

Wilmington, Delaware
February 6, 2025

#0008

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Oliver**

**Co-
Sponsor(s):**

**Council
Member
Harlee
Willauer
McCoy
Johnson
Field
Cabrerera
Hackett**

WHEREAS, on July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the United States Congress formed the nonpartisan U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission to support the America250 initiative, which seeks to coordinate with partners around the country to facilitate an inclusive observance that “ignite[s] our imaginations, elevate[s] our diverse stories, inspire[s] service in our communities, and demonstrate[s] the lasting durability of the American project”; and

WHEREAS, as home to some of the earliest colonial settlements, the site of some of the post pivotal battles in the fight for independence, and having the proud distinction of being the first state to ratify the Constitution of the United State of America, the semiquincentennial milestone holds special significance for the Delaware Valley region, State of Delaware, and the City of Wilmington. Municipalities in Delaware, and across our region, will be marking the occasion with various initiatives that educate the public on our nation’s unique path to independence and reinforce each locality’s contributions to America’s story; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Heritage Commission has established Delaware 250 to support a “full and inclusive interpretation” of our country’s anniversary. The initiative’s intended purpose is to mobilize Delawareans to “tell the full and honest story of Delaware’s past which allows more people to see themselves reflected in our State’s history”; “frame 1776 as a beginning, not the end, of our American story, as we continually strive toward creating ‘a more perfect union’”; and “cultivate a deeper appreciation for Delaware’s history

among state residents and visitors, so that we may celebrate our history and inspire the next generation of caretakers of the rich and diverse histories of our State”; and

WHEREAS, the City now known as Wilmington has existed for over 350 years. Since the American Revolution, the City has played pivotal roles in shaping our national trajectory throughout the 250-year journey. Its strategic location alongside key bodies of water, its industrial development, and its resilient population have been integral to the eventual liberation of our country from colonial rule. The contributions of Wilmingtonians merit recognition and acknowledgement during this collective commemoration of our nation’s path to independence and its continual evolution; and

WHEREAS, the 2022–25 Wilmington City Council Strategic Plan prioritizes a “Connected, Informed, and Engaged Wilmington.” It is the desire of this Council to be at the forefront of showcasing the City’s unique place in the fabric of our nation and State; to give Wilmingtonians a platform to take part in a more inclusive narrative of the founding and continual evolution of our nation; and to act in coordination with national and statewide efforts to commemorate the semiquincentennial.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Legislative body encourages the Administration to develop an initiative to facilitate a Wilmington 250 commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the signing of the declaration of Independence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wilmington 250 initiative should involve collaboration with institutions and experts, including, but not limited to, the City’s Historic Preservation Planner and the Delaware Historical Society, to produce initiative that reflect the distinctiveness of our City’s story.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: In accordance with the 2022–25 Wilmington City Council Strategic Plan goal of a “Connected, Informed, and Engaged Wilmington,” this Resolution encourages the Administration to develop an initiative to facilitate a Wilmington 250 commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Wilmington 250 initiative should involve collaboration with institutions and experts, including, but not limited to, the City’s Historic Preservation Planner and the Delaware Historical Society, to produce initiatives that reflect the distinctiveness of our City’s story.