

Kensington Community Revival 2024-25:

Progress Report and Look Ahead



Restoring Kensington
to a Safer, Cleaner,
Greener community,
with Access to Economic
Opportunity for All.



City of
Philadelphia



Accelerating Progress in 2025

Message from
Mayor Cherrille L. Parker



Cherrille L. Parker
100th Mayor
City of Philadelphia

“Since the day I was sworn in, I started making good on a promise I made to this City — to never shrug or turn away from the conditions in Kensington. I promised on Day One to roll my sleeves up and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the residents of Kensington to end this opioid-driven humanitarian crisis once and for all. We’ve been hard at work already for a year. Violent crime is down. We’re building a new wellness ecosystem to connect people with the services and treatment that they need. We’re cleaning up the neighborhood. We’re working every day to make it easier for businesses to serve their community, and for children to go safely to and from school. There is more work to do, to restore Kensington as a safer, cleaner and greener community, with access to economic opportunity for all.”

Message from Chief Public Safety Director Adam Geer



Adam Geer
Chief Public Safety Director

“The Office of Public Safety will not rest until the people of Kensington have regained their neighborhoods, safe streets, vibrant storefronts, restaurants and inviting public spaces. The residents deserve all this and more. There’s a lot of hard work still ahead, but we’re ready to go. We will keep the entire City and all of its partners marching in step, to the same beat, towards a better future.”

Message from Deputy Police Commissioner for Kensington Pedro Rosario



Pedro Rosario
Deputy Police
Commissioner for
Kensington

“I am honored to serve Kensington, where I have spent most of my career. I love the neighborhood and its proud, resilient people. But they have suffered too much and for too long. Mayor Parker’s total commitment from Day One to uplifting Kensington has already made a difference, but there is much more work to do. We will continue to make sure we are out in the community 24/7 doing community policing – making foot and bike patrols, checking in on our businesses, and showing up in public spaces to listen and share. We will continue to expand our collaborations with our partners, from law enforcement to violence interrupters to healthcare clinicians to street outreach teams. This is a team effort and we’re proud to do our part for Kensington.”

Executive Summary

As we move into this year of action, the City of Philadelphia is committed to transforming Kensington by prioritizing quality of life and resetting norms that will create lasting, positive changes. We recognize that true community revitalization goes beyond surface-level improvements and accepting the status quo—it requires a dedicated, multi-faceted approach that addresses both immediate needs and long-term sustainability. By fostering a safer, cleaner, and more connected neighborhood, we aim to create an environment where residents and businesses can thrive.

Our efforts will focus on five key areas: public safety, clean and green initiatives, housing, economic opportunity for all, and education. From enhancing enforcement measures and beautifying public spaces to increasing access to affordable housing, investing in local businesses, and strengthening educational opportunities, we are taking bold steps to uplift Kensington. This work is not just about transformation—it's about ensuring that every resident has the chance to live in a neighborhood that reflects dignity, stability, and opportunity.

From day one of Mayor Cherrille L. Parker's administration, it has been our commitment and promise to the neighborhood of Kensington, and the entire city of Philadelphia, to bring dignity and decency back to this proud, but long neglected community. No community should be trapped in neglect. It's time to reset norms, clean the streets, and build a future with more opportunity and a better quality of life for Kensington residents.

In our commitment to realizing the mayor's vision, the Office of Public Safety is breaking down silos and facilitating collaboration across the city. Our comprehensive plan for Kensington is yet another example of how Mayor Cherrille L. Parker has led this City to work together in order to achieve what's best for all of us.

In this spirit of collaboration, the Office of Public Safety would like to thank our partners in the Philadelphia Police Department, our fellow City departments, and all of our community partners who have lent their ears and their voices to this effort. Without you all this Plan would not be possible.

Progress Highlights

Since Day 1, Mayor Parker has made Kensington a priority. Immediately after her inauguration, she signed Executive Order No 1-24, highlighting conditions in Kensington. That order called for a 100-day public safety plan that would address those conditions, led by Police Commissioner Kevin J. Bethel, Chief Public Safety Director Adam Geer, and Managing Director Adam Thiel. The Kensington Community Revival Plan that resulted was centered on Mayor Parker's vision for a three-pronged approach to public safety: prevention, intervention, and enforcement (PIE).

Early results are encouraging. In 2024,

Kensington saw significant reductions in homicides and shootings of more than **40%**. Fatal overdoses declined by as much as a third.

Although these reductions are promising, there is much more work to do and the Parker Administration is dedicated to relentlessly improving its efforts – and results – in Kensington.

Mayor Parker created **Philly Stat 360** to serve as the City's central hub for performance management, via Executive Order 9-24. Its mandate includes performance tracking and trend analysis across City services. For more on progress by the Parker Administration and the community in Kensington, see Philly Stat 360's new Kensington Dashboard.

For more on City performance throughout Philadelphia, go to <https://philly-stat-360.phila.gov/>



Public Safety

Kensington has been a focal point for public safety resources, with an emphasis on community-centric approaches.

The **Police Department (PPD)** has increased staffing levels in Kensington by **195%** while adding foot and bike beats, conducting regular business checks, and attending dozens of community meetings.

Meanwhile, arrests for drug dealing in Kensington increased 58% in 2024 and nearly 90 crime guns were recovered.



Narcotics Enforcement Enhanced In Kensington Police District

\$10,011,252 in narcotics recovered

845,208 doses of fentanyl removed from the drug market

1,473 arrests (265 buyers and 1,208 sellers)

\$354,962 in cash recovered

87 firearms recovered

(March through December 2024)



Designed to prevent, disrupt and respond to violent crime, the **Office of Public Safety (OPS)** deploys three different community violence intervention initiatives in Kensington: Group Violence Intervention (GVI), the Community Crisis Intervention Program (CCIP), and the Violence Prevention Partnership (VPP). In 2024, CCIP conducted 1,534 home visits in response to shooting incidents in Kensington. Meanwhile, GVI intensively engaged 146 people at the highest risk of involvement in gun violence from 10 groups in Kensington. Likewise, VPP partnered with local probation on case management of 35 high-risk youth and young adults under court supervision in Kensington. OPS also coordinates safe corridor programs for five Kensington public schools.

Historic Drop in Violent Crime in Kensington in 2024

45% reduction in homicides

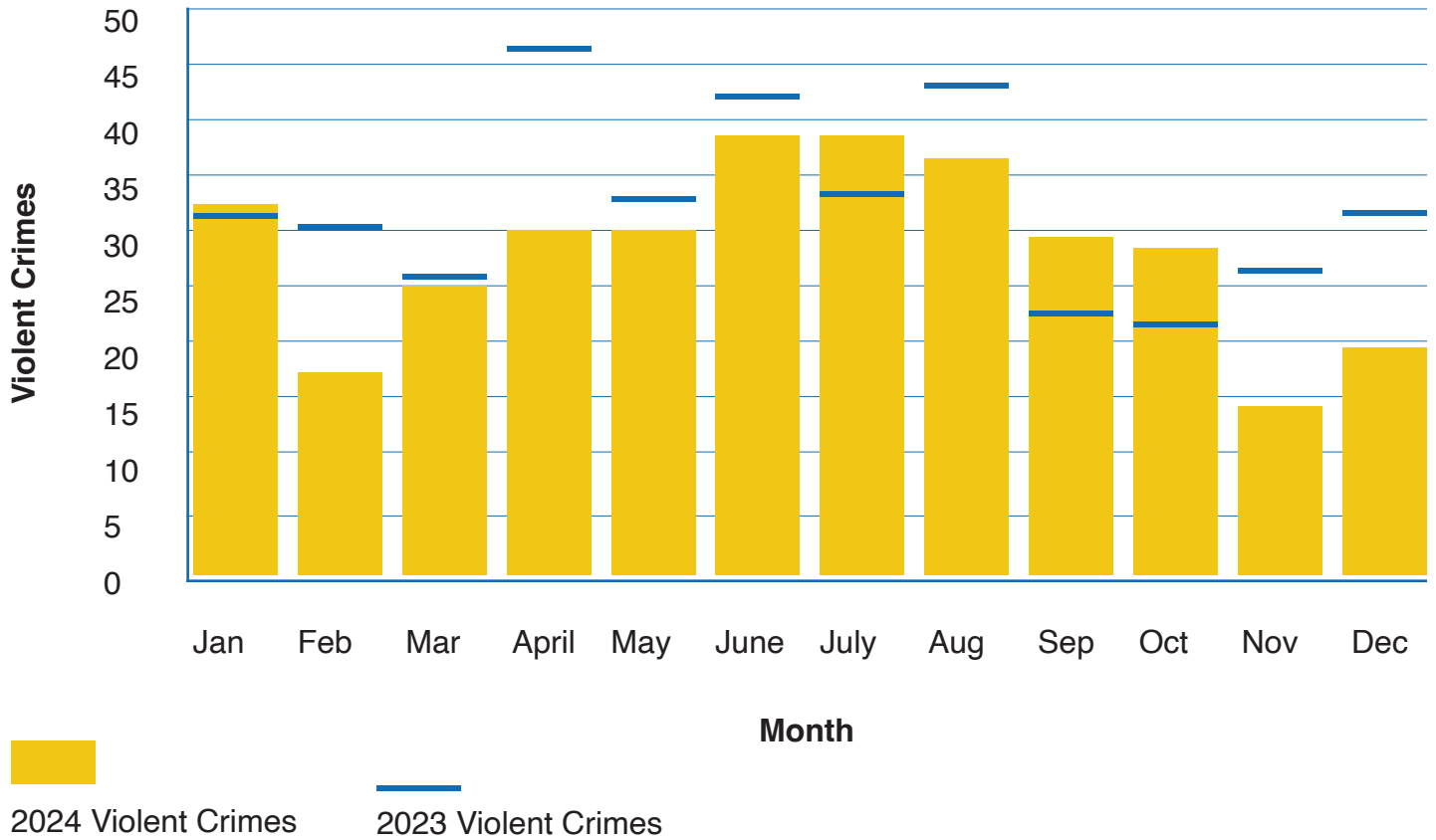
44% reduction in shooting incidents

57% reduction in shooting victims

228 arrests for firearm offenses

(YTD compared to 2023)

Kensington Violent Crimes



An interdepartmental **Nuisance Fire Task Force**, led by OPS, launched in November 2024 to respond to trash fires during winter months. As of mid-February of 2025, the Task Force has already extinguished, secured, and cleaned up over 300 fires, while connecting over 170 people at the scene with services.



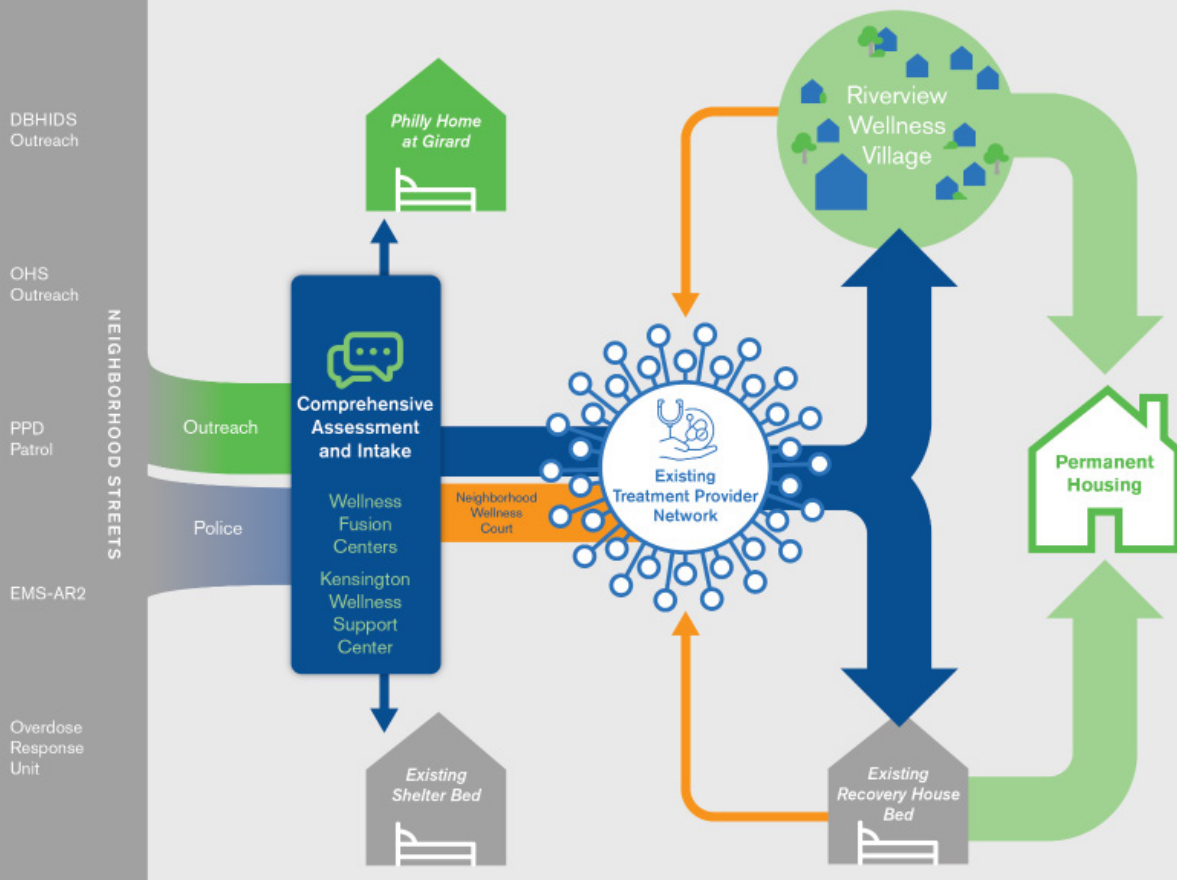
Health and Wellness

The Parker Administration has partnered with Philadelphia's world-class healthcare leaders to establish new, custom-built infrastructure for long-term treatment and care.

OPS has partnered with PPD to provide multiple alternatives to prosecution and incarceration for people arrested for drug-related offenses. The innovative **Neighborhood Wellness Court** pilot offers fast-track diversion for people arrested for drug-related offenses. The program provides same-day medical and behavioral health assessment, social services, warrant

clearance, judicial hearing, and treatment intake. This complements **Police Assisted Diversion (PAD)**,

which provided pre-booking diversion for drug-related offenses in over **1,000** cases last year.



Partners include the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS), the First Judicial District (FJD), the Defender Association of Philadelphia, the District Attorney’s Office, Merakey, and Penn Medicine. Both programs, along with walk-in services, are now housed at the new **Kensington Wellness Support Center**.

OPS also hosts **Wellness Resource Fairs** in Kensington twice a month, with 53 providers who offer connection to treatment, housing, medical care, and public benefits. In the second half of 2024 alone, the Fair led to nearly 100 referrals to treatment and nearly 200 referrals to shelter or housing resources.

The Managing Director’s Office (MDO) has established a Wellness Ecosystem to ensure comprehensive resources for people with substance use disorders. The Riverview Wellness Village is a new 336-bed campus, providing up to a full year of recovery-based housing and comprehensive services. Philly Home at Girard is a new 180-bed facility to offer immediate housing access for people referred by street outreach teams.

It has
already served
648 people
since opening
in May 2024.

Together, OPS and MDO partnered to coordinate three safe, ethical encampment resolutions in 2024. They resulted in 38 people accepting services, including treatment and shelter placements.

Moreover,
OPS and MDO
partnered to
provide three
warming centers
in Kensington
for Code Blue
cold emergencies
this winter,
serving over
3,400 people and
counting.

Clean, Green, and Quality of Life

The Office of Clean and Green (OCG) stabilizes and beautifies neighborhoods through coordinated interagency action. Its 2024 highlights in Kensington include:

450 abandoned vehicles removed

17,104 properties and fixtures cleaned of graffiti

311 nuisance properties addressed

810 property and block cleanups

8,208 syringes collected

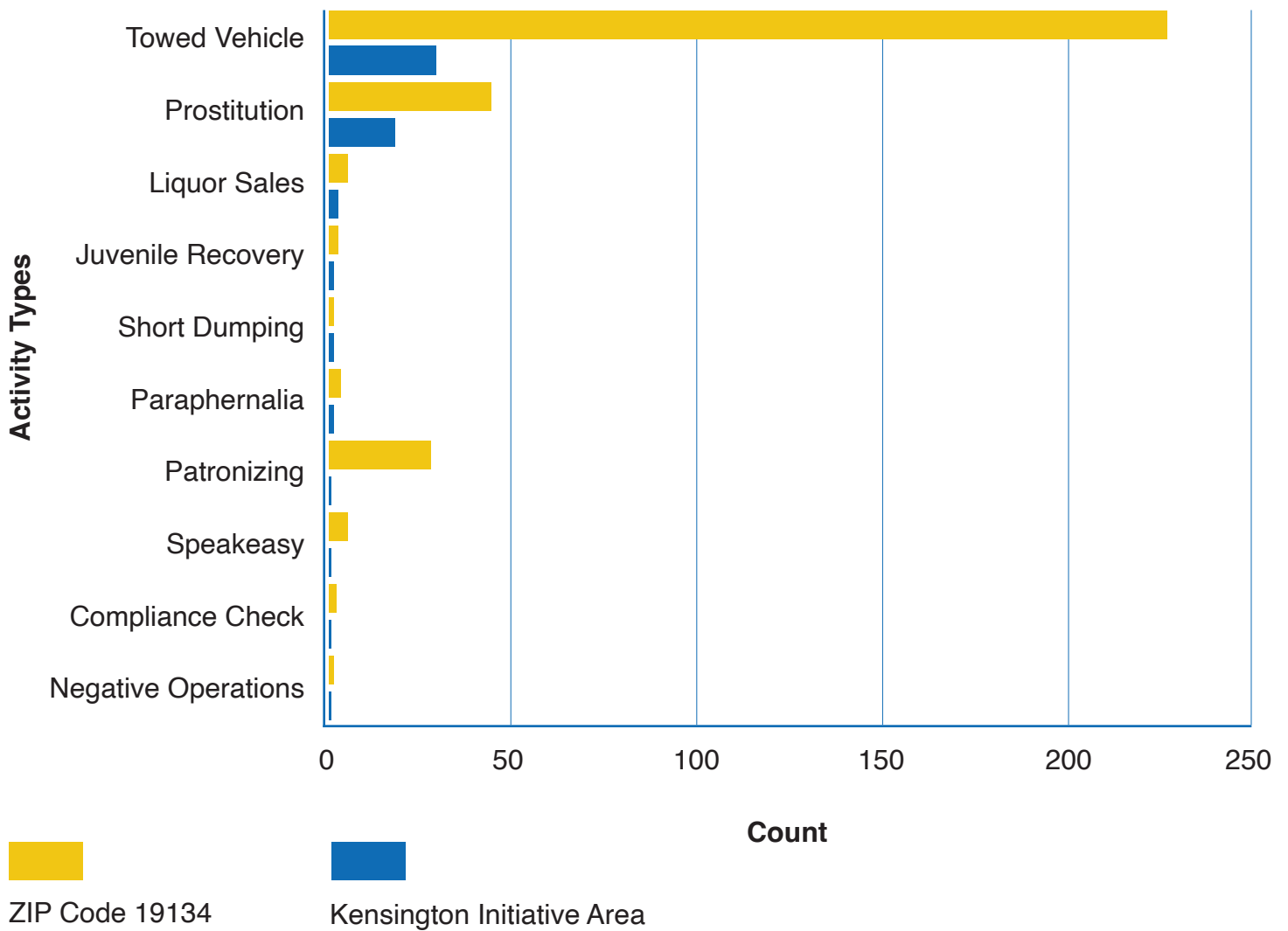
Meanwhile, the **Philadelphia Streetlight Improvement Project** has also prioritized Kensington, already installing over

5,000 new longer-lasting, brighter LED streetlights.

The Department of Licenses & Inspections: Quality of Life (L&I: QOL) addressed 131 neglected property reports in Kensington, resulting in

20 dangerous building demolitions and **101** clean-and-seals.

Kensington Nuisance Enforcement



Community Investment and Empowerment

In addition to working for and with the community, the Parker Administration recognizes the importance of investing in community-led work. In 2024, nearly

\$3.5 million
in grants were
awarded to
77 organizations

through the OPS-managed Overdose Prevention & Community Healing Fund and the Kensington Community Resilience Fund. Grantmaking is participatory, including review of grant applications by residents to enhance the integrity and quality of the process.

Meanwhile, OPS's Anti-Violence Community Partnerships Grants program awarded over

\$8.6 million
in grants to
19 organizations
in 2024.

2025

Looking Forward Action Items

This forward-looking plan for 2025 is organized across Mayor Parker's overarching priority pillars:

- **Public Safety**
- **Clean and Green**
- **Housing**
- **Economic Opportunity for All**
- **Education**

Within each pillar, interventions are outlined by four areas of activity:

- Resource and Service Provision
- Direct Funding
- Cross-Systems Collaboration
- Building and Supporting Public and Private Partnerships

Public Safety

Resource and Service Provision

Connecting people to lifesaving resources.

The Office of Public Safety (OPS) will vigorously expand cross-agency collaboration on health and safety. That work will reach from the ground level up to the highest levels of City leadership. Throughout, OPS will prioritize community engagement, collaboration, and empowerment.

Key initiatives will include:

- Enhanced inter-agency coordination of prevention, intervention, and incident response
- Expanded collaboration on deterrence and enforcement of crime, with an emphasis on violence and drug trafficking
- Refining procedures for targeted interventions including encampment resolutions and heat and cold emergencies
- Expanded accessibility and effectiveness of off-ramps from prosecution and incarceration, while maintaining accountability
- Development of new strategies to respond to the shifting dynamics of drug markets and the overdose crisis
- Increased entryways into shelter, supportive housing, and substance use treatment

These efforts will be fortified by new integrated data infrastructure, built by OPS, Philly Stat 360, and MDO's Office of Integrated Data for Evidence and Action (IDEA). OPS and MDO will also upgrade and relaunch Overdose Fatality Reviews (OD Stat).

Establish and Sustain Community Inclusion

OPS will host weekly problem-solving meetings with City representatives and Kensington stakeholders, including community members, civic associations, and nonprofit leaders. OPS will also establish and maintain weekly meetings with City agencies responsible for addressing quality-of-life matters in Kensington. Many of these quality-of-life interventions have been proven to reduce violent crime, including maintenance of vacant lots and buildings, improved streetlighting, and elimination of nuisance business activity. The OPS data team and Philly Stat 360 will support these efforts with new integrated data on community safety initiatives and delivery of City services, providing more transparency and accountability.

Resource and Service Provision

Expand distribution of lifesaving resources.

Together, City agencies will ensure public safety and public health resources are not just available, but accessible. This means expanding service hours, bringing resources to communities, and sometimes even showing up on doorsteps. It also includes engaging Kensington residents in collaborative activities like Town Watch groups and the Safe Corridors program. The City will micro-target resources to the most affected areas while upgrading tracking and evaluation.

Expanding services

In 2025, the Office of Public Safety will expand the capacity of the Kensington Wellness Support Center (KWSC) to 24/7 operations with mobile outreach and increased on-site services, including new dedicated medical staff. The KWSC offers medical screening and care, withdrawal management and wound care, behavioral health assessment and treatment placement, bench warrant clearance, legal services, support with obtaining identification, and housing and job placement services. Extended 24/7 operations will enable expansion of both the Neighborhood Wellness Court and Police Assisted Diversion.

Moreover, OPS will coordinate with Police to dedicate a Crisis-Intervention Response Team (CIRT) team to Kensington, and with Fire to increase 302 transports by Alternative Response Unit-3 (AR-3) for individuals who need immediate treatment because they present a clear and present danger to themselves or others

The Managing Directors Office (MDO) will expand capacity and availability of outreach teams. That includes making assessments and connections to substance use treatment available 24/7. It also includes lowering barriers to entry at shelter and longer-term housing.

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health will continue distribution of overdose prevention resources, offer overdose reversal trainings and other educational opportunities, and will continue to support cleaning activities in Kensington.

Bringing Resources to Communities

The OPS will continue and improve the popular Kensington Wellness Fair at Rock Ministries, where resources and services are offered by dozens of City departments and community partners. OPS will also expand its community canvassing efforts in partnership with Philly Counts, engaging residents and providing resources, focusing on areas most impacted by violence.



Data Tracking

OPS plans to enhance the tracking and evaluation of service requests, referrals, and outcomes with recently adopted integrated case management, mapping, and dashboard tools. This includes ongoing tracking of people referred to services through violence-reduction, diversion, and community outreach initiatives.

Direct Funding

Continue Providing Direct Funding to Community Partners

OPS will continue to provide direct funding to community partners and grassroots organizations through the Philadelphia Anti-violence Community Partnership Grants (AVCPG).

The AVCPG has three grant programs. The Community Expansion Grant is on its third cohort, with 63 organizations selected for Calendar Year 2025 and \$21,528,500 in awarded funding. The Community Capacity Grant, which is a new opportunity, has selected 18 organizations and awarded \$1,078,992. The Targeted Community Investment Grant will select 60 organizations and award \$1,243,833.

AVCPG will focus in 2025 on:

1. Expanded technical assistance
2. Holding the 2nd Philadelphia Grantee Conference
3. Creating our internal grant data collection process
4. Refining the grant common application



Clean, Green, and Quality of Life

Resource and Service Provision

Prioritization of routine and responsive cleaning, beautification, and the restoration of quality of life in Kensington.

The City will continue to raise the bar for cleaning of public spaces. Clean and green spaces foster community pride, deter crime, and create healthier, more welcoming neighborhoods.

Accordingly, the Sanitation Department and Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP) will increase the frequency of cleaning activities, graffiti abatement, and property maintenance code enforcement for vacant lots. Sanitation will continue to promptly address litter, illegal dumping, and early trash set outs, to keep sidewalks and other open spaces clean.

Increased frequency and responsiveness of cleaning activities

CLIP plans to accelerate the removal of discarded syringes within 24-48 hours of a report. The team will continue to eliminate graffiti vandalism and enforce property maintenance codes regarding vacant lots. There will be dedicated cleaning and quality-of-life services along the Kensington Corridor 18 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Beautification

CLIP will focus on the beautification of vacant properties sealed by the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) by painting the plywood to resemble doors and windows. CLIP will also increase the number of lots beautified following the L&I clean-and-seals.



Direct Funding

The City of Philadelphia recognizes that community partners are uniquely positioned to support cleaning and beautification efforts in Kensington. They have the advantage of deep roots in the neighborhood and nuanced understanding of its needs. Directly funding these partners for corridor revitalization and blight remediation is essential to an effective city strategy, ensuring resources are efficiently allocated to restore public spaces and enhance residents' quality of life.

Corridor Revitalization

The Department of Commerce will continue the administration of the Targeted Corridor Revitalization Management Program (TCMP) and Taking Care of Business (TCB) corridor cleaning programs. These programs fund community-based nonprofits in Kensington to sweep sidewalks and remove litter in commercial corridors in 19124, 19133, and 19134. Commerce also contracted with Impact Services to implement the BRAKE Initiative (Blight Removal & Assistance for Kensington Entrepreneurs). BRAKE focuses on improving storefronts, addressing blight, greening and beautifying public spaces, and providing free power washing and window cleaning for businesses. The Department of Commerce will also continue to offer business grants.

Building and Supporting Public/Private Partnerships

Collaborative Initiatives

CLIP will continue to strengthen partnerships with Philadelphia Works Integrated (PWI) to train participants on landscaping, painting skills, and power washing techniques. This crucial partnership creates a career path for people, starting with the Same Day Work and Pay program. Participant can then move into programming at PWI and full-time employment with CLIP.

The Office of Clean and Green Initiatives plans to deepen their partnership with Philadelphia Horticultural Society's LandCare program to clean and green vacant lots, plant trees, and sustain increased investments to ensure vacant lots are maintained year-round. They will also expand interdepartmental cleaning initiatives like the biannual Citywide Cleaning Program and the District-Based Residential Cleaning Program in Council District 7. They will begin to use cleaning crews to proactively identify other quality-of-life issues in neighborhoods like graffiti, potholes, and abandoned vehicles.

Housing

Cross-Systems Collaboration

Vulnerable populations in Kensington are offered a streamlined approach to accessing housing and services through the Coordinated Entry and Assessment-Based Housing Referral System (CEA-BHRS) ensuring people are matched with appropriate resources promptly, with the goal of reducing time spent without stable housing.

Resource and Service Provision

Reducing barriers and connecting individuals to shelter services

The City of Philadelphia is dedicated to increasing access to housing and long-term treatment services for unsheltered individuals in Kensington. Through continued collaboration across city agencies, the city is working to enhance pathways to treatment and housing services for those in need.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) will increase street outreach capacity, including targeted outreach in Kensington. The City has increased shelter capacity and taken steps to increase the attractiveness of available shelter. That includes options like the new Philly Home at Girard. Additional capacity for accessible recovery house options has been made available through the Riverview Wellness Village, with 336 long-term housing slots and pathways to permanent long-term housing.

MDO is partnering with OPS to plan and execute a comprehensive system buildout. This will mean greater integration, better data sharing, increased accessibility, adaptation to evolving patient needs, and more sustainable pathways to well-being.

Direct Funding

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is committed to strengthening and preserving Kensington's housing stock. DPD will continue to support eligible homeowners through the Basic System Repair Program (BSRP), providing free repairs to correct electrical, plumbing, and limited structural emergencies. They also provide support to residents through the Adaptive Modification Program (AMP) which helps people with disabilities live more independently in their homes.

Increasing affordable housing and homeownership

This month, Mayor Parker signed an executive order establishing Housing Opportunities Made Easy (H.O.M.E.), and the appointment of the inaugural Chief Housing and Urban Development Officer, Angela Brooks. It is the second phase of Mayor Parker's plan to create and preserve 30,000 units of new and existing housing. DPD also plans to foster generational wealth creation through homeownership, via investment in programs like Philly First Home.

Eviction prevention

DPD and OHS will continue to support households in maintaining housing through eviction prevention efforts including the eviction diversion program, targeted financial assistance payments, and right to counsel.



Building and Supporting Public/Private Partnerships

Housing support for individuals with criminal justice involvement

The Office of Criminal Justice (OCJ) in collaboration with the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) plans to secure a \$5 million Program-Related Investment loan from the McArthur Foundation for the Just Home project. This program is an unprecedented investment in housing dedicated to people at the intersection of housing insecurity and criminal justice involvement.

Economic Opportunity for All

Cross-Systems Collaboration

Unlocking economic opportunity in Kensington requires a collaborative approach—one that brings together business, government agencies, community organizations, and residents.

Collaborative Relationships to Expand Services

The Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP) will continue to partner with community-based organizations to expand the Same Day Work and Pay program to train individuals with the goal of employment with the CLIP team.

The Clean and Green Initiative's partnership with the Department of Commerce will work to expand the PHL Taking Care of Business commercial corridor cleaning services to service additional parts of the Kensington with community partners like HACE (Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement), Impact Services and New Kensington CDC. By improving the appearance of storefronts, removing blight and enhancing public spaces, this collaboration will attract more customers, investors and economic activity. These efforts will strength local business, support job creation, and contribute to the long-term economic revitalization of the Kensington Community.

Direct Funding

Economic Opportunity is the backbone of a thriving community, fostering job creation, stability and long-term growth. The City of Philadelphia plans to directly invest in neighborhood businesses and collaborate with community partners to expand services in Kensington.

Funding to Support Revitalization of Commercial Corridors and Businesses

The Department of Commerce is investing \$1.5 million in businesses on the Kensington Avenue commercial corridor, supporting 40 small businesses. Those funds will support corridor cleaning

and greening, and creative placemaking. Commerce also will promote participation in the Business Security Camera program, which subsidizes cameras outside businesses. Additionally, the Storefront Improvement Program will defray costs of facade improvements for Kensington Avenue businesses. This funding will help make the corridor more attractive to customers and investors.

The City of Philadelphia has also awarded funds to the New Kensington CDC to support the development of a grocery store at 3134-36 Kensington Avenue. The new grocery store will help to provide fresh goods to the community and new job opportunities for residents. Additionally, a new commercial space in the Mill Service Building at A & Indiana will be developed to house community nonprofits, made possible in part by \$3 million in City funding. These projects will not only enhance the neighborhood's business landscape but also create a stronger, more connected community.

Likewise, McPherson Library will be getting \$10 million from the City for renovation, attracting additional investments.





Education

Cross-Systems Collaboration Supporting Educators

OPS will collaborate with other City departments towards the shared goal of improving the school environment and the lives of students in Philadelphia.

In 2025, OPS will re-engage the Kensington Schools Opioid Taskforce to increase the safety of schools and students. Activities by the Taskforce can include request and fulfillment of crossing guards; safe parking considerations for staff and families; support during local field trips; access to resources including shelter and treatment; and providing holiday and summer programming.

Resource and Service Provision

Creating Safe Spaces for Children

OPS is committed to increasing opportunities for positive youth development by supporting the work of community-based organizations and the beautification of the Kensington community. Positive youth development engages youth in pro-social and empowering activities to prevent negative behaviors and outcomes in the future, including substance use and overdose.

We also know that exposure to blight is linked to negative mental health outcomes, highlighting the importance of cleaning activities in Kensington. The Sanitation Department will continue to give special, concentrated attention to cleaning areas near schools, along school corridors and public transit entry points. These efforts reflect the City's commitment to creating clean spaces around, and en route to school facilities so young people can get to school safely each day and focus on pursuing an education.

Building and Supporting Public/Private Partnerships

Special Events

In partnership with other city agencies and community organizations, ORU will continue to work with Kensington schools to organize and deliver special events for students and families similar to the Eagles Day at Conwell. This partnership aims to not only honor the strength of the community but also promote physical wellbeing and positive engagement among students and families.

“We will continue to be relentless in our pursuit to revitalize and lift up the resilient, colorful and wonderful community of Kensington.”

Adam Geer
Chief Public Safety Director

