

**GreenPlan Philadelphia
 Philadelphia, PA**

Project Description:

In 1995, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission identified Philadelphia as one of the only counties in the area that did not have an open space plan. Thanks to DCNR, the City of Philadelphia, the William Penn Foundation, and PECO Energy, Philadelphia now boasts one of the most progressive plans in the nation. The vision for the plan was unveiled in the spring of 2006 as GreenPlan Philadelphia. An inter-agency management team, many of whom who had never worked together before, met weekly to develop goals and inter-agency working groups on the topics of stormwater, economic development, data and measurement, health, special projects, and environmental. An extensive civic engagement process coordinated by the PA Horticultural Society reached into every neighborhood in the City. The inter-agency management team wrote the plan with the guidance of consultants Wallace Roberts & Todd, The Trust for Public Land and others.

GreenPlan Philadelphia sets lofty goals, but none that are out of reach. It is based around a Sustainability Framework that evaluates the contribution of all projects and policies in terms of Environmental, Economic and Quality of Life benefits. All actions fall within eight green elements and projects within these are measured against how they benefit the three facets of sustainability for the City over the long term. The eight elements include: trees, trails, renewable energy, external building elements, wetlands, meadows, pervious and cool surfaces, and urban agriculture.

Of these, planting trees ranked the highest on the sustainability framework as meeting the most measures of environmental, economic and quality of life factors. That seems like an obvious answer, but the City won't be taking it lightly. Almost 1 million trees are to be planted throughout the



neighborhoods over the next several years. By 2028, the City plans to have 30 % tree cover in every neighborhood. The trees will reduce pollution, store carbon, reduce building energy usage by creating shade, increase property value,

reduce stormwater runoff, and even reduces crime. Many neighborhoods have very low tree cover; for example, South Philadelphia has only 1.8 percent tree cover in 2008. A cost/benefit analysis done for Southeast Philadelphia indicates that the net annual benefit of 30 percent tree cover would be over 1 million dollars.

Trails are another key recommendation of GreenPlan Philadelphia. The goal is to have 100% of City residents living within a ½ mile of a major trail. This means over 200 miles of new trails will need to

be added, most of them offroad or physically separated from the road. New trails will create greenways throughout the area and enhance existing greenways through connections. Wouldn't it be nice to ride your bike along a tree-lined trail instead of sitting in traffic or in an overcrowded subway car? The city will also look to reduce its use of nonrenewable energy. Open space resources, such as roofs of train stations, are identified as great locations to put photo-voltaic panels to harness solar energy. If half of the building owners in the Southeast Philadelphia one square mile test area were to install solar panels, the plan estimates a net annual benefit of over \$80,000. Green roofs, green walls, and rain water collection



methods are also recommended to be implemented to help reduce energy consumption, manage stormwater better, and provide better air quality.

While trees and trails can help green the streets, another major aspect of the GreenPlan Philadelphia is expanding the park system. As of 2008, there are 10,000 acres of parkland within the City. GreenPlan's goal is to add 4,000 acres of park, mostly to underserved areas. As one resident put it, "South Philly rowhouses don't have much in the way of backyards, so we need well-kept public



spaces." The plan is to ensure 10 acres of parkland for every 1000 citizens.

The partnership of the City of Philadelphia, DCNR, William Penn Foundation, numerous non-profit organizations and the business community worked to bring this visionary plan to a jumping-off point. A new Director of Sustainability for the City is responsible for harnessing this energy and managing the implementation process.

Amount of Keystone funding awarded, year and matching sources:

2005: \$325,000 Keystone Grant
 Matching Funds: \$392,500
 City of Philadelphia - \$230,000
 William Penn Foundation - \$152,500
 PECO - \$10,000