

## Broad Street Brief: Council Questions “Triage Center” Logistics

### City Hall

#### Budget Hearings Update

This week, Philadelphia City Council embarked on its first round of hearings on Mayor Chelle Parker’s \$6.3 billion FY25 budget, which featured discussion about police response to youth gun violence and the lack of a funding increase for the Department of Labor, as well as logistical questions about proposed triage centers to address crime, drug use, and homelessness — which the administration hopes to begin opening within weeks. The budget for the Mayor’s Office would increase by 151% primarily due to personnel costs and the creation of new positions aligned with Mayor Parker’s campaign promises.

The full schedule of FY25 budget hearings and a link to watch them can be found [here](#). The following hearings are coming up next week:

- **Chief Administrative Office, Office of Human Resources, Office of Innovation & Technology, Procurement** (Tuesday, April 2 at 10 a.m.)
- **Aviation, Water Department** (Tuesday, April 2 at 1:30 p.m.)
- **Office of Children & Families, Free Library, Parks & Recreation, Department of Human Services** (Wednesday, April 3 at 10 a.m.)
- **Commerce, Mural Arts** (Wednesday, April 3 at 1:30 p.m.)

#### Potential Tax Structure Overhaul on the Horizon, Despite Absence from FY25 Budget

Mayor Parker’s inaugural budget plan breaks a three-decade tradition by proposing no changes to Philadelphia’s wage or business tax rates, though the mayor has suggested a major overhaul of the City’s tax structure may be on the horizon pending state-level reforms.

#### City Council Investigates How to Bring Philadelphians into Growing Cell, Gene Therapy Industry

During a Commerce & Economic Development Committee hearing on Monday, City Council members heard testimony about how to help Philadelphians — especially those without college degrees — access employment opportunities in the city’s growing life sciences industry, particularly in cell and gene therapy. Councilmember Jamie Gauthier (District 3) emphasized the potential for economic uplift and the need for local workforce training initiatives.

#### Philadelphia Business Owner Files Lawsuit Over “Skill Games” Ban

A South Philly 7-Eleven franchise owner filed a lawsuit challenging the ban on casino-style “skill games” in convenience stores passed by City Council last week.

#### Upcoming Committee Hearings

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

- A **Committee on Public Health & Human Services** hearing on Monday, April 1 at 10



Joseph Hill

**Managing Director, Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies**

jhill@cozen.com  
Phone: (215) 665-2065  
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Brianna A. Westbrooks

**Government Relations Associate, Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies**

bwestbrooks@cozen.com  
Phone: (215) 665-4757  
Fax: (215) 665-2013

#### Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies

a.m. will include testimony on proposed mandates for the Managing Director's Office to report on the City's efforts to combat illegal opioid use and illegal encampments.

## **Around Town**

### **"Handle With Care" Launches in North Philadelphia Thanks to \$1M Federal Grant**

North Philadelphia's 22nd police district is aiding students who witness trauma through a new initiative called "Handle With Care," made possible by a \$1 million federal grant. Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel hopes to eventually expand the program citywide.

### **City's Summer Jobs Program Rebrands as C2L-PHL, Will Focus on Careers**

Philadelphia's summer jobs program for youth is being revamped as Career Connected Learning PHL (C2L-PHL). The program will expand to offer year-round, work-based opportunities in partnership with the School District and Philadelphia Works, replacing the City's WorkReady program.

### **Popularity of Apprenticeships Surges in Philadelphia Area**

The number of apprenticeships in the Philadelphia region — which allow individuals to receive customized education while being compensated, with a guarantee of employment on training completion — has almost doubled since 2014. Construction remains the dominant field, though other sectors like finance, insurance, and healthcare are also seeing significant growth.

### **Ships May Be Rerouted to Philadelphia Following Baltimore Bridge Collapse**

The suspension of maritime traffic through the Port of Baltimore following the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge may end up rerouting cargo ships to nearby ports, including Philadelphia's. The Delaware River Port Authority has expedited a planned review of safety features of the four bistate bridges it oversees.

### **Behavioral Health Commissioner, Prison Chief Step Down**

Philadelphia Behavioral Health Commissioner Jill Bowen is stepping down from her position to serve as Vermont's commissioner of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living after leading the department for more than three years. Chief of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons Blanche Carney is also stepping down.

---