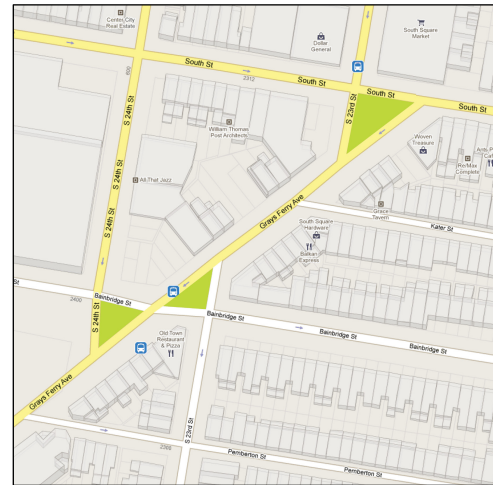


TRIANGLES GATEWAY PROJECT - UPDATE

South of South Neighborhood Association (SOSNA), South Street West Business Association (SSWBA)

Since 2005 numerous plans by the City, SOSNA, the Community Design Collaborative and others have engaged a wide-array of stakeholders - including business owners and residents - to articulate concerns and develop ideas for improving the Triangles for all. The Triangles area includes 2 of the 10 busiest intersections for pedestrians, but it is difficult and unsafe for all modes of transit to navigate. Pedestrians jay-walk, cars have trouble driving around looking for parking, and there are places where the sidewalk is too narrow for strollers or wheelchairs. The space itself is aesthetically dispiriting to stakeholders (88% of users expressed dissatisfaction with their state in a recent survey) with weeds around the fountain, trash and litter in the planting areas, and a web of poles and overhead wires.



Stakeholders and professionals also see immense opportunities to renovate and revamp this space as a landmark gateway to our community. In this neighborhood and Citywide as a whole, there is a severe lack of public open spaces. Public spaces have immense value to community and economic development in neighborhoods, which is why the creation of over 500 acres of new space is a goal for Mayor Nutter.

Through events such as PlazaPalooza and the opening of the South Street Bridge, the Triangles have already demonstrated what versatile and attractive spaces they are. As a result of the overwhelming dissatisfaction of its primary users and the successful events it's hosted, over 90% of neighbors want to see the City make significant investment in improving the Triangles.

Such improvements would address 6 topic areas. The ideas in each topic area come from stakeholders and professionals and were shared during public meetings and surveys conducted since 2005:

Traffic/Circulation/Parking

Improving safety, circulation and connections is essential for and between all modes of transportation: pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and public transportation (buses 7, 12, and 40). The ease of loading and unloading to existing businesses should not be affected, and it should be easier for cars especially to circulate the area looking for parking. There needs to be an appropriate mix of short-term (customer) parking and long-term (resident parking) Pedestrians should be encouraged to not-jay-walk or cross mid-block, but do so at clearly demarcated crossings.

1. Encourage traffic calming measures and supportive infrastructure improvements for all modes of transportation, such as constructing a roundabout at the Grays Ferry Avenue/24th Street, stop control for southbound 23rd Street at Bainbridge Street, and switch traffic flow on 24th street to one way northbound etc.
2. Move parking currently on Grays Ferry between 23rd and South Streets to the edges of the Triangle along South 23rd and South Streets; potential net gain of 4 spaces.
3. Properly accommodate trucks or "reroute" them.

Get involved with the Grays Ferry Triangles Gateway Project! The planning committee meets the second Tuesday of every month at 6 PM at the SOSNA Office (1901 Christian Street) All are welcome.

Safety

For these spaces to flourish and grow over the long term they need to be safe and secure for all users at all times of the day.

1. Add protective planters and/or bollards to improve safety and pedestrian visibility.
2. Install street furniture, bike racks, and planters and other items that attract users and deter criminals.
3. Expand sidewalk and improve ADA access around the Triangles.
4. Install new lighting.

Maintenance

A long-term maintenance plan needs to be in place to ensure the future viability and success of this area.

1. Development of regular maintenance plan, i.e yearly pruning, quarterly clean ups.
2. Functional trash and recycling collection.
3. Create a Friends group to fund and execute long-term maintenance of the area.

Public/Green Space/Streetscape/ Utilities

The Triangles are a perfect opportunity to bring much-needed public space to the community. It should be a landmark and a town center. Places like the Porch (30th Street Station) have shown how this is possible. Public spaces attract customers, build community and keep families in the neighborhood. Above-ground utility lines block views, crowd the sidewalks, and damage aesthetics.

1. Demolish existing concrete and enlarge Triangle at Bainbridge Street and create pocket park.
2. Promote the South Street Triangles as a neighborhood center, and this area as a Gateway and a landmark.
3. Add Street trees on both sides of Grays Ferry Avenue.
4. Remove and replace existing planters on Bainbridge Street.
5. Install new light poles on South and 23rd Streets; install in-ground solar LEDs.
6. Install street furniture such as benches, trash/recycling cans, bike racks.
7. Install a civic clock in the Triangle.
8. Burying the lines of the ten existing electrical/telephone poles along Grays Ferry Avenue.
9. Use tree trenches, pervious pavers and other techniques to address stormwater.

Plaza/Programming

Since first envisioned by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission in 2005, every plan and study has recommended closing Grays Ferry Ave between South Street and 23rd Street to car traffic and creating a public plaza. While useful in terms of parking and loading for the handful of businesses on that stretch of Grays Ferry, it is vastly underutilized for the overwhelming majority of other users. Any such plaza would need to carefully balance the needs of all users, including businesses, residents, customers and passersby.

1. Improve maintenance of the park itself, especially dealing with trash, litter, and weeds.
2. Install raised/elevated-loading area in the Triangle at South Street.
3. Restore the fountain.
4. Expand Wi-Fi in the Plaza to attract users.
5. Use plaza to host regular events to draw people to the space, like PlazaPaloosa and South Street Bridge Opening, or a concert series.

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