

Reimagining the CIVIC COMMONS PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE INITIATIVE

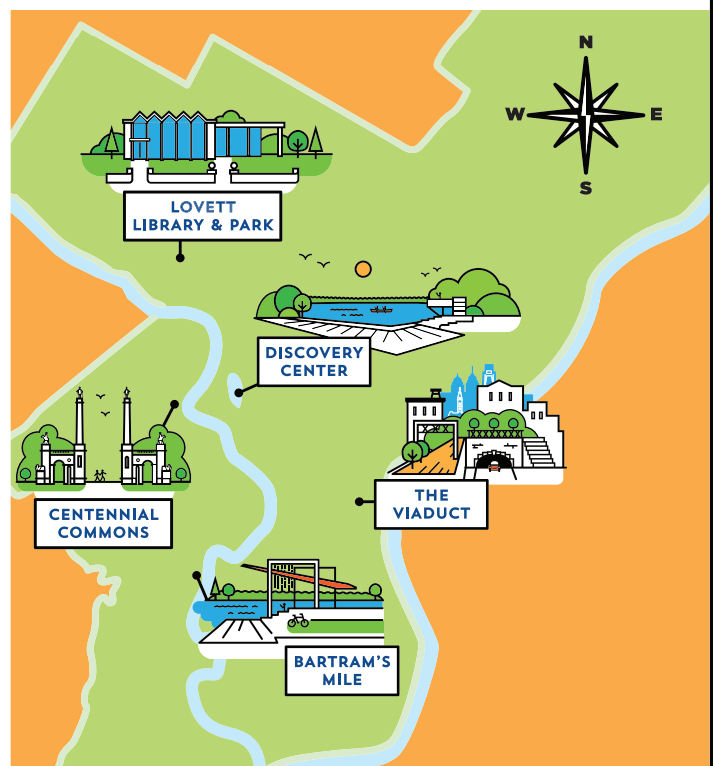
In 2014, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the William Penn Foundation formed a partnership to *Reimagine the Civic Commons*. The underlying premise is that parks, libraries and other “civic assets” can be better leveraged to promote greater social and economic integration, retain residents, and foster community and economic development.

THE INVESTMENT

The Knight Foundation’s pioneering \$5.4 million investment received matching support from the William Penn Foundation, creating a total investment of \$11 million to create a “civic commons collective” of five model projects in Philadelphia, led by Fairmount Park Conservancy. The foundations envision this as the first cohort of a national initiative, with Philadelphia as an ideal testing ground because of its booming millennial population, rapidly changing neighborhoods, widespread civic space innovation and entrepreneurship, and array of urban infrastructure available for repurpose.

THE CIVIC COMMONS COLLECTIVE

Over the course of three years, the Civic Commons Collective, directed by Fairmount Park Conservancy, will foster a collaborative environment among Philadelphia’s nonprofit network while repurposing and repositioning the city’s existing urban infrastructure into new amenities for the city and its neighborhoods. The Collective is undertaking data collection efforts to better measure the usage patterns of our projects, a storytelling effort to share the impact and learning from the neighboring communities and examining collaborative operations, staffing and maintenance models. In addition, we are partnering with leading researchers to experiment with programmatic and design interventions that will help us inform how citizens access civic assets.



THE NEWS

To find out more, visit CivicCommonsPHL.org for up-to-the-minute stories, interviews and field notes on the five projects, their communities, and their impact. Contribute to the conversation through #CivicCommonsPHL and at @CivicCommonsPHL. Follow the Fairmount Park Conservancy for news on the Civic Commons and other Philly park initiatives at <https://www.facebook.com/FairmountParkConservancy/> and @myphillypark.

THE PROJECTS

DISCOVERY CENTER

The Philadelphia Outward Bound School and The National Audubon Society are joining forces to reactivate a century-old abandoned water reservoir in East Fairmount Park. The project will provide environmental education and adventure programs that inspire self-discovery, foster personal achievement, and build community across Philadelphia.



THE VIADUCT RAIL PARK

Center City District and Friends of the Rail Park will repurpose a portion of an abandoned rail line as an elevated linear park in a changing, multi-ethnic community.



BARTRAM'S MILE

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation will transform this former industrial waterfront, adjacent to Bartram's Garden, into a greenway that will reconnect the oldest botanical garden in the U.S. to Center City, while reconnecting an isolated neighborhood back to its historic waterfront.



LOVETT LIBRARY AND PARK

Free Library of Philadelphia and Mt Airy U.S.A. will convert this library and adjoining underused, open space into a new community center.



CENTENNIAL COMMONS

Fairmount Park Conservancy will create three recreational zones and bring much-needed amenities to a 12-acre desolate edge of West Fairmount Park to transform this space into an inviting and vibrant park for residents of the adjoining neighborhood.

