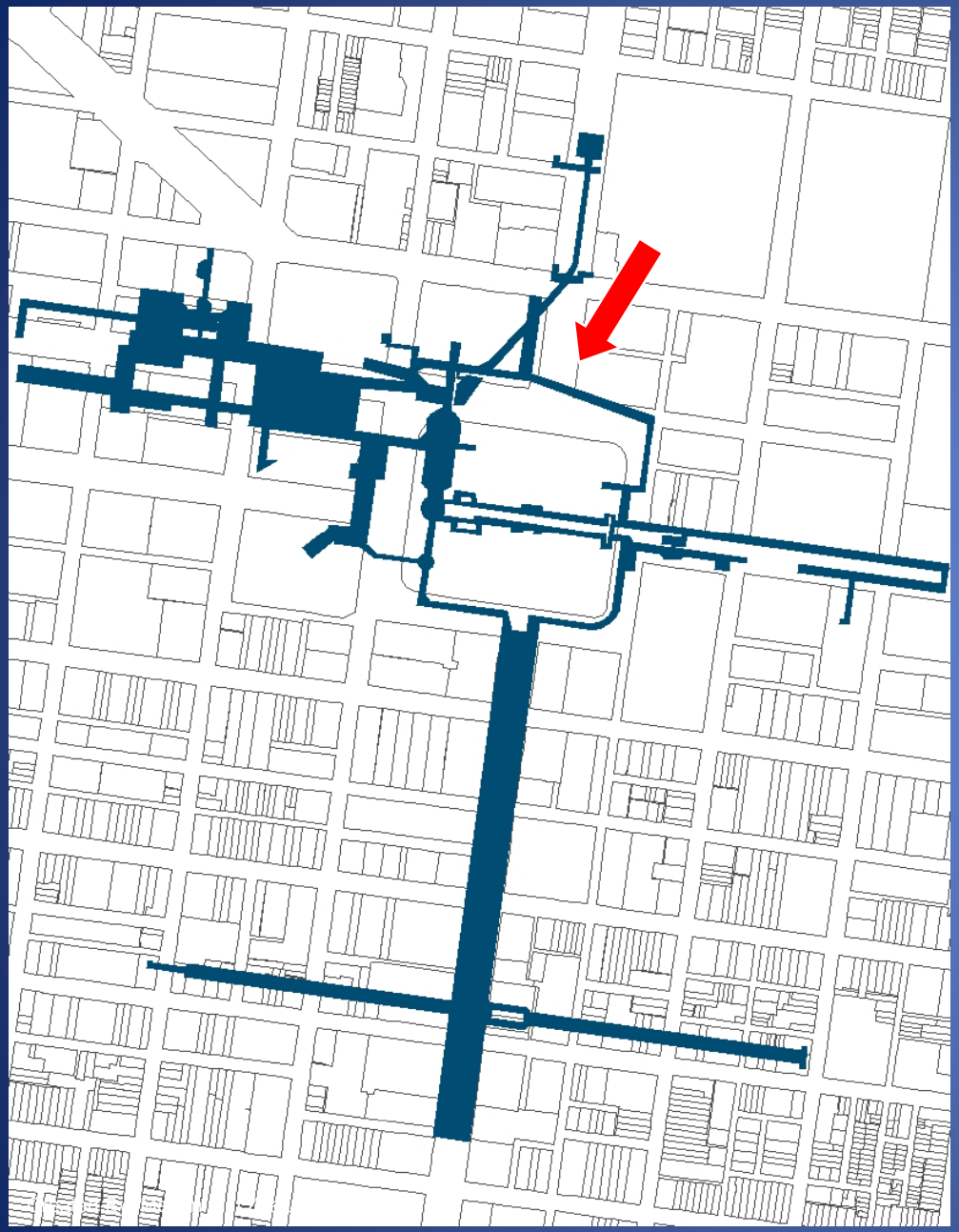


#ImproveOurConcourse: Re-Imagining the SEPTA Concourse Under City Hall

Alejandra Austria, Laura Kliniewski, Alix Lowe-Server, Emily Malusa, Joe Miele, Megan O'Leary, Josh Oppenheimer, Chase Rozenberg, Kevin Sanders

SEPTA boasts exceptional functionality, but lacks basic aesthetic elements.

Created as a way to revitalize the City Center	• Directed by architect Edmund Bacon • Aimed at attracting the middle class and promoting the urban economy
Crime has become a deterrent for Concourse use	• Informal surveys show crime is the biggest deterrent to Concourse use • People associate the underground transportation system with crime
SEPTA's functionality has received high praise	• SEPTA receive the American Public Transportation Association's 2012 "Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award". • Aesthetic improvements will build on its great functionality

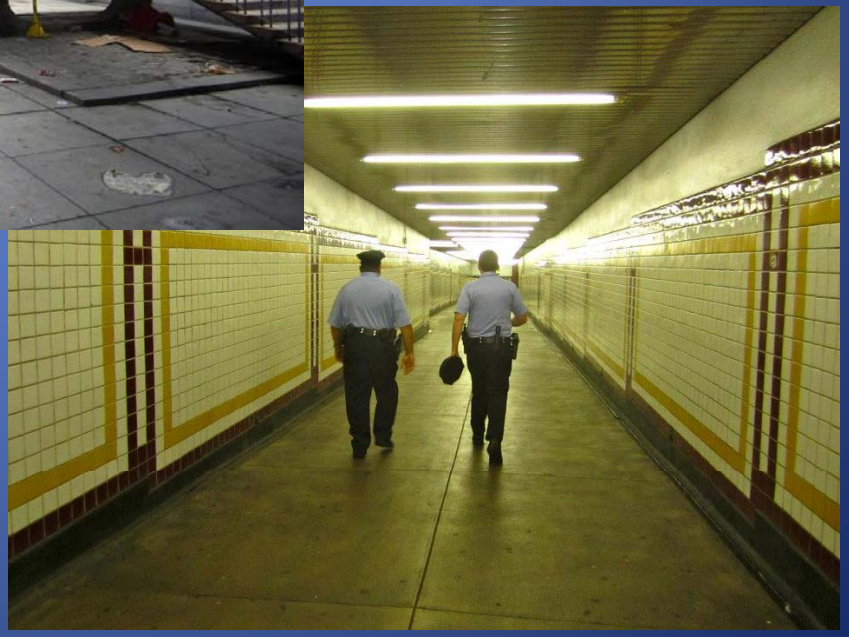
While improvements are being made, other sections are being neglected.

Dilworth Plaza	North Broad Street Redevelopment	SubWalk Philly
• Rejuvenate busy transportation hub	• TIGER funds to support changes for Fern Rock station	• Sustainable/low cost approach to create assets out of Concourse

Serious barriers stand in the way of needed improvements.

Financial Difficulties	Negative perception	The Chicken and the Egg
• Nationwide austerity and budget cuts are affecting the transit system • SEPTA receives less funding even with higher ridership	• Elected officials have put SEPTA improvements on the backburner	• How do you get people down to the Concourse to attract business? • How do you get businesses down to the Concourse to attract people?

"NO SMOKING"
IN CONCOURSE



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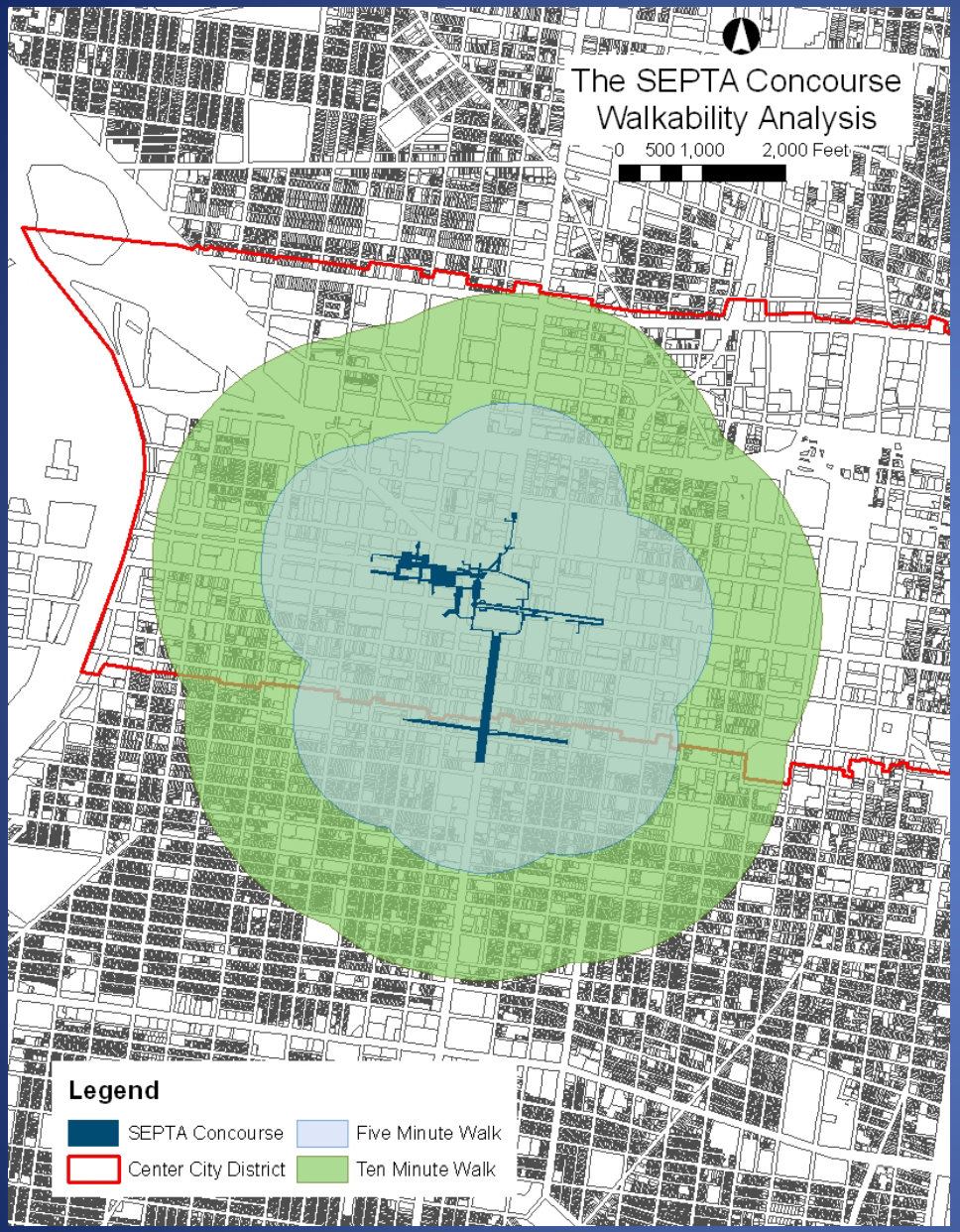


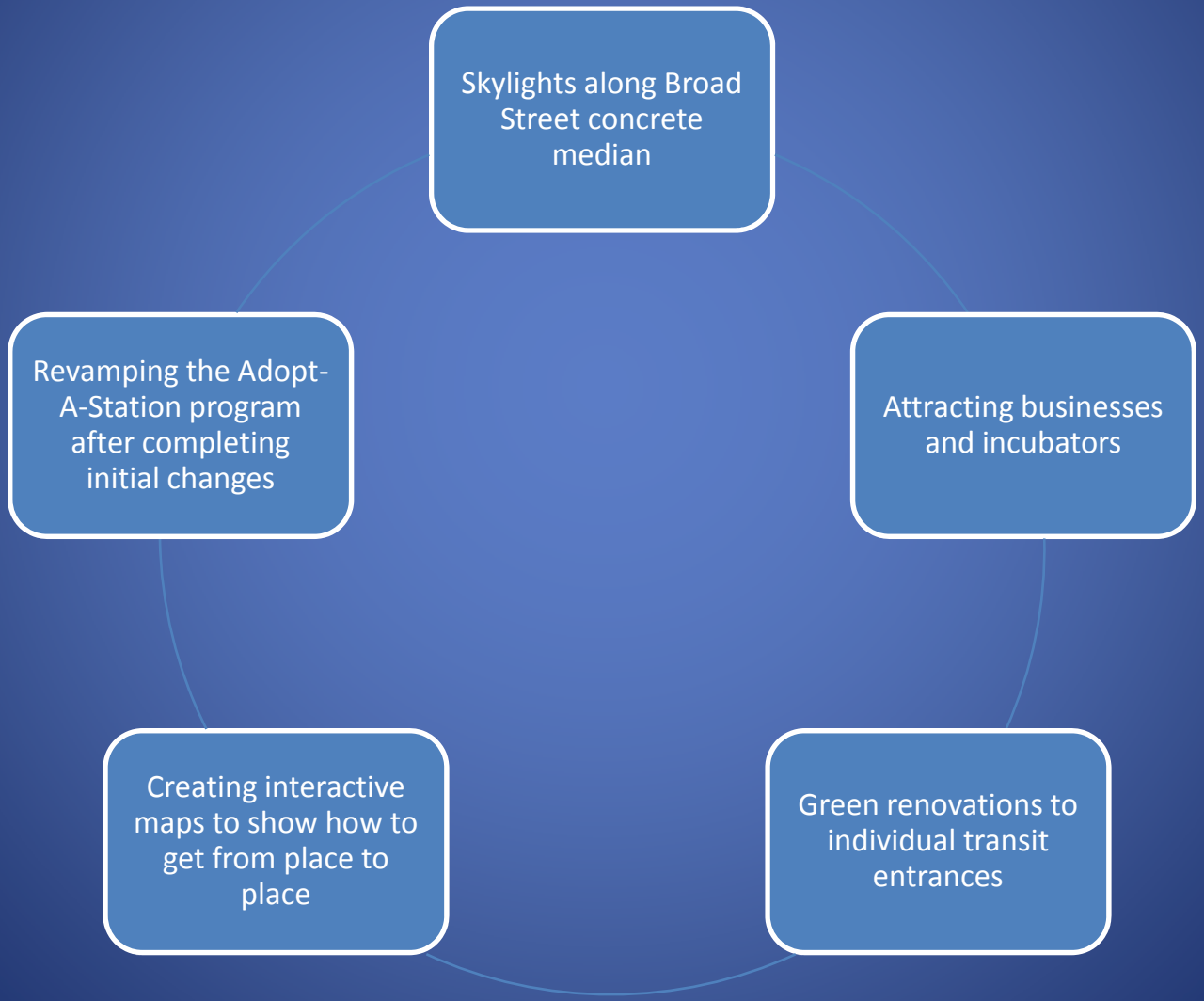
SEPTA Concourse Improvement: Potential Market Capture

- 38,812 residents live within a ten minute walk
- 15,341 residents live within a five minute walk
- 70% of Center City employees use public transit to get to work

Map Source: 2010 U.S. Census, PWD GIS Database

Created By: Megan M. O'Leary

Long-term initiatives will transform the Concourse for the foreseeable future.



Even with a lack of funding, small but effective changes can be made.

Cleanliness

- Repainting, repairing and replacement of infrastructure
- Implementation of better cleaning practices

Lighting

- Installing newer and brighter lights
- Connecting sections and tunnels through better lighting

Signage

- Redesign of directional signs for easier use
- More visible law enforcement signs

Simple changes must be accompanied by creative initiatives.

Greening

- Continuance of Mayor Nutter's Green Initiative
- Installing moss gardens, rainwater collection planters, and murals in unused space

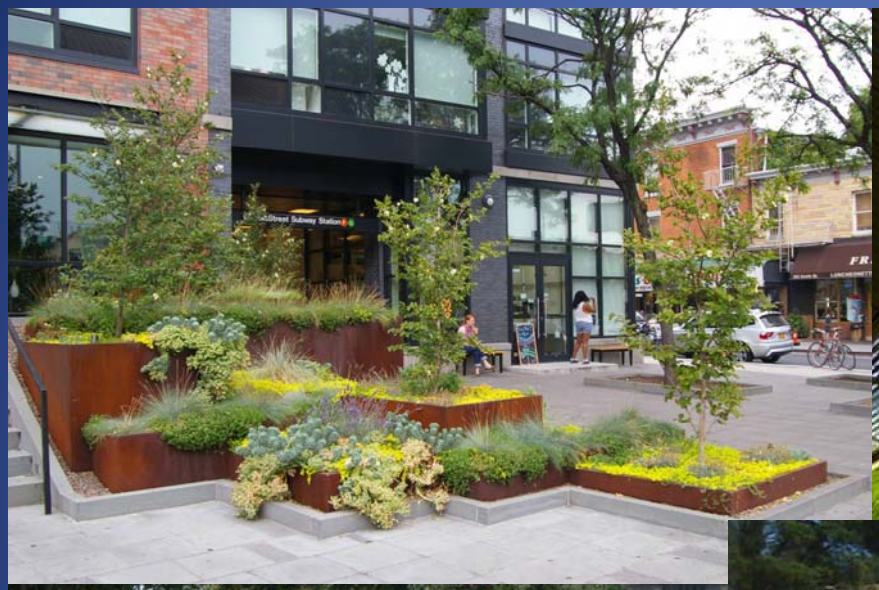
Attracting

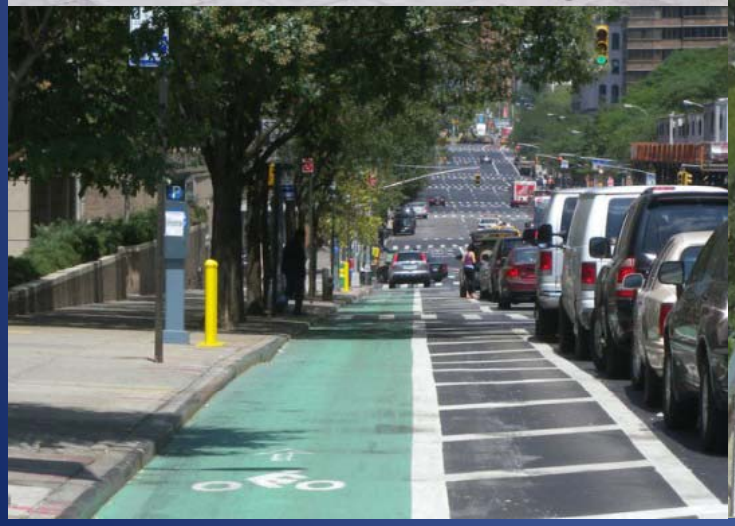
- Creation of eye-catching and interactive campaigns and advertisements through social media.
- Creation of visuals to make the Concourse more welcoming

Activating

- Hosting "Rainy Day Events" such as markets and game tournaments throughout the walking tunnels.
- Creating pop-up gardens or small eateries in open spaces.

Greening





Attracting

UNDER THE CLOTHESPIN

Artists Miriam Singer and Emilie Ledieu are creating a new glass mosaic mural at Centre Square just under the iconic *Clothespin** sculpture this fall.

Contributions will be incorporated into the mural's design which will be inspired by the personal geographies of those who work at, meet near, or pass through the intersection at the *Clothespin*.

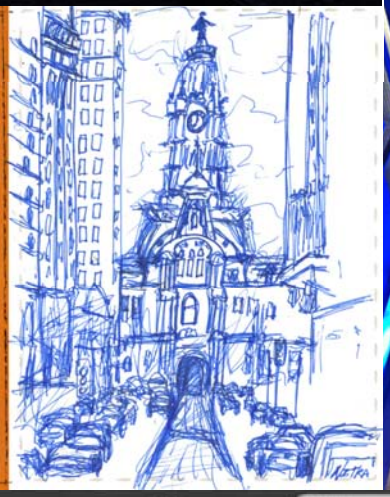
THIS IS HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

We want your story, your geography, your route:

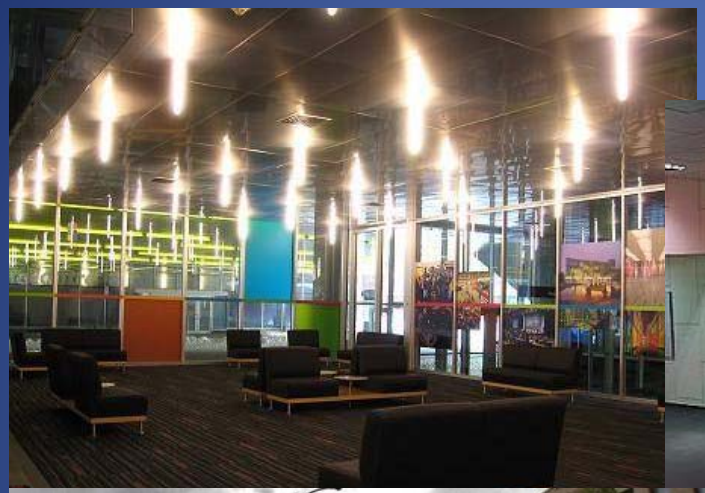
- **Where are you going?**
- **Where are you coming from?**

Doodle, draw, write, or paste on the map on the front of this card and in the space here.

*Clothespin, Claes Oldenburg, 1976



Activating



PROSPECTUS
RANDONNÉE DANS UN HYPERBÂTIMENT
INDOOR CITY_HYPERBUILDING STROLL
CCA

Activating: Re-design Renderings

Activating: Re-design Renderings

Thank You!

#ImproveOurConcourse:
Re-Invigorating the SEPTA Concourse Under City Hall

Purpose: To document previous attempts at reforming the Concourse, explain the barriers to change, and outline recommendations for opportunities to re-invigorate the Concourse.

Background: In 1963, the Philadelphia Planning Commission announced a redevelopment plan to revitalize Center City. Sadly, fifty years later, the underground pedestrian concourse continues to fall short of its ideal design.

What Has Been Done: The City of Philadelphia, SEPTA, and Center City District have made various attempts at reforming the Concourse, including:

1) Greening Dilworth Plaza and making it more accessible.
2) Redeveloping North Broad Street as part of President Obama's TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) initiative.
3) Creating opportunities for civic engagement as part of the SubWalk Philly project.

Barriers to Change: Despite increased attention to the problems and challenges facing the SEPTA Concourse, several obstacles remain as barriers to future improvement:

1) Funding: SEPTA received 25% less funding than in the previous two years, despite being one of the largest transportation authorities with an ever increasing ridership demand.
2) Negative Perceptions: Whether via local media or by word of mouth, SEPTA has become the bane of many residents' existence.
3) "Chicken-Egg Dilemma:" There is a general sense that improvements will not made to the Concourse until riders use the Concourse more. However, riders will not use the Concourse more until it is improved.

Necessary Changes for Improvement: In order for any major improvements to begin, three primary issues must be addressed:

1) Cleanliness: The Concourse must undergo a thorough and consistent cleaning, including repainting and maintaining structural repairs, to show riders that the City cares about these areas.
2) Lighting: Installing newer and brighter lights throughout the Concourse will help reverse the various negative nicknames and assumptions given to these areas. By making the areas feel brighter and safer, riders will begin using the Concourse more.
3) Signage: New way finding signs to the various transportation lines and nearby activities (stores, restaurants, attractions, etc.) will help to improve riders' ability to navigate the Concourse.

SEPTA Concourse Design Toolkit: Once these necessary changes are made, stakeholders can begin implementing a variety of initiatives that will enable the Concourse to become a usable, versatile space for all.

Greening	**Activating**	**Attracting**
Subway Street and Concourse Entrances	Rainy Day Events: farmers market, book market, retail market, food carts	Re-coloring pavement around entrances to the Concourse to let people know of the entrances

"Creepy Curve" planters-engineered to direct collected rainwater	Light Displays: mimic Ave. of the Arts to create visual consistency between the street and the Concourse	Create an extension of Philadelphia festivals and events (Flower Show, Fringe Fest, etc.)
Murals evocative of the environment	Bocce Tournament set up in the underused space between the MSB and the "Creepy Curve"	Art and Museum Installations
Pop Up Garden at the outdoor entrance to the "Creepy Curve"	Programming (yoga, gardening classes, etc.) in the Pop-Up Garden near the "Creepy Curve Entrance"	Social Media sites about the Concourse and potential programming in the concourse
Moss Garden Installation via SEPTA's Go Green Campaign in Market East	Creating what the Philly Master Plan calls "viewsheds" where people have opportunities to take pictures, etc.	Create places to pause and relax while others move through the Concourse
Creating skylights along Broad Street to allow natural light to enter	Highlight the cultural/historical assets via signage	Ensure the space is clean, safe and well lit; better signage of "No Smoking" and "Keep Your Concourse Clean"

Intern Bios

Alejandra Austria is a senior at Temple University double majoring in German and Community & Regional Planning. This summer, she worked at the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations.

Laura Kliniewski is a junior at Temple University majoring in Political Science with a minor in History. This summer, she worked with the Law Department's Major Tax Unit.

Alix Lowe-Server is a junior at Vassar College majoring Science, Technology, and Society, with a minor in Political Science. This summer, she worked with the Law Department's Major Tax Unit.

Emily Malusa is a senior at Lasalle University majoring in Health Science. This summer, she worked at the Office of Housing and Community Development conducting research on the causes of eviction.

Joe Miele is a senior at Penn State studying Criminal Justice with a minor in Sociology. This summer, he worked with the Department of Licenses and Inspections assembling an application for accreditation.

Meg O'Leary is a graduate student at Rutgers' Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy. This summer, she worked with the Philadelphia Water Department, conducting an analysis of storm water management programs.

Josh Oppenheimer will be a sub-matriculant into the Fels MPA Program at the University of Pennsylvania. This summer, he worked with the Mayor's Office of Community Services (MOCS) to fight poverty in the City.

Chase Rozenberg is a junior at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in Urban Studies and Economics. This summer, he worked at the Grants Management Unit at the Philadelphia Police Department.

Kevin Sanders is a second year student at Carnegie Mellon's Heinz College studying Public Policy & Management. This summer, he worked in the Department of L&I's Vacant Property Strategy Unit.