

Economic Development and Job Creation Programs in Minnesota

October 2024

This publication provides a brief overview, in table format, of the state's programs designed to promote economic development and job creation.

Minnesota has a variety of programs designed to promote economic development and job creation throughout the state. The programs provide: information, advice, and technical assistance; state-sponsored marketing and promotion; direct business subsidies in the form of grants and loans; and public funding of infrastructure development and redevelopment. Other state supports for economic development and job creation include programs designed to educate and train its current and future workforce, such as higher education and workforce development programs, and the unemployment insurance program.

The table in this publication summarizes economic development and job-creation initiatives that exist in statute. The table is organized into sections based on program type: Business Development (page 2), Business Finance (page 3), Community Finance (page 7), and Other (page 11). The table does not include programs and services whose primary focus is education, workforce training, or unemployment insurance or programs that exist only in session law or which were created by agency initiatives. Education, workforce training, and unemployment insurance programs are discussed in other publications found on the House Research Department website.

The following are common abbreviations and acronyms used in the table:

- DEED – Department of Employment and Economic Development
- DOR – Department of Revenue
- MDA – Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- MHFA – Minnesota Housing Finance Agency
- MnCIFA – Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority
- MNDOT – Minnesota Department of Transportation
- PCA – Pollution Control Agency
- PFA – Public Facilities Authority
- U of M – University of Minnesota

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
Business Development			
Business Assistance	Facilitation of small business startup, licensing, resource coordination, and partnering; Bureau of Small Business; Bureau of Business Licenses; Small Business Development Center Services; and Small Business Assistance Office.	§§ 116J.66 – 116J.86 and federal law	DEED
Business Development Office	Business assistance and coordination of resources for business expansion, including: business development specialists; Positively Minnesota marketing initiative; manufacturers’ advocate; targeted assistance; provision of information and analysis on business financing, site selection, and real estate.	Chapter 116J (§§ 116J.011 , 116J.035 , 116J.401)	DEED
Economic Response Team	Fast-action response team focused on businesses that are prospects for locating within the state or at risk for expanding or relocating outside of the state.	§ 116J.872	DEED
Explore Minnesota Tourism and Explore Minnesota for Business	Promotion of travel, tourism, and economic opportunity in Minnesota.	Chapter 116U	DEED
Invest Minnesota	State marketing initiative focused on branding the state’s economic development activities and promoting business opportunities in the state.	§ 116J.9781	DEED
Microenterprise Entrepreneurial Assistance	Grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to individuals to support the startup and expansion of micro-businesses and self-employment.	§ 116J.8745	DEED
Minnesota Discovery, Research, and Innovation Economy Funding	Investments in scientific research to: position the state as an industry leader in the engineering, science, technology, and food-related sectors; support the creation, growth, and competitiveness of Minnesota-based companies in these targeted industry clusters. Also known as MnDRIVE.	§ 137.66	U of M
Minnesota Green Enterprise Assistance	Multiagency project to advise, promote, market, and coordinate state agency collaboration on green enterprise and green economy projects. Expedite grants, licenses, permits, and other state approvals for projects.	§ 116J.438	DEED and Dept. of Commerce

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
Minnesota STEP (State Trade and Export Promotion) Grants	Financial and technical assistance focused on small businesses with interest in exporting products or services to foreign markets.	§ 116J.979	DEED
Small Business Assistance Partnership Program	Free or low-cost professional business development and technical assistance services to diverse small business owners in Greater Minnesota.	§ 116J.682	DEED
Trade Promotion	Promotion of trade and foreign investment in Minnesota. Includes promotional activities; trade missions; trade shows; trade delegations; technical assistance to businesses; promotion of state agricultural offerings, products, and services; and establishment of trade offices in foreign markets.	§§ 116J.966 and 116J.978, 17.101	DEED and MDA on agricultural initiatives
Business Finance			
Ad Hoc Sales Tax Exemptions for Building Materials	The legislature has enacted sales tax exemptions targeted to specific manufacturing and commercial projects, although written as general provisions (i.e., qualifying rules are provided by law, rather than naming the specific site or company). Examples include the creation of a number of manufacturing and research and development facilities.	§ 297A.71 , subd. 23 and 45	DEED and DOR
Agricultural and Economic Development Program	Loans and loan guarantees to agricultural resource projects and other eligible small businesses.	§§ 41A.01 – 41A.08	DEED, MDA, PCA, MN Agricultural and Economic Dev. Board
Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program	Grants to farmers and others in order to advance the state’s agricultural and renewable energy industries.	§ 41A.12	MDA
Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)	Seeks to expand markets for agricultural crops, livestock, and byproducts by providing financial and technical assistance to entrepreneurs who are developing new agricultural products or processes.	Chapter 116V	AURI
Beginning Farmer Tax Credit	Provides an income tax credit to (1) owners of farmland, machinery, or other eligible agricultural assets who sell or rent the asset to a qualifying beginning farmer, and (2) beginning farmers enrolled in certain farm business management programs.	§§ 290.06 , subds. 37 and 37, and 41B.0391	DOR

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
Bioincentive Program	Production-based grants to eligible producers of advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biomass thermal energy.	§§ 41A.15 – 41A.19	MDA
Border City Programs	Allows tax reductions (credits against property, corporate or individual income tax) for qualifying businesses under the enterprise zone (existing and new businesses) or development zone program (new or expanding businesses) in five designated border cities (Breckenridge, Dilworth, East Grand Forks, Moorhead, and Ortonville). Available state tax reductions depend upon dollar amounts allocated by the legislature.	§§ 469.166 – 469.1735	DEED, DOR, and local government units
Capital Access Program	Capital for business development; focus on small- and medium-sized businesses; capital includes equity investments for community development venture capital funds or business loans. Capital available through a capital access account created in the special revenue fund.	§§ 116J.876 – 116J.8771	DEED
Credit for Historic Structure Rehabilitation	Provides a refundable tax credit (or a grant in certain cases) for qualified rehabilitation expenditures on historic structures in conjunction with the credit available under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). The credit expires after fiscal year 2030, but credit certificates issued before the expiration remain available through fiscal year 2034.	§ 290.0681 and Section 47(a)(2) of the IRC	DOR/IRS
Emerging Developer Fund Program	Grants and loans for developers of projects that will transform neighborhoods and promote economic development and job retention, while reducing racial and socioeconomic disparities.	§ 116J.9926	DEED
Enterprise Minnesota/Small Business Growth Acceleration Program (GAP)	Financing, business development services, technology, technical assistance for innovation, and development of new products, services, and processes.	Chapter 116O (GAP: § 116O.115)	Enterprise Minnesota, Inc.
Film Production Credit	Provides a tax credit for 25 percent of eligible film production costs in Minnesota, in a taxable year, if over \$1 million is spent on those costs.	§§ 116U.27, 290.06 , subd. 39, and 297I.20	DEED and DOR
Film Production Jobs Program	Reimbursement for production costs of up to 25 percent for projects with a minimum expenditure of \$1 million or located outside of metropolitan area; up to 20 percent of costs for projects with less than \$1 million in	§ 116U.26	Explore Minnesota Film and DEED

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	expenditures within the metropolitan area. Also known as "Snowbate."		
Good Food Access Program	Financial and technical assistance for grocery stores and small food retailers that locate, renovate, or expand in certain underserved areas.	§ 17.1017	MDA
Greater Minnesota Job Expansion Program	Sales tax exemption available to qualified businesses certified by the commissioner of DEED. Qualified businesses are in Greater Minnesota, pay 120 percent of poverty wages, and are expanding their workforce. A \$7 million annual limit applies to total refunds under this exemption. The limit is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis; if larger amounts are claimed, refunds are deferred until they can be refunded under the limit in later years.	§§ 116J.8738 and 297A.68 , subd. 44	DEED and DOR
Military Reservist Economic Injury and Veteran-Owned Small Business Loans	Onetime, interest-free loans up to \$20,000 available to: a business that has or is likely to sustain substantial economic injury resulting from a call to active service of an essential employee; or to a recently separated veteran (with active military service after 9/11/01) to assist in starting a business.	§ 116J.996	DEED
Minnesota 21 st Century Fund	Investment in specific projects related to minerals processing and economic diversification of Northeast Minnesota. Fund operated as revolving account. Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) match for loans or equity investments in facilities in the taconite tax relief area.	§ 116J.423	DEED
Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority	Funding to accelerate the adoption of proven clean energy technology and greenhouse gas reduction projects in the private sector.	§ 216C.441	MnCFIA
Minnesota Emerging Entrepreneur Program	Grants to nonprofits to fund loans to businesses owned by minorities, low-income people, women, veterans, or people with disabilities; includes loans to microenterprises and targets lowest income areas.	§ 116M.18	DEED
Minnesota Expanding Opportunity Fund	Loans to Minnesota nonprofit organizations to increase lending opportunities to Minnesota small businesses.	§ 116J.8733	DEED
Minnesota Forward Fund	Provides resources that the state can leverage to increase business retention, expansion, and the attraction of projects in both new and	§ 116J.8752	DEED

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	existing industries. Federal funding requires a state match.		
Minnesota Investment Fund	Financing for infrastructure; loans; loan guarantees; interest rate buy-downs; grants; other forms of participation with private sources for financing; investments in renewable energy market development; training, technical assistance, and financial assistance under Small Cities Development Block Grant Program; and disaster assistance. Repayments credited to a revolving fund; grants generally limited to \$1 million.	§ 116J.8731	DEED
Minnesota Job Creation Fund	Capital investment rebates and cash awards for qualifying job creation and capital investment available to certified job creation-fund businesses. Rebates and awards are available for five years for projects located in the metropolitan area and for seven years for projects in Greater Minnesota.	§ 116J.8748	DEED
Minnesota Native American Business Loan Program	Loans to support startups or expansions of Native American businesses; funded with 20 percent of severed mineral interest tax revenue deposited in special revenue fund account.	§ 116J.64	DEED
Research and Development Credit	Tax credit against either the corporate franchise tax or the individual income tax (for pass-through entities such as S corporations and partnerships) for increasing qualifying research.	§ 290.068	DOR
Rural Finance Authority (RFA)	Private loans to eligible beginning farmers, livestock producers, and others. The Rural Finance Authority's participation lowers the borrower's interest rate, making debt financing more affordable.	Chapters 41B and 41C	RFA
Rural Rehabilitation Revolving Account	Funds loans for economic and workforce development projects in Greater Minnesota.	§ 116J.955	DEED
SEED Capital Investment Credit	DEED certifies businesses in border cities as qualified to receive the SEED Capital Investment (tax) Credit; credits are limited to the amount allocated by the border city from its credit allocation.	§§ 116J.8732 and 290.06 , subd. 35	DEED and DOR
Small Business Investment Tax Credit	DEED certifies a qualified small business; tax credits of up to 25 percent of an investment in	§ 116J.8737	DEED and DOR

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	a qualified business; available to investor or fund. Also called, "Angel Tax Credit."		
Small Business Loan Guarantee Program	Loan guarantees of up to 80 percent of a loan amount made by a qualified economic development lender. Authorizes a loan guarantee trust fund account in the special revenue fund to pay for defaulted loan guarantees.	§ 116J.881	DEED
Tourism Loan Program	Loans, loan participation, or loan guarantees to resorts, campgrounds, lodging facilities, and other tourism-related businesses. Program has not operated since its funding account was repealed in 2003.	§ 116J.617	DEED
Community Finance			
Broadband Development Grant Programs	Promotion of broadband expansion and access to underserved and unserved areas of the state.	§§ 116J.395 – 116J.396	DEED
Central Minnesota Opportunity Grant Program	Grants to a foundation to support community initiatives in the St. Cloud area that enhance long-term economic self-sufficiency for Central Minnesota communities of color.	§ 116J.9922	DEED
Challenge Grant Program	Grants available to nonprofit organizations in six designated regions in rural Minnesota to encourage private investment, job creation and job enhancement, and the promotion of economic development. Statutory allocation from rural rehabilitation account; loans, loan guarantees, interest rate buy-downs, and other forms of participation with private sources through revolving funds established by regional organizations.	§§ 116J.411 – 116J.415	DEED
Community Development Corporations	Financial and technical assistance to certified community development corporations for economic development projects including new businesses, business expansion, real estate development, infrastructure development, or housing activities associated with an economic development activity.	§ 116J.982	DEED
Community Development Program	Allocates state and federal money for community development, rehabilitation, housing, local infrastructure, and revitalization projects; provides technical assistance to rural communities; coordinates community	§ 116J.980	DEED

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	assistance and development with regional development commissions; administers the Minnesota cleanup revolving loan fund.		
Contamination Cleanup Grant Program and Minnesota Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund	State and federal grant funding to local governments and private entities for contaminated site cleanup.	§§ 116J.551 – 116J.559	DEED
Credit Enhanced Bond Program	Access to investment capital for community development with support of DEED and PFA.	§ 446A.087	PFA and DEED
Dairy Development and Profitability Enhancement	Provides profit enhancing technical assistance and grants to dairy farmers and processors.	§ 32D.30	MDA
Dairy Modernization	Funds available to regional or statewide development organizations for loans to dairy producers for acquisition, construction, or improvement of buildings or facilities; acquisition of equipment; dairy animal housing, confinement, feeding, milk production, and waste management. Applications for assistance made to county in which the dairy producer is located.	§ 116J.407	DEED and MDA
Destination Medical Center	Sales tax exemption for materials, supplies, and equipment purchased for construction of public infrastructure in Rochester's Destination Medical Center.	§ 297A.71 , subd. 48	DEED and DOR
Economic Development and Housing Challenge Program	Grants or loans for: construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, demolition or removal of existing structures; and construction financing, permanent financing, interest rate reduction, refinancing, and gap financing of housing. Income limits and limitations on return, as well as contribution requirements, apply. Goal of supporting economic development and job creation or preservation within a community or region.	§ 462A.33	MHFA
Economic Development Tax Abatement	Allows local governments (towns, school districts, cities, and counties) to lower taxes, or to pay for improvements, on a private property if the benefit of the abatement is expected to exceed the amount of the abatement and if the abatement promotes economic development in one of several enumerated ways.	§§ 469.1812 -469.1815	Local units of government
Greater Minnesota Business	Resources made available to local governments for infrastructure projects to promote and	§ 116J.431	DEED

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
Development Public Infrastructure Program	support economic development in Greater Minnesota. Eligible projects include manufacturing, technology, warehousing and distribution, research and development, agricultural processing, or industrial park development. Local match required.		
Host Community Economic Development Grants	Grants to cities within the seven-county metropolitan area that are the site of a waste disposal facility accepting unprocessed mixed municipal solid waste. Grants may be used to finance the capital costs of development or redevelopment projects to create jobs, increase the city tax base or the city's capacity to attract private investment, or other criteria developed by the commissioner of DEED.	§ 116J.548	DEED
Housing Aids	Distributes aid to cities and counties to promote housing development through two programs: a program for metropolitan cities and counties is funded through a metropolitan sales tax; and a statewide program is funded through a standing general fund expenditure. Eligible expenditures of the aid include housing that would have been eligible for the workforce housing development and the economic development and housing challenge programs. MHFA oversees local governments' use of this aid and runs a grant program for smaller cities not eligible for aid.	§§ 477A.35-477A.36	DOR and MHFA
Innovative Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant Program	Competitive grants to local governments to acquire and prepare land for an eligible innovative business development project by improving public infrastructure. An innovative business is one researching, or developing, or using a proprietary product, process, technology, or service in a high-technology field or in tourism, forestry, mining, transportation, or green manufacturing. Requires a local government match.	§ 116J.435	DEED
Launch Minnesota	Business development assistance and financial assistance to entrepreneurs and emerging technology-based companies.	§ 116J.8751	DEED
Main Street Economic Revitalization Program	Leveraged grants and guaranteed loans for development, redevelopment, demolition, site preparation, predesign, design, engineering, repair, or renovation of real property or capital improvements that address the greatest	§ 116J.8749	DEED

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	community needs. Up to three rounds of funding; program expires in 2036.		
Minnesota Housing Tax Credit	Provides a tax credit for 85 percent of contributions to the housing tax credit contribution account, which MHFA may use to award grants and loans for low- to moderate-income housing development projects.	§§ 290.0683, 2971.20, 462A.40	DOR and MHFA
Redevelopment Grant and Loan Program	Resources available to local governments for site redevelopment. Resources available through bonding money and the general fund.	§§ 116J.571 – 116J.5765	DEED
Short Line Railroad Infrastructure Modernization Credit	Provides a tax credit for certain railroad infrastructure improvements, for class II and III railroads. The credit is equal to the lesser of 50% of the infrastructure expenses or \$3,000 per track mile improved.	§ 290.0695	DOR
Tax Increment Financing	Program allows local development authorities (typically agencies created and controlled by cities) to capture the growth in property tax in a defined geographic area (a tax increment financing or TIF district) to pay for private and public development costs, such as land acquisition, site preparation, installation of public infrastructure, and so forth.	§§ 469.174 – 469.1771	Local units of government
Transit Improvement Area Loan Program	Loans to eligible organizations for development of areas near transit facilities. Funding through special accounts in general fund and bond proceeds fund.	§§ 469.35 – 469.351	DEED
Transportation Economic Development Infrastructure Program	Grants to local governments for predesign, design, acquisition of land, construction, reconstruction, and infrastructure improvements to promote economic development, increase employment, and improve transportation systems to accommodate private investment and job creation. Funds made available cannot be used on trunk highway improvements but may be used for nontrunk highway improvements in coordination with trunk highway improvement projects done by MNDOT.	§ 116J.436	DEED and MNDOT
Workforce Housing Development Program	Grants to cities and communities in Greater Minnesota for development of market-rate housing to address local housing shortfalls that are impacting the ability to recruit employees. Requires a 50 percent local government match;	§ 462A.39	MHFA

Program	Description	Statutory Authority	Agency
	grant can fund a maximum of 25 percent of the project.		
Other			
Economic Development	Provides a broad range of economic development authority, entities, and financing. Includes: housing and economic development authorities; port authorities; economic development authorities; area redevelopment; city development districts; mined underground space development; rural development financing authorities; municipal industrial development; border city enterprise zones; tax increment financing; miscellaneous items including foreign trade zones, special tax provisions for certain industries including agricultural processing facilities, businesses with disrupted access, neighborhood revitalization, and municipal commercial rehabilitation loans; targeted community revitalization; enterprise zones; transit improvement areas; and Destination Medical Center.	Chapter 469	Primarily local gov't with DEED, DOR, and MNDOT

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