

CENTER CITY DIGEST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER CITY DISTRICT AND CENTRAL PHILADELPHIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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Inside...

CCD's 2003 Budget 3

Parkway Lighting 4

Panhandling Update 5

Walk Philadelphia Tours 6

The conflict at the Pennsylvania Convention Center between city and suburban representatives has been like a bucket of water on flickering embers of regional cooperation. The unstated logic of the last decade had been that as Philadelphia cleaned up its act—literally and figuratively—and created attractions suburbanites valued, a conversation could follow on shared efforts to:

- contain sprawl by reinvesting in older neighborhoods;
- link I-95 to the Turnpike, build the Schuylkill Valley MetroRail and upgrade SEPTA;
- share the cost for regional assets like the airport, cultural institutions and Fairmount Park;
- use statewide reform to reduce the wage tax and equitably fund public schools;
- market the region not only for tourism but for business growth.

The uniform color of every southeastern Pennsylvania county on last November's gubernatorial electoral map raised further hopes that an era of collaboration was at hand. That potential remains if we can rebound from the civic embarrassment on Arch Street.

So use your imagination for a moment to consider a very different scenario. Imagine that the American colonies hadn't banded together in Philadelphia after independence, but evolved instead as separate states with separate currencies. Picture now, if after two centuries of suspicion, wars and shifting alliances, they unite, adopt a single currency and allow unrestricted movement of people and commerce across their borders.

Something like that just occurred on the other side of the Atlantic. Nations with a dozen different languages, centuries-old cultures and a combined population larger than the United States have merged in the European Union to bolster their position in the global economy.

But the profound changes Europeans are making at the local level offer the most immediate lessons for Philadelphia. Businesses and places long sheltered by tariffs and national boundaries now face powerful winds of international competition. Yet, instead of adopting American-style competition between neighboring cities and towns, Europeans are responding as regions.

Perhaps nowhere has this gone further than Spain. In reaction to the authoritarianism of the Franco years, Spain is devolving responsibility to semi-autonomous regional governments, even as the nation cedes powers upward to the European Union.

In four days of conversations at a "world summit of smart cities and regions" last December, I joined with elected officials, city planners and managers, development professionals and academics from cities in 30 countries on five continents in a moving intellectual and gastronomic feast.

In the new Guggenheim in Bilbao, in an 11th-century cathedral in Vitoria in the mountains of the Basque country and in a covered bullring in Zaragoza in northeast Spain, our hosts showcased their diverse attractions, along with regional wines and foods. But, they also demonstrated how neighboring cities were coming together to identify their unique competitive traits. Avoiding duplication, they were investing in each city's specific strengths, linking them with light rail, and evolving a regional strategy to compete on a global scale.

From the air, Philadelphia looks more like a region than 442 separate units of government.



Imagine Wilmington, Camden and Philadelphia—confronting the larger economies of New York and Washington, D.C.—forging a shared strategy for regional assets, such as the Delaware River, the international airport, the commuter rail lines, the Convention Center, diverse business nodes and world-class education, cultural and research institutions. Imagine a negotiation through which one of these cities might forgo, for example, investment in its port to free up scarce resources for another priority—as San Sebastian just did with neighboring Bilbao in Spain.

Similar second-tier cities in Europe are recognizing they can only compete on the same playing fields as Paris, London or Madrid if they pool resources, avoid redundancy and function as a cluster of coordinated cities within an integrated region.

But even more remarkable was the manner in which many world cities were approaching the *domestic* challenges of globalization. In Philadelphia we have proponents of business competitiveness, advocates for the disadvantaged and defenders of the environment: three different perspectives, three conversations that rarely converge.

By contrast, a government minister from New South Wales, Australia, the former Mayor of Santiago, Chile and the governor of Aragon in Spain, all articulated the same triad of goals: *economic competitiveness, social cohesion and sustainable development*.

The first is self-explanatory for those raised on American capitalism. The second is subtler. For some cities, it means preserving social stability as waves of new immigrants cross open borders in search of work. In developing nations in sub-Saharan Africa or in Southeast Asia, it means addressing the disparities between rich and poor. Cities simply cannot be competitive, as tourist destinations or technology hubs, if they are plagued by poverty, crime and an under-educated workforce. Others seek to preserve local language, culture and architecture in an homogenizing world. What would Rome be without its piazzas? Spain without tapas? As the former Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil eloquently said, in a turbulent world, cities are home to our heritage, a refuge for social cohesion and places of cultural identity.

Finally, while all endorsed the free-market mechanism, they tempered it with a concern for sustainability. For fresh-water-scarce Sydney and the desert city Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, the challenge is self-evident. But residents of most world cities are driving more cars and confronting the challenge of sprawl. So each was eager to avoid the American maelstrom of abandoned urban neighborhoods, receding open space, failing public transit and auto-congested suburbs.

To be sure, some of this was rhetorical posturing for the cameras. But it also reflected a remarkable shift in thinking. Startled awake by the fall of the Berlin Wall, by the challenge of globalism and now, by the tumbling of centuries-old boundaries, these diverse cities no longer are letting themselves be diverted and constrained by the lesser barriers that fragment Philadelphia and its suburbs. To compete and grow, they have begun to act as regions with a development agenda that is competitive, inclusive and sustainable.

What will it take to startle this region out of habits of discord? Change usually is prompted by *fear* or *opportunity*. *Fear* can motivate a community when chronic, but once tolerable, problems cross a line making disaster possible. Such were the conditions that gave birth to the Center City District. So too, Greater Atlanta only began working as a region when uncontrollable sprawl and clean-air violations threatened the loss of substantial transportation dollars.

Opportunity is created when extraordinary benefits are achievable only by working in concert, such as the chance to snare the Olympics, a political convention or a mega-project that will transform the region.

Philadelphia has the opportunity and the assets to market the region for business, biotech and tourism growth. We have made an excellent start with the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation and with the emerging efforts of Innovation Philadelphia and Positively Philadelphia. We have airport, highway and rail projects that can jump-start dynamic and inclusive metropolitan growth. We have a governor who, beyond the force of his personality, could fashion enduring incentives for counties to work together. The choice is ours: to fight over shreds of a shrinking pie, or to think and act like a mature and growing region.

Paul R. Levy
Executive Director
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Transportation: Making the Most of a Competitive Advantage

In an era of sprawl and suburban traffic jams, one of Center City's competitive strengths is an outstanding transportation network that makes us easily accessible to residents, commuters and visitors. A 2001 Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC) survey found that 70 percent of Center City office workers use transit to get to work, eight percent walk to jobs in our compact downtown, and only 19 percent commute by car. Even more, public transit enables residents of city neighborhoods to hold 81 percent of restaurant jobs, 80 percent of hotel jobs and 44 percent of office jobs in Center City.

To maintain accessibility, to ensure that congestion from increased popularity does not stifle growth and to increase downtown's competitiveness as a location for business, the region needs to place an even greater emphasis on strengthening and coordinating all modes of transportation.

The Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC) and its Central Philadelphia Transportation Management Association (CPTMA) recently took this message to Governor Ed Rendell with a proposed transportation agenda for the new administration.

"Without greater emphasis on the development of a balanced, multi-modal network of highways, public transportation, bike lanes and sidewalks, Pennsylvania's older communities will increasingly lose their competitive advantages and transit-dependent individuals will be further left behind," the report said.

CPDC/CPTMA urged the new administration to make public transportation a high priority and cornerstone of "smart growth" community revitalization efforts. "Increased transportation choice will help employers attract more workers, induce new investment, enable transit dependent workers to access jobs and reduce one unfortunate side effect of downtown revitalization—traffic jams, parking problems and overcrowding," the report suggested.

The report also advocated for increased funding for bicycle and pedestrian amenities, noting that "due to its compact scale, accessibility to mass transit and mix of residents and employers, Center City Philadelphia, along with many older communities throughout the region, has the opportunity to increase the share of people who choose to bicycle or walk." The 2000 Census documented that 37 percent of Center City's residents already walk to work.

Finally, CPDC/CPTMA urged more funding for technologies that improve management of congestion, parking and public transportation while increasing mobility. Examples include street signs that display how many spaces are left at parking facilities and direct motorists to alternatives, parking meters that accept debit and credit cards and transit stops that display the arrival time of the next bus or trolley.

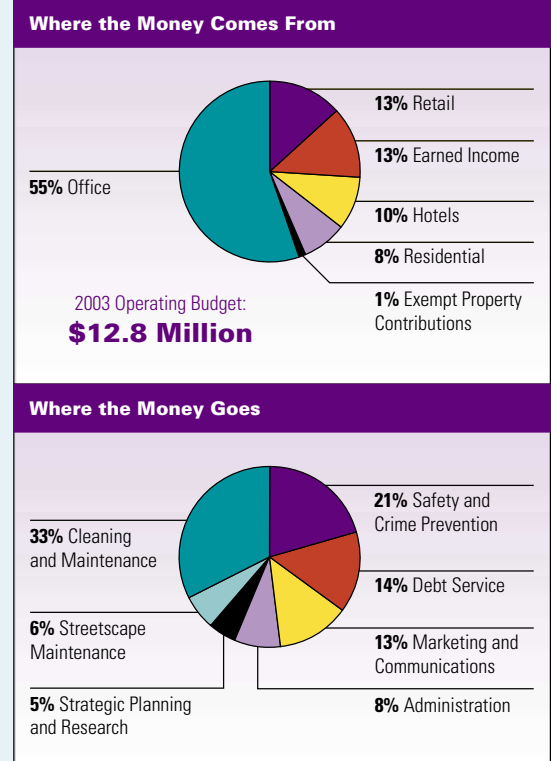
For copies of the report, *Strengthening City and Regional Economies through Multi-Modal Transportation Investment*, contact Laurie Actman at 215.440.5500 or email lactman@centercityphila.org.

CCD's 2003 Budget: Sources and Uses

This year, the Center City District will directly bill and collect assessments from 2,143 properties within district boundaries. These revenues are used exclusively to fund the CCD's services and physical improvements within the district. Sixty percent of the CCD's revenues go to fulfilling our basic mission to keep downtown streets clean, safe and attractive. The CCD also receives revenues from other sources, such as contracts, foundation grants and management agreements, and uses these revenues to expand services and fund planning and research.

For 2003:

- The top 15 properties pay 32% of total program cost, with an average charge of \$239,657.
- The top 200 properties pay 87% of total program cost, with an average charge of \$49,054.
- Lowest annual charge = \$1.04.
- Highest annual charge = \$419,315.
- The typical Market West office building is charged \$162,566.
- The average hotel pays \$50,272.
- The average Chestnut Street property is charged \$3,504.
- The average Walnut Street property is charged \$2,584.
- The average residential property's bill is \$191.





Cope Linder Architects

When completed in 2004, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway will be awash in light with new pedestrian and roadway fixtures, along with illumination of building facades and public art.

The Parkway Aglow: New CCD Lighting Project is Underway

Since 1996, the Center City District has installed 1,474 pedestrian lights, illuminating downtown streets to make things brighter and safer for workers, residents and visitors.

Now the CCD is undertaking a dramatic project to improve the lighting on the city's grandest boulevard, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. When completed in 2004, the Parkway will have new roadway and pedestrian fixtures, magnificent statuary and public art will be lit, and many of the architecturally significant building facades will be illuminated at night.

Funding for the project is provided by a \$3 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts and a \$2.1 million grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

As the project gets underway, CCD has hired a consultant team consisting of Cope Linder Architects, Urban Engineers and Grenald-Waldron lighting designers, the same team that has worked successfully on previous CCD streetscape projects. The Lighting Practice has been retained to handle the specialized designs for lighting of sculpture and building facades.

A broad range of stakeholders, including city agencies, the Fairmount Park Commission, Parkway institutions and properties, neighbors, the Fairmount Park Art Association and Councilman Darrell Clarke are all being consulted as plans move forward to insure that Philadelphia's museum mile will dazzle day and night.

Responding to a Resurgence in Panhandling

After many years of progress, Center City experienced a resurgence in panhandling in 2002. This has prompted the Center City District, in partnership with retail associations and the City of Philadelphia, to renew the “Real Change” campaign and initiate monthly surveys of the number of panhandlers on downtown streets.

In mid-January, in the midst of a severe cold snap, the CCD recorded 25 panhandlers actively working in Center City. While small, that number is substantial enough to be perceived as a significant quality-of-life issue for downtown workers, residents and visitors.

Most notably, in frigid weather there were only four fewer panhandlers than CCD teams counted in September 2002. This might mean there could be a noticeable increase as the weather warms.

Based on the experience of social service agencies and the CCD’s own outreach teams, it is clear that a large majority of these panhandlers are not homeless, but rather are individuals who travel to Center City to lucrative locations that enable them to support

drug and alcohol addictions. Police and social service agencies have noted in particular an upsurge in young heroin addicts. These professional panhandlers prey on a Center City population who often feel sympathy for those in need or who may be intimidated by aggressive actions.

Under the law, police can intervene only if panhandling is occurring in certain prohibited areas, such as near ATM machines or building entrances, or if the individual is totally or aggressively obstructing a pedestrian’s ability to walk in peace. And violations of the law are civil—not criminal—offenses, similar to a parking ticket. Responding officers are required to go through a notification process and engage social service workers before they can issue a ticket. If at any point a panhandler walks away, the process stops and officers are prevented from issuing a ticket, even though the individual is likely to resume activity after the police leave. Finally, since violations are civil, they not eligible to be brought to Community Court, where offenders might benefit from an array of social and medical services.



Given the limits of current laws, the Center City District’s Homeless Action Team will continue to work with those on the street who are truly in need and to transport them voluntarily to services. The Center City District will also continue through the Real Change campaign to educate the public about more constructive ways to help panhandlers than providing loose change that most likely supports destructive addiction.

5.16.03



Bike to Work Day

Strap on your helmet and commute in the cleanest and most efficient way possible. Bike to Work Day is Friday May 16. To mark the day, the Bicycle Coalition, in partnership with the Central Philadelphia Transportation Management Association (CPTMA), the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the City of Philadelphia, are planning noon festivities on Dilworth Plaza, just west of City Hall. There’ll be bike demonstrations, displays, food and much more. Mark your calendar and watch www.bicyclecoalition.org for more details.

Walk Philadelphia

The second season of the Center City District's Walk Philadelphia tours gets underway April 5, featuring innovative new tours and old favorites, all offering unique perspectives on extraordinary architecture and streetscapes throughout the city and region.

New this year is **Reel Philadelphia**, a bus/walking tour of some of the locations that have appeared in films including *Rocky*, *Witness*, *Trading Places*, *The Age of Innocence*, *Beloved*, *The Sixth Sense* and *Philadelphia*. There will be film clips shown aboard the bus, and a look at two interior locations.

Also new is **Philadelphia Illuminated**, a guided evening bus tour that shows how light transforms the city in dramatic, powerful and fanciful ways. Later in the year, watch for a special seasonal tour of holiday lighting.

The popular **Dining by Design** series is back, featuring visits to creative restaurant spaces with a sampling of food and drink along the way.

Regularly scheduled tours will continue to locations throughout Center City, Philadelphia neighborhoods and destinations throughout the region. Downtown tours include the popular **Littlest Streets**, which strolls tiny and often-missed alleyways, **Skyscrapers Old and New**, in and around Rittenhouse and Fitler squares and a walk down Philadelphia's grand boulevard, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

Neighborhood tours explore Queen Village, Northern Liberties, North Philadelphia, Germantown, Frankford and many more. Walk Philadelphia tours also visit outlying architectural gems including Narberth, Doylestown, Haddonfield and, new this year, Haverford.

Walk Philadelphia tours are led by more than 100 dynamic and highly trained volunteers, who are passionate about architecture, design and the Philadelphia region. Many are longtime guides who led the tours as part of the former Foundation for Architecture's acclaimed tour program.

The tours begin April 5 and continue through December. Most tours last approximately one to two hours and most do not require reservations. To learn more, watch for details later this month at www.centercityphila.org. Or plan to pick up a Walk Philadelphia tour brochure at locations throughout the region including the Independence Visitor Center, AIA Bookstore, Fleet Bank branches, museums and hotel lobbies. Thanks to Fleet Bank for its continued support of the Walk Philadelphia brochure.

Walk Philadelphia also offers group bus tours, special children's tours, illustrated lectures and private group tours for your business or visitors. For more information, call **215.625 WALK**.



Elfreth's Alley is featured on the Old City tour.

Clean and Safe

Keeping Center City clean and safe is the Center City District's core mission. And the CCD's uniformed personnel—the community service representatives and cleaning staff—are the people who make it happen. Here are two who serve on the frontlines.



Don Hall

Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), the international network of community-based skills training programs, has sent more than 190 graduates to the Center City District.

One of the standouts is Don Hall, who came to CCD in 1994 as a work/study participant in OIC's building maintenance program. He proved to be a great fit for CCD, whose uniformed cleaning personnel fulfill the critical and fundamental mission of keeping the downtown clean. Don was hired upon graduation from OIC and it was quickly apparent that he had "a basic understanding of how to motivate employees," says Henry Hippert, director of operations.

Today, Don serves as lead supervisor for all cleaning service contracts, managing sidewalk-cleaning crews in neighborhoods outside of district boundaries where the CCD provides cleaning services—South Street, Washington Square West, Society Hill, Chinatown and the neighborhood bounded by the Schuylkill River, Broad, Locust and South streets.

With an always-changing work site, "It's a challenge every day. I'm never bored," says Don. Also rewarding, he adds, are the frequent positive reactions and thanks from the public.

In addition to his position with CCD, Don, a native Philadelphian, is also an ordained minister at the Haven of Hope Church in West Philadelphia.



Moses Pierce, right, confers with fellow CSR Helen Bobb.

Moses Pierce

Moses Pierce was one of the Center City District's original community service representatives, participating in the first patrol day, Easter Sunday 1991. Today, the Penn State graduate, Philly native and Vietnam vet is the longest-serving CSR, and his enthusiasm for the job, the

organization and for Philadelphia is undiminished. "I believe the Center City District has changed the way folks look at their city," he says.

"People are more open and joyous 12 years later and I think it's the impact of our organization on the community. The streets are cleaner, without a shadow of a doubt." And with CSRs patrolling the streets as an adjunct to the Philadelphia Police Department's foot and bike patrols, downtown has never felt safer or friendlier, he adds.

Greeting visitors, residents and workers on Center City streets comes easily to Moses, who is best known for his perennial cheer and gracious manner. "A smile from me is not something I turn on and turn off. I'm smiling all the time," he laughs.

When he's not serving as a roving goodwill ambassador and downtown concierge, Moses is usually in South Jersey, where he indulges a lifelong passion for raising vegetable crops.

State of Center City 2003 Coming Soon

The 8th annual *State of Center City* report, published by the Center City District and Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, will be available later this month. The report will provide data on every aspect of the downtown marketplace, including the office sector, hospitality trade, retail, tourism, parks, transportation, residential and much more. For more information on how to order, email ksims@centercityphila.org.

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Beach Party

It's been a long, cold winter. So mark your calendar now for a little bit of summer. The Center City District will once again bring the beach to the city at the 2nd annual Center City Beach Party on Wednesday June 4. Visit the Jersey Shore, South Beach or Waikiki—all on the 1600 block of Market Street. Love Seed Mama Jump returns as the lead band and once again there will be food, drink, carnival games and the very popular corporate volleyball tournament. A preview concert is scheduled for noon; the Beach Party runs from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Watch www.centercityphila.org for more details.



The *Center City Digest* is a publication of the Center City District (CCD), a private-sector sponsored municipal authority committed to providing supplemental services that make Philadelphia's downtown clean, safe and attractive; and of Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC) with over 40 years of private-sector commitment to the revitalization of downtown Philadelphia.