



May 4, 2021

All District & At-Large Council members

Dear Councilmembers,

The undersigned organizations are part of the City of Philadelphia Livable Communities Network. We believe strongly that several operational agencies need to have their budgets restored so that they can have the bare minimum of resources to move forward and help the City recover from the pandemic. Making these investments will yield the most for our City.

We respectfully request that specific line items in FY22 budget items be restored or increased when City Council adopts the final budget.

In total, we are seeking \$31.275 Million in operating and capital funds to be restored or reallocated. These items support the findings of the Budget Community Engagement process that prioritized parks, housing and cleaner and safer streets.

Our Network is working collaboratively to promote a more livable city and have joined together to advance the [2020 Livable Communities: Age-Friendly Philadelphia Action Plan](#) that Mayor Kenney supported on February 6, 2020 and that City Council's Committee on Intergenerational Affairs & Aging supported on April 16, 2020. Letters indicating yours and the Mayor's support are [here](#).

The Livable Communities 2020 Action Plan focuses on three key areas: Housing, Transportation and Outdoor Spaces and Buildings. Mayor Kenney's FY22 Budget is critical to the successful implementation of this plan and his own plans and initiatives such as:

- the 2025 Vision Zero Action Plan,
- the 2021 Transit Plan,
- the 2018 Connect - Transportation Strategic Plan,
- Green 2015,

- Greenworks,
- Rebuild,
- Tree Philly,
- expanding Out of School Time programming,
- City Council's Narrowing the Gap,
- Philadelphia City Planning Commission 2035 Comprehensive Plan and the
- City Housing Action Plan.

Philadelphia is home to the largest percentage of seniors and poorest overall population of the 10 largest American cities. There are 276,000 Philadelphia residents aged 60 years and older, representing 19% of the total population. Almost all these older adults live in the community versus an institutional setting. The public demands racial equity in every corner of the city, and the budget items we support in this letter address this in several ways. Affordable housing is inextricably linked to racial equity, reflected in a proposed budget increase for the Housing Trust Fund and the Land Bank. Public accessible open space is also important to the quality of life in all communities in the City and the budget cannot underfund our important Parks & Recreation operations that maintain and improve those spaces.

Our suggestions to the Vision Zero budget confront the fact that BIPOC are more likely to be victims of traffic violence: fatal or serious injury crashes are 30% more likely to occur in areas of the city where most residents are people of color compared to areas where most residents are white, according to Vision Zero. We know that our older adult population has disproportionately suffered in the past year: adults 55 years and older account for 3,186 of Philadelphia's 3,452 COVID-19 deaths, or approximately 92%.

True recovery from the pandemic cannot be achieved in a city that lacks affordable housing, equitable public spaces, and safe mobility options for residents of all ages and abilities. When the 2020 Livable Communities: Age-Friendly Philadelphia Action Plan was prepared in a pre-pandemic world, the actions and investments identified were compelling then. They are even more urgent today, and we believe the budget should respond to this historic urgency.

We have studied the FY22 budget that has been submitted by the Kenney Administration to City Council and found many critical line items that must be restored or added to in order to enable the City of Philadelphia to recover from the pandemic. Restoring the budget is essential to meet the goals laid out by this Administration and City Council.

The total amount that we are requesting comes to \$27.875 M in operating and \$3.4 M in capital expenditures. This totals **\$31.275 Million, which is 0.6 % of the total City operating and capital budget.**

Housing Trust Fund

- Add \$14 Million to the Housing Trust Fund to match pre-pandemic level of \$20Million

Land Bank

- Restore \$3 Million for acquisition
- Restore \$3 Million to operations

Commerce Department

- Add \$1 Million to the Commercial Corridor Cleaning Program (PHL TCB) to match the FY20 budget
- Add \$675,000 to the Storefront Improvement Program, Business Security Camera Program

Parks and Recreation Operating Budget

- Add \$5.2 Million to match the FY21 pre-pandemic budget proposal

Managing Director’s Operating Budget

- Add \$500,000 for Vision Zero Planning & Design to its pre-pandemic FY20 level. It was zeroed out in the proposed FY22 budget
- Add \$500,000 to hire a sidewalks coordinator, conduct a sidewalk masterplan, and create sidewalk repair funding strategy, as recommended by a 2018 Sidewalk Policy Transportation Community Development Initiative (TCDI) to the Office of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems.

Streets Department Capital Budget

- Increase by \$1 Million the Vision Zero line item to the pre-pandemic FY21 budget proposal. Make line 73 Traffic Control in Traffic Engineering IMPS for Vision Zero \$2.0 Million to match FY20 budget.
- Designate \$2 Million in CN Funds from Line 66 Reconstruction/Resurfacing of Streets for Vision Zero Maintenance to pay for supplies such as flex posts, quick-curb, line stripping and traffic calming devices that are installed by the Vision Zero Maintenance Crew.
- Increase line item 73.5 Traffic Control - Signal Synchronization - Transit Improvements to \$500,000 in order to implement transit improvements in the City’s five high priority corridors

Line Item	Operating	Capital
Housing Trust Fund	+\$14,000,000	
Land Bank - Operations	+\$3,000,000	
Land Bank - Acquisitions	+\$3,000,000	
Commerce Dept - Corridors	+1,000,000	
Commerce Dept. - Storefronts	+675,000	
Parks & Recreation	+\$5,200,000	

MDO Operating - Vision Zero & Sidewalks	+\$1,000,000	
Streets-Vision Zero Capital		+\$1,000,000
Streets-Vision Zero Maintenance		+\$2,000,000
Transit		+\$400,000
TOTAL	\$27,875,000	\$3,400,000

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Clark Stuart
 Executive Director
 Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

Yocasta Lora
 ASD Advocacy and Engagement
 AARP-PA

Maria Gonzalez
 President & CEO
 HACE

Alex Doty
 Executive Director
 Philadelphia Parks Alliance

Rose Gray
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Arts + Business Council for Greater Philadelphia

Shalimar Thomas
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Laura Fredricks
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Transit Forward Philadelphia

Kim Jordan
Co-Executive Director
Philadelphia Orchard Project

Ken Weinstein
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Philly Office Retail

Bryan Fenstermaker
Executive Director
Passyunk Avenue Revitalization Corp

Owen Franklin
Pennsylvania State Director
The Trust for Public Land

John Chin
Executive Director
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation

Esther Wiesner
Development Director
Rebuilding Together Philadelphia

Casey Kuklick
Director of Strategy, Planning, and Partnerships
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Rick Sauer
Executive Director
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

APPENDIX

How the Livable Community Coalition Budget Request Advances the
2020 Livable Communities Action Plan and Assessment Report -
Philadelphia: An Age-Friendly, Livable City for All

Housing Trust Fund

- Add \$14 Million to the Housing Trust Fund to match pre-pandemic level of \$20Million

Housing 1.1. Encourage the permanent appropriation of general funds to the Housing Trust Fund for development of affordable housing. (p. 11 of the 2020 Livable Communities Action Plan and Assessment Report (the [Report](#)))

Land Bank Budget

- Restore \$3 Million for acquisition & \$3 Million for operations

Housing 1.5. Ensure that the Land Bank is adequately funded so that it can prioritize the sale of public land for the development of affordable rental and homeownership housing. (p. [11 of the Report](#))

Parks and Recreation Budget

- Add \$5.2 Million to match the FY21 pre-pandemic budget proposal

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, 2.8, 2.5, 4.2 and 4.8 (see [p. 18-19 of the Report](#)).
1.2. Improve maintenance of equipment in parks and overall sanitation; 2.1. Ensure adequate funding for the creation and ongoing maintenance of green spaces. 2.4. Engage community residents of all ages in the planning and design of new green spaces. 2.5. Convert sites such as school yards, recreation centers, and library branches into neighborhood green spaces accessible to the public outside of school/center operating hours. 2.8. Use public space to increase access to fresh food, particularly in neighborhoods with barriers to food access. 4.2. Promote neighborhood safety and beautification programs that engage residents of all ages. 4.8. Expand programs such as “play streets” and Philly Free Streets in order to encourage outdoor activities for children and families.

Commerce Department

- Add \$1 Million to the Commercial Corridor Cleaning Program to match the FY20 budget Outdoor Spaces and Buildings 2.3, 4.7 and Transportation 2.7 ([p. 15, 18, 19 of the Report](#)) 2.3. Increase number of planters and other beautification efforts along commercial corridors where this is a priority. 4.7. Install seating along commercial corridors. 2.7. Increase traffic calming city-wide focusing on commercial corridors, park roads, and intersections around schools and senior centers.

Managing Director’s Operating Budget

- Add \$500,000 for Vision Zero Planning & Design to pre-pandemic FY20 level. It was zeroed out in the proposed FY22 budget
- Add \$500,000 to hire a sidewalks coordinator, conduct a sidewalk masterplan, and create sidewalk repair funding strategy, as recommended by a 2018 Sidewalk Policy Transportation Community Development Initiative (TCDI) to the Office of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems.

Transportation 2.1. Accelerate and expand Vision Zero capital projects on the High Injury Network. 3.6. Invest in repair of city-owned sidewalks and explore a cost-sharing program to incentivize the repair of privately-owned sidewalks by property owners. ([p. 15 of the Report](#))

Streets Department Capital Budget

- Increase by \$1 Million the Vision Zero line item to the pre-pandemic FY21 budget proposal. Make line 73 Traffic Control in Traffic Engineering IMPS for Vision Zero \$2.0 Million to match FY20 budget.

Transportation 2.1. Accelerate and expand Vision Zero capital projects on the High Injury Network. (p. 15 of the Report)

- Designate \$2 Million in CN Funds from Line 66 Reconstruction/Resurfacing of Streets for Vision Zero Maintenance to pay for supplies such as flex posts, quik-curb, line stripping and traffic calming devices that are installed by the Vision Zero Maintenance Crew.

Transportation 3.7. Fund an improved level of “state of good repair” of existing and new bicycle infrastructure through more regular maintenance and 2.3. Offer communities the ability to easily request a robust suite of low-cost traffic calming measures (p. 15 of the Report)

- Increase line item 73.5 Traffic Control - Signal Synchronization - Transit Improvements to \$500,000 in order to implement transit improvements in the City’s five high priority corridors

Transportation 1.14 Prioritize transit and active transportation on city streets (p. 15 of the Report)