



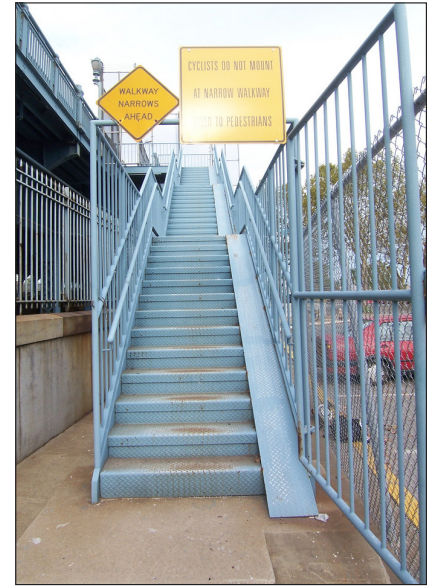
Crossing the Delaware for Transportation Independence: Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge

Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
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Executive Summary

The iconic Benjamin Franklin Bridge links Central Philadelphia to Camden, New Jersey. Opened in 1926, the Ben Franklin Bridge once featured right of ways for trolleys, subways, pedestrians and cars. Today, the Bridge carries motor vehicles, the PATCO High Speed Line and is one of only two Delaware River Crossings in Philadelphia that has a pedestrian walkway. The walkway is the only pedestrian and bicycle connection between Philadelphia and Camden without a fare or toll and offers one of the best views of the Philadelphia's skyline and the bustling Delaware River.

Five-hundred bicyclists and pedestrians use the Bridge's walkway daily, yet accessing it can be a challenge. No signs point to the walkway entrances and warning signs and fences make the entrances uninviting, while access ramps and narrow passageways are barriers to accessibility. Access hours to the bridge are limited and the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) has no snow removal policy, interrupting winter access. The greatest barrier, however, is a three story stairwell on the Camden side of the river that makes the south walkway inaccessible for the disabled and an obstacle for bicyclists.



The North walkway stairs in Camden

Based on the findings of this report, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia recommends that the DRPA adopt the following goals:

- Improve walkway access through updated infrastructure, longer hours and full ADA compliance.
- Improve the approach routes and walkway entrances on both sides of the Bridge for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Reduce weather related closings by adopting a consistent snow removal policy.
- Enhance community relations through public involvement and communication.
- Publicize and market the bridge as a true regional attraction for all users.

Issues of health, quality of life, access to jobs, climate change and enhancing the Delaware River Waterfront on both sides of the river are all reasons to improve the Benjamin Franklin Bridge so that it more equitably accommodates all users. This report provides a road map for the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) to create a world class bridge walkway that strengthens the bicycle and pedestrian links between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.