

- How can the city reach different audiences to educate the public about the benefits of and programs that support preservation?

Next Steps

City Council, in its adoption of the expanded Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1984 and reaffirmed in the new Zoning Code adopted in 2011, declared that it is “a matter of public policy that the preservation and protection of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts of historic, architectural, cultural, archaeological, educational and aesthetic merit are public necessities and are in the interests of the health, prosperity and welfare of the people of Philadelphia.”

Today, many Philadelphians favor initiatives that support a broad definition of preservation. However, increasing development pressure and a lack of resources have meant that city staff and communities are often only able to react instead of making strategic, equitable decisions around preservation.

Mayor Kenney’s Historic Preservation Task Force is a means to meet that challenge.

The Task Force’s next step is to review best practices from around the country in regulations, incentives, surveys and outreach and education. Informed by those best practices and guided by its framing questions and vision statement, the Task Force will offer strategies and recommendations to help Philadelphia balance the goals of historic preservation with new development.

This document is the first of three products from the Task Force. It provides an overview of the Task Force and a summary of the current state of historic preservation in Philadelphia (including economic benefits, preservation planning, and advocacy). It is intended to assist the Task Force members and the public to have a common understanding of existing conditions. The Task Force will produce two more papers: the second will note specific issues the Task Force has prioritized tackling, based upon its research, public comments, and their knowledge. The second paper will also identify the best practices being considered by the subcommittees to address this challenge. The third and final paper will contain specific recommendations for Philadelphia to adopt and proposed strategies for implementing and resourcing those recommendations. While the City is leading the charge, the work and strategies proposed will require engagement and participation by communities, public sector, academic and private partners to succeed.