

Broad Street Brief: City Council Returns from Winter Recess

CITY HALL

Mayor Parker Expresses Openness to Working with Trump Admin.

Mayor Chelle Parker expressed a willingness to collaborate with President Donald Trump on shared priorities, emphasizing the need for bipartisan cooperation to address the city's most pressing challenges.

City Launches "Wellness Court" to Combat Substance Use Disorder

Philadelphia's new "Wellness Court" offers reduced charges and potential expungement for drug offenders who agree to treatment. The initiative is part of a broader effort — which includes a wellness facility in the Northeast — to address substance abuse issues in Kensington and improve public safety and quality of life.

City Council Tackles School District's "Rubber Rooms," Soda Tax, and Immigration Protections

In their first meeting back from winter recess, the City Council committed to investigating the Philadelphia School District's utilization of reassignment offices, commonly referred to as "rubber rooms," where school staff are assigned while under investigation for misconduct. The Council also committed to examining the effects of the City's sweetened beverage tax on businesses, trades, and consumers. Additionally, members highlighted the importance of protecting immigrants and other vulnerable communities from potentially harmful policies introduced by President Donald Trump, whose second term commenced this week.

Pension Fund on Track for Full Funding by 2033

Philadelphia's Municipal Pension Fund, now 62.2% funded as of FY23, is on track for full funding by 2033 due to increased City contributions and reforms, boosting the City's credit rating.

Upcoming Committee Hearings

Philadelphia City Council holds several public hearings throughout the legislative calendar year. Watch [here](#).

- The **Streets & Services Committee** will meet on Wednesday, January 29 at 10 a.m. to examine the City's response to illegal dumping and discuss proposals for sidewalk cafes, one-way streets, and parking regulations.

Around Town

President Trump's Executive Orders May Impact City's Federal Workforce

President Donald Trump's new executive orders imposing a hiring freeze and mandating in-person work could impact Philadelphia's federal workforce, potentially leading to understaffing and challenges for local agencies. Union leaders express concerns about the potentially detrimental impacts on essential services and employee agreements.

Philly Schools Vow to Shield Immigrant Students from ICE



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Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

The Philadelphia School District reaffirmed its policy to protect immigrant students by preventing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents from entering schools without a warrant and providing extra training for staff as they support these students.

Future of UArts' Arts Bank Building Hinges on Bankruptcy Court Decision

The sale of the University of the Arts' (UArts) Arts Bank building will be decided by a bankruptcy judge, with bids from a theater company and a developer planning residential and commercial use. The arts community hopes the new owner will remain dedicated to cultural purposes, preserving its legacy on the Avenue of the Arts.

Philadelphia Ranks as Fifth-Hottest Housing Market in 2025

Philadelphia's real estate market is booming, ranking fifth in the nation due to its affordability and strong job market, though housing inventory remains significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels. The city's healthy labor market continues to drive demand, outpacing the supply of new homes.

PHA Converts Student Apartments to Affordable Housing in UCity

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is transforming two student housing buildings in University City (UCity) into affordable housing as part of an initiative to quickly provide move-in-ready properties.

City's Biomanufacturing Faces Slowdown Amid Investor Shift to AI

Philadelphia's biomanufacturing sector is experiencing a slowdown as investors shift focus from gene therapy to artificial intelligence, leading to project delays and cancellations. Despite the slowdown, local biotech leaders remain optimistic about future demand and potential state investments to support the industry.

West Philly Street Renamed to Honor MLK Jr.'s 1965 Speech

The 3900 block of Haverford Avenue in West Philadelphia was renamed the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Triangle to commemorate the Civil Rights leader's 1965 speech in Mantua.

Election Update

Philadelphia Democrats Decline to Endorse in DA Race

For the second time in four years, Philadelphia's Democratic Party has chosen not to endorse any candidate in the 2025 district attorney race, instead deferring to individual wards to make their own endorsements.
