Schuylkill Banks is an eight mile stretch of tidal riverfront in the heart of Philadelphia, near diverse neighborhoods, industry, and a variety of cultural and educational institutions. This trail/greenway carefully balances recreation with spaces that emulate natural environments.

**Site Context**

**Project Overview**

The first greenway segment was constructed on an abandoned stretch of rail tracks and industrial brownfields; Grays Ferry Crescent is built on land that has been used for chemical and paint manufacture and chemicals research since the 1800’s. Care was taken on both sites to carefully remediate any contaminated soil, clear invasive species, preserve existing healthy tree cover, and plant native species wherever possible. The first trail segment created a new habitat for waterfowl and other urban wildlife, and design of Grays Ferry Crescent enhances existing waterfowl habitats.

**Sustainable Practices**

**Water** - Remediation performed as part of the development of Schuylkill Banks reclaimed previously polluted land, protecting the Schuylkill River from runoff contaminants in future storm events. Plantings along the Schuylkill Banks absorb stormwater runoff, as well as a large bio-swale and anti-erosion terracing. Impermeable surfaces are minimized to encourage groundwater infiltration and reduce runoff. SRDC maintenance staff removes excess de-icing salt from the trail after ice has melted to protect the river from contamination. Fences along Grays Ferry Crescent keep trail users from disrupting the natural riparian shore.

**Natural Landscaping** - Existing native trees were protected, while invasive species were removed wherever possible. Tree cover was enhanced by planting native trees including American Redbud, Red Maple, River Birch, Oak, and Sweet Gum. The amount of turf lawn area is minimized on the Grays Ferry Crescent trail and greenway, with warm season grass meadows designed to protect river quality and create habitats for urban wildlife along the edges of the space. Additional plantings along both segments of the greenway include native grasses, shrubs, and flowers. Biodiversity is encouraged on Schuylkill Banks and a variety of birds and animals can be seen along the greenway.

**Conserve Energy/Green Design** - Lights along the greenway are on a photo sensor so they are only on when needed. Lights are also designed to direct light down helping to protect night skies.
Sustainable Practices Cont.

Schuylkill Banks carefully balances recreation with spaces that emulate natural environments. Impacts to the existing landscape were minimized wherever possible. The trail and greenway adaptively integrates architectural features from historic sites, including bridges and bollards. Remediation performed as part of the development of Schuylkill Banks reclaimed previously polluted land. A composting restroom saves 1.5 gallons of water with each use.

Connecting People to Nature- The Schuylkill Banks is a welcome respite where visitors can reconnect with nature in the middle of the city. River overlooks, plaza spaces and benches along the trail encourage passive recreation and interaction with nature, such as birding and fishing. The Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRDC) holds fun, educational riverboat tours throughout the summer and fall, partners with organizations to do camping and kayaking.

The trail creates pedestrian and bicycle connections between diverse neighborhoods, the Center City business district, educational institutions like the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, and cultural institutions like the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Fairmount Water Works. Residents and visitors use the greenway to access 30th Street Station for subway, regional rail and Amtrak service, and a variety of bus and trolley routes provide easy access to Schuylkill Banks.

Information provided by: Joseph Syrnick, President & CEO, Schuylkill River Development Corporation (2011)