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POLICY BRIEF

How to Streamline Housing Permitting in Pennsylvania

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Introduction

State and local regulations governing the development application process in Pennsylvania have added time, cost, and uncertainty to the process of building new homes and have contributed to the commonwealth's housing shortage.[1] To identify ways to improve and streamline these processes, we spoke with land use experts from across the commonwealth, including attorneys, planners, government officials, developers, scholars, and others. Based on these interviews, we have identified five overarching areas for reform, within which are specific recommendations for state and local policymakers to consider.

These recommendations are intended as complements to other avenues for reform, including substantive zoning changes and amendments to technical codes, which remain important to the goal of increasing housing production and decreasing housing costs in Pennsylvania. Median listing prices have been increasing in the commonwealth in recent years, rising steadily from $184,900 in mid-2016 to $325,000 in mid-2025. These higher housing costs underline the urgent need for a broad range of reforms.[2] The existence of over 2,600 municipalities, many with their own zoning ordinances and distinct land use approval systems, makes the need for procedural reform particularly acute in Pennsylvania.

To put the recommendations in context, this brief first provides a summary of the current planning environment in Pennsylvania, then details reform proposals.

Pennsylvania's Land Use and Zoning Environment

Pennsylvania has a bifurcated state-level planning and zoning framework. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC),[3] enacted in 1968, serves as the zoning enabling act for all units of local government other than the consolidated city-county of Philadelphia and the city of Pittsburgh, which together contain about 14 percent of the commonwealth's total population. The MPC is predominantly a procedural document outlining the processes for subdivision, the manner

for preparation and adoption of zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans, the implementation of planned residential developments, the creation of zoning hearing boards (ZHBs), the handling of court appeals, and the applications for connection to wastewater systems.[4]

Within this overall framework, dozens of commonwealth cities, townships, and boroughs have adopted home rule charters pursuant to a 1972 commonwealth law. These charters now cover more than 80 Pennsylvania localities comprising approximately 1.6 million residents, with at least 11 local governments having adopted charters between 2016 and 2026. The charters grant enhanced authority in matters of self-governance, including land use and zoning matters.[5]

The land use system created by the MPC in conjunction with Pennsylvania's option for home rule charters has recently been criticized for allowing excessive fragmentation of planning and development regulations.[6] Interviews conducted for the preparation of this brief have identified five major areas for reform of the MPC and other laws to address and streamline procedural complexity.

Most of these recommendations pertain to the MPC and therefore will not be directly applicable to the cities of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, though similar amendments that would affect these cities can and should be made to Pennsylvania's Home Rule Act and zoning statutes.[7] Other recommendations, such as reforms to state transportation rules, will apply uniformly across Pennsylvania. To place these recommendations in context, the next section describes how residential development approvals typically proceed in Pennsylvania in practice.

How Land Use Approvals Work in Pennsylvania

Within the legal framework described above, residential development in Pennsylvania proceeds through a layered approval system that combines state-mandated procedures with highly localized discretionary practices. While the Pennsylvania MPC establishes a common procedural baseline, the actual experience of securing development approvals varies widely across the commonwealth because of local ordinance design, institutional capacity, and the sequencing of discretionary decisions.

In most municipalities governed by the MPC, a housing project must navigate three distinct stages: (1) zoning entitlement, (2) subdivision and land development approval, and (3) permitting and inspection. Each stage may involve different decision-makers, evidentiary standards, timelines, and appeal rights, often administered by separate boards or staff with limited coordination across steps.

Zoning entitlement determines whether a proposed use, density, or form is permitted on a given parcel of land. Projects that comply with zoning by right may proceed administratively, but many residential developments require discretionary approval through conditional uses, special

exceptions, variances, or rezonings. These approvals typically involve public hearings, formal findings, and quasi-judicial procedures before a governing body or ZHB. Although intended to address unusual circumstances, discretionary approvals have become routine for housing projects in many communities owing to restrictive dimensional standards, outdated zoning provisions, or misalignment between comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Following zoning entitlement, most projects must obtain subdivision and land development approval. The MPC authorizes a two-step preliminary and final approval process, even when zoning issues have already been resolved through a hearing-based decision. In practice, this process can require multiple plan submissions, extended consultant review, and additional public meetings, often revisiting issues addressed earlier in the entitlement process. Review is commonly conducted by municipal engineers or consultants selected by the municipality but paid by the applicant, creating iterative and open-ended review cycles.

Only after land development approval may a developer apply for building permits and related construction approvals. At this stage, projects are subject to review by municipal staff and, where applicable, state agencies such as the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation or the Department of Environmental Protection. Interviewees consistently reported that even after discretionary approvals are granted, projects may face substantial delays because of unclear standards, inconsistent interpretation across departments, or repeated review and resubmission requirements.

Appeals are available at multiple points in the approval process. Objectors may challenge zoning decisions before local boards and in the courts, while applicants may appeal denials or conditions imposed during review. The availability of appeals, combined with discretionary decision-making and broadly worded statutory standards, can introduce uncertainty that increases holding costs and discourages time-sensitive or smaller-scale housing projects.

Taken together, Pennsylvania's land use approval system is characterized not by a single bottleneck, but by the cumulative effect of layered discretion, duplicative review stages, and fragmented accountability across decision-makers. The recommendations that follow are intended to reduce unnecessary procedural friction while preserving legitimate public oversight and local participation.

Recommendations

Protracted approvals processes and unpredictable delays in obtaining development approvals are major factors in slowing the rate of housing production and increasing the cost of building homes in Pennsylvania. The following recommendations can be incorporated into the MPC as required procedures by the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Some can also be implemented by local governments right now, as they are not prohibited by the MPC. Whether a particular reform must

be enacted by the state, or can also be adopted by localities, is noted in the header of each recommendation. To reduce costs, delays, and uncertainty, we propose the following reforms:

- Permitting Process Reforms:
  - Streamlining discretionary zoning approvals through standards-based and quasi-judicial review
  - Using standards-based administrative review in place of routine hearings
  - Streamlining minor subdivisions and minor land developments
  - Eliminating redundant plan stages following hearing-based approvals
  - Reforming variances
  - Expanding specific plan fast-track authority
  - Authorizing Unified Development Ordinances
  - Requiring comprehensive plan–zoning alignment
- Process Quality and Accountability Reforms:
  - Reforming engineer selection
  - Standardizing and limiting review letter protocol
  - Allowing licensed professional self-certification (third-party review)
  - Requiring mandatory training and recertification for municipal land use decision-makers
  - Developing model ordinance standards, including modern dimensional and housing-type guidance
  - Providing financial support for implementation
- Transparency and Accessibility Reforms:
  - Establishing a housing case management system
  - Developing a public-facing permit tracking system
  - Creating presubmission road maps and clear public guidance
- State Transportation Process Reforms:
  - Codifying highway occupancy permit review timelines and cycle limits
  - Implementing highway occupancy improvements
- Appeals Process Reforms:
  - Clarifying standing for objector appeals

Permitting Process Reforms

Streamlining discretionary zoning approvals through standards-based and quasi-judicial review (state and/or local level)

In Pennsylvania, discretionary zoning approvals such as conditional uses, special exceptions, and variances have become routine pathways for residential development, often owing to outdated zoning, restrictive dimensional standards, or misalignment between comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances. While discretionary zoning approvals are intended for unusual or site-specific circumstances, their frequent use has introduced delay, uncertainty, and politicization into the housing approval process. The following reforms, which could be implemented at either the state or local level, would reduce reliance on routine discretionary review while preserving appropriate oversight:

- **Reduce reliance on conditional uses and special exceptions where approvals are routine.** Where a conditional use or special exception is consistently approved, it should no longer require discretionary permission. Uses and development forms that reliably meet community expectations can be made by right or governed by clear, objective ordinance standards, with common conditions written directly into local regulations. Shifting routine approvals to standards-based administrative review would improve predictability, reduce political pressure on local officials, and limit opportunities for procedural delay.
- **Consolidate discretionary approvals in quasi-judicial bodies applying defined criteria.** For discretionary approvals that remain necessary, municipalities should be expressly authorized to route conditional use and similar applications to ZHBs or hearing examiners rather than governing bodies. Concentrating these decisions in quasi-judicial bodies accustomed to evidentiary standards and formal findings would allow hearings to be scheduled more efficiently, improve consistency in decision-making, and insulate land use outcomes from shifting political dynamics.
- **Reduce variance dependence by authorizing limited, non-variance relief governed by objective criteria.** As an alternative or complementary approach, the Pennsylvania General Assembly could reduce reliance on variances by authorizing ZHBs to grant limited relief from dimensional, parking, or density requirements without requiring applicants to demonstrate unnecessary hardship. This authority would apply only to clearly defined categories of relief and would be governed by objective, ordinance-based criteria rather than subjective judgment. By allowing targeted adjustments where projects meet measurable standards—such as consistency with adopted plans, compliance with performance criteria, or minimal impacts on surrounding properties—Pennsylvania can bypass the most litigation-prone elements of variance law while preserving quasi-judicial oversight and appeal rights. Alternatively, the General Assembly can achieve a similar outcome by clarifying or broadening existing variance standards in MPC Section 910 to reduce disputes over minor or de minimis requests. (See “Reforming variances” section on p. 6 below.)

Using standards-based administrative review in place of routine hearings (state and/or local level)

Where a local ordinance clearly governs the relationship between adjacent uses and the externalities generated by a proposed use through what are commonly characterized as compatibility and performance regulations, approvals should be handled administratively rather than through public hearings. Doing so would reduce unnecessary discretion, negotiation, and delay. Permitted uses that demonstrate compliance with clear and objective criteria should not require a separate approval pathway. Although municipalities could make these changes under the current MPC, the General Assembly should also require that compatibility and performance standards be subject to a ministerial process.

Streamlining minor subdivisions and minor land developments (state level)

Subdivision procedures that require public hearings and other procedural hurdles are ill-suited to minor subdivisions such as those involving the re-subdivision of an existing urban lot into two or three new lots. Some states have enacted laws to streamline the process for lot splits and other small-scale projects.[8] For these types of developments, Pennsylvania should amend the MPC to do the following:

- Prohibit requiring preliminary approval for minor subdivisions and minor land developments.
- Authorize the Planning Commission or Planning Director to approve minor subdivisions and minor land developments, without needing governing body approval.

According to some interviewees, these changes could be implemented by way of a model ordinance and regulatory guidance without changes to state statutes.

Eliminating redundant plan stages following hearing-based approvals (state level)

Where a project has already undergone conditional-use or special-exception review requiring a detailed plan, Pennsylvania should incentivize or require municipalities to allow a single-step land development approval rather than separate preliminary and final stages, as is common practice among Pennsylvania localities. This single-step approval avoids duplicative submissions, aligns conditions at the earliest decision point, and respects the limited capacity of local volunteer boards.

Reforming variances (state level)

As an alternative to increasing the authority of the ZHB by creating new powers, the existing procedures for variances in Section 910 of the MPC can be modified to expand the criteria by which a variance can be granted, allowing ZHBs clearer but broader criteria for varying existing zoning constraints. Currently, the MPC requires that variances "will not alter the essential character" of the neighborhood, a vague standard that serves as an invitation for abutter litigation. It further

requires that the variance "will represent the minimum variance that will afford relief and will represent the least modification possible of the regulation in issue," a standard that lacks clarity or objectivity. These standards are further complicated by a "de minimis" exception that courts are at pains to articulate, and which has resulted in protracted litigation over seemingly inconsequential changes.[9] Reform must come from the General Assembly.

Expanding specific plan fast-track authority (state level)

Pennsylvania's existing MPC "specific plan" tool allows multimunicipal planning areas to preplan development areas that can then be approved more quickly when proposals align with the adopted plan. This authority is currently underutilized and excludes residential development. Expanding eligibility to include single-municipality plans and explicitly authorizing housing—especially affordable and infill projects—would create a predictable, front-end planning pathway that unlocks ministerial fast-track approvals when projects match the adopted specific plan.

Authorizing Unified Development Ordinances

Pennsylvania's MPC currently presumes that zoning, subdivision and land development, and related procedural controls are adopted and administered as separate ordinances. In practice, this fragmentation often produces inconsistent standards, duplicative review requirements, and procedural gaps that drive municipalities toward variances and discretionary approvals even for routine projects.

Explicitly authorizing the use of Unified Development Ordinances (UDOs)—which consolidate zoning, subdivision, and procedural standards into a single, integrated regulatory framework—could help municipalities modernize their codes while preserving local control over substantive land use decisions. By aligning permitted uses, dimensional standards, and review procedures in one ordinance, UDOs can improve clarity for applicants and administrators, reduce administrative burden, and support more predictable, standards-based permitting, without mandating uniformity or altering local land use outcomes.

Requiring comprehensive plan–zoning alignment (state level)

In Pennsylvania, comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances frequently become misaligned because, unlike in some other states, municipalities are not required to update zoning to reflect adopted planning goals. This leads to outdated zoning that does not support the development patterns identified through planning work, forcing many projects into rezonings and discretionary processes.

Requiring municipalities to review zoning for consistency following comprehensive plan adoption or update, and to publicly document findings, would help ensure that local plans serve as real implementation tools rather than advisory documents with no regulatory effect. An alternative

approach, recently enacted by Arkansas, is to allow a streamlined procedure for rezoning requests that are consistent with the comprehensive plan.[10]

Process Quality and Accountability Reforms

Reforming engineer selection (state and/or local)

Currently, Pennsylvania's municipalities select the engineer who reviews development applications, but applicants are responsible for paying that engineer's hourly costs, thereby creating weak incentives for efficiency and expanding review scope. Allowing applicants to select from a list of multiple prequalified engineering firms would introduce basic market choice, reduce unnecessary review cycles, and enhance accountability for timely progress.

Standardizing and limiting review letter protocol (state and/or local levels)

During the development approval process, municipalities typically issue one or more municipal review letters—written communications prepared by staff, consultants, or reviewing professionals that identify perceived deficiencies, required revisions, or conditions needed for an application to comply with adopted ordinances and technical standards. In practice, these review letters can expand far beyond core technical compliance items, sometimes growing from a few pages to dozens and reopening previously resolved issues. Establishing a uniform, checklist-based format anchored exclusively to adopted standards would prevent scope creep, improve clarity, and reduce repetitive or discretionary comment cycles.

Allowing licensed professional self-certification (third-party review) (state level)

For qualifying projects that meet clearly defined ordinance standards, the MPC should authorize an optional self-certification pathway allowing applicants and their licensed professionals of record—such as engineers, architects, and surveyors—to certify that submissions comply with all applicable zoning, subdivision, and land development requirements. Under this approach, the certifying professionals would assume primary responsibility and liability for compliance, with municipalities retaining the authority to conduct a limited, cursory review or to audit a subset of applications for quality control and enforcement purposes. Eligibility should be restricted to projects that do not require discretionary approvals, variances, or rezonings, and that rely on objective, measurable standards rather than subjective judgment.

Similar systems used in other jurisdictions have significantly reduced approval timelines by shifting routine compliance verification away from open-ended municipal review processes, while preserving public health and safety through professional licensure, liability exposure, and post-approval enforcement. In Pennsylvania, such a framework would address persistent bottlenecks created by engineer-driven review cycles, reduce duplicative and iterative comment letters, and provide a predictable alternative to multiyear municipal review for routine projects, particularly small-scale, infill, and affordable housing developments.

Requiring mandatory training and recertification for municipal land use decision-makers (state level)

In many Pennsylvania municipalities, discretionary decisions are made by long-tenured volunteer boards that often operate with limited formal training in land use law, fair housing requirements, development finance, or contemporary planning practice. This can lead to inconsistent interpretations, subjective or shifting standards, and de facto policymaking through individual preference rather than ordinance. Standardized training and periodic recertification for land-use board members—modeled after existing boot camps for newly elected officials—would increase legal defensibility, reduce procedural inconsistency, and promote evidence-based decision-making across municipalities while preserving local participation.

Developing model ordinance standards, including modern dimensional and housing-type guidance (state level)

Pennsylvania's highly fragmented and often outdated local ordinances contribute to inconsistent procedures, unnecessary variances, and unpredictable review pathways. Developing state-supported model ordinance language—focused on modern dimensional standards, permitted use tables, ministerial review procedures, and contemporary housing formats such as high-quality manufactured homes—would provide municipalities with ready-to-use templates that reflect current development practices and reduce routine variance and exclusionary zoning outcomes. Incentivized adoption, rather than mandated uniformity, would align with Pennsylvania's local-control culture while improving clarity, consistency, and administrative efficiency statewide.

Providing financial support for implementation (state level)

Mandatory statewide procedural reforms should remain the preferred and most effective mechanism for reducing delay, uncertainty, and cost in Pennsylvania's housing approval process. Uniform requirements embedded in the MPC provide clarity, consistency, and predictability that voluntary measures cannot fully achieve. Interviews with practitioners and state policymakers, however, indicate that resource limitations at the local level may impede effective implementation of state reforms. Because municipalities routinely depend on state grants for infrastructure, public safety facilities, transportation improvements, parks, and economic development projects, the commonwealth can likewise expand grant eligibility to cover procedural reforms, including digitization of land use forms and documents. Tying grant eligibility to the implementation would create strong motivation for compliance and avoid the need for more coercive measures for localities that are unwilling or unable to comply with new requirements.

Transparency and Accessibility Reforms

Establishing a housing case management system (state level)

Some Pennsylvania jurisdictions may already offer informal project-management support for particular developments, especially in larger cities. But interviewees described a persistent lack of

consistent end-to-end coordination across the full affordable housing delivery pipeline—from local entitlements and permitting through state funding, compliance, and the "placed-in-service" signoff issued by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) to recognize project completion. One multistate affordable housing developer pointed to the City of Atlanta as a model, noting that Atlanta assigns dedicated staff whose job is "to usher through affordable developments," providing a single point of contact who helps coordinate across reviewers, keeps applications moving through handoffs, and reduces delays caused by fragmented agency workflows and capacity constraints.

Pennsylvania should establish a comparable, formal case-management function for qualifying affordable housing projects, assigning a single coordinator to manage sequencing, interagency communication, and issue resolution from application through placed-in-service. This concierge role should be housed within PHFA—or within a statewide performance office with authority to coordinate across agencies—to ensure continuity across permitting, funding, and compliance steps and to reduce delays driven by fragmented workflows and staffing bottlenecks.

Developing a public-facing permit tracking system (state level)

Require the PHFA and state-funded municipalities to use a standardized digital tracking platform that displays application status, key milestones, responsible parties, and expected decision timelines. Such a system reduces uncertainty, promotes transparency, prevents informational bottlenecks, and enables developers to align financing and construction schedules without relying on informal updates.

Creating presubmission road maps and clear public guidance (state and/or local level)

Applicants in many municipalities must rely on informal staff conversations to learn the required steps, submittal materials, and sequencing for land development. This unofficial process leads to incomplete applications, repeated cycles of review, preventable delays, and higher predevelopment costs, especially for small or nonprofit builders. Creating standardized, publicly available, step-by-step permitting road maps and submittal checklists—ideally using a common statewide template—would improve predictability, reduce back-and-forth review, and lower barriers for community-scale developers.

State Transportation Process Reforms

Codifying highway occupancy permit review timelines and cycle limits (state level)

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT) Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) review currently has no legally binding timeframes, allowing iterative review cycles that often span 18 months or more. Following the ClearPath pilot, an initiative intended to streamline the

HOP process,[11] statutory limits on both the number of review cycles and the duration of each cycle derived from the pilot's findings should be enacted to preserve reforms across inevitable administrative turnover.

Implementing highway occupancy improvements (state level)

Housing developments accessing state roads trigger PennDOT review through a Traffic Impact Study and HOP, a process that is often lengthy, costly, and unpredictable, and therefore discourages projects along state routes. Projects are instead incentivized to open onto local roads, which can stir neighborhood opposition. A more systematic and equitable approach would replace individualized impact studies with a standardized impact fee structure based on expected trip generation, retain PennDOT review only for direct access and safety, and direct collected fees to counties for regionally prioritized improvements. This approach would shorten timelines, improve predictability, and align improvements with county-level planning rather than project-by-project negotiations.

Appeals Process Reforms

Clarifying standing for objector appeals (state level)

In Pennsylvania, a party to a legal action involving a development application, rezoning, or other land use decision is "aggrieved"—that is, has standing to sue—when the party has an "adverse, direct, immediate and substantial interest" in a decision, as opposed to a "remote and speculative interest."[12] To obtain a dismissal for lack of standing, the opposing party must raise the issue of standing before the ZHB, or will be deemed to have waived the issue on appeal to the trial courts.[13]

Interviewees stated that objector lawsuits are not particularly common because of their expense, but the existing definition for statutory aggrievement contained in Section 913.3 of the MPC should be narrowed in a manner similar to other states' codes, including those of Wisconsin and Kentucky, that have recently clarified theirs to further limit the opportunity and incentive for appeals on trivial or frivolous grounds.[14]

Conclusion

Pennsylvania's exceptional degree of local government fragmentation creates unusual challenges for any effort to streamline residential permitting. But with housing production lagging and home prices having risen dramatically in recent years, the stakes are simply too high for state officials to continue to pin their hopes on local governments overhauling processes on their own. Reforms to the MPC and other laws and regulations must originate with the General Assembly and the Governor's Office for maximal effectiveness. If implemented, however, these recommended policy changes should promote both housing abundance and housing affordability in Pennsylvania.

About the Authors

Charles Gardner is a research fellow at the Mercatus Center, and his research focuses on planning law and housing affordability. He has testified before several state legislatures and frequently advises local government officials on zoning matters. He has also served as a local elected official and as an active participant in state policymaking on the Connecticut Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights and on the Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future. He received his JD degree from Vanderbilt University Law School.

Luke Zubrod is Chief of Staff at Square Roots Collective (SRC), a social impact venture igniting systemic change in Southern Chester County. SRC builds local businesses as a force for good and supports non-profit initiatives so everyone can thrive in its region. Through SRC's involvement in residential real estate, and his service on the Kennett Borough Planning Commission, Luke has a close, firsthand view of the systemic and procedural issues that frustrate housing development.

Notes

1. See Harrison Cann, "Breaking Regulations: Changing Zoning, Codes, and Bureaucracy Could [Be] Key Housing Solutions," *City & State Pennsylvania*, July 28, 2025 (stating that "obstacles to increasing the number of units available, including restrictive zoning, prolonged permitting processes—combined with a lack of new construction—have put the commonwealth in a precarious position"); Ida McMurray, "Challenges of PA's Local Government Structure for Zoning and Development," Capstone Commercial, accessed February 4, 2026, https://capstonecre.com/blog/challenges-of-pas-local-government-structure-for-zoning-and-development/ (noting that "one of the most immediate ways to address zoning and development challenges is by streamlining the permitting process").
2. Data obtained from Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED), "Housing Inventory: Median Listing Price in Pennsylvania (MEDLISPRIPA)," last accessed January 30, 2026, https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEDLISPRIPA.
3. Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247 of 1968, Pub. L. No. 805, as reenacted and amended, 53 P.S. §§ 10101 et seq.
4. Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The primary policy concern embodied in the MPC is the protection and preservation of farmland in the face of pressure from development and from resource exploitation activities. While this is an understandable policy concern given the commonwealth's rich agricultural history and the importance of farming to state and local economies, it seemingly overshadows the MPC's goal "to accommodate *reasonable* overall community growth, including population and employment growth" (emphasis added).
5. See Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law of 1972, 53 Pa.C.S. §§ 2901 et seq.
6. See McMurray at note 1, supra. "While home rule provides flexibility, it further fragments zoning regulations and makes it more difficult to align policies across municipalities. . . . This decentralized control often leads to further complications for developers, who must navigate a complex and inconsistent regulatory landscape. Without standardized practices or regional coordination, the development process becomes more difficult and unpredictable."
7. See 53 Pa. Stat. Ann. §§ 14751 (1915) et seq.
8. See, e.g., California's S.B. 9 (2022) and Washington's H.B. 1096 (2025).
9. See, e.g., *Twp. v. Zoning Hearing Bd. of Pequea Twp.*, 180 A.3d 500 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2018), in which an entire bench trial was held and appeal with published opinion was taken over a ZHB's decision to allow a homeowner a variance of eight feet in height to accommodate an accessory dwelling unit over a garage, in spite of the fact that there appeared to be no genuinely aggrieved party.

10. See Arkansas S.B. 505 (2025).

11. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, *PennDOT HOP ClearPath Pilot Program* (2025), https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/penndot/documents/programs-and-doing-business/permits/highwayoccupancypermits/clear-path-pilot-program/2025-09-26-hop-clearpath-brochure.pdf

12. *Rooftop Equip., Inc. v. Wilmington Twp. Zoning Hearing Bd.*, No. 1794 C.D. 2016 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2017); see also *William Penn Parking Garage, Inc. v. City of Pittsburgh*, 464 Pa. 168, 346 A.2d 269 (1975).

13. *Thompson v. Zoning Hearing Bd. of Horsham Twp.*, 963 A.2d 622, 624 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2009).

14. See Kentucky H.B. 321 (2025); Wisconsin A.B. 16 (2023); see also Alabama H.B. 281 (2025); Florida S.B. 1730 (2025); Louisiana H.B. 446 (2025), Montana H.B. 427 (2025) and S.B. 214 (2025); New Hampshire H.B. 399 (2025); Oregon S.B. 817 (2025); Texas H.B. 24 (2025) and S.B. 15 (2025); Maine L.D. 1829 (2025); California A.B. 130 (2025).