

Philadelphia, PA

Benjamin Franklin Parkway Circulation, Parking and Transit Study

The City of Philadelphia, through the generosity of the Pew Charitable Trust, hired Nelson\Nygaard to comprehensively examine circulation, parking and transit issues in the Benjamin Franklin Parkway area. The Parkway had been redesigned in the 1950s to facilitate vehicle traffic, which had the by-product of creating a rather barren environment for transit, pedestrians and cyclists. Nelson\Nygaard was tasked with examining the implications of proposed developments and producing a plan to satisfy the various stakeholders; facilitating circulation (not just for through vehicles); recommending parking facilities and strategies; and reorganizing transit. Complicating all this were special events, which occupied the Parkway for better than 35 weekends a year.

Circulation

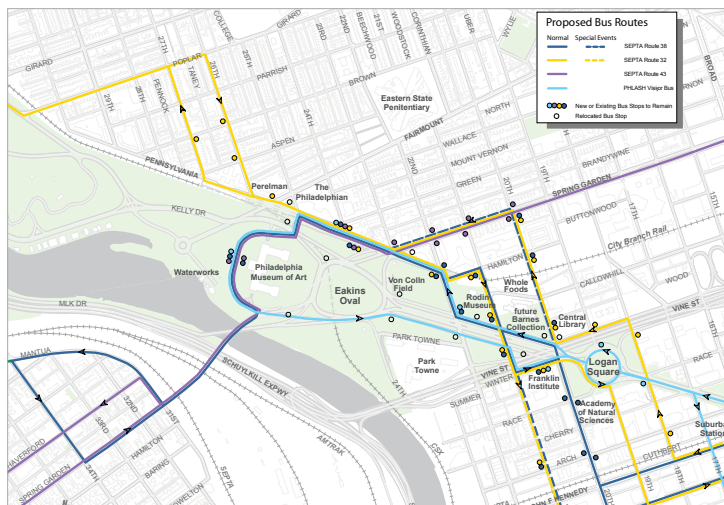
In the past several years, two major plans had been published recommending changes to circulation on the Parkway. Taking into account the past two studies, future developments, and current conditions, Nelson\Nygaard produced two plans that redesigned roadways, reconfigured problematic intersections, addressed pedestrian safety concerns, and added bicycle facilities.

Parking

The study area was defined by a series of five- and ten-minute walks. On- and off-street parking counts were taken during various time periods and future developments were considered, as well as existing usage patterns. The findings recommended, in some cases, building additional parking facilities, while in other areas parking problems could be solved through policy alone. For example, better enforcement and expansion of Residential Parking Permit programs can free up spaces for residents, pricing strategies at off-street locations can increase utilization rates, and on-street parking needs to be 'timed' appropriately to prevent abuse.

Transit

Nelson\Nygaard proposed a route structure with combined stops and services to increase headways, minimize special events disruptions, and place stops closer to residential and commercial uses. A specific objective was to use transit to extend the range of available parking, so as to reduce the need to build additional parking facilities.



Project Duration:
2005-06

Total Budget:
\$140,000

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