



Old City is a worldwide tourist magnet, a destination for nearly twenty thousand daily workers, a hub of creative economy, a regional dining and entertainment scene, and an attractive residential choice. Tackling some persistent challenges, nurturing continued growth, and maintaining a high quality of life will require facts, vision, and mutual understanding and compromise.

The Old City District, in its role as a special services district and Registered Community Organization, is embarking on the development of a neighborhood master plan to set a framework for private development and a high-quality public realm. The master plan, currently titled Vision2026, will supplement the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's Philadelphia2035 plan and position Old City to achieve important accomplishments in time for Philadelphia's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Specifically, elements of the plan will include:

- Market assessment, retail inventory, and upstairs vacancy inventory
- A broad vision for highest and best uses in sub-districts and corridors within Old City
- A "civic checklist" for considering proposed developments as the RCO
- Recommended street life, public realm, and connectivity improvements
- Strategies & site-specific approaches for rehabilitation/infill of critical development sites

The District board has engaged Mark Keener AIA AICP and Jonas Maciunas AICP of The RBA Group, joined by Atkin Olshin Schade Architects and the economic development consultancy of Urban Partners, to prepare Vision2026. RBA is an interdisciplinary design firm of planners, landscape architects, and engineers with nearly fifty years of experience in countless Philadelphia neighborhoods and across the northeast. The firm has recently developed a complete streets redesign of Washington Street in Hoboken, a downtown masterplan for Westport, Connecticut, and is currently designing the Delaware River Trail here in Philadelphia. Together, RBA, Urban Partners, and Atkin Olshin Schade will work with the District and stakeholders to prepare visionary and implementable plan to move Old City forward.

The Vision2026 process kicks off in May. A public survey will be posted on the District website on the week of June 1<sup>st</sup>, and existing conditions and assessments will be presented during a public open house on the evening of June 23 at the Arch Street Friends Meeting House at 320 Arch Street, when there will be opportunity for residents, visitors, and workers to share their ideas, challenges, and aspirations. After continued stakeholder engagement, planning will conclude in the fall, and the implementation process will begin.

Check [www.oldcitydistrict.org/vision2026](http://www.oldcitydistrict.org/vision2026) for updates and materials as they are developed. Contact Job Itzkowitz, Executive Director, at 215.592.7929 for more information.