

CONNECT
THE LOTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

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The Connect the Lots season went into full swing in June 2018. Regular weekly programming such as outdoor fitness classes, Friday movie nights, and weekly, live lunchtime concerts presented alongside a summer’s worth of special weekend events provided Camden residents with more than 100 opportunities to get outside and enjoy the vibrancy of 8 Camden’s parks and open spaces this summer. From Camden Night Gardens in May to Camden Jam in September, Connect the Lots 2018 was a source of non-stop family fun for residents of the city of Camden looking to enjoy the warm summer months in the vibrant city they call home.

10,000 Camden residents and visitors participated
100+ Opportunities for residents & visitors to enjoy Camden’s parks and open spaces this summer



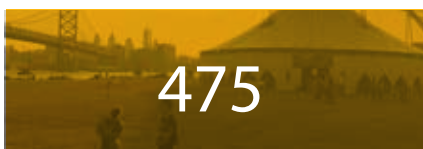
12

12 Parks and open spaces activated



600+

600+ residents enjoyed outdoor movie nights



475

475 families enjoyed a free circus under a big-top on the waterfront



200

200 people danced Salsa on the Plaza!

CAMDEN JAM SURVEY



65% of attendees are from Camden

61% feel that they are “healthy” but only 40% rate Camden as a “healthy community”

64% of people at Camden Jam had been to another CTL event in 2018

88% said events like these positively showcase Camden

80% visit Camden parks at least once per month

92% said the event promotes positive community

The statistics below are gathered from 161 responses from Camden Jam attendees

#EXPLORE CAMDEN

The goal of Connect the Lots is to create safe and vibrant nodes of activity for Camden residents by providing opportunities for arts, music, and recreation in Camden's underutilized outdoor spaces. CTL invited residents and visitors to #ExploreCamden in new ways this summer—by bike, on foot, and in a canoe. In 2018, CTL expanded the definition of “open space” to include not only Camden parks and vacant lots, but its surrounding waterways. Camden is virtually surrounded by water, with 15 miles of waterfronts that touch the Delaware River, Cooper River, and Newton Creek. Although 13 miles of Camden's waterfront remain inaccessible to the public, the creation of new waterfront parks and trails has awakened residents' desire to connect to its waterways.





I BIKE CAMDEN

Our #Explore Camden series kicked off on June 9th as the 2nd annual “I Bike Camden” took 53 riders on a leisure ride along Camden’s growing trails network—the Camden GreenWay. This year’s 12.5 mile route took riders through Camden’s downtown, Parkside, East and North Camden neighborhoods and welcomed riders from the all over Camden and as far away as Westchester, PA.



I PADDLE CAMDEN

Camden residents were invited to get on a boat for two special events taking residents on a tour of one of the city’s most underutilized recreational spaces: its waterways. On June 23rd and July 21st , Connect the Lots, in partnership with Urban Trekkers, took paddlers on a peaceful trip along Camden’s sections of the Newton Creek and Cooper River. Paddlers of every level received an orientation, a seat in a canoe built by Camden youth, and valuable information about the area’s ecology and what each of us can do to preserve it. Each paddle excursion included a stop for quiet meditation and reflection encouraging residents to pause and soak in the natural beauty of their city.

“I PADDLE CAMDEN WAS GREAT! I CAN’T WAIT TO GO AGAIN.”

“BALD EAGLES, GREAT BLUE HERONS, DUCKS...WE SAW IT ALL TODAY!”

- CAMDEN RESIDENTS

I WALK CAMDEN

Residents explored Camden by bike, boat and finally on foot during our July 14th I Walk Camden event. I Walk Camden is a collaboration between the City of Camden, Cooper's Ferry Partnership and the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, designed to promote simple ways residents can make healthy choices by taking advantage of Camden's walkability. Participants were welcomed by New Jersey's Assistant Commissioner for Health, Naashon Hornsby, Val Galarza of Get Healthy Camden and Camden's Mayor Francisco "Frank" Moran. Participants warmed up with Sharice Sloan El from Camden's Dare 2 Dance studios before taking the 2-mile walk through Mayor Moran's old neighborhood of East Camden.

In addition to nostalgic stories about the Mayor's childhood in East Camden, the walk included one planned stop at a local business for snacks and water. Walkers returned to Dudley Grange Park for healthy food demonstrations and samples from local business Reggae Grill, fruit smoothies by Get Healthy Camden, and free fresh produce courtesy of the Virtua Mobile Farmers Market. Special thanks to our County Police and City Fire department for accompanying us on the walk and to Assemblyman William Spearman and his family for joining in the festivities.

"HAPPY TO SEE AN EVENT LIKE THIS TAKE PLACE IN A CITY THAT MEANS SO MUCH TO ME. LOOKING FORWARD TO MANY MORE! I THINK THESE EVENTS ARE GREAT FOR THE COMMUNITY." - CAMDEN RESIDENT



HEALTHY CAMDEN

Connect the lots is partnering with organizations around the city to improve the personal health of residents and incorporate health strategies into placemaking. Get Healthy Camden, The Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, Virtua Health and Cathedral Kitchen were just some of the partners providing healthy choices at CTL events this summer.



FITNESS CLASSES

Back by popular demand, Connect the Lots offered free outdoor fitness class five days a week in five locations this summer! Each week free fitness kicked off with Zumba on Mondays at Dudley Grange Park. Yoga, a neighborhood favorite, was back in Johnson park on Tuesdays. House Party Fitness was offered in a new location, historic Yorkship square in Fairview Village, expanding free outdoor activity options to a yet another Camden neighborhood. The popular Boot Camp with Diva Richards returned to Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park on Thursdays, and on Saturdays Aqua fit was offered in 2 locations: North Camden Pool and for the first time at the Isabelle Miller Community Center in Centerville.



MOBILE FARMERS MARKET

CTL and GHC partnered once again with Virtua Health to welcome the Virtua Mobile Market to Roosevelt Plaza Park on Tuesdays from July – September. The market, a 23-foot bus brimming with fresh produce, makes a selection of fruits and vegetables accessible to Camden workers and residents at significantly reduced prices. Roosevelt Plaza remains one of Virtua's most successful locations in Virtua's Burlington and Camden county service area prompting expansion include an East Camden location.

- 40% of shoppers surveyed are between ages 36-50
- 50% of shoppers surveyed were repeat customers
- 37% of shoppers surveyed reported affordability as an obstacle to getting fresh produce into their diets.
- 52% of shoppers surveyed reported time or distance to a grocery store as an obstacle to getting fresh produce into their diets.



LUNCHBOX CONCERTS

This summer the Camden Lunchbox joined in the fun at Roosevelt Plaza Park, adding to the ambiance created by the popular weekly lunchtime concert series. The Lunchbox features 2 pop-up restaurants populated by Camden’s own culinary prep programs Cathedral Kitchen and Respond Bakery. Roosevelt Plaza became a destination for hungry downtown workers in search of homemade cookies, sandwiches and salads named for Camden neighborhoods. Patrons came for the sandwiches, but stayed for the smooth sounds of local and regional live musicians from the PACE Band of Camden’s Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy to Rutgers student duo Miles and Kayla and Camden’s own CPR: Music Invincible.



CUBES

Centered on the activation of vacant and underutilized spaces, CTL re-located the very popular “CUBES” from Roosevelt Plaza to Dudley Grange Park in the spring of 2018. A unique series of temporary interactive play sculptures “Cubes” further aides in this park’s transformation from nuisance to neighborhood asset by expanding youth-focused activity to an underutilized, grassy and highly visible area of the park. Cubes will remain in Dudley Grange as a pop-up playground until the spring of 2019. This project is funded through the Kresge Foundation, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey and the William Penn Foundation as well as East Camden’s Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit.

#COMMUNITY

"IT WAS A GOOD EXPERIENCE TO GET INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY
EVENTS WITH THE FAMILY AND FEEL SAFE."

- PARTICIPANT 1: I WALK CAMDEN

"HAPPY TO SEE AN EVENT LIKE THIS TAKE PLACE IN A CITY THAT
MEANS SO MUCH TO ME. LOOKING FORWARD TO MANY MORE! I
THINK THESE EVENTS ARE GREAT FOR THE COMMUNITY."

- PARTICIPANT 2: I WALK CAMDEN

OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHTS

Every Friday this summer (weather permitting) residents could attend a free outdoor screening of a popular movie at Roosevelt Plaza Park (June & July) and Dudley Grange Park (August). Movies ranged from the blockbuster hit Black Panther to kid favorite Lego Ninjago to family hit A Wrinkle in Time. CTL also partnered with neighborhood organizations to provide ## special movies in the heart of the community.

Thanks to the generous support of the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation, in celebration of their 75th anniversary, Connect the Lots partnered with Camden Lutheran Housing for a special outdoor screening of Coco under the stars at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park. More than 120 attended this beautiful event featuring Disney Pixar's popular family film alongside stunning views of the Philadelphia skyline and Ben Franklin Bridge.

CAMDEN PEACE GAMES

On Saturday July 28th 10 teams played for peace and brotherhood in the Camden Peace Games all-city basketball tournament at Von Nieda Park in Camden's Cramer Hill neighborhood. The friendly competition brought players from all over town together on one court while spectators were treated to free water ice from Rita's of Runnemede and Berlin, free face painting, and music by DJ DuiJi. Wegmans provided water and volunteers from Wells Fargo pitched in wherever needed throughout the event. Following the tournament, players were treated to a post-game ice cream cone from Mister Softee. Congratulations to our tournament winners: CHANCE (13 and Under), Camden Panthers (16 and Under) and the 21's (25 and Under).





CIRCUS SQUAD IN CAMDEN

Camden's 4th of July celebration welcomed the "greatest show in town" to the Camden Waterfront. Together with Camden County, Connect the Lots presented the Trenton Circus Squad in Camden at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park during the county's Freedom Festival celebration attracting 500 Camden families to a picturesque big top for a free youth circus spectacular. Audiences gasped, laughed and cheered as teen acrobats showcased their aerial, juggling, clowning and other skills before adoring fans. In addition to four free performances open to the public, the squad welcomed more than 1,000 Camden youth from summer camps and community organizations into the big top for workshops that inspired teamwork while challenging them to perform difficult and exacting circus arts. The Circus Squad in Camden was a spectacular social circus event that inspired kids and kids at heart to achieve new heights.



COMMUNITY MURALS

CTL partnered with Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts (RCCA) to produce mini-murals designed and installed by the residents of two Camden neighborhoods. After an initial design session with experienced local muralists, youth from the Camden City Summer Recreation program worked together to create a mural featuring individualized fish for the Isabelle Miller Community Center's "Centerville pool." Children from several community centers were able to showcase his or her own personality through personalized fish, which now "swim" on the steps behind the pool via this public art piece created entirely by Camden youth.

#TURN UP THE FUN

CTL provided Camden residents with more than 100 opportunities to enjoy the city's parks and open spaces this summer. Turn down for what?

- 600 residents enjoyed outdoor movie nights
- 475 families attended a free youth circus under the big top at the city's newest waterfront park
- 92% of Camden Jam attendees said they would like to see more events like this



CAMDEN NIGHT GARDENS

On Friday, May 25th, the fifth Connect the Lots summer season kicked off with Camden Night Gardens, a free and family-friendly immersive community showcase at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park.

In what has now become an annual local tradition, over 4,000 residents and visitors attended the festival, with attractions including live music from local bands, a set from DeeJay Rob, dance performances from Dare 2 Dance and Camden Sophisticated Sisters, art installations, fireworks, and a custom car show. Food was sold from a variety of the region's best food trucks, and a 300-foot zip line offered rides for \$5.

Four years ago, the original Camden Night Gardens transformed the site of then-recently demolished Riverfront State Prison into an arts and culture "wonderland," which later inspired the development of present-day Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park.

As the sun set this year, Camden Night Gardens once again transformed Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park to represent the "Tides of Change" – the site transformation from prison to park, the renewed connection to the river, and the growth underway in all parts of the city.

In addition to jaw-dropping performances, attendees enjoyed temporary light, sound, and projection installations, and themed spectacles including aerial mermaids, bubble contortionists, unique water features, and a professional sand sculptor.





CAMDEN'S GOT TALENT

On June 28th Connect the Lots presented the 4th Annual Camden's Got Talent competition, sponsored by American Water, in Dudley Grange Park. Ten contestants from the City of Camden competed for cash prizes and an opportunity to perform before thousands at Camden Jam 2018. The quality and variety of contestants foretells a bright future for Camden's performance art scene. From Hip-hop artists, to singers, dancers and an absolutely invigorating kid's cheerleading squad each participant's commitment to excellence left the judges with a difficult decision. Our panel of judges included Saffire Chantal, Camden-born entertainment professional, Rashaan Hornsby, Camden-based small business owner and music producer, and Walter Lynch, American Water COO. After careful deliberation the judges selected inspirational hip-hop artist B.DeVinci as our 1st place winner. In addition to the \$250 grand prize, B.DeVinci received the opportunity to perform alongside Lil' Mo and Arrested Development at the Camden Jam Arts and Music Festival.



SALSA ON THE PLAZA

On Friday, August 24th Roosevelt Plaza came alive with the sounds of salsa! Inspired by Mayor Francisco "Frank" Moran, "Salsa on the Plaza" was a collaboration between Connect the Lots Camden and the Office of the Mayor that brought food, music, lights and dancing to Camden's central plaza. The first guests to arrive brushed up their skills with a free salsa lesson from Algorhythm Studios and before long more than 200 people found themselves dancing the night away to popular salsa, bachata and pop hits provided by La Mega radio's DJ Jorge Melendez. Dancers took breaks to enjoy Latin delicacies provided by Respond Culinary Institute while host Maria del Pilar kept the party going out on the floor.



CAMDEN JAM

On September 8th the Camden community said farewell to summer with the Camden Jam Arts and Music Festival, CTL's capstone event. Thousands of people braved the rainy weather for a full day of free, family-friendly outdoor music, arts and community building at a new event location: Wiggins Waterfront Park. Camden Jam 2018 featured a full day of music from local artists including Camden's own hip-hop legend "Trazhman", student horn-playing sensations from Camden's Creative Arts High School "The Trumpet Chics," and the up and coming inspirational hip-hop artist and winner of the 2018 Camden's Got Talent competition, B. DeVinchi. Headliners R&B princess Lil' Mo and Grammy Winning hip-hop group Arrested Development closed the festival down with fan favorites that kept the crowd rocking while the sun set over the Delaware River. Festival goers came for the music, but stayed for the family fun and community building.

More than 30 Camden-based nonprofits, businesses, craft and food vendors made sure residents went home full of funnel cake and rich with information regarding programming that can benefit them and their families. The Eco Zone showcased the latest in green technology and eco-friendly activities while the Camden Children's Garden doubled as the Camden Jam Kids Zone providing free entry, face painting, and crafts to festival participants and their children.

Special thanks to Camden County, American Water, Subaru of America and the City of Camden for coming together to make this year's Camden Jam the quintessential Camden summer send-off.



ARTIST ENGAGEMENT

Camden is bursting at the seams with talent. Artists from youth cheerleaders to award winning painters and grammy nominated musicians hail from Camden and many still call Camden home. CTL is committed to weaving the talent inherent in the community into the programming that seeks to serve it. Through our annual call for artists, networking events and old fashioned social capital, we are able committed to engaging Camden based artists at all levels of Connect the Lots programming all summer long.



MEET THE ARTISTS EVENT

In preparation for the 2018 season, Connect the Lots hosted “For Artists Only” a networking event for Camden-based artists, producers, venues and members of the Camden creative community with the goal of facilitating interaction between artists who are ready to present their work and organizations with the desire and budget to showcase local talent. More than 35 creatives convened at Camden Fireworks Art Gallery for the event to discuss opportunities with Connect the Lots Camden and beyond. Three of the performers featured at Camden Jam Camden were hired a result of the event, and the CTL Call for Artists saw its biggest response yet, with more than 75 area musicians, visual artists, and media professionals responding to the call for talent that would result in paid work with Cooper’s Ferry and partner organizations. In addition, 100% of event attendees said they met someone new at the event and 90% said they made a connection that could result in the growth of their creative brand.



DONALD WILLIAMS ART FOR REAL

Camden born and raised, Donald Williams is a visual artist, art educator and founder of Art for Real studios in Camden, New Jersey. Donald was introduced to Connect the Lots after responding to our Call for Artists and a Cooper’s Ferry RFP for a visual artist to create art for the North Camden Sign Project. After being selected for the project, Donald met with the community to develop several images representative of life in North Camden that will be featured in gateway and streetlight banner signage throughout the neighborhood. Through his relationship with Connect the Lots Camden Donald has also been introduced to the recently opened Fireworks Art Gallery in South Camden where he serves as a volunteer docent and arts mentor.

SOURCING LOCAL TALENT

From Lunchtime concerts to murals, to Camden Jam, Connect the Lots infuses fine and performance art into programs and activities whenever possible and is committed to these programs showcasing the talents of Camden-based performers while promoting Camden's reputation as an area hub for live music and performance art.

This summer 69% of CTL's 32 live performance acts hailed from inside city limits providing economic opportunities for residents in addition to attracting talent from the South Jersey suburbs and Philadelphia. CTL is cultivating local talent for an arts scene worthy of a city rapidly becoming a hub of regional activity and economic opportunity.





WHAT'S NEXT?

The fun is not over yet! There are still a few days of nice weather left which means more chances to get outside and experience Camden's community and outdoor spaces!

FALL MOVIE NIGHTS

Connect the Lots will partner with Camden Lutheran Housing and Mastery Schools of East Camden for 2 outdoor movie nights this fall. The first will take place in Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park in North Camden and the second in the newly re-opened Alberta Woods Park in East Camden.

I WALK 2

Connect the Lots will partner with the City of Camden, the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers and Parkside Community and Business in Partnership to present I Walk Camden: 2! This event will feature a walk through the Parkside neighborhood including the peaceful, tree-lined trails behind Farnham Park and the Haddon Avenue Business District and will showcase to residents the health benefits of living in a walkable city.

FOR INFLUENCERS ONLY

Connect the Lots recognizes the power of social media influencers as a strong component to the modern marketing campaign. Building off of the success of last fall's "For Artists Only" event, CTL will invite influential leaders with strong social media presence from the city of Camden to participate in an event to help explore this marketing phenomenon and facilitate partnerships that will enable influencers to partner with local businesses and organizations to drive more traffic to Camden's many opportunities to live, play and work inside the city.

CTL FUNDERS & SPONSORS

THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE THE CTL 2018 SEASON A SUCCESS!

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION



CTL SUPPORTERS

THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE THE CTL 2018 SEASON A SUCCESS!

13 Sound	Devin Robinson Designs	Pink's Cold Treats
Algorhythm Studios	El Guaco Loco	Poison and Antidote
Balanced Living and Wellness	Eleven22 Productions	Power Corps
Bike Camden County	Empowering Rights of Victims	Preferred Party Place
BOSS Mentoring, Inc.	Freedom Prep	Premiere Outdoor Movies
Boyd Photography	Greater Quality Custom Ridez	Project Little Warriors
CamCare Health Organization	Gridless Generators	Reggae Grill
Camden City Arts and Cultural Commission	H.O.P.E.	Robert's Event Group
Camden County Parks Department	Hopeworks	Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts
Camden County Pop Up Library	Identity Gear	Rutgers Camden School of Nursing
Camden Fireworks	Ignite	Rutgers VTC Bike Share Study
Camden Lutheran Housing	Ignoble Artists	Salvation Army Kroc Center – Camden
Camden Printworks	Joeseph's House Camden	Samiyah Smith Photography
Camden Women's Shelter	Johnny on the Spot	Sanctuary Foundation for Veterans
Camden Youth Soccer	Jumpspire	Sapphire Chantal
CASA Camden	La Mega	Serpico Pyrotechnics
Catheral Kitchen	LEAP Academy	Social Responsibility Through Me
CCMUA	MadHouz Productions	Soldier On Veterans Assembly
Center for Aquatic Sciences	Mastery Schools	South Camden Theater Company
Center for Family Services	MGR Counseling	Spotlight Sports Entertainment
ClearChannel	MIO	Steve's Club of Camden
Cooper Health Systems	Miracles in Motion	Sustainable Haddon Heights
Cooper-Rowan Medical School	Mister Softee	Swank
Covanta	Moms Demand Action	Triton Security
Crazy Faces Face Painting	Myrimdon Films	Universal Attractions
Crown Trophy	Office of Representative Donald Norcross	Urban Trekkers
Delware Estuary	OFO	Visionary Entertainment
Department of Children and Families	Parkside Learning Garden	WRNB
Department of Human Services	Payne Catering	YMCA Freedom Valley
	Philly Goodfellas	

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