

Chapter 389

(Senate Bill 816)

AN ACT concerning

**West North Avenue Development Authority – Neighborhood Social Connection
and Development Program – Establishment
(WNADA Neighborhood Social Connection and Development Act)**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Neighborhood Social Connection and Development Program within the West North Avenue Development Authority to provide technical support and grants to certain organizations to implement programs that foster social connections and activities in a certain area; authorizing the West North Avenue Development Authority, in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Community Development, to use funds from the Continuing the CORE Partnership Fund to assist with the removal of certain blighted property within a certain area; and generally relating to the Neighborhood Social Connection and Development Program in the West North Avenue Development Authority.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Economic Development
Section 12–701
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY adding to
Article – Economic Development
Section 12–715
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Housing and Community Development
Section 4–511(a) and (b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Housing and Community Development
Section 4–511(c)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Economic Development

12-701.

- (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.
- (b) “Authority” means the West North Avenue Development Authority.
- (c) “Board” means the Board of Directors of the Authority.
- (d) “Buffer zone” means the area within 250 yards of the target area.
- (e) “Target area” means the portion of West North Avenue in Baltimore City between the 600 block and the 3200 block, inclusive.
- (f) “West North Avenue Corridor” includes the geographic area consisting of the target area and the buffer zone.

12-715.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “PROGRAM” MEANS THE NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL CONNECTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(B) THERE IS A NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL CONNECTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN THE AUTHORITY.

(C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO FOSTER SOCIAL CONNECTIONS TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE WEST NORTH AVENUE CORRIDOR BY:

(1) PROVIDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS, NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS, VOLUNTEER GROUPS, AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS; AND

(2) AWARDING GRANTS TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS THAT FOSTER SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND ACTIVITIES TAILORED TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT.

(D) (1) THE AUTHORITY SHALL AWARD GRANTS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM.

(2) THE AUTHORITY MAY ANNUALLY SET ASIDE EXISTING FUNDS OF NOT MORE THAN ~~\$500,000~~ \$150,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AWARDING GRANTS UNDER THE PROGRAM.

(3) THE AUTHORITY MAY AWARD A GRANT UNDER THIS SECTION ONLY FOR:

(I) SOCIAL GATHERINGS, INCLUDING BLOCK PARTIES, CULTURAL FESTIVALS, PARADES, SPEAKER SERIES, AND SERVICE OR RECREATIONAL EVENTS;

(II) OUTREACH INITIATIVES, INCLUDING NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTERS, COMMUNITY BULLETINS, OR DIGITAL CONTENT, TO RAISE AWARENESS OF SOCIAL EVENTS AND CONNECT RESIDENTS WITH AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND SERVICES;

(III) STIPENDS TO COMPENSATE VOLUNTEERS FOR THE TIME USED TO ORGANIZE PROJECTS, REFRESHMENTS AT PROGRAM DESIGNATED EVENTS, RENTAL AND EVENT SPACES, AND MATERIALS FOR PROGRAM EVENTS;

(IV) OPERATING SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS;

(V) SOCIAL CONNECTION PROJECTS TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN GREEN SPACES OR OTHER COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES;

(VI) RESOURCES FOR TRAINING AND HIRING COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS; AND

(VII) RESOURCES FOR GRANT APPLICATION EFFORTS.

(E) PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS SHALL COLLABORATE WITH RESIDENTS OF THE WEST NORTH AVENUE CORRIDOR IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVENTS AND PROJECTS TO ENSURE THAT ACTIVITIES REFLECT NEIGHBORHOOD PRIORITIES AND, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THAT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES ARE LED BY RESIDENTS.

(F) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2029, THE AUTHORITY SHALL COMPILE EVALUATIONS AND OUTCOMES OF PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP A TEMPLATE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING AND PROVIDE SCALING RECOMMENDATIONS TO SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATE AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

(G) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2027, AND EACH DECEMBER 1 THEREAFTER, THE AUTHORITY SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON ITS COMPREHENSIVE GRANT-AWARDING ACTIVITIES.

Article – Housing and Community Development

4-511.

(a) In this section, “Fund” means the Continuing the CORE Partnership Fund.

(b) There is a Continuing the CORE Partnership Fund.

(c) The purpose of the Fund is to assist the Department, in conjunction with the Maryland Stadium Authority, **THE WEST NORTH AVENUE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**, and Baltimore City, in expeditiously removing blighted property within Baltimore City.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026. It shall remain effective until the taking effect of the termination provision specified in Section 3 of Chapters 215 and 216 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2025. If that termination provision takes effect, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect. This Act may not be interpreted to have any effect on that termination provision.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2026.