

Executive Summary

American Street Improvements

Category H

It is fitting that a revolution of the “Urban Industrial Corridor” is occurring in the City of Philadelphia and, more specifically, on American Street. This two-mile stretch of industrial roadway between Girard and Indiana Avenues sits at the intersection of a thriving and expanding urban core and long-underserved neighborhoods of Lower North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The unique contrast in physical and socio-economic context provides the perfect backdrop to how we plan and deliver balanced multimodal facilities in modern cities beyond simply restoring pavement and sidewalks.

After years of discussions and plans, the City’s Streets, Water, Planning, and Commerce Departments and Office of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems coalesced around a common vision that:

- Sought to preserve and invest in the corridor’s remaining industries to connect and revitalize the surrounding neighborhoods
- Improved accessibility and safety for all corridor users by reshaping an aging cartway into a refurbished facility with multimodal accommodations
- Provided stormwater facilities that would treat millions of gallons of stormwater and reduce the amount of combined sewer overflows

The vast public right-of-way allowed room for creative and complex design solutions. Ultimately, a road diet was selected and the cartway was reconfigured to provide a multimodal corridor including:

- The City’s first median-protected, raised bike lanes to enhance bicyclist safety
- Significant landscaped/vegetated swales and subsurface stormwater trenches in the median to manage stormwater
- Adequate tractor-trailer access and parking/loading zones for industrial uses
- Bus loading zones and back-in angled parking for passenger vehicles
- ADA-compliant sidewalks and pedestrian facilities and landscaped public spaces/gathering areas