



# THE MANTUA GREENWAY

a collaborative community revitalization effort

WHAT DO YOU LIKE? 

- OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
- B

WHAT COULD BE BETTER? 

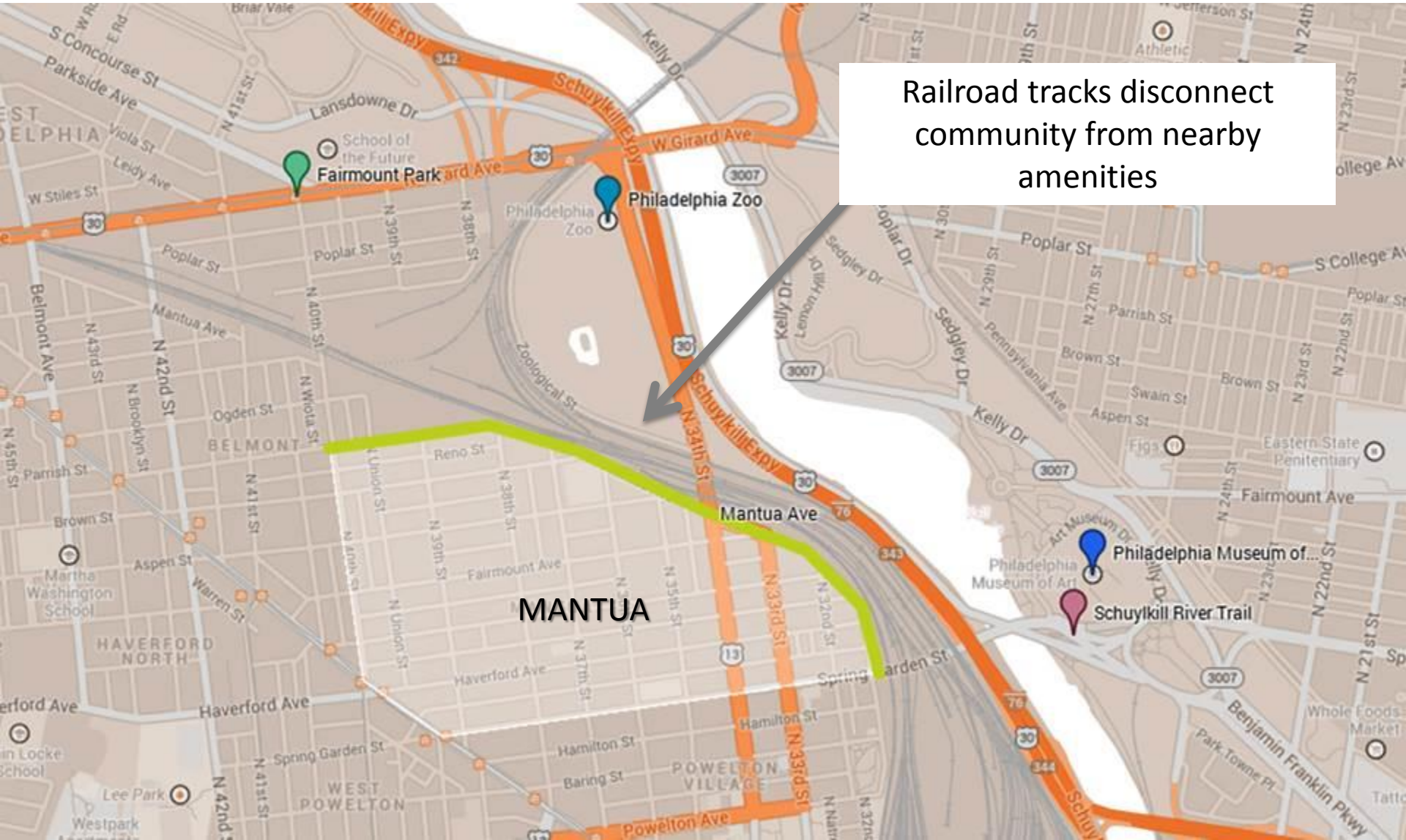


**Sophie Sarkar**

Outdoor Recreation Planner  
Rivers & Trails Program  
National Park Service



# MANTUA: NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT



Railroad tracks disconnect community from nearby amenities

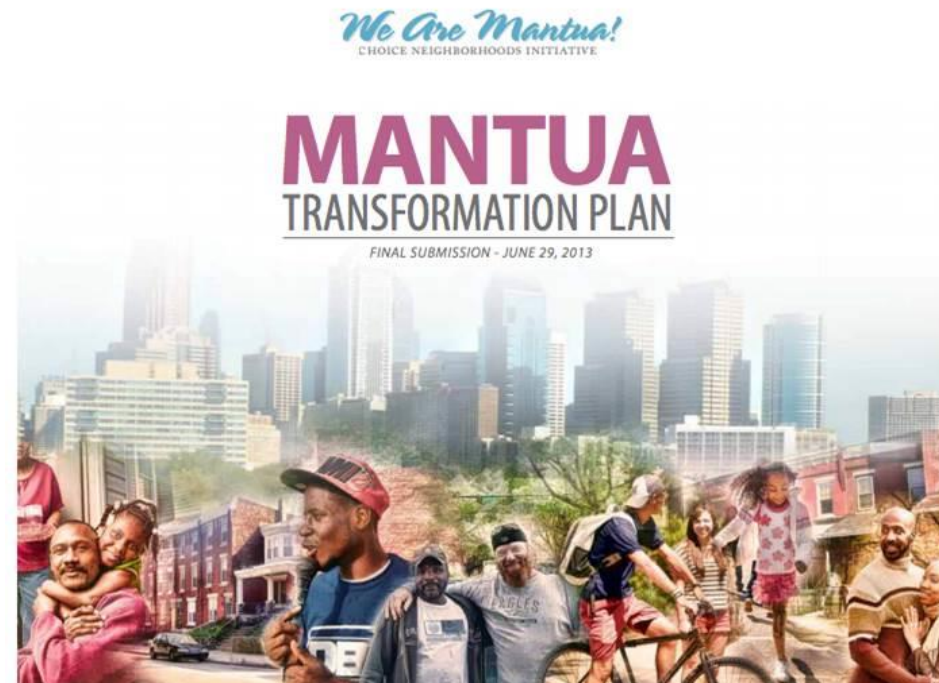
MANTUA

# MANTUA: NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Mantua is a neighborhood in West Philadelphia that has suffered from low economic opportunity and high rates of poverty, unemployment, vacancy, and blight:

- **54% of residents live below the poverty line**
- **21% of residents in the labor force are unemployed**
- **32% of properties are vacant**

The **We Are Mantua!** Neighborhood Transformation Plan (June 2013) engaged Mantua residents to envision a new future for their neighborhood, including the revitalization of the physical environment



# MANTUA AVE REVITALIZATION

**The revitalization of Mantua Avenue was identified as an early action priority in the We Are Mantua! plan**

**The Mantua Avenue corridor is currently characterized by:**

- An unattractive railyard
- An unmaintained fence
- Litter & weeds
- Vacant land
- Unsafe transportation stops
- Low walkability & bikability
- Limited lighting



# THE MANTUA GREENWAY

Residents, inspired by Miss Bessie's Memorial Garden, developed the idea for the  
**MANTUA GREENWAY**



**MISS BESSIE'S  
MEMORIAL GARDEN**

The project was adopted by the  
**We Are Mantua! Beautification Committee** in June 2013.  
The Committee worked with Philadelphia LISC to apply for NPS  
technical assistance to help get the project started

# MANTUA GREENWAY VISION



**Safe bike and ped paths**



**Gateway signage**



**Improved traffic lanes and intersections**



**Improved fence**



**Visual representation of Mantua's people, history, and culture**



**Improved bus stops**



**Improved lighting**



**Park space and gardens**



**Trees & flowers**

# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## AIM OF PARTNERSHIP

To use our **shared resources and expertise** to plan and implement the Mantua Greenway through a participatory, resident-driven process.



# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## FULL PARTNER LIST JUNE 2014

**Mantua Community Improvement Committee**, Greenway Maintenance

**Philadelphia Department of Commerce**, Cash Match

**People's Emergency Center**, Health & Wellness Programming

**PA Horticultural Society**, Resident Land & Tree Maintenance Training

**Philadelphia University**, Concept Design/Community Engagement

**Mantua Civic Association**, Resident & Stakeholder Engagement

**Bessie Carter**, Resident Team Leader, Mantua Greenway Advisory Committee Chair

**Rebecca Rose**, Beautification Committee Co-Chair, Design and Implementation Support

**Donna Griffin**, We Are Mantua!, Community outreach & project leadership

**Sophie Sarkar**, National Park Service, Technical Assistance & Non-Cash Match

**David Ferris**, Philadelphia LISC, Coordination/Communications & Cash Match

**Philadelphia Zoo**, Resource Development Connected to Planned Rail Stop near Greenway

**Mural Arts Program**, Creative Support for Cultural Components

**Philadelphia City Planning Commission**, Planning/Project Leadership

**Philadelphia Parks and Recreation**, Street Tree Plantings

**Philadelphia Mayor's Office of Community, Empowerment & Opportunity**, Leverage

Federal Mantua Promise Zone Opportunities and Resources

**O. Anderson, B. Lewis, M. Washington & M. Arrington**, Resident Greenway Ambassadors



# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## CORE TEAM

**RESIDENT  
TEAM LEADER**

**Bessie Carter**  
Beautification  
Committee

**TRAIL PLANNER**

**Sophie Sarkar**  
National Park  
Service

**COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZER &  
PLANNER**

**Donna Griffin**  
We Are Mantua!

**FUNDING &  
COMMUNICATION  
SPECIALIST**

**David Ferris**  
Philadelphia  
LISC

# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

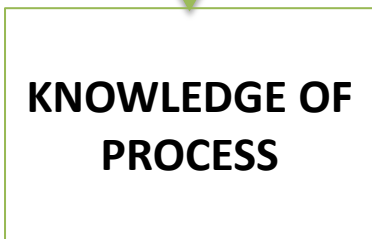
## BENEFITS OF WORKING TOGETHER



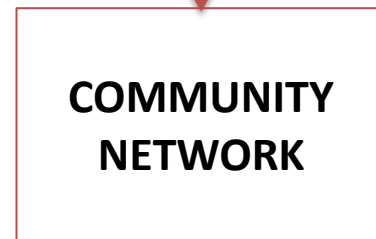
**Bessie Carter**  
Beautification  
Committee



**Sophie Sarkar**  
National Park  
Service



**Donna Griffin**  
We Are Mantua!



**David Ferris**  
Philadelphia  
LISC



**WHAT EACH PARTNER BRINGS TO THE TABLE**

# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### VISION & CONCEPT PLAN:

- Created a shared vision and work plan
- Partnered with PhilaU to complete concept designs

### RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT:

- Solicited community feedback on concept designs
- Formalized a Resident Advisory Committee
- Organized several walks/programs along Mantua Ave

### PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDRAISING:

- Solidified support from Phila LISC for early action steps
- Partnered w/ Planning Commission to apply for feasibility study funding



# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## CHALLENGES & BEST PRACTICES

**Challenge:** Each partner/organization has their own language

**Best Practice:** Spend time teaching and learning. Create a list of keywords & terms to distribute.

**Challenge:** Certain individuals may distrust the partnership (because of a past experience with one of the partners), even if they like the project

**Best Practice:** Invest time in building relationships. Make sure everyone has the chance to voice their concerns, and make sure team addresses them directly and openly. A committed resident leader is invaluable.

**Challenge:** Balancing consistent v.s. targeted messaging

**Best Practice:** Work together on common message that satisfies each person's needs, and also tweak when necessary.

**Challenge:** Managing Expectations. Trail projects take a long time! Challenge to communicate this without discouraging participation.

**Best Practice:** Be honest about process, but also work with group on early action steps that you know are achievable in the near future.

# GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

## CHALLENGES & BEST PRACTICES

**Don't forget to stop talking, and actually experience the resource together once in a while!**

