special thanks

PennPraxis
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PHS

civic landscapes for the 21st century

PHS PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

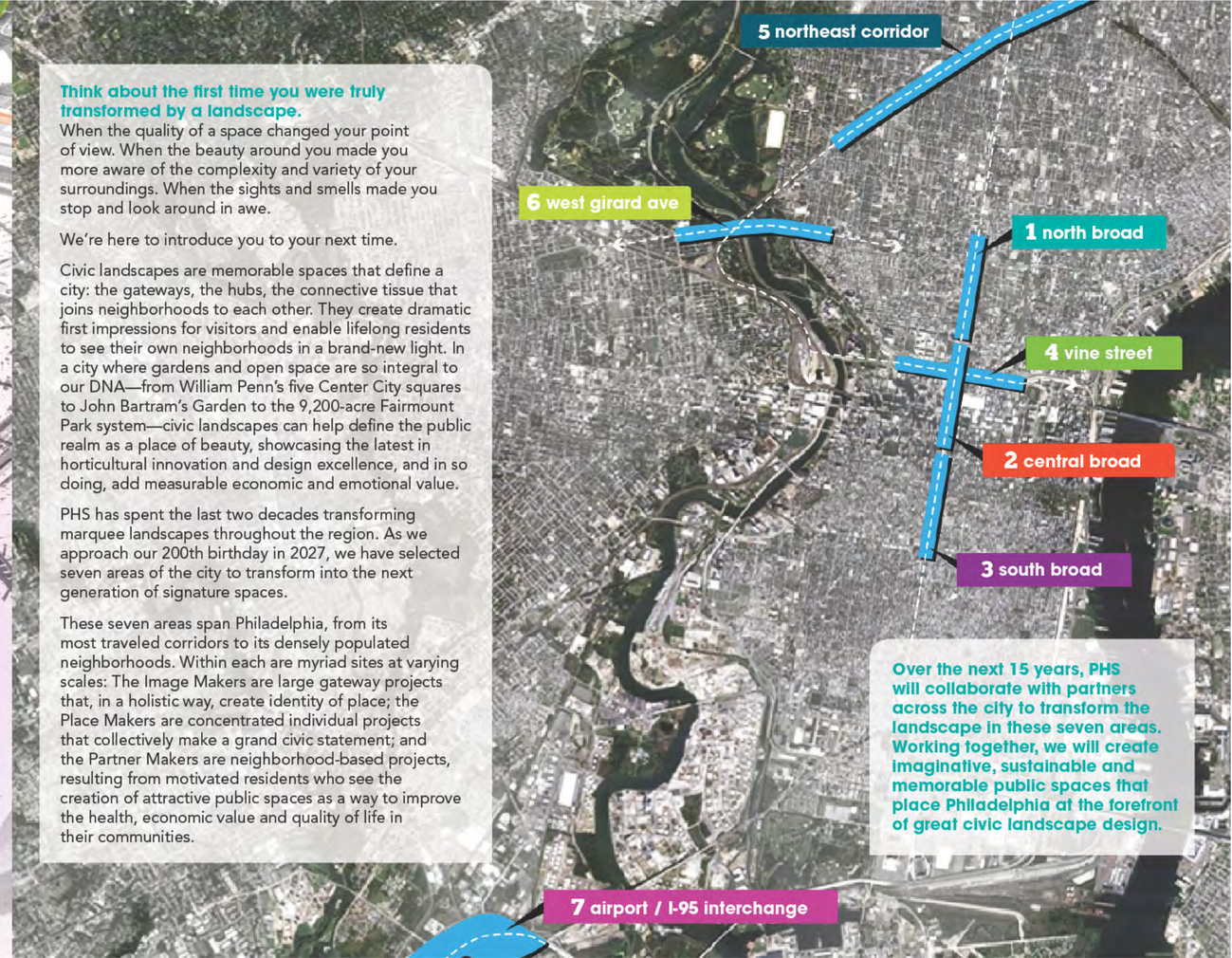
Think about the first time you were truly transformed by a landscape.
When the quality of a space changed your point of view. When the beauty around you made you more aware of the complexity and variety of your surroundings. When the sights and smells made you stop and look around in awe.

We're here to introduce you to your next time.

Civic landscapes are memorable spaces that define a city: the gateways, the hubs, the connective tissue that joins neighborhoods to each other. They create dramatic first impressions for visitors and enable lifelong residents to see their own neighborhoods in a brand-new light. In a city where gardens and open space are so integral to our DNA—from William Penn's five Center City squares to John Bartram's Garden to the 9,200-acre Fairmount Park system—civic landscapes can help define the public realm as a place of beauty, showcasing the latest in horticultural innovation and design excellence, and in so doing, add measurable economic and emotional value.

PHS has spent the last two decades transforming marquee landscapes throughout the region. As we approach our 200th birthday in 2027, we have selected seven areas of the city to transform into the next generation of signature spaces.

These seven areas span Philadelphia, from its most traveled corridors to its densely populated neighborhoods. Within each are myriad sites at varying scales: The Image Makers are large gateway projects that, in a holistic way, create identity of place; the Place Makers are concentrated individual projects that collectively make a grand civic statement; and the Partner Makers are neighborhood-based projects, resulting from motivated residents who see the creation of attractive public spaces as a way to improve the health, economic value and quality of life in their communities.



Over the next 15 years, PHS will collaborate with partners across the city to transform the landscape in these seven areas. Working together, we will create imaginative, sustainable and memorable public spaces that place Philadelphia at the forefront of great civic landscape design.

guiding principles

Design for the 21st century.
The civic landscape sets a new standard for public spaces in Philadelphia. The civic landscape is visually interesting and experienced holistically. Design excellence must be at the core of the civic landscape.

Design for everyone, not a specific audience.
The potential audience for a new civic landscape is vast. But a civic landscape will succeed when it is accessible to all people. A great place brings people from all walks of life together.

Be a trailblazer.
Prioritize investment in the public realm within emerging areas of the city. Build upon critical mass and make strategic investments that can become catalytic agents for positive change.

Redefine Philadelphia's signature.
Philadelphia's industrial heritage has begun to yield to a future of creativity, innovation and collaboration within all sectors of the economy. Celebrate Philadelphia as a center of industriousness as well as sustainability. In reimagining the public realm, redefine Philadelphia as a model of sustainable horticultural practices.

Start small, and increase scale in measured steps.
Vary the scale of the civic landscape. Early actions can lead to long-term, transformative change. Accomplish success in increments, starting with small, discrete projects. Over time, the impact will be significant.

Locate projects in areas with strong potential for partnerships.
Philadelphians value sustainable partnerships. By building upon investments that are already under way, PHS can be the catalytic partner that helps transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

goals

1. Design for locals.
2. Design a public realm that conserves, restores, protects, and enhances local ecosystems.
3. Create a landscape that reconnects communities and neighborhoods.
4. Make big moves and implement big ideas—pushing the design and horticulture envelope.
5. Create a significant gateway to the city and region.
6. Develop a civic landscape that can be implemented in phases.
7. Mobilize community support and build partnerships.
8. Build upon the authentic, distinctive characteristics of Philadelphia.
9. Build healthy communities.
10. Redefine the future of horticulture.

the next generation of civic landscapes

To compile these seven sites, PHS gathered stakeholders, decision-makers, thought leaders, and community representatives to help determine the places most critical to the success of the city and region. These seven sites, honed from an initial list of more than 100, were selected as the places that most clearly define the city: where our identity is formed, and where we are not yet realizing our full potential.

With these seven sites, PHS seeks to do more than simply enhance existing public space. With a focus on innovation and new possibilities, these sites will completely transform our way of thinking about public space. With this work, we intend to showcase extraordinary horticultural design that will inspire others to push the envelope. We hope to promote healthy communities, where the connection between green space and wellness is paramount and well understood. Finally, with this work, we intend to foster sustainable practices, helping to transform our communities into national models of economic, social and environmental success.

1 north broad

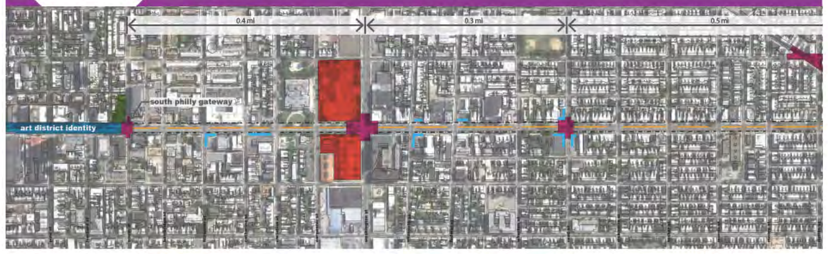
Strong institutions, respected social service agencies, houses of worship, new residential development and a growing hospitality sector establish a strong foundation from which to build the partnerships necessary to create civic landscapes along this key corridor.

2 central broad

Philadelphia is in the midst of a public space renaissance, and Central Broad Street between Vine Street and South Street forms the core of a vibrant downtown. Recent renovations here signal a new paradigm for public spaces, and PHS will work to help fill in the gaps left in the urban fabric.

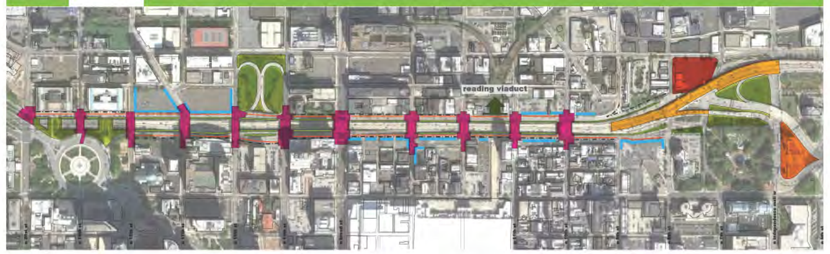
3 south broad

South Broad Street is defined by strong performing arts, vibrant commercial activity and a growing residential population. Stable bordering neighborhoods present opportunities for projects at varying scales. New community gateways will announce arrival to Center City and to a thriving, historic downtown core.



4 vine street

By improving the streetscape, refreshing furnishings and planting the limited open spaces along Vine Street, this gateway will introduce visitors to the city and build upon the cultural touchstones of Chinatown and Callowhill.

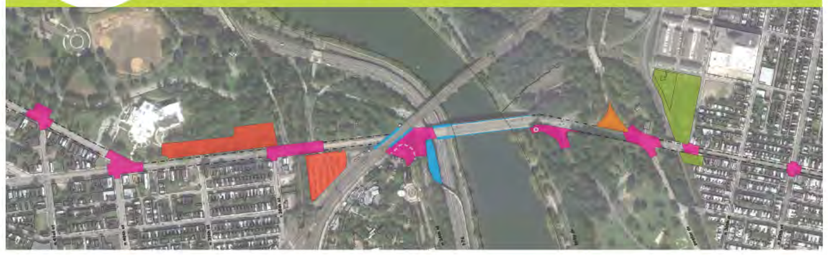


5 northeast corridor

Through horticulture, PHS will help redefine the way that cities treat rail corridors. The new civic landscape will take travelers on a historic journey that honors the past, welcomes visitors with exuberant and memorable plantings, and links to the diverse neighborhoods that line the tracks.

6 west girard avenue

Bringing horticultural expertise to this neighborhood gateway presents an opportunity to build upon investments in the Centennial District and help reconnect neighborhoods on both sides of the Schuylkill River.



7 airport

Enhancing the landscape along I-95 and its approach to the Philadelphia International Airport will change the first impressions of the thousands of travelers who pass through every day. The resulting landscape will say to newcomers, "Welcome to Philadelphia: The Nation's Center of Horticultural Excellence."

8 What's your civic landscape?

Civic landscapes are large and small, grand and intimate. Tell us what landscape you would like to transform in your neighborhood. Email suggestions and photos to civiclandscapes@pennhort.org

Surfacing · Activating · Screening · Plantings (Vertical) · Plantings (Horizontal) · Object Field · Object Field (wet) · Landforming · Illuminated Access · Temporary Event · Furnishing · Signage

PHS transforms the past and future city

1987
Azalea Garden

1991
Philadelphia Museum of Art

2004
Logan Square

2006
Las Parcelas

2012
Green Resource Center at Bartram's Garden

2027
PHS celebrates 200 years

1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2013-2027

1990
John F. Kennedy Boulevard

1995
Penn's Landing, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

2005
Vacant Land 7th and Germantown

This could be your neighborhood