Southwest Philadelphia Neighborhood
Litter Control Plan

PHILADELPHIA CLEAN

A LITTER-FREE CITY STARTS WITH YOU.

LITTER CONTROL PLAN

September 2018

www.cleanphl.org
In February of 2018, the City of Philadelphia’s Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet released comprehensive litter index data for every public space in the city. Each residential street, business district, park, and school received a litter score based on Keep America Beautiful’s 1-4 scale (with “1” being litter-free, and “4” requiring extensive cleanup efforts and resources from multiple entities).

After mapping Philadelphia based on that litter assessment, the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet and Streets Department brought together City departments and agencies to work in partnership with community groups to outline a set of interventions, identify resources and maintenance opportunities, and determine next steps.

While the City is committed to creating Neighborhood Litter Control Plans for every neighborhood in Philadelphia, the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet and the Streets Department are beginning with communities that have the most problematic litter index scores to guide all litter reduction work with the principle of equity.

Below is our first pilot neighborhood litter control plan, created in partnership with the Southwest Community Development Corporation (CDC) and many other organizations serving the southwest section of the city. This action plan is focused on 49th to 72nd Streets between Lindbergh Avenue and Woodland Avenue.

We expect to take the experience of this effort to other Philadelphia neighborhoods and to continue to work with stakeholders in Southwest Philadelphia in to the future on litter abatement and prevention strategies.
The following organizations played key roles in identifying causes of litter, outlining interventions and partnership opportunities, and carrying out the actions agreed upon as critical to creating and maintaining a clean Southwest Philadelphia. Included as part of this team are municipal departments as well as citywide and neighborhood-based nonprofit groups.

Note that some of these stakeholders will continue to be a part of the Neighborhood Litter Control Plan process in other communities, while others may not be depending on the conditions and needs of a given area.

**Municipal Government**
- Office of 2nd District Councilman, Kenyatta Johnson
- Managing Director’s Office
  - Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet
  - Community Life Improvement Program
- Philadelphia Department of Streets
- Philadelphia Department of Commerce
- Philadelphia Police Department, 12th Police District
- Philadelphia Police Department, Neighborhood Services
- Planning Commission
- Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections

**Citywide Agencies**
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
- Keep Philadelphia Beautiful

**Community-Based Organizations**
- Southwest Community Development Corporation
Southwest Philadelphia Demographic Data
Neighborhood Average Litter Index Score
60% of the areas scoring a “4” in Southwest Philadelphia fall within the service area encompassing this plan

Average Recycling Diversion Rate:
15.2% for entire service area

Top 10 Service Requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Request</th>
<th>zip code 19142</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>zip code 19153</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maintenance residential</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abandoned vehicle</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illegal dumping</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubbish collection</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pothole repair</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vacant house</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>street light outage</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vacant lot clean-up</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>licenses</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smoke detector</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Neighborhood Stakeholders

**Principal community and economic development entities**
- Southwest Community Development Corporation
- Empowered Community Development Corporation

**Block Captain presence**
- 348 total Block Captains prior to March 1, 2018
- 356 total Block Captains after March 1, 2018

**Registered community organizations**
- Southwest Community Development Corporation
- 40th Ward Republicans
- Paschall Unity Day Committee
- Eastwick Community Network
- Empowered Community Development Corporation
- Southwest Community Advisory Group

**Environmental stewardship organizations**
- Cedar Park Neighbors (Parks and Recreation Official Friends Group)
- Schuylkill River Watershed
- John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge

**Hyperlocal press**
- Southwest Globe Times

**Other key community assets**
- Bartram’s Garden

**Local schools**
- Tilden Middle School
- Bartram High School
- Richard Allen Preparatory Charter School
- Thomas G. Morton Elementary School
- Southwest Leadership Academy Charter School

**Key faith based organizations**
- 58th Street Baptist Church

www.cleanphl.org
Current Needs Assessment Work Conducted
Initial Stakeholder Feedback Session
The purpose of the first session was to discuss and plan for matters pertaining to Zero Waste and Litter initiatives and Vision Zero.

With the help of the Streets Department and Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet, the following programs and initiatives were identified for the area:

- The Streets Department Neighborhood Recovery Project was conducted. This program includes the following activities in areas targeted through the litter index:
  - Increased SWEEP ticketing for litter violations, for a total of 197 tickets between March 1, 2018 and May 31, 2018
  - Cleanup of illegal dumping on 27 lots for a total of 216 tons of debris between March 1, 2018 and May 31, 2018
  - Continued maintenance of cleaned areas and continued ticketing
- Philadelphia Future Track participants worked in teams across Southwest Philadelphia on various cleaning, transportation, and sanitation-related projects. The participants have taken complete ownership of their assignments and created proposals for beautifying parcels of land on the following blocks:
  - 49th St. & Paschall Ave.
  - 61st St. (2900)
  - 63rd-65th St./Eastwick-Dicks Ave.
  - 72nd St. & Paschall Ave. (bridge and park)
  - 1900 Cemetery Ave.
  - 6000 Allman St.
  - 6000 Regent St.
  - 6800-6900 Linmore Ave.
  - 5400 Glenmore Ave.

Future Track’s work resulted in:
- 28.17 tons of debris removed from three alleys
- 16.79 tons of debris removed from two vacant lots
- 100.34 tons of debris removed on 34 blocks
- 15.06 tons total for 575 tires removed from the area

- The Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee Block Captain Network continues to work hard to recruit new Block Captains and further engage existing Block Captains. The Block Captain Network provides opportunities and incentives for having clean and organized blocks, including spring and summer street cleaning and grant opportunities for beautification efforts.

On Monday March 19, 2018, the Streets Department was joined by representatives and dignitaries including Second District Councilman Kenyatta Johnson, the Mayor’s Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet, Southwest Community Development Corporation, SEPTA, and the Commerce Department at the 12th Police District for its first general public session regarding the targeted area.
The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and Amtrak have partnered with the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet over the past year to identify opportunities to improve conditions on the Airport Line, which runs through the boundaries of this Neighborhood Litter Control Plan. Amtrak and SEPTA installed 50 “No Dumping” signs along the corridor and coordinated “track outages,” which allow both organizations to conduct cleaning and graffiti removal. Both organizations are also committed to securing any open fencing. Additionally, SEPTA began coordinated cleanups with the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet through the major cleaning of the following two sites:

**60th St. on Elmwood Ave. to Grays Ave.**
- 5 employees for 1 day
- Removed 8 cubic yards of debris

**5915-17 Elmwood Ave. Lot and Escape Track**
- 6 employees for 4 days
- Removed 15 cubic yards of debris

Amtrak also completed cleanups in early March 2018 on:
- 4 track between 58th and 65th streets
- 4 track between 65th and 67th streets
The Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems introduced Vision Zero to Southwest Philadelphia with a survey of residents of the area regarding multi-modal transportation efforts and traffic-calming measures during this year’s Philly Spring Cleanup.

The Philadelphia Police Department Neighborhood Services Unit towed the following number of abandoned automobiles in Southwest Philadelphia:

- 300 abandoned autos from January 1, 2018 to March 1, 2018
- 167 abandoned autos from March 1, 2018 to June 1, 2018
- 101 abandoned autos from June 1, 2018 to June 30, 2018

Philadelphia Licenses and Inspections took action against 6 automotive shops that were out of compliance.

As part of a new pilot program, Philadelphia License and Inspections, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission installed new windows and doors to 9 publicly owned vacant properties to improve conditions on blocks.

- In that same pilot, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, with the Planning Commission and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, cleaned and greened 19 vacant lots in the service area of this plan.

This year’s Philly Spring Cleanup signature site was Ezekiel Baptist Church on 57th St. and Grays Ave. as part of this Neighborhood Litter Control Plan. 56 projects were conducted in the Neighborhood Litter Control Plan boundaries.

Stakeholder engagement during the first session also provided an opportunity for attendees to participate in a poll, submit in writing or by voice specific quality of life issues in their community pertaining to Zero Waste and Vision Zero.

The poll allowed attendees to prioritize and rank the pressing issues in order of greatest importance or concern.

### Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Feedback Session</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dumping</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautification</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Maintenance</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Waste</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Compliant Businesses</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Waste left carelessly or hurriedly in unauthorized locations

The process of making visual improvements to a place or thing

Maintaining the condition of vacant land & properties in an aesthetically appealing way

Placement or storage for safe and proper disposal of household waste including trash and recycling

Trash, such as paper, cans, and bottles, left lying in an open or public place

Entities operating outside of the confines of the law or regulations. May include improper disposal of waste, blocking the right-of-way, or creating hazardous conditions.
Neighborhood Interventions
As a direct result of community feedback — and to continue the City’s ongoing efforts — the following interventions have been determined as key to sustained neighborhood beautification throughout Southwest Philadelphia.

These interventions are intended to address the main causes of litter as identified by both community stakeholders and the City:

- Vacant land and open space that lead to illegal dumping
- A lack of lighting in strategic areas to deter illegal dumping and other crimes
- Scrap yards and automotive shops

Carrying out the interventions outlined below will remain a cross-departmental effort along with on the ground community stakeholders. All of the action items detailed here are connected, and work to support one another; we recognize that a successful enforcement strategy, for instance, is linked to the stabilization of vacant land.

The goal of the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet and the Streets Department is to revisit this plan with the Southwest Philadelphia community on a quarterly basis to track progress, address concerns in a timely manner, and take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. We will also use the annual litter indexing to monitor improvements in litter scores on specific blocks and vacant lots as well as across the entire geographic boundaries of this neighborhood litter control plan.
Illegal Dumping Enforcement

The Streets Department’s SWEEP (Streets and Walkways Education and Enforcement Program) officers, along with the 12th Police District, will work with the Southwest CDC to continue strategic enforcement efforts aimed at curbing illegal dumping and street litter. Specific tactics at illegal dumping hotspots will include but will not necessarily be limited to:

- Camera installation and additional lighting at locations experiencing the highest levels of illegal dumping
- Education and promotion of the 311 program and mobile application to encourage active reporting of neighborhood beautification concerns by both the business and residential communities
- Education and enforcement for business owners and residents around their obligations under the code regarding waste, using the litter index to guide these outreach efforts
- Continued and consistent communication and coordination between the City and neighbors to track progress on illegal dumping enforcement
- Continue the Streets Department Tire Roundup to collect illegally dumped tires and advocate for more oversight of tire-related businesses to prevent dumping

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Decrease in illegal dumping
- Increase in successful illegal dumping prosecutions and SWEEP ticketing
- Increase in camera network and lighting
- Increase in 311 reporting
There are approximately 40,000 vacant lots across the city of Philadelphia — and those pieces of vacant land, large and small, attract illegal dumping and street litter alike.

In order to address the root causes of the litter and illegal dumping concerns in Southwest Philadelphia, key parcels of vacant land need to be transformed, whether through neighborhood-led greening efforts, municipal interventions with citywide organizations such as the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, private development, or a combination of these efforts.

The City will work with the Southwest CDC to continue efforts already underway, as well as work to:

- Successfully stabilize the 19 vacant parcels already identified as key to neighborhood-wide, sustainable beautification
- Identify other vacant lots in need of beautification and stabilization, and then:
  - Engage key partners in land stabilization efforts, such as the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s LandCare program
  - Undertake a community engagement process to determine the highest and best use for the parcels identified
  - Secure any additional funding and/or land-use agreements needed to expand and maintain lot transformation efforts
- Ensure that no vacant lots have unpermitted use (illegal auto yards, illegal scrap storage yards, etc.)

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Number of lots beautified and maintained
- Number of lots developed by private or community organizations
Intervention 3

Beautification Efforts

Well-kept residential blocks, commercial corridors, and public gathering spaces create a social norm that serves as a prevention tool in tackling litter and illegal dumping.

In Southwest Philadelphia, the City and community stakeholders will build upon efforts to clean and develop vacant lots through general beautification efforts. This will involve:

- Identifying and increasing opportunities for neighbors to beautify their blocks through:
  - Existing City programs such as the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee’s Clean Block Contest and the Water Department’s Rain Check Program
  - Improvements to lighting and property maintenance
  - Deploying Streets Department Future Track program participants to partner with community members on beautification projects
  - Continuing existing beautification and cleanup efforts along the airport regional rail line

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Blocks participating in the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee Clean Block Contest
- Green stormwater infrastructure installed
- Future track projects completed
- Increased residential lighting
- Increased 311 property maintenance requests
- SEPTA/Amtrak Airport Line cleanup and beautification progress
Intervention 4

Block Captain Recruitment & Engagement

One of the greatest lessons learned from the citywide litter index is a simple one: blocks with engaged Block Captains are cleaner than those without block-level leaders. A civically engaged resident who has stepped up to organize neighbors to participate in cleanups and other community work has a multiplier effect.

Therefore, the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee will work with Southwest CDC to:

- Map blocks with active Block Captains
- Select key blocks without Block Captains and work to recruit a new block leader through mailings, canvassing, and the successful leveraging of citywide events like the Philly Spring Cleanup
- Convene active Block Captains in Southwest Philadelphia regularly to build community, work together across the neighborhood, and notify the City of concerns and issues that need to be addressed through municipal services

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Number of new Block Captains recruited
- Number of opportunities for Block Captains to meet and work together
Neighborhood Interventions

Communications

Website

- Southwest neighbors will be able to track the progress of the plan’s implementation on a special page on the Cleanphl.org website. The page will host the full plan, running updates of work accomplished on the plan, and other relevant updates for residents and stakeholders in the Southwest.

Partner Engagement

- A social media toolkit will be created for the partners organizing feedback meetings and final plans. The toolkit will include meeting flyers, social media graphics to promote meetings, a list of the media partners to tag in posts, and relevant hashtags.

- The City will work in coordination with partners to support and facilitate media outreach and other external communication. The City’s Commerce Department will facilitate outreach to businesses in the neighborhood about the plan and ways to get involved.

Social Media

- The City will create an external social media plan that will list the relevant groups to engage residents/businesses/organizations in ongoing efforts related to the plan.

Traditional Communications

- The City will engage with the media to communicate the progress on the plan by soliciting press coverage.

- The City will also utilize internal communications vehicles such as the City employee newsletter to raise awareness across the network of City employees.

- The City will look into utilizing the Streets Department’s NextDoor account to conduct outreach and promotion of the plan on a hyperlocal level.
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