

May 6, 2104

Philadelphia City Council
City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3290

Dear Council member:

As President of the board of directors of the Tookany/Tacony Watershed Partnership (TTF), I am writing to urge you to vote to make the Mayor's Office of Sustainability (MOS) permanent by approving this legislation and placing it before the voters on the November ballot.

TTF was initiated in 2000 by the Philadelphia Water Department's Office of Watersheds to address water quality issues by organizing around watershed rather than municipal boundaries. Through collaboration among the Philadelphia Water Department, Cheltenham Township and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, a strong coalition of watershed stakeholders, including nonprofit organizations, corporations, local governments, and residents joined forces to improve the health of this urban creek and the surrounding land that "sheds" into it when it rains.

As a partner in the City's groundbreaking Green City, Clean Waters initiative, we support efforts to restore the health of our watershed and mobilize watershed stewards. We increase public understanding and stewardship, and improve watershed streams, parks, and communities, with a particular focus on Tacony Creek Park. Our strength is our ability to partner with other organizations to connect environmental programs to city residents.

The Mayor's Office of Sustainability's development and implementation of the Greenworks plan is critical to improving our watersheds. MOS has taken an important role in ensuring that Philadelphia's milestone green stormwater efforts are successful, through the plan's Equity goals: to manage stormwater to meet federal standards, to provide park and recreation resources within 10 minutes of 75% of residents, and to increase tree coverage toward 30% in all neighborhoods by 2025; and the plan's Economy goals: to increase the state of good repair in resilient infrastructure and to double the number of low- and high-skill green jobs.

I ask that you pass this legislation so that we can ensure that Philadelphia continues to lead nationally in sustainability, and reach the goals of the Greenworks plan. This plan will not only help to address our city's serious equity and economy challenges, but will also enable us to lead our region toward improved stormwater management and watershed health.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Gerry Kaufman

Gerry Kaufman
President, Board of Directors