

Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committees on Public Safety and Health & Human Services to convene public hearings to allow the Police Commissioner to share his vision behind the new City-wide campaign to disrupt open air drug markets known as "Operation Safe Streets" and to further explain its details.

WHEREAS, More than three decades after our nation declared a "war on drugs," Philadelphia's neighborhoods suffer the corrosive effects of the illegal drug market, including blight, violent crime and harassment arising from the open and notorious operations of between 300 to 500 open-air drug markets located on street corners, in vacant lots and parks throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Street and Police Commissioner Johnson have recently announced the launching of a new campaign to take back the corners, parks and vacant lots in our neighborhoods by disrupting the business operations of the narcotics dealers who currently transact their business in open-air drug markets; and

WHEREAS, It would be helpful in garnering public support and insuring the success of the campaign for the Commissioner to further explain the details of the strategy to City Council and residents of our neighborhoods at a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, A public hearing would allow Council the opportunity to obtain answers to the following questions in the context of the new plan, such as:

1. Given the emphasis on prevention, will other City social service, recreation and human services agencies be involved in the operation?
2. What role will drug treatment and rehabilitation programs play in the operation and will persons incarcerated for narcotics related offenses receive access to drug treatment and rehabilitation programs while in prison?
3. What are the strategies for addressing the inevitable shift of illegal drug sales from open-air markets to private residences and businesses and abandoned buildings?
4. How does Operation Safe Streets intersect with current and ongoing anti-narcotic trafficking operations?
5. What are the projected costs of Operation Safe Streets and will there be a need for supplemental appropriations to meet any unanticipated expenditure requirements?; and

WHEREAS, The Council is committed, along with the Mayor and the Police Commissioner, to the goal of ridding our neighborhoods of the scourge of open-air drug markets; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes Council's Committees on Public Safety and Health & Human Services to convene public hearings to allow the Police Commissioner to share his vision behind the new city-wide campaign to disrupt open air drug markets

known as “Operation Safe Streets” and to further explain its details.