



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on the Environment to hold hearings to determine the need for a conservation district to be enacted within Philadelphia County.

WHEREAS, Conservation districts in Pennsylvania operate under the Pennsylvania Conservation District Law, which established these districts to work collaboratively with state agencies, local governments, and other organizations to achieve their conservation goals. They are typically organized at the county level, with each district serving the specific needs and challenges of its area; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia County is the only county in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that does not possess a conservation district, a local governmental entity responsible for promoting and implementing soil and water conservation practices. These districts work to protect and manage natural resources, address environmental concerns, and support sustainable land use practices within their jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, There is a critical importance of addressing environmental and resource management challenges in our urban landscape, including the conservation of soil and water resources, the prevention of soil erosion, and the promotion of sustainable practices. Accelerated soil erosion, inadequate management of soil and water resources, and the need for improved urban agriculture practices are significant problems of public concern within Philadelphia County; and

WHEREAS, In the Philadelphia Urban Agriculture Plan: Growing from the Root, published by the Department of Parks and Recreation in 2023, there is a clear need and desire for a path forward in sustainable practices concerning urban agriculture among the community. Within this document and through efforts of public engagement, a multitude of stakeholders and community groups provided insight into their contributions and needs regarding sustainable practices within the City of Philadelphia. These include but are not limited to: Philadelphia Office of Sustainability, Fairmount Park Conservancy, Indigenous 215, Soil Generation, Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation, GreensGrow Farms, and many more; and

WHEREAS, Key stakeholders, including community organizations, state agriculture experts, sustainability advocates, have expressed a unified and strong interest in establishing a mechanism to enhance urban agriculture, sustainability efforts, and related economic activities through effective local policy and best management practices; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a conservation district will provide a structured and effective means to channel financial resources, implement best management practices, and develop policies that will support and enhance urban agriculture, sustainability, and related economic activities throughout the county; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby authorize the Committee on the Environment to hold hearings to determine the need for a conservation district to be enacted within Philadelphia County.