



Keystone Recreation, Park & Conservation Fund

Columbia Borough Riverfront Park

Columbia Borough's River District is considered the community's most treasured resource. Not surprising, as the river has always been, since the borough's incorporation, a lifeline and driver to the local economy.




In today's world, the river no longer serves as the primary source of transportation; yet the riverfront remains a hub of activity and continues to spur the local economy, thanks to the hard work and vision of Columbia Borough's Riverfront Park Committee and to the Keystone Recreation Park & Conservation Fund.

During a strategic planning process a few years ago, borough leaders interviewed stakeholders to determine community needs and learned that recreation was a key priority to residents. Recognizing the desire for healthier lifestyles and more outdoor recreation opportunities, borough leaders took action including applying for Keystone funding.

In 2007, the borough received funding through the Keystone Fund to complete phase one of the Riverfront Park project, which included the expansion of an antiquated boat launch, a new kayak access area to the water trail, parking, an ADA accessible fishing pier, pedestrian walkways and the installation of rain gardens and landscaping. The 10-acre park reopened Memorial Day Weekend 2010 and even with expanded parking the facility was filled to capacity.

In 2012, the 2nd phase, also supported through Keystone funds, was completed and connected the Borough's downtown business district to Riverfront Park, incorporating façade and street improvements, ADA access across the existing railroad tracks, and a trail width sidewalk which connects the park to Lancaster County's Northwest River Trail. The park serves as the southern trailhead of the Northwest River Trail. In 2013, the borough acquired additional Keystone funding for the construction of the Park & Trail Services Building.

In 2010, the borough leased a portion of the riverfront park to a new business which offers paddling trips along the river. Over three years, the business had grown and welcomed over 650 visitors – many that likely would have never visited the borough otherwise.

Although Columbia Borough has always been technically *on the map*, the community is now a destination, where visitors don't just happen upon but seek out its recreational opportunities. These visitors are not just spending their time in the borough, they're spending their money. 

Project Spotlight

Keystone investment: \$1.4M

Total project cost: \$3.34M

Project leader: Columbia Borough

Key local partners:

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

County: Lancaster

Fun fact: Columbia Borough has earned recognition by the Smithsonian Magazine as a top U.S. town for visitors, being named as one of "The 20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2014".



The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund was established in 1993 with overwhelming bipartisan support both in the General Assembly and through a voter referendum. A portion of the state Realty Transfer Tax has been dedicated to the Keystone Fund for more than two decades. Each dollar of Keystone Fund investment typically leverages three dollars or more in direct local investments in our parks, trails, community green spaces and libraries.

Read more about the Keystone Fund at KeystoneFund.org