

# Clean Philadelphia NOW

## Platform for a PHILADELPHIA FREE OF LITTER AND DUMPING BY 2028

All Philadelphia residents deserve to live in a clean environment and in safe, healthy, and thriving neighborhoods. Neighborhood groups, place-based organizations, and individuals across the city carry the burden of keeping their communities clean, but too often see their efforts undone in areas [targeted by litter and dumping again and again](#). Disproportionately located in the [city's least-served neighborhoods](#), litter and illegal dumping hotspots persevere due to inadequate waste collection practices. Our neighborhoods are under assault by indiscriminate dumping--from tires to piles of construction waste--while requests for removal are met with long delayed responses or simply ignored. These conditions contribute to environmental violence.

According to [studies conducted by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#), Philadelphia spends \$48 million a year on clean-up-related activities. Laws, rules, and regulations are enacted to support clean-up and then ignored. Eighty-eight percent of the budget is spent on abatement<sup>1</sup>, with virtually no attention to prevention or enforcement. Funds spent on education and promotion campaigns are ineffective. Mayor Kenney's Litter Cabinet and commitment to Zero Waste by 2035 was the most ambitious initiative launched in recent years. The lack of funding to support its objective was a message made clear with the cancellation of the program at the outset of COVID: the proper management and enforcement of City policy regarding waste is not a priority.

This is not acceptable. Ending littering and open dumping demands the attention, intent, and personal leadership of the Mayor and full support of City Council.

### CALL TO ACTION

The Clean Philadelphia NOW Campaign, with its growing list of endorsing organizations and individuals (Appendix A), calls on all candidates for Mayor and City Council on the ballot for the Spring 2023 primary to adopt and publish as their own the agenda below as a public pledge and commitment to work for a Philadelphia free of litter and dumping by 2028.

- 1. Formally announce your intention to develop and implement a program to end littering and dumping by 2028 as one of the priorities of your administration and provide active personal leadership to make it happen.**
  - Restate this pledge at the outset of the administration, annually as part of the budget address outlined in the annual five-year plan, and continuously in materials issued by your administration.
  - Be the voice and image for the program promotions and public announcements.
  - Engage the City Council and members of the Pennsylvania State Delegation to provide promotional, constituent, and budget support.

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<sup>1</sup> [THE COST OF LITTER & ILLEGAL DUMPING IN PENNSYLVANIA- A STUDY OF NINE CITIES ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH JANUARY 2020](#), page 33

**2. Re-establish within the first 100 days an entity akin to Mayor Kenny’s Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet**

- Provide for staff under the auspices of the Managing Director
- Oversee the plan development described below with annual reports to the City Council and the public on the progress and plans for the year ahead.
- Establish a Citizens Advisory Council, engaged residents appointed by the Mayor and an elected chair with authority to advise the Cabinet and monitor and evaluate its programs.

**3. Develop and implement a multi-faceted plan to eliminate dumping in Philadelphia by 2028, incorporating four components as detailed below: Prevention, Abatement, Enforcement, and Education/Outreach.**

<p><b>Prevention</b></p> <p><i>The goal of prevention is zero waste. Prevention strategies include policy and practices (actions taken) to avoid making waste (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle), providing convenient and affordable options for the proper disposal of commonly dumped materials.</i></p>	
<p>1. Improve citywide municipal systems collection system</p>	<p>a) Re-introduce city bulk pickup</p> <p>b) Introduce <a href="#">automated trash and recycling collection</a></p> <p>c) Provide all residents with adequate, durable, lidded receptacles</p> <p>d) Increase diversion and material recovery options - more returnables, more composting, more recycling</p> <p>e) Provide twice a week trash collection (where appropriate)</p>
<p>2. Redirect construction and demolition (C&amp;D) waste</p>	<p>a) Allow small haulers to dump at convenience centers (to capture clean-out dumping)</p> <p>b) Require the recycling of C&amp;D waste</p>
<p>3. Engage communities to re-establish litter reduction plans per neighborhood</p>	<p>a) Use litter index and other data to prioritize areas with a greater need for support/resources and neighborhood-specific litter reduction plans</p>

<p>4. Allow vacant lot and dumping site improvement through community intervention and programming by providing resources and access permissions</p>	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Beautification (e.g., gardens, murals, gathering spaces)</li> <li>b) Site activation, musical programming, food trucks, educational programming</li> <li>c) Clean, green, and activate vacant lots through <a href="#">community Landcare groups</a> or PHS Philadelphia Landcare programs</li> <li>d) Community gardens</li> </ul>
<p>5. Assign the Office of Innovation to collect and analyze dumping and litter data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Collect dumping and litter data to understand how and why it occurs; use that to inform new prevention strategies</li> <li>b) Research and assess new prevention strategies</li> </ul>

<p><b>Abatement</b></p> <p><i>“Abatement” refers to actions and programs addressing (cleaning) litter and dumping after it occurs. It is currently the most funded approach, though ineffective as an isolated strategy and expensive as dumping continues to reoccur. While residents are responsible for the litter they create, the vast majority of dumping occurs as an illegal cottage industry, and the packaging industry is not held accountable for their role given the proliferation of packaging among commonly dumped and littered materials.</i></p>	
<p>1. Ensure that all existing and future abatement funding and programs have specific accompanying components (concrete actions) at the neighborhood level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Incorporate prevention, lot activation, and enforcement, education, and outreach</li> </ul>
<p>2. Use data to evaluate impact of existing litter and dumping strategies on a continuing basis</p>	
<p>3. Provide resident compensation, employment of local residents, and career development as available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Compensate local residents for their role in the ongoing abatement program</li> <li>b) Recruit neighborhoods and communities to develop and establish Clean and Green Ambassadors</li> </ul>

## Enforcement

*"Enforcement" strategies to hold those accountable for dumping and littering.*

1. Make enforcement an institutional priority integrated with community efforts	a) Establish a chain of command that includes the District Attorney, Judges, detectives, police officers, and public engagement b) Ensure adequate staffing in the Department of Licenses & Inspections & the Law Department c) Collaborate with the community, town watch groups, bicycle patrols, and commercial corridor/district safety ambassadors, etc.
2. Enforce and expand statutes regarding dumping, littering, licensing of waste carriers, and waste generation	a) Cite violations for both dumping and loosely controlled construction sites b) Consider temporary suspension of the driver's license or vehicle seizure c) Establish public policy for "extended producer responsibility" holding manufacturers of products accountable for the waste resulting from the packaging they create
3. Improve monitoring to support enforcement	a) Allow photo/video evidence to hold violators accountable b) Establish an effective system for monitoring that includes the use of city-operated security cameras
4. Publicize enforcement to deter future incidents	a) Use traditional and social media to increase awareness of ongoing efforts b) Make efforts visible on-site (e.g. crime scene tape is a proven deterrent)

**Education/Outreach**

*Education and Outreach strategies are designed to influence people's behavior in the purchase, consumption, and disposal of products and are essential to address the root causes (i.e., excessive packaging) instead of treating symptoms (i.e., tolerating dumping with and prioritizing abatement).*

1. Invite public participation in developing education and outreach programs and access to information on related city programs	
2. Streamline, centralize, and promote information to improve access to resources and best practices	a) Provide clear and accessible information on sanitation convenience centers b) Support diversion options by listing in a centralized location (including repair fairs, free online services, food rescue services, subscription services, e-waste events, etc.) c) Consider awareness campaigns to boost visibility of programs and resources (billboards, social media, traditional media, etc.)
3. Establish public outreach and school-based education programs on zero waste and the proper disposal of waste at home, school, the workplace, recreation, and public spaces	a) Include strategy targeting renters and landlords to improve trash and recycling management
4. Establish outreach activities that inform and engage residents and measure the efficacy of programs sponsored by the City	a) Affirm the Litter Index and regularly survey litter conditions throughout the city
5. Consider incentive programs to improve habits	a) Reconsider RecycleBank or similar program that integrates education/awareness of proper recycling practices

**4. Provide for financing to implement the plan before the end of the Mayoral term limit of 2028 or sooner.**