

OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER
Christy Brady, City Controller
Budget Testimony FY2025

Good morning, Council President Johnson, Majority Leader Gilmore-Richardson, Majority Whip Thomas, Deputy Majority Whip Bass, Minority Leader Brooks, Minority Whip O'Rourke, and other esteemed Councilmembers.

I am City Controller Christy Brady, and we want to thank you for the opportunity to present the Fiscal Year 2025 budget of the Office of the City Controller.

Joining me today are my First Deputy, Bill Rubin, Audit Deputy, Charles Edacheril, and Administrative Services Director, Andrea Rose.

First, I would like to extend my gratitude to the staff at the Controller's Office, who work diligently each and every day. Thank you for all that you do.

Since taking office on November 30th, I have focused on restructuring the City Controller's Office and its divisions. One of my first actions was reviving our Community Affairs Division. Since I ran for office during a special election, I had the privilege of campaigning alongside the Mayor and all of you. The experience allowed me to form many positive relationships over the months we spent together, and as we traveled across the city attending various events, the critical role of the Community Affairs Division in my administration became abundantly clear. Through this division, I can connect with citizens, understand their priorities, and work to improve their lives.

An example of the impact of this work occurred when a member of our community affairs team delivered an elder fraud presentation at a community event. During the presentation, one attendee shared that she was a victim of check washing, resulting in a loss of almost \$10,000. Through our team's persistent outreach efforts, we were able to assist this woman in getting her money back.

I have attended community meetings across the city, including a town hall at New Beginnings Church with Police Commissioner Bethel, a meeting at the Boys and Girls Club in South Philadelphia with you, Council President; and I have also spent time at the Boys and Girls Club in North Philadelphia with Councilmembers Young and O'Rourke. Through these and other community engagements, we are currently working to establish financial literacy programs in each of the Boys and Girls Club sites as well as a financial literacy program for returning citizens.

We are actively engaged with Chairman Sabir, Commissioner Deeley, and Commissioner Bluestein to streamline and expedite the payment process for our hardworking poll workers and other essential personnel who are vital to providing a fair and transparent electoral process.

My team and I have worked on distributing food in Councilmember Gauthier and Councilmember Bass's districts. I am working with Councilmember Jones on the costs

associated with crime and incarceration. I am collaborating on matters such as the Kensington Initiative with Councilmembers Lozada and Harrity, addressing PGW issues with Councilmember Driscoll, L&I demolition issues with Councilmember Phillips, Youth and Education issues with Councilmember Thomas, and considering strategies to support the city's underserved and most vulnerable citizens with Councilmember O'Rourke.

These issues are separate from the annual audits and examinations conducted by my auditing division. This division is responsible for conducting comprehensive audits of city departments, financial statement audits of the city and school district, the single audits of the city and school district, and the city's Five-Year Plan. The audit division has also initiated a performance audit on the Department of Licenses & Inspections to assess the effectiveness of L&I's enforcement of building codes and safety standards, as well as to ascertain whether contractors and subcontractors are utilizing a properly documented workforce. Our pre-audit division continues to process vouchers and payments from various city departments.

Meanwhile, our investigative division is addressing concerns related to other quality of life issues, such as sidewalk cafes alongside Councilwoman Landau. With the World Cup and so many other exciting events being planned in the upcoming years, a vibrant outdoor dining experience will bring positive energy and give visitors a fun experience here in Philadelphia. We will review the rules and look for ways to streamline the process without sacrificing the necessary accessibility and safety for each site.

We are also reviewing the policies and procedures regarding imminently dangerous properties that put our citizens at risk from falling debris and damage to adjoining properties. We will identify paths for making our city safer.

And we are reviewing the recently passed skills gaming legislation for compliance. In collaboration with the city's Treasurer's Office, our Financial Policy Division was able to help distribute unclaimed monies to our retirees, one of whom was owed more than \$20,000. The Financial Policy Division also recently introduced a new monthly report titled "Municipal Money Matters", focusing on specific topics related to city finances.

I am proud of the progress we have made in revitalizing the Office of the City Controller and its vital functions. Through proactive community engagement, strategic partnerships, and diligent oversight, we are committed to serving the residents of our city with transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

As we move forward, I look forward to continued collaboration with all councilmembers and stakeholders to ensure the responsible fiscal management of our city's resources and the well-being of its citizens. Thank you once again for the opportunity to present our FY 25 budget.