



**City of Philadelphia
Office of the City Controller**

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**City Controller Rynhart Announces Independent Review of City’s Response to
Civil Unrest Following George Floyd’s Murder**

Philadelphia, PA – City Controller Rebecca Rynhart announced that the Office of the City Controller is undertaking an independent review of the City of Philadelphia’s operational and resource deployment and tactics during the civil unrest following George Floyd’s murder. Her statement is as follows:

“A little over a week ago, George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, was murdered by a police officer in Minneapolis. The video and Mr. Floyd’s cries for mercy shocked the nation and me personally. But for many Black and Brown Americans it was a reminder of the reality they live with every day – injustice, oppression, fear. Protests calling for police and criminal justice reform and an end to systemic racism happened across the country, including right here in Philadelphia. Most of the protests have been peaceful displays of righteous anger and frustration. But, our city has also seen opportunists capitalize on these feelings, leading to looting and the destruction of neighborhoods and businesses, vigilantism, and violence.

Watching the events of the last several days unfold and the toll they are taking on our city is incredibly painful – the images of our shopping districts and commercial corridors, the backbones of our neighborhoods, being looted, of protesters being teargassed on the Vine Street Expressway, of armed white men marching in Fishtown are seared into our collective memory.

As City Controller, my office is tasked with ensuring taxpayer money is used in the most efficient and effective way to serve and protect all of Philadelphia. Over the last few days, questions have been raised about the City’s preparation for and response to the protests, and unrest that followed. For example, there was a heavy police presence at MSB and City Hall on Saturday while events escalated on Chestnut and Walnut Streets in Center City. Similarly, protests grew to looting and violence on the 52nd Street corridor in West Philly on Sunday, which remained understaffed – and the same can be said of incidents in neighborhoods across the City, at

Philadelphia Mills in the Northeast, Aramingo Avenue in Port Richmond, Bakers Centre on Fox Street in the Allegheny West neighborhood, Columbus Boulevard in South Philly, and Kensington and Broad and Olney in North Philadelphia, to name a few.

In this time when City resources are stretched thin, we must ensure dollars are being used in the best interest of the taxpayer, every day and especially in crisis situations. To this end, my office is opening an independent review of the City's response to analyze what went right and what went wrong around tactics and operational deployment of City resources led by an outside expert. The results of which will be made public. We will incorporate feedback from community leaders and activists, as well as city and state officials. Our goal is to analyze the City's response and answer the difficult questions, while including a broad cross section of Philadelphians throughout the process. We realize these are serious issues that do not lend themselves to easy answers, but it is my belief that this review can serve to guide City actions going forward."