

Local Economic Development Act

For the full text of the Local Economic Development Act, please consult the New Mexico State Legislature website.

5-10-1. Short title.

This act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978] may be cited as the "Local Economic Development Act".

5-10-2. Findings and purpose of act.

A. The legislature finds that:

- (1) development of the New Mexico economy is vital to the well-being of the state and its residents;
- (2) it is difficult for municipalities and counties in New Mexico to attract and retain businesses capable of enhancing the local and state economy without the resources necessary to compete with other states and locales;
- (3) municipalities and counties may need to be able to provide land, buildings and infrastructure as a tool for basic business growth and the introduction of basic business ventures into the state;
- (4) it is in the best interest of the state, municipalities and counties to encourage local or regional solutions to economic development; and
- (5) the access to public resources needs to be carefully controlled and managed for the continued and future benefit of New Mexico citizens.

B. The purpose of the Local Economic Development Act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978] is to implement the provisions of the 1994 constitutional amendment to Article 9, Section 14 of the constitution of New Mexico to allow public support of economic development to foster, promote and enhance local economic development efforts while continuing to protect against the unauthorized use of public money and other public resources. Further, the purpose of that act is to allow municipalities and counties to enter into joint powers agreements to plan and support regional economic development projects.

5-10-3. Definitions.

As used in the Local Economic Development Act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978]:

A. "department" means the economic development department;

B. "economic development project" or "project" means the provision of direct or indirect assistance to a qualifying business by a local or regional government and includes the purchase, lease, grant, construction, reconstruction, improvement or other acquisition or conveyance of land, buildings or other infrastructure; public works improvements essential to the location or expansion of a qualifying business; payments for professional services contracts necessary for local or regional governments to implement a plan or project; the provision of direct loans or grants for land, buildings or infrastructure; loan guarantees securing the cost of land, buildings or infrastructure in an amount not to

exceed the revenue that may be derived from the municipal infrastructure gross receipts tax or the county infrastructure gross receipts tax; grants for public works infrastructure improvements essential to the location or expansion of a qualifying business; purchase of land for a publicly held industrial park; and the construction of a building for use by a qualifying business;

C. "governing body" means the city council or city commission of a city, the board of trustees of a town or village or the board of county commissioners of a county;

D. "local government" means a municipality or county;

E. "municipality" means any incorporated city, town or village;

F. "person" means an individual, corporation, association, partnership or other legal entity;

G. "qualifying entity" means a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, joint venture, syndicate, association or other person that is one or a combination of two or more of the following:

(1) an industry for the manufacturing, processing or assembling of agricultural or manufactured products;

(2) a commercial enterprise for storing, warehousing, distributing or selling products of agriculture, mining or industry, but, other than as provided in Paragraph (5) of this subsection, not including any enterprise for sale of goods or commodities at retail or for distribution to the public of electricity, gas, water or telephone or other services commonly classified as public utilities;

(3) a business in which all or part of the activities of the business involves the supplying of services to the general public or to governmental agencies or to a specific industry or customer, but, other than as provided in Paragraph (5) of this subsection, not including businesses primarily engaged in the sale of goods or commodities at retail;

(4) an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo or a federally chartered tribal corporation; or

(5) a telecommunications sales enterprise that makes the majority of its sales to persons outside New Mexico; and

H. "regional government" means any combination of municipalities and counties that enter into a joint powers agreement to provide for economic development projects pursuant to a plan adopted by all parties to the joint powers agreement.

5-10-4. Economic development projects; restrictions on public expenditures or pledges of credit.

A. No local or regional government shall provide public support for economic development projects as permitted pursuant to Article 9, Section 14 of the constitution of New Mexico except as provided in the Local Economic Development Act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978] or as otherwise permitted by law.

B. The total amount of public money expended and the value of credit pledged in the fiscal year in which that money is expended by a local government for economic development projects pursuant to Article 9, Section 14 of the constitution of New Mexico and the Local Economic Development Act shall not exceed five percent of the annual general fund expenditures of the local government in that fiscal year. The limits of this subsection shall not apply to:

- (1) the value of any land or building contributed to any project pursuant to a project participation agreement;
- (2) revenue generated through the imposition of the municipal infrastructure gross receipts tax pursuant to the Municipal Local Option Gross Receipts Taxes Act [Chapter 7, Article 19D NMSA 1978] for furthering or implementing economic development plans and projects as defined in the Local Economic Development Act; provided that no more than the greater of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or ten percent of the revenue collected shall be used for promotion and administration of or professional services contracts related to the implementation of any such economic development plan adopted by the governing body;
- (3) revenue generated through the imposition of a county infrastructure gross receipts tax pursuant to the County Local Option Gross Receipts Taxes Act [Chapter 7, Article 20E NMSA 1978] for furthering or implementing economic development plans and projects as defined in the Local Economic Development Act; provided that no more than the greater of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or ten percent of the revenue collected shall be used for promotion and administration of or professional services contracts related to the implementation of any such economic development plan adopted by the governing body;
- (4) the proceeds of a revenue bond issue to which municipal infrastructure gross receipts tax revenue is pledged;
- (5) the proceeds of a revenue bond issue to which county infrastructure gross receipts tax revenue is pledged; or
- (6) funds donated by private entities to be used for defraying the cost of a project.

C. A regional or local government that generates revenue for economic development projects to which the limits of Subsection B of this section do not apply shall create an economic development fund into which such revenues shall be deposited. The economic development fund and income from the economic development fund shall be deposited as provided by law. Money in the economic development fund may be expended only as provided in the Local Economic Development Act.

5-10-5. Economic development department; technical assistance.

At the request of a local or regional government, the department shall provide technical assistance in the development of an economic development plan or economic development project.

5-10-6. Economic development plan; contents; publication.

A. Every local or regional government seeking to pursue economic development projects shall adopt an economic development plan or a comprehensive plan that includes an economic development component. The plan may be specific to a single economic development goal or strategy or may include several goals or strategies. Any plan or plan amendment shall be adopted by ordinance of the governing body of the local government or each local government of a regional government proposing the plan or plan amendment.

- B. The economic development plan or the ordinance adopting the plan may:
- (1) describe the local or regional government's economic development and community goals and assign priority to and strategies for achieving those goals;
 - (2) describe the types of qualifying entities and economic activities that will qualify for economic development projects;
 - (3) describe the criteria to be used to determine eligibility of an economic development project and a qualifying entity to participate in an economic development project;
 - (4) describe the manner in which a qualifying entity may submit an economic development project application, including the type of information required from the qualifying entity sufficient to ensure its solvency and ability to perform its contractual obligations, its commitment to remain in the community and its commitment to the stated economic development goals of the local or regional government;
 - (5) describe the process the local or regional government will use to verify the information submitted on an economic development project application;
 - (6) if an economic development project is determined to be unsuccessful or if a qualifying entity seeks to leave the area, describe the methods the local or regional government will use to terminate its economic assistance and recoup its investment;
 - (7) identify revenue sources, including those of the local or regional government, that will be used to support economic development projects;
 - (8) identify other resources the local or regional government is prepared to offer qualifying entities, including specific land or buildings it is willing to lease, sell or grant a qualifying entity; community infrastructure it is willing to build, extend or expand, including roads, water, sewers or other utilities; and professional services contracts by local or regional governments necessary to provide these resources;
 - (9) detail the minimum benefit the local or regional government requires from a qualifying entity, including the number and types of jobs to be created; the proposed payroll; repayment of loans, if any; purchase by the qualifying entity of local or regional government-provided land, buildings or infrastructure; the public to private investment ratio; and direct local tax base expansion;
 - (10) describe the safeguards of public resources that will be ensured, including specific ways the local or regional government can recover any costs, land, buildings or other thing of value if a qualifying entity ceases operation, relocates or otherwise defaults or reneges on its contractual or implied obligations to the local or regional government; and
 - (11) if a regional government, describe the joint powers agreement, including whether it can be terminated and, if so, how the contractual or other obligations, risks and any property will be assigned or divided among the local governments who are party to the agreement.
- C. The economic development plan shall be printed and made available to the residents within the local or regional government area.

5-10-7. Regional plans; joint powers agreement; regional government.

A. Two or more municipalities, two or more counties or one or more municipalities and counties may enter into a joint powers agreement pursuant to the Joint Powers Agreements Act [11-1-1 to 11-1-7 NMSA 1978] to develop a regional economic development plan which may consist of existing local plans. The parties to the agreement shall be deemed a regional government for the purposes of the Local Economic Development Act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978].

B. The joint powers agreement shall require that the governing body of each local government approve each economic development project. The agreement may also provide for appointment of a project manager who shall be responsible for the management of projects and project funds. The agreement may provide for a regional body consisting of representatives from the governing bodies of each local government that is a party to the agreement and may determine the powers and duties of that body in implementing the regional government's plan and projects.

5-10-8. Economic development project applications.

A. After the adoption of an economic development plan by a local or regional government, a qualifying entity shall submit to the local or regional government an economic development project application.

B. The application shall be on a form and require such information as the local or regional government deems necessary.

5-10-9. Project evaluation; department.

A. The local or regional government shall review each project application, and projects shall be approved by ordinance.

B. The local or regional government's evaluation of an application shall be based on the provisions of the economic development plan, the financial and management stability of the qualifying entity, the demonstrated commitment of the qualifying entity to the community, a cost-benefit analysis of the project and any other information the local or regional government believes is necessary for a full review of the economic development project application.

C. The local or regional government may negotiate with a qualifying business on the type or amount of assistance to be provided or on the scope of the economic development project.

5-10-10. Project participation agreement; duties and requirements.

A. The local or regional government and the qualifying entity shall enter into a project participation agreement.

B. The local or regional government shall require a substantive contribution from the qualifying entity for each economic development project. The contribution shall be of value and may be paid in money, in-kind services, jobs, expanded tax base, property or other thing or service of value for the expansion of the economy.

- C. The participation agreement at a minimum shall set out:
- (1) the contributions to be made by each party to the participation agreement;
 - (2) the security provided to the local or regional government by the qualifying entity in the form of a lien, mortgage or other indenture and the pledge of the qualifying business's financial or material participation and cooperation to guarantee the qualifying entity's performance pursuant to the project participation agreement;
 - (3) a schedule for project development and completion, including measurable goals and time limits for those goals; and
 - (4) provisions for performance review and actions to be taken upon a determination that project performance is unsatisfactory.

5-10-11. Project revenues; special fund; annual audit.

A. Local or regional government revenues dedicated or pledged for funding or financing of economic development projects shall be deposited in a separate account. Separate accounts shall be established for each separate project. Money in the special account shall be expended only for economic development project purposes, which may include the payment of necessary professional services contract costs.

B. In the case of a regional government, revenues of each local government dedicated or pledged for economic development purposes shall be deposited in a special account of that local government and may be expended only by that local government as provided by the regional government's economic development plan and joint powers agreement.

C. The local or regional government shall provide for an annual independent audit in accordance with the Audit Act [12-6-1 to 12-6-14 NMSA 1978] of each special fund and project account. The audit shall be submitted to the local or regional government. The audit is a public record.

5-10-12. Plan and project termination.

A. At any time after approval of an economic development plan, the governing body of the local government or the governing body of each local government in a regional government may enact an ordinance terminating the economic development plan and dissolving or terminating any or all projects. An ordinance repealing an economic development plan shall not be effective unless the ordinance provides for satisfying existing contracts and the rights of the parties arising from those contracts.

B. Any unexpended and unencumbered balances remaining in any project fund or account upon repeal of a plan and termination or dissolution of a project may be transferred to the general fund of the local government holding the fund or account. In the case of funds or accounts of a regional government, the unexpended and unencumbered balances shall be divided among the local governments as provided in the joint powers agreement.

5-10-13. Limitations.

Nothing in the Local Economic Development Act [5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978] shall be construed to affect any other requirements of the constitution or other laws regarding local government debt, issuance of bonds, use of tax revenues or the grant, lease or sale of land or other property.