

HOUSE BILL 1276

C8

6lr1762
CF SB 816

By: **Delegates Wolek, Amprey, and Wells**
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026
Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

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

5 FOR the purpose of establishing the Neighborhood Social Connection and Development
6 Program within the West North Avenue Development Authority to provide technical
7 support and grants to certain organizations to implement programs that foster social
8 connections and activities in a certain area; and generally relating to the
9 Neighborhood Social Connection and Development Program in the West North
10 Avenue Development Authority.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
12 Article – Economic Development
13 Section 12–701
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Economic Development
18 Section 12–715
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Economic Development**

24 12–701.

25 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (b) "Authority" means the West North Avenue Development Authority.

2 (c) "Board" means the Board of Directors of the Authority.

3 (d) "Buffer zone" means the area within 250 yards of the target area.

4 (e) "Target area" means the portion of West North Avenue in Baltimore City
5 between the 600 block and the 3200 block, inclusive.

6 (f) "West North Avenue Corridor" includes the geographic area consisting of the
7 target area and the buffer zone.

8 **12-715.**

9 (A) **IN THIS SECTION, "PROGRAM" MEANS THE NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL**
10 **CONNECTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11 **(IV) OPERATING SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPATING**
12 **ORGANIZATIONS;**

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

15 **(VI) RESOURCES FOR TRAINING AND HIRING COMMUNITY**
16 **ORGANIZERS; AND**

17 **(VII) RESOURCES FOR GRANT APPLICATION EFFORTS.**

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

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

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

31 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
32 October 1, 2026. It shall remain effective until the taking effect of the termination provision
33 specified in Section 3 of Chapters 215 and 216 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2025.
34 If that termination provision takes effect, this Act, with no further action required by the

1 General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect. This Act may not
2 be interpreted to have any effect on that termination provision.