
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1201 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY CONTI, KUKOVICH, KITCHEN, LAVALLE, GERLACH,
M. WHITE, EARLL, O'PAKE, RHOADES, SCHWARTZ, MOWERY, DENT,
KASUNIC, WAUGH AND BOSCOLA, NOVEMBER 8, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NOVEMBER 8, 2001

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. Legislative findings and purpose.

10 (a) Findings.--The General Assembly finds as follows:

11 (1) The viability and desirability of established
12 residential neighborhoods in this Commonwealth's urban areas
13 have been in a state of decline for more than 50 years.

14 (2) Suburban sprawl has lured homeowners away from
15 established residential neighborhoods.

16 (3) Suburban sprawl has led to great losses of valuable
17 farmland and open space throughout this Commonwealth.

1 (4) Many established residential neighborhoods suffer
2 from deteriorating infrastructures and structural decline.

3 (5) Many established residential neighborhoods suffer
4 from the adverse effects of criminal activity.

5 (b) Purpose.--The purpose of this act is to establish a plan
6 within the department to enhance the desirability and viability
7 of established residential neighborhoods through a comprehensive
8 plan to:

9 (1) Address the issues of infrastructure and structural
10 decline in established residential neighborhoods.

11 (2) Address the adverse effects of criminal activity in
12 established residential neighborhoods.

13 (3) Improve the public image of established residential
14 neighborhoods.

15 (4) Enhance the economic and social aspects of living in
16 an established residential neighborhood.

17 (5) Compliment downtown commercial corridors.

18 Section 3. Definitions.

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

22 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic
23 Development of the Commonwealth.

24 "Elm Street Program." A comprehensive plan to develop and
25 revitalize established residential neighborhoods either in the
26 vicinity of a Main Street project or in close proximity to an
27 existing commercial core.

28 "Established residential neighborhood." A defined geographic
29 area which has historically consisted of buildings and
30 structures for housing individuals and families in close

1 proximity to a commercial core and which has existed as a
2 residential neighborhood for 40 or more years.

3 "Main Street Program." The program administered by the
4 Department of Community and Economic Development designed to
5 help a community's downtown economic development effort through
6 the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown
7 revitalization and management of downtown revitalization by
8 hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator.

9 "Municipality." Any city, borough, township, county or home
10 rule municipality.

11 Section 4. Elm Street Program.

12 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established an Elm
13 Street Program within the department.

14 (b) Program guidelines.--The Elm Street Program shall, at a
15 minimum, include the following components:

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

17 (2) Basic grants for administrative costs associated
18 with the hiring of a professional Elm Street Manager, who may
19 serve as an assistant to the Main Street Manager when a Main
20 Street Program exists within a municipality.

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

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

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

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

1 (7) Plans to, the greatest extent possible, achieve
2 consistency with any existing commercial and residential
3 revitalization efforts.

4 (8) An assessment of the potential need for the
5 following components:

6 (i) The establishment of a neighborhood improvement
7 district as defined in the act of December 20, 2000
8 (P.L.949, No.130), known as the Neighborhood Improvement
9 District Act.

10 (ii) A review of local comprehensive plans and
11 zoning and other land use ordinances to foster the
12 viability of established residential neighborhoods, with
13 a balanced mix of commercial, civic, employment and
14 residential uses, with particular attention to a
15 diversity of housing options.

16 (iii) A review of educational and recreational
17 opportunities and facilities.

18 (c) Eligibility.--Municipalities or their designated
19 agencies must meet the following criteria to participate in the
20 Elm Street Program:

21 (1) Have a clearly defined residential neighborhood in
22 need of revitalization in proximity to a downtown commercial
23 district.

24 (2) Have demonstrated support by local residents,
25 merchants and government officials.

26 (3) Have ability to provide up to a 50% match in
27 financial and/or in-kind support for any department grants
28 from other public or private sources based upon departmental
29 guidelines. The department may waive any matching
30 requirements if it is determined that such requirements would

1 constitute an unusual hardship upon the municipality or its
2 designated agency.

3 (d) Limits.--The department shall establish limits on the
4 amount of money available to each applicant so as to distribute
5 the available funds as fairly as possible throughout this
6 Commonwealth.

7 Section 5. Appropriation.

8 The sum of \$2,500,000, or as much thereof as may be
9 necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of Community
10 and Economic Development to carry out the purposes of this act
11 for the first fiscal year of its implementation.

12 Section 6. Effective date.

13 This act shall take effect immediately.