

SE Minnesota Small Town Energy Efficiency and Conservation Planning Grants Now Open

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has opened a new grant opportunity to help small communities in southeastern Minnesota—and townships in Benton and Sherburne counties—advance long-term energy efficiency and resilience planning. Local units of government that were *not* direct recipients of federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding are encouraged to apply.

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, townships, and school districts with populations under 15,000 located in Benton, Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Sherburne, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona counties.

These grants provide both financial and technical assistance to support energy-efficiency planning, renewable energy considerations, and other resilience-focused strategies. Funding may be used for energy studies, building assessments, audits, or preliminary planning work that positions communities to implement future energy-saving measures. The goal is to help small jurisdictions create actionable, cost-saving plans that reduce energy use, strengthen energy independence, and benefit local taxpayers.

The Request for Proposal (RFP), required forms, and instructions are available at the Commerce RFP webpage: mn.gov/commerce/business/rfp.jsp.

Proposals must be submitted through Commerce's online grant portal by **December 8, 2025, at 5:00 PM CDT**. Multiple application rounds may occur until funds are fully awarded.