

RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TOOLKIT FOR LOCAL PROJECTS



GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Continue to work with City agencies and residents to prioritize best locations for green stormwater infrastructure projects.

There is one current, Philadelphia Water Department-initiated green stormwater infrastructure project in the design phase at Wharton Square for a rain garden. Other completed green stormwater infrastructure projects include locations at Stinger Square, Lanier Playground, and Vare Recreation Center. More public- and private-initiated projects should be considered at other open spaces like Donald Finnegan Playground, alongside tree planting and pavement reductions at streets that are commonly flooded.

» See: *Grays Ferry Healthy Corridors*



COOLING CENTERS

Evaluate the feasibility of an additional cooling and community center.

There are several spraygrounds in Grays Ferry but there is only one indoor center listed by the City, which is at the Greater Grays Ferry Senior Center, a Philadelphia Housing Authority Senior site. Existing indoor recreation centers should be considered for designation as a cooling center, like Vare Recreation Center. Grays Ferry residents have also expressed desire in prior engagement meetings for an additional resiliency and/or community center focused on senior and youth programs. An additional center can serve these social functions as well as serve as a cooling center and resiliency hub for any future disaster recovery efforts.



WATERFRONT ACCESS & AMENITIES

Prioritize safe access to the Grays Ferry Crescent Trail and Park and expand waterfront trails

The Grays Ferry Crescent Trail expansion is complete with connection to the larger Schuylkill River Trail network and to Bartram's Mile. However, residents have previously expressed safety concerns about accessing the current park and trail. Ensure there are safe road crossings, lighting, and viewsheds when accessing the waterfront park from the neighborhood, especially along Wharton Street and include more neighborhood access points.



TREE PLANTING

Collaborate with government agencies, non-profits, private organizations, and residents to prioritize tree planting programs in the neighborhood.

Grays Ferry was listed as a priority area in the Philly Tree Plan with only 5.5 % canopy cover in comparison to the City goal of 30 %. All tree planting efforts by any City agency or organization should work closely with residents to prioritize locations and ensure cooperation from any commercial, industrial, or otherwise private land owner.

» See: *Philly Tree Plan (2023)*



SHADE-WAY CORRIDORS

Prioritize shade along heavily trafficked corridors.

Alongside tree planting efforts, shaded areas should be prioritized along heavily trafficked corridors, including: Grays Ferry Avenue, Wharton Street, and 34th Street.





SPRAY FOUNTAINS & SPLASH PADS

Continue maintenance of existing spraygrounds.

There are several spraygrounds and water features already within Grays Ferry at William Lanie Park, Wharton Square, and Thomas B. Smith Recreation Center. Ensure there is continued maintenance and upkeep of these recreational assets.



BUILDING RETROFITS

Ensure all residents are aware of existing municipal guides for flood-proofing homes and work with relevant City agencies to continuously update the guides as new climate projections emerge.

Philadelphia has multiple building retrofit and design guidelines, including ones that specifically address the various types of flooding and for those living in Grays Ferry. These guides should be advertised and available to any current and future residents, including information on any assistance available. Relevant City agencies should continue to work on ensuring any flood-related design and building guidelines are up-to-date on current climate and flood projections.

» See: *Flood Ready Home Guides (OOS Guide for Eastwick)*, *Flood Recovery Grant Program* from Eastwick United CDC, *A Guide to Flooding in Philadelphia* (2017)



DEPLOYABLE/TEMPORARY BARRIERS

Evaluate the feasibility of temporary barriers to protect critical infrastructure and facilities along the Schuylkill River shoreline.

No known levee or barriers are planned for the neighborhood or the redevelopment of the former Refinery site. However, officials and responsible agencies should evaluate future flood risk along the shoreline and its impact on critical infrastructure/facilities and whether temporary barriers are a feasible solution in this area.



ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & MODELING

Ensure residents are aware of the various monitoring systems available.

Various monitoring systems are in place for the areas around Grays Ferry, from community monitoring (Thrive Air Project) to City-mandated monitoring. Due to ongoing contamination concerns and ongoing construction work at the Bellwether District (former PES Refinery site), increased fenceline monitoring should be implemented and information made available to residents.

» See: *City of Philadelphia Air Quality Monitoring Network*, *Clean Air Council*, *Thrive Air Monitoring*



PAVEMENT REDUCTION

Study potential underutilized paved spaces for depaving and green stormwater infrastructure installations.

Areas of high imperviousness, like along the commercial and industrial lots north of Grays Ferry Avenue, west of I-76, and along South 25th Street, should be evaluated and studied for their potential for depaving and green stormwater infrastructure installations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EARLY ACTION PROJECT



GROWING TOGETHER GARDEN

SITE CONTEXT

The Church of the Redeemer Baptist Growing Together Garden is located on a large lot along the western edge of Grays Ferry and is bordered by Reed Street to the north, 25th Street and the 25th Street Rail Viaduct to the east, Dickinson Street to the south, and 26th Street to the west. The site has a high point at its center while the western half has a grid of over 400 community garden plots that are reserved by gardeners. The site is fenced with locked gates for access at the corners of Reed and 25th Streets and at 25th and Dickinson Streets.

DESIGN CONCEPT

The project is organized around siting a new native plant garden at the corner of the lot at Reed and 26th Streets, where water from up to a fourth of the site drains. While trees were considered along the property boundary to provide south-facing shade along the Reed St sidewalk, due to stormwater and slope limitations, the garden focuses on native planting instead. Native plants that are suited to the climatic conditions are selected as they help contribute to the restoration of native ecosystems.





Figure 174. Tending to plants in the Growing Together Garden. Source: CAC.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Picnic and Gathering Space

- Information stands
- Site furnishings

Native Garden Planting

- Shrubs/groundcover

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

This site should continue to be protected and preserved as a community garden space.