



Development Partnership Grant Report

Purpose	Assists with research, planning, education and development-based initiatives that support the long-term economic growth of northeastern Minnesota.
Strategic Plan Alignment	Business Development v Community Development v Workforce Development v

Results As Of	10/20/2021	10/20/2021	09/07/2022	
What did we do?	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Budget	\$375,000	\$625,000	\$1,000,000	
Grants	12	10	17	
Agency Investment	\$364,349	\$625,000	\$977,609	
Total Project Investment	\$1,634,361	\$4,095,450	\$6,750,095	
Leverage	3.5 : 1	5.6 : 1	5.9 : 1	
Key Impact Measures	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Industries Served	8	8	9	
Economic Development Partners	71	53	96	

What were the results?

FY22: The collaborations of the region’s resources, subject matter experts, educators, job placement services and entrepreneurial advisors helped drive the development of community, business and workforce initiatives. Some of the industries served included film, transportation, broadband, manufacturing, tourism, the arts and child care. Project examples include:

- A public rural transportation 18-month pilot initiative that includes four autonomous shuttle vehicles covering 12 miles in Grand Rapids. Residents may use an electronic mobile booking application to take a variety of routes to local points of interest.
- A Northland Small Business Development Center (SBDC) regional consultant to provide free technical support to local businesses (existing and startups) such as business plan development, feasibility and financial analysis, market research, advertising and sales, loan packaging, strategic planning, accounting systems and e-commerce.
- Upper Midwest Film Office’s effort to bring jobs and economic impact to the region through development of the film industry.

FY21: The grants support projects that combine the region’s resources, subject matter experts, educators, job placement services and entrepreneurial advisors. FY21 grants supported the collaboration of resources and people to drive economic development. Project examples included:

- Development of two business development sites which are a powerful tool in attracting businesses, startups, expansions or relocations: Chisholm and Cohasset.
- A Northland Small Business Development Center (SBDC) regional consultant to provide free technical support to local businesses (existing and startups) such as business plan development, feasibility and financial analysis, market research, advertising and sales, loan

What were the results?

packaging, strategic planning, accounting systems and e-commerce. Three business that received assistance included Including: Loonies Coffee Shop (Virginia), Bear Island Surveying (Ely) and The Sugar Shack (Virginia).

- A regional broadband partnership between the agency, Blandin Foundation and Northland Foundation called Arrowhead Intelligent Region (AIR). A grant pool was created and funded to support a broadband-fueled economy in northeastern Minnesota. Seven projects to date have received grants through AIR.

FY20: The grants support projects that combine the region’s resources, subject matter experts, educators, job placement services and entrepreneurial advisors. The projects can drive economic development, propel a business, grow an industry or solve a workforce barrier. Project examples include:

- Nine census tracts within the agency’s service area were officially designated as Opportunity Zones through the U.S. Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017. The program encourages long-term investments in low-income and urban communities nationwide. Northspan Group launched “Minnesota Opportunity Collaborative” which brought together developers, investors, businesses, and community development entities to host a statewide Opportunity Zones online project directory. Training sessions (in person and virtual) were provided to stakeholders who wanted to learn more about Opportunity Zones.
- Itasca Economic Development Corporation’s recruitment plan for a new manufacturer to fill the void left by the upcoming closing of GSI Solutions due to COVID-19. The Bigfork plant closing will impact 59 workers. A new manufacturer is being recruited whose needs match the plant assets: the building, site, workforce and equipment.

COVID-19 Pandemic: Northeastern Minnesota continues to be significantly impacted by COVID-19, including the temporary yet repeated closure of schools, businesses, community centers, clinics, public recreation and parks, and government buildings. The public and private sector experienced negative impacts related to budgets, revenues, supply chains and workforce. The pandemic impacted agency-funded projects: some projects were delayed or canceled, some lost funding from other resources. However, many projects were completed and benefitted the region’s communities, economy and quality of life.

Fiscal Year 2022 Grants

Grantee	Description	Agency Investment	Total Project Investment
Charles K. Blandin Foundation	Arrowhead Intelligent Region initiative - Phase II	\$100,000	\$200,000
East Range Joint Powers Board	Economic development services	\$48,109	\$101,472
Enterprise Minnesota Inc.	Manufacturing growth program	\$50,000	\$50,000
Grand Rapids	Minnesota Autonomous Rural Transit initiative	\$300,000	\$3,717,575
Grand Rapids	Downtown plan	\$20,000	\$80,000
Iron Range Tourism Bureau	Sports/meeting market development	\$10,000	\$20,000

Fiscal Year 2022 Grants			
Grantee	Description	Agency Investment	Total Project Investment
Itasca Economic Development Corporation	Thrive Up North	\$20,000	\$162,000
Northern Lights Music Festival	Northern Lights Music Festival	\$25,000	\$432,425
Northland Foundation	Child care consultation services	\$10,000	\$20,000
Northland Foundation	Small business assistance program - accelerate entrepreneurs	\$50,000	\$100,000
Northland Foundation	Small business development center	\$100,000	\$850,260
Northspan Group Inc.	Application facilitation for Build Back Better Regional Challenge	\$4,500	\$13,000
Northspan Group Inc.	Northlandconnection.com	\$20,000	\$98,000
Northspan Group Inc.	Value acceleration and succession planning services	\$20,000	\$150,000
Northspan Group Inc.	NORTHFORCE.org	\$50,000	\$185,881
Upper Midwest Film Office	Upper Midwest Film Office economic development	\$100,000	\$357,482
Zeitgeist Center for Arts and Community	North x North Film Festival - Phase I	\$50,000	\$212,000

Fiscal Year 2021 Grants			
Grantee	Description	Agency Investment	Total Project Investment
Charles K. Blandin Foundation	Arrowhead Intelligent Region initiative - Phase I	\$50,000	\$224,950
Chisholm	Site development to attract economic growth	\$5,340	\$15,000
Cohasset	Pre-development due diligence at business site - Phase 1	\$25,000	\$50,000
East Range Joint Powers Board	Economic development services	\$50,000	\$110,000
Hibbing Schools - District 701	Group facilitation services for school collaboration	\$4,660	\$9,320
Northeast Entrepreneur Fund	Capital campaign for small business growth	\$350,000	\$2,500,000
Northland Foundation	Small business development center	\$60,000	\$911,876
Northland Foundation	Child care consultation services	\$10,000	\$20,000

Fiscal Year 2021 Grants			
Grantee	Description	Agency Investment	Total Project Investment
Northspan Group Inc.	Northlandconnection.com	\$20,000	\$95,500
Northspan Group Inc.	NORTHFORCE.org	\$50,000	\$158,804

Fiscal Year 2020 Grants			
Grantee	Description	Agency Investment	Total Project Investment
East Range Joint Powers Board	Economic development services	\$50,000	\$155,967
Enterprise Minnesota, Inc.	Manufacturing consulting services	\$25,000	\$50,000
Itasca Economic Development Corporation	Emergency business recruitment	\$11,000	\$61,488
Laurentian Arts & Culture Alliance	Artspace study	\$5,000	\$11,000
National Lead for America, Inc.	Train community leaders	\$30,000	\$170,232
Northland Foundation	Small business development center	49,349	\$492,000
Northspan Group, Inc.	Upper Minnesota Film Office	\$5,000	\$26,400
Northspan Group, Inc.	Minnesota Opportunity Collaborative	\$10,000	\$157,857
Northspan Group, Inc.	Northlandconnection.com	\$20,000	\$103,517
Northspan Group, Inc.	NORTHFORCE.org	\$50,000	\$180,900
Two Harbors Development Fund	Business assistance	\$100,000	\$200,000
Wabana Township	Update comprehensive plan	\$9,000	\$25,000