

Grays Ferry Crescent



The Grays Ferry Crescent is situated on the east bank of a bow-shaped curve in the Schuylkill River in the Grays Ferry area of Philadelphia. Beginning in 1863, the crescent was home to Harrison Brothers & Co., whose 5,000 employees made it one of the largest paint and chemical companies in the region. The 240,000 square-foot property was then purchased by DuPont, of Wilmington, Del., in 1917. The new DuPont Marshall Laboratory complex was used for nearly 100 years to research and manufacture paints used in the automotive industry. Over time, the complex also upgraded its facilities, and by 1983 had replaced all of the original structures with new buildings.

In 2008, the City of Philadelphia acquired a swath of riverfront land along the crescent from 34th to Wharton streets with the intention of developing it as an extension of the Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway. Before development began, the city asked the Schuylkill River Development Corp. to remediate the area up to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) cleanup standards.

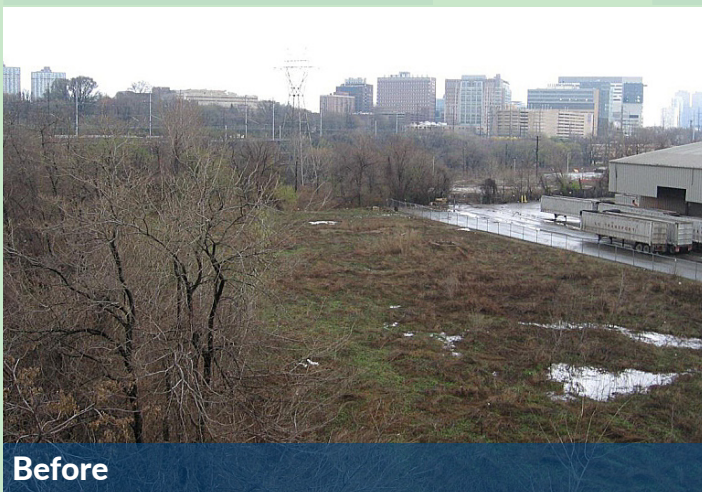
The cleanup of contamination began in August of 2008 with the work being approved through the DEP's Land Recycling (Act 2) Program. Soils containing metals associated with pigments and paint-making – including antimony, arsenic, barium, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, and most notably lead – were either removed or contained on site. The groundwater in the area was also evaluated, and the results demonstrated that the contaminants did not pose a risk to the Schuylkill River.

Once the cleanup and groundwater evaluations were completed, construction on the project could begin. Starting in March of 2010, the project created a 3,700-foot-long bicycle and pedestrian trail, as well as several walking trails that added an additional 1,600 feet. The area – once an empty, contaminated field – now provides access to the river where people can enjoy walking, biking, and other recreational activities along a scenic waterway.

This project was designed by Urban Engineers Inc., with landscape design by Simone Collins Landscape Architects.

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Before



After

