

Philadelphia RESILIENCE Project

Our Vision

To save lives and promote the healing of communities and individuals, Philadelphia will lead in preventing and treating opioid use disorder and breaking the cycle of the opioid burden on communities, through a data-driven focus on root causes, collaborating with communities, and strategically mobilizing resources.

Targeted Efforts in Kensington

2016: Launched coordinated interdepartmental effort to address challenges facing residents in Kensington.

2017 - 2018: City reached agreement with Conrail to clean and secure overgrown areas along railroad tracks and provide housing and addiction services to those living in the encampment. Continued to invest tens of millions of dollars on expanded policing and public safety measures.

August 2018: Kensington experienced a significant spike in homelessness, including the establishment of four encampments, two of which were resolved earlier that year.

Fall 2018: The Philadelphia Resilience Project was born to approach the opioid overdose crisis in new ways and was established by mayoral executive order.

“We didn’t get into this situation overnight, but it’s clear that because of the extensive work of city employees, the Mayor’s Task Force to Combat the Opioid Epidemic, the Philadelphia Resilience Project, and many partners, we’re seeing positive results and saving lives.”

Mayor Jim Kenney

35 City offices and agencies mobilized to achieve seven key goals:



Clear major encampments



Reduce criminal activity



Reduce the number of unsheltered individuals



Reduce trash and litter



Reduce overdoses and the spread of infectious diseases



Increase treatment options



Mobilize community response

Philadelphia Resilience Project Team Accomplishments:

The City has made significant progress through this multidisciplinary effort, which other cities are looking to as a model.

Public Safety and Quality of Life

- Cleared all major homeless encampments compassionately and effectively connecting people to treatment and housing. None have been re-encamped.
- Increased safety measures for children by employing foot and bike patrols and creating Safe Corridor routes for travel to and from schools.
- Created a new protocol for police officers to disrupt nuisance behaviors that negatively impact quality-of-life for residents.
- Created a dedicated Philly311 unit to address complaints in Kensington/Fairhill faster.
- Installed 1,000 LED Street lights and more cameras in Kensington.
- Hosted 30 Community and civic meetings since October 2018.
- Removed 375 tons of trash and over 600 abandoned vehicles.
- Held 11 community cleanups with 935 volunteers.
- Initiated a new needle collection program.

Substance Use Disorder and Housing Services

- Increased the availability of buprenorphine from approximately 100 slots to more than 1,000 slots.
- Installed public restrooms, handwashing, and hand sanitizer stations, and provided nearly 6,000 doses of vaccine to address the spread of Hepatitis A.
- Launched a Treatment Availability Database to provide real-time information about bed availability.
- Expanded work with First Step Staffing to connect individuals in recovery to employment.
- Created EMS response units staffed by a paramedic, case manager, and social worker to connect individuals with services after responding to an opioid overdose.
- Increased mobile treatment options and 24/7 treatment options in areas most impacted by the epidemic.
- Became the first prison system in the country to offer MAT to all prison inmates with OUD.
- Expanded “warm hand-offs” to connect people to treatment and ongoing care after having a non-fatal overdose and being treated by an emergency department.
- Reduced the number of people on the street significantly through intensive outreach and connections to expanded low-barrier housing.
- After several years of sharp increases, total fatal overdoses fell 8 percent in 2018 from the previous year.

Next Steps

It took years for the pharmaceutical industry to flood our city with opioids, and it will take years to undo the damage. The Kenney Administration is committed to continuing this important work and is investing \$36 million in new funding to support the Philadelphia Resilience Project over five years. The administration plans to focus resources in ten strategic initiatives to drive impact:

Prevention:

- Expand prescriber oversight, with targeted interventions at high-volume practices
- Improve coordinated narcotics strategy between local, state, and federal agencies

Treatment:

- Expand “warm handoff” program, including following incarceration
- Expand mobile medication assisted treatment (MAT)
- Execute Medication First policies, provider incentives, and expanded access to treatment
- Scale Police-Assisted Diversion with co-responders
- Scale Alternative Response Units

Community:

- Scale supportive housing for chronically homeless people
- Expand employment programs for at-risk youth in hot-spot neighborhoods
- Pursue permanent closure of drug corners and activation of community spaces in hot-spot neighborhoods

Execution is possible through Community Engagement + Resource Mobilization + Data & Analytics



“A year ago, I was struggling with addiction, and now I’m working and will go to back to school. This shows that when people come together and are willing to help

each other, community members, like me, have a chance at recovery and success.”

Jolene Piliero, Pathways to Housing PA participant who used to live in the encampment at Kensington and Lehigh Avenues