



## CCRA Testimony for 2022 City of Philadelphia Budget.

CCRA generally supports the FY 2022 Operating and Capital budgets presented by Mayor Kenney to City Council. As we stated in our testimony as a member of the Controller's Community Advisory and Accountability Council, developed to guide the Controller's Investigation into City's Response to Civil Unrest "Philadelphia needs a well-trained, professional police force. Officers need to be trained in de-escalation techniques, be from the community they serve, respect the community they serve, and be supported with trained professionals on calls dealing with the homeless and mentally ill. We need to provide more housing for people in crisis. Finally, we need to fully fund education and other neighborhood support services, as they are necessary to tackle the multi-generational cycles of poverty that plague too many of our neighborhoods."

### **CCRA supports the increased funding to improved mental health services, transitional housing and police reforms, including but not limited to budget items addressing the**

- 911 Co-responder and mobile crisis units
- Violence Intervention and Community Response teams
- \$ Citizen Police Oversight Commission (on top of existing PAC funds)
- Non-congregate sheltering, capital improvements
- CCRA supports full funding of the Philadelphia Eviction Prevention Project. This program pays for itself and deserves to be fully funded as we continue to make our way through the pandemic.

### **CCRA supports increased funding for the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disability, including but not limited to budget items addressing the**

- Measures that more safely support people in crisis
- Expanded training for police officers to have the tools and skills to make positive decisions when put in difficult situations.

### **CCRA supports investments in education and the neighborhoods, including but not limited to budget items addressing the**

- Philadelphia School District
- Community College of Philadelphia and the Octavius Catto Scholarships
- Additional slots for PHLPreK, bringing the total to 4,000
- Increased funding for The Free Library of Philadelphia
- Increased funding for Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

A healthy city budget is nothing without a healthy Center City. Therefore, the City of Philadelphia must invest in services and programs that will encourage businesses, tourists and employees to return to the area. Quality of Life concerns in Center City, which we define as street crime (theft/assault), vandalism, aggressive panhandling, public urination and defecation, sidewalk obstructionism and noise, must be addressed if our retail stores, restaurants, theaters, music venues, and office buildings are to rebound. This will require more than roving co-responder teams of Police and Social Service representatives. Through the Center City Coalition, comprised of 25 businesses, high rise residential buildings and non-profit organizations, we formally requested a police mini-station be located on the 15<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor. That is still our request. This would permit the quick disbursement of teams of trained police officers and social service representatives to address these concerns in real time. These teams could serve as a transition during which Philadelphia develops a civilian enforcement detail (unarmed) whose exclusive responsibility is to address the aforementioned quality of life concerns, similar in concept to the traffic enforcement officers which have been previously proposed by Council President and strongly endorsed by voters in a referendum. Such a detail could address quality of life concerns without consuming police resources.

CCRA also encourages the City to invest in the City's digital infrastructure, which is essential to laying the foundation for a vibrant 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. Ideally, the City would use some of its federal dollars to create funds dedicated to making the promise of world-class technology a reality for all citizens, regardless of their zip code. This would include investments in broadband and 5G technology/infrastructure. Such investments also provide an excellent opportunity for the City to work with the large technology corporations based right here. CCRA is happy to assist the appropriate City offices in bringing corporate technology providers to the table to develop a feasible plan to make this happen. Our residents, including our students, need this to happen now.