

116J.435 INNOVATIVE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Creation of account.** (a) An innovative business development public infrastructure account is created in the bond proceeds fund. Money in the account may only be used for capital costs of public infrastructure for eligible innovative business development projects.

(b) An innovative business development public infrastructure account is created in the general fund. The account consists of funds as provided by law and any other money donated, allotted, transferred, or otherwise provided to the account. Money in the account may only be expended on a project receiving financial assistance as provided under this section.

Subd. 2. **Definitions.** For purposes of this section:

(1) "local governmental unit" means a county, city, town, special district, public higher education institution, or other political subdivision or public corporation;

(2) "governing body" means the council, board of commissioners, board of trustees, board of regents, or other body charged with governing a local governmental unit;

(3) "public infrastructure" means publicly owned physical infrastructure in this state, including, but not limited to, wastewater collection and treatment systems, drinking water systems, storm sewers, utility extensions, telecommunications infrastructure, streets, roads, bridges, parking ramps, facilities that support basic science technology and clinical research, and research infrastructure;

(4) "innovative business" means a business that is engaged in, or is committed to engage in, innovation in Minnesota in one of the following: using proprietary technology to add value to a product, process, or service in a high technology field; researching or developing a proprietary product, process, or service in a high technology field; researching, developing, or producing a new proprietary technology for use in the fields of tourism, forestry, mining, transportation, or green manufacturing;

(5) "proprietary technology" means the technical innovations that are unique and legally owned or licensed by a business and includes, without limitation, those innovations that are patented, patent pending, a subject of trade secrets, or copyrighted; and

(6) "eligible project" means an innovative business development capital improvement project in this state, including: manufacturing; technology; warehousing and distribution; research and development; innovative business incubator; agricultural processing; or industrial, office, or research park development that would be used by an innovative business.

Subd. 3. **Grant program established.** (a) The commissioner shall make competitive grants to local governmental units to acquire and prepare land on which public infrastructure required to support an eligible project will be located, including demolition of structures and remediation of any hazardous conditions on the land, or to predesign, design, acquire, construct, furnish, and equip public infrastructure required to support an eligible project. The local governmental unit receiving a grant must provide for the remainder of the public infrastructure costs from other sources. The commissioner may waive the requirements related to an eligible project under subdivision 2 if a project would be eligible under this section but for the fact that its location requires infrastructure improvements to residential development.

(b) The amount of a grant may not exceed the lesser of the cost of the public infrastructure or 50 percent of the sum of the cost of the public infrastructure plus the cost of the completed eligible project.

(c) The purpose of the program is to keep or enhance jobs in the area, increase the tax base, or to expand or create new economic development through the growth of new innovative businesses and organizations.

Subd. 4. **Application.** (a) The commissioner must develop forms and procedures for soliciting and reviewing applications for grants under this section. At a minimum, a local governmental unit must include the following information in its application:

(1) a resolution of its governing body certifying that the money required to be supplied by the local governmental unit to complete the public infrastructure is available and committed;

(2) a detailed estimate, along with necessary supporting evidence, of the total development costs for the public infrastructure and eligible project;

(3) an assessment of the potential or likely use of the site for innovative business activities after completion of the public infrastructure and eligible project;

(4) a timeline indicating the major milestones of the public infrastructure and eligible project and their anticipated completion dates;

(5) a commitment from the governing body to repay the grant if the milestones are not realized by the completion date identified in clause (4); and

(6) any additional information or material the commissioner prescribes.

(b) The determination of whether to make a grant under subdivision 3 is within the discretion of the commissioner, subject to this section. The commissioner's decisions and application of the priorities are not subject to judicial review, except for abuse of discretion.

Subd. 5. **Priorities.** (a) If applications for grants exceed the available appropriations, grants must be made for public infrastructure that, in the commissioner's judgment, provides the highest return in public benefits for the public costs incurred. "Public benefits" include job creation, environmental benefits to the state and region, efficient use of public transportation, efficient use of existing infrastructure, provision of affordable housing, multiuse development that constitutes community rebuilding rather than single-use development, crime reduction, blight reduction, community stabilization, and property tax base maintenance or improvement. In making this judgment, the commissioner shall give priority to eligible projects with one or more of the following characteristics:

(1) the potential of the local governmental unit to attract viable innovative businesses;

(2) proximity to public transit if located in a metropolitan county, as defined in section 473.121, subdivision 4;

(3) multijurisdictional eligible projects that take into account the need for affordable housing, transportation, and environmental impact;

(4) the eligible project is not relocating substantially the same operation from another location in the state, unless the commissioner determines the eligible project cannot be reasonably accommodated within the local governmental unit in which the business is currently located, or the business would otherwise relocate to another state or country; and

(5) the number of jobs that will be created.

(b) The factors in paragraph (a) are not listed in a rank order of priority; rather, the commissioner may weigh each factor, depending upon the facts and circumstances, as the commissioner considers appropriate.

Subd. 6. **Cancellation of grant.** If a grant is awarded to a local governmental unit and funds are not encumbered for the grant within four years after the award date, the grant must be canceled.

Subd. 7. **Repayment of grant.** If an eligible project supported by public infrastructure funded with a grant awarded under this section is not occupied by an innovative business in accordance with the grant application under subdivision 4 within five years after the date of the last grant payment, the grant recipient must repay the amount of the grant received. The commissioner must deposit all money received under this subdivision into the state treasury and credit it to the debt service account in the state bond fund if the grant was funded with state general obligation bond proceeds or to the general fund if the grant was funded with money from the general fund.

History: 2006 c 258 s 34; 2009 c 35 s 1,2; 2009 c 78 art 2 s 12; 2010 c 189 s 39; 2023 c 71 art 2 s 3,4