



2017 CGMC Policy Positions: Economic Development

To help improve the economic climate and continue Greater Minnesota's economic recovery, the CGMC supports the following economic positions in the 2017 legislative session:

1. **Workforce Housing**

CGMC supports programs to address the critical workforce housing shortage in Greater Minnesota. This includes increased funding for the DEED workforce housing grant program. The workforce housing tax credit should be the highest priority for tax cuts in the 2017 tax bill, and should be funded with at least \$40 million over six years. The CGMC supports workforce housing programs that are administered by DEED, have no income or population restrictions, and which are focused on economic development and middle-income workers in Greater Minnesota.

2. **Income-Restricted Housing**

For housing programs within the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, criteria should be evaluated to ensure housing challenges are addressed in an equitable fashion between the metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota. Such factors as a lack of private sector investments, as well as other public investments, should be a part of the comprehensive analysis that determines the overall need for a state partnership.

3. **Greater MN Business Development Public Infrastructure (BDPI) Grant Program**

CGMC supports at least \$12 million in bonding and an increase in the general fund appropriation in the 2017 legislative session for the BDPI grant program. The CGMC believes that the program should remain a stand-alone program open to only Greater Minnesota without earmarks to specific geographic areas or for specific projects.

4. **Greater Minnesota Job Training Incentive Program**

CGMC supports the Job Training Incentive Program and any necessary updates to make the program more responsive to the needs of Greater Minnesota employers. The program should have an ongoing base budget of at least \$2 million annually.

5. **Broadband Expansion**

The CGMC supports a \$50 million appropriation to the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program for underserved areas, as over half of households in rural Minnesota lack access to broadband at the state speed goals. Federal broadband funding is targeted at service that does not meet state speed goals, so should never be a reason in failing to support state funding. The CGMC supports using grant funds for economic development that place a priority on areas that hold the most promise for protecting and growing jobs, while delivering modern business needs that help ensure businesses can compete with more developed areas of Minnesota. The CGMC opposes policies that limit how much grant dollars can be spent in underserved areas and challenge processes that give large providers power to determine that a community shouldn't receive a grant. The CGMC supports defining "underserved" areas as those that lack access to the level of service actually funded by the grant program (100 Mbps download / 100 Mbps upload).

6. **Bonding and Infrastructure in Greater Minnesota**

Bonding bills should focus on local roads and bridges, wastewater, and other infrastructure that grows local economies in Greater Minnesota. In addition, of projects identified as being located in the metro area or Greater Minnesota, at least 50% of all capital investment funding should be directed at Greater Minnesota.



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7. Multi-use Trails

CGMC supports continued development of multi-use trails in Greater Minnesota. These trails assist in the recruitment of workers for rural manufacturers and other businesses as well as generating economic development for Greater Minnesota.

8. Minnesota Investment Fund and Job Creation Fund

CGMC supports restoring funding for both the Minnesota Investment Fund (MIF) and the Job Creation Fund and language changes to provide a more balanced distribution of funding between the metro area and Greater Minnesota.