

# A CITY BUDGET FOR SAFETY, HEALTH, AND MOBILITY

5th Square members and our advocacy partners are calling on City Council to support a city budget that promotes clean neighborhoods, funds our city Parks and Rec center programming, keeps residents in their homes, provides for safer and sustainable mobility choices, and makes our public spaces accessible to all Philadelphians. These priorities aren't meant to be comprehensive, and reflect our mission to improve Philadelphia's built environment. We stand in solidarity with those seeking increased funding to address other major challenges like gun violence, education disparities, the opioid epidemic, and so much more. Read our agenda for the FY2022 budget, and then contact City Council to let them know you're counting on their support! Visit <http://www.5thsq.org/phillybudgetpriorities> to take action, and share this info with the hashtag **#phillybudgetpriorities**



## Fund Citywide Street Sweeping

Philadelphia was the first major U.S. city to have a municipal street sweeping program, but now we're the only major city without one. The lack of a mechanical sweeping program leaves our neighborhood streets and our waterways much dirtier than they have to be, and this is a major contributor to our litter problems. 5th Square believes street sweeping should be one of our most basic municipal services like trash collection, and we're calling on Mayor Kenney to include **\$10.5 million** in this year's budget for a citywide mechanical street sweeping program—the same amount the administration had proposed to spend last year before the pandemic.



## Fund Vision Zero Street Safety Projects

Mayor Kenney needs to make some major changes if he wants to achieve the Vision Zero pledge he made in 2015 to reduce traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries to zero by 2026. Over Mayor Kenney's time in office, pedestrian crash rates have been trending in the wrong direction, and aren't going to improve without some major changes.

5th Square supports the Bicycle Coalition's call for **\$1 million** for a new Vision Zero Maintenance line item in the budget to pay for supplies (striping, flex posts, barriers, and other traffic calming devices) for Vision Zero maintenance crew uses. In addition, we are calling on the Mayor and Council to restore **\$425,000** to the Office of Transportation, Infrastructure & Sustainability to conduct Vision Zero planning and design projects, and maintain staffing levels at Streets and oTIS to carry out the 2025 Vision Zero Action Plan. Mayor Kenney and City Council should also restore **\$2 million** for Vision Zero projects in the Streets Capital Budget.

5th Square also joins Feet First Philly's call for the Kenney administration to fund safe sidewalks. The Mayor and Council should allocate **\$500,000**—less than 1% of the Streets Department budget—to begin to address the more than 230 miles of sidewalks in "poor" or "very poor condition." Funding should be used to hire a sidewalk coordinator, create a sidewalk master plan and strategy, create inspection and compliance guidelines, and conduct an education campaign to spread awareness about the importance of sidewalks.

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## Fund Parks and Rec Operations to Reopen Pools, Rec Centers, and Summer Camps

The Department of Parks and Recreation's summer programming and recreational facilities are a crucial lifeline to communities across Philadelphia, providing opportunities for residents to get free or inexpensive physical activity, cool off from the heat, play sports, and for parents to access affordable child-care for school-aged kids. According to a City survey from last year, city parks saw a 50% increase in use on average during the pandemic.

5th Square endorses the Philadelphia Parks Alliance's call for Mayor Kenney to restore **\$12.5 million** that was cut from the Parks and Rec budget last year, and fully fund park and Rec center programming.



## Fund Housing Stability

The pandemic has underscored the fact that housing is healthcare. But Philadelphians are struggling to afford housing, with more than half of Philly renters being rent-burdened. To tackle critical housing needs, the City must commit resources on multiple fronts.

First, it should re-start using individual rooms in hotels as emergency shelter, a common-sense way to keep the most vulnerable Philadelphians safe. FEMA is offering 100% reimbursement for hotel shelter costs, which the City should immediately take advantage of. The City should also think longer-term by acquiring hotels for permanent housing, which other jurisdictions have already successfully done.

Second, Philadelphia needs to increase the supply of housing affordable to low-income families, and prevent more homes from falling into disrepair. It can do this by boosting the Housing Trust Fund, which narrowly avoided a massive budget cut last year.

Third, Philadelphia should double down on its commitment to prevent evictions. It must commit funding to make sure its groundbreaking eviction diversion program can remain effective. 5th Square supports Community Legal Services' call to invest **\$1.8 million** into the Philadelphia Eviction Prevention Project, which provides legal assistance to tenants facing eviction. There is no reason why we should go back to our pre-pandemic level of nearly 20,000 eviction cases each year.



## Fund Public Restrooms

Access to public restrooms is a vital piece of any thriving public space, but one that's too often missing in Philadelphia. This affects people's ability to comfortably engage with our public spaces, especially those with young children or marginalized people. The alternative is plainly seen in places like Somerset Station, with unsavory conditions being a hindrance to a healthy public life.

5th Square calls on Mayor Kenney and City Council to appropriate funds in this budget to reopen and continue maintenance of all public restrooms closed during the pandemic at city parks and Rec centers, and restore and expand existing public restroom capacity at City Hall and other high-traffic locations. The administration should also appropriate funds for a master plan to co-locate public restrooms near public spaces in every neighborhood.

In addition, the city should explore the feasibility of new restroom options similar to Portland Loo in Portland, Oregon or the "Armadilloo" in Cambridge, United Kingdom. A new multi-stall facility with sharps disposal can be installed for **\$200,000 to \$400,000**, outweighing the cost of constant sidewalk cleaning, 311 calls, and property damage. If the city truly wants to shed its "Filthadelphia" image and recognize the dignity of all residents, funding public restrooms must be part of the solution.

**5th Square is Philadelphia's urbanist political action committee and advocacy organization.** We're an all-volunteer grassroots organization with over 270 members advocating for safe and affordable transportation, abundant housing, and more and better public spaces. This city budget agenda is the result of a member feedback survey and reflects the priorities of our members. To become a member, sign up today at <http://www.5thsq.org/membership>.