

SE MN Regional Economic Development Study

Southeastern Minnesota has exciting and challenging times ahead with unprecedented growth potential, and we do that without the support of a regional economic development organization such as other parts of the state have. There is no Region 10 Development Commission.

As communities throughout the eight counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona prepare to meet the needs of the projected growth in our region, planning is more important than ever before, services that the state helps finance in other regions of the state through Regional Development Commissions.

Similar to what was proposed and passed for border communities in northwestern Minnesota, the SEMLM proposes the state fund an economic development study to encourage and inform community planning efforts, including such things as engineering studies, housing studies, upgrading infrastructure, and other preparations. The funding pass-through agent for this project would be Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), whose home office is located in Chatfield, Minnesota. CEDA has the appropriate certification and authority to handle the funds, and will add their technical expertise to the project through the RFP and review process.

The SEMLM proposes that \$275,000 in fiscal year 2017 is appropriated from the general fund to CEDA, in consultation with the commissioner of revenue, to finance a study and analysis of the effects of current and projected economic growth in the southeastern region of Minnesota. This would be a onetime appropriation available until June 30, 2020.

The study and analysis must address:

- (1) current and projected economic, fiscal, and demographic effects and issues;
- (2) direct and indirect costs and benefits;
- (3) positive and negative effects, including those upon workforce, taxation, and transportation; and
- (4) economic challenges and opportunities for economic growth or diversification.

The study must be objective, evidence-based, and designed to produce empirical data. Study data must be utilized to formulate policy recommendations on how the state, the southeastern region of the state, and cities in southeast Minnesota may respond to the challenges and opportunities for economic growth and financial investment that may be derived from the projected regional economic changes.

The study and analysis must be conducted by an independent entity with demonstrated knowledge in the following areas:

- (1) the economy and demography of Minnesota;
- (2) the medical and technology fields of southeast Minnesota; and
- (3) technologies, markets, and other factors that have an impact on current and future economic growth in the region; and
- (4) the transportation, housing, and current infrastructure of southeast Minnesota.

CEDA shall report on the findings and recommendations of the study to the committees of the House of Representatives and Senate having jurisdiction over economic development and workforce issues by February 15, 2019. All results and information gathered from the study shall be made available for use by cities in southeast Minnesota by March 15, 2019.

SE MN Regional Economic Development Study Bill

What it is ...

- An economic development tool to help communities plan for growth and maximize the opportunities for their businesses and residents.
- A forecasting tool to project changing needs for city infrastructure and services.
- A tool that will provide substantial and useable information geared specifically toward the communities in southeast Minnesota, especially in the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona, with additional usefulness to communities adjacent to these areas in Minnesota.
- A study that will have local oversight to keep the focus on southeast Minnesota with Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA) as the pass-through agent, located in Chatfield, Minnesota. CEDA has the appropriate state certification and authority to handle the funds, and will add their technical expertise to the project through the RFP and review process. DEED has recommended this local oversight.
- A tool for cities of all sizes, from our small towns to our largest member cities of Winona, Austin, and Rochester. SE MN has over 70 cities in the eight-county area, with 61 of them as members of the SEMLM.

What it is NOT ...

- It is not just an inventory of current assets. Our communities have been very specific about wanting a forward looking end product, not a static picture.
- It is not meant to sit on the shelf. As a forecast, this tool will inform a variety of community decisions and planning steps, such as roads and streets, water/sewer needs, housing development and placement, types of city services to expand or decrease, types of business needs that should be anticipated to foster more jobs. This study is intended to create useful information for cities to plan efficiently and effectively.
- It is not a duplication of city studies in the region. Cities are not financially able to conduct such a study for their own community, and even if they were, this regional approach would be far more efficient and economical than each city having a study done.
- It is not a duplication of efforts by other entities, such as a Regional Development Commission (RDC), SMIF, or any other entity. There is no RDC for Region 10, and neither SMIF nor any other similar organizations have forecast information for our region as what is proposed for this study.

COUNTY OF _____
RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF Southeast Minnesota Regional Economic Development Study

WHEREAS, southeast Minnesota faces unprecedented economic growth in the coming years from a variety of sources and projects.

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Minnesota League of Municipalities (SEMLM) is working with legislators in our region on behalf of 61 SEMLM cities to provide our communities with needed economic development information as they plan to address the changes coming to our region.

WHEREAS, without a Regional Development Commission, our part of the state lacks the same level of regional economic development support as seen in the rest of the state.

WHEREAS, the SEMLM has put this proposal forward to create a forecasting tool for communities.

WHEREAS, while geared for cities in our region, it will produce useful information for our counties and townships, too.

WHEREAS, the SEMLM seeks county support of the Southeast Minnesota Regional Economic Study Bill for the planning data it will generate for entities throughout the eight county area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY OF _____, MINNESOTA, AS FOLLOWS:

The _____ County Board of Commissioners asks the Minnesota State Legislature to fund the Southeast Minnesota Regional Economic Study.

Adopted by the _____ County Board on _____.

Approved:

(Signature area)
