Reclaiiming Urban Wasteland for Human Ecology

S.R.A. is a framework for reclaiming vacant space in Philadelphia in order to enhance the current ecology of the city, both human and natural.

Three layers of new and adaptable program are woven into the city fabric, each one designed to respond to existing and historic patterns and configured to function in specific desirable ways. The conversion of vacant parcels within each layer will enhance the existing infrastructure of the city, drawing new connections between neighborhoods, providing new urban amenities, and creating fresh opportunities for growth and development.

The Stormwater layer utilizes the historic stream pattern to indicate parcels that can be used to alleviate water pollution problems resulting from sheet flow off paved surfaces. The Recreation layer draws from existing bikeways to create a network of leisure and exercise infrastructure. The Agricultural layer responds existing zoning patterns and vacancy opportunities to indicate areas where agriculture districts could be created by converting vacant parcels into productive landscapes.

While each of the three program layers is explicit in its intent and arrangement, they physically overlap in various places and are connected to each other through the existing fabric of the city and the day-to-day movement and activity of its residents.

This dynamic and flexible system can be adapted to the specific needs and opportunities that are found throughout Philadelphia. New program considerations and/or new layers could be developed in the future and integrated into the evolving network. The S.R.A. system can adapt and expand to meet the needs of a changing city.