

STATE OF MAINE

—
 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
 TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN

—
 H.P. 1017 - L.D. 1478

**An Act To Provide Support for Sustainable Economic Development in Rural
 Maine**

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, investing in the rehabilitation and revitalization of nonproductive industrial and manufacturing sites will provide an economic boost to rural communities that have experienced severe economic decline and employment loss; and

Whereas, delaying the effective date of this bill will unnecessarily prolong the economic challenges faced by these rural communities; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §13120-P, sub-§4 is enacted to read:

4. Other use of program funds. The authority may use funds available for the program established in this section:

A. To implement the program established in this section; and

B. To provide technical assistance, planning grants and implementation grants to municipalities and other entities eligible for assistance under section 13120-R.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §§13120-R and 13120-S are enacted to read:

§13120-R. Rural Manufacturing and Industrial Site Redevelopment Program

1. Establishment; purpose. The Rural Manufacturing and Industrial Site Redevelopment Program is established within the authority to provide technical

assistance, planning grants and implementation grants for the rehabilitation, revitalization and marketing of manufacturing and industrial sites in rural communities.

2. Technical assistance and planning grants. The authority may provide technical assistance and grants for redevelopment and marketing of a nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site to a municipality or the owner of the nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site. In awarding grants and providing technical assistance under this subsection, the authority shall give preference to nonproductive industrial or manufacturing sites located in communities that have experienced severe economic decline and employment loss due to the nonproductive nature of the site and insufficient technical or planning personnel or resources.

A. The authority shall work collaboratively with other state agencies and regional economic development organizations to provide technical assistance under this subsection.

B. A municipality that receives technical assistance or a planning grant under this subsection shall form a committee, whose membership includes but is not limited to local residents and the owner of the nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site, to provide advice regarding the redevelopment of the site.

C. If the authority is unable to provide technical assistance to a municipality or the owner of a nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site that is qualified for technical assistance under this subsection, as determined by rule, the authority may provide a planning grant to the municipality or the owner of the nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site.

D. The authority shall adopt rules related to the implementation of this subsection, including rules regarding the application process and eligibility of applicants for technical assistance and planning grants. Rules adopted under this paragraph are routine technical rules pursuant to chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

3. Implementation grants; rules. The authority may provide grants for implementing a project for the redevelopment and marketing of a nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site located in a rural community that has experienced severe economic decline and employment loss due to the nonproductive nature of the site. An applicant for a grant must demonstrate the capacity to undertake the project with a reasonable prospect of bringing it to successful completion.

The authority shall adopt rules, which are routine technical rules pursuant to chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, related to the implementation of this subsection, including rules regarding:

A. The application process for implementation grants; and

B. The criteria and scoring system for awarding implementation grants. The scoring system must include, but is not limited to, an evaluation of the plan for redeveloping and marketing the nonproductive industrial or manufacturing site, community support for the project and consistency with any applicable regional economic development plan.

§13120-S. Inventory of nonproductive industrial or manufacturing sites

By January 1, 2018 and annually thereafter, the authority, in consultation with the Office of Business Development within the department, shall make or require an inventory to be made of all nonproductive industrial or manufacturing sites in the State that are available for redevelopment.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.