

US Economic Development Administration *Investment Priorities*

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are intended to provide more detail for certain terms identified within EDA's investment priorities (<https://www.eda.gov/about/investment-priorities/>). For more information on EDA's investment priorities and the associated definitions, please contact your EDA regional office (<https://www.eda.gov/contact/>).

1. Underserved Populations (as noted in the **Equity** investment priority):
 - a. *Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color.* To qualify under this component of the investment priority the applicant must identify which minority population(s) will benefit from the project AND either a) how the project will intentionally attempt to improve the economic conditions of that population within the project's planned area of impact and/or b) how that minority population, alone or in combination with other minority populations, represents at least 30% of the population within the planned area of impact of the project. Projects that have a focus on assisting businesses that are owned by any of the above-referenced persons or that are led by minority-serving institutions (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and Universities) would also qualify.
 - b. *Women.* To qualify under this component of the investment priority the applicant must identify how specific components of the project will assist women in the project's planned area of impact to overcome barriers to employment or entrepreneurship. Examples of projects might include a project that is intended to assist women who left the workforce due to the coronavirus pandemic to return to work or a project that will focus on supporting women entrepreneurs. Projects that have a focus on assisting women-owned businesses would also qualify.
 - c. *Members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities.* To qualify under this component of the investment priority the applicant must identify how specific components of the project will assist one of the above-mentioned groups (i.e., members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities) in the project's planned area of impact to overcome barriers to employment or entrepreneurship. An example might include a project that will focus on training persons with disabilities to improve their skills in entrepreneurship. Projects that have a focus on assisting businesses that are owned by any of the above-referenced groups would also qualify.

2. Geographies (as noted in the **Equity** investment priority): Examples of “Geographies” include Tribal Lands or [Persistent Poverty Counties](#), which include rural areas with demonstrated, historical underservice. To qualify under this component of the investment priority the applicant must show one (or more) of the geographies represents at least 30% of the planned area of impact of the project. This could also include smaller pockets (i.e., sub-county) of high ([at least 20% poverty rate](#)) or persistent (at least 20% poverty rate for at least 30 years) poverty that represent at least 30% of the project’s planned area of impact. For help in identifying areas of high poverty please see: [Census ACS19 based Poverty Status Viewer](#).
3. Green Products (as noted in the **Environmentally-Sustainable Development** investment priority): An economic development project that results in a clearly defined end-product that furthers or contributes to the environmental quality (e.g., reuse/recycling/restoration/preservation), greenhouse gas mitigation (e.g., renewable energy, energy efficiency), and/or climate resiliency (e.g., green infrastructure) of the associated community or region. The end-product (i.e., what is being developed or produced) can take numerous forms, such as an activity, item, plan or program. For example, a Green Product might be a business incubator focused on renewable energy, infrastructure for a business park in which the primary tenant will produce solar panel components, or a feasibility study for developing a biomass-to-electricity facility.
4. Green Processes (as noted in the **Environmentally-Sustainable Development** investment priority): An economic development project that results in clearly defined green enhancements to the resource, energy, water, and/or waste efficiency of an existing function or process (including the use of green or natural infrastructure). The enhancements reflect changes to the life-cycle process of an existing function so that the function is performed in a more environmentally-sustainable manner (e.g., improves energy efficiency, uses renewable energy, contributes to reuse/recycling/restoration/preservation, reduces anticipated climate risks like flooding). The focus is on how the product is being developed or produced rather than the product itself. For example, a Green Process might be the retrofitting of a tannery facility to enable tannery operations to use water and energy in a more sustainable manner. The project would potentially impact multiple stages (e.g., use and reuse) of the tannery process life-cycle.
5. Green Buildings (as noted in the **Environmentally-Sustainable Development** investment priority): An economic development project that results in the construction or renovation of a structure using green building techniques that result in a net positive outcome in terms of energy, materials, and/or water use efficiency and designed with consideration of impacts from climate change (e.g., flooding). Such buildings or structures would preferably pursue or plan to pursue and receive U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) certification (or other comparable green building certification). The focus is on the green aspects of the building or structure itself, not what is being created, developed or undertaken within.

For example, a Green Building might be a LEED-certified agribusiness commercialization center.

6. Green Places (as noted in the **Environmentally-Sustainable Development** investment priority): An economic development project located within mixed-use, transit-oriented areas that increases community revitalization, improves job access, avoids impacts to undeveloped or environmentally sensitive lands and waters (e.g., greenfields or wetlands) and is resilient to expected climate risks (e.g., not sited in a location vulnerable to anticipated sea level rise impacts). The green portion is focused primarily on where (from a water/land-use perspective) the project activity is taking place. Such investments are:
- located within a ½ mile of quality transit (i.e., fixed guide way transit station or well-served bus transit stop) for urban or inner-suburban locations, or within a ½ mile of a town center or main street area for rural locations;
 - situated on previously developed or degraded land – includes infill and vacant property development, intensification of underutilized parcels, and/or the leveraging of existing public infrastructure;
 - sited based on an assessment of the anticipated climate threats (e.g., drought, flooding) to the project for its lifetime; AND
 - placed in an area that favors efficient land use (i.e., land uses in close proximity to one another), where commercial uses, economic activity, and employment opportunities are concentrated and accessible (e.g., walkable, bikeable) to nearby residential density.

In addition to the criteria noted above, consider using tools such as EPA’s Smart Location Calculator and the National Walkability Index to determine the project’s overall location efficiency.

7. Well-Paying, Quality Jobs (as noted in the **Workforce Development** investment priority): A job that exceeds the local prevailing wage¹ for an industry in the region, includes basic benefits (e.g., paid leave, health insurance, retirement/savings plan) and/or is unionized, and helps the employee develop the skills and experiences necessary to advance along a career path.

¹ “Prevailing wage” is defined by the Department of Labor as “the average wage paid to similarly employed workers in a specific occupation in the area of intended employment.”