

Broad Street Brief: Councilmember Domb Resigns, Green Equity Initiative Gets Pushed, African American Museum Will Move



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Philadelphia City Councilmember Domb Resigns

On Monday, City Councilmember Allan Domb announced that he is resigning, citing his intent to evaluate a 2023 mayoral run. In an interview with The Philadelphia Inquirer, the councilmember said that he is weighing a run because Philadelphia is a “city in crisis” in need of a “champion.” Councilmember Domb is the first of potentially many city elected officials to step down due to the resign-to-run rule in Philadelphia’s city charter. Domb made a name for himself as Philadelphia’s “condo king” before serving two terms as an at-large councilmember.

Opinion: Data Show Urban Green Spaces Can Help Philadelphia Reduce Violence, Says Matt Rader

In a recent Philadelphia Inquirer opinion piece, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society President Matt Rader extolled the virtues of investing in trees, gardens, and green public spaces as a potential means of violence reduction. With more than 330 recorded homicides thus far in 2022, which disproportionately impact Black and brown communities, city leaders should embrace a Green Equity Initiative, which would harness the power of simple but effective environmental solutions to make Philadelphia neighborhoods not only more pleasant but safer for all.

African American Museum in Philadelphia Relocating to Former Family Court Building Near “Museum Mile”

The African American Museum in Philadelphia will move from its longtime home at 7th and Arch Streets to the long-vacant former Family Court Building at 1801 Vine Street. The move, announced last week, is expected to increase museum visitorship and secure the museum’s place among the city’s most venerable cultural institutions. The museum will occupy nearly 250,000 square feet of the Depression-era beaux-arts building near the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, allowing it to expand its exhibits and facilities.

Philadelphia to Receive \$25 Million in Street Safety Funding

Last week, Senator Bob Casey announced that Philadelphia will receive \$25 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s RAISE discretionary grant program. The funding is intended to address speeding and unsafe driving in high-crash corridors in seven historically disadvantaged neighborhoods in North, West, and Northeast Philadelphia. Despite shutdowns at the height of the pandemic, traffic crash-related deaths in the city grew 88 percent in 2020 over the previous year. The funding will be used to install “countermeasures” to encourage slower, safer driving, protect bikers and pedestrians, upgrade traffic signals, and repave streets.

Councilmember Gilmore Richardson’s Tangled Title Disclosure Bill Now in Effect

Earlier this month, a new law that targets the issue of Philadelphia’s tangled titles, spearheaded by Councilmember Katherine Gilmore Richardson, went into effect. The Tangled Title Disclosure Bill addresses titles that become tangled as a result of heirs not acting once the record owner of a property passes away and requires funeral service providers to distribute a tangled title information sheet to all clients. According to Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia has more than 10,000 tangled titles, half of which became tangled within the past decade.

Black Business Leaders in Philadelphia Encouraged to Pursue Government Contracts

Last Friday, State Representative Darisha Parker spoke to a group of Philadelphia's preeminent Black business leaders, strongly encouraging them to pursue government contracts to help grow their businesses. This message was relayed after the National Convening of Black Mayors, hosted by the African American Chamber of Commerce of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, which focuses on Black entrepreneurship and equity. In the wake of the passage of the American Rescue Plan, many government contracts have yet to be awarded, with many governments stipulating that a minimum percentage be awarded to minority-owned businesses.

Philadelphia's Life Sciences Real Estate Market Slowing

Philadelphia's bustling life sciences and biotech real estate industry appears to be showing signs of slowing for the first time in nearly a decade, though not declining as sharply as other big cities. The slow growth can largely be attributed to the recent rise in inflation and the current state of the national economy. One of the strongest indicators of this trend is that many Philadelphia developers are choosing to build lab space based on market demand rather than specific requests from tenants. While experts believe the market is cooling off, they are also hopeful for recovery.
