



HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

Overview

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FOR THE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE FOR GREATER
PHILADELPHIA
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OVERVIEW HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT FOR THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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Introduction

In comparison to other colonial settlements in the United States, Philadelphia is a relatively young city, having only been established in the late seventeenth century; Pennsylvania was one of the last of the original thirteen colonies to be founded. Philadelphia, its colonial capital, quickly made up ground on its peers, however, growing faster and becoming wealthier than settlements in both New England and the South soon after the French and Indian War. Although its population was outnumbered by New York City early in the nineteenth century, Philadelphia continued to be ranked close behind in numbers until the eve of World War II. Its "middling" geographic situation was conducive to the agricultural production that was the basis of the city and colonial economy in the eighteenth century, and convenient as a political meeting place for representatives from all the colonies as revolt grew to revolution in the 1770s. The residence of the federal government in the formative years of the young nation brought the eighteenth century ascendancy of the city to a crescendo. The diversity of the colony's natural habitats and resources provided an incentive for immigrants and a reward for hard work, making the city the gateway to the mid-Atlantic cultural hearth that formed much of "middle American" culture. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mercantile trade and agriculture were displaced by industry as the city's economic base, and the city honorably earned the sobriquet of the "Workshop of the World." After the mid-twentieth century, the city came to be marked by the loss of the industrial basis of the economy, and like most of the nation's industrial cities, is in the process of re-making itself as the twenty-first century unfolds.

The Diverse City; the City of Prosperity

Two great themes emerge from the history of Philadelphia from its founding at the end of the seventeenth century up to the present. As many scholars and geographers have previously remarked, the city embodies several of the core themes of American history that span the colonial era to the twentieth century.

Since its colonial beginnings, Philadelphia has been a city of intentional diversity. Penn's policy of religious toleration uniquely attracted not only Quakers from different areas of Britain and Europe, but other Dissenter Protestant religions, Roman Catholics, and Jews. Enslaved Africans arrived as early as European settlers did, but by the eighteenth century Philadelphia supported a robust, free African-American community. Diverse as the population of the city has been relative to other urban centers, the city has never been fully integrated to the present, and equal rights for all citizens has been a goal not fully achieved in the city's history, as in the nation's.



From almost the beginning of the Pennsylvania Colony through to the twentieth century, Philadelphia has prospered. Abundant natural resources and industrial innovation in the eighteenth century led to industrial boom in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This in turn enabled both wealth to purchase material goods and commission buildings and the technology and sophistication to design and construct them.

Geography

The original, smaller city of Philadelphia as it was founded in the late seventeenth century was bracketed by the two rivers that still frame much of the city's modern form: the Schuylkill and the Delaware. The former Philadelphia County and modern city straddles two geographic provinces. The region has benefitted from the resources of each and the results of their point of convergence. The southeastern portion of the present city lies in the relatively flat, Inner Coastal Plain; to the northwest is the more hilly terrain of the Piedmont. The provinces meet at the irregular "fall line," where sharp changes in elevation cause streams and rivers to create rapids and falls in clefts between higher ridges. The presence of these streams was conducive to widespread use of water power for early industry in the original city and county in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The modern city still retains some of the many streams that characterized the area's topography at the time of the founding of the Pennsylvania colony in its northwestern- and northeastern-most branches, although most of the city's smaller streams had been culverted in the course of development by the early twentieth century. The two geographic zones are characterized by productive soil and underlying rock, particularly the Wissahickon Formation in the Piedmont. Many of the stones contained in the formation, including "Wissahickon schist," granite, quartz, marble, limestone, and soapstone, have been quarried and used as building materials or other productive purposes since the arrival of European settlers in the region. The region is also notable for its clay, which was suitable for the burning of bricks used nearly ubiquitously for building throughout the city.

Before Penn – Prehistory and First European Settlement

Prior to the creation of the Pennsylvania colony by land grant to William Penn in 1681, the region that includes the present city of Philadelphia was occupied by humans from at least 13,000 BCE. In the millennia before settlement by Europeans, occupation patterns began with transitory hunting camps in the Paleo-Indian/Early Archaic Period (13,000-6,500 BCE) when inhabitants subsisted on large game in a relatively cold climate. The relative warming of the climate by the Middle Archaic Period (6,500-3000 BCE) was conducive to the availability and exploitation of other food sources such as roots and nuts, which led to the use of stone tools. Toward the end of this period, larger and more permanent base camps began to appear. In the Late Archaic, and Early and Middle Woodland Periods (3,000 BCE -1,000 CE), the modern climate began, bringing conditions of temperature, rainfall, and flora that persisted into colonial European settlement. Before colonial settlement in the Late Woodland Period (1,000 CE – ca. 1,600 CE), Native American populations still moved their encampments seasonally, but during the warmer months established small villages and agriculture near waterways. At the time of European contact, the peoples in the region called



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themselves Lenape. Several of their summer stations are known to have been located within the modern boundaries of the city of Philadelphia, and Lenape place names survive in a number of the city's areas, streets, and waterways, including Passyunk and Moyamensing, and Shackamaxon. The earliest European settlements were in the same areas and used these and other Lenape names. A network of Indian trails provided the basis for a number of early roads in the city that also were the locus of colonial development. Ongoing archaeological investigation continues to discover new evidence of Native American occupation within the city boundaries. The Lenape and other aboriginal groups continued to live in and visit the city well into the historic period, and some residents of the Delaware Valley continue to identify themselves as Lenape or of Lenape heritage.

Before the founding of the Pennsylvania colony near the end of the seventeenth century, Europeans of several nationalities established scattered settlements in the region and contested for its control. By the 1620s a few Dutch emigrants first began occupying the area: the Dutch West India Company created a small colony of settlers on Burlington Island upstream of Philadelphia on the Delaware River in 1624. The colony of New Sweden was founded in the lower Delaware Valley in 1638, although its principal settlements were south of the modern city on Tinicum Island and at Upland, the latter of which became Chester after the founding of the Pennsylvania colony. The Dutch reasserted control in 1655, and in 1664, British forces entered the stage, seeking to secure the extensive lands Charles II had granted to his brother the Duke of York, which included what would become New York and New Jersey, as well as the western shore of the Delaware. In 1677, the Duke of York granted one thousand acres of land in what is now South Philadelphia in lots that fronted on the east bank of the Schuylkill River in an area then called Passyunk.

When William Penn was granted the charter for a colony by Charles II in 1681, the area included a scattering of subsistence farms held by Swedes and Finns and a smattering of Dutch and English settlers, including those at Passyunk. Along with farms, the Swedes had established a small number of mills, including one on Mill Creek near where it joined the Schuylkill River and one in what was to become Frankford along the Frankford Creek, or Quessinawomink. Land along the west side of the Schuylkill River above its mouth had been cultivated by individuals associated with the New Sweden Company since as early as 1644, and nearly a dozen owners occupied the Delaware River front from its marshy juncture with the Schuylkill to the mouth of Frankford Creek. Three sons of Sven Gunnarsson owned two miles of Delaware frontage in what was to become the Southwark district, and a Lutheran church in the vicinity marked the only clustered development within the boundaries of the present city of Philadelphia. Nothing is known to remain above ground from this earliest period of European settlement.

The Pennsylvania Colony and Philadelphia

William Penn had thought to build the main town of his colony from the settlement already established at Upland (Chester), but arrangements with existing landholders proved too difficult. Moving the projected development upstream to the land between the Schuylkill and the Delaware entailed reaching agreements with significantly fewer earlier occupants. Penn famously met peaceably with the Lenape to negotiate for land, perhaps at the village of Shackamaxon under a large

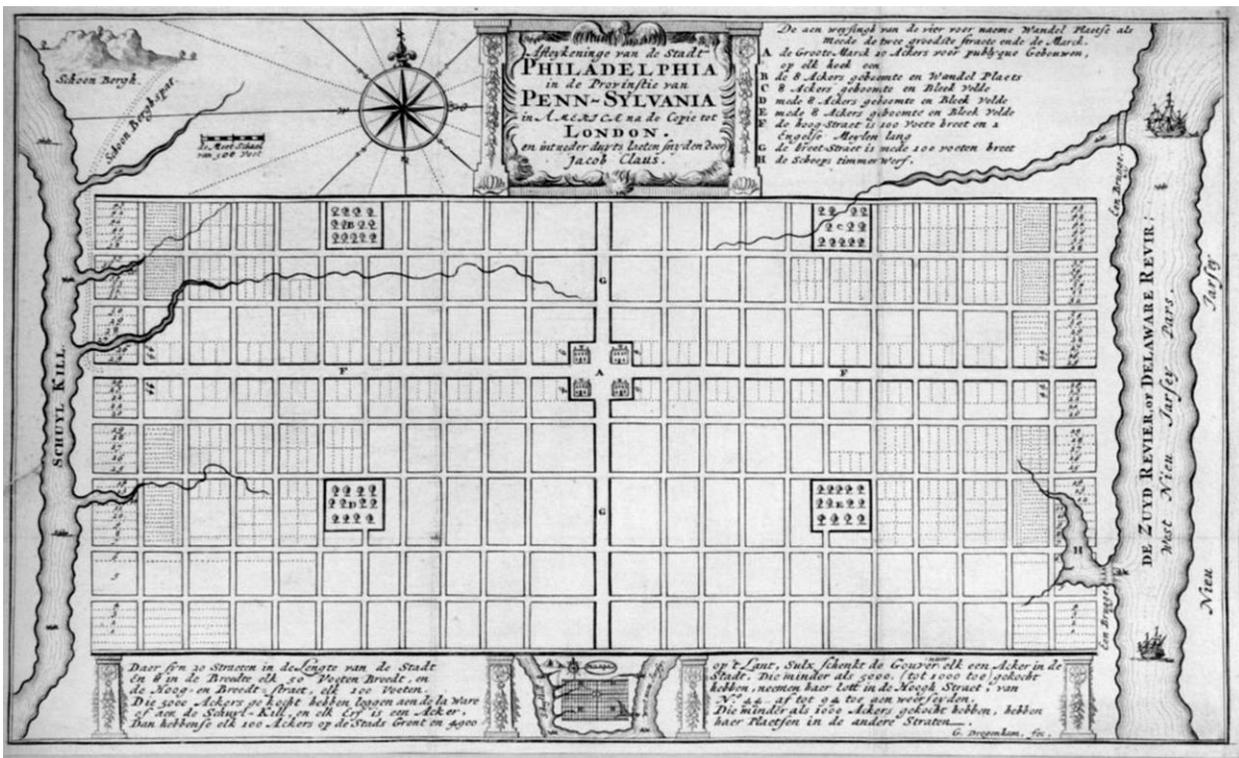


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elm on the Delaware River in the modern Kensington neighborhood. In 1683, Penn's design for his city was publicized through surveyor Thomas Holme's *Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia*, which gave a written account as well as the well-known plat that accompanied it. Several features of the scheme would have far-reaching consequences, although what occurred on the ground did not correspond exactly with either Penn's original vision or Thomas Holme's plat. The notion of a regular grid of streets, which still marks Philadelphia's built form, went back to ancient Roman centuriation. In Philadelphia, the grid would determine the form of the city as it continued to grow to its current limits well into the twentieth century.



Thomas Holme's *Portraiture of the City of Philadelphia*, 1682

The essential pattern of five squares placed in a symmetrical pattern has also survived to the present, although these were not envisioned as public gardens per se by Penn, not least because the modern notions of urban green space amenities was one that began to develop only in the following century. Instead, four quadrant squares were to be reserved and used like the London Moorefields as multi-purpose open space. Philadelphia's Central Square was to contain at "Houses for publick Affairs, as a Meeting-House, Assembly or State-House, Market-House, School-House, and several other Buildings for Publick Concerns." The symmetry of the Penn/Holme plan extended to the way development was envisioned: it was to proceed uniformly throughout the city, with emphasis on construction on High (later Market) Street and along the two river fronts.



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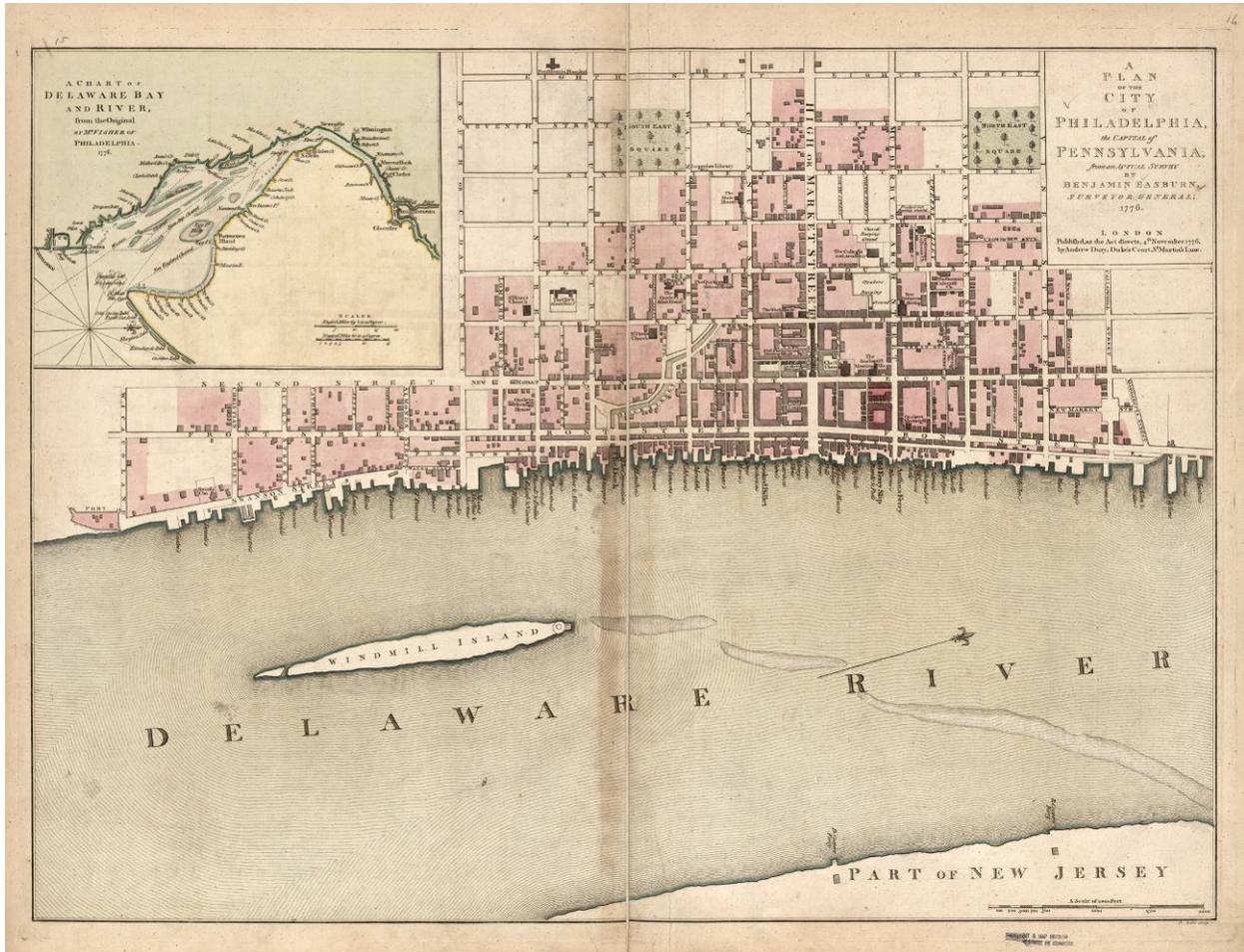
The purchase of lots in the original city, bounded by the rivers, and what are now South and Vine streets on the south and north, respectively, was directly linked to the purchase of acreage in the liberty lands surrounding the area in Holme's grid in the outlying Philadelphia County, now the limits of the city itself. Penn's famously "greene country town" was to be so within its boundaries by virtue of the large proposed building lots and gardens within them, and in the country seats that were to surround it. Penn made some provision for smaller lots for renters, but his scheme rested on the vision that the land in his new colony would largely be owned by those of the "upper sort" who would maintain both a substantial city residence as well as a country estate.

By the time William Penn left Philadelphia in the summer of 1684, 270 lots had been surveyed, two-thirds of which were on the Delaware side. Over 350 buildings were reported to have been completed. A shipload of 150 Africans arrived from Bristol, England that same year: they were purchased as slaves in part to help with the clearing needed for construction. Before his departure, Penn had authorized the first manufacturing of brick from the local clay. The waterfront on the Delaware in Philadelphia had already begun to take shape by 1685, and several large wharves capable of handling ocean-going vessels of considerable size had been built. Before the end of the century, riverbank lots east of Front Street had been patented.

Although Penn's original scheme was for the city to develop equally from both rivers, with a government and religious center at Centre Square, it quickly concentrated on the eastern side of the new plan, along the Delaware, since the marshy shores of the Schuylkill were less conducive to water access. A characteristic bell-shaped development soon emerged that would persist well into the early nineteenth century, with Market (originally call High) and Arch streets at the center, and the Delaware River front port at the wide bottom of the "bell." This early concentration on the port and on Market Street reflects the mercantile and agricultural bases of the city's economy in its first century, when the waterfront and the market represented these two poles. Within the bell, large lots were subdivided, and a network of alleys and smaller streets within the originally planned grid quickly began to take shape, a pattern that would continue throughout what is now Center City and adjacent areas in the Northern Liberties and Southwark neighborhoods within the development "bell." The concentration of development also soon grew beyond the northern and southern limits of the city grid into the Liberty Lands along the Delaware. The concentration led very quickly to the contiguous construction of houses along street fronts with little or no set-back. Thus, the dominant form of residential construction in the city was the row house virtually from the beginning.



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Benjamin Easburn, *A Plan Of The City Of Philadelphia, The Capital Of Pennsylvania, From An Actual Survey*, 1776, showing the “bell” of Philadelphia early development. Library of Congress.

The Eighteenth-Century City

Three Territories and Pattern of Growth

Rapid growth in the new colony began almost immediately: between 1683 and the turn of the eighteenth century, the population of the city had gone from a few hundred to over 2,000. Between William Penn's final departure from his colony in 1701, when the city was incorporated, and the eve of the Revolution in 1775, Philadelphia went from a small settlement town to the largest, richest, and most populous city of the American colonies. By the end of the eighteenth century, the bell of development had reached 11th Street on the west and had penetrated well into Southwark (incorporated as a District in 1794) and the Northern Liberties along the Delaware River.



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Philadelphia's first public utility, the Centre Square Waterworks, an enormous achievement, had been completed to provide a healthy supply of water to Center City.



Scull and Heap, *Plan of the City and Environs of Philadelphia*, 1777, showing the three territories of Philadelphia early development: the gridded city, country seats in the Liberty Lands, and villages at Frankford and Germantown. Library of Congress.



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Growth in the eighteenth century followed the pattern of three types of territory established by Penn's initial plan for the city and its county, and related to his first town patent in the former Philadelphia County to a group of German Quakers that created Germantown (originally the German Township) in 1683, and encompassed what is now that neighborhood as well as Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill. The first territory was the gridded city itself, which, as noted above, quickly spread beyond the city's incorporated limits established by the Holme plan along the Delaware. The two other territorial types developed in the Liberty Lands: the first was the farms and country seats that had spread throughout the county by the mid-eighteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, two distinct villa districts had developed: one along the Schuylkill River (which survives to a great extent in Fairmount Park), and one on the Delaware River north of Kensington. The second territory was the villages such as Germantown that developed along the roads -- many former Lenape routes -- that ran diagonally from the city across the Liberty Lands into the territory beyond. Major secondary waterways also saw clusters of development, most notably Frankford, where a group of mills along Frankford Creek soon led to a village.

By the mid-eighteenth century another important pattern was established that would repeat itself in the succeeding generations: the placement of large, often charitable institutions, at the perimeter of the city's development in open land. These institutions, beginning with Pennsylvania Hospital, would be over-run by, and integrated into, the city's construction as it moved outward. In the following centuries, the large institutions and facilities built in the city's open land would include not only schools, prisons, and utilities works, but also the many large factories that capitalized the city's economy in the nineteenth century.

Eighteenth-Century Buildings and Landscapes

During its first century, Philadelphia's built environment was characterized by buildings and landscapes that reflected both the early settlement and the prosperity it had achieved by the mid-century onwards. Smaller, frame and log dwellings gave way to more substantial brick residences and free-standing townhouses; the latter usually surrounded by fairly substantial private gardens. Although these townhouses' large lots served as most of the "greene" within the built-up portion of the city, a single, major public garden was established in State House Square immediately south of Independence Hall in the 1780s. In the Liberty Lands, the Schuylkill villa district came to be seen as a continuous, shared landscape, although it was primarily available only to those who owned property along the river and their elite cohort. Larger houses in outlying areas, particularly the country seats established throughout the Liberty Lands, were built in stone as well as brick. As the century ended, the interest in the classical world that had existed before then mostly in literary culture began to make its way into building form, and marble temple-fronted buildings could be found in several key locations in the settled portion of the city.

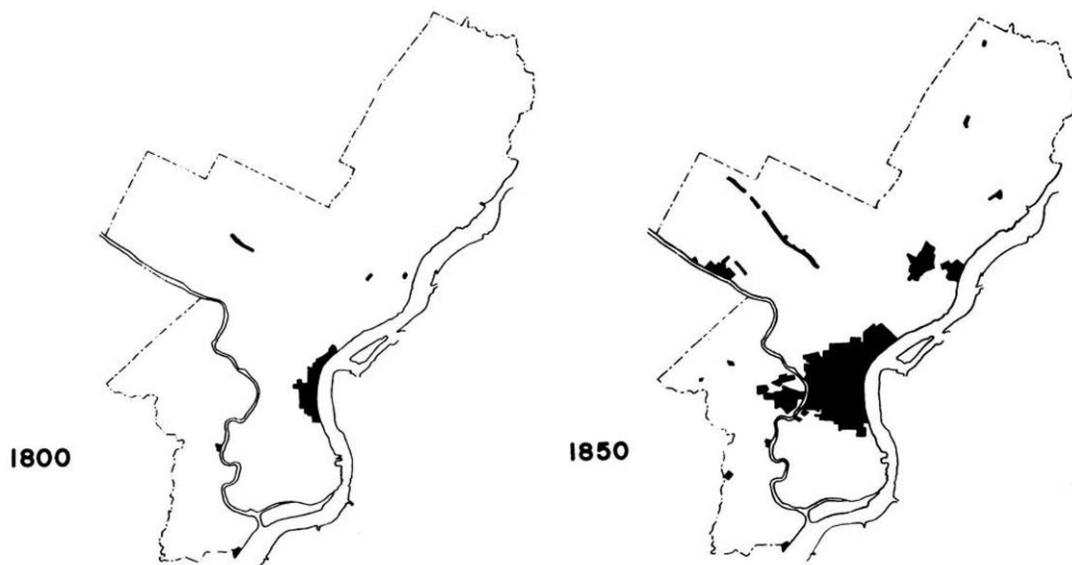
The style, overall form, and scale of buildings of Philadelphia's architecture reflected the British roots of the predominant part of Philadelphia's culture, although German forms could also be found in a number of locations and areas, thus reflecting the large number of people who came to the city from the German states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Generally speaking, and with the notable exception of church steeples, buildings in Philadelphia did not exceed three



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stories in height until the end of the century, and then added only one floor. Over the course of the city's first century, late medieval modes gave way to Georgian motifs and forms, which in turn gave way to Regency, translated as Federal style, as the century ended. In much of the century, construction and design was dominated by the members of the Carpenters' Company, an important, guild-like professional association founded in the 1720s, although gentleman amateurs also played a significant role in the form of large public buildings such as the Pennsylvania State House. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, when the city served as the national capitol, professional designers emigrating to Philadelphia from Britain and continental Europe began to change this status quo. Chief among these was Benjamin Henry Latrobe, destined by become architect of the U. S. Capital in Washington. In Philadelphia, Latrobe was a key force in creating buildings that brought design to a new level. He trained a generation of practitioners who would form the architectural Greek Revival in many parts of the country.

The Nineteenth-Century City



In the first half of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia continued to grow at what seemed an exponential rate, particularly in the 1830s and '40s. Immigration formed a substantial percentage of the expansion in population. By mid-century, nearly one-quarter of the half-million citizens in Philadelphia's city and county had been born in other countries. Many of these were Irish Catholics, significantly changing the religious demographic in the city, which had been predominantly Protestant (although, despite the city's reputation, Quakers had ceased to be the majority early in its history). Although still a definite minority, Philadelphia's free African-American community also grew significantly. In the eighteenth century, the city was relatively little segregated by class and race; in the early years of the nineteenth century, speculative row-block developments began to cluster the wealthy onto certain streets and those with less on smaller ones. Clusters of groups allied by ethnic



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background, social class, and religious affiliation began to form. By mid-century, for example, the city's wealthiest sort had begun to congregate around Rittenhouse Square; the city's African American community was centered to the south and west of the intersection of Lombard and S. 6th streets.

One of the main draws for those arriving in the city from outside was the prospect of work. Work was increasingly to be found in Philadelphia's growing number of factories, as industry began to replace mercantilism as the fundamental basis of the city's economy (both New York and Baltimore began to exceed Philadelphia in port volume in the first two decades of the century). Industrial facilities were being built not only at the periphery of the original settlement area of Center City east of Broad Street, but also in outlying areas in Philadelphia County. With the arrival of new ethnic groups came the development of related social organizations and religious institutions, and

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, most factories relied primarily on water power from the creeks and streams created by the city's geographic location on the fall line, as they had in the previous century. With the discovery of the potential of anthracite coal by Josiah White in 1815 in Philadelphia, among other factors, steam began to overlap and eventually replace water in many places, becoming the dominant power source by mid-century.

Key "internal improvements" also came to Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century, and substantially affected industrial as well as general development. Permanent bridges (rather than floating ones or ferries) were built across the Schuylkill River, beginning in the 1810s, connecting development further east with what was then Blockley Township on the western shore. The city had had, in theory, a municipal water supply in the form of the Centre Square Waterworks since the end of the eighteenth century. Its wood-fired steam boilers had never worked satisfactorily, however, and it was therefore unreliable. The completion of the Fairmount Waterworks, which was completed in the second quarter of the century, corrected this situation and came to be considered one of the great national achievements of the early American Republican period. In a related matter, the city followed the lead of those that had created Mt. Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the nation's first rural cemetery, with the founding of Laurel Hill in 1836, the first architect-designed landscape of this sort in the country. Laurel Hill was soon followed by the creation of the Woodlands Cemetery on the grounds of the former much-noted landscape garden of William Hamilton's Woodlands. The second quarter of the century also saw the establishment or expansion of other important institutions whose architecturally important buildings survive to the present, including Eastern State Penitentiary, Girard College, and the Second Bank of the United States. In the 1840s, the city purchased the former Lemon Hill estate near the Water Works in the first land acquisition along the Schuylkill. This would lead to the creation of Fairmount Park as the century unfolded.

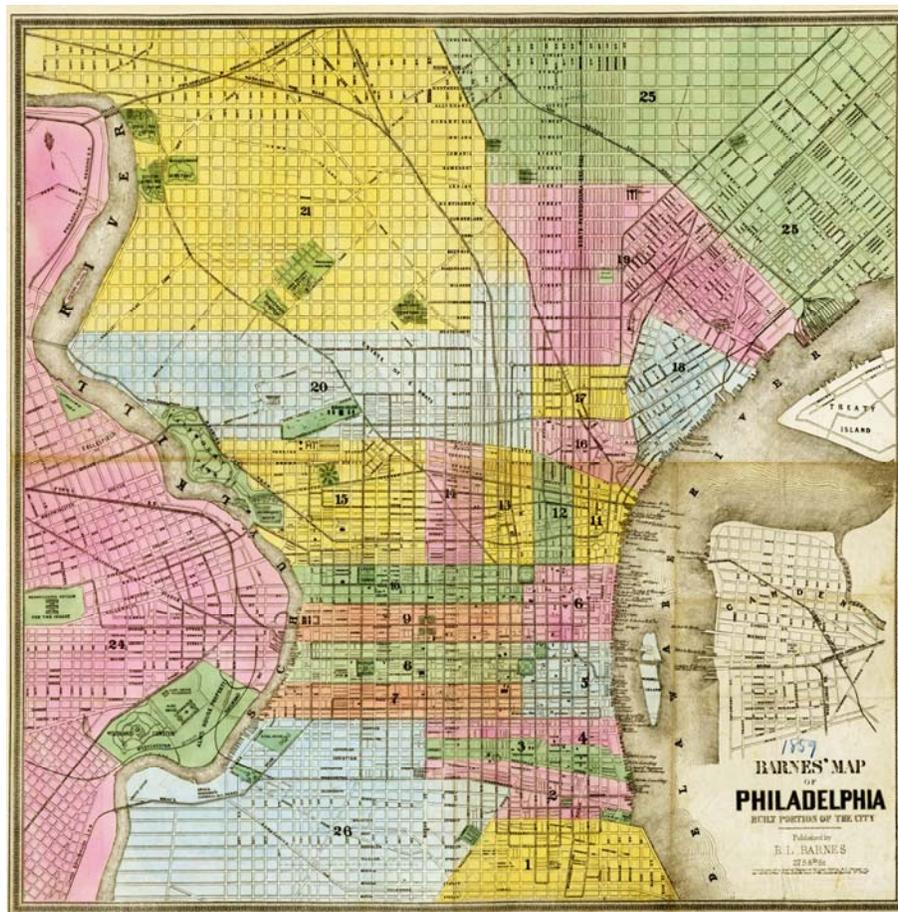
Intimately connected to the Waterworks was the Schuylkill Navigation, the canal established to carry coal from upriver on the Schuylkill down to Philadelphia. As part of the project, locks and the Flat Rock Dam were established at Manayunk, resulting in the rapid growth of industry in this



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portion of the city beginning in the second quarter of the century. As in many other parts of the city, textile production of various sorts and at various scales soon became predominant in Manayunk. The houses of mill workers began to occupy the hillside above the river, with managers' and factory owners' houses further up. Similar industrial villages began to be established in other portions of Philadelphia County (particularly along the Delaware in Northern Liberties and above) with the spread, first, of channelized water power, and second, of steam power.

Another significant driver of change in the city that arrived in the second quarter of the nineteenth century was increased public transportation in the form of railroads and horse cars on the city's streets. With the completion of the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad in the 1830s and the introduction of horse car lines, both Germantown and West Philadelphia began to be developed as well-to-do suburbs of the dense Center City settlement. Significantly, commuter connections to communities outside the city began to be forged after mid-century, a shift that would eventually lead to the departure of many of the city's wealthier citizens for these communities in the latter part of the century as rail transportation improved.



R. L. Barnes, *Map of Philadelphia, Built Portion of the City*, 1859. Collection Frankford Historical Society.



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Shortly after mid-century, a significant shift occurred with the Consolidation of the City and its surrounding county of 1854. Outlying, relatively recently established industrial villages, some incorporated as boroughs with their own local governments, were subsumed, as well as the many districts and townships that had been established outside the original city limits.

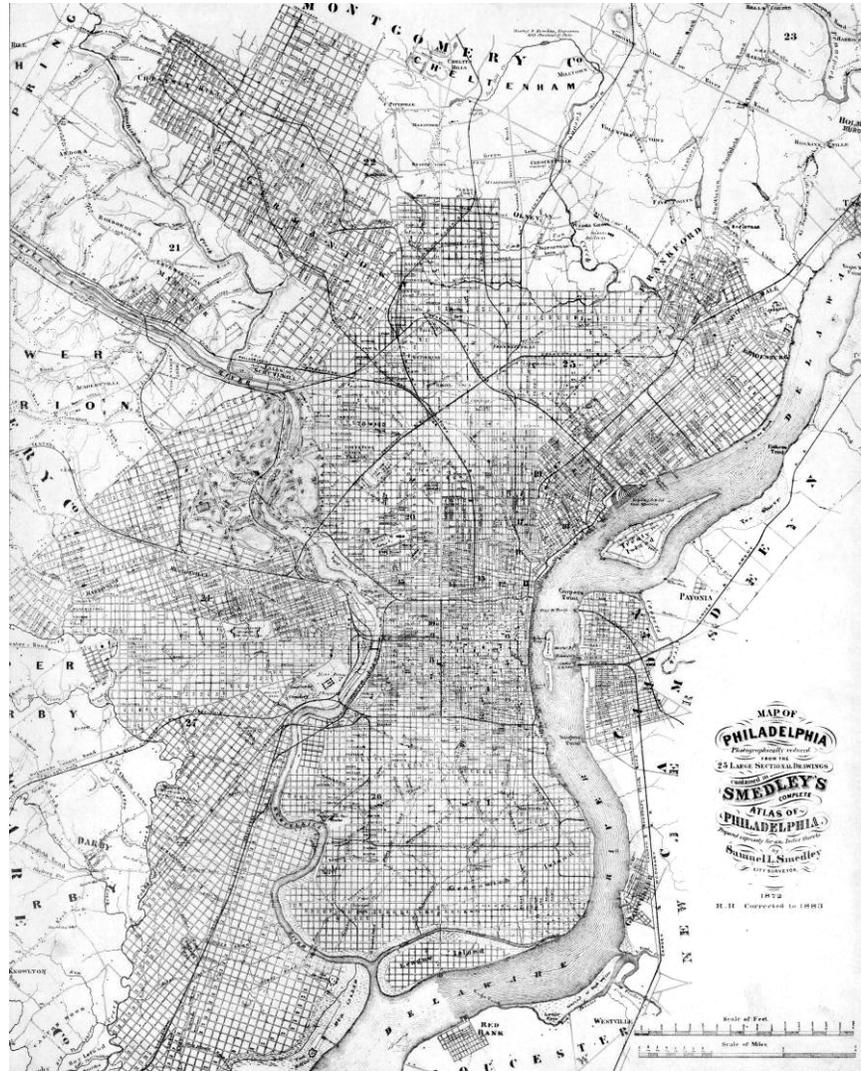
In contrast to the remarkable preceding half-century, the period between the Consolidation and the Civil War saw relatively little in the way of new trends that affected continued, strong and steady growth. Increasing population led to seemingly constant residential construction, mostly in brick row groups. Many new churches were constructed; Water Works were built in Kensington and in other locations. Within the boundaries of the original city, land was fast nearing the point of being built out, and redevelopment had occurred in multiple properties on an individual basis. In addition to the intermixed primarily residential and industrial areas, business districts had begun to take shape along Market, Walnut, and Chestnut Streets. One of the most important factors in the shaping of the commercial downtown core that exists today was the decision in the immediate aftermath of the War, to move Philadelphia's City Hall from Independence Square to its present site at Centre Square. The completion of the new City Hall would take some thirty years.

Both during and after the Civil War, the unrelenting progress of Philadelphia's industry led to the march of speculative rowhouse development for workers' housing north, west, and south from Center City and in Germantown. 1876 saw the opening of the extensive fairgrounds of the Centennial in what was to become the western portion of Fairmount Park; the millions who came to the fair presented the city to a large audience and gave permanent landscaping in this area as well as the surviving Memorial Hall. The emerging commercial downtown near the new City Hall, then in construction, was strongly influenced by the arrival of Wanamaker's Grand Depot Store and 13th and Market streets. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, which had been in existence since the early nineteenth century, commissioned Furness & Hewitt to build their new facility at Broad and Cherry Streets, also near the new commercial center of the city, ushering in the era in which Frank Furness would dominate architectural practice in the region through the 1890s, eventually creating over 800 buildings in his various firms.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the University of Pennsylvania, still a relatively small, urban institution mostly in one building at 9th and Chestnut streets, moved to land owned by the city on the west side of Schuylkill, constructing several serpentine buildings that survive to the present. This move signaled the beginning of this institution's own significant growth to become the city's largest employer by the early twentieth century. This growth has continued into the twenty-first century; the campus, along with that of Drexel University and those of allied institutions, now occupies most of West Philadelphia east of 40th Street.



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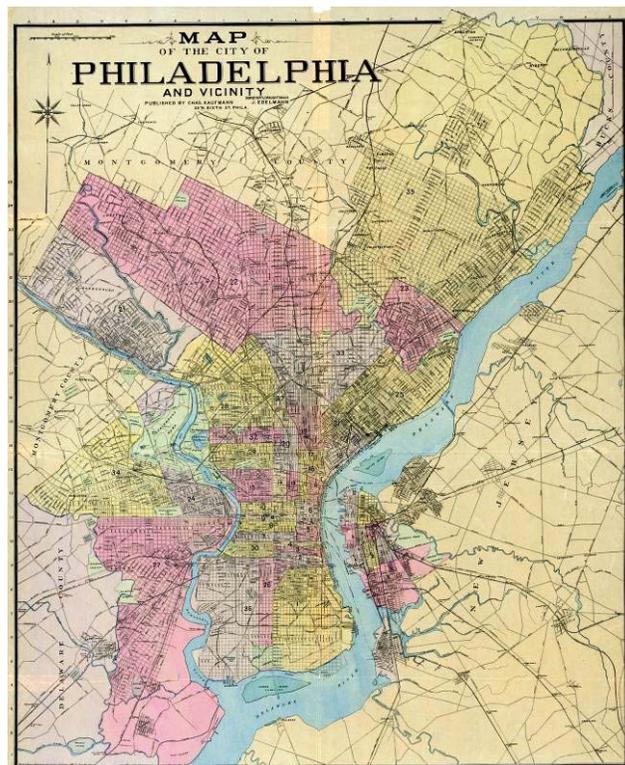
Samuel Smedley, *Map of Philadelphia*, 1872, updated to 1883, showing the extent of post-Civil War development. Collection Frankford Historical Society.

Between the Centennial and the end of the century, the development of the previous decades continued, growing out like the rings of a tree from the work of previous generations. Hundreds of miles of horse-car lines were laid and thousands of brick row houses constructed as factories, churches, and synagogues went up among them. Large waves of immigration from eastern and southern Europe led to the growth and ethnic diversification of Catholic populations as well as the establishment of more ethnic enclaves, including concentrations of Jews on the eastern portion of South Street and in Northern Liberties; Italians increasingly moved into South Philadelphia. Philadelphia's African American community also expanded rapidly, establishing centers in West and North Philadelphia as well as in Germantown and other locations.



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Both the scale of individual buildings and of development projects took on significantly greater proportions than previously as building technology improved internationally and building materials were more easily transported by rail. The new City Hall's rising tower, for a period of time around its completion in the 1890s the largest masonry structure in the world, embodied this new scale, and commercial and institutional buildings followed suit, particularly in Center City along Broad and Market streets. The Pennsylvania Railroad, rising to its position as the largest corporation in the United States, established its Broad Street Station on the west side of the new City Hall. The Reading Railroad, which was almost as large an organization, established its terminus not far away on East Market Street. The Delaware riverfront, while never the first seaport in the nation after the first decade of the nineteenth century, remained second only to New York's in 1900.



J. Edlmann, surveyor, *Map of the City of Philadelphia and Vicinity*, 1895, Charles Kaufmann, publisher. Collection Frankford Historical Society.

Nineteenth-Century Buildings and Landscapes

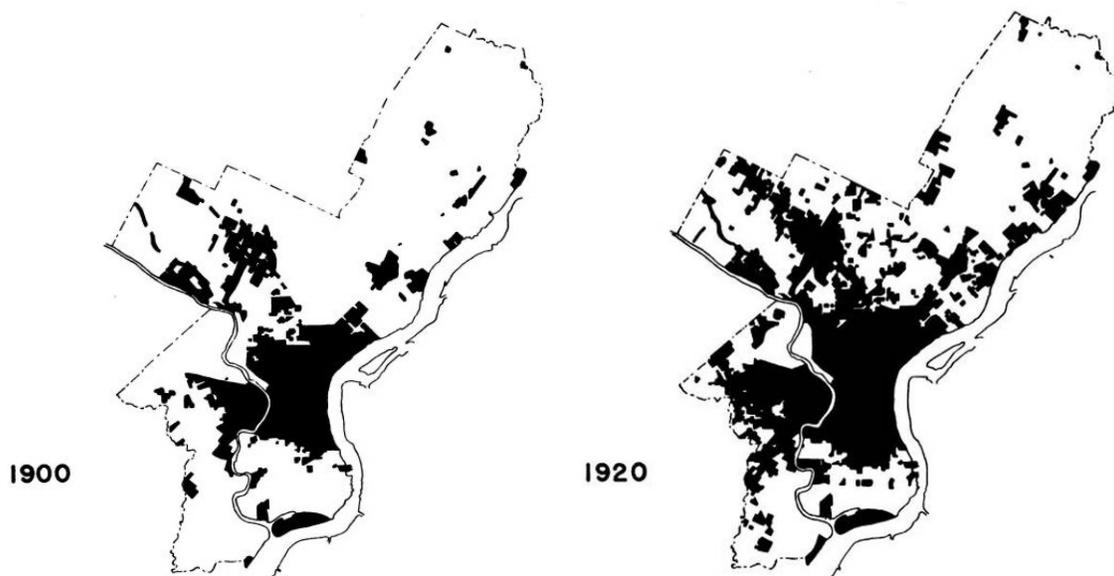
From the relative uniformity of material and scale of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia's built environment grew in the scale of individual projects and diversity of building types, materials, and size in the course of the nineteenth century. Professionals, many of whom were prominent on the national scene, led the design of Philadelphia's buildings and landscapes. Among these might be noted William Strickland and Thomas Ustick Walter, whose marble Greek Revival masterpieces



were succeeded by the brownstone villas, churches, and institutions of John Notman in the period before mid-century. Samuel Sloan's pre-Civil war Italianate buildings precede the post-war dominance of Frank Furness's forceful and eclectic red brick, brownstone, and terra cotta mix of *néo-grec*, medievalizing, and machine form and the engineering achievements of the Wilson Brothers, which made possible the enormous scale of the train sheds at the Broad Street and Reading Terminal stations. The century closed with the emergence of, on both the Philadelphia and national scenes, such important figures as Wilson Eyre, Jr., Frank Miles Day, and Cope & Stewardson, whose historicizing approaches influenced the generation that followed them.

The nineteenth century also saw the creation and spread of public gardens in landscapes through the city. The establishment of Fairmount Park (created not so much as a public amenity as a means of safeguarding the city's water supply in the Schuylkill River against advancing industry) is clearly the most salient of these events, but the organization of smaller green space parks within the urban fabric records the progress of development and of the growing interest in such facilities as an essential element of city life. Washington Square's development as a garden in the 1820s thus marks the emergence of the elite residential neighborhood that surrounded it at the time. The creation of the fountain in Franklin Square in the following decade was recorded in the national press as a notable achievement made possible by the still-new Fairmount Water Works. Smaller pocket parks created throughout the city as it grew were signs of a mature society.

The Twentieth-Century City



The first half of the twentieth century in Philadelphia saw continued and seemingly relentless residential growth. By mid-century the result was that most of the city, with the notable exception of portions of the Far Northeast, had been built out for all intents and purposes. The tree-rings of



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rowhouse, factory, and religious institution continued to multiply; large single residences continued to be built for wealthier citizens in Germantown, Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill. Ominously, and in contrast to the continued rate of construction, the rate of industrial growth had begun to slow in the early years of the century, a trend that would come to mark the city's fate after mid-century.

While residential construction continued expanding much as before, a significant and new strain of redevelopment and of reform emerged in the city, as it did in many other American metropolises. The seeds of these changes had been sown in the nineteenth century: the city's largest redevelopment project of the period before the Great Depression, the creation of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, had begun as an idea proposed by architect James H. Windrim in the 1890s, and was part of a wave of City Beautiful projects throughout the country. The creation of the Parkway, the grand avenue stretching from City Hall to give vehicle access to Fairmount Park on the northwest, and cutting a diagonal swath through the city's existing fabric, would not be complete until the eve of the Depression. The Parkway was the city's first massive redevelopment project, and entailed the demolition of multiple residential buildings. As part of the Parkway project, new institutional buildings were created along its edges. The most notable new institutional building was enormous, temple-form Philadelphia Museum of Art, installed at the new road's terminus on its plinth of Fairmount.

Smaller-scale, reform-based redevelopment also began to be taken up as a cause by elite Philadelphians in the first half of the century, as it was in other cities. Here, the Octavia Hill Association sought to improve the living conditions for European immigrants and African Americans in eastern Center City and elsewhere. One factor that spurred these efforts was the rapid growth of the African-American community in the period before the Great Depression with the Great Migration.

The Parkway was hardly the only important roadway project undertaken in the city in the early twentieth century. Following the advent of the automobile in the first decades of the century (car factories came to be concentrated along North Broad Street), the creation of what was to become the Roosevelt Boulevard as part of the new Lincoln Highway, the first transcontinental road, is particularly notable. The Boulevard would play an important role in spurring development in the Lower Northeast.

In addition to new roadways, several other substantial transportation-related projects were completed in the city in the first part of the twentieth century. Notable among these was the creation of two subway lines, and the construction of both Suburban and 30th Street stations for the Pennsylvania Railroad. To accommodate the newer mode of transportation, the Delaware River (Benjamin Franklin) Bridge was built to enable easy car travel between Philadelphia and New Jersey.

Despite the reflection of new forces that the creation of the bridge represented, much of what was "modern" in the first quarter of the twentieth century was seen through the filter of the increasingly distant past. The first quarter of the century culminated in the Sesquicentennial celebration in 1926 at the lower end of South Philadelphia. In contrast to the celebration of the



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present and the future embodied in the Centennial, the event of fifty years later lingered on Philadelphia's colonial beginnings. This reflected a trend that the city shared with others (including those that created Colonial Williamsburg soon after), but it was yet another sign that Philadelphia's vision of itself had changed from the nineteenth century.

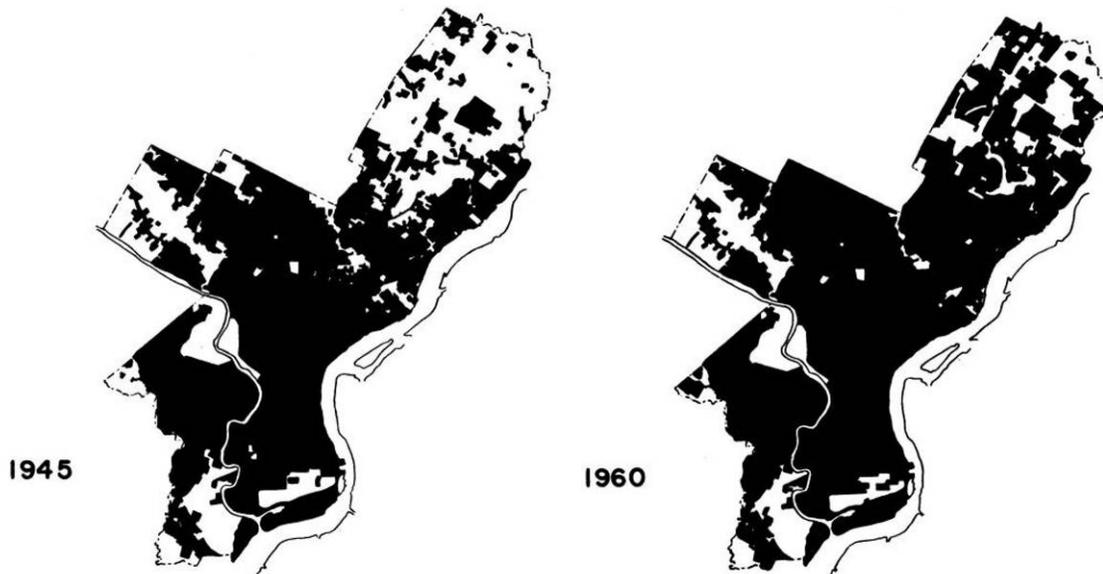
Following a trend established at the end of the nineteenth century, re-development increasingly went higher and higher up in the first decades of the century in Center City. In addition to the creation of larger office buildings on the site of former row houses and smaller, free-standing buildings, new hotels and apartments raised residents above streets increasingly occupied by automobiles in Washington Square West and around Rittenhouse Square. Among the most prominent of these new, tall buildings was the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society that rose at 12th and Market streets from designs by Howe and Lescaze. Even before it was completed in the 1930s, it became one of national landmarks of the newly named International Style.

The new PSFS tower was built at the beginning of the Great Depression, a period that saw the start of the decline of Philadelphia's industrial base, although it would recover to a certain extent in World War II. Not surprisingly, relatively little was built during the 1930s in the city, although there are a few notable exceptions. Among these are the Carl Mackley Houses of 1933-1934 (designed by Oskar Stonorov and Alfred Kastner), which represented both another leading example of International Style in the city and the first wave of a preoccupation with reformist "group housing" on the part of left-leaning architects, private developers, and city officials, who created the Philadelphia Housing Authority in 1937.

Just as the Depression slowed growth in Philadelphia as it did in the rest of the country, the city saw little development during World War II, although its industries and Naval Yard were extremely active in wartime production. Like much of the country, however, the city was enlivened by the visions of growth and renewal that were endemic in the postwar period. The city grew to its largest size of around two million in total population around mid-century. Both redevelopment and new construction manifested themselves in various ways, but one of the key factors in all these efforts was the prominence of the general interest among the city's design professionals, city officials, and concerned citizens in comprehensive and large-scale planning. Although not the only actor in determining the fate of new city projects, the Philadelphia Planning Commission rose to particular prominence under the staff leadership of Edmund Bacon. Some of the postwar efforts were unusually successful in comparison to other cities'; some embodied the typical problems of 1950s and 1960s initiatives.



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Planning visions to girdle the original city in highways on the north, south, east, and west were floated in the early postwar years, in part because of the National Highway Act. Between the 1950s and the early 1980s, the Schuylkill and Vine Street Expressways and the section of I-95 on the eastern edge of the city were constructed, generating the final chapter of development in the Far Northeast after mid-century. In contrast, the South Street Expressway was eventually defeated by public protest. Highway and bridge construction led to the redevelopment of a commercial area that straddled the city and adjacent Montgomery County on City Line Avenue at the Schuylkill Expressway. On the city side, the headquarters of one of the new television stations was constructed, as well as a number of high-rise residential and shopping complexes.

The most extensive redevelopment efforts affected nineteenth-century built fabric in the heart of Center City and in areas east of 6th Street. On the west side of City Hall, Broad Street Station was demolished and Penn Centre's new, modernist slab forms (from designs by Vincent Kling) were put in its place along with a sunken plaza connecting the newly buried train tracks and the area around City Hall. This initial effort was followed in the succeeding decades by downtown redevelopment along the major spines of west Market Street and the newly created JFK Boulevard. On the east side of City Hall, Market again served as the spine for redevelopment construction, including the creation of the Gallery, a downtown mall.

This downtown erasure of historic fabric was paralleled by many projects throughout the nation, and by another ambitious project in another portion of the city. In the late 1950s, the neighborhood of Eastwick in southwest Philadelphia was targeted for a large-scale plan, billed as the largest such endeavor in the nation, to create a "city-within-a-city," complete with a new shopping center, main street, and transportation facilities.



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Philadelphia's efforts to the east of downtown in Society Hill and in the area surrounding Independence Hall did not represent the same kind of scorched earth approach. Instead, in these areas, later nineteenth-century buildings were selectively demolished to enshrine eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century landmarks in the creation of Independence National Historical Park. In Society Hill, an African-American community was displaced to make way for selective demolition for new construction and the insertion of I.M. Pei's Society Hill Towers. Society Hill remains an elite residential area to the present, although one of its key redevelopment projects, Head House Square, only very briefly realized the commercial role that was envisioned for it.

In contrast to the Society Hill Towers, which continue to attract market-rate residents, high-rise, public housing redevelopment projects built after the war and scattered throughout the city fared less well. Mill Creek Housing, a project that provided the career of internationally significant architect Louis I Kahn's career with an important push, has gone the way of St. Louis's infamous Pruitt Igoe. Also demolished are the Richard Allen Homes, the Schuylkill Falls Project, and most others. Most of these have been replaced by low-rise public housing that often follows the lead of garden-front, suburban developments rather than continuing the tradition of the city's row houses.

Before the general decline of the American industrial economy in the late twentieth century, Philadelphia began to lose its manufacturing firms to suburban sites and locations outside of the region, due to incentives provided by outlying communities that made industrial parks more attractive than urban locations, and market forces such as cheaper labor pools elsewhere. The Bicentennial of 1976 provided a bright moment in civic pride in an increasingly troubled period.

By the 1980s, the city was losing population rapidly and in significant financial straits. Buildings were abandoned increasingly, particularly the former workers' housing of North and West Philadelphia in addition to the factories in these areas. The bombing of the house occupied by the radical group Move in West Philadelphia during the term of Mayor Wilson Goode led to the destruction of surrounding blocks by the ensuing fire. In contrast to this destruction, however, was a growing rate of revitalization of historic fabric, mostly in and around Center City, to a great extent as a result of the federal government's Investment Tax Credit program. Philadelphia's historic preservation community was growing, and became an increasingly successful advocate for the city's early built environment.

The 1990s saw growing revitalization as the national economic climate brightened. Areas that were the most stable, such as Center City and the northwest, saw much of the investment. Interestingly, the city's development history recapitulated itself to a certain extent with renewed vigor in Manayunk and Northern Liberties. In contrast, large swaths of the industrial city remained abandoned. A series of house collapses and general concerns about urban blight in areas including North and Southwest Philadelphia led to the creation of the National Transformation Initiative under mayor John Street. In this, whole blocks were demolished, erasing large sections of former industrial neighborhoods.



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As the first decade of the twenty-first century nears its close, the city is in a better position than many other municipalities with regard to its built environment. In contrast to other areas, the real estate bubble of the decade did not drive prices as high, relatively speaking, as it did elsewhere, and therefore the chances for recovery appear better. In the same vein, the economic crisis of 2008-2009 has hit hard, but not as hard as in some other regions. As elsewhere in the country, the last several decades have seen waves of new immigration in the city of Latino, Asian, and eastern European populations. The rich legacy of the city's built fabric and social diversity provides many opportunities for the city's future.

Twentieth-Century Buildings and Landscapes

The large scale of projects established at the end of the nineteenth century continued to grow into the early twentieth. The creation of the Parkway was not only an architectural and city planning project, but one that created a new landscape for the city, particularly in the form of the redesign of Logan Square. In contrast to the previous century and the creation of Fairmount Park, the city's public landscapes have seen relatively little change or expansion, although a number of key projects have been completed in the park, including an extensive campaign of renovation during the WPA era.

The "gentleman's agreement" that led the city's developers and architects to stop buildings at the height of the top of City Hall's tower was broken in the 1980s, and the height of new downtown buildings has been increasing since, in national modernist style idioms. As in previous centuries, building styles in the twentieth century in Philadelphia have both followed national trends and created them. In the first half of the century, the increasingly archaeological attitude in historicist styles predominant in the nation strongly affected much of Philadelphia's architecture. Philadelphia's colonial and early republican past proved a rich mine for new projects, although important strains of "freer" styles found in the work of William L. Price and Art Deco practitioners who followed him were also strong in the city in the early part of the century. The PSFS tower is the most notable example of a new modernist aesthetic before mid-century, but a number of important "regional" modernist examples of roughly the same period can be found in the city, including the work of Kenneth Day.

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, International Style become an important mode for corporate and government buildings in Philadelphia, particularly through the dominant practice of Vincent Kling. In strong contrast to this, the architects of the "Philadelphia School," that included the internationally significant architects Louis I. Kahn, Mitchell/Giurgola, and Robert Venturi (working with his wife and business partner Denise Scott Brown) emerged as an internationally influential design movement. These modernists pointed the way to Post-modernist styles by creating an alternative to the monolithic glass and concrete box in buildings that responded to context and history, and used materials in ways that sought to reveal their nature. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, the city's architects followed these leads to a great extent, but, as elsewhere, design (as so many other things) has become increasingly global. The city has seen its most prominent recent projects completed by firms from elsewhere, including the city's Convention



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Center (Thompson, Ventulett, Stainback & Associates), Kimmel Center (Rafael Vinoly), most recently, the Cira Center (Cesar Pelli) and the Comcast Center (Robert A. M. Stern, architects).