

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 500 Session of  
2003

INTRODUCED BY FREEMAN, ARGALL, TANGRETTI, HERMAN, CURRY, HARPER,  
STURLA, HENNESSEY, STEIL, GRUCELA, SAMUELSON, ALLEN, BEBKO-  
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SURRA, THOMAS, TRAVAGLIO, VITALI, WALKO, WANSACZ, WATSON,  
J. WILLIAMS, WRIGHT, YOUNGBLOOD, YUDICHAK AND PALLONE,  
FEBRUARY 26, 2003

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 26, 2003

AN ACT

1 Providing for a residential neighborhood enhancement program to  
2 be administered by the Department of Community and Economic  
3 Development; and making an appropriation.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Elm Street  
8 Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

1 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic  
2 Development of the Commonwealth.

3 "Elm Street Program." A comprehensive plan to develop and  
4 revitalize established residential neighborhoods either in the  
5 vicinity of a Main Street Program project or in close proximity  
6 to an existing commercial core.

7 "Established residential neighborhood." A defined geographic  
8 area which has historically consisted of buildings and  
9 structures for housing individuals and families in close  
10 proximity to a commercial core and which has existed as a  
11 residential neighborhood for 40 or more years.

12 "Main Street Program." The program administered by the  
13 Department of Community and Economic Development designed to  
14 help a community's downtown economic development effort through  
15 the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown  
16 revitalization and management of downtown revitalization by  
17 hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator.

18 "Municipality." Any city, borough, township, county or home  
19 rule municipality.

20 Section 3. Elm Street Program.

21 (a) Establishment.--There is established an Elm Street  
22 Program within the department.

23 (b) Program requirements.--The Elm Street Program shall, at  
24 a minimum, include the following components:

25 (1) Five-year maximum State financial assistance.

26 (2) Residential reinvestment grants for administrative  
27 costs associated with the hiring of a professional Elm Street  
28 Manager, who may serve as an assistant to the Main Street  
29 Manager when a Main Street Program exists within a  
30 municipality.

1           (3) Basic grants for infrastructure and structural  
2 improvements, including, but not limited to, streets, street  
3 lights, trees, housing facades and sidewalks or other  
4 pedestrian-oriented features.

5           (4) Plans for marketing and promoting downtown  
6 residential living within a designated Elm Street area.

7           (5) Plans to leverage additional private and public  
8 investment in the designated area.

9           (6) Plans to address any social or economic concerns  
10 within the designated area.

11           (7) Plans to, the greatest extent possible, achieve  
12 consistency with any existing commercial and residential  
13 revitalization efforts.

14           (8) An assessment of the potential need for the  
15 following components:

16               (i) The establishment of a neighborhood improvement  
17 district as defined in the act of December 20, 2000  
18 (P.L.949, No.130), known as the Neighborhood Improvement  
19 District Act.

20               (ii) A review of local comprehensive plans and  
21 zoning and other land use ordinances to foster the  
22 viability of established residential neighborhoods, with  
23 a balanced mix of commercial, civic, employment and  
24 residential uses, with particular attention to a  
25 diversity of housing options.

26               (iii) A review of educational and recreational  
27 opportunities and facilities.

28           (c) Eligibility.--Municipalities or their designated  
29 agencies must meet the following criteria to participate in the  
30 Elm Street Program:

1           (1) Have a clearly defined residential neighborhood in  
2           need of revitalization in proximity to a commercial district.

3           (2) Have demonstrated support by local residents,  
4           merchants and government officials.

5           (3) Have ability to provide up to a 50% match in  
6           financial and/or in-kind support for any department grants  
7           from other public or private sources based upon departmental  
8           guidelines. The department may waive or reduce any matching  
9           requirements if it is determined that such requirements would  
10          constitute a hardship upon the municipality or its designated  
11          agency.

12          (d) Limits.--The department shall establish limits on the  
13          amount of money available to each applicant so as to distribute  
14          the available funds as fairly as possible throughout this  
15          Commonwealth.

16          Section 4. Appropriation.

17          The sum of \$5,000,000, or as much thereof as may be  
18          necessary, is appropriated to the Department of Community and  
19          Economic Development to carry out the purposes of this act for  
20          the first fiscal year of its implementation.

21          Section 5. Effective date.

22          This act shall take effect immediately.