The FDR Park Master Plan offers the opportunity to reimagine a historic Olmsted Park to serve 21st century Philadelphians and generations to come. In order to achieve this vision, we must bring nature, water, and human activity into balance together.

The master plan is organized into two zones:

**ECOLOGICAL CORE**

The Ecological Core manages stormwater, connects parks users to nature, and provides critical habitat via wetlands, meadows, and water access. The Master Plan will expand FDR’s meadowland by 36% from its previous state. We will triple the current trail network in the park, and introduce sustainable natural lands to park for the first time.

**URBAN EDGE**

The Urban Edge will be raised above the floodplain and will feature new amenities such as athletic fields and signature playgrounds. Currently, there is a lack of high-quality (or even playable by regulation standards) fields across the city, but in South Philadelphia particularly. The athletics field will be interspersed within a woodland setting that includes natural amenities like trees, native plants, trails, and creeks, and non-natural amenities like playspaces, concession kiosks, and restrooms.
During the year-long planning process, the project team spoke to nearly 3,000 community members and stakeholders.

- 7 different languages
- 1,200+ survey respondents
- 5 paid Park Ambassadors
- 30+ stakeholder interviews
- 3 community meetings
- 7 community design workshops

We learned there were many things that the community would like to see changed about FDR Park:

- Establish new amenities and services that would allow families to extend their stay at the park.
- Resolve the conflicts between vehicles and park users for the benefit of both.
- Improve opportunities for multi-generational users to enjoy the park, with improved playgrounds.
- Create an operations and revenue infrastructure that allows for the park to be well-cared for and maintained.

At the same time, there were many things about FDR Park that residents appreciated and wanted to see preserved:

- Preserve and enhance opportunities to connect with nature and water.
- Continue and expand opportunities for youth development through athletics and environmental education.
- Celebrate the historic core and civic architecture of the park.
- Enhance the identity of the lakes and keep the Boathouse at the heart of the FDR experience.
WORK COMPLETED IN PURSUIT OF THE MASTER PLAN:

PAVED THE ROADS
In partnership with the City of Philadelphia Streets Department, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation repaved 58,911 square yards of loop road and parking lots in the summer of 2020, representing an investment of $750,000. Bike lanes were also added to the park for the first time.

STAFFED THE PARK
Parks & Recreation appointed FDR Park’s first Executive Director in March 2020 to support programming and help steward the effective implementation of a multi-year Master Plan. Two additional staff members have come on board since to lead stewardship and volunteer efforts. 100+ volunteers have since been recruited.

TRIED OUT CAR-FREE DAYS
FDR Park has seen record numbers of attendance this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, with as many as 1,200 vehicles on recent weekends. Select weekend road closures are allowing park managers and visitors to experience what a car-free park looks like.

TOTAL 2020 INVESTMENT INCLUDES:
$3 MILLION in RACP funds
$1 MILLION from the City of Philadelphia’s capital budget
$250,000 from the PA DCNR, matched with $250,000 from the Fairmount Park Conservancy.

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MAYOR JIM KENNEY ANNOUNCED AN INVESTMENT OF $4.5 MILLION TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FDR PARK MASTER PLAN IN MARCH 2021. THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DCNR), THE COMMONWEALTH’S REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE CAPITAL PROGRAM (RACP), AND THE CONSERVANCY ARE COMMITTING NEW FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT THE GATEWAY PROJECT, INCLUDING PATTISON PLAYGROUND AND THE WELCOME CENTER.

THE WELCOME CENTER
The implementation of the first phase of the masterplan will enhance the visitor experience by transforming the 18,000-square-foot guardhouse and stables at the Broad and Pattison Avenue entrance into a modern Welcome Center. The guardhouse will become a shared co-working space where community organizations can deliver park programming. The project will activate a 3,600-square-foot courtyard to offer a one-stop shop for park users with restrooms, creating a staffed information center, and equipment rentals. Finally, the Welcome Center project will transform the former stables into a 4,000-square-foot-cafe and 6,700-square-foot event and community meeting space overlooking Pattison Lagoon.

PATTISON PLAYGROUND
The first phase of implementation will also include the construction of an exciting signature playground and picnic area celebrating FDR Park’s unique identity. The Children’s Play Area, located near Pattison Lagoon will include high quality, interactive play elements set within a landscape of natural features including barrier-free paths, hills and planted spaces and will be next to the park’s Welcome Center. Design of the destination playscape will be funded by DCNR and Fairmount Park Conservancy.
A number of improvements to FDR Park’s natural areas are currently underway. The following efforts are being implemented by FDR Park staff, Fairmount Park Conservancy’s Natural Lands team, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Stewardship team, PowerCorps PHL fellows, volunteers, and contractors:

- Protecting and facilitating further wildlife habitat in natural lands areas
- Cleaning lake/lagoon edges from invasive species and replacing with live stakes and other native vegetation
- Large scale phragmites control and removal throughout all park waterways
- Maintaining previous tree planting/reforestation sites
- Invasive removal and facilitation of further natural lands development in FDR Meadows
- Redesigning, re-routing, and developing improved trail system in meadows for better user access, aesthetics, overall experience, and less disruptive human impact on natural land spaces
- Brush mowing/cleaning up old and overrun areas of former golf course
- Planning for strategic overseeding and planting of supplemental native grasses and wildflowers throughout selected meadow areas

**PHL AIRPORT ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION**

Philadelphia International Airport will create wetlands at FDR Park by excavating an area at the southwestern side of the park. Clean soil from that excavation will be used to raise areas at the edge of the park, and to create an observation hill.

The newly created wetland will enhance existing habitats and provide a buffer to control flooding coming from the Delaware River.