

15A.1 Economic development — public purpose — environmental protection and waste disposal requirements.

1. a. Economic development is a public purpose for which the state, a city, or a county may provide grants, loans, guarantees, tax incentives, and other financial assistance to or for the benefit of private persons.

b. For purposes of this chapter, “*economic development*” means private or joint public and private investment involving the creation of new jobs and income or the retention of existing jobs and income that would otherwise be lost.

2. Before public funds are used for grants, loans, tax incentives, or other financial assistance to private persons or on behalf of private persons for economic development, the governing body of the state, city, county, or other public body dispensing those funds or the governing body’s designee, shall determine that a public purpose will reasonably be accomplished by the dispensing or use of those funds. In determining whether the funds should be dispensed, the governing body or designee of the governing body shall consider any or all of the following factors:

a. Businesses that add diversity to or generate new opportunities for the Iowa economy should be favored over those that do not.

b. Development policies in the dispensing of the funds should attract, retain, or expand businesses that produce exports or import substitutes or which generate tourism-related activities.

c. Development policies in the dispensing or use of the funds should be targeted toward businesses that generate public gains and benefits, which gains and benefits are warranted in comparison to the amount of the funds dispensed.

d. Development policies in dispensing the funds should not be used to attract a business presently located within the state to relocate to another portion of the state unless the business is considering in good faith to relocate outside the state or unless the relocation is related to an expansion which will generate significant new job creation. Jobs created as a result of other jobs in similar Iowa businesses being displaced shall not be considered direct jobs for the purpose of dispensing funds.

3. In addition to the requirements of subsection 2, a state agency shall not provide a grant, loan, or other financial assistance to a private person or on behalf of a private person unless the business for whose benefit the financial assistance is to be provided meets, to the satisfaction of the state agency, all of the following:

a. The business makes a report detailing the circumstances of its violations, if any, of a federal or state environmental protection statute, regulation, or rule within the previous five years. The state agency shall take into consideration before allowing financial assistance this report of the business.

b. If the business generates solid or hazardous waste, that the business conducts in-house audits and management plans to reduce the amount of the waste and to safely dispose of the waste. For purposes of this paragraph, a business may, in lieu of conducting in-house audits, authorize the department of natural resources or the Iowa waste reduction center established under section 268.4 to provide the audits.

4. A state agency shall disburse public moneys used for grants, loans, tax incentives, or other financial assistance for economic development without discrimination or without the use of terms or conditions which are more onerous than those regularly extended to persons of similar economic backgrounds and based on an applicant’s age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, physical disability, or familial status.

5. In addition to the other requirements of this section, a state agency may give additional consideration or additional points in the application of rating or evaluation criteria in providing a grant, loan, or other financial assistance for economic development-related purposes to a person or business for whose benefit the financial assistance is to be provided if the person or business is located in an area that meets one of the following criteria:

a. The area is a brownfield site as defined in section 15.291.

b. The area is a blighted area as defined in section 403.17.

c. The area is located in a city or county that meets the distress criteria provided under the enterprise zone program in section 15E.194, subsection 1 or 2.

87 Acts, ch 183, §2; 90 Acts, ch 1125, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1239, §21; 94 Acts, ch 1008, §14, 15; 99 Acts, ch 197, §22; 2001 Acts, ch 7, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 156, §1; 2002 Acts, ch 1162, §27; 2008 Acts, ch 1032, §124