



PARKWAY COUNCIL *foundation*  
*Enhancing & Promoting the Parkway*

## ***INFORMATION SHEET on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia, PA***

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***The Setting:*** Stretching a diagonal 1.2 miles from City Hall to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia's grand, tree-lined boulevard is flanked by some of the city's most acclaimed institutions. Visitors discover a cultural mecca – world-class museums and educational institutions, the magnificent Swann Memorial Fountain and Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on Logan Square, and even the famed *Rocky* steps.

***The History:*** Completed in 1926, it was originally known as the Fairmount Parkway, and was designed by Beaux-Arts architects Paul Cret and Jacques Gréber. In 1937, the name was officially changed to honor the city's most celebrated adopted son, Benjamin Franklin.

***The Fountain “Centerpiece”:*** The Swann Memorial Fountain was completed in 1924, as the centerpiece of Logan Square and the Parkway. The fountain was named for Dr. Wilson Cary Swann, founder of the Philadelphia Fountain Society, and was designed by sculptor Alexander Stirling Calder. The fountain's three Native American statues represent the Schuylkill River, the Delaware River, and the Wissahickon Creek.

***The Draw:*** Philadelphians and visitors alike visit the Parkway to explore the cultural institutions, run beneath a canopy of international flags, and admire the unique outdoor sculptures and fountains. The Parkway also serves as a vibrant setting for many major events throughout the year, including the US Pro Cycling race each June, 4th of July fireworks, charity walks, and major parades.

***The Flags:*** The colorful tradition of displaying flags of many countries on the Parkway began in 1976 as a part of the U.S. bicentennial celebration. The flags represent countries with significant populations in Philadelphia, and are hung alphabetically, with a few exceptions.

***The Calders:*** Parkway visitors can admire the work of three generations of the Calder family of sculptors in a one-mile span. Alexander Milne Calder designed some 200 sculptural decorations adorning City Hall, and the bronze statue of William Penn that tops its clock tower. His son, Alexander Stirling Calder designed the Swann Memorial Fountain. The third generation sculptor, Alexander Calder, created the 11 outdoor sculptures installed at 22<sup>nd</sup> and the Parkway, as well as the ethereal mobile *Ghost*, which is suspended in the Great Stair Hall of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

### *The Parkway Area's Cultural & Educational Treasures:*

- **The Academy of Natural Sciences** is the place to explore four floors of exhibitions and activities centering on the environment and its diverse species. Stroll among dinosaurs and live butterflies, pet a live snake or hissing cockroach, learn about the importance of water, and much more. Founded in 1812, The Academy also houses 17 million specimens of plants, animals and other organisms, as well as rare library holdings that document scientific discovery from the 1500's to today. (19<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.ansp.org](http://www.ansp.org)
- **The Barnes Foundation** has chosen the Ben Franklin Parkway as its future site. The Barnes Foundation houses one of the finest collections of French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and early Modern paintings in the world, including an extraordinary number of masterpieces by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne, and Henri Matisse. By creating this new facility in the center of Philadelphia, the Foundation will advance its educational mission and ensure its long-term viability. The Barnes on the Parkway is targeted to be completed by Winter 2011. (21<sup>st</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.barnesfoundation.org](http://www.barnesfoundation.org)
- **The Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul** is the principal church of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. With its majestic façade, vaulted dome, ornate main altar and impressive side chapels, the Cathedral is one of the most architecturally-eminant structures in the City of Philadelphia. The Cathedral is modeled after the Lombard Church of Saint Charles (San Carlo al Corso) in Rome, and is of Roman-Corinthian architectural style. The structure dates from 1846 and was completed in 1864. The Cathedral has a Winter & Summer Mass Schedule. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month September – June features Latin Mass at 11:00am. (18<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.sspeterpaulcathedral.catholicweb.com](http://www.sspeterpaulcathedral.catholicweb.com)
- **Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site**, known for its grand architecture and strict discipline, was the world's first true "penitentiary," a prison designed to inspire penitence, or true regret, in the hearts of convicts. The vaulted, sky-lit cells once held many of America's most notorious criminals, including bank robber Willie Sutton and Al Capone. The penitentiary stands today in ruin, a haunting world of crumbling cellblocks and empty guard towers. Tours include the central surveillance hub, the solitary exercise yards, Death Row and Al Capone's Cell. The critically acclaimed series of artists' installations is included with admission. (2124 Fairmount Avenue) – [www.easternstate.org](http://www.easternstate.org)
- **Fairmount Park** is Philadelphia's Park System. With over 9,200 acres, it claims 10% of the land in Philadelphia (City and County). Fairmount Park has been called "one of the largest urban parks in the country". The Benjamin Franklin Parkway is also part of Fairmount Park. This mile-long boulevard connects the City of Philadelphia to the greenery of Fairmount Park, stretching from JFK Plaza (Love Park) to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. [www.fairmountpark.org](http://www.fairmountpark.org)
- **The Four Seasons** is elegance itself, with contemporary classic furnishings inspired by the handsome Federal period. With 364 rooms, including 96 suites, Four Seasons is the city's first choice for business or pleasure - close to the financial and commercial districts yet surrounded by museums, shopping and history. Four Seasons offers dining options including the award-winning Fountain Restaurant, Swann Lounge & Swann Café all with views of Logan Square and the fantastic Swann Fountain. (Logan Square, 18th & the Parkway) – [www.fourseasons.com/philadelphia](http://www.fourseasons.com/philadelphia)
- **The Franklin** is an innovator in designing hands-on exhibits before "interactive" became a buzzword. In the spirit of inquiry and discovery embodied by Benjamin Franklin, the mission of The Franklin is to inspire an understanding of and passion for science and technology learning. Exciting interactive exhibits, the Tuttleman IMAX Theater, the Fels Planetarium, and more. Its eminently touchable attractions explore science in disciplines ranging from sports to space. Recent blockbuster exhibitions include *Titanic: the Artifact Exhibition*, *Body Worlds*, and *Tutankhamen: The Golden Age of the Pharaohs*. (20<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu).

- **The Free Library of Philadelphia** (Parkway Central Library) is the jewel of the citywide library system, offering world-class programs and services to the general public and scholars. The Free Library of Philadelphia is a welcoming and inspiring environment for learning, promoting individual enlightenment, community enrichment and economic vitality throughout the region. (Vine St. between 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>) – [www.freelibrary.org](http://www.freelibrary.org).
- **Friends Select School** is the only pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade independent school and the only Quaker school in Center City Philadelphia. It provides a challenging, college preparatory academic program and a full complement of athletic, art and community service options. Because Friends Select sits on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the curriculum is greatly enriched by the resources of the city. (17<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.friends-select.org](http://www.friends-select.org)
- **Moore College of Art & Design** is the first and only women’s art and design college in the country - and one of two in the world. Moore nurtures women with special talents in the visual arts and prepares them to flourish in their chosen fields. In its two large, airy galleries (Paley and Levy Galleries), Moore College has set a standard of excellence in its exhibit program. (20<sup>th</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.moore.edu](http://www.moore.edu)
- **The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts**, founded in 1805, is America's oldest museum and school of fine arts. The Academy collects and exhibits the work of distinguished American artists, and is renowned for training fine artists. Notable alumni include Rembrandt Peale, William Harnett, Mary Cassatt, Thomas Eakins, Cecilia Beaux, Henry Tanner, Maxfield Parrish, Robert Henri, John Sloan, Violet Oakley, John Marin, Arthur B. Carles, Charles Sheeler, Charles Demuth, Robert Gwathmey, Edna Andrade, Charles Searles, Jody Pinto, Bo Bartlett, Vincent Desiderio, Sarah McEneaney and filmmaker David Lynch. (118-128 N. Broad Street) – [www.pafa.org](http://www.pafa.org)
- **The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society** is a not-for-profit membership organization founded in 1827. As producer of the Philadelphia Flower Show, PHS annually hosts thousands of visitors and gardening enthusiasts. Its award-winning Philadelphia Green program also brings vibrant green spaces to the city’s downtown area and neighborhoods. PHS’s McLean Library houses one of the largest garden-book collections in the country. (100 N. 20th Street) – [www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org)
- **The Philadelphia Museum of Art** is among the largest art museums in the United States, showcasing more than 2,000 years of exceptional human creativity in masterpieces of painting, sculpture, works on paper, decorative arts and architectural settings from Europe, Asia and the Americas. The striking neoclassical building (opened in 1928) stands on a nine-acre site above the Parkway, and houses more than 200 galleries. The Museum also includes the Ruth and Raymond G. Perelman Building (opened in 2007), just across from the main building, at Pennsylvania and Fairmount Avenues. The Museum offers a wide variety of enriching activities, including 15 to 20 special exhibitions each year as well as programs for children and families, lectures, concerts and films. The Museum has wowed visitors in recent years with special exhibitions of the works of Cézanne, Van Gogh, Degas, Manet, Schiaparelli, Wyeth, and Dalí. (26<sup>th</sup> St. & the Parkway) – [www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org)
- **The Rodin Museum** houses the largest collection of works by French sculptor Auguste Rodin outside of Paris. The collection contains over 120 sculptures, including bronze casts of the French master's greatest works: *The Thinker*, *The Burghers of Calais*, *Eternal Springtime*, *Apotheosis of Victor Hugo*; and the culminating creation of his career, *The Gates of Hell*. There is also a fascinating collection of the artist’s drawings, paintings and studies. (22<sup>nd</sup> & the Parkway) – [www.rodinmuseum.org](http://www.rodinmuseum.org)

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**The mission of the Parkway Council Foundation:** The Parkway Council Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that the Benjamin Franklin Parkway realizes its potential as a truly unique cultural destination. The Parkway Council Foundation’s members are committed to creating a distinctive, vibrant, and welcoming place for local residents, visitors, and the institutions and businesses that share the Parkway. The Parkway Council Foundation works closely with the City of Philadelphia and other public and private organizations to identify the best strategies for enhancing and promoting the Parkway, and serves as a strategic partner and catalyst to ensure that those strategies are implemented.