



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania, West Scranton Designated as Keystone Communities Elm Street

Scranton, PA – Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Deputy Secretary of Community Affairs and Development Rick Vilello joined Scranton Mayor Paige Cognetti and other state and local officials to announce that [NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania](#) (NeighborWorks) has received Pennsylvania’s newest [Keystone Communities Program Elm Street](#) designation. NeighborWorks is the administering agency responsible for implementing the revitalization effort in the City of Scranton’s West Scranton neighborhood.

“The NeighborWorks revitalization plan for West Scranton is bold and comprehensive, and aims to create opportunities for families that will improve their lives through quality housing and financial guidance” said Deputy Secretary Vilello. “This Keystone Communities Elm Street designation will give NeighborWorks the necessary tools to reach their important goals for this neighborhood.”

The Keystone Communities Elm Street designation became effective on December 1, 2021, and runs through December 31, 2026. As part of NeighborWorks’ five-year plan, one of their key strategies is to create five distinct districts that have a strong integration of commerce, housing, and community assets. These districts include: The Avenue; The Crossroads; Luzerne Corner; South Main Gateway and Medical Corridor; and the Clover-Industrial District. Another focus of the revitalization program is to enhance community anchors in the area, such as schools, parks and trails and community centers.

“We are excited to join the network of organizations working hard to improve Main Street and Elm Street communities across the state. Earning Elm Street designation is a significant milestone in our long-term neighborhood revitalization efforts in West Scranton,” said Todd Pousley, Neighborhood Revitalization Manager, NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania. “The funding opportunities and technical assistance that Elm Street designation affords us will go a long way in helping us implement our West Scranton Neighborhood Plan. We look forward to working with the DCED team, PA Downtown Center staff, and, most importantly, residents to make West Scranton the best possible place to live, work, and play.”

As a DCED-designated Elm Street, NeighborWorks will receive priority consideration under several programs including the Keystone Communities Program, will be eligible for complimentary technical assistance and programmatic support from the [Pennsylvania Downtown Center](#) (PDC) over the next five years and will receive priority status for various funding applications submitted to the DCED.

“As our newest Keystone Communities Elm Street program designation, the West Scranton Neighborhood will be well-positioned to enhance and expand their current level of services for the residents in the neighborhood,” said Julie Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Downtown Center. “The Elm Street model for neighborhood district revitalization is an ideal framework for community stakeholders to partner and coordinate efforts to work to improve the quality of life for the residents and better position the neighborhood for the future.”

Elm Streets are [one of four designations](#) within the Keystone Communities Program. An Elm Street designation takes a holistic approach to long-term neighborhood sustainability by operating in cooperation with existing downtown or commercial corridor revitalization programs, including the Pennsylvania Main Street program, to better connect healthy neighborhoods and strong business districts.

“Scranton’s future depends on continuing our legacy of hard work and developing strong partnerships,” said Mayor Paige Cagnetti. “DCED’s Elm Street designation and the energy that NeighborWorks is putting toward strengthening our community exemplifies how we are working together to improve our quality of life and build our economic future.”

“This Elm Street designation is recognition of the hard work of NeighborWorks, their partners, and the original steering committee,” said Sen. Marty Flynn. “I am proud to have been part of the planning process as a Representative and I am committed to supporting the implementation of this vision as Senator.”

“The valuable resources provided by this Elm Street designation will support the revitalization efforts underway in West Scranton,” said Rep. Thom Welby. “I commend the partners from NeighborWorks and their Steering Committee, the Department of Community & Economic Development, and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center for their work and remain committed to supporting these efforts moving forward.”

The [Keystone Communities](#) program is designed to encourage the creation of partnerships between public and private sector that jointly support local initiatives such as the growth and stability of neighborhoods and communities; social and economic diversity; and a strong and secure quality of life. The program allows communities to tailor assistance to meet the needs of specific revitalization efforts.

A Keystone Communities designation is a flexible tool for use in community and economic development for a variety of uses including planning activities, façade grant programs, accessible housing programs, and development grants, and designation applications are accepted at all times.

For more information, visit the DCED [website](#), and be sure to stay up-to-date with all of our agency news on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

MEDIA CONTACT: Penny Ickes, dcedpress@pa.gov

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