

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, April 15, 2024
10:04 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMEMBER NINA AHMAD
COUNCILMEMBER CINDY BASS
COUNCILMEMBER MICHAEL DRISCOLL
COUNCILMEMBER KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMEMBER JIM HARRITY
COUNCILMEMBER CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMEMBER RUE LANDAU
COUNCILMEMBER QUETCY LOZADA
COUNCILMEMBER NICOLAS O'ROURKE
COUNCILMEMBER ANTHONY PHILLIPS
COUNCILMEMBER MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMEMBER ISAIAH THOMAS
COUNCILMEMBER JEFFERY YOUNG, JR.

BILLS 240179, 240180, 240181, and 240182
RESOLUTION 240193

- - -

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Good morning. Good morning, everyone.

4 (Good morning.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I

6 want to thank all of you for being

7 patient with us this morning. Thank you

8 very much.

9 This is the public hearing and
10 public meeting of the Committee of the
11 Whole regarding Bills No. 240179, 240180,
12 240181, 240182, and Resolution No.
13 240193.

14 Ms. Loughead, will you please
15 call the roll and take attendance.

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Squilla.

18 (No response.)

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Gauthier.

21 (No response.)

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember
23 Jones.

24 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Present.

25 THE CLERK: Councilmember

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Young.
3 (No response.)
4 THE CLERK: Councilmember
5 Driscoll.
6 (No response.)
7 THE CLERK: Councilmember
8 Lozada.
9 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Present.
10 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.
11 (No response.)
12 THE CLERK: Councilmember
13 Phillips.
14 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
15 Present.
16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 O'Neill.
18 (No response.)
19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Gilmore Richardson.
21 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
22 Present.
23 THE CLERK: Councilmember
24 Thomas.
25 (No response.)

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 THE CLERK: Councilman Harrity.
3 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:
4 Present.
5 THE CLERK: Councilmember
6 Ahmad.
7 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Present.
8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Landau.
10 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Present.
11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 Brooks.
13 (No response.)
14 THE CLERK: Councilmember
15 O'Rourke.
16 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:
17 Present.
18 THE CLERK: Council President
19 Johnson.
20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 Present.
22 Thank you. A quorum of the
23 Committee is present and this hearing is
24 now called to order.
25 Ms. Loughead, will you please

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 read the title of the resolutions.

3 THE CLERK: Bill No. 240179, an
4 ordinance to adopt the Operating Budget
5 for Fiscal Year 2025.

6 Bill No. 240180, an ordinance
7 amending Chapter 19-1800 of The
8 Philadelphia Code, entitled "School Tax
9 Authorization," to provide for an
10 increase in the tax that the Board of
11 Education of the School District of
12 Philadelphia is authorized to impose on
13 real estate; and amending Chapter
14 19-1300, entitled "Real Estate Taxes," to
15 establish an equivalent reduction in the
16 tax rate for the City real estate tax;
17 and making technical changes; all under
18 certain terms and conditions.

19 Bill No. 240181, an ordinance
20 to adopt a Fiscal Year 2025 Capital
21 Budget.

22 Bill No. 240182, an ordinance
23 to adopt a Capital Program for the six
24 Fiscal Years 2025 to 2030 inclusive.

25 Resolution No. 240193,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 providing for the approval by the Council
3 of the City of Philadelphia of a Revised
4 Five Year Financial Plan for the City of
5 Philadelphia covering Fiscal Years 2025
6 through 2029, and incorporating revisions
7 with respect to Fiscal Year 2024, which
8 is to be submitted by the Mayor to the
9 Pennsylvania Intergovernmental
10 Cooperation Authority pursuant to an
11 Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement
12 by and between the City and the
13 Authority.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Today we will continue the public hearing
16 of the Committee of the Whole to consider
17 the bills read by the Clerk that
18 constitute proposed operating and capital
19 spending measures for Fiscal Year 2025, a
20 Capital Program, and a forward-looking
21 Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2025 through
22 Fiscal Year 2030.

23 This morning we will hear
24 testimony from the Departments of Public
25 Health, the Department of Behavioral

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2 Health and Intellectual disAbility
3 Services, and Office of Homeless
4 Services. This afternoon we will
5 continue with the testimony from the
6 Department of Planning and Development
7 and also the Department of Register of
8 Wills.

9 Ms. Loughhead, will you please
10 call the first witness to testify.

11 THE CLERK: Dr. Frank Franklin,
12 Interim Health Commissioner.

13 (Witnesses approached witness
14 table.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Excuse me. I'm going to call up the
17 Office of Homeless Services first.
18 Excuse me. I just want to rearrange the
19 schedule this morning. Office of
20 Homeless Services.

21 The Chair also recognizes
22 Councilman Mike Driscoll is present.

23 (Witnesses approached witness
24 table.)

25 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Good

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2 morning --

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 Good morning.

5 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: -- Council

6 President and members of City Council.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

8 Before you give your presentation, the

9 Chair recognizes Councilmember Katherine

10 Gilmore Richardson.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

12 Thank you. Thank you so much,

13 Mr. President.

14 And first I truly want to thank

15 everyone who is here this morning who

16 works to provide service to our residents

17 who are experiencing homelessness and

18 housing insecurity. It is a very

19 challenging job in the best of

20 circumstances, and I do appreciate the

21 service that you all are providing. I am

22 grateful for the families also that we

23 are able to help.

24 I also want to note for the

25 record that I share the same singular

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2 goal in this work. And let me say this:
3 This work is not about me. It's not
4 about any of you. It's about the people
5 that we serve. This is not personal.
6 This is business, because this is about
7 people, and I want to be real clear.

8 The goal is to provide
9 leadership, coordination, planning,
10 immobilization of resources to make
11 homelessness rare, brief, and
12 non-reoccurring in this city. With an
13 overall budget that has increased by
14 \$57 million since Fiscal Year '18, I am
15 truly perplexed as to why we are not able
16 to help more people and more families.

17 As you all know, I spent the
18 last year and a half seeking to address
19 issues with homelessness in our city. It
20 all started with a constituent case where
21 a mother of five children called my
22 office looking for somewhere to go. I
23 made a call to the family intake line. I
24 did not identify myself. I was gravely
25 concerned with the service I received.

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2 The more I've looked into this,
3 the more concerned I am becoming. There
4 is a deep, systematic, structural issue
5 with the operation of Homeless Services
6 in the City of Philadelphia.

7 I have met with those living in
8 shelters. I have met with providers. I
9 have met with advocates and with City
10 officials, and my team and I have
11 reviewed every single document you see in
12 front of me, every one, for the last
13 18 months. We've gone through thousands
14 of pages, and it is clear to me that in
15 order to actually end homelessness in our
16 city, we need a complete overhaul of that
17 department. That is why I introduced
18 legislation calling for the creation of
19 an Office of Homeless Services
20 Ombudsperson.

21 Now that the problem has
22 finally come to light, the buck must stop
23 with us, colleagues. The buck has to
24 stop somewhere. If we continue to allow
25 this office to operate in this way, we

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2 are culpable for their dysfunction, their
3 lack of accountability, and mismanagement
4 of funds.

5 In addition, this office is
6 currently under investigation by the OIG
7 and has an ongoing forensic audit, which
8 was announced by our Mayor, and I thank
9 Mayor Parker and her Administration for
10 taking that necessary action.

11 I believe we can help many more
12 families with the money we have allocated
13 if the money was managed correctly and
14 the appropriate oversight of the system
15 was taking place.

16 And I want to say on the record
17 right now that until we see written
18 policies and procedures and a system of
19 oversight that will lead to fundamental
20 change, I do not support the operations
21 of this office or any additional funding.

22 Providing additional resources
23 to OHS will do nothing to house more
24 Philadelphians or a system in receiving
25 high-quality services until these changes

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2 have been implemented.

3 Effective operations are rooted
4 in both function and financing, and as I
5 have stated from the beginning, when I
6 requested additional funds for this
7 department -- because if you remember, I
8 originally requested additional funds for
9 this department and you received them --
10 last year in hopes that we can open
11 another family intake shelter, my only
12 goal is to ensure we provide high-quality
13 services to Philadelphians.

14 And I want to state for the
15 record that I appreciate the work OHS has
16 done to open the second intake shelter,
17 but I find it very suspicious that
18 suddenly, after I asked in writing about
19 the progress of the money that we
20 allocated and it was approved last year
21 and right before last week's
22 Appropriations hearing, that suddenly the
23 shelter was identified and ready to open
24 and operate.

25 In addition, I believe that you

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2 all were able to get away with this for
3 so long because you screamed, the
4 homeless, the homeless, we have to help
5 the homeless. But what I have learned is
6 that we are not helping those who need us
7 most.

8 To my colleagues, please don't
9 fall for any more of the games. If you
10 care about this issue, get educated about
11 how this really works. Do the hard work
12 my team and I have been doing for
13 18 months. Then tell me if you are
14 comfortable putting your name on the line
15 as being culpable to this mismanagement.

16 Your approval of this continued
17 mismanagement of funds and lack of
18 accountability for our most vulnerable
19 will mean that you agree with what's been
20 going on. And I will tell you I'm not
21 putting myself on the line or my family
22 for anything that I have seen, read or
23 heard in the last 18 months in this
24 department.

25 And I want to be clear with

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2 everybody who is here. I was sent to
3 this body on behalf of the residents of
4 the City of Philadelphia to do a job.
5 Our primary responsibility in this body
6 is to legislate and appropriate our City
7 budget. Do not ask me not to do my job.
8 Let me repeat. Do not ask me not to do
9 my job. If you don't like it, so be it.
10 I have this privilege to represent the
11 people of Philadelphia. I will do my
12 job.

13 We must provide high-quality
14 services and be good stewards of taxpayer
15 dollars, money that comes out of the
16 pockets of our hard-working residents.
17 These are not mutually exclusive goals.

18 I do not believe we are doing
19 that in this case, and I will not stand
20 by any longer while many Philadelphians
21 are not treated with the dignity and
22 respect they deserve and are not able to
23 receive service in their time of need.

24 Thank you, Mr. President, for
25 allowing those opening remarks.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 You're welcome.

4 Will the Department of Homeless
5 Services please begin your testimony.

6 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
7 for that, Majority Leader.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 Bring your microphone up, please.

10 Before we even get started, I
11 just want to acknowledge in the presence
12 of our illustrious body students from the
13 Sankofa Academy.

14 Let's give them a round of
15 applause. They are our guests.

16 Can we have them stand, please.
17 All the young people who are here stand.

18 - - -

19 (Applause.)

20 - - -

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

22 They are here to witness our budget
23 process as guests of our Majority Whip,
24 Mr. Isaiah Thomas. And the correct name
25 is the Sankofa Freedom Academy, and we

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2 thank them for being here, as well as the
3 presence of Jeffery J. Young.

4 Anybody else come in?
5 Councilmember Mike Driscoll,
6 Councilmember Nicholas O'Rourke.

7 Okay. The floor is now yours,
8 sir. Please state your name and title
9 for the record and begin your testimony.

10 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Good
11 morning, Council President Johnson and
12 members of City Council. I am David
13 Holloman, Interim Executive Director for
14 the City's Office of Homeless Services.
15 Joining me today is Peter Curran and
16 members of the OHS executive management
17 team. I am pleased to provide testimony
18 on the City's Office of Homeless
19 Services' Fiscal Year '25 Operating
20 Budget.

21 OHS is requesting \$88,714,379.
22 This request will enable the Office of
23 Homeless Services to continue to provide
24 and to maintain services, which includes
25 homelessness prevention and diversion,

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2 emergency and temporary housing,
3 permanent supportive housing,
4 infrastructure, and administrative
5 services.

6 Before proceeding, it is
7 imperative to address OHS's budget
8 shortfall. We acknowledge OHS's
9 budgetary current position resulting in
10 past overspending. As a result of this,
11 our office is working with the Office of
12 the Inspector General and a forensic
13 audit team to assess past financial
14 practices and to implement recommended
15 improvements.

16 Since assuming this role in
17 October, I have also established
18 safeguards to prevent future
19 overspending, such as a detailed
20 corrective action plan and standard
21 operating procedures, with enhanced
22 fiscal processes and accountability.

23 Despite these challenges, the
24 Office of Homeless Services has seen many
25 accomplishments, such as ending Calendar

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2 Year 2023, 15,652 visits to our
3 centralized intake centers. Of that,
4 12,137 unique individuals were placed in
5 emergency and temporary housing.
6 Additionally, through our Prevention and
7 Diversion Unit, we were able to assist
8 1,428 individuals and family households.
9 Lastly, but not least, through our
10 nationally recognized Landlord Engagement
11 Unit, they successfully recruited 6,982
12 landlords to connect prospective tenants
13 to the opportunity for affordable
14 housing.

15 As we forecast for FY25, the
16 Office of Homeless Services is embarking
17 on a five-year strategic plan that would
18 align with Mayor Parker's cleaner, safer,
19 greener, economic opportunity for all.
20 The Office of Homeless Services will
21 deploy several tactics to address certain
22 areas.

23 Families, we agree with you,
24 Majority Leader, families deserve to live
25 in a dignified residence. So we will be

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2 focusing our move-on strategy to reduce
3 family homelessness in our emergency and
4 temporary housing.

5 Secondly, our elderly, seniors
6 who are living either unhoused or in our
7 emergency temporary housing deserve to
8 live in a dignified place and meet with
9 the proper level of services need.

10 Lastly, but not least, our
11 youth, which is defined by HUD 18 to
12 24 years of age. Last year, the City of
13 Philadelphia received \$8.7 million from a
14 Youth Homeless Demonstration project
15 grant. That grant is designed to develop
16 a plan to effectively end and reduce
17 homelessness in the City of Philadelphia.
18 We're extremely excited about this
19 opportunity.

20 As we look at our brothers and
21 sisters who are currently residing
22 unsheltered on the street, we will work
23 with our partner agency within the City
24 of Philadelphia to develop a more
25 comprehensive assessment strategy that

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2 meets people's need.

3 And lastly and in conclusion, I
4 would like to thank the dedicated staff,
5 the mission-driven individuals at the
6 Office of Homeless Services, and also our
7 partners who have worked with us
8 throughout the pandemic and before the
9 pandemic of answering any concerns that
10 we may have.

11 At this time, I would like to
12 thank the members of City Council for
13 your due diligence, your advocacy, and
14 your passion to make Philadelphia better.

15 We will answer any question
16 that you may have at this present time.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

18 Thank you. I'm going to be brief with my
19 comments and then relax the floor to my
20 members.

21 Just a couple things. The
22 systems that you put in place to deal
23 with the fiscal mismanagement that has
24 been taking place in the Office of
25 Homeless Services, give us an idea in

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2 more detail what that looks like.

3 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
4 for that question. So we have developed
5 a framework, and I have to say framework
6 because we're currently in the mix of an
7 investigation by the Office of Inspector
8 General forensic team, but this work
9 framework that we have in place right now
10 allows for multi-layer of accountability
11 and oversight.

12 What we have done was to bring
13 in all of the internal departments -- can
14 you hear me?

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Yes.

17 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: What we
18 have done was have a multi-layered
19 review. We have designed and implemented
20 a multi-layered review that starts with
21 the Executive Director. The Executive
22 Director will be responsible for signing
23 on -- signing off on any contract that is
24 authorized through the Office of Homeless
25 Services. We have also implemented

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2 through our Contracts Unit and Housing
3 Unit and Policy Unit where there will be
4 director's level of signoff to make sure
5 that, one, the services that are being
6 rendered are in complete control of what
7 we are paying for by the scope of
8 services, also those line items and items
9 that providers may be billing for and
10 that we're providing technical assistance
11 when there is disruptions there.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: And
13 last question, will your department play
14 any role in the proposed triage and
15 wellness facilities proposed by the
16 Mayor?

17 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: At this
18 time, we're working with all of our
19 partners, starting at the Managing
20 Director's Office. Because it involves
21 individuals who are homeless on the
22 street, I'm assuming we will play a role.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: And
24 last, what's the timeline for this
25 forensic audit from the Office of

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2 Inspector General?

3 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I'm
4 assuming it will take a number of months,
5 maybe four to five months, for them to do
6 a thorough audit of our office.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

8 Okay.

9 The Chair recognizes
10 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
11 Richardson.

12 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
13 Thank you, Mr. President. And,
14 Mr. President, for the record, I am now
15 respectfully requesting a callback for
16 the Office of Homeless Services during
17 our callback budget hearing process.

18 For the record, OHS's overall
19 budget by revenue type, if you can just
20 ensure that I am correct, Mr. Curran.
21 Fiscal Year FY18 -- this is total General
22 Fund and Grants Revenue -- was about
23 \$81.8 million; is that correct? I'm just
24 going to say the number, Mr. Curran. I'm
25 going to say the number for each year,

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2 and if you could just verify that that
3 number is correct.

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: For
6 Fiscal Year '18, General Fund and Grants
7 Revenue, approximately \$81.8 million?

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That
9 sounds correct.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: For
11 FY19, approximately \$89.7 million?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

13 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
14 FY20, \$94.9 million?

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That
16 is correct.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
18 FY21, \$122.3 million?

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That
20 is correct.

21 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: For
22 FY22, \$95.1 million?

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN:
24 Correct.

25 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

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2 FY23, \$106.8 million?

3 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

4 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

5 FY24, \$140.6 million? That's total for
6 General Fund and Grants Revenue for FY24.

7 I have General Fund \$91,564,048. Grants
8 Revenue \$49,056,919, for a total of
9 \$140,620,967.

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That
11 is correct.

12 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
13 Okay. And then for FY21 proposed, total
14 \$138.2 million; is that correct?

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

16 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
17 Okay. Thank you for that verification.

18 With that information, could
19 you clarify the request for the
20 additional \$16 million? How much
21 additional money are you requesting for
22 Class 100, how many positions, in which
23 units, and then again for Class 200?

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: For
25 Class 100 in Fiscal '25, our request is

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2 10,635,984. Total General Fund positions
3 is 149. Grant funded positions is 39,
4 for a total number of positions 188.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: My
6 question, though, is with the amounts
7 that I have just notated for the record
8 and that you have confirmed, we received
9 a request that OHS is requesting an
10 additional \$16 million. Can you help me
11 find where?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: The
13 \$16 million is made up of 9.3 million, of
14 which was funding that was scheduled to
15 be --

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Could you use the microphone, please.

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Sure.
19 My apologies.

20 \$9.3 million of this request is
21 funding that had existed in our budget in
22 Fiscal Years '23 and '24 that was
23 scheduled to come out this year. Some of
24 these services that were being covered
25 were some non-congregate sheltering and

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2 also -- I believe it's mostly
3 non-congregate sheltering and some other
4 services as well, and obviously we can
5 follow up in writing for the specifics.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
7 I'm not -- I'm having a hard time hearing
8 you.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Okay.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
11 if you could just pull the mic closer.

12 Again, what I'm seeking to
13 understand is the additional \$16 million
14 request. Where is that reflected when
15 typically you would see that reflected
16 here. And it's only a change. It's a
17 decrease of \$2 million, but you all are
18 asking us for an increase of \$16 million.
19 That's my understanding.

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Right.
21 We were asked to abbreviate that section
22 by the Department of Finance. So I can
23 give you those details directly. I don't
24 have them off the top of my head, but
25 those were initially in our submission.

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2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

3 Okay. I'm having a hard time hearing
4 you, but, again, for the 16 million, you
5 said that goes back to Finance?

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: No.

7 The \$16 million -- the \$16 million is
8 essentially 9.3 million that was
9 scheduled to come out in the Fiscal Year
10 '25 per the Five Year Plan. That's
11 funding that we had the last couple of
12 fiscal years. In the Five Year Plan, it
13 was scheduled to come out. \$1.4 million
14 of that is for additional funding for
15 support for operations at the
16 Philadelphia Nursing Home, and \$5 million
17 of that is to basically maintain current
18 services and to restore some of the
19 funding that we had to reduce this year
20 due to the 5 million now being awarded in
21 the midyear transfer in the fall.

22 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

23 Right. So let me circle back to that
24 very quickly before I move to my next
25 question, because we did not allocate

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2 that money because you all told us and we
3 worked with Finance and with OHS during
4 Appropriations and you stated the
5 contracts that you all had already
6 conformed, that you only needed up to
7 that amount and you would deal with the
8 rest of it later once you get on the
9 fiscal year contract schedule.

10 And so my concern is is that
11 every year you have come to us to say,
12 we're fixing this, and then every year
13 you have to come back and ask us for more
14 money. Where is the money going? We did
15 give you enough money to deal with the
16 conformed contracts. Then we just
17 approved another 850,000 for
18 intradepartmental transfer in order for
19 you all to meet additional contracts that
20 had already been conformed that did not
21 reflect in the records that you all
22 shared with us, and then the contract
23 amounts were different.

24 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: So thanks
25 again for that question. The monies that

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2 came in for the midyear transfer, at that
3 time we requested \$14.7 million.

4 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

5 Right.

6 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: 9.6 of
7 that, you are absolutely correct, we were
8 on a calendar year fiscal period, which
9 crossed over a couple fiscal years. The
10 reason why we were projecting a
11 \$5 million overspend, because they were
12 contracts that was previously authorized
13 by our previous leadership during that
14 time. As a corrective action plan and to
15 address this projected \$5 million deficit
16 while we're in the midst of FY24, we had
17 to make some revisions and to recoup some
18 of these contracts to align with what we
19 have budgetary authority for.

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

21 Okay. So let me stop you there, because
22 I know I'm going to hear this a lot today
23 and I'm a little beside myself, because
24 I'm a former chief of staff too. I was a
25 chief of staff to former Councilmember

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Blondell Reynolds Brown. There wasn't
3 too much that happened with her or around
4 her that I was not aware of.

5 So for the record, if each of
6 you could state your name, state your
7 position, and how long you've been
8 working at OHS.

9 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yes.
10 Again, David Holloman, current Interim
11 Executive Director for the City's Office
12 of Homeless Services. I've been at OHS
13 since 2012.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
15 Thank you.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I am
17 Peter Curran. I am the Deputy Director
18 for Fiscal Contracts and Asset
19 Management, and I have been with Homeless
20 Services since 2011.

21 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
22 you've been in charge of contracts and
23 fiscal at OHS since 2011, but this all
24 happened under the previous leadership of
25 which you all were there.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I was
3 not in charge of all of that in 2011. I
4 was in charge beginning in the summer of
5 2020.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
7 2020, okay. But still under the previous
8 leadership that you all are referring to
9 in your testimony.

10 Please proceed.

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
12 Good morning, Councilmembers. Roberta
13 Cancellier, Deputy Director for Housing
14 Services at OHS, 20 years.

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
16 please advise -- you said 20 years?

17 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
18 Yes.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
20 please advise your title again and your
21 responsibility.

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
23 Deputy Director for Housing Services. So
24 the services and programs that we operate
25 fall in Housing Services Division.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

3 Thank you.

4 And I'm sorry. Just to
5 confirm, you've been a part of the
6 leadership team at OHS for 20 years?

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

8 Yes, I have.

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
10 would you state that you were a part of
11 the previous leadership or are you not?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

13 Yes.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

15 Okay.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Good
17 morning, Council. My name is Beth
18 Gonzales. I am the Deputy Director of
19 Policy, Planning and Performance
20 Management, and I've been at OHS for
21 seven years.

22 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

23 Seven years, okay. Thank you very, very
24 much.

25 In last year's budget

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 responses, City Council FY24 budget
3 responses, Page 5, OHS wrote, the
4 \$3,253,904 increase in Class 100 for
5 administration services and
6 infrastructure adds nine additional
7 positions and brings the position total
8 up to 47 to conduct all this work, which
9 translates into a dependable steward of
10 precious taxpayer dollars for
11 high-quality, consistent caring services
12 for 18,000 people at the moment of
13 greatest need in their lives.

14 Six months after you made this
15 statement, you came to Council requesting
16 \$14.7 million in additional funding
17 because you had oversight -- because you
18 had overspent your budget for four fiscal
19 years, and you are again coming to
20 request 16 million more to address
21 significant overspending, including
22 Grants Revenue, the Office of Homeless
23 Services Grants Revenue Fund.

24 So I'm going to go down. I'm
25 going to skip a few questions, but I will

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 submit all of these for the record for
3 your written responses.

4 Were you audited by anyone in
5 Fiscal Year '23, including, but not
6 limited to, the federal government, the
7 state government, City Finance employees,
8 the City Controller or internally?

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: In
10 Fiscal Year '23, we were part of the
11 City's annual single audit, which was the
12 Controller's Office. The State of
13 Pennsylvania, their Department of Human
14 Services audited us for the -- I'm sorry;
15 it's the Social Services Block Grant.
16 And I believe that was it. We did not
17 have a HUD audit that year. I believe it
18 was two. It was just the state and the
19 Controller's Office.

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Was
21 there --

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I'm
23 sorry. I am mistaken. We also had a
24 monitoring with the federal Department of
25 Housing and Urban Development.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
3 were the results made publicly available?

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I
5 believe so. I don't know by our office.
6 No, I don't believe so, but I think those
7 are published.

8 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: May
9 you please share those with the Council
10 President and the Council body?

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

12 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: In
13 Fiscal Year '24, you were originally
14 appropriated \$80 million, the largest
15 ever General Fund contribution to your
16 office, and you received nearly
17 \$50 million in Grants Revenue, taking
18 your total original appropriation to over
19 \$129 million. You still overspent your
20 budget. Would you be able to detail why?

21 And I heard the bell, and I
22 will respect the clock, and I appreciate
23 this, Council President.

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Our
25 Fiscal Year '23, much like the previous

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 fiscal years in which we overspent, the
3 Office of Homeless Services did enter
4 into contracts with funding that we did
5 not have appropriated.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I'm
7 sorry?

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: From
9 Fiscal Years '21, '22, and '23, the
10 Office of Homeless Services entered into
11 professional services contracts with
12 funding that was not appropriated to the
13 Office.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
15 Would you be able to talk about -- I will
16 honor the clock. I will come back on the
17 next round.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 Just for clarity, did you just say that
20 y'all engaged in contracts, y'all
21 appropriated for contracts with
22 professional services but the funding
23 wasn't there? I'm just trying to get
24 clarity on the status.

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 is correct.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: How
4 does that work, if you don't mind me
5 asking?

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Well,
7 it doesn't, but --

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I
9 didn't hear you. Say that again. I
10 can't hear you.

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: It
12 doesn't. That's why we had incurred the
13 \$9.6 million deficit.

14 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: And I also
15 want to note for the record that the
16 Office is currently under an
17 investigation, and we hope that through
18 those assessments of how our financial
19 practices, we can have a better response
20 for you and a more accurate response once
21 the Office of Inspector General, along
22 with that forensic audit team, has done
23 their due diligence on making some
24 assessments.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 I've been around for a little bit these
3 last couple years --

4 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: And just,
5 as I stated --

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: One
7 second. I just have a question.

8 Did anybody say we can't do
9 that or that's not appropriate or that's
10 not the best way to go about good
11 fiduciary fiscal management, or nobody
12 saw these things happening? I just
13 wanted to ask.

14 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: No. I want
15 to state this, two things before we get
16 there. Again, it will not happen again,
17 as I've stated in my opening testimony,
18 but there was a difference of opinion as
19 it relates to that.

20 I want to note here, yes, we
21 were at the Office of Homeless Services,
22 but we were not the decision-maker, the
23 final decision-maker. So I need to make
24 that extremely clear. But, again, we
25 don't believe that spending outside of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 your budget is the correct thing to do
3 given that this is taxpayers' dollars
4 here.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
6 Chair recognizes Councilmember Jones.

7 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: So thank
8 you, Mr. President. I know the Health
9 Department right now is glad you changed
10 the order.

11 So I'm not going to focus on
12 your fiscal stewardship. Member Gilmore
13 Richardson is laserly focused on that.
14 I'd like to just from a District
15 Councilperson's perspective share with
16 you some of the experiences that my
17 constituents who have gone through that
18 system have relayed back to me. And, in
19 fact, we've worked with them to try to --
20 so let me precursor to my questions.

21 I couldn't do your job. You
22 catch people in their worst day, families
23 that are impacted. I get that. You're
24 going to have to answer about the money.
25 I don't know why you took the job, but

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 congratulations.

3 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I love

4 helping people.

5 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: You love

6 helping people.

7 So if you were talking about
8 potholes, when we see a pothole, we fix
9 it. We look at it -- when we see ten
10 potholes, we question what kind of
11 surfacing are we putting down, because it
12 might not be adequate. So when we start
13 looking at systems and the continuum of
14 homelessness, the first thing I would
15 recommend to you is a flowchart, PERT
16 chart of what happens when somebody walks
17 through your door seeking housing, so
18 that all of us can understand the
19 possible outcomes.

20 We did this for the criminal
21 justice system. We've done this for
22 other departments. You need to help us
23 understand what those outcomes can be.

24 Second question, how much does
25 it cost for a single parent with a kid to

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 stay overnight at one of your shelters on
3 average?

4 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Great
5 question, Councilman Jones. The average
6 cost for a single bed per night is
7 ranging between \$68 to \$73 per night.

8 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Okay.
9 And I can only say that that experience
10 is not the Holiday Inn. It is
11 challenging.

12 Another constituent, who is
13 related to one of my staffers, so I know
14 it's an authentic concern, she refused to
15 stay in the shelters because she was
16 constantly being approached by other
17 females about her sexuality and if she --
18 I've heard this about staffers. I've
19 heard this coming about from other
20 residents.

21 How do we secure that stay is
22 one that is at least tolerable, that
23 people aren't choosing to sleep on the
24 streets versus stay in our shelters? How
25 do we, irrespective of the money, how do

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 we make sure that people stay with
3 dignity?

4 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
5 for that question. I'm going to start
6 and then I'm going to defer to my
7 Housing.

8 So let me first and foremost
9 say we do not discriminate against anyone
10 from sexual creed, ethnicity or gender.
11 We strongly encourage our providers, the
12 staff, to respect people from all levels.
13 So that gets down to the quality of
14 services.

15 As you have indicated, shelters
16 unfortunately serve as a backdrop for
17 many system failures. The number that I
18 opened up with earlier about 15,000 that
19 we saw as visitors, when you break that
20 down over 12 months, over one-twelfth,
21 there's about 1,300 people that are
22 visiting our shelters from prisons,
23 hospitals, streets, and all different
24 walks of life.

25 It is critical and necessary

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 for us to have a better assessment tool
3 at the beginning of the front door, but
4 to also work with our provider community
5 to find out from a trauma-based
6 perspective what can we do in terms of
7 providing technical assistance to them so
8 that these issues that you are explaining
9 there does not occur, and if they are
10 occurring, we need to have a process in
11 place to quickly address that.

12 What I'd also like to say here
13 is that it really starts at the mindset
14 of people that are coming in and the
15 staff. And so it's a partnership there.

16 I think too many times we look
17 at this and not have some set standards.
18 It's standards everywhere, in your
19 household and all. So when people are
20 coming in, if they're coming from an
21 institutionalized setting, it is on us
22 and the providers who are delivering
23 those services to help reshape the
24 mindset of when you're coming into these
25 facilities. I do believe that that will

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 reduce some of the traumatic issues that
3 people are experiencing at the front
4 door.

5 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: So
6 holding your staff accountable not to
7 approach residents about sexual favors is
8 key, making sure that the population that
9 is in the shelter doesn't prey upon the
10 other members of the -- not just sexually
11 but taking their items, stealing from
12 them.

13 And then what I would leave
14 this with is, that when somebody comes
15 through the door, there has to be a
16 diagnosis of what their needs are. Some
17 people unfortunately come through your
18 doors with dual diagnosis. They have a
19 dependency on drugs. They have a
20 dependency that deals with some type of
21 mental illness. And I'm not sure within
22 that PERT chart, that PERT chart, how we
23 address those specialized needs, because
24 when somebody comes in that has mental
25 issues, you have to have a staffer that

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 can address that. And the question I
3 would have is, how do you interact with
4 Behavioral Health? How do you interact
5 with other entities and create what I
6 would call warm handoffs? So when you
7 realize that somebody has a service need
8 that's beyond yours, how do you softly
9 pass them off so that -- in the case of
10 this one young lady, I mean, she gets
11 abused every night. She gets kicked out,
12 because she fights back. You know what I
13 mean? And she needs constant care. And
14 I don't know -- that's not your fault,
15 but you do need to address the fact that
16 some people need a little more and they
17 need your help.

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: We can't
19 agree with you any more. I'd like to
20 state that I apologize for her having
21 that experience in our facility. I
22 wouldn't want that on anyone.

23 We do have case management,
24 behavioral health case management at the
25 shelters, but we need more. And many

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 times where we may see behavioral health
3 concerns, most of our services are
4 volunteer, but I totally agree with you
5 on making sure that when we see those
6 triggers or those signs there, we need to
7 quickly assess that situation and get the
8 person help.

9 So, again, I apologize for
10 anyone that experienced that level of
11 trauma.

12 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: So to
13 your point, Member Gilmore Richardson,
14 there's an integration that needs to
15 happen. It's not just linear. It is
16 multi-faceted that we need to take a look
17 at.

18 Finally, Mr. President,
19 30 percent of my young people at
20 Overbrook High School are homeless. We
21 have got to figure it out so that there
22 is stability in their education,
23 stability in their life, because that
24 instability creates some of the violence
25 that we see on the street.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 If I'm couch surfing and
3 somebody gets mad at me because I didn't
4 do what they wanted me to do, I'm
5 homeless. Some people are living in
6 cars, creating bad deeds, getting dressed
7 in the morning by going to the corner
8 store and put on a new white tee.

9 Our young people should not
10 live like that, and I don't know how the
11 integration happens. So we have a bigger
12 problem you did not cause, but it is your
13 responsibility, and we need to work with
14 you on that.

15 Thank you, Mr. President.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

17 You're welcome.

18 I do echo the sentiments of my
19 colleague Councilmember Jones. A lot of
20 people look at homelessness as being one
21 way, but couch surfing is a real big
22 issue when it comes to our young people,
23 and that goes from them trying to go to
24 school while staying with someone because
25 they don't have a place to stay, but also

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 them getting involved in all kinds of
3 other things because they don't have a
4 place to stay or the type of support
5 system that's needed.

6 And so as we move forward,
7 obviously that should be a conversation.
8 In the spirit of my former colleague
9 Councilwoman Helen Gym, it was something
10 she championed in this body to make sure
11 we're making it a priority to address
12 homelessness amongst our young people.
13 And so hopefully there's some level of
14 integration with our School District,
15 right, as a part of this, DHS as a part
16 of this conversation, and obviously the
17 Office of Homelessness.

18 Do you want to respond before
19 I --

20 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. I
21 will let my Deputy of Policy talk about
22 our Youth Homeless Demonstration project
23 grant.

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES:
25 Hello again. So as we stated earlier, we

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 were awarded \$8.7 million to specifically
3 address youth homelessness, and the
4 process for that first initially was to
5 spend six months with our youth to design
6 what that looks like, so what type of
7 housing is needed, what type of
8 supportive services are needed. We did
9 that very closely in partnership with the
10 School District, with DHS, with our Young
11 Adult Leadership Committee, and within
12 our Continuum of Care.

13 So HUD requires all communities
14 to have an integrated, comprehensive
15 approach of coordinating so that you can
16 make better use of your resources. So
17 when we initially started our strategic
18 plan five years ago, we created the
19 Interior Governmental Council on
20 Homelessness. That's all the government
21 agencies that feed into our system or the
22 systems that we utilize, such as DBH,
23 working with the criminal justice system.
24 It was as well the School District. And
25 then we also have community seats as

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 well. So we have a board that's made up
3 of City agencies and community elected --
4 I mean community selected folks within
5 that.

6 And so with that planning
7 process with the youth, designed the type
8 of housing that we're going to do with
9 these funds, and we're in the process now
10 of implementing that, and we're hoping
11 that it will bring potentially up to
12 261 units to help specifically with
13 youth, and then it will roll up into our
14 larger Continuum of Care funding.

15 So we have lots of plans in the
16 works to help with that, in addition to
17 supportive services in reference to
18 working with the other systems when it
19 comes to employment and when it comes to
20 entrepreneurship, when it comes to
21 childcare and really working with
22 different support systems throughout the
23 community as well.

24 And I don't know if, Roberta,
25 you want to add anything.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

3 Just briefly, that we've been able to
4 expand access points, to your point,
5 Councilmember, of where can you go. So
6 we've expanded Valley Youth House
7 operates one. We recently added another
8 with Eddie's through this grant source
9 and work closely with the School District
10 and their liaisons as well, so...

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: Can
12 you give us an updated summary in 90
13 days -- well, we're out in the
14 summertime. Just give us an updated
15 report, status report, on where you're at
16 on this particular project. Just provide
17 it to the Chair, and I'll provide it to
18 my members as well as the Chair of
19 Neighborhood Services and Homelessness,
20 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

21 At this point, the Chair
22 recognizes Councilmember Jim Harrity.

23 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Council
24 President, I'd like to acquiesce my time
25 to our Leader, Katherine Gilmore

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Richardson.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
4 Chair recognizes Councilmember Kathy
5 Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
7 Thank you, Council President.

8 And thank you, Councilmember
9 Harrity.

10 I wanted to quickly go back to
11 the tail end of the last question that I
12 was on relative to the issues around the
13 overspending. And so we left off talking
14 about you all receiving 129 million in
15 FY24 but still overspent your budget by
16 another 5 million. And you did tell --

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
18 Excuse me, Madam Leader. Did you say 129
19 million?

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
21 Their total budget for FY24, Grants
22 Revenue and General Fund, was
23 \$129 million.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 What was the follow-up statement you made

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 after that? Overspent the budget?

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

4 Pardon me?

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: Did
6 you say overspent their budget beyond the
7 129 million?

8 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: No;
9 by 5 million.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: By
11 5 million? So they got 129 million
12 budgeted and spent an additional 5
13 million over budgeted?

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes,
15 from what we could see.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
19 you did tell Council's Appropriation
20 Committee that you could continue to
21 operate at the same level of service by
22 not filling positions. That was also
23 stated in the newspaper. You posted
24 publicly, though, that the Office was not
25 accepting applications, and that created

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 panic for many residents and individuals
3 who were in need of housing services.
4 And so with the significant contributions
5 made in the midyear transfer to help
6 address the Fiscal Year '21 to '23 back
7 payment issues, your total FY24 estimated
8 obligations reached a record high of
9 \$140.6 million.

10 In FY25, you are requesting to
11 essentially maintain that level of
12 funding at 138 million in total revenue,
13 which was 88.7 million in General Fund
14 contributions, and that comes from the
15 OHS budget data from the charts. But
16 after four years of financial
17 mismanagement, no overhaul of your senior
18 leadership -- everyone who was there
19 under the previous Administration that we
20 keep hearing about are the same people
21 here today -- no clear answers on exactly
22 how this mismanagement took place,
23 multiple ongoing investigations, and the
24 complete lack of written plans or
25 specific operational procedures, why

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 should Philadelphians believe that
3 maintaining an increased level of funding
4 will do anything to improve outcomes for
5 residents experiencing homelessness and
6 housing insecurity in the City of
7 Philadelphia? And specifically, what is
8 your operational plan for ensuring that
9 this level of dysfunction and
10 mismanagement does not take place again?

11 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
12 for that question. So I'm going to start
13 and I'm also going to lean on my team.

14 So just I want to start at the
15 129 million, because I know you keep
16 referencing grant funds. So about 33 --
17 between \$33 to \$40 million -- like for
18 this year here, Philadelphia received
19 from a continuum of care through
20 HUD-funded \$40 million. That is money
21 that is really designed to go for units
22 that's already online. It's renewable.
23 Only about \$6 to \$8 million of that
24 actually comes to the Office of Homeless
25 Services. Reason why, 90 percent of our

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 HUD direct receive that money directly
3 through them. And so when we talk about
4 that number, I want to make sure that
5 we're talking apples to apples. And so
6 when we're talking at a request of the
7 General Fund operating dollars, that is
8 through the local tax dollars. Many of
9 the grants are -- only can be spent on
10 certain allowable expense.

11 I absolutely agree with you
12 that projected overspending was a
13 projection, and so as one of the way of
14 making the corrective changes, we
15 immediately looked at those contracts
16 that did not have budgetary authority and
17 made changes to them. One of the
18 immediate changes that we did was move
19 from a calendar year contract to
20 institute a six-month contract, with the
21 aim of going back to a City fiscal year
22 contracting period. We believe that this
23 will better align our current budget
24 allocations with what we're receiving
25 coming in.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Again, we're working with a
3 forensic audit team to improve our
4 processes that are currently in place.

5 The other challenges are
6 opportunities that I believe we have
7 here. Right now we're very light in our
8 Fiscal and Contract Units. I'm very
9 aware of that. We have anywhere between
10 150 and 172 contracts with probably
11 manpower to really address maybe half of
12 that. We are really looking at how do we
13 hire up to make sure that, one, we're
14 looking at those things that does not
15 proceed for us to go over budget, but we
16 need more staffing capacity, but we also
17 need to make sure that our funding and
18 what we're contracting with aligns with
19 what we have. Again --

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I
21 agree, and I apologize for cutting you
22 off, but I really need to get in as many
23 questions as I can today and I have to
24 make best use of my time.

25 You know and I know that I'm

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 very well aware of the budget. I have
3 the detail here. I have the additional
4 details here from each year. I have all
5 the contracts here. I have all my
6 information here. But I'm talking about
7 a trust issue with the citizens of the
8 City of Philadelphia, those who would
9 need service and need help. How do they
10 know that things will actually be
11 changing? That's what I'm referring to.
12 And I know that a forensic audit is
13 taking place. It's something that I
14 requested.

15 And so once we get through that
16 process, we will know more, but I need to
17 get to my additional questions that I
18 have time for while I have time.

19 You just talked about moving to
20 this fiscal year contract from the
21 calendar year and putting some of the
22 contracts on a six-month basis. I have
23 all the contracts here. I requested them
24 from the Procurement Commissioner last
25 summer. I have a list of those here, for

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 the record.

3 In the letter that you all --

4 in the letter sent to my office on

5 April 2nd, you included a document

6 stating that OHS had completed the

7 transition of moving all contracts from

8 calendar year to fiscal year. That was

9 the information that you all had provided

10 to my office that I have here for the

11 record that I'll submit additionally for

12 the record, along with my 23 pages of

13 questions.

14 You also provided a document

15 that included a list of all conformed

16 contracts, and that was a document here.

17 This was from April 2nd. This is, for

18 the record, the April 2nd document that

19 you all submitted to my office.

20 And so upon review of all of

21 this material, because I know that the

22 important thing here is that I need my

23 colleagues to understand that you all are

24 saying that you're correcting this, but

25 we still have additional questions.

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2 There are 15 General Fund
3 contracts that have dates that do not
4 align with the fiscal year. They were
5 all conformed after the overspending
6 issue came out. Are they currently in
7 the confirmation process? Why are these
8 contracts not on the fiscal year
9 timeline? And that would be specifically
10 in this document Lines 5, Lines 11, 12,
11 25, 28, 56, 57, 62, 65, 70, 106, 107,
12 112, 115, 119. There are 20 contracts on
13 this list that have encumbrance amounts
14 that are different from the contract
15 amount. Please explain those
16 discrepancies and those amounts. And why
17 is the Office of Homeless Services
18 regularly encumbering contracts at lower
19 amounts? And that's the same document,
20 Lines 31, 35, 44, 45, 56, 57, 61, 62, 63,
21 65, 70, 72, 73, 76, 82, 84, 85, 97, 106,
22 and 107.

23 And I heard the bell.

24 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I'll defer
25 to Finance, but before we get there, I

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 just want to assure you when you
3 mentioned why do Philadelphia should
4 trust us, again, I want to help as many
5 people as I want, but I also understand
6 the importance of staying within your
7 budgetary means. And so that's one of
8 the things that under my watch will not
9 happen, as much as I want to help people,
10 but I will defer to my Deputy of Finance
11 to answer some of your contract-related
12 questions.

13 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
14 Excellent.

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Thank
16 you, Majority Leader. I guess since I
17 cannot quite keep up with the number --
18 the line numbers, would it be possible to
19 give me a program name?

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
21 Pardon me?

22 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: We can't
23 hear you.

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I
25 really can't hear you.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I'm
3 sorry. I couldn't quite keep up with the
4 line numbers, so is it possible for you
5 to give me a program name?

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

7 Sure. I'll start naming them now.

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Sure.

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Is
10 that okay, Mr. Chair? I did hear the
11 bell. I want to respect the clock.

12 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Let me
13 recognize the next person.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Councilmember Lozada.

16 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair. Because of the
18 seriousness of this situation, I also
19 defer my questions to Majority Leader
20 Gilmore Richardson.

21 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS:
22 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson,
23 Councilmember Lozada has given her time
24 to you, so we will let you start from a
25 fresh set of minutes.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 And thank you, Councilmember
5 Lozada.

6 I'll go through the lines,
7 Mr. Curran. Acts Christian Transitional
8 Services -- and for the record, this is
9 not against these particular providers.
10 This is the information that your office,
11 the Office of Homeless Services, shared
12 with my office relative to an information
13 request.

14 Acts Christian Transitional
15 Services Bethesda Project, Richard
16 Kulick, Darlene Morris, Drueding Center,
17 Love Pray Peace Project, Veterans
18 Services, New Journey CDC. I can give
19 you every single line.

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Thank
21 you. Is the question that they don't
22 allow in the fiscal year that there was
23 not sufficient funding upon conformance?

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
25 after we've allocated the funds that you

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 all requested to deal with the contracts
3 that had already been conformed, we gave
4 you the dollars to address because of the
5 overspending that you had in your
6 department, we gave you the additional
7 money in order to resolve those contract
8 issues. You all stated as a part of your
9 corrective action, that you will align
10 the contracts to a fiscal year instead of
11 calendar year. You moved some to the
12 six-month process just to get them onto
13 the fiscal year process. Many of these
14 contracts that you all have sent in
15 writing to Council that I have listed out
16 here, which is a document that you all
17 recently sent on April 2nd, that document
18 is still listing contracts that have
19 varying amounts based on what you all
20 stated the contract amount would be and
21 how you've conformed the contract. In
22 addition to that, the encumbrance amounts
23 are different than the contract amounts.
24 And so, again, my reason for
25 bringing this up is to notate for the

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 record that you all are stating you put
3 these corrective action plans in place,
4 you were doing all that you can, but
5 every single document we continue to
6 receive -- see, I actually read these
7 documents. When I go home, I read them.
8 And so for each of these documents, they
9 do not align. The amounts do not align.
10 The dates do not align. So everything
11 you're saying, it does not align. These
12 are the documents that you all provided
13 to City Council.
14 And so that is my question, and
15 that you are requesting an additional
16 \$16 million. We can't see where the
17 \$16 million is in these documents. I
18 want to ask about that again. And it
19 also does not make sense in the
20 additional money that we have allocated
21 for you all to address your overspending
22 issues, that we are not receiving correct
23 contract amounts, dates or information.
24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: So to
25 address Acts Christian Transitional

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Services, there are two contracts there
3 which started January 1st to expire --
4 I'm sorry; June 30th. That is a
5 half-year extension. So the amount for
6 one is 778,029, which is about half of
7 what it would have been had it been
8 extended for the full calendar year. The
9 reason for the six-month extension was in
10 order to align it in Fiscal Year '25 with
11 the fiscal year.

12 There is another Acts contract
13 which runs from November through this
14 month. That was a winter initiative
15 contract.

16 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
17 for the record, please, I understand that
18 when you have a contract, obviously the
19 amount would be in half. I understand
20 that very clearly. I'm also a former
21 math teacher. Okay? And so that I do
22 understand. However, how do you explain
23 that the encumbrance amounts are
24 different than the contract amounts
25 outside of that particular circumstance

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 of the realigning of the contract?

3 And I won't belabor that point
4 here, because we're very far into the
5 weeds, but I will submit all 23 pages of
6 the questions for the record for your
7 written response so that we have them for
8 the record, but I want to get this on the
9 record for my colleagues so they can
10 understand that what we're seeing is not
11 what we're getting. What we're hearing
12 is not what's happening.

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN:

14 Well --

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
16 the \$16 million, where is that reflected
17 and what is it for?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I will
19 push back a little bit for Acts. The
20 amount 778 was encumbered on the date of
21 conformance.

22 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

23 Thank you. Thank you for that
24 information. And we have in here -- in
25 fact, I do have a question about that.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 In the responses you sent to my office
3 yesterday in a follow-up to the transfer
4 ordinance, you stated that the funds that
5 I had advocated for in last year's budget
6 to create an additional family intake
7 shelter are now being used by Acts to
8 provide overnight shelter for families.

9 That was a response we received. The
10 \$350,000 would cover beds from April 1st
11 to June 30th of this year, and service
12 began on April 8th.

13 That was the April 14th
14 Appropriations response that we received
15 in our office from your office.

16 In a memo that you sent me on
17 April 2nd regarding the intake shelter,
18 you stated that your office reached out
19 to Acts, Lutheran Settlement House, and
20 New Journey CDC because of their
21 experience and then recommended working
22 with Acts.

23 So within an entire year to set
24 up the additional intake shelter, why did
25 you not put that out to competitive RFP

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 to solicit competitive bids? And then
3 you sent me this memo on April 2nd and
4 said families began receiving service or
5 will begin receiving service on
6 April 4th. You clearly did not set up
7 the service in six days. So when did you
8 inform Acts that they were being awarded
9 an additional contract or expanded
10 contract responsibility? How many
11 families are currently being served and
12 what is the plan to maintain those beds
13 for FY25? The time doesn't make sense.

14 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I'll start.
15 Thanks again for your advocacy for the
16 family intake site. Yes, we did a soft
17 opening April 8th for the new family
18 intake site, which will serve and have 51
19 beds, 15 families, but it gives us
20 another location outside of the Center
21 City location.

22 We believe with the amount of
23 money of being \$350,000, this was the
24 best course of action by having it start
25 in the last quarter of this fiscal year.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 When we looked at what the cost of a
3 12-month operational shelter, we did not
4 have the monies and it would be
5 irresponsible to start a contract prior
6 to what we have monies allocated for.

7 As it relates to how did we
8 select Acts versus New Journey or Family,
9 I would defer to my Deputy of Housing
10 Operations for that.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

12 Pardon me? I didn't hear you.

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

14 Thank you for that question.

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I'm
16 sorry. I didn't hear the last part. You
17 said -- oh, you were deferring? Okay.

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yes.

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: So
20 selection of providers, either new or
21 renewal, we do either by request for
22 proposal or in the case when they're a
23 non-profit organization, we're going to
24 assess on various factors, right? We
25 look at experience, past performance,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 capacity, ability to start quickly,
3 minority led. And it took us a couple
4 months to go through that assessment and
5 discernment process for several
6 non-profits as it relates to the new
7 site.

8 They are invited to come look
9 at the site. They are -- they responded
10 to our request for information, more
11 information about their organization and
12 their ability to begin quickly, and
13 that's ultimately how we settled on Acts
14 and have served families there since
15 April 8th.

16 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I
17 heard the clock and I will honor the
18 clock. I will circle back to that
19 answer.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
21 Chair recognizes Councilmember Phillips.

22 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank
23 you, Council President. I would like to
24 yield my time back to Majority Leader
25 Katherine Gilmore Richardson.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
3 Chair recognizes Councilmember Kathy
4 Gilmore Richardson.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
6 Thank you, Council President.

7 And thank you, Councilmember
8 Phillips.

9 To circle back to your answer,
10 how regularly does that happen in your
11 department and who is in charge of that?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
13 Meaning how regularly do we assess as
14 opposed to do an RFP?

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: I
17 think we do both. The determination is
18 often a management team determination.
19 Some of it relates to time, how much time
20 do we have. For example, we have not
21 RFP'd winter providers because we're
22 working to get those set up quickly.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: And
24 who is in charge of that?

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Again, management decision, but request
3 for proposals are managed and issued by
4 the Contracts Unit in concert with the
5 contract units of the City, OEO, et
6 cetera.

7 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

8 Right. But singularly in the Office of
9 Homeless Services, who is the individual
10 who is principally responsible for
11 oversight of that process? Please name
12 them for the record.

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: I
14 think for selection of providers like
15 shelters, that's my role as the Deputy
16 for Housing Services.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

18 Okay. And please state your name for the
19 record.

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

21 Roberta Cancellier, Deputy Director for
22 Housing Services.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

24 Thank you.

25 And I wanted to quickly go to

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 provider oversight. I guess you could
3 answer this question, Roberta. If you
4 could walk me through what the process is
5 for monitoring and site visit. Do you
6 personally do the monitoring site visits?
7 When is the last time you did a
8 monitoring site visit? Was it scheduled?
9 Which provider did you visit? Why did
10 you visit that provider, and what did you
11 find?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
13 Let me start with generally. The
14 Emergency and Temporary Housing team is
15 responsible for planning and monitoring
16 shelters. It all begins with emergency
17 housing standards, which are part of the
18 contract and lay out our expectations of
19 the responsibilities of shelter
20 providers. This is everything from case
21 management standards, cleanliness of the
22 facility, frequency of fire drills,
23 inspections of the facility.
24 Late last year we initiated a
25 strengthened monitoring, a more

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 comprehensive monitoring approach called
3 Boots to the Ground. We recognized that
4 there were some shelter providers that
5 really needed and could benefit from
6 additional hands-on technical assistance
7 from our staff.

8 We've completed the first of
9 those reviews, and actually the second
10 was just completed, and a corrective
11 action plan is in place for the first and
12 we continue to provide hands-on technical
13 assistance, training, meetings and so on
14 so that our providers are in compliance
15 really with the standards that we have
16 set as a system.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
18 to your point, do you have a written
19 policy for corrective action plans for
20 providers?

21 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
22 Yes. We can provide that to the Council
23 President's office.

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: That
25 would be great.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 And going back to the RFI that
3 you just spoke about that they responded
4 to very quickly for the new family intake
5 shelter, could you provide that? Could
6 you show us where that is? Because we
7 didn't see that posted.

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: We
9 did not post it publicly. We identified
10 potential agencies based on criteria,
11 experience, past performance, strong
12 performance, and our assessment that they
13 could begin quickly.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
15 Okay.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: I
17 could provide you any additional
18 information that we haven't already.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: That
20 would be great, to the Chair.

21 Do program analysts in your
22 department do monitoring site visits?

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
24 Yes, they do. They do both desktop,
25 right, reviewing complaints, reports, et

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 cetera, but also boots to the ground,
3 going out, speaking with participants,
4 with shelter providers and providing that
5 support.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
7 Okay. And how regularly during the
8 course of a contract are sites monitored?

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: At
10 least once on site, and again, this
11 enhanced process will lead to more. In
12 addition, we use our staff. There are
13 housing quality inspectors that are
14 staffed at the Office of Homeless
15 Services that are certified inspectors
16 that are also going out on at least an
17 annual basis taking a look at facilities,
18 safety issues. And then from time to
19 time, other staff at OHS is there for
20 participant meetings, resident meetings,
21 visits, reviewing concerns or policies
22 and so on, myself included.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
24 Sure. Would you be able to provide that
25 information regarding the frequency of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the visits, the times visited, whether
3 the visits are random or scheduled, is it
4 drop-in visits, client interviews,
5 information that gets into your system,
6 double checking that the information is
7 accurate, engagement with the staff. If
8 you could provide all of that information
9 to the Chair. I'm particularly concerned
10 about how you all are reviewing and
11 comparing the invoices and the purchases
12 for these facilities to ensure there is
13 quality control within these particular
14 facilities and for these particular
15 providers, but also the rubric that you
16 all utilize in order to do the
17 evaluation. If you could submit all of
18 that information to the Chair, that would
19 be exceedingly helpful.

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

21 Thank you, Majority Leader. We'd be
22 happy to submit that information.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

24 Okay. How many providers in the last
25 five years saw reductions in programming

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 or non-renewals of contracts because of
3 non-compliance?

4 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: For
5 non-compliance I would need to get back
6 to you in writing as it relates to that.
7 As far as reduction, as we was awarded
8 during the height of the COVID pandemic
9 where we saw one-time funding, there were
10 some contracts that were reduced as of
11 that funding not being available. So we
12 can provide that in writing to you in a
13 more detailed manner.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: That
15 would be excellent.

16 Do you all as a leadership team
17 look at spending over previous years to
18 determine a pattern of over- or
19 under-spending?

20 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: That is
21 part of the decision around costs being
22 recouped. So we look at providers that
23 have traditionally under spent and make
24 reasonable accommodations where we should
25 be recouping that under-spend.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 For example, as this projected
3 \$5 million budget deficit for '24, some
4 of the under-spending that we recouped
5 were from providers that we saw that had
6 significant under-spending in their
7 current contract year.

8 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

9 Understood.

10 Who is responsible for ensuring
11 materials and supplies purchased by
12 providers are actually purchased? Who at
13 OHS ensures those materials are provided
14 to clients? Has OHS had experiences of
15 providers double billing for materials
16 and supplies? And do you have a policy
17 or procedure in place for when double
18 billing occurs?

19 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. As
20 part of our corrective action plan and
21 updated standard operating procedures,
22 one of the multi-layered review does
23 include housing staff multi-layered from
24 the contract staff to look at those line
25 items that are accountable. So what

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 we're looking at right now is to make
3 sure that everything that is submitted
4 for payments are actually lining up, but
5 it's a combination of housing staff, our
6 facility staff. We have food staff that
7 goes out and check these regularly, but
8 we probably could be a little bit better
9 in those areas also.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: In
11 the FY23 Continuum of Care scoring,
12 permanent supportive housing, safe haven,
13 how many transitional housing programs
14 are funded with General Fund revenues?
15 And when did these programs start
16 receiving General Fund revenues?

17 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Thank
18 you, Council Leader. Our transitional
19 housing programs are primarily funded --
20 the non-COCs are funded through the
21 state's housing assistance program. So
22 there really aren't many, if any, at this
23 point General Fund-supported --
24 exclusively General Fund-supported
25 transitional housing programs.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
3 you said there aren't many, so that means
4 that there are some. Could you detail
5 them for the record, please?

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I
7 believe Melba Way was one.

8 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
9 Pardon me?

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: The
11 provider is Families Forward, and Melba
12 Way is the program.

13 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: If
14 you could submit that for the record.

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Sure.

16 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
17 Because I don't know why I'm having such
18 a hard time hearing you.

19 I heard the bell. I will
20 circle back.

21 Thank you, Council President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 You're welcome.

24 Councilmember Rue Landau.

25 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 you.

3 Just a couple quick questions
4 because, one, I was interested in the
5 oversight of contracts. So if we could
6 just talk again about this.

7 I first want to thank you. I'm
8 new, as you know, and so I hear all my
9 colleague's frustrations from the past.
10 I know it's a lot, and I know that
11 they've been approving your budget for so
12 many years and there has been concerns
13 that they're looking into, but I want to
14 thank you for meeting with me in
15 February. It was a refreshing meeting,
16 and taking all that you said, I have high
17 hopes for your office. And so I really
18 do hope we can turn this around and want
19 to take a moment to offer the services of
20 me. I'm the Vice Chair of the Housing
21 Committee, and Councilmember Gauthier,
22 who can't be here today, who is the
23 Chair, we're happy to help you with
24 anything that you need.

25 With the contracts, my question

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 is, when do you -- you're talking about
3 some technicalities with oversight and
4 whatnot. What have you done now that you
5 didn't do before with the contracts?
6 What have been the changes?

7 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
8 for that question and thank you again for
9 all of your work around the housing in
10 the past.

11 As one of the things we have
12 immediately did to bring our contracts
13 aligned with the City fiscal year was
14 immediately instituted a six-month
15 contract beginning January 1st to
16 June 30th, with the aim of making sure
17 that all of our contracts for FY25 are on
18 a City fiscal year calendar.

19 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: I'm
20 talking not about the money. I'm talking
21 about the oversight of making sure that
22 they're providing the services. We have
23 a tremendous problem with homelessness
24 here in Philadelphia, and I know that the
25 City itself cannot house everybody that

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 we need, which is why we have contracts
3 with other agencies. We want to make
4 sure that those agencies are providing
5 the services that we expect.

6 So, for example, you said it's
7 approximately \$70 a night for us to house
8 people. Am I correct that it costs more
9 sometimes with some of the providers?

10 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. For
11 some of our providers, which provide
12 specialized services, the range can be
13 more, especially during the height of the
14 COVID pandemic where we opened up a few
15 facilities to accommodate our seniors who
16 has more physical disability. Those
17 services actually tend to cost a little
18 bit more.

19 We also believe that given the
20 marketplace as it relates to -- we are
21 getting probably a best value at that low
22 rate of \$68 to \$73 a night for our
23 shelter. When we look at that, that
24 includes a lot of overhead costs that the
25 providers have to account for in terms of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 fringe benefit, personnel, and also we
3 pay for a number of the leases that are
4 embedded in some of the contracts that
5 are subcontracted out.

6 But we are always looking for
7 how do we get better in that area of how
8 do we reduce costs, and the only way that
9 we can really reduce cost is that we
10 reduce the number of people who are
11 experiencing homelessness in the City of
12 Philadelphia.

13 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Right.
14 So just one last question really about
15 the \$16 million that you're asking for.
16 If you can talk about how the money is
17 going to be allocated and what services
18 or contracts will it fund, how many
19 people will it serve. And I ask this
20 because to me when I look at the money,
21 and we talked about this when I was in
22 your office, is that I think as often as
23 possible we should be doing programs like
24 rapid rehousing or taking that money and
25 seeing what we can do to help people pay

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 their rent or stay in the place that
3 they're in at that moment and how can we
4 open up the shelter system to be a place
5 where people are fearing homelessness and
6 get some services of what they need to
7 keep them in their homes.

8 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah.
9 Thank you for that question. So I will
10 start and then I will defer to my Deputy
11 of Finance. But just as he stated
12 earlier, for FY25 and the previous
13 five-year spending plan, we were due to
14 receive a significant reduction into the
15 tune of \$9.3 million. So part of that
16 \$16 million is to restore that.

17 The additional money, we agree
18 this is to maintain services here. And
19 so we know that just by attrition, that
20 more people come in needing some rental
21 assistance or -- I mean, prevention
22 assistance. So some of that money will
23 be dedicated right at the front door for
24 prevention service.

25 As we think about our move-on

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 strategy, instead of having a move-on
3 strategy that waits until someone, let's
4 quote/unquote, have recovery capital,
5 we're thinking about moving on from the
6 front door. So those programs such as
7 rapid rehousing, shared housing,
8 prevention, we also are putting money
9 there where we have seen significant food
10 costs as an example of inflation. I
11 think Pennsylvania has the highest amount
12 of what we pay for food, and so that is a
13 critical need that we're looking to do.

14 The other thing that we want to
15 invest in in terms of our move-on
16 strategy and with the Landlord Engagement
17 Unit, we're dedicating three staff to
18 really focus on that so that we can do
19 better triaging, so we can move people
20 quickly out of those services that
21 they're currently seeking.

22 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Okay.
23 Thank you.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 Thank you.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 The Chair recognizes Nick
3 O'Rourke.

4 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
5 you, Council President.

6 First, I want to start by
7 thanking you all for the tireless work
8 you do. I'm not sure if you always hear
9 those words enough, but for what you are
10 doing well, I am grateful.

11 Given OHS's proposed General
12 Fund request and a further reduction in
13 federal funds, I want to start by asking
14 some questions about how these shifts
15 would impact OHS's capacity going
16 forward.

17 Just a brief read through your
18 written testimony shows that the Office
19 predicts that less households will
20 receive homeless prevention assistance.
21 A lower percentage of clients in
22 emergency housing will transition to
23 permanent housing. The medium length of
24 shelter stays will increase by 21 days.
25 The number of households provided rapid

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 rehousing assistance is expected to drop.
3 So what impact, if you can
4 state for the record, will these service
5 cuts have on Philly's homelessness
6 trends? To be clear, will more folks be
7 unhoused for longer periods of time due
8 to these budget changes?

9 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
10 for that question and thank you for your
11 advocacy. Absolutely. We will have
12 devastating impact. We have seen that as
13 a reduction of many of the dollars that
14 the City was awarded during the COVID
15 relief.

16 Homelessness is on the rise
17 nationally about 12 percent. As a result
18 of the eviction moratorium being lifted
19 about two years ago, we're seeing a
20 steady increase of folks that are
21 experiencing evictions as a result of
22 higher rent, the lack of affordable
23 housing. And so this will have
24 devastating impact on individuals and
25 families who are experiencing

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 homelessness just as a result of
3 decreased funding. Again, as we're
4 projecting, not just Philadelphia alone,
5 we're starting to see that trend in a
6 more upward bound direction there.

7 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Given
8 the compelling case that the Majority
9 Leader is laying out, if we do not fully
10 fund OHS, what is the plan to provide
11 homeless service while the multiple
12 investigations are complete?

13 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: It will --

14 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: For
15 example, are there external non-profits
16 who are willing to fill in the gap? Like
17 what do you think will happen there?

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I think we
19 will see devastating impact, to be
20 honest. As we look at our provider
21 community -- and this is with everybody.
22 Everybody is going through an
23 organizational restructuring. Our
24 providers are not alone. Many of them
25 are struggling with trying to staff up

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 with their capacity.

3 Over the last couple years,
4 especially coming out of pandemic, we
5 have seen some great talent leave this
6 area of social services. The need hasn't
7 changed. The need is continuing to grow
8 as we are continuing to sit here today
9 just by the number of people that we see
10 on our streets every day out here.

11 And so with a reduction in
12 funding, we will absolutely have to make
13 critical decisions on how do we address a
14 rise in population of people.

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

16 Point of information.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
18 Chair recognizes Councilmember Kathy
19 Gilmore Richardson.

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

21 Thank you, Mr. President.

22 I apologize for the
23 interruption to your line of questioning,
24 Councilmember O'Rourke, but I wanted to
25 state for the record that the COVID ESG

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 dollars were already spent and the
3 ARP-HOME dollars were just awarded in
4 November. So I just wanted to state that
5 for the record.

6 We know that the COVID money
7 that the City is also using for revenue
8 replacement on the General Fund side has
9 to be spent down by the end of the year.
10 So I want to state that for the record.

11 The information you are
12 referring to has nothing to do with the
13 overspending that has been happening in
14 your department and nothing to do with
15 the fact that we did not give you all the
16 additional \$5 million of the 129 that you
17 already had last year total for Grants
18 Revenue and also for General Fund.

19 So I want to be real clear as a
20 point of information that we're talking
21 apples to oranges right now, because you
22 all knew that that was going to happen
23 with the federal funds because the COVID
24 relief dollars have already been spent
25 already and have gone away. I just

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 wanted to state that for the record.

3 Thank you very much.

4 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
5 you very much, Madam Leader.

6 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: And I thank
7 you for that, because a clarification is
8 homelessness is not steady. I think
9 every day we see people experiencing
10 homelessness through a variety of events,
11 through fires, substance abuse, mental
12 health. And so homelessness continues to
13 rise.

14 I think we have to be honest
15 with ourselves. Any reduction in amount
16 of money that goes towards homelessness,
17 there's going to have some level of
18 impact. I can't sit here and tell you
19 how significant it will be or
20 under-significant it will be. What we
21 know is that the need is continuing to
22 grow out here.

23 One of the things that Council
24 President noted earlier today, we're
25 seeing many of our young people who don't

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 always self-identify as homeless because
3 of the stigma that goes along with that.
4 We're seeing more of those individuals
5 experience homelessness by just couch
6 surfing, living in abandos, which is
7 abandominium buildings that people live
8 in. We know that just by sure.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

10 Excuse me. Just for the record, for
11 those who don't know the jargon, break
12 down abandominiums.

13 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Absolutely.
14 So abandominium is a property that is not
15 livable for anyone in where you may see a
16 building that may have caught fire or
17 have some structural damage.
18 Unfortunately, there are people that
19 still live in those property because they
20 refuse to want to live on the street in a
21 visible setting. And so when I use the
22 term "abandos" or "abandominium," those
23 are places where unfortunately people
24 tend to go out of the element.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember O'Rourke.

3 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Yes.

4 Let me move now to the HOME-ARP plan.

5 You know what, I'm going to move on past
6 that one too.

7 I noticed there were
8 significant bumps in General Fund dollars
9 being spent on security contracts for
10 both the homelessness prevention and
11 emergency housing programs. Why is that?

12 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: So for
13 security, the City of Philadelphia has a
14 contract that awards outfits security. I
15 believe you're referring to Scotlandyard.
16 That is a blanket contract that the City
17 of Philadelphia has and all of our intake
18 centers and the six-run City-funded
19 facilities. We have worked with the
20 Philadelphia Police, our partner
21 communities.

22 Philadelphia as a whole is
23 seeing significant violence right now,
24 and so that is not indicative of what we
25 experience. We want to make sure our

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 staff is safe and we also want to make
3 sure our participants are safe that are
4 coming into our facility.

5 So in partnership with our
6 provider community, we work to make sure
7 that we have adequate level of security.
8 As it relates to the cost and how much of
9 that because it's under a Procurement
10 contract, we actually follow those
11 guidelines.

12 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: So it
13 represents the need for increased
14 security, simply put?

15 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Excuse me?

16 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: It
17 represents a need for increased security,
18 simply put, and not making up for less
19 federal funding?

20 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: So that
21 comes out of, again, out of our General
22 Fund obligation here as it relates to
23 security in Class 200.

24 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: The
25 Office's written testimony noted that

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Philly's unhoused population is growing
3 older on average, which is unsettling to
4 say the least, if not completely
5 surprising. Could you explain why more
6 elderly people are becoming OHS clients
7 and how that's changing the services that
8 you provide to the clientele?

9 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. I
10 will start and I will defer to my Deputy
11 of Policy.

12 Yes, there are more elderly
13 people. We believe that there's more
14 elderly people that are coming in. One,
15 individuals who experience homelessness
16 that may have some behavioral health
17 challenges, we have found it very
18 difficult to have those individuals
19 placed in nursing home, a skilled level
20 place. That number has continued to
21 trend as we have seen the closes of
22 personal care boarding home where you see
23 some of our elderly folks with behavioral
24 health challenges have resided in. So
25 just by attrition of some resources being

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 bought offline hard into place, we are
3 starting to see more of our elderly
4 population either unhoused or
5 unfortunately living in our emergency and
6 temporary housing.

7 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
8 you. I heard the bell.

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
10 Point of information, Mr. President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
12 Chair recognizes Councilmember Katherine
13 Gilmore Richardson.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: For
15 the record, how many of those beds, all
16 of the shelter beds, how many of them are
17 accessible and ADA compliant?

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Great
19 question. We are actually in the process
20 right now of working with our ADA
21 applicants to come up with an assessment
22 of all of our shelter facility to make
23 sure that there are -- all of our intake
24 sites are ADA accessible for everyone,
25 but we're actually doing -- we're going

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 to be amending the contract out there to
3 do an assessment on all 42 of our
4 shelters to subcontractors on their end.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
6 Please share that information with
7 Council President and with this body.

8 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yes, ma'am.

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
10 Thank you.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: So
12 that ends this session, but you have been
13 asked for a callback, so we will see you
14 again before this -- oh, okay. Press the
15 buttons.

16 The button is pressed? I'm
17 going to do it manually, old school way.
18 The Chair recognizes Councilmember Young,
19 then the Chair recognizes Councilmember
20 Nina Ahmad. But just for the record, now
21 you pressed your buttons up here.

22 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: I didn't
23 press it. It just turned green just now.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 It's all good.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember Young, then

3 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

4 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
5 you, Mr. President.

6 You know, this office -- my
7 colleague has done most of my job for me,
8 so I appreciate Councilwoman Katherine
9 Gilmore Richardson, but this office
10 serves -- 90 percent of the constituents
11 served are Black and Hispanic, right?
12 And we all know this is the largest
13 poorest city in the country. So what you
14 do is very critical to the health of the
15 City. And just hearing the
16 mismanagement, the fiscal mismanagement,
17 when you are serving the most vulnerable
18 populations in our city is very
19 disheartening to me.

20 But I want to go back to
21 Councilmember O'Rourke's question about
22 the security, because you kind of didn't
23 answer the question. So can you tell us
24 like what data shows you or tells you
25 that you need to almost double your

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 security budget to over \$4 million?

3 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thanks for
4 that question and, again, I will start
5 and allow -- so part of our security cost
6 that you see continue to rise, there was
7 a decision made in the prior
8 Administration to put additional
9 securities on the Kensington Avenue. As
10 many of us know, we know that there's a
11 lot of challenges with that particular
12 area there, and so when we --

13 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
14 Point of information, Council President.
15 Councilmember Young, I believe
16 that figure is \$9 million.

17 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
18 you.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
20 Thank you, Council President.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 You're welcome.

23 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: So, again,
24 you're absolutely correct that we have
25 seen a rise in cost in our security

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 costs, and many of that is attributed to
3 security being placed on the avenue of
4 the Kensington area of the City. Again,
5 that was a decision that was made during
6 the prior Administration.

7 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: But what
8 are the things that were happening that
9 caused this uptick in security? Like
10 what incidents can you point to to say,
11 you know what, we have to increase our
12 budget for security by X amount of money
13 because of these things that are
14 happening?

15 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Absolutely.
16 I think just the number of incidents,
17 people feeling unsafe working in that
18 area down there, had a contributing
19 factor. The other thing was that to get
20 workers to go down there, again, there
21 was a hazard pay that was assigned to the
22 security firm that was providing that
23 services in there. But people felt
24 unsafe and the participants felt unsafe
25 in that particular area, but I would

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 defer to my Finance Director to talk a
3 little bit more in depth about --

4 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: My time
5 is limited. I got a couple more
6 questions, so I understand, okay, folks
7 are feeling unsafe. I just hope that
8 with this additional money, that feeling
9 goes away.

10 Regarding -- I see here that
11 there is an almost over \$3 million
12 increase to U.S. Facilities for
13 preventative maintenance where the FY24
14 obligation is 1.9 million and for FY25
15 the proposed is over 5.6 million. Could
16 you talk to us about what are we
17 preventing here?

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. I'll
19 defer to my Deputy of Finance to talk.

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Thank
21 you, Councilmember. That contract serves
22 three City-owned facilities, three
23 shelters. And also in Fiscal '24 we
24 picked up services at the Philadelphia
25 Nursing Home; that is, OHS located a

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 shelter and a winter program there.

3 That contract is also used by
4 the Office of Emergency Management to
5 fund preventative maintenance at the
6 migrant site at Luzerne and also covered
7 migrant services that was at a --

8 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: So I see
9 what the contract -- what is covered, but
10 why the increase again from 1.9 million
11 to 5.6 million? What maintenance
12 measures are being done that's different?
13 Like can you explain to us why the need
14 for this additional funds in this
15 category?

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Right.
17 Well, increased services increased the
18 cost. So we picked up three sites in
19 Fiscal '24.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: How many
21 sites?

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Three.

23 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Three
24 sites. So an additional three sites?
25 What was that number?

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Three
3 sites.

4 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Three.

5 So just additional three sites. And
6 those same three sites had similar
7 numbers or maintenance numbers as the
8 current three sites that you have now?

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I
10 would say that the cost at the migrant
11 centers are enhanced because they offer
12 more than just maintenance. That's more
13 overall facilities management.

14 As far as details of those
15 services, I would have to defer to OIA
16 and OIM for more detail or we can send
17 your office and also the Council
18 President the scopes related to those
19 particular sites.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
21 you. Can you please provide us with
22 those numbers, please.

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

24 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: And also
25 going through your budget, your

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 performance measures, it seems like every
3 single performance measure, the goals are
4 lower than the previous years. And I
5 know most of the rationale behind it is
6 because there's -- the COVID money has
7 ran out, but I do note that from
8 Councilwoman Gilmore Richardson, the
9 COVID money been ran out.

10 So can you tell us, I guess,
11 how can we -- how much was that, I guess,
12 the federal relief through COVID, and is
13 that money really going to create this
14 much of a hindrance in all of your
15 program-targeted performances? I mean,
16 every single one has gone down, every
17 single performance, but you're asking us
18 for additional revenue. What are we
19 paying for?

20 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I'll defer
21 to our Deputy of Housing Operations can
22 speak to more what the performance
23 measures indicate.

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
25 Thank you for that question. I actually

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 was thinking of one very clear example,
3 the ESG CARES money, which ended
4 September 30, 2023, supported 400
5 households in rapid rehousing. Those
6 fundings are no longer available.

7 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: But how
8 much was -- can you tell us, I guess, how
9 much money was allocated to OHS that now
10 is not there which causes this decrease?

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: The
12 ESG funding that Ms. Cancellier is
13 referring to, that was \$35 million.

14 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG:
15 \$35 million. So essentially if we had
16 that additional \$16 million, then we
17 would be able to then provide at least
18 some level of services at a higher rate.

19 One more question. You have --
20 Mr. President, may I please, one more
21 question?

22 You got a lot of service
23 providers that are under your care
24 essentially, and can you describe to us
25 or tell us specifically what processes

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 you have in place to ensure that these
3 service providers are timely paid so
4 there's no disruption to the services
5 that they provide. I mean, given that we
6 are dealing with our most vulnerable
7 population again in the City, can you
8 please elaborate on that process?

9 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah.
10 Thank you for that question. Let me
11 first and foremost say, first of all, I
12 apologize for any inconvenience our
13 budgetary shortfall have caused on any
14 provider. I understand clearly the
15 operational impact from a provider
16 standpoint. But the one thing that we're
17 doing immediately is, one, not engaging
18 contracts that we do not have budget
19 authority for. That's first and
20 foremost.

21 The other thing is too having
22 that multi-layer review to make sure
23 that, one, that those items that folks
24 are submitting their invoices for are
25 allowable expense so that we cut down any

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 of the discrepancy that may cause a
3 potential rejection.

4 The other thing is that we're
5 working with our partners in Finance to
6 assure quickly and accurate payments that
7 gets out the door much quicker. But,
8 again, I apologize for any inconvenience
9 that may have caused, and we want to get
10 our providers paid in a timely manner.

11 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
12 you.

13 Mr. President, I also echo
14 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
15 Richardson's call for a callback for this
16 department.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: So
18 noted.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

21 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
22 you, Council President.

23 Thank you all for giving us
24 detailed answers, but I have to commend
25 my colleague, Majority Leader Katherine

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Gilmore Richardson, for really delving
3 deep, because this is our responsibility
4 to our constituents and use of their tax
5 dollars.

6 I have a question around
7 maternal care in this space. In 2019, in
8 the end of May, early June, I personally
9 escorted a young woman who was pregnant.
10 She was -- she had a partner who was
11 fully invested in supporting her.

12 When I -- and hopefully this
13 has changed since then. When I went with
14 her, the intake process, Cherry Street,
15 was so stressful. She immediately was
16 put on edge by the security guard -- we
17 talked about security at these spaces --
18 who treated her very poorly, and I could
19 see the tension rising.

20 I didn't have elected office
21 then. I was not in the Administration,
22 but I had served previously, so I was
23 able to call someone and expedite her
24 process. But what we found was, because
25 she was not married to her partner, they

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 could not get a space together, and she
3 was -- he was the only support she would
4 have. These were teenagers. And when I
5 asked, they said, one, there's no intake
6 information segregated by status as in
7 pregnancy, which was alarming, and then
8 the second piece was about the lack of
9 ability to put these two people together
10 in the same space.

11 So I wondered how your
12 department is dealing with that. What is
13 your focus on this most vulnerable
14 population? To be pregnant and unhoused
15 is just unimaginable. And just as a
16 blanket statement, I cannot understand in
17 this country, which is the first world
18 richest country, we're having to do this.

19 So I thank you for your
20 service. I know it's a difficult space,
21 but we have to do better.

22 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I
23 appreciate all of your advocacy. I think
24 you're asking the right questions,
25 everyone here today.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 I believe in keeping families
3 together. I think that's a critical core
4 of stabilizing community. But I can
5 defer to my Deputy of Housing to talk
6 about the intake process and how we
7 strongly support trying keeping partners
8 together.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

10 Thank you so much for sharing that
11 experience, and please know we accept
12 comments, complaints at any time,
13 215-686-4700.

14 It wasn't that they were
15 unmarried. We work very hard so that
16 people coming into shelter basically can
17 come as they are. However, one challenge
18 we haven't solved yet is a couple who has
19 no children, right? Our shelters are for
20 single individuals and households with
21 children. So that was really the reason
22 why they weren't kept together.

23 It is something to work on.
24 Our providers have done an incredible job
25 accommodating two-parent households,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 two-headed households, children of ages
3 up to 21 in emergency shelter, but a
4 couple with one pregnant member is not
5 something that we have a shelter for at
6 this time.

7 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So we
8 need to address that.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
10 Pardon?

11 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: We need
12 to address that, because we have pregnant
13 people in the City.

14 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
15 Yes. I took a very similar call last
16 week, but right. Thank you for bringing
17 that to our attention.

18 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So we
19 have -- what is your intake process for
20 identifying who you're taking in, meaning
21 this is a single male, this is a single
22 female? What is the status -- where is
23 pregnancy reflected in this?

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: So
25 any household can come to either Apple

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Tree Center, Roosevelt Darby Center.
3 Those are both City-run, City-operated
4 intakes, any household size, any
5 composition, and we will always first
6 seek to not admit someone to shelter. We
7 want to do everything we can to find
8 other alternatives, can they return to
9 family and friends, can they -- are there
10 other options in the community, can we
11 help with back rent, are they from
12 another city and they might want to
13 return. We ask a host of questions that
14 help us to place households, everything
15 from would you as a household member need
16 a lower bunk. If you are a household
17 with children, are you willing to share a
18 room with another family, if that's the
19 only space we have. Are you pregnant?
20 Do you have support from DHS or from
21 other City departments that will help us
22 continue to give that continuous support
23 and warm handoff as needed.
24 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So you
25 mentioned you asked are you pregnant. So

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 do you keep stats that tell you who is
3 coming to your shelter and what the
4 status is, particularly around pregnancy?
5 Do you have those numbers? I would love
6 to see those numbers.

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
8 Yes. I'm passing on our Deputy for
9 Policy, Planning, Performance.

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Yes.
11 When we do assessments, that question is
12 asked and self-reported, and it's
13 documented in the HMIS system.

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: I'd love
15 to see those numbers, because this is a
16 population that needs immediate
17 attention. So I want to make sure that
18 they're receiving it.

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Yes.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Second
21 question was about since you're the
22 policy person, are you globally working
23 with any other departments to discuss the
24 redevelopment within housing and
25 building? Like are you part of the

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 planning process to do that so they are
3 made to the communities that we serve?

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: So
5 our service -- our office specifically
6 works with the people that occupy the
7 housing, but the actual partners, we do
8 work with them, but we don't lead those
9 efforts, but we do work with Planning and
10 Development and other folks that do do
11 the building and the construction, and
12 some of the funds that we do get, we
13 allocate and pass through directly to
14 those particular agencies that specialize
15 in that.

16 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So my
17 question was, do you give feedback as to
18 what these homeless shelters should look
19 like and where they should be? That's
20 what I'm asking.

21 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Yes.
22 And that design process, and we get
23 feedback not only just from the staff but
24 even from the community. So, for
25 example, with the youth makeup design,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 what should that look like, what do we
3 need, what should the policies be, and
4 getting feedback from the community.

5 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
6 you, Council President. I'm done.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 Thank you.

9 The Chair recognizes
10 Councilmember Cindy Bass.

11 And also I want to note for the
12 record the presence of Councilmember Mark
13 Squilla.

14 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Thank you,
15 Mr. President.

16 Good morning.

17 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Good
18 morning.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: So I just
20 have a couple of questions and wanted to
21 hear you all talk about -- and my
22 apologies that I'm late. I was on
23 Council business at another event. And
24 I'm sure you probably already touched on
25 this, but I'm really interested in

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2 hearing more about your office and some
3 of the spending issues and misspending, I
4 would say, just because money and
5 contracts seem like it's almost -- here
6 we are on tax day. It's almost as if you
7 showed up with your accountant with all
8 your receipts in a shoebox. You know, it
9 just feels really disjointed and
10 disorganized, and it's a problem because,
11 as you know, our homeless population,
12 particularly during COVID, has really
13 boomed. And I'm wondering if you can
14 address that.

15 And also I didn't see anything
16 in your presentation about mental health
17 services, which I think is just
18 absolutely necessary when we look at our
19 homeless population, the amount of trauma
20 that they've been faced with, the things
21 that they have gone through. We cannot
22 just sort of ignore or act like the need
23 for homeless services -- for mental
24 health services isn't there. And I'm not
25 saying that that's what you're doing.

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2 I'm just making a point that we need to
3 further address it.

4 So I don't know if you've
5 already talked about these things, but
6 like I said, I'm a little bit tardy, so
7 I'd like for you to discuss them, if you
8 wouldn't mind.

9 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: No. Thank
10 you again, and thank you for your
11 continuous support of our office.

12 As it relates to the
13 overspending, you know, one of the things
14 that we have to be very -- do our due
15 diligence is that we cannot enter into
16 contracts that we do not have budgetary
17 authority for. We know that there is a
18 serious strain on resources overall, and
19 so one of the things that we have to do,
20 and it aligns with Mayor Parker's
21 economic opportunity for all, for those
22 individuals who are able to work, we need
23 to do that assessment at the front door
24 to make sure that we're connecting people
25 to educational and labor force

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2 opportunities.

3 As it relates to the second
4 part of your question, we do know that
5 behavioral health challenges are
6 prevalent in our shelters. We do try to
7 connect them as quickly as possible. We
8 work with our partners at DBHIDS to
9 quickly assign individuals to case
10 management, but it's all volunteer-based
11 services. We don't have the authority to
12 force it on anyone, but we strongly
13 encourage. And I think as we look at
14 FY25 and when I talk about doing better
15 assessment, we can do better in the area
16 of providing technical training to our
17 provider community to identify those
18 areas where you may see someone who is
19 experiencing any form of behavioral
20 health challenges so that we can get the
21 necessary services to them in a quicker
22 manner.

23 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Okay. Can
24 we go back to the first question about
25 the budget and I guess the overspending.

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2 Can you give us more detail? Like what
3 happened? How did it happen that we
4 ended up overspending significantly, it
5 seems?

6 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. I
7 think right now, as you're aware, our
8 office is under investigation of the
9 Office of Inspector General, but long
10 story short, until we get those findings
11 and with a forensic audit team that is in
12 place, you know, I defer to coming out
13 with seeing how they're reviewing our
14 past financial practices.

15 But the one thing that we
16 wanted to do was make sure that all of
17 the funds that are awarded through this
18 body of Council, that we're using it in
19 the most due diligent fashion by making
20 sure that contracts are fully funded that
21 we have budgetary authority for.

22 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Okay. And
23 I'm assuming going forward that the
24 controls are now in place to prevent --
25 and I know you can't talk about what

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2 happened already, but going forward, that
3 the controls are in place to make sure
4 that this doesn't happen again.

5 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Absolutely.
6 And we're looking forward to implementing
7 any recommendations that the forensic
8 audit team, along with the OIG, proposes
9 to us.

10 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Okay.
11 Very good.

12 That's my questioning for right
13 now. I'll come back around on the second
14 round.

15 Thank you, Mr. President.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: You
17 might want to squeeze that in, because
18 this will be the last round.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Oh, this
20 is the last round. Never mind.

21 Okay. So can you talk to us
22 about the intervention services,
23 particularly for children who are going
24 through homelessness. A couple years ago
25 I read an article in the New York Times

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2 and it said that -- I forget exactly how
3 it was phrased, but it was akin to the
4 highest number of those experiencing
5 homelessness, the age of the highest
6 number of those experiencing homelessness
7 was like five and under. And so I'm
8 wondering in terms of Philadelphia and
9 our population, where do we stand in
10 terms of young people and children?
11 Because that early displacement, that
12 early insecurity, unless like handled and
13 dealt with, can carry through to a young
14 person in other ways that we may see
15 manifest in not doing well in school,
16 dropping out of school, some of the crime
17 and violence we see among some of our
18 younger population. So all of these
19 things, they don't just go away, as you
20 know, with our young people. We see it
21 pop up in other ways that they're acting
22 out or that they are frustrated or
23 there's this level of insecurity.
24 So what kind of services do we
25 provide? I know we provide a lot of

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2 different services, but like how
3 intensive is it? Can you talk about that
4 a little bit?

5 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah.
6 Thanks for that question. Any young kid
7 that is experiencing homelessness is
8 traumatic. We work with our partners at
9 DHS along with DBH to identify the
10 appropriate level of services, but I
11 would defer to my Deputy of Housing that
12 can talk a little bit more of the
13 integrals of what they're seeing in the
14 housing programs.

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:
16 Thank you for that question. One of the
17 first things we want to do is end the
18 experience of homelessness as quickly as
19 possible. And if we can prevent a family
20 from coming into shelter in the first
21 place, we want to do that with back rent,
22 with rent going forward, with a security
23 deposit to move elsewhere. We know those
24 disruptions to a child's life are very
25 challenging.

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2 We've been able to add a School
3 District-funded staff member at intake to
4 ensure that young children, school-age
5 children are being connected right there
6 before they come to shelter with anything
7 they need, reconnection with school,
8 uniforms, transportation, et cetera.

9 And then from a housing case
10 management perspective, it's really the
11 case manager's role to get to know that
12 family, to work with them through their
13 housing needs, and to get them relocated
14 in the community, connected to supports
15 in the community as quickly as possible.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: And
17 then I think another thing just to add as
18 well, working with our partners with
19 early intervention for children that are
20 five and under as well to help those who
21 are in shelter can get assessed, get the
22 services that they need quicker, so
23 rather than go through the system and not
24 be served for that even when they get
25 moved into community.

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2 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Okay. All
3 right. Thank you very much.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
5 Thank you.

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Squilla.

8 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA: Thank
9 you, Mr. President.

10 And thank you all for being
11 here and your testimony.

12 Dave, real quick, I know that
13 Shared Streets has been a committee
14 that's been set up to deal with a lot of
15 the questions and concerns that we're
16 hearing that involve other City
17 departments, some of our business
18 partners, our non-profits.

19 Are we planning on continuing
20 that moving forward, and is that
21 something that we could hopefully grow to
22 be able to get the input from our
23 surrounding partners?

24 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Thank you
25 for that question, Councilman Squilla,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 and, again, thank you for your advocacy.
3 Absolutely. I think that could be a game
4 changer for Philadelphia, because it
5 provides a roundtable where folks who
6 traditionally don't work in this space
7 have an opportunity to bring innovative
8 ideas, bring attention. It addresses a
9 number of issues. One, the well-being of
10 a community.

11 Again, as I stated, when you
12 talk about Mayor Parker's goal around
13 safer, cleaner, greener, economic
14 opportunity for all and some of the
15 quality-of-life issues, this provides us
16 a gateway to address many of those issues
17 with non-traditional stakeholders at the
18 table, such as business leaders, folks
19 like yourself, Councilman, who can bring
20 a different perspective, service
21 providers.

22 We would love to be able to
23 continue that conversation and grow it
24 beyond what we have already done.

25 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA: Thank

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 you. That's great to hear.

3 And mentioning that, there was
4 a program that came out of those
5 conversations, Text to Give or Share to
6 Care, but it was getting right to a point
7 I think where we were ready to implement
8 it and we had some announcements. But
9 where is that now and how can we continue
10 to grow that?

11 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah.
12 Absolutely. And you attended the event.
13 We had an event with the partnership of
14 the Loews Hotel where it was called Scan
15 to Give on Giving Tuesday. The idea of
16 that is to bring awareness around
17 homeless issues and to make sure that
18 we're introducing some of the systemic
19 issues around homelessness to that.

20 We have launched that event,
21 and so we're looking forward to promoting
22 that even more throughout the City of
23 Philadelphia to get more people involved.
24 Especially as we move to the warmer
25 months where more tourism start to come,

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2 we need to be able to show there's proven
3 evidence process through our provider
4 community that there are things that
5 work, but it costs, and also not just by
6 dollars, but your volunteer efforts is
7 part of that.

8 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA: And I
9 think it's important because it was part
10 of an education process, but also as well
11 as awareness and raising money, where you
12 could have people who say, all right, we
13 have programs to help some of our
14 unhoused population, we have places to go
15 eat, we have all these things, and
16 instead of sometimes -- people want to
17 help. Most people have a heart and they
18 see somebody out there struggling, how
19 can they help, what can they do, and
20 sometimes when they don't know what to
21 do, they may do the wrong thing or make
22 it difficult for us. So by getting this
23 information out there, realizing that,
24 hey, maybe there's -- a perfect
25 opportunity was during this WrestleMania.

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2 Like if you want to help folks, right,
3 you want to be able to get them, please
4 do not give money to people outside, but
5 we have this program called Share to
6 Give, or whatever it's called, that we
7 could actually get those resources into
8 our non-profits and our departments and
9 our partners that are really doing the
10 right thing to help people who are
11 unhoused and get that information out
12 there.

13 If you're visiting for a
14 convention or you're coming here to visit
15 the City of Philadelphia, you see it in
16 your hotels, you see it in your retail
17 stores, right, you see it everywhere, and
18 so you know how to help folks when you do
19 see them. You say, you know what, I saw
20 that, let me go to this app and let me
21 donate.

22 And so it's a way to send a
23 message in a positive way and education
24 through what they can do to help, because
25 we know sometimes we have challenges with

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2 folks who come there and maybe want to
3 give out food and they create a mess and
4 they're not working with those folks who
5 are not engaging them in a way that
6 provides social services around there.
7 Sometimes that causes a challenge, but
8 having an organized policy and a way to
9 let people know how they could help I
10 think is very helpful.

11 And the last thing I'll say is
12 the Same-Day Pay program that works with
13 a lot of our programs, and we know CLIP
14 and Mural Arts and others are a part of
15 that, is do we see that too as a way to
16 move forward to continue to grow that
17 through our not only Office of Homeless
18 Services but through our other partner
19 departments to make sure we continue that
20 opportunity?

21 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Oh,
22 absolutely. And the one thing I want to
23 make very clear, Philadelphia has some of
24 the best models that I've ever seen, and
25 I've had the opportunity to travel to

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 many different places. I understand the
3 level of frustration when we see anyone
4 experiencing homelessness. I personally
5 take that seriously. What we need to
6 figure out as we move forward is how do
7 we right-size this system. We have every
8 model there is. And so this is an
9 opportunity to educate the public about
10 that.

11 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA: Thank
12 you. Looking forward to working with you
13 to continue those. Appreciate it.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
15 Chair recognizes Councilmember Isaiah
16 Thomas.

17 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Good
18 morning.

19 Council President acknowledged
20 that we had some young people here today,
21 and part of the reason that they're here
22 is to listen to testimony and advocate
23 for more mental health support for young
24 people.

25 I listened to Councilmember

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Bass ask specifically about mental health
3 services in support for families and
4 children that's within your care. Can
5 you just go back to that question and
6 give us maybe a detailed answer,
7 especially for the young people that's
8 here today that came to advocate for more
9 resources for families to receive mental
10 health support.

11 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Absolutely.
12 And thank you for your advocacy for young
13 people.

14 I think the one thing that we
15 have to do when we're addressing young
16 people is to understand the language.
17 Many times us in the academia world or
18 the professional, quote/unquote,
19 professional world don't speak the same
20 language, so it's a cultural difference.
21 And when we talk about trying to provide
22 services for young people -- I have an
23 18-year-old son and I know throughout the
24 COVID there were some challenges there,
25 but for the young people that are here

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 today, the one thing that I will first
3 say is find someone who you are
4 comfortable with if you're struggling
5 with any type of behavioral health
6 challenges.

7 I think with our partners at
8 the Department of Behavioral Health that
9 has really, really take some unique steps
10 in terms of trauma care, we want to
11 partner with them, but we also want to
12 partner with the young people, how do we
13 engage and do outreach to them so that we
14 can deliver the adequate and the quality
15 level of services that they necessarily
16 and desire and need.

17 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: What do
18 you offer right now? If I'm in one of
19 your centers, I've experienced some
20 trauma. I'm in one of your centers.
21 What are my options?

22 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Right now
23 through mental health services, it's
24 really at the Department of Behavioral
25 Health IDS. We don't perform -- we don't

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 offer mental health services through the
3 Office of Homeless Services. We work
4 through our partners in doing that.

5 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: So if
6 someone is in your facility, they're
7 having a traumatic experience. They need
8 help. What is the communication? How
9 does the pipeline, what is the system?

10 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. So
11 we have our staff that are trained in
12 mental health one-on-one that are located
13 within the shelter. We also have fast
14 case manager that is supported through
15 the Department of Behavior Health. We
16 try to make those connections through
17 that way and facilitate services.

18 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: So I
19 thought I was asking a softball question,
20 but what I'll say is this, and I said
21 this to the Council President. Today is
22 frustrating. I've listened to -- I came
23 to listen today, right? I'm really here
24 because I want to do mental health stuff.
25 I came to listen. We already knew that

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2 there was going to be some issues around
3 spending, but your answers have not
4 helped us. As someone who came in pretty
5 neutral as it relates to this issue of
6 homelessness, right, you have some
7 Councilmembers who are clearly saying we
8 have to give you money because the
9 homeless problem is a serious issue and
10 you have other Councilmembers saying why
11 would we give you more money when you've
12 clearly mismanaged money in the past and
13 we can't trust that the money you're
14 looking to spend is not data driven. I
15 listened to Councilmember Young's
16 question around security. It just sounds
17 like you're free-styling.

18 So at the end of the day --
19 I'll close out with this, Council
20 President -- you put us in a very bad
21 position. You put us in a very
22 uncomfortable position. And the reality
23 is is we all signed up for this job,
24 right? We know we have to take tough
25 votes and make tough decisions, but it's

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2 not fair that we have to look at a
3 department that's as important as yours,
4 especially at a time like this, and
5 decide whether or not we have to give you
6 money because we're scared of how you're
7 going to spend it or not spend it.

8 Thank you, Council President.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

10 Thank you, Councilmember Thomas.

11 Councilmember Young.

12 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
13 you, Council President.

14 So I was just told by a friend
15 of mine, who is a service provider, that
16 it's taking you guys two months to
17 essentially pay out on some of the
18 contracts that you have with some of
19 these small vendors. Can you tell us how
20 your audit affects your service providers
21 and their contracts and the timeliness of
22 them being paid what is owed to them?

23 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. I'll
24 defer to our Deputy of Finance.

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: The

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2 direct connection between the audit and
3 the fee to payments is that obviously due
4 to obviously our crisis, any sort of --
5 any payments that come out of our office
6 are to receive significantly more
7 scrutiny than they did prior to that. So
8 that is not 100 percent why, say, it
9 would take two months for a specific
10 provider, but that is something that we
11 are experiencing, which is that things
12 that are leaving our office are taking
13 more time due to the enhanced scrutiny
14 that they are receiving.

15 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: So can
16 you tell us the average length of time
17 between the moment your office receives
18 an invoice and the moment that payment
19 goes out to that service provider?

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: That's
21 information I would have to send to you
22 separately. I don't have that offhand,
23 but I will do so.

24 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: You can't
25 estimate? I mean, if you're in charge of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 this particular process, you don't have
3 an estimate on one that you may have seen
4 in the past recently?

5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: It
6 could be as quick as ten business days
7 and, like I had said, more recently it's
8 been longer than that. It could be 15,
9 as many as 20.

10 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: In your
11 permanent housing budget at Fiscal Year
12 '24, it's about 1.3 million obligated for
13 100 new supportive housing units, and I
14 guess the contractor is to be determined,
15 but you spent, it looks like, 1.1 of that
16 1.3. Could you tell us who this money
17 was spent with?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I'm
19 not certain about that number. I know
20 that we were allocated the 1.3 and for
21 that purpose.

22 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: It's on
23 Page 46 of your budget, Page 46, closer
24 to the bottom. To be determined, 100 new
25 supportive housing units, right? And

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 you're asking for an additional 1.8 -- I

3 mean, 1.3 in FY -- in the same budget.

4 So I'm just trying to figure out who

5 received that \$1.1 million?

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER: So

7 some of those funds were used to address

8 the \$5 million projected deficit, but we

9 were able to initiate 20 new housing

10 subsidies in Fiscal '24 through our

11 partners at PMHCC providing assistance to

12 individuals with support from DBHIDS.

13 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: So out of

14 the 100 that you've asked for, you've

15 only been able to provide housing for 20

16 and still spent the majority of the

17 \$1.3 million?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I

19 don't believe that number is accurate.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: The

21 number that's in this budget here is not

22 accurate?

23 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I

24 don't believe that number is accurate.

25 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: The

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 number that you provided to us in your
3 budget, this number is not accurate?

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I
5 would have to get back to you,
6 Councilmember, because I know that we did
7 not allocate that amount of funding for
8 that purpose.

9 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: It says
10 in here. So this is what --

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I
12 understand. I see it, and you are
13 correct in saying that, but I would have
14 to get you that information. I don't
15 believe that number is correct.

16 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Could you
17 please provide us with the correct
18 information so we can really assess?

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Yes.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank you
21 so much.

22 Mr. President, I'm just going
23 to yield at the moment.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 Thank you, Member Young.

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2 The Chair recognizes

3 Councilmember O'Rourke.

4 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: I did
5 want to come back to something I was
6 going to ask earlier. I'm asking now. I
7 want to move to the HOME-ARP plan, which
8 seems like the longest lasting COVID era
9 funds -- I want to go to the HOME
10 American Rescue Plan dollars, which seems
11 like the longest lasting COVID era funds
12 that OHS will manage.

13 The Office has stated that the
14 primary goal for this 42 million stream
15 is to rehab and develop new housing for
16 living -- for people living without
17 homes. So here's a rapid-fire round of
18 questions on HOME-ARP and then I'll get
19 off of it.

20 First, I know the housing
21 production goal is to increase the
22 affordable housing stock in Philly by 10
23 percent. Can you give us an idea of how
24 the boost would impact the daily
25 operation of OHS's housing programs?

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2 Second, as OHS is entering the
3 implementation phase of HOME-ARP, are
4 there any early concerns or challenges in
5 contracting? Hoping the money can be
6 leveraged for as much housing as
7 possible. Concerned about the 20 new
8 housing units that Councilman Young just
9 named.

10 Lastly, OHS's testimony states
11 that the plan will be implemented this
12 year. Does that mean the production of
13 new housing will begin this year with
14 confidence that it will take place on the
15 72-month timeline stated in the report?
16 If you can answer those and then I'm
17 done. Thank you so, so much.

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: Yeah. To
19 speak about the HOME-ARP, so we're
20 working in partnership with DHCD to award
21 that money out to -- that has been
22 dedicated for that. But about \$5 million
23 of that is for tenant-based rental
24 assistance and social services. The
25 majority of that money again is for

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 acquisition, development for low
3 affordable housing for folks who are
4 experiencing homelessness, but that is in
5 partnership with DHCD.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

7 Point of information.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
9 Chair recognizes Councilmember Gilmore
10 Richardson.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Can
12 you just detail for the record what is
13 the amount of the ARP, who is
14 responsible -- can you detail for the
15 record this ARP funding that you're
16 referring to, who is responsible, and
17 when did you receive the funding?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: I'll
19 answer that. So we had to create a plan
20 of how we would use the funds with the
21 community. So we had an extensive
22 community input process. We were just
23 approved by HUD in November of '23 with
24 the plan, which is on our website, and
25 we're hoping with those funds,

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2 \$23 million of it will be allocated
3 towards acquisition and development, and
4 we're hoping there will be 351 units over
5 a 72-month period once the RFP process
6 goes through.

7 So we had -- it will be in
8 stages, short term, medium and long term
9 when we use those funds. And then in
10 addition, as Dave had mentioned with the
11 tenant-based rental assistance, we're
12 hoping to have an additional 200 units
13 from that. So there will be a total of
14 551 units in total.

15 And then besides the
16 acquisition and development, 12 percent
17 of those funds, which is about 5 million,
18 will go towards the tenant-based rental
19 assistance, supportive services to help
20 individuals and families obtain stable
21 housing. In addition, 2.1 will go
22 towards acquisition and development of
23 non-congregate shelters. And then
24 3 percent, which is about 1.26 million,
25 will help with non-profit capacity

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2 building as well as operating in the
3 community, and then administration costs
4 too.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
6 Chair resumes time back to Councilmember
7 O'Rourke.

8 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
9 you, Council President.

10 I just wanted to make sure I
11 got clear, based off your testimony, does
12 building begin this year for the new
13 housing and can we expect it to kind of
14 be along the 72-month timeline that had
15 been laid out?

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: So I
17 think the projects that are shovel ready
18 will start, but the longer term ones
19 won't. But, yes, once that RFP process
20 goes through with our partnerships,
21 projects that have been identified and
22 ready, they will start.

23 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Okay.
24 Thank you very much.

25 Thank you, Council President.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
3 Chair recognizes Councilmember Cindy
4 Bass, then last Councilmember Harrity and
5 we'll wrap up.

6 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: I
7 apologize, Mr. President. No questions.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
9 Chair recognizes Councilmember Jim
10 Harrity.

11 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Thank
12 you, Council President.

13 To the permanent housing, how
14 many units did you actually build last
15 year?

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: How
17 did we build it?

18 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: How
19 many have you built out of that?
20 Because -- well, let me just phrase it
21 this way: With the numbers that my
22 colleague is shooting out, being somebody
23 who comes from the construction industry,
24 all that money that we've spent in the
25 last seven to eight years, roughly around

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 a billion or so dollars, we could have
3 built a lot of permanent housing with
4 that money. You know, we need to start
5 figuring out how we shelter people
6 permanently, not temporarily.

7 I'm just completely confused
8 and this -- you got to see our
9 frustrations, right? I mean, this is
10 astronomical money that could have been
11 spent for permanent housing to house some
12 of these families. I just don't -- I
13 would like to know what are the changes
14 you're going to make to move forward in a
15 way that we can house people permanently?

16 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: We agree
17 with you with housing people permanently.
18 For the record, our office don't build
19 permanent housing. We work with our
20 partners at DHCD that has the
21 responsibility of that. We also work
22 with our partners at the Philadelphia
23 Housing Authority to provide individuals
24 and families the opportunity for
25 shelters.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 I think through our Landlord
3 Engagement Unit, what we're doing is
4 trying to engage landlords who has
5 prospective property at an affordable
6 rent so that we can do better planning of
7 getting people to those sites. But we
8 absolutely agree that more people should
9 be in permanent housing.

10 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Yeah.
11 This whole thing doesn't make any sense
12 to me. It's just unfathomable. I am
13 lividly upset with what's going on here
14 and the lack of concern, frankly. I
15 don't feel it coming from you guys. You
16 know, I believe that you were completely
17 unprepared for this meeting. And I agree
18 with my Leader, we definitely need to
19 call you guys back to give you some time
20 to actually think about your answers and
21 figure out some real stuff for us,
22 because what you're spouting now is not
23 doing it.

24 Thank you, Council President.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Thank you, Member Harrity.

3 We're wrapping up, and the
4 Chair recognizes Councilmember Katherine
5 Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

7 Thank you, Council President. Again,
8 thank you very, very much, and thank you
9 to each of my colleagues, particularly
10 those who extended their time to me as we
11 continue to undertake my office's deep
12 dive into the Office of Homeless
13 Services.

14 I do want to thank each of you
15 for being here and for responding to the
16 numerous requests for information that we
17 have asked over the last 18 months. But
18 I heard you say right-size, and I think
19 that's what we're seeking to get to. We
20 need to right-size this department.

21 We don't know how to fully fund
22 this department because you all have
23 spent years entering into contracts that
24 you didn't have money for, and you're
25 operating without a clear set of standard

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 operating procedures, without clear
3 oversight, without clear monitoring,
4 without clear compliance. So we don't
5 really know what it costs to operate this
6 system, because you don't know what it
7 really costs to operate this system at
8 its best, fully functioning, helping the
9 most amount of people.

10 Then you say that you'll have
11 to cut service because of lack of
12 funding, which I completely disagree
13 with. We went over the numbers, and as
14 you see here, colleagues, from FY24 to
15 FY25, there's only a decrease in
16 \$2 million for General Fund and Grants
17 Revenue per the information that was
18 provided by the Office of Homeless
19 Services. Yet, in your budget documents
20 and details, you are having most of the
21 amount of people that you could service
22 here in the City of Philadelphia.

23 In addition to that, I just
24 wanted to ask two very brief questions
25 and I will end with this. If you could

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 detail for the record how much money you
3 have brought in in grants last year.

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: We
5 brought in \$96 million.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
7 you brought in \$96 million in grants just
8 last year?

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Now,
10 when those are awarded, it doesn't mean
11 it's in that fiscal year. Some of it is
12 federal fiscal year. Some of it is city
13 fiscal year, but cumulatively, yes.

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I'm
15 sorry. For the record, if you could just
16 detail, it's just grants?

17 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES:
18 Yeah. This is grants, federal and state.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: All
20 federal grants outside of your General
21 Fund budget; is that correct?

22 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES:
23 Yeah. Excluding General Fund, yes.

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
25 Thank you for that information.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 And, finally, I have a very
3 serious question that I could ask each
4 person on your leadership team who is
5 here, not just the people who are at the
6 table. Are there any other members of
7 your leadership team here?

8 (Witness approached witness
9 table.)

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Who
11 work directly in the Office of Homeless
12 Services.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't
14 work there, but I would like --

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Only
16 if you work in the Office of Homeless
17 Services if you're in the senior
18 leadership team.

19 Mr. President, can they
20 approach the table, please?

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Sure.

23 Yeah. May you please approach
24 the table, please.

25 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Is

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Bruce Johnson here?

3 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

4 No. He's away on a family matter.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

6 Okay. Thank you.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

10 Mr. President, this will conclude my
11 questions here.

12 If we could start with the
13 Director and we'll work our way down. If
14 you could state your name and title for
15 the record, and then I'll ask you a
16 question. Then we'll go just one at a
17 time, and this will conclude my
18 questions.

19 We can start with the Director
20 and work our way down. State your name
21 for the record and your title.

22 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: David
23 Holloman, Interim Executive Director for
24 the City's Office of Homeless Services.

25 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Thank you. My last question, this will
3 go to each of you. So I'll ask this
4 question once. State your name for the
5 record, your title, and then please
6 respond to the question.

7 Have you ever personally
8 benefited from any finances from the
9 Office of Homeless Services? Have you
10 ever personally accepted or received any
11 money from the City of Philadelphia or
12 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or the
13 federal government that was money
14 intended for the Office of Homeless
15 Services and the work that your office
16 does? Have you ever personally received
17 any of those dollars?

18 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: I have
19 never received any dollars for the Office
20 of Homeless Services, from the Office of
21 Homeless Services or any other state or
22 any local that benefited me.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

24 Thank you.

25 Next.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 MS. RIVERA: My name is Diana
3 Rivera. I am the Contract Administrator
4 for the Office of Homeless Services.

5 I'm the Contract Administrator
6 for the Office of Homeless Services and
7 my name is Diana Rivera.

8 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes.
9 And please respond to the question that I
10 asked of the Executive Director. That
11 question will be for each person.

12 MS. RIVERA: No, I have never
13 gained any money or funds from any
14 contractor or vendor or potential vendor
15 for the Office of Homeless Services or
16 for any other City office that I have
17 worked at.

18 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
19 Thank you so much.

20 Next.

21 MS. BEST-MORRISON: Hi. My
22 name is Sabrenia Best-Morrison. I'm the
23 Assistant Deputy Director of Facilities.
24 And, no, I have never received any funds
25 from any state or local government.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

3 Thank you so much.

4 Next.

5 MR. HILL: Hi. My name is

6 Jerome Hill. I am the Director of

7 Compliance. And, no, I have never

8 received any funds or any type of

9 payments.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

11 Thank you so much.

12 Next.

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GONZALES: Hi.

14 My name is Beth Gonzales. I'm Deputy

15 Director of Policy, Planning and

16 Performance. And, no, I have not

17 received any funds from any federal,

18 state or local dollars.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

20 Thank you so much.

21 Next.

22 MS. RAHIM: My name is Rochelle

23 Rahim. I'm the Fiscal Officer at OHS.

24 And, no, I have never personally received

25 any funds from the state government, city

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 government, federal government.

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

4 Thank you very, very much.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Hello. My name

6 is Ebony Williams, Director of Landlord

7 Affairs. No, I have not received any

8 funds, city, federal or any other thing.

9 My paycheck was low funding. No. I'm
10 just kidding.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

12 Thank you.

13 Next.

14 MS. ROBINSON: Good morning.

15 My name is Daiquiri Robinson. I'm the

16 Director of Long-Term Housing, and I have

17 not received any local, state or federal

18 funds from the Office of Homeless

19 Services.

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

21 Thank you.

22 MS. SMITH: Good afternoon. My

23 name is Katima Smith. I am the HR

24 Manager for the Office of Homeless

25 Services. No, I have never received any

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 funds, state, federal or local.

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

4 Thank you so much.

5 MS. LINTON-JONES: Good

6 afternoon. Sherylle Linton-Jones, Senior

7 Director of Communications for the Office

8 of Homeless Services. And the answer is

9 no to all three.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

11 Thank you. Thank you very much.

12 MR. GIGLIOTTI: Good afternoon.

13 Fred Gigliotti, Director of Emergency

14 Housing for the Office of Homeless

15 Services. I have never received any

16 funds from the City or state government

17 that was supposed to go to the Office of

18 Homeless Services.

19 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

20 Thank you.

21 MS. GIGLIOTTI: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

23 Thank you very much.

24 Next.

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CANCELLIER:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Roberta Cancellier, the Deputy Director
3 for Housing Services, and I have not.

4 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

5 Thank you very much.

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: Peter
7 Curran, the Deputy of Fiscal Contracts
8 and Asset Management. I have never
9 received any funding from the federal,
10 state, local governments or any other
11 source intended for the Office of
12 Homeless Services.

13 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

14 Thank you. Thank you very much.

15 Thank you for allowing us to
16 get that information on the record if
17 needed in the future.

18 Thank you, Council President.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 You're welcome.

21 Final question, Councilwoman
22 Lozada.

23 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank
24 you, Council President.

25 I just have one question. You

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 all just mentioned receiving \$96 million
3 in grant dollars. How much philanthropic
4 dollars have you all received, if any,
5 and are there corporate private dollars
6 that work in partnership with OHS, and if
7 so, how much?

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: I'm
9 sorry. We have not received any
10 philanthropic funds recently, like within
11 the last, I'd say, two to three years.

12 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: When was
13 the last time you received philanthropic
14 dollars?

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: We did
16 receive two small grants from the Clinton
17 Foundation.

18 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: How
19 much?

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR CURRAN: From
21 the Clinton Foundation.

22 DIRECTOR HOLLOMAN: And for
23 better accuracy, can we provide that to
24 you in writing so that we can give you
25 the accurate amount whether we received

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 it in the last three years and from which
3 entity that we received it from?

4 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Yes. If
5 you could -- Council President, if we can
6 ask for the philanthropic dollars,
7 corporate or private funding that they
8 received over the course of the time
9 between 2019 to the present, that would
10 be awesome.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 Absolutely.

13 Please provide the information
14 to the Chair.

15 Seeing that there are no other
16 questions, you are on notice for a
17 callback, and obviously between now and
18 that period of time, you should be able
19 to provide the information requested of
20 you today. And I know we have
21 individuals from the Administration who
22 is here as well, and so hopefully they'll
23 make it an urgent process in terms of
24 making sure we receive the information
25 back. And we also know that this

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 particular department is under
3 investigation, and so hopefully that
4 process can be expedited as we address
5 the decisions that need to be made
6 regarding this particular budget so we
7 aren't voting blindly on the budget with
8 no outcomes on what things are going to
9 look like in the future as well as, most
10 importantly, the final outcomes of what
11 actually happened in the past.

12 With that being said, thank you
13 very much.

14 Ms. Loughhead, will you please
15 call up the next panel who will provide
16 testimony together.

17 THE CLERK: Yes. Dr. Frank
18 Franklin, Interim Health Commissioner,
19 and Dr. Jill Bowen, Commissioner of
20 DBHIDS.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Members, you will have the opportunity to
23 ask questions after you hear testimony
24 from the Department of Public Health as
25 well as the Department of Behavioral

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Health and Intellectual disAbilities.

3 (Witnesses approached witness
4 table.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: So
6 we're going to ask that you state your
7 name and title for the record and begin.
8 I'm going to ask for the Department of
9 Behavioral Health and Intellectual
10 disAbilities to begin your testimony.

11 I want to, first and foremost,
12 thank Dr. Jill Bowen for her service to
13 the City of Philadelphia. I want to also
14 acknowledge soon-to-be interim leader,
15 Dr. Marquita Washington, so I'm --

16 DR. BOWEN: Marquita Williams.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I'm
18 sorry. Marquita Williams. It was a long
19 morning. So congratulations.

20 - - -

21 (Applause.)

22 - - -

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 Dr. Marquita Williams, looking forward.
25 You got fans up there also clapping.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 We look forward to working with
3 you as well in the capacity of Interim
4 Commissioner.

5 So Dr. Jill Bowen.

6 DR. BOWEN: So thank you.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

8 You're welcome.

9 DR. BOWEN: Thank you for
10 announcing -- we were hoping that we
11 would be able to announce today. So
12 we're very excited about it.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

14 Yes. I was wondering why she wasn't up
15 here, but I'm going to let you go ahead
16 and do what y'all do, the Administration.
17 Go ahead.

18 DR. BOWEN: This is my --

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 This is your swan song, so keep passing
21 it along. That's cool.

22 But thank you, Dr. Jill Bowen.

23 DR. BOWEN: Thank you. And I
24 want to just say before I start, thank
25 you to City Council President for the

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 citation that recognized the Department's
3 work, efforts, and achievements during my
4 tenure. I really appreciate that's a
5 full team effort and --

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Before we get started, I just want to
8 thank you and your team particularly
9 around working with my team specifically
10 addressing the issue of trauma and mental
11 health as it relates to the issue of gun
12 violence, right, and the vast variety of
13 services and resources that y'all offer
14 when it comes to addressing the mental
15 health and trauma that our young people
16 and their families are experiencing as it
17 relates to the gun violence that we're
18 seeing in the City of Philadelphia.

19 I don't think people really
20 recognize you got a lot of families and
21 young people walking around with
22 post-traumatic stress disorder as a
23 result of seeing people getting shot and
24 murdered day in and day out. We know
25 hurt people hurt people.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 So I want to publicly
3 acknowledge you and your team for just
4 being a part of our roundtables and
5 support of our efforts around that issue.

6 Will you please begin your
7 testimony.

8 DR. BOWEN: Really appreciate
9 your efforts on that as well.

10 Good afternoon, President
11 Johnson and members of City Council. I
12 am Dr. Jill Bowen, Commissioner of the
13 Department of Behavioral Health and
14 Intellectual disAbility Services, DBHIDS.
15 Joining me today is Dr. Tierra Pritchett,
16 Deputy Commissioner of Administration,
17 Finance and Quality, and Amanda David --
18 where is Amanda -- Chief Program Officer,
19 Director of the Division of Behavioral
20 Health. I am pleased to provide
21 testimony for the Department of
22 Behavioral Health and Intellectual
23 disAbility Services' Fiscal Year 2025
24 Operating Budget.

25 Our mission at the Department

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 of Behavioral Health and Intellectual
3 disAbility Services envisions a
4 Philadelphia where every individual can
5 achieve health, well-being, and
6 self-determination. The mission of
7 DBHIDS is to educate, strengthen, and
8 serve individuals and communities so that
9 all Philadelphians can thrive, enjoy
10 improved quality of life, and benefit
11 from City services that residents can
12 see, touch, and feel.

13 At the Department of Behavioral
14 Health and Intellectual disAbility
15 Services, Fiscal Year '24 was a kickoff
16 and expansion of strategy for many of our
17 efforts and is being deepened further in
18 Fiscal Year '25.

19 DBHIDS has a priority vision
20 that ensures that all of our efforts work
21 collectively to address trauma, achieve
22 equity, and engage community,
23 encapsulated as TEC, T-E-C, for trauma,
24 equity, and community. Through this
25 lens, the Department has worked to revamp

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 operations so that system responses are
3 trauma aware and equitable and do not in
4 and of themselves add trauma when a
5 person is already in distress.

6 DBHIDS has worked to reduce
7 behavioral health disparities and promote
8 racial equity within BIPOC communities,
9 and we have transformed systems and
10 approaches to actively involve and
11 empower communities, integrating the
12 insights of community and faith-based
13 leaders, providers, advocates,
14 individuals, and families with lived
15 experience, academicians, and
16 community-based organizations into
17 program development and operations at all
18 levels. DBHIDS does this work in
19 partnership with over 100 stakeholders.

20 To address trauma, DBHIDS has
21 utilized a multi-faceted approach,
22 including creating an external
23 stakeholder learning collaborative and
24 subcommittees that provided multi-year
25 recommendations, which are in various

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 stages of implementation.

3 The subcommittees focused on
4 trauma related to violence, the impact of
5 trauma on children and families,
6 prolonged trauma that people experience
7 over time, secondary and vicarious
8 trauma, and the intersections of trauma
9 that can result when individuals and
10 families interact with multiple safety
11 net systems.

12 Some of the recommendations and
13 activities that we have already
14 implemented in our
15 recommendation-to-action approach that
16 moves with urgency to stand up these
17 recommended initiatives include
18 distribution of behavioral health
19 resource cards to children, families, and
20 communities throughout the City, reaching
21 over 50,000 households; expanded
22 trauma-focused cognitive behavior
23 therapy, particularly in underserved
24 areas; held focus groups with both
25 perpetrators and survivors of gun

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 violence to understand early risks and
3 then to use that information to enhance
4 upstream services for today's at-risk
5 youth; launched Trauma to Triumph, an
6 initiative aimed at annually providing
7 resources, support services, and
8 opportunities for 100 youth living in
9 high crime and high poverty areas. The
10 community-based organizations have been
11 selected and will be infusing resources
12 and support services into the community
13 in Fiscal Year '25.

14 To achieve equity, DBHIDS
15 continued our DEI efforts to diversify
16 the provider network, creating an open
17 network at Community Behavioral Health
18 for certain levels of care, supporting
19 entry for small and mid-sized providers,
20 establish the social determinants of
21 Health Equity Unit to tackle disparities
22 arising from systemic racism, and
23 introduced the Forensic Equity Unit to
24 address health-related needs of
25 incarcerated individuals and those in the

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 justice system.

3 In addition, we hosted BIPOC
4 provider focus groups to identify and
5 break down barriers to entry into the
6 provider network. DBHIDS convened
7 external stakeholders and BIPOC community
8 leaders to develop sustainable strategies
9 to address the devastating impact of
10 trauma and the substance crisis on
11 Philadelphia's BIPOC communities, with
12 the goal of making it easier to navigate
13 the healthcare systems and increase the
14 number of professionals with cultural
15 humility and linguistic competence within
16 the DBHIDS/CBH provider network.

17 To engage community, DBHIDS
18 strengthened partnerships with
19 community-based organizations combatting
20 gun violence and secured stable funding
21 to bolster their infrastructure and
22 address priority issues.

23 Through the Community Wellness
24 Engagement Unit, DBHIDS deployed teams of
25 community wellness specialists with lived

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 experience, including peer counselors,
3 recovery specialists, and autism peer
4 specialists. CWEU engaged in nearly 300
5 community activities aiding over 7,500
6 individuals. And the Network of
7 Neighbors, inclusive of community members
8 trained to support and lead responses to
9 stress, trauma, loss, and violence,
10 responded to 135 requests related to
11 children, gun violence, opioids, and
12 suicide. In Fiscal Year '25, Community
13 Engagement will intensify the
14 collaboration strategy approach with all
15 our City and community partners.

16 During Engaging Males of Color
17 Initiative, DBHIDS collaborated with
18 First Person Arts to produce Trigger, a
19 deeply impactful film highlighting the
20 experiences of those affected by gun
21 violence in Philadelphia and their
22 healing arc. Nearly 3,000 individuals
23 have seen this film at screenings through
24 educational institutions and community
25 organizations, with an additional 3,300

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 views via WHYY, and further screenings
3 are planned in Fiscal Year '25 as well as
4 a toolkit to support communities in their
5 Trigger-screening activities.

6 ReCAST, the Resilience in
7 Communities After Stress and Trauma,
8 which is a substance -- is a
9 SAMHSA-funded initiative, specifically
10 focuses on addressing the traumatic
11 impact of community violence on youth.
12 It has funded a total of 67
13 community-based and driven projects, the
14 youth that provide safe spaces for
15 promoting social and emotional
16 well-being, youth leadership,
17 intergenerational communication, and
18 community pride, and continues into
19 Fiscal Year '25.

20 Our Faith and Spiritual Affairs
21 Initiative is designed to empower faith
22 communities to access behavioral health
23 resources when needed. Clergy are
24 available through the Philadelphia warm
25 line for callers seeking faith-based

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 supports.

3 DBHIDS will host its 17th
4 Annual Faith and Spiritual Affairs
5 Conference this year entitled Rising
6 Above: Empowering Youth to Heal from
7 Trauma and Violence.

8 In addition to TEC, DBHIDS
9 recognizes the vital role of addressing
10 social determinants of health for
11 comprehensive well-being and community
12 success. In 2023, we piloted a program
13 providing food, technology, and
14 transportation to individuals who were
15 receiving behavioral health treatment.
16 The pilot affirmed the positive impact of
17 addressing these needs, promoting food
18 security, enabling access to telehealth
19 and economic opportunities, and enhancing
20 mobility for broader job prospects and
21 social engagement. That work has been
22 incorporated into an on-site one-stop
23 shop effort to connect to related
24 services that will continue into Fiscal
25 Year '25.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Through our Children's Cabinet,
3 DBHIDS created a strategic framework that
4 outlines a set of priorities to
5 implement, focused on the distress that
6 our children are experiencing in this
7 post-pandemic era in light of the
8 violence and substance crises that affect
9 their everyday lives and recognizing the
10 negative impact of social media. This
11 resulted in the development of a social
12 media toolkit, palm cards with useful
13 approaches and how-to information, one
14 designed for youth and one designed for
15 parents so that they have the information
16 they need to understand and navigate the
17 dangers and find alternatives for social
18 connectedness. The Children's Cabinet
19 will continue to focus on children and
20 schools and further the trauma work
21 related to gun violence in Fiscal Year
22 '25.

23 DBHIDS, with tremendous help
24 from this body, City Council, thank you,
25 has transformed the behavioral health

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 crisis system. It looks nothing like it
3 looked a few years ago. Between
4 January '22 and February '24, nearly
5 153,000 calls were received by the
6 Philadelphia Crisis Line, including
7 9-8-8, averaging 193 calls per day.
8 There were nearly 3,000 warm transfers
9 from 9-1-1 to 9-8-8.

10 The Philadelphia Community
11 Mobile Crisis Response Teams provide
12 regionalized citywide coverage through
13 four providers, managing 22 teams that
14 operate 24/7. Preliminary results
15 reflect the success of this model, with
16 high ratings of satisfaction by those who
17 were served by the CMCRT and the majority
18 of crises resolved in the community.

19 With 302 numbers down and the
20 time needed for diverts from the CRC
21 reduced dramatically. Several other
22 cities and states have been reaching out
23 to learn how they may develop similar
24 approaches to Philadelphia's model.

25 In addition to the expansion of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Adult Community Mobile Crisis Response
3 Teams, in Fiscal Year '25 DBHIDS will
4 expand the number of longer term crisis
5 intervention stabilization teams to
6 provide up to six weeks of therapeutic
7 intervention to individuals at risk of
8 reemergence of crisis. And DBHIDS is
9 also supporting the establishment of the
10 first adult behavioral health urgent care
11 center in Philadelphia, with the first
12 center scheduled to open in early Fiscal
13 Year 25 as part of this continuum of
14 adult crisis services available to
15 Philadelphians.

16 Also an academic evaluation of
17 the crisis system transformation itself
18 has been procured and will begin in
19 Fiscal Year '25.

20 DBHIDS is also actively engaged
21 in developing an evidence-based model of
22 care for those with both behavioral
23 health and intellectual disability
24 challenges and continuing to work with
25 stakeholders trained in this

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 evidence-based model in Fiscal Year '25
3 and beyond.

4 And as substance use disorder
5 continues to be of grave concern in
6 Philadelphia as well as in many other
7 cities across the country, DBHIDS offers
8 a comprehensive range of treatment and
9 support services, including peer support,
10 outpatient treatment, residential
11 treatment, licensed recovery houses, and
12 hospital-level treatment. This past year
13 the Department has stood up an innovative
14 ASAM, American Society of Addiction
15 Medicine, Level 4 program tied to acute
16 and post-acute medical care to shift the
17 system so those who need intensive wound
18 care treatment can also flow easily into
19 substance use recovery, and this is
20 continuing to expand in Fiscal Year '25.
21 There has never been a model like this
22 before.

23 So far since almost a year,
24 nearly 200 people were admitted to the
25 program, who never would have gotten

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 recovery services before, and a majority
3 of them complete the program and continue
4 their recovery.

5 And the MORS team, which Mobile
6 Outreach and Recovery, provides linkages
7 to recovery supports and substance
8 treatment. This is critically important
9 because the MORS team is an on-the-ground
10 assessment team, which makes it easier to
11 get into services and treatment directly
12 from the street. And they've engaged
13 over 2,400 individuals and facilitated
14 346 linkages to treatment.

15 Homeless Outreach engaged over
16 8,000 unique individuals in 2023,
17 connected nearly 5,000 people to
18 services, tracking for follow up from the
19 2018 and 2019 encampment resolution
20 pilot. Of the 298 total individuals who
21 were placed on the by-name list,
22 97 percent are no longer being seen or
23 actively engaged with homeless outreach
24 teams today in 2024. Only nine people
25 from that 2018, 2019 pilot by name list

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 have been seen on the streets throughout
3 the City and only one in Kensington.

4 This data is now available to
5 the public on the DBHIDS website. I was
6 looking for Councilmember Lozada. This
7 is now available to the public on the
8 DBHIDS website at [DBHIDS.org/SDOH](https://dbhids.org/SDOH), click
9 on the Outreach tab. And this data will
10 be regularly updated monthly going
11 forward and into Fiscal Year '25.

12 DBHIDS also works closely with
13 the First Judicial District's specialty
14 court programs where individuals with
15 behavioral health challenges may be
16 diverted from a traditional trial track.
17 This includes Veterans Court, AMP Court,
18 Drug Treatment Court, and Mental Health
19 Court.

20 Our work is outlined in the TEC
21 comprehensive plan. You can find it at
22 [DBHIDS.org/tec](https://dbhids.org/tec).

23 In Fiscal Year '25, DBHIDS will
24 continue, and I know they will because of
25 all of these amazing people that are here

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 with me today and of course the
3 incomparable Dr. Marquita Williams.
4 DBHIDS will continue to scale up our
5 effective efforts as outlined in our TEC
6 plan for Fiscal Year '25 and beyond. All
7 of our partners contribute to these
8 efforts. The support of City Council has
9 been critical in helping to address the
10 deep challenges to behavioral wellness
11 and the trauma that has so widely
12 impacted Philadelphians.

13 We appreciate the ongoing
14 support of Council and the opportunity to
15 highlight the work of DBHIDS. My
16 colleagues and I are happy to respond to
17 questions at this time.

18 Thank you so much.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 Thank you very much.

21 The Chair recognizes Dr. Frank
22 Franklin.

23 DR. FRANKLIN: Good afternoon.

24 Good afternoon, President Johnson and
25 members of the City Council. I'm

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Dr. Frank Franklin, the Interim Health
3 Commissioner for the Philadelphia
4 Department of Public Health. Deputy
5 Commissioner Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson, Ryan
6 Taylor, Chief Operating Officer, and
7 Chief of staff, Sara Enes, and the
8 division directors across the Department
9 are joining me today. I am pleased to
10 provide testimony on the Department of
11 Public Health's Fiscal Year 2025
12 Operating Budget.

13 The FY25 budget will continue
14 to support our mission to protect and
15 promote all Philadelphians' health and
16 provide a safety net for people
17 disproportionately impacted by societal
18 factors that limit their access to
19 healthcare and other resources necessary
20 for optimal health and well-being.

21 Given that you have my full
22 testimony and my full written testimony,
23 I will provide a high level summary.

24 The proposed Fiscal Year 2025
25 General Fund budget totals \$149 million,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 approximately -- well, let me go back.
3 149,276,661, a decrease of \$4,459,659
4 from Fiscal Year 2024. The decrease is
5 due primarily to one-time funding for
6 pay-as-you-go capital support for health
7 center infrastructure in Fiscal Year '24.

8 The Department currently has
9 908 filled positions and requests 1,082
10 budgeted positions in FY25, an increase
11 of one position over FY24. The growth is
12 attributed to hiring additional staff for
13 air pollution control.

14 Some of the Department's
15 accomplishments includes expanding dental
16 and cervical cancer prevention services,
17 convening a task force on housing, and
18 supporting affordable housing among
19 people with HIV.

20 Since its launching in 2019,
21 our Philadelphia Food and Justice
22 Initiative has provided over
23 \$1.99 million in seed funding to 27
24 entrepreneurs and organizations to
25 address food injustice and expand healthy

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 food access in neighborhoods that need it
3 most. Twenty-five grantees are BIPOC
4 owned or led, 18 are woman owned or led.

5 The Department has advanced our
6 efforts in understanding and addressing
7 maternal mortality and morbidity by
8 advancing the nation's first severe
9 maternal morbidity surveillance program,
10 which utilizes hospital-level clinical
11 data to analyze severe maternal morbidity
12 trends in depth and identify public
13 health improvement opportunities. This
14 work that we are engaged in at the
15 Department aligns with the Mayor's
16 priorities of public safety and
17 well-being, economic opportunity,
18 housing, clean and green, and education.

19 As we continue to engage from
20 the pandemic and reimagine our new
21 normal, the Health Department continues
22 strengthening critical areas essential to
23 public health services. For example,
24 expanding our health center network
25 promotes equitable access to primary care

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 services, pivoting our COVID-19 resource
3 hubs into community-based public health
4 resource hubs to support consistent
5 avenues of community engagement, and
6 enhancing the Department's capacity to
7 build diverse and skilled workforce in
8 alignment with our strategic and
9 community health assessment priorities.

10 Thank you, Council President
11 and members of the City Council, for your
12 continuing support of the Philadelphia
13 Department of Public Health, and I'm
14 happy to answer your questions.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Thank you very much.

17 The Chair recognizes
18 Councilmember Phillips.

19 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank
20 you, Council President.

21 Good afternoon, Department of
22 Public Health.

23 In March of 2023, after meeting
24 with hundreds of neighbors in Lower
25 Northeast Philadelphia and having walked

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 entire neighborhoods in Oxford Circle and
3 Lawncrest, I called an emergency meeting
4 to address a serious concern in Oxford
5 Circle and, that is, rats, large
6 extensive number of rats in Oxford
7 Circle.

8 So, yes, Philadelphia, one of
9 the things that was very important is
10 that I asked the Public Health Department
11 to come up with a massive campaign to
12 address finding issues -- finding
13 resolutions with this particular matter.
14 I also asked the Public Health Department
15 that they work on developing a
16 comprehensive strategy that will utilize
17 campaign work to notify residents,
18 education work to help residents
19 understand how to rid rats but, most
20 importantly, to come to work with Vector
21 Control to make sure that we find a way
22 to get rid of where the rats originated
23 from. And thus far, after that emergency
24 meeting, there was a level of concern
25 that was said to me that was going to

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 happen. The emergency meeting took
3 place, and then after that meeting,
4 Dr. Palak had notified me that there was
5 inspections that took place.

6 Once the inspections took
7 place, there was a summary of how many
8 residents opened doors and so forth.
9 However, following those inspections,
10 there has not yet to be an extensive
11 massive education campaign, massive
12 solution-oriented campaign to resolve the
13 issue with rats in Lower Northeast.

14 My question here for you today
15 for the Department of Public Health, if
16 you lived in areas where rats were
17 really, really, really inundating your
18 neighborhood and you were a person, you
19 would be highly concerned. So I'm
20 concerned that of the \$6 million that is
21 allocated to environmental protection and
22 so forth in your department, there are
23 only six workers that are identified to
24 work under Vector Control for this year.
25 And the Mayor, having represented this

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2 particular area, also is big on this
3 clean and green initiative, and she's
4 very much aware of this issue as well, to
5 the point where if she would have known
6 this was still going on, she herself
7 would be disappointed.

8 So what I'm telling you right
9 now is that this department has to do
10 better in terms of campaign work,
11 education work, and resolve work. And
12 what is the plan going forward to make
13 sure that rats not only in Lower
14 Northeast but other parts of the City of
15 Philadelphia is reflected in this budget
16 so that we can make sure that residents
17 feel like this problem is being solved?

18 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
19 Councilmember, for the question. Yes,
20 absolutely, the Department agrees rats
21 are an important issue, and I'm sure no
22 one in their neighborhood would like to
23 be inundated with rats or any other
24 rodents.

25 I'm going to defer to my Deputy

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2 Commissioner, Dr. Palak Raval, to speak
3 on this.

4 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Good
5 afternoon. Thank you for the question,
6 Councilmember. I agree with you
7 completely. We do have -- we did have
8 those meetings, and what we have begun
9 doing is a comprehensive -- what we used
10 to do in the '70s -- and I was not
11 working for the Department in the '70s,
12 just for the record -- we had funding
13 from the Centers for Disease Control to
14 do what was called a comprehensive rodent
15 survey, which involves the door-to-door
16 knocking of individual residents as well
17 as doing the educational campaigns. We
18 even had a mystery rat, a person that
19 dressed up as a rat to do education and
20 outreach.

21 Where we are is, we would like
22 to implement that and reinvigorate that
23 program. We can do it with the funding
24 that we have. The challenge we're having
25 is that our -- the staff that we need to

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2 conduct that work are titles called field
3 investigators and Vector Control workers.
4 We have been working with our Office of
5 Human Resources, because quite often we
6 end up interviewing people from the
7 service rep list and people that have
8 applied for service rep positions, when
9 they hear that they need to go ahead and
10 go out in the field and deal with rats,
11 they have a tendency of not wanting those
12 jobs. So we are -- we've worked with OHR
13 to highlight that field investigator
14 position, and we're actively working to
15 recruit the staff and to fill the
16 vacancies.

17 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Not to
18 cut you off, I just want to say really
19 quickly, because my time is short, that
20 to me this is a promise of a plan. It's
21 almost like -- these rats are in
22 Germantown as well, right? It's around
23 other parts of the City of Philadelphia,
24 I've read. And I feel like for us not to
25 have -- I just want to get you on the

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2 record as saying like is this on a daily
3 radar for you? Because it's on a daily
4 radar for all of the residents in
5 Northeast and some of the parts in the
6 City of Philadelphia, and I feel like
7 it's being ignored, right? Not ignored,
8 but you're not making this a huge
9 priority in your department, and for me,
10 I need to see a little bit more off of
11 your testimony as well as budget to kind
12 of reflect the needs that are needed to
13 solve this problem.

14 DR. RAVAL-NELSON:
15 Councilmember, I'd be more than happy to
16 share the rodent pilot survey plan that
17 we're putting together. Once
18 Dr. Franklin and the team looks it over,
19 we'd be happy to share it with your
20 office so that they're well aware of what
21 our outreach plan is going to be, and
22 then we can begin moving forward.

23 As I mentioned, we're actively
24 working to fill our vacancies. Vector
25 Control is allocated 23 positions. We

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2 have multiple vacancies associated
3 specifically with the work that's done
4 for field investigators and our Vector
5 Control operators.

6 So we will gladly share that
7 plan with you and your office, and then
8 we can, with your assistance, maybe come
9 up with innovative ways of filling those
10 vacancies and making sure we have a
11 significant impact.

12 I know some of the staff have
13 come out, and the blocks that were
14 identified on Oxford Circle, there was
15 treatment provided, but would love the
16 opportunity to also have community
17 meetings so that residents know that they
18 can trust our staff as they're coming to
19 the door to address the rodent control
20 and the rat issue specifically.

21 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank
22 you, Chair.

23 I just don't want the
24 Department of Public Health competing
25 with the Homeless Service Department as

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2 an inefficient department. So I just
3 want to make sure y'all keep working.

4 Thank you.

5 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Thank
6 you, Councilmember Phillips. I agree
7 with you.

8 The Chair recognizes
9 Councilmember Bass.

10 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Thank you,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 Good afternoon.

13 DR. FRANKLIN: Good afternoon.

14 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: How's
15 everybody doing? So I want to start with
16 the Health Department and I wanted to
17 start -- just today Mayor Parker
18 announced the new Office of Business
19 Services, and she did it on North 22nd
20 Street, which was fantastic, in my
21 district, and just talked about how much
22 easier it will be to start a
23 restaurant-related business.

24 But in thinking about
25 restaurants, their opening, the

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2 licensing, one of the things that has
3 been of great concern to me -- and,
4 Dr. Nelson, I know you know this very
5 well -- is stop-and-go's and the lack of
6 enforcement from the Health Department
7 related to stop-and-go's. And even to my
8 surprise, because these folks operate
9 with a restaurant license, that there are
10 no cleanliness standards that seem to be
11 enforced by the Health Department.

12 I've been in many stop-and-go's
13 with many different Health Department
14 staff and pointed out this and pointed
15 out that and what would be clear signals
16 to me not too eat from this place, you
17 know, dirty cobwebs and cobwebs in
18 general and dirty floors and all kinds of
19 things, and not really seeing any sort of
20 response from the Health Department that
21 says, you know, red flag, this is a
22 problem, this location is a problem.

23 So I'd like to hear some sort
24 of response on like are y'all going to
25 make this better? Is it a priority? Is

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2 it not a priority? I'm just trying to
3 find out like is it just me or like is
4 the Health Department okay with this?
5 Because it seems like we are. It seems
6 like the Health Department is. I'm not
7 okay with it. Because it's been a long
8 time.

9 DR. FRANKLIN: Absolutely it's
10 a priority for us, Councilmember Bass.
11 I'll defer to Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson, who
12 oversees that area for the Department.

13 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Thank you.

14 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Thank you,
15 Councilmember. And, yes, we've been out
16 to many a stop-and-go's or nuisance
17 establishments, and absolutely.

18 So the Health Department, we
19 conduct food inspections that are a
20 54-point food inspection investigation.
21 The top 27 items are risk factors. The
22 items that you're -- and I want to --
23 sorry my back is to you --

24 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: That's
25 okay.

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2 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: -- while I'm
3 talking on the microphone.

4 So when our staff conduct these
5 inspections, the risk factor violations
6 are those violations that actually cause
7 food-borne illness and food safety
8 impacts. Those items could be anything
9 from improper handwashing to actually not
10 having certified food safety handlers, et
11 cetera.

12 The items that involve
13 cleanliness issues, they pertain more to
14 good retail practices, and the
15 Councilmember is aware that a lot of the
16 stop-and-go's, quote/unquote, have
17 restaurant licenses, but they don't have
18 enough food. They're not carrying on an
19 actual food-handling procedure and
20 process, which lends to them getting the
21 lower retail category violations.

22 We also count the number of
23 seats, and we work with our Department of
24 Licenses and Inspections --

25 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: I'm sorry.

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2 I don't want to cut you off, but I know
3 my time is limited. But in terms of the
4 number of seats -- and you know because
5 we've been out together. And so we'll
6 walk into a place. So when we say the
7 spirit of the law is that they're
8 supposed to seat 30 to be able to have a
9 restaurant license. And so someone will
10 stack up 30 folding chairs and say
11 there's my 30 chairs, even though there's
12 absolutely no square footage for you to
13 open up all 30 of those chairs.

14 And so the Health Department,
15 just in my opinion, has a duty and an
16 obligation that like this doesn't fit the
17 spirit of the law and so, therefore, we
18 have to do something about it.

19 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: I agree with
20 you, Councilmember.

21 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: It's been
22 years. We've been on this since 2017.
23 I'm just saying.

24 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: No. The law
25 has been on the books and the licenses

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 are issued by the Department of Licenses
3 and Inspections. When it comes to -- we
4 can cease operate food establishments
5 that are posing an imminent health hazard
6 or imminent health risk.

7 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: So what
8 does it require for you all to pull a
9 license of an establishment that is not
10 following the spirit of the law? What
11 does it require from the Health
12 Department?

13 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Sure. So we
14 do not have the authority to revoke a
15 food license. That is the Department of
16 License and Inspections. We work with
17 them. We categorize and count the seats.
18 We also work with the Liquor Control
19 Board and Liquor Control Enforcement. As
20 the Councilmember is aware, we do the
21 joint visits with them.

22 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Yes.

23 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: In this
24 realm -- sorry. In this realm, they have
25 more authority, and that is why we make

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2 referrals and we work with them to do
3 joint inspections to try to go ahead and
4 cease operate the establishments that may
5 not be posing a food safety risk because
6 they don't necessarily have an actual
7 food operation.

8 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: So what
9 authority does the Health Department have
10 to close a business that's operating
11 poorly? Because -- and I'll just tell
12 you this, and we had a conversation just
13 last week, me and the Commissioner, new
14 Director, and welcome aboard. We had a
15 conversation just last week about a
16 minority-owned establishment, restaurant,
17 that had some issues and it was like
18 clear that they have to operate in a
19 particular fashion. They have to be
20 above board. They have to have -- you
21 can't have all of these different
22 conditions that could be problematic, but
23 it almost feels as if there are some
24 rules for some businesses and other
25 establishments can be as dirty as they

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2 want to be and there is no enforcement.

3 So I'm trying to find out what
4 level of -- or what kind of tools do you
5 have in your toolbox that can help us
6 when it comes to the enforcement that's
7 necessary from these specific types of
8 businesses that we know are skirting the
9 spirit of the law?

10 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Absolutely.
11 So currently the tools that we have in
12 our toolbox are immediate cease
13 operations, and then we also can take the
14 establishment to Common Pleas Court if
15 they are a multiple repeat offender.

16 The establishment in question
17 that you're speaking of, Dr. Franklin did
18 reach out. That establishment had mice.
19 It had lack of hot water and a host of
20 other risk factor violations.

21 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Yes. And,
22 listen, everybody has got to play by the
23 same rules, but I'm saying -- and so not
24 to excuse anybody, but at the same time,
25 it does feel heavy handed when it comes

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2 to particular businesses versus other
3 businesses, because like I said, you and
4 I have been out. We've been to -- and I
5 don't want to call out any in particular,
6 but you and I went on a tour. I'll just
7 say it's on Hunting Park Avenue, and it
8 was atrocious.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

10 Call that jawn out so I don't go there
11 and get something to eat.

12 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: It was
13 Hoagie City. It was a Hoagie City on
14 2244 West Hunting Park Avenue. But it
15 was horrible. And they had built their
16 own walls. They had done their own
17 construction. They had -- it was just
18 horrible. And when we asked for -- they
19 had put in like a little -- well, I don't
20 want to go into the whole thing, but when
21 we asked for enforcement, I don't
22 believe, and you correct me if I'm wrong,
23 that one ticket was issued.

24 There was another stop-and-go
25 that we went to on Germantown Avenue

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2 right after that, Germantown and I want
3 to say Butler or Pike, a stop-and-go
4 right there, and they had almost no food.
5 I think the food that they had was like
6 their lunch, which they produced as the
7 food. Not one ticket issued from the
8 Health Department, and it's kind of like
9 when are we going to be able to do
10 something?

11 Do you have any tools? Or
12 maybe I'm barking up the wrong tree.
13 Maybe I should call L&I back and talk to
14 them a little more extensively about
15 this.

16 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: I think
17 that, Councilmember, when it concerns
18 liquor and alcohol, which these
19 stop-and-go's are, because there is
20 cross-jurisdictional authority between
21 us, the Liquor Control Enforcement Board,
22 the Liquor Control Board, and Licenses
23 and Inspections, it would -- and there's
24 a Nuisance Committee that stop-and-go's
25 fall under that we have meetings with

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2 with the Law Department and we have
3 strategies to address these issues.

4 What happens when we have a
5 place that has a restaurant license but
6 no food, we cite them and we share that
7 information with the Liquor Control
8 Enforcement team, Liquor Control Board,
9 because they then have the authority to
10 be able to get rid of that liquor
11 license. We can only cite the food
12 safety issues. We can cite if they have
13 mice, if they have pests, if they're
14 unclean. We can cite all of those
15 things, but in order for us to
16 immediately cease operation -- cease
17 operate an establishment, the violation
18 has to be of an imminent health hazard.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: There has
20 to be a level -- and I know I'm over
21 time, Mr. President, but I'll just say
22 this in closing.

23 There has to be a level or a
24 sense of urgency from all of the
25 departments, whether it's L&I or the

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2 Health Department or LCB, to say the
3 operation here is unacceptable and it is
4 a nuisance to the business, because when
5 we look at where a lot of our shootings,
6 a lot of our fights and all kinds of
7 altercations and things happen, you know,
8 they happen a lot of the time inside or
9 outside of these very establishments. We
10 have to park police cars, which
11 infuriates me, we have to park a police
12 car to guard a stop-and-go, which is the
13 source of the foolishness in the
14 neighborhood in the first place.

15 So I know my time is up. I'll
16 come back around, Mr. President.

17 DR. RAVAL-NELSON:
18 Councilmember, I will just say this for
19 the record: We are working with our
20 partners. We just recently had meetings
21 with L&I, LCB, Liquor Control
22 Enforcement. We've also included the
23 Commerce Department and the Law
24 Department, because we understand -- and
25 PPD. We understand that when we do this,

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2 we have to do it well. We know that PPD
3 can arrest a person, but if we close that
4 establishment down, even for a few days,
5 we interrupt the pattern and can have a
6 significant impact on the health and
7 well-being.

8 So I'd be more than happy, you
9 know, Dr. Franklin, through the Budget
10 Office, we can share more details with
11 you.

12 COUNCILMEMBER BASS:
13 Dr. Nelson, we've been talking for like
14 seven years now.

15 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: We have. We
16 have.

17 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Okay.
18 Period.

19 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: And if it
20 was under the authority that we had, you
21 know, it -- but we don't have the
22 authority for liquor control and those
23 things.

24 COUNCILMEMBER BASS: Just a
25 sense of urgency.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Thank you, Mr. President.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 Thank you.

5 I just have a question, though.

6 Even though it may not be under your
7 authority, did y'all have like maybe an
8 inter-task force with the individuals
9 with the authority and kind of all
10 collaborate together?

11 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: We do,
12 President Johnson. We do. The Law
13 Department has a Nuisance Committee that
14 Kristin Bray chairs, and we all get
15 together on a monthly basis, but we also
16 do sweeps with our PPD, L&I partners,
17 Liquor Control Board, and Liquor Control
18 Enforcement. Every once in a while we
19 also include Councilmembers.
20 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson has gone
21 out with us. Councilmember Sanchez had
22 gone out. Councilmember Bass had --

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

24 Well, this is an ongoing task force, so
25 intergovernmental collaboration.

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2 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: It is an
3 ongoing task force, yep. And we have the
4 list of the bad actors and we go through
5 each one, and then we come up with a
6 strategy so that we're all working
7 collaboratively together to address the
8 issue. And when we go to do a SWEEP
9 cert, it's all of us on the same beat
10 that are walking and issuing the cease
11 operations and making an impact.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

13 Thank you very much.

14 The Chair recognizes the Chair
15 of Health and Human Services,
16 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

17 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
18 you, Council President.

19 Thank you all for being here.
20 These are very big departments who do
21 very important work for our city, so I
22 have a lot of questions and I'm going to
23 try to phrase them as shortly as
24 possible, succinctly.

25 Do we have any preliminary

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2 analysis on the Joy Bank program? I'm
3 particularly interested in the impact of
4 douglas and if expansion of this program
5 is necessary.

6 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you for
7 that question, Councilmember. That
8 program sits with the Division of
9 Maternal and Child Family Health, and
10 I'll bring the Director, Dr. Stacey
11 Kallem, to give you feedback on that.

12 (Witness approached witness
13 table.)

14 DR. KALLEM: Hello. I am
15 Dr. Stacey Kallem, the Director of
16 Maternal, Child, Family Health. Thank
17 you for that question.

18 The Philly Joy Bank is our
19 guaranteed income and pregnancy pilot.
20 We do not have data yet, because it
21 actually hasn't launched. We're set to
22 launch tentatively June 22nd, and we have
23 contracting with Drexel University, who
24 will be doing a really rigorous
25 evaluation. So as we have data, we'll

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2 certainly come back and share it.

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And

4 January -- when did you say it's going to
5 start?

6 DR. KALLEM: Tentatively

7 January 22nd of this year coming up.

8 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: This is
9 already --

10 DR. KALLEM: 2024.

11 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Oh, so it
12 started already?

13 DR. KALLEM: No. It should be
14 starting in June, like in a month and a
15 half.

16 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: In June,
17 okay. Got you.

18 DR. KALLEM: Sorry. I talk too
19 fast.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD:
21 Understood. All right. Thank you for
22 that. We look forward to any updates on
23 that and any recommendations around how
24 that money really made an impact. We
25 would love to see that.

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2 Second question is about the
3 status of the health centers in Northeast
4 Philadelphia that are supposed to be -- I
5 don't know what the status is, so I don't
6 know what they're supposed to be, if
7 someone could update me on that.

8 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
9 Councilmember. My Chief of Staff, Sara
10 Enes, is overseeing that project and
11 she'll provide you with the input.

12 (Witness approached witness
13 table.)

14 MS. ENES: Thank you so much
15 for that question. We are in the process
16 of planning for two health centers in the
17 Lower Northeast. One is scheduled to be
18 set at the Frankford Transportation
19 Center. It's part of an in-fill
20 development with the Frankford CDC. The
21 site will contain the health center, a
22 grocery store, and some mixed-income
23 housing.

24 Currently on the health centers
25 end, we are in the concept design phase.

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2 So we finished our programming and we're
3 doing concept design, moving into the
4 next stage of the design very shortly.

5 That project with the Frankford
6 CDC, they are waiting. They have applied
7 for and are anticipating notification
8 about their funding sometime in the fall.
9 So a timeline for establishment of the
10 construction will be set at that time.

11 The second site is currently
12 scheduled for the campus of Friends
13 Hospital. We just finished a very
14 lengthy community engagement process with
15 Councilmember Lozada and we hosted a
16 series of community meetings throughout
17 neighborhoods in the Northeast to obtain
18 feedback and input as to the location,
19 needs, you know, demand. And so right
20 now we are -- that just concluded about a
21 week and a half ago maybe, two weeks ago.
22 We are preparing our response to comments
23 document. That will go out to everyone
24 who signed in so that we can make sure
25 we've answered all questions. And then

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2 zoning -- decisions related to zoning
3 will come shortly hopefully thereafter.

4 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So the
5 first one is slated for September of this
6 year for --

7 MS. ENES: Well, we don't
8 have -- so currently there is no
9 construction schedule for either site.
10 The Frankford site is, we're waiting on a
11 decision related to funding for the
12 entire project.

13 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: It's a
14 match? It's a funding match?

15 MS. ENES: I am not sure. I
16 know that the Frankford CDC applied for
17 LIHTC funding and some other tax credits.
18 So that -- the actual development of that
19 project is based on that funding.

20 For the health center's
21 portion, we do have our funding to build
22 out the internal piece of the health
23 center, but the remainder of the building
24 is the Frankford CDC.

25 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And do

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 you have a CDC partner for the other
3 location or is it just all you?

4 MS. ENES: It's just the health
5 center.

6 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So you
7 would have a faster way -- once your
8 zoning was done, you would have a faster
9 way to put it into action?

10 MS. ENES: Yes.

11 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Okay.
12 Another question, which is for Dr. Palak,
13 I would think. Do you have a role in the
14 contract negotiation or renewal of the
15 Covanta incinerator in Chester, which has
16 a deeply problematic impact, one of the
17 worst examples of environmental racism in
18 the country, and I just wondered what the
19 Public Health Department's role is in
20 that.

21 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: So we do not
22 have necessarily a direct role, but we're
23 working with our Office of Sustainability
24 extensively to -- pollution is something,
25 it doesn't stay on the county boundaries.

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2 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: That's
3 right.

4 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: It depends
5 on which way the wind is blowing. So we
6 are working through our Office of
7 Sustainability to advocate for what is
8 needed regarding that incinerator.

9 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So
10 speaking about working with them, do you
11 recommend for them how we dispose of our
12 trash in the most equitable and healthful
13 manner? Your office has some oversight
14 on that or if they don't, should they?

15 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: So the way
16 that we handle trash in our city is done
17 with the Streets Department. We are
18 working with groups like Circular
19 Philadelphia and others.

20 We hired when I became -- we
21 hired an Environmental Justice
22 Coordinator that is working and focusing
23 on the issues associated with trash and
24 how we equitably distribute the
25 environmental bads while we all benefit

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 from the environmental goods. So we are
3 working on that. We just met with
4 Circular Philadelphia and Sustainability
5 and a handful of other groups, including
6 the Streets Department, to figure out
7 what are things that we can do in terms
8 of the overall trash streamline, and
9 while we do not have a regulatory
10 authority over it, how can we be a
11 supportive partner from the Health
12 Department.

13 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Yes. I
14 hope you have a sizable influence in that
15 space, because something can be
16 technically great on one end, but if you
17 don't have the health impact integrated
18 in our responses across the City for all
19 things, not just trash, but I know that's
20 a lot of work for the Department of
21 Public Health, but we need to really look
22 at what healthy Philadelphia looks like
23 and to have research and your presence in
24 these spaces, and whatever needs to
25 happen, we should talk about how to make

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 sure you have a front seat in these
3 spaces.

4 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: I appreciate
5 that, and, you know, the trash issues
6 directly relate to the rodent issue and
7 the rat issues that Councilmember
8 Phillips was bringing up. So it's all
9 connected, interwoven, and wherever we
10 have the opportunity to interject, we
11 will absolutely interject and advocate
12 for those things that are better for our
13 city.

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
15 you. For your part of Public Health,
16 I'll have my remaining questions sent by
17 e-mail.

18 I would like to switch to
19 Department of Behavioral Health and I
20 have some questions around your Mobile
21 Crisis Teams. Dr. Bowen, thank you for
22 your service. I know the hand-over will
23 be very warm, and I appreciate everything
24 you've done for our city.

25 I wanted to know about the

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 response times, because we got some
3 feedback from some advocacy groups around
4 some problematic time spans in that area.

5 DR. BOWEN: So thank you for
6 that. We've been working really closely
7 with the advocacy partners. Our goal is
8 to get response time down to 30 minutes,
9 which is not even heard of in the field.
10 The average is more like 45 to an hour,
11 and we are there. We're about an hour.

12 We are building those. With
13 the support of City Council, we have been
14 building bridge teams, and that is for
15 teams that will sort of double the
16 capacity during the high volume times,
17 and our main goal there is to reduce that
18 response time.

19 I just want to say to keep in
20 mind that the majority of the calls that
21 come into 9-8-8, what happens when you
22 call into 9-8-8, quite different than
23 what happens at 9-1-1, which is more of a
24 relay. 9-8-8 is an intervention. It's
25 actually a therapeutic intervention, and

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 most of the crises get resolved through
3 that. So that's actually immediate
4 response.

5 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: I'm sorry
6 to interrupt. Time is short.

7 The 9-8-8, if it gets tracked
8 from 9-1-1 to 9-8-8 or there's a direct
9 call to 9-8-8 and it can also be tracked
10 from 9-1-1; am I correct in that?

11 DR. BOWEN: So we have
12 Philadelphia Crisis Line workers who are
13 the ones who, people at the 9-8-8 call
14 center, are also embedded at 9-1-1. The
15 call comes into 9-1-1. They can shift
16 the call to 9-8-8 if in fact it's
17 appropriate for a 9-8-8. But the
18 majority of the calls that come in from
19 wherever they come in are actually
20 managed through the PCL intervention, and
21 it's about 10 percent of the time when a
22 call needs to be sent -- it's the same
23 group that actually dispatches, which is
24 one of the beauties of the -- it's why
25 it's a model program, because it all

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2 happens in the same space, which actually
3 reduces any kind of wait time.

4 So it's not that the person
5 hasn't had an intervention, like just
6 sitting there without any intervention
7 before the team gets out there, but the
8 time is about an hour and we'd like to
9 cut that down to 45 minutes.

10 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: That's a
11 long time.

12 DR. BOWEN: Well, in the field
13 it's not that long a time, but it is too
14 long in reality. We don't want it to
15 take that long.

16 When we do the reviews from the
17 people who have received the services,
18 they actually give us very high marks in
19 terms of things like it came timely,
20 probably because they're on the phone
21 with someone throughout that, but they
22 say the responses are very good. It's a
23 very positive response from the folks.

24 But we agree with the
25 advocates. I mean, we work with them.

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2 We have -- particularly Treatment not
3 Trauma is a very excellent group that has
4 been really advocating for the highest
5 quality crisis system possible, and we
6 have representation from them on our
7 advisory board and we work closely and
8 actually credit them with a lot of
9 advancements that we have made, because
10 they have very good ideas, and it's a
11 social work group, but other advocates
12 too.

13 So we agree, which is why we
14 are building those bridge teams.

15 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Council
16 President, I'll hold my questions for the
17 second round. Thank you so much.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
19 Chair recognizes Councilmember Jim
20 Harrity.

21 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Thank
22 you, Council President.

23 Hello, everyone. My first
24 question is for the Department of
25 Behavioral Health. Are there any

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 affordable mental health programs or
3 resources that residents living in the
4 City of Philadelphia can access without
5 health insurance?

6 DR. BOWEN: So the Department
7 of Behavioral Health covers for uninsured
8 and underinsured. So treatment is
9 provided through the grant money that we
10 get from the state and feds. You
11 probably -- I know we've talked about
12 this, but 98 percent of our funding comes
13 through those kinds of grant monies
14 through the state and the Medicaid
15 dollars through the feds and state. But
16 you're talking people who are uninsured
17 and, yes, that's what the programs and
18 the treatment is all covered through the
19 Department on the City side for people
20 who are uninsured.

21 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Okay.
22 And for the Department of Health, how can
23 we -- how can the City's health centers
24 be expanded to include more services and
25 refer specialists, and how effective is

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the Injury Prevention Program and what
3 approaches are being used to reduce gun
4 violence?

5 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you for
6 the question, Councilmember. Regarding
7 the services at the health centers, we
8 actually have had opportunity this year,
9 past fiscal year, to expand a lot of the
10 services there, and I mentioned a couple
11 in terms of cancer prevention services,
12 also the opportunity to build two new
13 health centers.

14 And the second question was on
15 injury?

16 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Yeah.
17 It's on the how effective is the Injury
18 Prevention Program and what approaches
19 are being used to reduce gun violence?

20 DR. FRANKLIN: Most of our
21 involvement in ending gun violence at the
22 Health Department has been through our
23 CBI programs and our hospital-based
24 intervention programs. We work closely
25 with those two programs as well as -- let

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 me get this for you so I can make sure I
3 have it right. Yes, the Hospital
4 Violence Intervention Program, the
5 coordinated Community Violence
6 Interruption Program, and the
7 community-based diversion support for
8 youth with firearm offenses.

9 The goal in Fiscal Year '25 is
10 to sort of work with both of those
11 programs, particularly HCVI as well as
12 HVIP to hopefully coordinate and
13 integrate those services a little bit
14 better, because both programs have assets
15 that they could benefit from if we can
16 sort of coordinate and integrate some of
17 their work and eliminate the opportunity
18 from working in more isolation.

19 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: All
20 right. Thank you.

21 That's all I got for now,
22 Council President.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 Thank you.

25 The Chair recognizes

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember O'Rourke.

3 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
4 you, Council President.

5 I'll stay right there with
6 Public Health for a second. On the
7 question of the Chronic Disease and
8 Injury Prevention Program, I wanted to
9 learn more about it. Are those new
10 programs -- I'm a newbie. Please forgive
11 me. Are those new programs or changes to
12 existing programs, and how would
13 Philadelphia's youth access these?
14 Obviously this is something I'm asking in
15 light of gun violence prevention.

16 DR. FRANKLIN: Could you repeat
17 the last part? I couldn't quite hear
18 you.

19 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Yeah.
20 I was just saying how does Philadelphia's
21 youth access these programs and what are
22 the partnerships necessary to maximize
23 their access? I'm asking this question
24 in light of gun violence prevention.

25 DR. FRANKLIN: Okay. Actually

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the Hospital Violence Interruption
3 Program and the Community Violence
4 Interruption Coalition have been around
5 for some years. I don't have the exact
6 date, but I could call up one of my
7 directors to sort of give me the exact
8 date when they were started with the
9 Department.

10 As far as their access to --
11 for youth to be able to access them, we
12 work with our partners. A lot of the
13 individuals who are with CBI and HVIP are
14 actually on the ground.

15 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Okay.
16 That's fine.

17 I wanted to recognize the
18 critical role DBH plays.

19 DR. FRANKLIN: Just for the
20 record, my directors came and reminded
21 me, we also have the Youth Health Corps,
22 which is another route for --

23 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Youth
24 Health Corps?

25 DR. FRANKLIN: Yes. To access

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 that work or to access prevention

3 services.

4 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Got

5 it. Thank you very much.

6 So the Public Health Department

7 plays a major role in providing a safety

8 net for Philadelphians who otherwise

9 can't access basic healthcare. An ounce

10 of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

11 DR. FRANKLIN: Exactly.

12 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: We

13 know regular access to primary care is

14 key to keeping folks healthy and

15 preventing medical emergencies that can

16 devastate families, both medically and

17 financially.

18 From your budget testimony, we

19 know that there are plans to expand

20 critical services to the City's health

21 centers, especially for mental health and

22 substance use disorders. You have also

23 named that service delivery has been

24 negatively impacted by staffing

25 shortages. What, in your estimation, are

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 causing the actual staffing shortages and
3 how can we help address this issue?

4 DR. FRANKLIN: Councilmember,
5 I'm sorry. I'm having a problem getting
6 the last part of what you were saying.

7 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: My
8 apologies.

9 DR. FRANKLIN: No worries.

10 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: What's
11 causing the staffing shortages and how
12 can we help address this particular
13 issue?

14 DR. FRANKLIN: Okay. In large,
15 a lot of the staffing shortages in the
16 Health Department or the Ambulatory
17 Health Services, that division, is in
18 competition with a lot of different
19 players across the City for critical
20 staff. It's important for the Health
21 Department to remain competitive. We
22 work with our partners in HR to recruit,
23 OHR as well as the Health Department HR,
24 but I'm going to also bring up -- well,
25 Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson can speak to some

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 of that, also the Director of Ambulatory
3 Health Services who can expand on that,
4 if you'd like.

5 Doctor.

6 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Sure. Thank
7 you, Dr. Franklin.

8 So one of my responsibilities,
9 I'm also over our Health HR division for
10 the Health Department. What we did with
11 the Office of Human Resources centrally
12 is, we looked at bands of salaries. So
13 we looked at what are the comparable
14 salaries that nurses receive, that
15 medical assistants receive, that medical
16 clerks receive, and did a comparison with
17 our current job specifications with Civil
18 Service, because those salaries had not
19 been raised in years and years and years.

20 When we did that assessment and
21 did the comparison, we realized that we
22 needed to go ahead and raise salaries.
23 We also realized that we needed to create
24 specifications. A lot of the feeder
25 series because of the pandemic for

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 entry-level clerical positions have been
3 the service rep list. A service rep is
4 not as qualified to address with a rodent
5 issue as they would be to deal with a
6 medical chart, so we created -- we worked
7 with our Ambulatory Health Services, our
8 OHR, and our Health HR to create a
9 medical clerk job spec and a senior
10 medical clerk job spec. We also reached
11 out to the unions. District Council 33
12 Local 488 represents those folks, so we
13 made sure they were on board and okay
14 with us and the language of this job
15 specifications.

16 I'm happy to report those jobs,
17 they were finally approved through the Ad
18 Board and they're being announced for
19 filling of those vacancies. So those are
20 the things we've been doing.

21 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
22 you very, very much.

23 Are mental health and substance
24 use services available at all City health
25 centers right now?

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DR. FRANKLIN: To my knowledge,
3 yes. We have a mental health counselor
4 at all the City health centers.

5 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:
6 Fabulous. I know DBH is busy building
7 out two new health centers in Northeast
8 Philly. Will mental health and substance
9 use services be offered at those new
10 facilities as well?

11 DR. FRANKLIN: Mental health
12 services will be offered there as well or
13 behavioral health services.

14 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
15 you very much.

16 DR. FRANKLIN: But not full
17 behavioral health services, because they
18 are not necessarily behavioral health
19 clinics, but we do have behavioral health
20 counselors at each of the health centers.

21 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Okay.
22 Thank you.

23 I'll come back around. Thank
24 you.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Thank you.

3 The Chair recognizes Rue

4 Landau.

5 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank

6 you.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

8 Councilwoman. Excuse me.

9 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: It's all
10 good.

11 First questions are for DBHIDS.

12 Thank you, Dr. Bowen. Congratulations on
13 your move.

14 DR. BOWEN: Thank you.

15 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: So as
16 the City is expected to move people
17 experiencing homelessness with substance
18 use disorder into treatment, I want to
19 know more about the resources that
20 currently exist and how we plan to expand
21 them to meet the needs. I've asked a lot
22 of people these questions. No one can
23 answer it, from non-profits to people on
24 the ground, and all signs point to
25 DBHIDS. So if it's okay with you all,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 I'm going to ask --

3 DR. BOWEN: Not only -- thank
4 you.

5 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Please.

6 DR. BOWEN: Not only can we,
7 but we have. So we increased by 200 beds
8 in the system for residential rehab. We
9 just completed that 200 in 2023, so at
10 the end of 2023. We increased our IOP
11 programs, four new programs, that can
12 serve 30 people each. We increased our
13 MORS team --

14 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Can I
15 pause you for a second, because I don't
16 know what the --

17 DR. BOWEN: You don't know what
18 those things are?

19 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: No. I
20 don't know what the baseline is for the
21 increase. So I'm going to rattle off my
22 questions and would love to get the
23 answers. We can slowly go back to them,
24 but the first is, how many people in
25 Philadelphia are in need of inpatient and

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 outpatient treatment services and what
3 are their needs? Is it drug treatment,
4 mental health care, wound care, all
5 three?

6 How many beds are currently
7 available? How many exist and how many
8 are available, free and available, and
9 has the City done a comprehensive bed
10 utilization study? What are the
11 requirements for the available beds? For
12 example, are there barriers to entry if
13 the person is actively using drugs? Can
14 they smoke cigarettes? Are there
15 barriers to wound care?

16 If they cannot be actively
17 using drugs to come into a facility, how
18 much time do they have to wait through
19 withdrawal before being assigned a bed?
20 What resources will be available to them
21 during that withdrawal period? If there
22 are not enough beds available, where are
23 people being placed currently?

24 If you expect an increase in
25 patients coming into treatment, what

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 facilities will be utilized? What's the
3 current plan to address the gap between
4 the number of people who may be receiving
5 treatment in the coming weeks and the
6 long-term efforts to increase capacity?

7 What services are provided in
8 these facilities? Mental health care,
9 wound care? How long do patients
10 typically stay in inpatient treatment and
11 what is the stay length based on? Is
12 there any follow-up upon discharge? How
13 do you ensure follow-up?

14 What housing is connected to
15 treatment and for how long are housing
16 supports available? And then, finally,
17 how are people assigned to outpatient
18 slots? What are services -- what other
19 services are provided with outpatient,
20 like mental health care, healthcare
21 assistance with benefits? How do the
22 outpatient clinics keep track of their
23 consumers to ensure they come back?

24 Thank you.

25 DR. BOWEN: So you want to know

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2 about the entire system. That's good.
3 That's okay.

4 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: The
5 entire system. And I appreciate the
6 increase in 200 beds, but I don't know
7 the baseline.

8 DR. BOWEN: Okay. So we
9 have -- so first I'm going to talk to you
10 about substance beds, because that has
11 been the focus and -- first of all, we
12 have capacity in our bed base system,
13 just so that I say that, right? Some of
14 that is because we've built it in
15 anticipation of increases, but we do have
16 capacity.

17 The number of beds in our
18 substance system is 1,874. On any given
19 day, there are vacancies. I even know
20 today's. There are 109 beds available
21 today in our substance system. That can
22 change hour to hour, right?

23 We are -- we do have a
24 treatment access website on CBH's
25 website. We have a place where it gets

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2 upgraded like three times a week, but we
3 are building a bed registry to make that
4 a much more dynamic, active system.

5 As far as outpatient and flow
6 from inpatient to outpatient, so that's
7 all tracked as part of state
8 responsibility, our responsibility to the
9 state. So we know that whether people
10 are -- what percentage of people like
11 make it from like an inpatient to
12 outpatient. We put things in place to
13 try to make that as effective as
14 possible. These are all different types
15 of warm handoffs you're talking about
16 really as you flow through the continuum,
17 and we make connections between different
18 parts of the system.

19 For example, I know that like
20 Amanda David and Andy Devos, who is in
21 here -- hello, Andy -- have been working
22 very closely in anticipation of needing
23 to have faster flow from one part of the
24 system to the other in the event that
25 more people are going to be coming into

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2 the system, working between the CRCs,
3 which are the entry points, Crisis
4 Response Center entry points, and the
5 substance programs, the residential bed
6 programs, to make sure that they're
7 communicating with each other as well as
8 possible so there's no delays in getting
9 people into the treatment service.

10 So one of the problems is that
11 you do not want any delay in there or any
12 barriers. There isn't a barrier to
13 coming into -- tobacco is not a barrier.
14 We removed that a couple years ago.
15 There's no barrier.

16 I'm getting good help here.

17 As far as, yes, individuals are
18 matched with an outpatient treatment
19 provider before they leave the service.
20 So those connections are made. Whether
21 it's mental health or substance use,
22 those connections are made beforehand.

23 I think it's really important
24 when you think about treatment -- let's
25 talk about substance, because that's been

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2 a lot of the focus of this -- that you
3 don't just think about bed base, because
4 levels of care are based on medical
5 necessity and you need to be able to use
6 this very robust system of IOP, or
7 intensive outpatient treatment, that's
8 what IOP is, or outpatient treatment even
9 if you are, let's say, connected in a
10 shelter.

11 You heard some challenges,
12 mental health challenges. We have
13 housing specifically for people with
14 substance, transitional, we have safe
15 havens, we have recovery houses. Some
16 are more low barrier, because you're
17 talking about, well, what if they come in
18 and they're not ready. Well, there's
19 still access for folks.

20 The connection, though, to
21 outpatient treatment is really, really
22 important. We have built some programs
23 just this year also because of the
24 intense need and because we take
25 accountability, we take accountability

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2 for the fact that it's still really not
3 okay in Kensington. It's not. And it's
4 not okay for the people that live there,
5 and what we need to do is help people to
6 come off the street. We've been doing
7 that, always been doing that.

8 What we did was, we added
9 things that broke down the barriers.
10 Wounds became a significant barrier to
11 getting into rehab. We initiated the
12 first ever licensed wound care van in the
13 Commonwealth. We now have two of them
14 out there, and they can clear someone so
15 they can get into treatment quickly off
16 the street.

17 We also created the first ever
18 connection between the Level 4 ASAM,
19 which is your most complex level of
20 rehab, and they can take care of the
21 wounds now there even if they went in for
22 like hospital-level surgical necessity on
23 the medical side, and they can now have
24 their -- they can move into rehab even if
25 they have an IV line still in or a PICC

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2 line still in. That's not been done
3 before, and that broke down so much
4 stigma, I can't even tell you. But we
5 have put in -- and the MORS team that I
6 was mentioning before. Anything that
7 gets people into the system -- we have
8 capacity in the system. What we need is
9 good flow into the system.

10 We also just want to say one
11 more thing, which is that we also have an
12 overflow plan to be able to handle surge.

13 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank
14 you for that. I would want to submit
15 these questions to get a couple more
16 particulars, but the one question that
17 wasn't answered is, what's the current
18 need on the ground? So we have 1,874
19 beds with 109 available today at this
20 moment. What's the need on the ground?
21 If the need on the ground is 1,000 more
22 people, we can't provide them beds.

23 DR. BOWEN: Okay. So this
24 brings me to the new publicly available
25 data that's up, which shows you and shows

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2 the public what is happening in
3 Kensington in terms of who -- the numbers
4 of people that Homeless Outreach is
5 connecting with. Currently it's about
6 675 people. We know a fair amount about
7 them. We know that 21 percent of them
8 are chronically homeless by HUD's
9 definition, and we know that 61 percent
10 of them are newer to the area.

11 We know that we connect up and
12 can get certain percentages of them to
13 come in. If the question is what if they
14 all were brought in, right, would we be
15 able to manage that influx. That
16 depends -- so for now we have empty beds
17 and we have also slots, outpatient slots
18 available. So there is capacity in the
19 system, but that's why we have an
20 overflow plan. It's utilizing
21 out-of-network network to be able to
22 expand, and we could expand also within
23 the providers that we currently have.

24 So there is capacity to expand
25 further if we needed to, but it's also

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2 really important to use the full
3 continuum of care and to also recognize
4 that there is a limit for how long they
5 stay in one level. And so you have to
6 really utilize the whole range of
7 services that are available.

8 I heard the dinging. I heard
9 it.

10 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: I will
11 wait until the next round. Thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 Thank you.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Councilmember Quetcy Lozada.

16 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank
17 you, Council President.

18 First, let me say thank you to
19 my partners at the Health Department for
20 your willingness to participate in
21 multiple community meetings to ensure
22 that community residents were able to
23 express their concerns or their support
24 for the much-needed health centers in the
25 19124 zip code. I look forward to the

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2 fact sheet, the information sheet being
3 shared out with everyone who participated
4 and those who didn't have an opportunity
5 to come to any of the meetings, but we
6 want to make sure that folks feel like
7 their contributions were heard, valued,
8 and respected, and I appreciate your
9 willingness to do that. Thank you so
10 much for that.

11 Every time I hear from DBHIDS,
12 I get severe anxiety, because what we say
13 and what we are doing or what people are
14 feeling on the ground to me are two
15 different things. And we've had this
16 conversation. I've met with you and your
17 team multiple times. You know, I'm going
18 to just start off with the beds
19 conversation, right?

20 We've talked about the need for
21 beds. Dr. Bowen, you've said many times
22 that we have enough beds. I'm still
23 trying to figure out where are the beds
24 and what are the beds and how are they
25 classified and all of that. And we

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2 talked -- I talked to you guys about the
3 way we're doing things currently and how
4 we have to find the ability to be able to
5 go online like we do for a flight or for
6 a car rental, for a hotel rental and find
7 the beds, not just in Philadelphia but
8 across the Commonwealth, right? Because
9 we're getting people from everywhere.

10 So we need to -- I really want
11 us to take advantage of finding a system
12 that will truly allow us to find a bed,
13 because we have heard many times that
14 when people are ready to go, they're
15 ready to go. And so we should be able to
16 put them into a bed. It doesn't matter
17 if it's a treatment bed. It doesn't
18 matter if it's a shelter bed, a DV bed.
19 It doesn't matter. They're ready to go,
20 and we need to get them in to a bed,
21 stabilize them enough to be able to then
22 move them to whatever bed is more
23 appropriate, right?

24 And so I had this conversation
25 with you. I wanted to put it on the

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2 record, because I want us to seriously do
3 that. We have been talking about the
4 same 700 to 1,000 people living
5 unsheltered in Kensington for years. Yet
6 we talk about we're responding to
7 50 percent of the need or we're
8 responding to people and we're getting
9 them into treatment. How? Who are the
10 people? Who is counting? Is there
11 really 700 to 1,000? Is there 500? Is
12 there 3,000? Who are these people?
13 Where are they coming from and who are
14 the people we're putting into treatment?
15 We have providers on the ground
16 that we are funding that say they serve
17 30,000 people. Where are these numbers?
18 Who is counting?
19 DR. BOWEN: So we have had this
20 conversation even pretty recently.
21 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: We've
22 had this conversation, but I've never
23 gotten numbers, real numbers, right?
24 I've never gotten a solid answer. That's
25 why I'm asking on the record.

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2 DR. BOWEN: Well, not only do I
3 have a solid answer, it's now available
4 to the public, right? So what you have
5 asked for and what the community has also
6 asked for, they want to see the numbers.
7 They want to know who is out there, and
8 we now can do that. And that was not an
9 easy thing to build, let me just tell
10 you. It's complicated. It's complex out
11 there. It's not that easy to get the
12 information that you're talking about.
13 There's self-report, but that's not
14 enough.

15 So I'll tell you what we know
16 now, and I want you to see it. It's
17 DBHIDS.org/SDOH, and then you hit
18 Outreach, and this data comes up. It's
19 going to be updated monthly so that we
20 can see.

21 But we know some very
22 interesting things right now that we
23 didn't know before. So I definitely
24 don't want you to be anxious. I want us
25 to be very much on the same page here.

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2 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: I am as
3 anxious as my community residents are --

4 DR. BOWEN: Oh, I get that.

5 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: -- and
6 have been for the last 10 to 15 years,
7 and over the last eight years, it has
8 been an absolute disrespect and disregard
9 for community residents.

10 So I just say cautious, be very
11 cautious with choosing your words,
12 because my anxiety right now is at a
13 different level.

14 DR. BOWEN: Okay.

15 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: And so I
16 want to be respectful, but I also want us
17 to recognize that we have not done this
18 community any -- we've done a huge
19 disservice to this community. And so
20 finding out that there are now systems in
21 place that can collect this data, I want
22 us to figure out how do we not collect --
23 not just collect the data, but how do we
24 connect people to the services that they
25 need and get them out of --

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2 DR. BOWEN: Yes. And we
3 totally hear that. We hear that from
4 you, we hear that from Council, we hear
5 that from others as well. We also hear
6 that from the community, and that has
7 been the driver for us to put into place
8 the things that we put in place.

9 What we have put into place
10 just this year is actually quite
11 different, and knowing that, most of the
12 people that we're counting -- and who is
13 counting is DBHIDS Homeless Outreach are
14 out there every day. It's our providers.
15 It's the providers who are part of the
16 outreach teams.

17 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: So tell
18 me what your numbers are. What are your
19 numbers? If we were to ask you today,
20 how many people are living in the streets
21 of Kensington?

22 DR. BOWEN: So I would tell
23 you -- and I assure you it's never an
24 easy answer, so I'm going to give you the
25 answer, because the truth is where the --

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2 even if it's complex, it's not simple.
3 It's what has to be addressed, right?
4 And all of those barriers and all of
5 these things that we've built that we get
6 all of this attention for across the
7 state and across the country are things
8 that were built specifically because of
9 the concerns that you're raising. Like
10 the wounds don't -- why can't they get
11 into treatment even if they have wounds.
12 Why can't the system take care of people
13 and get them into recovery even if they
14 have wounds. Why would smoking be a
15 barrier. Why is there any barrier. We
16 removed --

17 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: I can
18 answer that. I can tell you that. We
19 are in this position right now today
20 because for the last eight years, we've
21 been talking about safe injection sites
22 and not prevention and recovery. That's
23 why. Because --

24 DR. BOWEN: Okay. I can talk
25 to you about prevention and the

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2 prevention that's going on in the
3 schools, because we go upstream with this
4 at the same time we attack it right where
5 it is. We're also upstream like crazy
6 with this, really, really high upstream
7 with this in the schools. We have
8 enhanced our prevention programs
9 specifically in Kensington because of the
10 challenges that the kids are facing.
11 It's helping them to address substances,
12 so when they're in the midst of this, how
13 they can deal with it and also not go
14 down that road, and also with the
15 violence.

16 So the things that we have been
17 creating are not separate from what the
18 concerns are on the ground, and we take
19 that seriously, and we do feel
20 accountable for everything that works and
21 everything that doesn't work and any gaps
22 that there are. So everything that I'm
23 talking about is actually meant to fill
24 the gaps that you're talking about.

25 When we learn something like

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2 more than half of the people out there in
3 the street are not the same people, even
4 being able to get data about what
5 happened to the people that we brought
6 in, you know, in 2018 and 2019, like was
7 that effective, are they back out on the
8 street again, do they just go in and come
9 right back out. We're actually learning
10 it's something different than that.
11 We're actually learning that the majority
12 of the people are coming in new. Are
13 they coming in to shop? Are they coming
14 in to socialize?
15 So we need a different strategy
16 for that group, which is now the majority
17 of the people that we're encountering out
18 there as opposed to the chronically
19 homeless that we've been encountering,
20 let's say, for quite some time, and they
21 meet the definition for HUD's chronic
22 homeless.
23 Okay. So different strategies,
24 but we have this data and we can show it.
25 And we can say more too, where are they

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2 from, how can we determine where they're
3 from. They say they're Philadelphians.
4 Are they Philadelphians?

5 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: So what
6 you're telling me is that we now have new
7 people there, which to me means that
8 we've done absolutely nothing to prevent
9 people from continuing to come into that
10 footprint. Is that what we're saying?
11 All of the strategies, all of the --

12 DR. BOWEN: I don't think -- I
13 think people can come into Kensington,
14 yes, and I think that there is -- they
15 can come into Kensington, but they're not
16 coming -- they are mostly from
17 Philadelphia. What I'm trying to say to
18 you is that we are able to check whether
19 they have ever -- whether they are CBH
20 eligible; in other words, they have a
21 Philadelphia address. They have had a
22 Philadelphia address. They have a
23 Philadelphia address. If in fact that's
24 the case, we know that they're
25 Philadelphians.

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2 It's about three-quarters of
3 the folks who have a Philadelphia address
4 or have had a Philadelphia address. So
5 they're Philadelphians.

6 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Is that
7 because we've allowed them to use an
8 address that is Philadelphia --

9 DR. BOWEN: No, no, no. We're
10 talking about an address because they
11 have received services from CBH at some
12 point, right? So it's not just, well,
13 they're using one of the places to pick
14 up their mail.

15 So if there are folks who
16 are -- and I know they've had
17 conversations. We've had conversations
18 with the state about this. We've had
19 conversations with Secretary Arkoosh and
20 Deputy Secretary Smith, and I know that
21 they are aware, and also DDAP Secretary.
22 And when there are people who come from
23 elsewhere, we can work with the people
24 there. Like our Single County Authority
25 that works under Amanda's division,

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2 Amanda David's division, has single
3 county authorities that they work with
4 all the time. If there are people here
5 from there, they will contact them and
6 they will work on where is the best place
7 for that person to be treated. And if
8 they're Medicaid, then the Medicaid of
9 the place they're from is the actual
10 responsible party to pay the bills. So
11 we work on this all the time, so --

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 Dr. Jill Bowen, do we have the numbers?
14 She just asked for specific data.

15 DR. BOWEN: I'm sorry. 675 who
16 were engaged in the past 90 days, 142 are
17 chronically homeless, 119 fall in this --
18 they have more than three contacts, so
19 they don't meet the HUD definition. And
20 then 61 percent have only had one to two
21 contacts. And if you want --

22 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: So give
23 me the total number of people you say are
24 out there. You didn't give me that. You
25 went kind of around that. What was the

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2 total number?

3 DR. BOWEN: 675.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 675?

6 DR. BOWEN: See this, this is
7 right there on the website for the
8 public.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: Let
10 me ask you this, Dr. Bowen. I know this
11 is your swan song and we're getting ready
12 to wrap up for our break and the
13 stenographer has to take a break as well.
14 I know it's on your website, but the
15 Chair requests that you provide the data
16 to the member and members of Council as a
17 whole as opposed to us going --

18 DR. BOWEN: Oh, absolutely. We
19 will get you snapshots --

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 Give us the official report.

22 And then I've been working with
23 you for a while. I know it's your swan
24 song, but I did get a whole lot of --
25 like you gave like 10, 15 scenarios as to

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2 why the situation is, when I think we
3 want more of a strategy and proactive
4 approach on here's how we're addressing
5 the issue, because when you talk about
6 all the reasons why a person is out there
7 or they're not from Philadelphia but they
8 come in here and they're getting high and
9 how they provide a service, like what is
10 our plan as a city, though, to track and
11 strategize on how we treat those
12 individuals so we can have our own
13 dashboard to kind of gauge how we're
14 being effective in that area.

15 DR. BOWEN: One of the
16 things -- so our strategy, okay, is to
17 bring people in off the street. So we
18 say at DBHIDS, and we've been saying this
19 for a while, harm reduction is step one,
20 it's not step done. That's our thing,
21 right? So our strategy is to connect up
22 and bring in for treatment. That has
23 always been our strategy.

24 What we do to try to make that
25 as effective as possible is identify

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2 every barrier to getting people to come
3 in. And so this past year the focus has
4 been on the wounds, because that was a
5 huge barrier. We broke down those
6 barriers to help people come in that
7 would not have come in. So we get more
8 people off the street than we would have.

9 Now, the other barrier is
10 really knowing who is out there and
11 making sure that our strategies are
12 effective, right?

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
14 Okay.

15 DR. BOWEN: But that was what
16 the data piece is, and also to be
17 responsive to the community that wants to
18 know what's going on.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
20 Chair recognizes -- no. The Chair
21 requests that you provide the data to the
22 Chair of Health, who is Nina Ahmad, and
23 the gentle lady from Kensington, who is
24 working very aggressively on this issue
25 in partnership with Councilmember Jim

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2 Harrity, Councilmember Mike Driscoll, and
3 Councilmember Mark Squilla. That's why
4 you're getting these lines of
5 questioning.

6 DR. BOWEN: We are very excited
7 to do that.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
9 Absolutely.

10 And I know we have a second
11 round, so you'll have an opportunity to
12 do any additional follow-up, because I'm
13 sure members -- there's several members
14 who are queued up for our second round,
15 so we will -- yes. So folks are still on
16 the first round. And so after lunch,
17 we'll finish at 2:30 and we'll see
18 everyone back and we will go from there.

19 Welcome, Dr. Marquita Williams.

20 DR. BOWEN: And this is why I'm
21 doing this today.

22 Thank you.

23 (Recess from 1:58 p.m. to 2:36
24 p.m.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

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2 This hearing is now resumed.

3 The Chair recognizes

4 Councilmember Jeffery J. Young.

5 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
6 you, Mr. President.

7 First line of questions are
8 going to be devoted toward the Department
9 of Public Health. In the Philly Joy Bank
10 program, is it possible that you can
11 provide us with data on income levels of
12 the participants, the zip codes of the
13 participants, and the amounts distributed
14 to date? Also if you can provide us with
15 who will be doing the assessment to see
16 if this particular program has ultimately
17 achieved the goals that we're trying to
18 achieve.

19 And I say that to say, you
20 know, because guaranteed income is great
21 in theory, but if we are really trying to
22 target a population that is experiencing
23 these health issues, I do think that we
24 should -- the spending of the money
25 should be targeted more toward those

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2 things that are going to directly affect
3 the outcome.

4 So I just want to keep that in
5 mind as you are going through this
6 program. A thousand dollars sounds good
7 until they spend that thousand dollars on
8 things that ultimately contribute to the
9 negative health outcomes that they were
10 experiencing in the first place. So if
11 we can keep that in mind.

12 Second question is related
13 to -- it's a non-budgetary question. I'm
14 sorry. I'm going off task. But the
15 regulations regarding the tobacco
16 retailer permit here in the City of
17 Philadelphia. In 2022, I believe the
18 regulations were changed to state that no
19 new licenses will be able to be within
20 500 feet of schools grades K through 12.

21 Now, in a prior life, I
22 represented a corner store who her father
23 died and she inherited that store, and
24 when it was time to renew her tobacco
25 retailer license, she was denied that

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2 license because she was considered to be
3 a new owner, although she inherited that
4 store from her father, and that license
5 was kind of like the backbone of that
6 store that's been in that particular
7 neighborhood in Fishtown for over 30,
8 40 years with no issues.

9 And so can we talk about -- can
10 you just explain the premise of this
11 regulation and why if a property was
12 already exempt, why now this new owner
13 cannot apply for a license, particularly
14 in this case where she inherited a
15 business from her family, a business that
16 she has worked there since she was a kid.
17 Why is it now that she is unable to
18 continue to sell a product, a legal
19 product, that that store has been selling
20 for over 40 years?

21 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you for
22 your questions, Councilman. For the
23 first line of questioning, I'm going to
24 have Dr. Stacey Kallem respond, and for
25 the second line, I'm going to have

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2 Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson.

3 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
4 you.

5 DR. KALLEM: Hello. I'm
6 Dr. Stacey Kallem, Director of Maternal,
7 Child, Family Health Division. I'm going
8 to try to speak more slowly this time so
9 people understand me.

10 So the program hasn't launched
11 yet. The Philly Joy Bank will be
12 launching tentatively June 22nd of this
13 year, so in a month and a half. I think
14 one of your questions was about who is
15 eligible. So it's folks who live in one
16 of the three neighborhoods in
17 Philadelphia that have the highest rates
18 of very low birth weight births. So
19 that's Cobbs Creek, Nicetown-Tioga --

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: And
21 Strawberry Mansion.

22 DR. KALLEM: -- and Strawberry
23 Mansion. Oh, you know. Thank you.

24 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: I'm
25 concerned, yeah. And it's folks that are

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2 making up to \$100,000, right? So the
3 question is again, I just want to make
4 sure that we're clear on when we're
5 collecting the data, can you provide
6 us -- that's why I said can you provide
7 us with the income data of the
8 participants, their zip codes, again the
9 amounts that's distributed per zip code
10 and also -- yeah. That was it. So we
11 can then determine -- and also tell us
12 who is evaluating that data to determine
13 if it is going to be meeting the goals of
14 what the Health Department has.

15 DR. KALLEM: Yeah. So for
16 evaluation, we did an RFP and we selected
17 researchers from Drexel University from
18 their School of Public Health who will be
19 doing our evaluation. We don't have the
20 program data yet, right, because we
21 haven't actually started, so no one is
22 enrolled, but I can tell you about the
23 neighborhoods we're serving.

24 The median household income is
25 about 20 to 30K per year, so we expect

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 most participants to be around there.

3 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: I'm

4 familiar with that, but, again, your

5 program states that it's folks that are

6 making up to \$100,000. So I want to make

7 sure that how can we -- how are we

8 targeting the participants, right?

9 Because if you target folks that are

10 mostly close to that hundred thousand

11 dollar level, then the outcomes that

12 we're expecting, the health outcomes, are

13 a little bit different than folks that

14 are living in poverty in the City. So,

15 again, how do you target the

16 participants?

17 DR. KALLEM: So we're going to

18 be recruiting in a few different ways, so

19 really relying on trusted messengers in

20 those neighborhoods, so prenatal care

21 providers at our health centers and other

22 prenatal care establishments, WIC, home

23 visitors. So really folks that are in

24 the neighborhood and trusted is where

25 people who are pregnant might be is who

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 will be doing a lot of the outreach and
3 recruitment for the program.

4 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: And what
5 was the determination of that income, the
6 income level, the hundred thousand dollar
7 income?

8 DR. KALLEM: So it's actually
9 based on community feedback. So we
10 partnered with researchers from CHOP
11 Policy Lab and did formative research
12 where we did community-focused groups of
13 Black Philadelphians who had recently
14 given birth or who were pregnant about
15 the Philly Joy Bank and how should we
16 make all of our design decisions, and one
17 of the big points of feedback we got from
18 community is to make sure we tie
19 eligibility, not just to the federal
20 poverty line or Medicaid eligibility but
21 really thinking about those
22 Philadelphians who maybe make too much to
23 qualify for traditional public benefits
24 but aren't yet making enough to thrive.
25 So we looked at a living wage calculator,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 and that's where we came up with the

3 hundred thousand dollar sort of cap.

4 But, again, knowing the neighborhoods

5 that we're focusing on, we don't expect

6 many people to be in that range.

7 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Okay. So

8 if you don't expect that, then why create

9 that, I guess, artificial kind of like

10 cap then if you don't expect it? You

11 should set the cap at what your

12 expectations are.

13 DR. KALLEM: We were really

14 trying to be responsive to the community

15 feedback, which they told us to set it

16 higher than sort of a traditional federal

17 poverty level.

18 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Okay.

19 Thank you. I appreciate that.

20 And then the question regarding

21 the tobacco retailer license and the

22 500 feet from K to 12 schools.

23 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Sure.

24 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG:

25 Essentially, again, the rationale is --

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the premise of my question is because I
3 had a client whose father owned a store
4 that she inherited and then at the end of
5 the year she had to apply for a license
6 and was denied, and I'm just saying if
7 the goals are to decrease tobacco use, I
8 understand that, but this particular
9 property has already had tobacco use --
10 tobacco sales for almost 40 years in that
11 particular neighborhood. It doesn't
12 create any kind of new disparity or new
13 issues because they've already been
14 there. So if you can elaborate on that.

15 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: Sure. And I
16 just want to clarify for the record, it's
17 a tobacco permit. I don't want to
18 confuse it. It's a tobacco permit, not a
19 license.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
21 you.

22 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: And tobacco
23 permits are not transferable. So the
24 permit is associated with the person and
25 the establishment. So it's issued --

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 it's similar to a driver's license or a
3 liquor control license. It's issued to
4 the person and the establishment, and
5 it's non-transferable. So that's what
6 ended up happening with the person that
7 you were representing. It's not
8 transferable. And then they probably --
9 and I don't know the address, so I don't
10 have the details, but I'd be happy to
11 follow up if you provide the address.
12 But if -- since it's not transferable and
13 if it's in a cap, which was legislation
14 to prevent youth tobacco access, so
15 there's no -- there shouldn't be tobacco
16 stores in -- we want to make sure that
17 the poorest of our neighborhoods are not
18 saturated with tobacco retailers. So if
19 she's in a cap or he's in a cap, then
20 they wouldn't be able to get the permit.

21 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: So I tell
22 you that this isn't -- I guess at one
23 point it might have been, but this is in
24 Fishtown, right, where there's no issues
25 with income or low-income folks or

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 whatnot.

3 So I made the argument at
4 the -- we appealed and I made an argument
5 at the Board. Only one person on the
6 Board who was actually a lawyer
7 understood my argument, but everyone else
8 turned it down.

9 But I just say that to say that
10 we think we really need to take a look at
11 our systems, because it is prohibiting
12 small businesses from operating in our
13 city, and I don't think we want to
14 prohibit small businesses who have been
15 operating in our city for years with no
16 issues whatsoever. And so I think we
17 should look at our regulations to make
18 sure that our regulations are meeting
19 today's standards and today's needs,
20 particularly in those particular
21 neighborhoods.

22 And I heard the bell, so thank
23 you.

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

25 Thank you. Thank you so much,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember Young.

3 We will now move to

4 Councilmember Phillips. The Chair

5 recognizes Councilmember Anthony

6 Phillips.

7 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank

8 you, Majority Leader, Councilwoman

9 Katherine Gilmore Richardson.

10 Just quick rapid-fire questions

11 for the Department of Behavioral Health.

12 There's a waiting list of children and

13 families for services. How long -- how

14 big is that waiting list?

15 DR. BOWEN: So I don't have

16 that directly, but I have to say that the

17 services are embedded in the schools, and

18 so there really shouldn't be a waiting

19 list to be able to get access to

20 treatment. There's providers right there

21 in the schools. They can tap into a

22 whole array of specialties depending on

23 what the needs are of the kids, and

24 there's also prevention providers.

25 So are we talking about people

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 just calling to sort of separately get --
3 we also have expanded our PACTS program,
4 which is very trauma focused for the
5 kids. There's now 25 --

6 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: I just
7 wanted to make sure there's enough
8 providers to be able to serve our
9 children in those schools. So if there's
10 not a waiting list --

11 DR. BOWEN: I'm getting no
12 waiting list. So what I'm concerned
13 about, though, if you hear that there's a
14 waiting list, again, that concerns us.
15 So we want to make sure that they call
16 Member Services, because there should not
17 be a waiting list for kids.

18 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Okay.
19 Great.

20 Providers should be delivering
21 intensive behavioral health services year
22 round in the home and in the community
23 settings when not in schools. What does
24 intensive behavioral health services
25 utilization look like in the summer

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 months and are families being engaged, as
3 well as in what way is DBHIDS and DHS
4 providing services for delinquent and
5 dependent children?

6 DR. BOWEN: So IBHS is year
7 round. They are in the schools when
8 there's summer school. They are at the
9 homes or in the community. So they do
10 maintain connection with people who --
11 kids who have met those criteria. And
12 also remember these are providers that
13 are also in the community.

14 IBHS is always in the
15 community, in the home and community,
16 which is what I was saying.

17 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Can
18 you provide data around academic
19 improvement of the kids who received
20 these services?

21 DR. BOWEN: So I don't know
22 that we have that. We can talk to our
23 school partners, but IBHS is a Tier 3
24 service, just so I am clear on that. The
25 school does have services for universal,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Tier 2. They have school counselors.
3 They're even a provider for CBH in the
4 step space, but IBHS is a Tier 3. So
5 it's folks that are really struggling
6 with need -- you know, a certain level of
7 treatment.

8 So I do not know for those kids
9 where the academic -- and it's not
10 necessarily going to be something that
11 can be seen short. It might require like
12 longitudinal data. So I'll get you the
13 answer to that to know to what extent
14 they're tracking it, but I think it would
15 be the school system that is going to
16 have that data. You know, they are
17 partners with us, so we can check that
18 out.

19 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank
20 you, Dr. Bowen.

21 Thank you, Majority Leader.
22 That's my time. I'm good. Thank you.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

24 Thank you, Councilmember Phillips.

25 The Chair now recognizes

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
4 you, Majority Leader.

5 Just a few other questions.

6 One was about the relationship of DBHI
7 with the gun violence prevention programs
8 and if you worked on the cognitive
9 behavioral therapy support that we were
10 told they now include in their
11 programming.

12 DR. BOWEN: You're talking
13 about cognitive behavioral treatment?

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Correct.

15 DR. BOWEN: We have cognitive
16 behavioral treatment infused into a great
17 deal of the work that we do to real
18 evidence-based practice. So when we talk
19 about gun violence, we always talk about
20 trauma, right, because trauma leads to
21 gun violence. It also is a result of gun
22 violence. So we're very, very trauma
23 focused and, therefore, the PACTS, which
24 is the Philadelphia Alliance for Children
25 Trauma Services, right, is a very

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 intensive trauma-focused, cognitive
3 behavioral therapy. So we have trained a
4 whole bunch more providers so that they
5 have those particular skills and we have
6 expanded the network of PACTS providers
7 within the City, and it's across the City
8 everywhere in the City. So we have
9 cognitive behavioral therapy infused into
10 the work that we do with the kids
11 throughout and also the school --
12 training the folks in the school.

13 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So
14 actually my question was about the actual
15 programs that are doing anti-violence
16 work. Is your department intersecting
17 with them? These are the grassroots
18 folks who are on the ground doing --
19 violence interrupters, all of those
20 different smaller groups, not the School
21 District or the bigger entities.

22 DR. BOWEN: So we support IMA,
23 Mothers in Charge, Black Men Heal, and
24 they are engaged with us on a number of
25 initiatives. Like one that's called From

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Trauma to Triumph, and it's a list of
3 those folks who are providing the
4 services to the kids, and it's meant to
5 be preventative from going down the gun
6 violence road, and it actually came
7 out -- the types of programs that are
8 being offered by the community-based
9 organizations that are focused on gun
10 violence is based on the work of the
11 external stakeholders around former
12 perpetrators of gun violence and what was
13 going on in their early lives and how can
14 we prevent that happening for the kids
15 that are currently --

16 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: My
17 question is really, yes, you do work with
18 them, and do you have data to show over
19 time that your involvement with these
20 CBOs have done what? Do you have -- have
21 you collected information around that?

22 DR. BOWEN: So we'll get you
23 whatever information that we have. The
24 initiative that I just told you about is
25 a newer one that is standing up, but we

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 do support -- we have supported this
3 sometimes, Healing Hurt People, Cure
4 Violence, CeaseFire. So we are funders
5 of this and we do have data there.

6 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Because I
7 just want to see how embedded CBT or
8 other things of that nature are -- each
9 of these programs, because it is
10 abundantly clear that we need it, and so
11 I wanted to see if there's a
12 comprehensive policy around all anti-gun
13 violence work from the City of
14 Philadelphia that's funding of any sort,
15 whether DBHI is connected or connect to
16 providers who do that. So I just wanted
17 data around that, how many are getting --

18 DR. BOWEN: We can get you
19 that, but sometimes there might be an
20 initiative where we have a grant that
21 they -- and they bring in a provider
22 there. Often they're also part of the
23 network. And so in a sense, we are part
24 of what they're doing there, but
25 sometimes it's not necessarily like we

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 have the data for that particular
3 program, but we'll get you what we have.

4 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: I just
5 want to be a collective place where we
6 get all this information.

7 DR. BOWEN: Understood.

8 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And your
9 department seems to be the most
10 appropriate place, whether or not
11 you're --

12 DR. BOWEN: We collect a lot of
13 data.

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Yeah. So
15 we need a report to say we've done this,
16 this happened in one year, two year, this
17 is good, this is bad, how do we move.
18 That's all.

19 DR. BOWEN: Got it.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: All
21 right. Thank you.

22 Thank you, Mr. President -- or
23 Madam Chair.

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
25 Thank you. Thank you so much,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember Ahmad.

3 The Chair now recognizes

4 Councilmember O'Rourke.

5 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
6 you, Madam Chair.

7 It's Black Maternal Health Week
8 in the Commonwealth, so I want to
9 highlight that.

10 Of the top ten most populated
11 United States cities, Philadelphia has
12 the highest rate of infant mortality in
13 the first year of life, and when we look
14 even closer to race and ethnicity, Black
15 infants in our city are over four times
16 more likely to die before their first
17 birthday than white infants. This is a
18 crisis, but we do know how to solve it.

19 When we design solutions that
20 see the whole person and the barriers
21 that they face, we can achieve true
22 success, and the Philly Joy Bank pilot
23 program is exactly the kind of response
24 that I believe that we need. So I share
25 Dr. Ahmad's excitement about the program

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 launching in June. I want to thank all
3 those who have put in work there. I just
4 wanted to ask for it to be stated on the
5 record clearly. Can someone just speak
6 to some of the common impacts of
7 guaranteed income programs in general
8 just so we can state on the record for
9 this portion, please.

10 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
11 Councilmember. I defer that to
12 Dr. Stacey Kallem.

13 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Hello.
14 Good to see you.

15 DR. KALLEM: Nice to see you,
16 and thank you so much for your enthusiasm
17 and for the question.

18 So as far as guaranteed
19 income --

20 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
21 Pardon me. Please state your name for
22 the record and speak directly into the
23 microphone. Thank you.

24 DR. KALLEM: I'm Dr. Stacey
25 Kallem, Director of Maternal, Child,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Family Health at the Philadelphia

3 Department of Public Health.

4 So thank you so much for the
5 question. As far as guaranteed income
6 and its impacts on birth outcomes, a lot
7 of what we know comes from Canada
8 actually from a program called the
9 Healthy Baby Prenatal Benefit, which
10 gives low-income pregnant people in
11 Manitoba, Canada unconditional cash, and
12 it found that it reduced rates of low
13 birth weight by 17 and a half percent and
14 reduced rates of prematurity by 21
15 percent. That is amazing and something
16 we're really excited about.

17 And then here in the U.S., we
18 know that states that have an earned
19 income tax credit and that also during
20 COVID during the expanded child tax
21 credit -- so not guaranteed incomes per
22 se, but both ways of getting more cash to
23 people during pregnancy -- also decrease
24 the rates of prematurity and decrease the
25 rates of low birth weight.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: We
3 thank you for your work on this,
4 Dr. Kallem, and all those who have gone
5 into it. Look forward to helping to
6 slash those maternity rates for sure.

7 I want to turn my focus to
8 Department of Behavioral Health and
9 Intellectual disAbility Services. In the
10 aftermath of deaths of Christian Hall and
11 Walter Wallace, it was abundantly clear
12 that as a city we needed to rethink how
13 we respond to people in crisis. Deeply
14 heartened, super excited about DBHIDS's
15 plans to continue and expand the
16 Philadelphia Community Mobile Crisis
17 Response Teams. These teams send medical
18 professionals to those who are in crisis
19 and they free up other resources, like
20 the police, to focus on other issues that
21 they may be better trained for.

22 Last budget cycle, thanks to
23 the efforts of a number of
24 Councilmembers, including Minority Leader
25 Brooks, Councilman Jones, Councilman

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 Squilla -- sorry if the bell is going. I
3 want to just finish this up -- Council
4 President Johnson, Councilwoman Gauthier,
5 past Councilwoman Vaughn, as well as
6 Councilman Driscoll, an additional
7 \$3 million was added to this important
8 work.

9 Can you tell us how the
10 addition of 3 million actually aided your
11 work that was secured by those members?

12 DR. BOWEN: Yes. That was
13 specifically to build the bridge teams so
14 that we can address the response rate.
15 So that has been this past year building
16 up those teams and getting them ready to
17 hit the streets. So specifically what it
18 was meant to do is what it was used to
19 do. So bridge teams, that's what that
20 part was about.

21 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
22 you very much.

23 Madam Chair, is there a Round
24 2?

25 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 there will be a Round 2, time permitting.

3 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Time
4 permitting, yes, ma'am.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
6 we'll get through the first round as
7 quickly as we can. Is that good for you,
8 Councilmember O'Rourke?

9 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: I have
10 some more for Round 2, if time permits.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
12 Excellent. Just please get in the queue.

13 The Chair now recognizes
14 Councilmember Harrity.

15 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Thank
16 you, Leader.

17 So just checking these numbers.
18 So you said right now out of a thousand
19 or so beds that we have, there's about
20 175 available? I believe that was the
21 number.

22 DR. BOWEN: 109. The SUD beds
23 is 109 available today.

24 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: 109
25 available, okay. That's not even -- all

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 right. And the number that you're saying
3 of homeless addicted out in Kensington is
4 about 675, you're saying?

5 DR. BOWEN: The number that has
6 been encountered during -- yes, is 675.
7 And like I said, that now is publicly
8 available data.

9 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Okay.
10 Do you have -- so what happens if we,
11 say, send you 300 people in a day? What
12 would you do then?

13 DR. BOWEN: So first I want to
14 say that when you say send us --

15 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Well,
16 we're about to start doing the Mayor's
17 plan and we're planning on the AMP
18 program and the PAD program, and I would
19 imagine that during that process, you're
20 going to have some very high numbers of
21 people that are going to be needing to be
22 put somewhere. I'd just like to know
23 with 109 beds how you plan on doing that.

24 DR. BOWEN: Okay. So first of
25 all, we are part of and engaging

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 alongside the many agencies that are
3 involved in this work. We are engaging
4 folks every day, even today.

5 We have not only the capacity,
6 we also have overflow beds, and we are
7 prepared for a surge, but we're also
8 really looking at the rest of the
9 continuum, because we also have slots
10 available there. So it really depends on
11 what they need, do they need outpatient
12 and some form of housing, do they need --

13 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: I can
14 tell you right now that none of these
15 people need outpatient programs. They
16 all need inpatient programs. There's no
17 way they'll be able to stay sober on an
18 outpatient program going back to the
19 place that they came from. That's just
20 outrageous to even think that somebody
21 that is on this type of drug is going
22 to --

23 DR. BOWEN: I'm not saying that
24 for the first --

25 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: -- be

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 able to go to an outpatient program --

3 DR. BOWEN: Right, because what

4 I'm saying is --

5 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: -- and

6 get the help that they need.

7 COURT REPORTER: Only one

8 person at a time.

9 DR. BOWEN: I'm so sorry. I'm
10 so sorry.

11 But I didn't mean to imply that
12 they wouldn't be coming first in there.
13 I was just talking about the whole
14 continuum.

15 We are -- we do have the
16 capacity right now with empty beds, but
17 also if you're saying that 675 are going
18 to come in and 109 are available, we also
19 have our overflow plan, okay, so that we
20 have out-of-network capacity.

21 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Well,
22 how many beds are in the overflow plan?

23 DR. BOWEN: And we also have an
24 open network, by the way, where providers
25 are coming in like --

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: Things
3 just keep changing as we go along, I
4 guess. You're just putting it out there
5 as --

6 DR. BOWEN: Do we have an
7 answer to how many the overflow can
8 handle?

9 We'll get that to you. Okay.

10 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
11 Pardon me. I'd like to request that you
12 get the information for Councilmember
13 Harrity and submit that information to
14 our Council President for dissemination
15 to all members of Council.

16 DR. BOWEN: Absolutely.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
18 Thank you.

19 Is that good, Councilmember
20 Harrity?

21 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY: I'm
22 good. We'll save the time here.

23 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
24 Excellent.

25 The Chair now recognizes

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Councilmember Landau.

3 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank
4 you. Thank you.

5 I was going to start with the
6 overflow beds as well. And so we're
7 going to get the number of beds that we
8 have available. Can you tell us the
9 organizations that are part of this
10 collective plan?

11 DR. BOWEN: I don't have that
12 off the top of my head, but there are a
13 number of providers. I mean, it's nearly
14 200 providers in the network. So there
15 are those who -- and that's across the
16 board. But we'll definitely get you how
17 many are in this overflow plan and also
18 the providers who currently are in
19 network that have the ability to expand,
20 and that the open network will also be
21 helpful to us in bringing others in.

22 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Can you
23 also let us know -- again, I will submit
24 the questions I asked earlier, but how
25 long can they stay in these treatment

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 programs and what kind of follow-up are
3 we doing after they leave?

4 DR. BOWEN: Okay. So the
5 follow-up is really what I was trying to
6 also convey to Councilmember Harrity.
7 That's what I was trying to convey.
8 Because it's more than just the time that
9 they're in one level of care. It has to
10 be -- the goal is long-term recovery,
11 right? Whole person health, long-term
12 recovery is the goal. And when you see
13 that work, it's fantastic, right? People
14 do recover. People do -- treatment
15 works, right?

16 But how long they can stay at
17 that level of care depends on how they're
18 doing, right? It's a medical necessity
19 that's a requirement. So different
20 people stay for different periods of time
21 in treatment.

22 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: I'm
23 going to transition over to Health,
24 because that buzzer is going to go off
25 any second now. But the biggest concern

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 we all have is long-term housing
3 obviously. You're going to leave
4 treatment, be expected that they can
5 maintain through outpatient. We have to
6 have housing associated with this for
7 people.

8 DR. BOWEN: Agreed. Because
9 anyone who goes into treatment and goes
10 back out on the street will invariably
11 fail. I mean, it's just -- right. In
12 order to succeed in treatment, you need
13 to have stable housing.

14 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Right.
15 Okay.

16 Question for Health, a 2019
17 study found that between 1993 and 2002
18 10,592 cases of HIV were avoided because
19 of access to clean syringes. The same
20 study multiplied that number by the
21 average cost of HIV treatment for a
22 lifetime, which is \$230,000. That's
23 \$2.4 billion over ten years or roughly
24 240 million annually. That was from a
25 WHYY report.

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2 So my question is, if City
3 funding to support the purchase of
4 syringes for syringe exchange is
5 eliminated, what will be the impact on
6 HIV transmission in Philadelphia and what
7 is the impact on transmission of
8 hepatitis C? And my follow-up, to put it
9 out there now, what are the alternative
10 plans to keep transmission rates of HIV
11 and hepatitis C low? What resources are
12 necessary to treat these additional
13 cases?

14 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
15 Councilmember. I'm going to respond to
16 your question, then allow my Director of
17 HIV Health just in case she has
18 additional information.

19 You're correct. In alignment
20 with that study, the absence of syringes
21 can lead to increased rates of infectious
22 disease such as HIV and hepatitis C, as
23 well as many other studies that cited
24 that. Our goal is to sort of work with
25 other partners and find alternative

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2 sources to support and prevent that. In
3 the interim, we are clear and probably
4 anticipate that there may be some spikes,
5 so we have plans for that, and I'm going
6 to turn it over to Dr. Kathleen Brady.

7 DR. BRADY: Good afternoon. So
8 my name is Dr. Kathleen Brady. I'm the
9 Director of the Division of HIV Health at
10 the Philadelphia Department of Public
11 Health.

12 And so first let me -- I just
13 want to give some background regarding
14 syringe exchange.

15 Syringe exchange is
16 evidence-based and the most
17 cost-effective public health intervention
18 in the history of the HIV epidemic.
19 Support of syringe exchange is a required
20 activity for the Health Department's CDC
21 HIV prevention funding, and the sole
22 purpose of syringe exchange is to prevent
23 transmission of HIV, hepatitis B,
24 hepatitis C, and other infectious
25 illnesses spread through sharing or reuse

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2 of syringes.

3 It does not increase injection
4 drug use or the presence of syringe
5 litter or crime, but it has the added
6 benefits of linking people who inject
7 drugs to substance use disorder
8 treatment, prevention, and overdose
9 through distribution of Naloxone and
10 fentanyl and xylazine test strips, safe
11 disposal of syringe injection equipment,
12 and vaccination testing and linkage to
13 prevention, care, and treatment for
14 infectious diseases.

15 Do we expect an increase with
16 withdrawal of City funding for syringe
17 exchange? Absolutely. Philadelphia has
18 been experiencing an ongoing HIV outbreak
19 in people who inject drugs since 2018,
20 and this outbreak occurred despite having
21 an active syringe exchange program since
22 1992. Why? There are multiple reasons,
23 but the main one is related to fentanyl
24 infusion into the drug supply. Obviously
25 fentanyl is a potent, highly addictive

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2 but short-acting opioid. In people who
3 inject drugs, this resulted in increased
4 frequency of injection, and unfortunately
5 the demand for clean syringes was greater
6 than the demand, which resulted in
7 increased sharing and reuse of syringes
8 and resulting in transmission of HIV,
9 hepatitis B, and hepatitis C.

10 And as part of Philadelphia
11 Public Health's response, the City
12 actually increased the budget for
13 syringes in Fiscal Year 2019, in Fiscal
14 Year '20. Syringe exchange increased, as
15 did syringe coverage, so that more people
16 who inject drugs had a sterile syringe
17 for each injection.

18 For syringe exchange to be
19 effective, there needs to be reliable but
20 flexible funding. The philanthropic
21 landscape in Philadelphia is neither.

22 Keep going?

23 DR. RAVAL-NELSON: No, no.

24 Answer.

25 DR. BRADY: Okay. Keep going.

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2 And so we expect that basically
3 philanthropic and private donations for
4 syringe exchange will not meet the budget
5 that is currently in the City budget for
6 Fiscal Year '24, which is \$900,000. And
7 so, yeah, that's basically what we
8 expect, is that there will be decreased
9 syringe distribution and increase in HIV
10 cases as a result.

11 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: So just
12 a really quick follow-up to that, that's
13 \$900,000 that has been in the syringe
14 exchange budget?

15 DR. BRADY: Yeah. It's
16 \$900,000, but \$654,000 of that \$900,000
17 goes towards the purchases of syringes
18 and other paraphernalia. The remainder
19 of the budget goes towards other
20 supplies, like needle boxes, et cetera.

21 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Okay.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 That's time.

24 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank
25 you.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 You're welcome.

4 The Chair recognizes

5 Councilmember Quetcy Lozada.

6 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank
7 you, Council President.

8 Just along those same lines, I
9 mean, I had questions as well as my
10 colleagues did about overflow beds, and
11 so let me just stay there for one second.

12 You mentioned that there's 200
13 providers, Dr. Bowen, that have these
14 beds. Can you please provide this body
15 with a list of who those providers are,
16 how many beds each of them has, how much
17 each of them is paid per bed, because
18 there's also all kind of numbers thrown
19 around for different types of beds at
20 different types of costs per night. So
21 if you could share with us a list of who
22 they are.

23 DR. BOWEN: So we'll get you
24 whatever we can get you, but let me just
25 clarify. When I said 200 providers,

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2 that's like across the whole network.
3 That includes like mental health and all.

4 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Let me
5 finish my question and then you can
6 respond, because I don't want the clock
7 to get me.

8 DR. BOWEN: Okay.

9 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: I also
10 want to know do these beds overlap -- do
11 the providers overlap with other City
12 departments who also have certain beds in
13 their inventory, such as OHS, right? So
14 do you guys have beds that OHS has beds
15 and they come from the same provider or
16 are they considered to be the same bed or
17 not?

18 DR. BOWEN: We're talking about
19 treatment beds. That's not OHS, right?
20 So that's us if we're talking about
21 treatment, billable treatment. If we're
22 talking --

23 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: I get
24 that, but are there providers that
25 have -- for instance, ABC company has

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2 substance beds and then ABC company also
3 gives OHS access to --

4 DR. BOWEN: There is some
5 fluidity with, let's say, commercial
6 insurance, right? So they may be some,
7 right, because we don't own the beds, but
8 we know that we have a certain number of
9 them. So that's how we can get our
10 slots, right? But it's not every bed
11 that they have that will be a bed that
12 DBHIDS or CBH uses.

13 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Council
14 President, can we ask for a list of
15 providers that have these beds from
16 DBHIDS as well as from OHS and other City
17 entities, who are the providers, how much
18 are these beds, and how many do they
19 have?

20 DR. BOWEN: So treatment beds
21 would be us, not OHS. If we're talking
22 about the support services around the
23 treatment, then, yeah, okay. So then we
24 might be in that place, but there is very
25 specific for behavioral health kinds of

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2 programs.

3 I also want to just clarify

4 that when we talk about -- I was

5 answering the question of Councilmember

6 Harrity and others from the DBHIDS only

7 perspective, and we're really part of a

8 bigger operation that's going on right

9 now with the triage and wellness, which

10 will help with having more beds available

11 than just what DBHIDS can do on its own.

12 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank

13 you.

14 You guys have different

15 providers that you work with on the

16 ground. It's no secret that community

17 residents in Kensington have had very

18 serious concerns with some of your

19 providers. Is there a process for which

20 the community can voice their concerns to

21 DBHIDS about specific providers, and if

22 yes, what is that process?

23 Also, does DBHIDS -- I think I

24 heard you earlier mention an advisory

25 group. What's the role of the advisory

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2 group, who is in the advisory group, and
3 is there community members in that
4 advisory group and what is their role?

5 DR. BOWEN: Yeah. So the
6 advisory board for DBHIDS is made up of
7 multiple stakeholders. So it's people
8 with lived experience, it's providers,
9 it's advocates. So, yes, it's --

10 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: I didn't
11 hear you say community members.

12 DR. BOWEN: Community members,
13 right. It's a mix, and I think I may
14 have seen some folks, yeah, who is part
15 of that, that provider. But, yes, and
16 it's intentionally meant to be really an
17 advisory board. So it is meant for folks
18 to bring concerns, to help address
19 concerns, to think about strategies. So
20 it's an advisory board.

21 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Can you
22 please provide this body with a list of
23 who your advisory board members are and
24 what their role is as well?

25 DR. BOWEN: Sure. And I had

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2 mentioned the treatment trauma group. We
3 have representation in there from that
4 group. So it's meant to be -- to advise
5 the Department from the community
6 perspective. But we also go out to the
7 community. We have been doing TEC tours,
8 which we get invited in by the community.
9 We talk about the services that we have,
10 the issues that folks have. And that's
11 at a pretty high level, TEC tour,
12 because, you know, we also have folks
13 who, like the Community Wellness
14 Engagement Unit, that goes to town hall
15 meetings or to schools or to places of
16 worship and engages with the community as
17 well.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

19 That's time. Thank you very much.

20 Just please provide the
21 information to the Chair.

22 DR. BOWEN: Absolutely. I'm
23 turning to her. Yes, will do.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

25 Thank you very much.

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2 The Chair recognizes
3 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
4 Richardson.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

6 Thank you. Thank you so much,
7 Mr. President.

8 And thank you, Councilmember
9 Lozada, for that line of questioning.

10 I'll start with Health and then
11 end with DBHIDS, first in thanking
12 Dr. Palak Raval-Nelson for all of your
13 work. We had the opportunity to work
14 together on the nuisance business tours
15 that were organized by my office over the
16 last four years since we passed the
17 legislation, and I listened to the line
18 of questioning from my colleague and
19 really completely understand the
20 frustration, because we were out on the
21 street and you all were citing businesses
22 for cigarette violations. So I will say
23 that I look forward to working with the
24 new bifurcated Licenses and Inspections
25 Department relative to their increased

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2 enforcement around these nuisance

3 businesses.

4 I know I left with frustration

5 at times, because you all would do a

6 cease for cigarette sales and then

7 nothing else would happen. And so I look

8 forward to continuing to work with you

9 all in reinstituting some of that work.

10 My colleague Councilmember

11 Dr. Nina Ahmad and also Councilmember

12 O'Rourke talked about this week being

13 Black Maternal Health Week here across

14 our country, April 11th through

15 April 17th. It's an issue that's

16 exceedingly important to me, and I know

17 we heard from the Division of Maternal,

18 Child and Family Health, but I wanted to

19 talk quickly about what we were able to

20 accomplish in the last budget cycle

21 supporting A Home From Shana Foundation,

22 which is a Black-founded, led, and run

23 organization that specifically focuses on

24 Black maternal health. They also focus

25 on ensuring that we have more doulas

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2 readily available for birthing people

3 here in the City of Philadelphia.

4 So I wanted to specifically

5 focus on how you all are providing

6 support year over year within your budget

7 to organizations like A Home From Shana

8 Foundation and others that are Black-run

9 and Black-led organizations for the Black
10 maternal health crisis.

11 DR. FRANKLIN: Councilmember,
12 if I may add a point of clarification to
13 a response before I get you your answer?

14 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes.
15 Council President, if you
16 please do not deduct that from my time.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I
18 won't deduct it.

19 DR. FRANKLIN: Sorry. I just
20 want to add some clarification to
21 Councilmember Landau's -- our response
22 regarding the syringe services program.
23 And, again, as we have said, it's
24 \$654,000. At this point, I think it's
25 too early to say whether or not we'll be

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2 able to cover that, but I do feel
3 confident with our partners that it will
4 come together.

5 The other piece, some of those
6 funds will be diverted to sort of bolster
7 or buttress the programs we already have
8 in place to navigate the spikes that we
9 may see as we progress to including
10 treatment and housing.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 We're going to do this, right, because
13 we're on the clock. You're going to
14 answer Katherine Gilmore Richardson's
15 response, and if you want to do an
16 immediate follow-up with the member when
17 we recess, y'all can have a conversation,
18 because we're still on the same mission
19 to get answers --

20 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
21 Council President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: --
23 regardless if it's public or directly.

24 The Chair recognizes
25 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore

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2 Richardson.

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

4 Thank you, Council President.

5 So my question stands, and then
6 I have a question for DBHIDS.

7 DR. FRANKLIN: Okay. I'm going
8 to ask Dr. Stacey Kallem to come back up.

9 DR. KALLEM: Hello. I'm
10 Dr. Stacey Kallem, Director of the
11 Division of Maternal, Child and Family
12 Health at the Philadelphia Department of
13 Public Health.

14 Thank you so much for your
15 question and thank you for all of your
16 work with A Home for Shana. That is an
17 amazing program that we are so excited
18 about that you've brought to the City, so
19 thank you for your work on that.

20 I think your question was about
21 how are we supporting community-based
22 organizations in Maternal Health, and we
23 have two different programs that are
24 grant programs for community
25 organizations. One is through our CAN,

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2 Community Action Network, and that is a
3 collective impact group focused on
4 reducing racial disparities in infant
5 mortality, and for the past several
6 years, we've given out grants to
7 predominantly Black-led organizations in
8 Philadelphia to support their work.

9 Then also through our OVA,
10 which is our Organizing Voices for
11 Action, that's the action team that
12 belongs to our Maternal Mortality Review
13 Committee, they've also done community
14 investment grants.

15 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: I
16 would love to follow up with you to just
17 talk more about that work and how we can
18 work together to support these
19 organizations year over year.

20 DR. KALLEM: I'd be happy to.

21 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
22 Okay.

23 And then very quickly for
24 Dr. Bowen, kudos and congratulations on a
25 job well done. I know today is your last

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 day, but we are looking forward to
3 working with Dr. Marquita Williams. And
4 I also want to thank LeVan White on the
5 team as well. We all have worked
6 together very closely. Thank you all for
7 working with us to institute Tier 1
8 conflict resolution with the School
9 District in every single school in the
10 City of Philadelphia.

11 I'm going to put this question
12 on the record and just ask for a written
13 response back. It only comes from sort
14 of where we went this morning with OHS,
15 but how does DBHIDS collab with OHS on
16 placement through homeless outreach? Who
17 sets the policy for how those who are
18 engaged are placed into a shelter? And
19 then what is the policy for placing folks
20 who are engaged by the outreach team into
21 the shelter? When was the policy
22 established? Is that policy applied to
23 all outreach teams, even those who aren't
24 City funded? And if the policy is
25 different, then why is it different?

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2 Does DBHIDS agree with the policy of
3 sending those engaged by the outreach
4 teams through intake instead of providing
5 direct placement?

6 And I'm not asking for a
7 response. I would just like a response
8 in writing to that question. I wanted to
9 get it on the record based on some of the
10 responses we received from OHS this
11 morning.

12 And I'm appreciative of your
13 work and your service. I wish you well
14 in your new career endeavor, and I thank
15 you all for working closely with us to
16 implement Tier 1 conflict resolution for
17 every child in this city. When I started
18 in government, we were only at 50 percent
19 of the schools, and now we're at
20 100 percent because of the work we did
21 together, and that was an everyday climb.

22 DR. BOWEN: I remember sitting
23 in your office --

24 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: So
25 thank you very, very much.

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2 DR. BOWEN: -- when you were
3 championing that. It was fabulous then
4 and it's fabulous now.

5 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
6 Thank you.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 Thank you, Madam Leader.

9 The Chair recognizes
10 Councilmember Mike Driscoll.

11 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: Thank
12 you, Mr. President.

13 I'm going to submit most of my
14 questions for the record, but I just want
15 to make sure I'm hearing this correctly,
16 because as you know, the Kensington
17 Caucus is working very hard in a massive
18 undertaking. And am I hearing that
19 between DBH and Housing and Health that
20 we do have the capacity to participate in
21 the resettlement actions scheduled for
22 the residents of the encampments down
23 there?

24 DR. BOWEN: So --

25 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: Or is

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2 that just with your affiliates? And if
3 it is with your affiliates, do we have
4 the capacity?

5 DR. BOWEN: I think the triage
6 and wellness -- development of the triage
7 and wellness piece of it is an important
8 part of it, and that's happening not just
9 like DBHIDS. It's a multi-agency effort
10 that the City is leading to develop some
11 more of the kind of capacity you're
12 talking about.

13 I was responding initially from
14 what we have, because we know we have
15 empty beds. We know we have overflow
16 capacity. To Councilman Harrity's point,
17 does that match the 695, whatever that
18 is? You know, the triage and wellness is
19 really an undertaking also as well.

20 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: That's
21 good to hear.

22 And then, lastly, this is more
23 with regard to the hundred million
24 allocation for the mental health funding
25 for youth. The question I have is, will

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2 the County or the District staff the
3 services, and will non-treatment services
4 such as intervention be provided and how
5 will these services be sustained after
6 the initial allocation is expended?

7 DR. BOWEN: So that's not
8 coming through to us.

9 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: It's
10 not?

11 DR. BOWEN: Not to DBHIDS.

12 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: It
13 comes straight to?

14 DR. BOWEN: To the schools. So
15 we do partner really intensively with the
16 schools, so there may be -- and they turn
17 to us when they need our support. They
18 have -- so that's not clear to me at this
19 point exactly how --

20 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: It
21 wasn't clear to me either.

22 DR. BOWEN: What?

23 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: It
24 wasn't clear to me exactly where it was
25 going.

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2 DR. BOWEN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

3 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL: All

4 right. Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 Thank you, Councilmember Driscoll.

7 The Chair recognizes

8 Councilmember Young.

9 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
10 you, Mr. President.

11 This question is for Public
12 Health. Can you tell us the last time
13 the City has done an assessment of our
14 healthcare facilities, I guess, to
15 determine the viability in those
16 communities, particularly with the large
17 number of Urgent Cares that have been
18 popping up all throughout the City?
19 Could you tell us has there been any
20 assessments done to look at what our
21 health centers are providing, the need
22 for them, et cetera?

23 DR. FRANKLIN: Thank you,
24 Councilmember. I will have Sara Enes, my
25 Chief of Staff, come up.

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2 MS. ENES: Good afternoon. My
3 name is Sara Enes, Chief of Staff for the
4 Department of Public Health.

5 So at the eight community
6 health centers, we are constantly
7 evaluating the program. And so the bulk
8 of our program, about I think 80 percent
9 of our practice is adult medicine. And
10 so we look at the needs of that
11 population.

12 One of the, I think, unique
13 aspects of the health center -- and I
14 think, Councilmember Harrity, you asked
15 this question earlier as well -- is our
16 ability to refer patients to specialty
17 care. And so each health center has a
18 contract with a local -- one of our many
19 local healthcare institutions, hospitals,
20 where we can refer someone to see a
21 cardiologist or a rheumatologist to meet
22 their healthcare needs, and we do that at
23 no cost to the patient. So we're able to
24 evaluate what our patients need, what
25 their diagnoses are, and then refer them

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2 out.

3 So it's a constantly evolving
4 process in terms of patient demand and
5 what patients need. And so while adult
6 medicine is the majority, our supportive
7 services, our menu of supportive services
8 continues to grow. And so in addition to
9 adult medicine, we have pediatric care,
10 dental care. We're looking to expand the
11 services that we provide in that dental
12 clinic, because we recognize dental care
13 as a barrier for a lot of our patients
14 and a lot of Philadelphians.

15 We have a very comprehensive
16 women's health program. We partner with
17 local hospitals for prenatal care with
18 their midwife programs, and then our
19 patients deliver in hospital. Pharmacy,
20 lab, you know, all of the sources on one
21 site in addition to our patient
22 navigators, our social workers, our
23 benefits counselors, our outreach and
24 enrollment specialists. So as our need
25 for -- as our program grows, so do our

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2 supportive services.

3 So we're really -- I think it
4 all depends on what we're seeing when
5 folks come in the door and then how we're
6 able to respond with the staff that we
7 have, and we're fortunate enough to
8 receive some grant funding as well to
9 expand that program.

10 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
11 you.

12 One more question about the
13 Philly Joy Bank program. I know that
14 it's based off data that was collected
15 from Canada, but I just want to for the
16 record let folks know that Canada has a
17 universal healthcare system that we do
18 not have in this country, and Canada
19 also -- those towns in Canada do not also
20 have the same type of social issues that
21 we have here in Philadelphia as well. So
22 I'm just cautious about providing that
23 level of -- that stipend monthly to
24 individuals to do what they wish freely
25 and there's no particular goals.

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2 So can you tell us what other
3 services will be provided on top of just
4 this thousand dollars that's being
5 provided a month?

6 DR. KALLEM: I am Dr. Stacey
7 Kallem, the Director of the Division of
8 Maternal, Child and Family Health at the
9 Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

10 Thank you for the question.
11 So, yes, in addition to the cash as part
12 of the Philly Joy Bank, it's a
13 comprehensive program. We'll be offering
14 voluntary services to program
15 participants, which are all services that
16 my division already offers, but we'll be
17 helping folks who are in the Philly Joy
18 Bank enroll. So it's things like doulas,
19 home visitors, lactation support.

20 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: But these
21 are voluntary, right? So they're not --

22 DR. KALLEM: Correct.

23 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: --
24 necessarily have to go through these
25 programs. Okay.

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2 DR. KALLEM: Correct.

3 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
4 you, Mr. President.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
6 You're welcome.

7 Any members for a third round,
8 I'm going to ask for you to please submit
9 your questions, unless you have a burning
10 desire to call these two departments
11 back, because before we wrap up today, we
12 still have other departments that we have
13 to cover today. So unless you say you
14 definitely want to bring them back, let
15 me know, but the third round we will not
16 be doing. Everybody had a full two
17 rounds, and we've been here for a couple
18 hours on this one department.

19 So with that being said,
20 Dr. Jill Bowen, thank you for your
21 presentation, your testimony, as well as
22 Dr. Franklin.

23 I also want to acknowledge
24 Mr. LeVan White from the Department of
25 DBHIDS. Any time when there's a killing

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2 or murder in the streets of Philadelphia
3 and I'm looking to do the trauma outreach
4 and trauma support, I will call LeVan
5 first, and he will make sure that I'll
6 have a team out there working with me to
7 address that issue. Thank you very much.

8 With that being said, next up
9 we have the Department of Planning.

10 (Witness approached witness
11 table.)

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: To
13 all the members, I just had a question.
14 As we start this next line of questioning
15 for the Department of Planning, are the
16 individuals I see on the screen, are
17 y'all queued up for this particular
18 session or are these a holdover from the
19 last session?

20 Okay. Just wanted to be clear.
21 This session? Okay.

22 I want to also commend my
23 colleagues for the deep dive on issues
24 that are critically important, and I
25 believe that all of the departments that

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2 we ask questions of are critically
3 important, but a lot of the departments
4 that have an immediate impact on the
5 lives of a lot of our constituents take a
6 little longer than most, but they all are
7 relevant to us addressing the issues and
8 concerns for the citizens here in the
9 City of Philadelphia. So I just want to
10 commend everybody for doing their due
11 diligence, but this won't be any
12 different.

13 And so with that being said,
14 Helen, can you please call the next
15 person for testimony.

16 THE CLERK: Yes. John Mondlak,
17 Interim Director of the Department of
18 Planning and Development.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 Thank you, John. It's just yourself
21 today? They're going to leave you out
22 there like that?

23 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: We'll see
24 how it goes.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: No.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 It's all good.

3 Just state your name and title
4 for the record and please begin your
5 testimony.

6 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: John
7 Mondlak, Interim Director of Planning and
8 Development.

9 Good afternoon, Council
10 President Johnson and members of City
11 Council. I am John Mondlak, Interim
12 Director of Planning and Development, and
13 joining me today are senior members of my
14 staff as well as the executive team of
15 the Philadelphia Housing Development
16 Corporation, PHDC. I'm pleased to
17 provide testimony on the Department of
18 Planning and Development's fiscal budget
19 for 2025, our Operating Budget, and I'm
20 proud of Planning and Development's
21 efforts over the past year.

22 In collaboration with the
23 Philadelphia Housing Development
24 Corporation, we work to clean, green,
25 stabilize vacant lots through a

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 partnership with Philadelphia
3 Horticultural Society, made significant
4 investments in neighborhood
5 infrastructure via Neighborhood
6 Preservation Initiative bonds, created
7 approximately 250 units of affordable
8 housing, supported home repairs with over
9 6,000 households, assisted 1,100
10 first-time homebuyers, helped secure
11 dedicated staffing to bolster the
12 eviction prevention efforts, launched a
13 rental improvement fund to support small
14 landlords, collected 7.3 million in
15 revenue via the mixed-income housing
16 bonus program, and reimagined a new
17 community engagement strategy for the
18 comprehensive planning process that uses
19 equity as a lens.

20 In the next fiscal year, DPD,
21 Department of Planning and Development,
22 will create a one front door to access
23 City home repair programs and services,
24 reducing administrative burdens on people
25 in the City that need these services.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 We're going to institutionalize the
3 Philadelphia Home Appraisal Bias Task
4 Force by adding staff to build up our
5 capacity and implement their
6 recommendations. We're going to continue
7 to scale Right to Counsel to add
8 additional zip codes, with the goal of
9 leveling the playing field at
10 Landlord-Tenant Court. We're going to
11 continue our efforts to provide
12 opportunities for first-time homebuyers
13 through Land Bank RFPs, Philly First
14 Home, Home.Buy.Now, and Turn the Key
15 mortgage programs.

16 We'll hopefully resume the
17 acquisition of tax delinquent vacant
18 properties to the Sheriff's Office, which
19 looks very promising at this point.
20 We're going to provide needed structural
21 and financial support for CDCs and
22 non-profit developers to allow for
23 development of a full range of affordable
24 housing options on Land Bank-owned
25 property.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 We're going to launch an
3 equitable and inclusive comprehensive
4 planning process that emphasizes outreach
5 and engagement with hard-to-reach
6 neighborhoods and individuals.

7 Residents confront challenges
8 in securing and maintaining high-quality
9 affordable housing and experience
10 quality-of-life challenges. Small
11 businesses and developers struggle to
12 navigate the complex regulatory
13 requirements of doing business in
14 Philadelphia. Understanding the
15 magnitude of these barriers, Planning and
16 Development and its partner, PHDC, stand
17 committed to addressing them.

18 I will now briefly highlight
19 some of the recent accomplishments and
20 some of the activities in the coming
21 fiscal year we plan to undertake.

22 We will continue to create and
23 maintain thriving communities through
24 investment in affordable housing. By
25 leveraging Housing Trust Funds, federal

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 resources, including Community
3 Development Block Grant money and
4 Neighborhood Preservation Initiative bond
5 funding, Planning and Development and its
6 partner, PHDC, have produced new
7 affordable housing and special needs
8 housing units, preserved existing
9 affordable housing through repair
10 programs, offered eviction and mortgage
11 foreclosure diversion programs to keep
12 people in their homes, and created new
13 homeownership opportunities.
14 Planning and Development and
15 PHDC have accepted Mayor Parker's bold
16 challenge to facilitate the production
17 and preservation of 30,000 residential
18 housing units in Philadelphia during her
19 term. In Fiscal Year 2025, Planning and
20 Development and PHDC will continue its
21 successful housing production programs,
22 like Turn the Key, as well as continuing
23 to invest in home preservation programs
24 like Basic System Repair Program,
25 Adaptive Modification Program, and

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Restore Repair Renew.

3 We will support our
4 neighborhoods through blight removal.
5 Planning and Development partners with
6 PHS on several successful programs,
7 including LandCare and Workforce
8 Development. The programs clean, green,
9 and stabilize lots.

10 In Fiscal Year 2023, the
11 program maintained more than 13,500 lots.
12 In Fiscal Year 2025, Planning and
13 Development will continue to partner with
14 PHS on this important work using CDBG
15 funding to support that effort.

16 Development resources - in
17 collaboration with other agencies,
18 Development Services updated and expanded
19 the development checklist, which will be
20 released in the coming weeks. The
21 checklist provides a comprehensive
22 overview of the requirements of real
23 estate development in the City, provide
24 useful tips, contact information, and
25 links to useful resources.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 In Fiscal Year 2025,

3 Development Services will continue its
4 work with other departments and agencies
5 to make the development review process
6 more accessible, efficient, and
7 predictable. We will engage all
8 residents in creating a vision for
9 Philadelphia. In collaboration with a
10 diverse steering committee of
11 Philadelphia residents and experts in DEI
12 and community outreach, Planning and
13 Development developed an equitable and
14 inclusive process for engaging various
15 public participation and a needed update
16 to the Philadelphia's land use
17 comprehensive plan.

18 Planning and Development will
19 dive deeper into the engagement process,
20 partnering with trusted community
21 organizations, resident working groups,
22 and resident ambassadors to reach
23 individuals and groups that have
24 historically been excluded from the
25 planning process.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 This is just a sample of our
3 work, and it concludes my testimony.

4 Thank you for your time. Thank you for
5 your leadership and your partnership as
6 we work to increase accessible housing
7 options for both renters and homeowners,
8 ensure vibrant and equitable communities,
9 and help build intergenerational wealth.

10 And if there's no questions, I
11 hope everybody has an enjoyable evening.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

13 Thank you. I wish it was that easy.

14 Thank you.

15 I just have a couple brief
16 questions and I'll then relax my time to
17 my colleagues.

18 Just a couple things. Now, I
19 know you talked about support for
20 programs like Basic Systems Repair,
21 certain amount of units and the Turn the
22 Key. Just for the record, though, those
23 initiatives are already taking place, the
24 majority of them, prior to this
25 Administration. So y'all starting new

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 from January 6th is when we took the oath
3 of office in terms of moving forward. So
4 I just want to acknowledge that those key
5 things that you talked about in terms of
6 the number of affordable units created,
7 the work that was done regarding Basic
8 Systems Repair, rental assistance, that
9 started under City Council under the
10 leadership of former Council President
11 Darrell Clarke. And so with the new
12 Administration, we will talk about what
13 we'll do working in partnership and
14 collaboration as we move forward.

15 So when you talk about rental
16 assistance, this current budget has an
17 \$18 million reduction, which eliminates
18 rental assistance and the Same-Day Work
19 program, and we actually worked very hard
20 to create the Same-Day Work program as a
21 way to alleviate poverty and also to
22 combat gun violence with young men
23 working to clean and green lots
24 throughout the City of Philadelphia.

25 So can you give us an idea of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 why there would be an \$18 million
3 reduction?

4 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I'll address
5 it in two components. The Same Day Work
6 and Pay program is a smaller piece of
7 that 18 million, and we acknowledge and
8 agree that it's been a very successful
9 program and we will look for other
10 funding. We'll utilize probably CDBG,
11 but we also have access to Housing Trust
12 Fund and NPI bond proceeds. So we plan
13 to find a way to keep that program at the
14 same level that it's been operating at.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Okay. And speaking of -- so you're going
17 to look for other outside sources for
18 Same-Day Pay program?

19 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yes. And
20 that constitutes a smaller chunk of the
21 18. The other 15 million is the bigger
22 chunk that really helped with rental
23 assistance in the diversion program. We
24 are at a pace right now -- so every year
25 for the last two years we've had

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 \$15 million General Fund and \$15 Housing
3 Trust Fund. So we've had \$30 million in
4 the program for the past two years. With
5 the extra \$15 million that we're
6 committed to from Housing Trust Fund
7 money, that's \$75 million. When that
8 program started, it took about eight or
9 nine months to ramp up that program to
10 initiate it, to create it, to get it
11 running. And so that delay in getting it
12 started in 2023 actually meant that we're
13 a little bit behind in the spending. And
14 so there is still money, and we don't
15 think that we're going to have to cut any
16 of the funding that's currently in there.
17 We're just going to have to spend through
18 the money that we still have, plus the
19 extra \$15 million from Housing Trust
20 Fund, and that should take us to the end
21 of Fiscal Year 2025, and if it doesn't,
22 if it falls a little bit short, again, we
23 would find additional resources in our
24 other sources to fill that gap.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: So

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 let's go on the record. How much is
3 currently in the budget for rental
4 assistance? How much is the
5 Administration proposing to add to our
6 budget for rental assistance?

7 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: For rental
8 assistance it would be --

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
10 Matter of fact, let me clarify, because I
11 hear you saying we already have money.
12 Basically that's the reason why we're not
13 proposing any new funding; is that
14 correct?

15 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yes.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: How
17 much is that? Just want to be clear.

18 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: We're going
19 to add another \$15 million, and that will
20 allow us to spend exactly what we're
21 spending now through the end of the
22 fiscal year, which we think it takes us
23 if not to the end of Fiscal 2025, very
24 close to the end. And if it's short,
25 then we'll fill in the gap, but it

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 shouldn't be a significant amount. If
3 you really want more like dollar numbers,
4 I can call somebody up that maybe could
5 answer that more precisely.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: If
7 you can provide that to the Chair and
8 members of our committee.

9 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Oh,
10 absolutely. Absolutely.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 There's a \$3.5 million reduction from the
13 Land Bank budget. What is that
14 associated with? I'm assuming it's
15 related to liens on properties throughout
16 the City, but I want you to give us an
17 overview of why is there a \$3.5 million
18 reduction in the Land Bank's budget.

19 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: The
20 reduction is because the money that was
21 put in last year was never spent on
22 acquisition, because there were no
23 sheriff sales, and so it hasn't been put
24 back in, but we have -- we still have
25 that money that we hopefully will be

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 spending, assuming the Sheriff
3 reconstitutes sheriff sales on vacant
4 delinquent property.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: You
6 talk about Basic Systems Repair. That
7 particular program, how much is budgeted
8 in this particular budget from the
9 Administration to help repair
10 individuals' homes?

11 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: For that I
12 am going to call somebody up just to make
13 sure I don't get the number incorrect.
14 Either Paul or Mark.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Matter of fact, let me back up for a
17 second, because I do see Angel Rodriguez.
18 Can you please come to the table, sir.

19 (Witness approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Just trying to get an idea. I know you
23 do a lot of hard work to try to get those
24 properties out of the Land Bank. That's
25 been your mission since you've gotten

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 here.

3 Give us an idea regarding the
4 \$3.5 million reduction to the Land Bank's
5 budget. According to Mike, the reason
6 why is that the money hasn't been used
7 for acquisitions. So tell me what we
8 need to do for the acquisition of
9 additional properties that can go to
10 affordable and workforce housing. And
11 also if we aren't achieving that, what is
12 the obstacles that we must overcome to
13 accomplish it?

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon,
15 Council President.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 Good afternoon. We need you to speak in
18 the mic just a little louder, my friend.

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Sorry. Angel
20 Rodriguez, Executive Director of the Land
21 Bank. Good afternoon, Councilmembers.

22 So just as a point of
23 clarification, the Land Bank is
24 experiencing -- what you're seeing is a
25 level funding. So in previous years, in

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Fiscal Year '23, we were funded at
3 6.5 million, 3 million is for operations,
4 3.5 for acquisitions.

5 In June of '23, the end of the
6 fiscal year, the Land Bank did draw down
7 that 3.5. We have access to that, and it
8 is in escrow right now. So what we have
9 in Fiscal Year '24 is another level
10 funding of 6.5. So you have another 3.5
11 in reserve. So for this year, we
12 actually -- the Land Bank is funded
13 technically at 6.5. So we do have access
14 to 3.5 million, plus the 3 million for
15 operations.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 What's the obstacles for the acquisition
18 of land so we can put that money to use?

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, once
20 sheriff sales resume, as the Mayor and
21 the Sheriff have talked about over the
22 summer, we do have a bill in committee
23 right now that would allow the Land Bank
24 to continue to use its priority bid sale.
25 So I'm unaware if the Council is aware,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the Supreme Court had issued a ruling in
3 Michigan or Minnesota, I believe,
4 Hennepin versus Tyler, which called into
5 question the Land Bank's ability to
6 exercise its priority bid.

7 City Law crafted, in
8 conjunction with Land Bank's law offices,
9 a bill for the consideration from Council
10 which would add levels of notification,
11 addressing the concerns put forth by the
12 Supreme Court, and then allow us to
13 continue to utilize our priority bid. So
14 once that bill is passed, we'll be able
15 to exercise that priority bid.

16 Currently we're working with
17 Revenue to identify those properties,
18 because sheriff sales stopped at the
19 beginning of the pandemic, in which case
20 a lot of the judicial decrees had ended.
21 I know they've been doing a great job of
22 reissuing them. So we're just right now
23 looking at what the schedule will be and
24 also the timing of when those identified
25 properties will be coming to sheriff

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 sale. It should be noted that not
3 everything comes up to sheriff sale at
4 one time.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 Okay. All right. Thank you very much.

7 Michael, let's go back to Basic
8 Systems Home Repair program. We're
9 talking about the repairing of individual
10 homes. How much is allocated and
11 proposed in this proposed budget for
12 FY25, the Basic Systems Repair, from the
13 Administration's standpoint? And not
14 NPI, because NPI is a whole different
15 conversation.

16 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I don't
17 think any General Fund money is spent on
18 Basic System Repair, but if -- so the
19 answer, General Fund is zero, but are you
20 still looking for the amount that will be
21 spent from other sources?

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

23 Well, I want to get an idea of why we
24 aren't on the General Fund side separate
25 from NPI. Is there a reasoning why we

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 aren't investing in Basic Systems Repair
3 on the General Fund side? I'm sure
4 there's a strategy behind it or a
5 reasoning why we're not investing in
6 helping people repair their homes.

7 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Mark Dodds
8 from our Division of Housing and
9 Development will join us.

10 (Witness approached witness
11 table.)

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Mark
13 Dodds, Interim Deputy Director, Division
14 of Housing and Community Development.

15 Right now in FY24 there's
16 currently \$40 million allocated to the
17 Basic Systems Repair program.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 From the General Fund?

20 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: None
21 from the General Fund.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I
23 just want to be clear, because again NPI
24 is a Council initiative, totally separate
25 from the Administration, right? I mean,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 we may collaborate as the time goes down
3 the line, but just want to be clear,
4 we're talking two totally separate pots
5 of money.

6 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS:
7 Correct.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: But
9 for the record, right now under the terms
10 of this proposed FY25 budget, there is no
11 proposal for funding for Basic Systems
12 Repair, correct?

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Not in
14 the General Fund budget.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Okay. Just wanted to be clear on that,
17 because members have been asking so we
18 can get a little bit of clarity on how we
19 move on this process.

20 I'm getting ready to relax my
21 time to my members. Just another
22 question in terms of the organizational
23 chart for the Planning Department. So
24 give me an overall of what that chart
25 looks like. I know you have an interim

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 director. I know we have a goal of
3 30,000 units in four years, and obviously
4 we want to be supportive of that process,
5 but the devil is always in the details.
6 And so is that 30,000 of affordable,
7 workforce units? And then also what's
8 the organizational structure?

9 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I think to
10 answer the first question, the 30,000 is
11 going to service all levels of incomes.
12 It's not going to be any particular level
13 of affordable or just affordable.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: So
15 you mean it could be a combination of
16 affordable, workforce, market-rate,
17 correct?

18 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Correct.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: I'm
20 only asking you that because members are
21 asking me when we have meetings just for
22 clarity, and so it's best to get clarity
23 from the Planning Commission.

24 And also what's your
25 organizational structure?

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: So I could
3 certainly follow up with an
4 organizational chart, but we have a
5 Division of Housing and Community
6 Development. Mark Dodds is the Interim
7 Director of that group. We have a
8 Division of Planning and Zoning, which
9 Martine Decamp is the Interim Director of
10 that group. We have a Division of
11 Administration, which includes finance,
12 IT and personnel, and that is Darshna
13 Patel. And we have a Planning and Zoning
14 Division, which is Kathleen Grady.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Would your team be the same team that
17 would be reviewing the Sixers stadium,
18 Comcast Spectacor, and other major
19 projects that come through the City of
20 Philadelphia?

21 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: We are one
22 of many departments that review those
23 projects.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
25 Thank you.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 The Chair recognizes

3 Councilmember Phillips.

4 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank
5 you, Council President Johnson.

6 I want to know what is the
7 average cost associated with driveway
8 repairs? Please provide the Council with
9 a work plan and a cost estimate to
10 address the driveway intake for
11 applications submitted last year.

12 Right now in the Ninth
13 District, among other Council districts,
14 there are a number of outstanding
15 responses to driveways, and we need to
16 come up with a systematic response to
17 that. So we want to see what is it
18 needed to get to the end goal, which is
19 fixing these driveways.

20 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Would you
21 like us to submit the number --

22 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: That
23 would be nice. And also do you know the
24 average cost? Would you like to submit
25 that as well?

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Average cost
3 as well, okay.

4 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Okay.
5 Great.

6 How many contractors have been
7 hired to complete driveway repairs? Is
8 this enough?

9 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Okay. I
10 could probably ask Angel to come back up
11 to maybe answer that or David. Sorry.

12 (Witness approached witness
13 table.)

14 MR. THOMAS: Good afternoon,
15 Councilman. David Thomas, President/CEO
16 for PHDC.

17 I think your question was how
18 many contractors have been hired for
19 repairs to driveways to date?

20 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Yes.

21 MR. THOMAS: We have two
22 contractors as of today. We're working
23 with the Streets Department to try to
24 multiply those numbers by working with
25 their contractors.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: So
3 clearly we're working with the Streets
4 Department because the two contractors
5 are not enough.

6 MR. THOMAS: The two
7 contractors are not with the Streets
8 Department. So we're trying to get their
9 contractors.

10 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Right.
11 So we're hiring the Streets Department
12 because we are in need of more
13 contractors to complete the work because
14 of the high volume, correct?

15 MR. THOMAS: Because of?

16 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: The
17 high volume. Is that why we're going
18 towards the Streets Department? Because
19 two contractors doesn't seem like enough
20 for over 160 driveways that have been
21 potentially approved.

22 MR. THOMAS: I don't want to
23 say that it's not enough yet. I will say
24 that it's been a slow start given the
25 weather that we've had. I don't believe

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 that two would be enough to get to 180,
3 to the question that you just asked, and
4 what we're trying to do is figure out the
5 best way to scale it out.

6 So as you recall, we started as
7 a pilot. We figured out some challenges
8 that we've had, and we've now resolved
9 those issues. We believe we have a path
10 forward to multiply the number of
11 driveways getting done over the next
12 couple months.

13 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Got
14 you.

15 Are there plans to expand
16 neighborhood infrastructure repairs
17 outside of the Basic Systems Repair
18 program and Adaptive Modifications
19 program for the duration of the
20 Neighborhood Preservation Initiative and
21 beyond? And will street trees be added
22 to the list of options to also be
23 considered?

24 MR. THOMAS: Some of that is
25 above my -- I won't say my pay grade, but

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 I wasn't in a lot of these conversations,
3 but I can tell you that I'm speaking to a
4 lot of folks about retaining walls, as
5 you're familiar with.

6 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: That
7 was one of the questions, because I
8 wanted to know when we're going to begin
9 repairing some of the retaining walls,
10 and could you describe the work plan for
11 retaining repairs -- for retaining wall
12 repairs for this fiscal season and next?

13 MR. THOMAS: I can probably
14 give you a schedule. I can't give you
15 too much detail at the moment, other than
16 the fact that it has been a little slower
17 than we'd like because of the engineering
18 process.

19 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
20 Exactly. Listen, there's an incredible
21 excitement around the NPI program,
22 particularly with our driveways, and
23 neighbors are understanding of the fact
24 that they may or may not be selected, but
25 if they are -- if we're pushing this for

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 our neighbors, we want to be able to have
3 a very transparent, efficient, and
4 effective process where people can be
5 able to see, touch, and feel what is
6 transpiring with the hard work that they
7 put in to the petition process as well.
8 They really want this. This is why City
9 Council has approved this money. So we
10 want to find a way to how are we going to
11 get to the end goal, because it's about
12 150 to 160 driveways that are left, and
13 right now we've only done a couple.
14 MR. THOMAS: Twelve, I think.
15 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: Twelve
16 driveways, right. So we need to do -- I
17 want us to figure out what is the plan
18 where we can say by 2026 with this type
19 of funding, we would be able to have this
20 done, or by 2025 we'll be able to have
21 this done, ideally by the end of 2025,
22 right? That would be nice. But it's at
23 least giving our neighbors a concrete
24 understanding instead of having to wait
25 when that funding -- if they're going to

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 get their driveway repaired or not.

3 So that's all. I think we get
4 calls all the time about that, so I want
5 all of us in the City of Philadelphia who
6 are working to feel that pressure as
7 well.

8 MR. THOMAS: Yes. I
9 understand.

10 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS: All
11 right.

12 Council President, thank you
13 for your time.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Thank you.

16 The Chair recognizes -- she's
17 not here. The Chair recognizes
18 Councilmember Nina Ahmad.

19 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
20 you, Council President.

21 I just want to clarify -- thank
22 you for being here. I want to clarify
23 the issue around the carryforward in the
24 Housing Trust Fund.

25 So in FY24, the City budgeted

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 about 102.9, but estimated to having
3 actually spent about half of that, and
4 what you said was because of the lack of
5 sheriff sales, there weren't enough
6 properties to acquire. So I don't know
7 if that is actually the reason. So the
8 question is, why is the money not being
9 spent and why is there a significant
10 increase in FY24 again?

11 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: So the money
12 for acquisitions wasn't spent because
13 there were no sheriff sales.

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Okay.

15 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: So we still
16 have access to that money to spend it
17 hopefully in the next fiscal year, but I
18 don't think that answers all of your
19 question.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Correct.

21 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: What's the
22 rest of it?

23 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: The rest
24 was, we see an increase -- even though
25 you haven't spent it down, you're asking

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2 for a little bit more money. So, again,
3 so is that because you're anticipating
4 being able to have a faster clip of
5 acquiring properties?

6 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I'm going to
7 ask if anybody can come up and correct
8 me, but I think we're asking for the
9 money just to maintain the lots. I don't
10 think we're asking for any more
11 acquisition money than we already had but
12 didn't spend.

13 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So you
14 have like a \$10 million difference
15 between '24 estimated and '25. So you're
16 getting a little bit more -- asking for a
17 little bit more money, and I was just
18 wondering since you haven't spent down
19 everything from before, what is the
20 reason for that? We have to count every
21 penny.

22 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yeah. So
23 I'm afraid that I don't think I
24 understand --

25 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So the

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2 question is that you have not spent the
3 money down, what you had, and you're
4 estimating your obligations to be half of
5 what you have left over. So you have a
6 lot of money left over is my point, and
7 I'm saying, the new budget that you're
8 proposing, does that have any increase
9 than what you had in 2024, which you
10 hadn't spent down anyways? Is there more
11 money you're asking in FY25?

12 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I don't
13 believe we are asking for more money.

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And the
15 answer to that is because of the Land
16 Bank issue of not having properties to
17 buy?

18 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: To acquire
19 through the sheriff sale process.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So
21 anecdotally I have gotten information
22 from folks who work and engage with the
23 Land Bank that there's a lot of delay in
24 the properties that are actually
25 available in terms of getting them

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2 processed. Can you address that? This
3 is anecdotal from multiple sources,
4 people who are in the process of
5 acquiring these properties and encounter
6 a lot of delays in getting these properly
7 processed.

8 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: And this is
9 specifically with respect to Land Bank
10 disposition?

11 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Correct.

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Councilwoman,
13 Angel Rodriguez, Executive Director of
14 the Land Bank.

15 Councilperson, could you
16 define? Are you talking about
17 dispositions for development?

18 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Yes.

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay.
20 Typically we award dispositions for
21 development, but we do not go to
22 settlement until the developer has their
23 entitlements.

24 Now, typically -- and I think
25 everybody here is aware of the length of

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2 time. Typically it will take six months
3 if a variance is required or if they're
4 subdividing a property, that will also
5 require something -- a certain amount of
6 time. Also the type of development, if a
7 developer is looking for slab-on-grade
8 development, that usually could happen
9 rather quickly, but if you're doing a
10 full basement, then you're looking at
11 sheeting and shoring and certain other
12 levels of requirements that are there.
13 So typically we won't go to settlement
14 until they have all of their
15 entitlements.

16 The reason for that is just
17 past history where typically the City
18 would transfer properties without
19 development agreements and things like
20 that. So this is a way to ensure that
21 they're ready to build and they can
22 actually build and produce the units in
23 the given amount of time, which is
24 typically 18 months.

25 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: All

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 right. Thank you. I just wanted to put
3 that on the record since I have been
4 asked.

5 I'm wondering also about the
6 community gardens, that you have funds
7 that you give towards community gardens.
8 Are these kinds of purchases that are
9 made budgeted for? Are they funded
10 through some midyear transfer and if the
11 community has input as to -- about these
12 parcels?

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I was
14 wondering, Councilperson, could you
15 clarify that? Are you saying acquiring
16 land at sheriff sale?

17 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So when
18 you purchase these properties that you're
19 going to give for community gardens, are
20 these budgeted for or are these sort of
21 you just come up on them and you have a
22 midyear transfer? And is the community
23 engaged in the process of which parcels
24 you're acquiring to give to them?

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: So to answer

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2 the last question first, our acquisition
3 list is, if you look at our acquisition
4 policy, is made up of requests, and
5 anybody can request a property to be
6 acquired as per the acquisition policy.
7 We then vet that and then we vet it with
8 the Council office, the Council district
9 office for acquisition.

10 The typical spend that we have,
11 so 3.5 million is usually typically what
12 we budget for the acquisition of 325
13 properties, but that has no impact on
14 disposition. As per the disposition
15 policy, we convey to non-profit groups
16 for gardens and open space nominally. So
17 it's a dollar sale. There is typically a
18 mortgage or a note tied to that, but it
19 doesn't really cost -- kind of two
20 separate issues. So acquisition for
21 municipal tax sales, we average anywhere
22 from \$8,000 to \$12,000 for a parcel, but
23 disposition really is almost all -- it's
24 nominal.

25 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: So I

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2 think really the question is, is there a
3 strategic overview of where these parcels
4 are and do you build that into your
5 budget that we're going to acquire so
6 many of these community gardens?

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Correct.

8 Usually we get a request from groups like
9 Neighborhood Gardens Trust or Council
10 offices or longstanding community groups
11 that have been occupying and utilizing
12 the open space.

13 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And how
14 does this feature into our Mayor's
15 greening piece of her proposal? Is that
16 a part of that or is that something
17 separate?

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I believe it's
19 a subset clearly, but for typically what
20 we acquire to go out, I think -- this is
21 a tiered approach. So you have the Land
22 Bank acquisition for community groups.
23 Obviously you have the Urban Ag Plan.
24 You have the Tree Plan. So there are a
25 lot of other issues, and Sustainability

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2 Office has their initiatives as well.

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: And my

4 final question about community gardens

5 is, whose responsibility is it --

6 sometimes you have a very engaged group

7 of people who do the upkeep. Is there a

8 transition plan or how is that space

9 maintained over time?

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: So while

11 properties are in the Land Bank's

12 inventory or one of the landholding

13 agencies, with the exception of

14 Department of Public Property, we are

15 responsible for the upkeep and

16 maintenance of the properties while it's

17 titled to one of the agencies. Once it

18 is sold, it is the requirement of the new

19 property owner to maintain the property.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: All

21 right. Thank you.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: No.

23 Thank you.

24 And I think also what Member

25 Ahmad is also referring to as well, when

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2 we focus on cleaning and greening the
3 City of Philadelphia and the
4 Administration's plan, that there's a
5 strategic vision with the Land Bank
6 around that whole concept of cleaning and
7 greening but, most importantly, the
8 gardens, right, the green space. Is that
9 incorporated into what the Administration
10 is trying to accomplish in terms of
11 cleaning and greening the City
12 strategically?

13 Is that correct, Member Ahmad?

14 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Yes.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

16 That's where she was getting it. Not a
17 subset but a strategic plan that I'm sure
18 everybody is around the table saying as a
19 part of her plan to clean and green,
20 here's how we're going to look at
21 maintaining green space as a part of that
22 plan. Is that a part of the plan?

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Well, yes.

24 It's all -- it's part of the mission of
25 the Land Bank.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Always been a part of the mission.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Always been a
5 part of the mission of the Land Bank to
6 balance uses between green space,
7 development, business expansion and the
8 like.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

10 You've done that with me in the past
11 before, so just stating that for the
12 record.

13 The Chair recognizes
14 Councilmember J. Young.

15 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
16 you, Mr. President.

17 I want to talk about NACs and
18 CDCs. So can you tell us in the Fiscal
19 Year '25 budget if there are any new core
20 operating support for CDCs or any housing
21 counseling agencies or any NACs?
22 Particularly I know I got a call from
23 some of our folks who work with the NACs
24 and stated that they told me they didn't
25 have any fringe benefits, right? There's

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2 no healthcare for the folks that are
3 servicing the most vulnerable populations
4 and providing the City service
5 essentially.

6 So could you talk to us about
7 any investments in our CDCs and our
8 housing counseling agencies and in our
9 NACs?

10 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Sure. Mark
11 Dodds is going to join me for that.

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Good
13 afternoon, Councilmember. Mark Dodds,
14 Interim Deputy Director, DHCD.

15 Just to start off with the
16 NACs, so we share that same concern. We
17 recently passed amendments to our
18 contracts with the NACs to support
19 benefits for those individuals working in
20 the NACs. So that was something we also
21 recognized.

22 As far as additional funding or
23 funding for FY25 for NACs and housing
24 counseling agencies, the majority, if not
25 all, of that funding comes from sources

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2 outside of the General Fund, and we are
3 still working through that budget
4 process.

5 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: So those
6 are federal grants you're speaking of
7 particularly?

8 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: And
9 local, Housing Trust Funds as well, yes.

10 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Okay.
11 The City is going through -- we have the
12 2035 plan, right, the Comprehensive Plan.
13 Does the City plan on addressing some of
14 the issues related to the Comprehensive
15 Plan? What progress has the City made in
16 updating the Comprehensive Plan and are
17 there any staff increases or staffing
18 impediments to updating the Comprehensive
19 Plan?

20 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: That's a
21 great question. I'm going to ask Martine
22 Decamp if she can come up and tell you
23 all about our plan.

24 (Witness approached witness
25 table.)

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2 DIRECTOR DECAMP: Hello.

3 Martine Decamp. I'm the Interim Director
4 of the Planning Commission. Hello. How
5 are you?

6 So the Comprehensive Plan is
7 something that we're excited about. The
8 Phila2035 Plan, I think it was the first
9 comprehensive plan that we had done in
10 40 years. So we accomplished a lot
11 during that time and we're continuing to
12 implement recommendations out of that
13 plan. So, I mean, that's partly one of
14 the reasons that we were able to devote
15 so many resources to Broad, Germantown,
16 and Erie, the Wissahickon Transfer
17 Center, a number of other projects that
18 helped us get everyone on the same page
19 and working towards some common goals.

20 So we did take a step back
21 after we did that, because we wanted to
22 make sure -- there were some questions
23 about did we reach enough people during
24 that process, did we include enough
25 voices in that process. So what we've

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2 been doing for the last couple of years
3 is that we developed a steering committee
4 that was made up of some of the folks
5 from the different mayoral commissions.
6 We also put out an application to general
7 citizens. So we received, I think, 800
8 applications. So we created a steering
9 committee made up of those residents that
10 would help guide us, figure out what's
11 the best way to reach more people and
12 more people from the disabled community,
13 more people from Black and brown
14 communities, more people from different
15 religious backgrounds and socioeconomic
16 backgrounds.

17 So we've been putting together
18 a plan. The most recent thing that we've
19 done is that we have -- we've paid our
20 steering committee and we have also
21 created a working group now of
22 individuals, mostly from our Citizens
23 Planning Institute that we've been
24 running for over a decade, and these
25 folks are helping us develop the tools

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2 that we'll need to actually do the
3 outreach.

4 We have -- we did recently hire
5 additional planners, I think, in FY23 and
6 FY24. So we have no additional planners
7 now, but we are looking for funding to
8 continue the work that we're doing, both
9 with the working group. We'll be meeting
10 to find money to actually do the
11 outreach, because as everybody knows,
12 that's a costly effort to actually be
13 reaching as many people as we want.

14 We'll be looking at translation
15 services, and we are looking to make sure
16 that we're addressing some of the social
17 needs and social issues that came up
18 during the last Comprehensive Plan
19 process. I think previously we mostly
20 focused on capital improvements and
21 physical improvements, but we want to
22 make sure that we're figuring out how do
23 we address some of the others as well.

24 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
25 you.

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2 I heard the bell,

3 Mr. President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 Thank you.

6 The Chair recognizes

7 Councilmember Rue Landau.

8 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Thank
9 you.

10 Thanks for being here. I just
11 want to make sure I was clear on
12 something I heard, that in order to fund
13 TFA, the tenant financial assistance, you
14 said that you believe we have enough
15 money under the current program -- I'm
16 sorry; we have enough resources currently
17 to fund it through FY25.

18 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yes. And if
19 I can, because there might be a shortfall
20 that we think we can plug, but if Mark
21 could come back up, because I don't know
22 that it takes exactly to the end of the
23 year, and Mark can give us a better idea.

24 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Okay.

25 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Hi.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 Good afternoon. Mark Dodds, Interim
3 Deputy Director, DHCD.

4 Yeah. So if we invest, and we
5 plan to through our Annual Action Plan
6 process in conjunction with you all, if
7 we do invest an extra 15 million in the
8 Housing Trust Fund for FY25, that will
9 get us to -- that will allow us, through
10 our projections, to sustain the programs
11 with its current level.

12 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Okay.
13 And do you think that will satisfy --
14 will cover the hundred percent of the
15 needs of the landlords and tenants now?
16 Knowing there's increased costs for
17 tenants and landlords in the City, will
18 that cover 100 percent of the costs?

19 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: I would
20 say that you're right, the need is great,
21 and it would allow us to continue the
22 program at its current level.

23 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: And then
24 just to follow up on this, I believe this
25 is not fully your purview, but I know

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2 there's going to be an expansion, a
3 proposed expansion, of PEPP and Right to
4 Counsel, right?

5 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yeah. We
6 add a couple zip codes. We're adding, I
7 think, four zip codes in the next fiscal.

8 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: And that
9 has funding associated with it as well?

10 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: It does.

11 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: So
12 that's going to increase the amount of
13 landlord-tenant relationships that could
14 use tenant assistance funding. These are
15 folks -- normally if there's a tenant,
16 didn't have a lawyer, got a judgment
17 entered against them, move on, try to
18 find another place to live. This is
19 going to be actually someone who is
20 represented in court and could use this
21 tenant assistance, this rental
22 assistance, in order to offset the rent
23 that they owe. So just want to keep in
24 mind that we on Council, I think there's
25 many of us who are very interested in

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 making sure that TFA, the rental
3 assistance, is funded at the level that
4 it needs to be funded in order to keep
5 tenants in their households.

6 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Understood.

7 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: I had a
8 couple -- well, Mark, while you're here,
9 I know that the most recent fair housing
10 policy is in draft form still, I believe,
11 from 2022, and this is the like
12 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
13 draft.

14 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS:
15 Correct.

16 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Is that
17 being updated soon?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Yeah.
19 We'd like to close out that process, and
20 we -- and that, I can explain, is due in
21 large part to the feedback we got. We
22 did convene a number of stakeholder
23 groups to comment on our draft version of
24 the plan. We got a lot of feedback. It
25 needs to make its way into the document,

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2 and we'll make that final.

3 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Okay.

4 Thank you. It's just always helpful.

5 It's a nice roadmap for where we are in
6 the City and where we need to go.

7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Agreed.

8 That was actually a voluntary effort that
9 took place.

10 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Doesn't
11 HUD mandate that we do it every certain
12 years? I know our last big one was 2016.

13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: There's
14 a proposed rule now that will alter the
15 way in which they require that
16 information.

17 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:

18 Interesting. Okay. Thank you.

19 Oh, I love the proposed one
20 front door system. My gosh, as the head
21 of the Information and Technology
22 Committee, it's music to my ears that you
23 have one place to go to have residents
24 apply to multiple home repair programs
25 simultaneously. We are all as fried as

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 you are. Thank you for staying through
3 the day.

4 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Thank you.

5 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Do you
6 have enough funding? What's the timeline
7 for that? Do you have enough funding for
8 that? How do we get that replicated
9 throughout the City in all the other
10 departments? That might not be your end.

11 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I don't know
12 if the can answer the last part fully,
13 but we have enough funding for it. We
14 expect it to go live in June.

15 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: That's
16 excellent.

17 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: So it's
18 being coded right now. So it's actively
19 under construction.

20 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:
21 Wonderful. Thank you so much.

22 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

24 Thank you.

25 The Chair recognizes

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2 Councilmember O'Rourke.

3 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
4 you, Council President.

5 With the support and leadership
6 of Council President Johnson actually
7 before I even got here, the City has
8 contributed \$60 million in rental
9 assistance over the past two years, which
10 combined with the Eviction Diversion
11 Program has made it possible for
12 thousands of landlords and renters to
13 avoid going to court over an eviction
14 filing. The program is a national model,
15 praised by the White House, by the
16 Governor for stabilizing neighborhoods
17 and keeping people in their homes. And I
18 know you just mentioned that the program
19 funding is being cut because the program
20 still has money sitting there, but why
21 are we not trying to expand the rental
22 assistance funding that's available?
23 Eviction diversion and rental assistance
24 are vital resources for Philadelphia
25 renters and it seems to us that we should

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2 be doing everything that we can to expand
3 these programs.

4 So can you just speak to that
5 on the record, why we wouldn't be
6 expanding this program?

7 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: I can say
8 that we are continuing in that at our
9 current level, which I think is excellent
10 and very beneficial to the Philadelphia
11 residents. To expand the program, we can
12 certainly try to -- it would require
13 staffing, it would require additional
14 time. Similar to when we launched the
15 program, it took a little bit of time to
16 get going.

17 I think we would probably want
18 to take a deeper dive and see what the
19 need is to see how much additional
20 resources, what the payback would be
21 before we did that, but I'm not objecting
22 to --

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The
24 payback is making sure you aren't
25 homeless.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Right, just
3 to make sure that it's -- but it's put to
4 good use, that it's available to serve
5 the public.

6 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: I just
7 want to clarify that the 15 million from
8 the Housing Trust Fund will still
9 contribute to the Targeted Financial
10 Assistance program for FY25, correct?

11 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Correct.

12 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: And in
13 your budget you also include a
14 \$10 million grant from the Housing Trust
15 Fund for housing development. Where is
16 this money coming from specifically and
17 what is it going to specifically? What's
18 it being used for, if you can detail that
19 for the record?

20 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: That's a
21 complicated question. I don't know if
22 you -- I mean, we have about a dozen
23 funding sources and we could maybe talk
24 through some of them.

25 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Could

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2 you?

3 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Was
4 there a specific line item you're
5 referring to in the Housing Trust Fund
6 budget?

7 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: It's
8 literally Housing Development, is how
9 it's itemized, Housing Development.

10 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: So the
11 question is what money, what funds of
12 money are spent on housing development?

13 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: I'm
14 asking where is the money coming from and
15 how are you using it? What's it going to
16 be used for, if you can specifically
17 speak to that?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: So the
19 money from the Housing Trust Fund comes
20 from two different sources. There's a
21 recording fee and a General Fund
22 sub-fund. 0.05 percent of the City's
23 General Fund goes into the Housing Trust
24 Fund, as well as recording fees from
25 various mortgages, deeds, instruments

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2 like that.

3 I can't speak specifically.

4 Maybe I could address your question
5 outside of the hearing, but I'm not sure
6 specifically what line item you're
7 referring to with the 10 million.

8 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: For
9 the sake of time, we'll do that. Let me
10 move on to the Land Bank.

11 Over the past two years,
12 Minority Leader Brooks worked extensively
13 on protecting community gardens and
14 public spaces with the U.S. Bank liens on
15 them. I want to acknowledge Dr. and
16 Councilmember Ahmad's interest in this as
17 well. As a result, the Administration
18 made a commitment that the Land Bank
19 would acquire 80-plus U.S. Bank
20 lien-encumbered properties, for which
21 this body appropriated funds in FY23.
22 However, I don't see any dedicated
23 funding in the Land Bank's acquisition
24 budget for the gardens. Can you
25 guarantee that this funding is budgeted

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2 for the Land Bank to acquire these
3 community gardens and public spaces?

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I can't say
5 that we have guaranteed that's
6 specifically for the gardens, because it
7 would be a timing issue. So as you're
8 aware, yes, the Revenue Department did
9 purchase back the liens from the U.S.
10 Bank, which secured the lien back with
11 the City. I think it depends on if the
12 City has the decrees in place and when
13 the sheriff sales start, would we be in a
14 position. And also we would need the
15 bill to pass for us to do that.

16 So if it came up in a timely
17 fashion in the next fiscal year, in
18 Fiscal Year '25, I don't see why we
19 wouldn't acquire them.

20 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Thank
21 you, sir.

22 Can you give us a specific
23 number that is dedicated to the Land Bank
24 acquisition in FY25?

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Currently we

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 have escrowed 3.5 million. So we have

3 3.5 million in the bank right now.

4 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: And

5 what portion of this number is dedicated

6 for community gardens and urban

7 agriculture?

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: That is simply

9 for acquisition because of the way

10 acquisitions work and decrees work.

11 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE: Okay.

12 Thank you, Council President.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

14 Thank you.

15 Councilmember Lozada.

16 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Thank

17 you, Council President.

18 Very quickly, because I know

19 that we are limited in time. Can you

20 tell me when was the last time that a

21 housing counseling contract was issued?

22 Can you share with me the list of housing

23 counselors in the Seventh Council

24 District? And can you tell me how is

25 oversight provided for each one of those

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 housing counseling providers?

3 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Yeah. We
4 could definitely provide the list to you.
5 I don't know if we can provide it now,
6 but we can certainly follow up with that
7 list, and Mark can hopefully answer the
8 oversight question.

9 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Hello.
10 Good afternoon. Mark Dodds, Interim
11 Deputy Director, DHCD.

12 I'm sorry. I didn't catch
13 everything. Sorry to make you repeat.
14 Could you --

15 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: So I
16 asked for the list of housing counselors
17 in the Seventh. When was the last time a
18 housing counseling contract was issued?
19 What is the oversight provided to housing
20 counseling providers?

21 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: Yes.
22 So the last time a contract was issued --
23 and sometimes it's confusing. Contracts
24 are amended annually. October 1st, 2024
25 was the last time it was either issued or

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 the contract was amended. I think we're
3 considering doing an RFP process, not for
4 FY25 but for FY26, for any new agencies
5 or to evaluate the way existing ones are
6 performing. And the way it's currently
7 arranged, the structure within the
8 organization, is housing counseling
9 agencies are divided up among the
10 contract analysts, and there are a number
11 of analysts that oversee a number of
12 different agencies. They have direct
13 touch points with those agencies, and
14 there's also what we call in-service days
15 where there will be a citywide meeting
16 with the different agencies to go over
17 issues that cross Council districts and
18 organizations.

19 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Can you
20 share with me for those housing
21 counselors in the Seventh Council
22 District how each one of them is meeting
23 their goals for whatever period of time
24 they've had the contract?

25 My reasoning for this is, you

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 know, we've had a lot of development in
3 the Seventh Council District. I can't
4 seem to understand why they are not
5 creating the pipeline for projects in the
6 Seventh, right? And those folks who do
7 go through our housing counseling
8 oftentimes don't tend to buy here, right?
9 So we're promoting Turn the Key. The
10 goal is to keep people who work here
11 living here, right?

12 I can't seem to understand why
13 housing counselors, especially in
14 districts like mine where there's a lot
15 of development, why are residents not the
16 folks who are in the pipeline to be able
17 to take advantage of those projects?
18 Most of the time or most often there are
19 folks that are coming from the outside
20 who are able to take advantage of these
21 types of programs. And so I want to know
22 how are my housing counselors -- what is
23 the work that they're doing, right? Who
24 are the people that they are preparing to
25 become homeowners? And what do we do

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 differently if they're not from the
3 neighborhood?

4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: I think
5 as far as stats and data are concerned,
6 we will definitely have to get back to
7 you. We can look at that for each
8 organization in your district.

9 I'll just note that our Philly
10 First Home program, which does involve
11 the housing counseling agencies, and we
12 can look at the Seventh District
13 specifically, but it does historically
14 benefit folks -- it ends up awarding
15 applicants that tend to move close to
16 their current residence, so that bodes
17 well.

18 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: All
19 right. I look forward to that
20 information. Thank you.

21 And then as it relates to -- I
22 guess we're going to hear at some point
23 from Register of Wills, but as it relates
24 to folks who have generationally lived in
25 homes who are in dire need of repair,

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 right, but they are the child of someone
3 who has been deceased, the deed was never
4 put in their name, there's no -- what are
5 we doing to kind of remove the barriers
6 for folks to be able to take advantage
7 and be able to stay in those homes if
8 they're not the actual deed holder but
9 that home has been in their family for
10 generations?

11 DEPUTY DIRECTOR DODDS: The
12 City has a history of providing support
13 for tangled title, and through working
14 with City Council and NPI funding, that's
15 increased over the last few years, and we
16 do have a robust network of partners that
17 we work with to try and decrease issues
18 related to tangled title.

19 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: If the
20 City has a history of removing those
21 barriers, I want to know where they are
22 and how I can get them, because in
23 districts like mine, I can't get them,
24 right? I have a lot of families who are
25 living in homes that are in dire need of

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 services and they can't seem to get the
3 necessary support to be able to restore
4 and repair their property because they're
5 not the property owner. Their names are
6 not on the deed. So if you have a list
7 of what that is or where they are, where
8 they can go, please share that with me as
9 well. Thank you.

10 Thank you, Council President.

11 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: And just to
12 clarify, I think Mark mentioned a
13 contract that was amended in October.
14 That would have been 2023, not 2024.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: Can
16 you say that again? I'm sorry.

17 DIRECTOR MONDLAK: Mark earlier
18 mentioned a housing counseling contract
19 that was amended in October of 2024,
20 although it was actually amended in
21 October of 2023 obviously, because 2024
22 did not happen yet.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

24 Okay. All right. Thank you.

25 We're going to do a callback

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.
2 because we still have a lot of questions
3 we want to do a deeper dive in. And so
4 we'll be in contact with the
5 Administration on when that callback is
6 going to be as we recess for today to
7 take care of additional business this
8 evening.

9 And so with that being said,
10 the Chair recognizes Councilmember
11 Katherine Gilmore Richardson for a
12 motion -- Register of Wills also, for the
13 record, will also be rescheduled to a
14 future date as well.

15 The Chair recognizes
16 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore
17 Richardson -- listen, our Leader was
18 throwing heat this morning -- all of
19 y'all was throwing heat. So, you know,
20 we're doing our due diligence to make
21 sure we're fiscally sound and doing the
22 people's business. So if it takes a
23 little longer, that means we're getting
24 it right as opposed to just giving over
25 things.

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 And so with that being said,
3 the Chair recognizes Councilmember
4 Katherine Gilmore Richardson for a motion
5 to adjourn.

6 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON: Yes.
7 Thank you so much again, Council
8 President, for your latitude today and to
9 all of our colleagues.

10 And with that, I move that City
11 Council's Committee on the Whole stand in
12 recess until Tuesday -- no; until Monday,
13 April 15th -- I know it's today. We have
14 a budget hearing this evening, correct?

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 That's just a town hall.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
18 Thank you so much for the clarification,
19 Council President, and, colleagues, my
20 apologies.

21 With that, I move that
22 Council's Committee on the Whole stands
23 in recess until Tuesday, April 16th at
24 10:00 a.m. Thank you.

25 (Duly seconded.)

1 4/15/24 - WHOLE - BILL 240179, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: All

3 those in favor signify by saying aye.

4 (Aye.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 Those opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON: The

9 ayes have it, and we will stand in recess

10 until tomorrow, April the 16th at 10:00

11 a.m.

12 - - -

13 (Committee of the Whole

14 adjourned at 4:34 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the

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proceedings, evidence and objections are

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contained fully and accurately in the

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stenographic notes taken by me upon the

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foregoing matter, and that this is a true and

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correct transcript of same.

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Michele L. Murphy

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MICHELE L. MURPHY

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RPR-Notary Public

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