



Pennsylvania
Department of Community
& Economic Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Contact: Penny Ickes, dcedpress@pa.gov

Shapiro Administration Announces \$36 Million Investment to Support Projects That Assist Low-Income Pennsylvanians and Help Improve Our Communities

The Neighborhood Assistance Program, which had its funding doubled to \$72 million in Governor Shapiro's bipartisan 2024-25 budget, will open a second round of applications on September 9, 2024.



Wilkes Barre, PA – Today, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) **Secretary Rick Siger** announced the approval of \$36 million through the [Neighborhood Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) to assist low-income individuals and improve distressed areas in Pennsylvania communities. The NAP, which provides tax credits to businesses that contribute to nonprofit organizations' efforts to revitalize communities, will support 185 projects across the Commonwealth.

NAP's funding was doubled in Governor Josh Shapiro's [bipartisan 2024-25 state budget](#) from \$36 million to \$72 million, allowing for the opening of a second round of applications from September 9, 2024, through October 25, 2024. Project awards for the second round of funding are expected to be announced later this year.

"The Shapiro Administration is committed to investing to strengthen Pennsylvania's communities. These projects, along with this year's doubling of the Neighborhood Assistance Program, will have a tremendous positive impact on individuals and neighborhoods across our Commonwealth," **said Secretary Rick Siger**. "When local communities are healthy and vibrant, Pennsylvania thrives."

Secretary Siger announced the new statewide NAP funding today during a visit to Wilkes-Barre, meeting with representatives of the Diamond City Partnership, who are receiving a \$190,000 NAP award to help develop downtown Wilkes-Barre. Last year, the city was also a [beneficiary of NAP](#), with an award helping towards the development of the first day-care center, Building Blocks Early Learning Center (BBELC) downtown.

"Today's announcement of the Neighborhood Assistance Program awards is a testament to our commitment to building stronger, more vibrant communities," **said State Senator Marty Flynn**. "These projects reflect the power of partnership and the incredible impact we can have when we work together toward a common goal. With the additional round of NAP funding, we are doubling down on our investment in the future of our neighborhoods, supporting innovative initiatives that will transform the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Area and communities across Pennsylvania."

"I would like to sincerely thank Governor Shapiro, DCED Secretary Rick Siger, and his team for providing over \$36 million for our Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) which provides tax incentives to nonprofits to help revitalize communities and create jobs," **said State Representative Eddie Day Pashinski**. "A perfect example of the success of the NAP program can be seen in the 2nd block of South Main Street in Wilkes-Barre, which is the home of the Building Blocks Early Learning Center, who are providing much needed early education and daycare services in our downtown. These investments improve the quality of life and aesthetics of our city."

"The Neighborhood Assistance Program is a powerful tool for neighborhood revitalization – one that has been critical to DCP's implementation of the revitalization plan for downtown Wilkes-Barre," **said Larry Newman, Executive Director, Diamond City Partnership**. "We're grateful to the Shapiro Administration and our legislators for understanding the value of the NAP program and doubling it the Commonwealth's 2024-25 budget – and we're excited to receive this NPP award and continue the work of building a strong, healthy downtown Wilkes-Barre."

The approved funding will support a variety of important community projects across Pennsylvania, including:

- 30 community investments in the [central](#) region. The Bench Mark program in Lancaster County, a gun violence prevention program, will provide cognitive behavioral therapy to 50 or more high-risk youth to prevent recidivism, increase school attendance, and increase resiliency.
- 20 community investments in the [Lehigh Valley](#) region. ArtsQuest, in Northampton County, plans to build a state-of-the-art Cultural Center on the current site of the Banana Factory Arts Center. The Cultural Center will expand education and outreach, serve underrepresented communities, unlock enhanced opportunities for economic growth, attract visual artists from across the country, and encourage tourism to provide economic support for small businesses.
- 27 community investments in the [northeast](#) region. NeighborWorks Pittston, through the Beautiful Blocks program, will empower and incentivize Pittston residents to improve both their homes and neighborhoods by providing matching funds for exterior home improvement projects.
- 26 community investments in the [northwest](#) region. Experience Children’s Museum in Erie County plans to host Community School Nights out for children and their families to enjoy the museum by providing free admission to families as well as a free meal and transportation.
- 37 community investments in the [southeast](#) region. Nueva Esperanza aims to address the lack of affordable housing in Eastern North Philadelphia by implementing the Stable Affordable Rental Trust (START) program for Hunting Park. The project will permanently protect two units of affordable rental housing for low-income residents.
- 45 community investments in the [southwest](#) region. Outdoor Odyssey in Somerset County, is nonprofit organization that teaches about leadership, team building, mentoring, and resiliency. The program pairs area youths with a mentor and provides them with a unique wilderness experience at their 500-acre Laurel Highland camp.

The NAP has five main components: The Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP), Special Program Priorities (SPP), the Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP), Charitable Food Program (CFP), and the [Enterprise Zone Program \(EZP\)](#). More information is available on the [NAP impact brochure](#).

For more information about the Neighborhood Assistance Program or the Department of Community and Economic Development, visit DCED’s [website](#), [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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Election Day Nov. 5, 2024



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