

**DELAWARE RIVER TRAIL
CENTRAL SEGMENT (WASHINGTON AVENUE TO SPRING GARDEN STREET)**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where did the idea for the trail come from?

The creation of a continuous, multi-use trail running the length of the waterfront was a critical element of the *Master Plan for the Central Delaware*, the community-driven guiding framework for the transformation of Philadelphia's central waterfront that was completed in 2012. The Master Plan specified that in the southern and northern sections of the waterfront, where space was more abundant, the trail would run along the river's edge, and that in the central section it would run along the east side of Columbus Boulevard/Delaware Avenue. It also provide general guidelines for its design, specifying that it should include a bi-directional bike path, a separate pedestrian walkway, and a planted zone for trees and landscaping to provide buffer from adjacent parking and vehicular driving lanes.

How is this project funded and who will oversee its construction?

The City of Philadelphia committed approximately \$20 million towards the construction of this segment of the Delaware River Trail as part of its contribution to the the Central Access Philadelphia (CAP) project, a \$225-million effort to bridge I-95 at Penn's Landing with an engaging civic space connecting seamlessly to the river. While that project is ongoing, the final design and construction of the trail was accelerated so that it could be completed before the construction of the cap over the highway, currently projected to begin in late 2021. The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC), which has overseen the trail's design, will hold the contract for its construction and will be responsible for its ongoing maintenance.

When will construction start and how long will it take?

Construction will last approximately 18 months and begin in earnest in spring 2020. The entire trail should be completed by the end of 2021.

Who will maintain all the plantings, furnishings, surfaces and signs?

DRWC will continue to provide high quality landscape maintenance as we do for the Columbus Boulevard median plantings, Spruce Street Harbor Park and our other pier parks.

How does the design for this trail improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians? How will it lessen conflicts between them?

The trail provides separate spaces for bicyclists and pedestrians for the vast majority of its length. These separate pathways were designed in accordance with guidelines published by the National Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). Creating an entirely separate pathway for

pedestrians will minimize conflicts between users. Where there are mixing areas, different textured stone cobbles and thermoplastic paint as well as signage will tell bikers they are entering a space where they'll encounter pedestrians or cars. Our experience building the Penn Street Trail shows that most users will abide by the separation. [Recent research](#) has also shown that separated bike facilities are inherently safer and lead to safer roadway conditions for vehicles.

How will the trail address conflicts between drivers and bicyclists and pedestrians?

By providing a curb-separation between the bicycle and pedestrian paths and the driving lanes of Columbus Boulevard, the Delaware River Trail will greatly improve safety for all users from the existing condition of the roadway. At points where vehicles will cross the trail (such as driveways and street crossings), the design has taken particular care to alert all users – through material changes and signage – to potential conflict areas. Furthermore, the design will improve the sight lines for motorists exiting and entering driveways, meaning drivers will be able to identify pedestrians and bicyclists further out. Of note, both the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code and the Philadelphia City Codes [give pedestrian users of the sidewalk](#) the right-of-way.

Is there anywhere I can see what this will look like?

Yes. DRWC constructed a segment of the Delaware River Trail between Spring Garden Street and Sugar House Casino (known as the Penn Street Trail) in 2013 and it provides a good example of how we envision the entire corridor: physical separation of bicyclists and pedestrians, planted buffers between vehicular travel lanes and the bicycle and pedestrian paths, decorative and utilitarian materials, furnishings and tough, native plantings. You can also see aspects of our designs at Pier 68 and through Penn Treaty Park (which is currently under construction). Outside of Philadelphia, portions of the Hudson River Greenway in New York City also resemble our plan.

What role have the City of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation played in reviewing and approving this project?

This segment of trail will be built entirely within the public right-of-way of Columbus Boulevard. The City (through the Streets Department, the Planning Commission, and the Water Department) and PennDOT have played critical roles in reviewing the design of the trail, and will ultimately be responsible for providing the necessary permits for its construction.

The plan shows the removal of some of the street parking (“layby lanes”) along Columbus Boulevard. How will be people get to the waterfront if there’s no parking?

As part of the design process, DRWC analyzed the usage of the existing parking along the waterfront and found that the layby lanes are very rarely ever at capacity. The City's [Complete Streets Design Manual](#) discourages the use of layby lanes, particularly in areas of high pedestrian traffic, because of how they encroach on sidewalk space.

Data collected by DRWC shows that driving personal vehicles to the waterfront is on the decline while walking and rideshare are on the rise. We hope to reduce car traffic on the waterfront even further with dense, walkable and transit-rich commercial, residential and public spaces and will launch a public awareness campaign about alternative transportation options to the waterfront.

What will happen to all of the trees currently lining Columbus Boulevard?

While we're striving to save as many trees as possible, the size of some trees and their difficult locations in undersized tree pits will make saving these difficult, if not impossible. Many of the trees along this stretch (such as the Pin Oaks) are not ideal street trees and are demonstrably unhealthy and declining. Still others are too close to existing utilities. As part of the construction of the trail, each tree removed will be replaced, and we will be looking to plant more mature trees with broader canopies so that there is shade provided from the earliest stage possible.

Will this project include any public art? What will happen to the existing public art in front of Piers 3 & 5?

DRWC is committed to including public art in all of its capital projects, consistent with the principles of our recently-established Waterfront Arts program. DRWC is working with the City of Philadelphia's Public Art Office to develop a public art program for the trail, and more information on this process will be coming soon.

The artwork that was installed as part of the conversion of Piers 3 and 5 into residences in the 1980s, *Riverwalk at Piers 3 and 5* by Andrew Leicester, was funded through the Redevelopment Authority's Percent for Art program. However much of it was removed as part of the reconstruction of Columbus Boulevard in the early 2000s and what remains . DRWC has spoken with the artist and with the Redevelopment Authority and received approval to remove the existing remnants of the artwork, including the ship sculpture just south of Pier 3 and the pavilion structure at the entrance of Pier 5.

What will this project do to solve the overall issues with Columbus Boulevard/Delaware Avenue, like traffic congestion and speeding? Why does it not take more advantage of the width of the street and the multiple lanes?

The Master Plan proposes a transformation of Columbus Boulevard/Delaware Avenue, achieved through incremental and strategic improvements to the infrastructure. In early stages of this project, DRWC explored the possibility of converting the eastern most lane of Columbus Boulevard to a flex lane, allowing parking at non-peak travel times. Through conversations with PennDOT it was clear that this was not viable option in the near-term, as the Boulevard is designated as a reliever road for I-95. DRWC continues to work with the City and PennDOT on longer term improvements to Columbus Boulevard and Delaware Avenue to achieve the Master Plan's goal of a truly multi-modal urban boulevard.