



Pennsylvania

## Department of Community & Economic Development

DCED Newsletter | February 2025

This month, Pennsylvania is making bold investments in economic development, energy, workforce training, and community revitalization. From streamlining business growth to creating more jobs, our work is helping to position the Commonwealth as a national leader in innovation and opportunity.

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## Driving Growth & Innovation

On February 4, **Governor Josh Shapiro unveiled his proposed budget for fiscal year 2025-26**, building on his administration's success in securing more than **\$3 billion in private sector investment and created nearly 5,000 new jobs**. His budget proposal continues that momentum, with over \$160 million in new and expanded DCED investments to enhance Pennsylvania's competitiveness, strengthen communities, and address critical housing needs.

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## A Bold Energy Plan

Pennsylvania has long been a leader in energy production and is now at the forefront of the clean energy transition. **Governor Shapiro's new "Lightning Plan"** is a bold, all-of-the-above energy strategy designed to protect and create nearly 15,000 energy jobs, lower utility bills, and tackle carbon pollution. The plan streamlines approvals for energy projects, modernizes energy standards, and expands the Pennsylvania Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) tax credits to attract energy investment. It also includes a cap-and-invest program to lower electricity costs and offers rebates to help households manage energy bills.

Companies are taking notice. GE Vernova is investing **\$10 million to expand operations in Pittsburgh**, boosting U.S. energy independence, supporting utility-scale solar, and energy storage, and creating more than 270 new jobs.

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## An Attractive Business Climate

The Shapiro Administration is cutting red tape and making it easier to do business in Pennsylvania. The new streamlined **BusinessPA team** is working with companies to find new opportunities for location and expansion in the Commonwealth. The time to file for a new business has **dropped from 40 days to just 2-4 days**, and permitting reform initiatives like **PA Permit Fast Track** are accelerating major economic development and infrastructure projects. **The International Franchise Association** recently ranked Pennsylvania among the top 10 states for franchise business growth in 2025.

Governor Shapiro's budget continues tax reforms, including speeding up the reduction of the Corporate Net Income Tax (CNIT) and closing the Delaware Loophole to ensure a fairer business environment. The administration's efforts are already driving investment—FNB recently celebrated the opening of its **new \$300 million headquarters in Pittsburgh**, a catalyst for driving \$1 billion in community revitalization in the

Lower Hill District.

In other business growth, the **Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA)** invested \$2.7 million to help two manufacturing companies expand operations and purchase equipment. The approval of these low-interest loans is expected to result in more than \$47 million in private investment, create 178 jobs, and help retain another 406 jobs.

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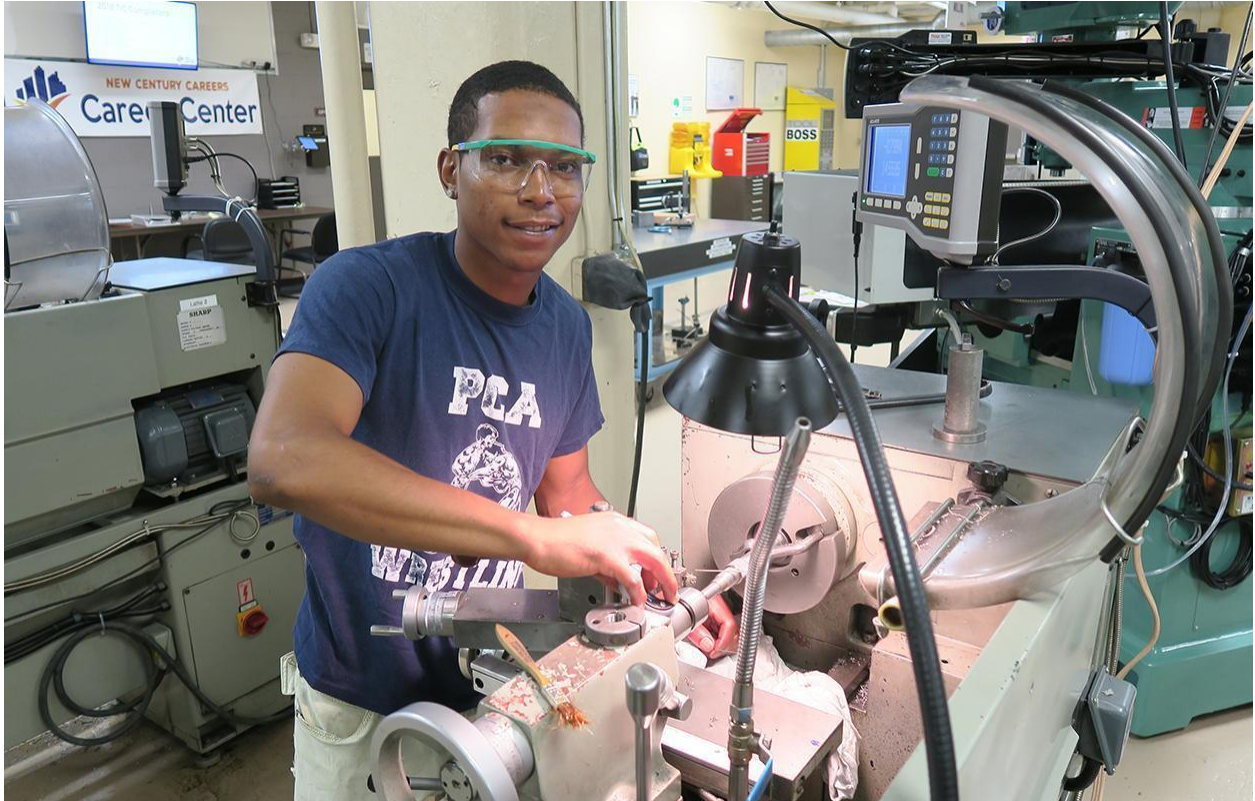


## Strengthening Communities

On January 28, the **Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA)** awarded **\$16 million** for 148 projects, supporting infrastructure improvements, environmental initiatives, and community development across the state. The CFA convened a second meeting on February 24, issuing awards for **more than \$87 million to fund 223 transportation improvement projects**. The **Strategic Management Planning (STMP) Program** also **provided over \$1 million** to help 13 municipalities strengthen their long-

term financial stability.

In Luzerne County, the Greater Hazleton YMCA Early Education Center cut the ribbon on its new facility, made possible by a **\$1 million Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) investment**. The center will provide affordable early childhood education and childcare for low-income families while transforming a previously blighted building into a community asset.



## Investing in Workforce Development

Workforce training is key to Pennsylvania's long-term economic success. This year marks the 26th anniversary of **WEDnetPA**, a program that has trained nearly 1.5 million workers across 25,000 businesses. Governor Shapiro's budget proposes a \$12.5 million expansion to close workforce gaps and upskill Pennsylvania workers.

DCED awarded nearly \$200,000 each to **Pittsburgh's North Hills School District** and **Northampton Community College** through the Manufacturing PA Training-to-Career (MTTC) program. These grants will

help North Hills students gain hands-on welding skills to support manufacturing in Southwestern Pennsylvania, while Northampton Community College's program will focus on preparing students for careers in the semiconductor industry.



## Supporting Agriculture & Innovation

Pennsylvania's agriculture sector is receiving targeted investments to modernize and drive innovation. A **\$1.3 million Farms & Agribusiness Workforce Engagement Grant** is funding workforce development at Penn State University, while the **Agriculture Innovation Fund recently issued \$10 million in grants** to support technology adoption in farming. Governor Shapiro's budget proposes an additional \$13 million to further accelerate agricultural innovation.

To fuel cutting-edge research and job growth, the proposed budget also includes **\$50 million for the new PA Innovation Program**, with a one-time \$30 million investment to spur life sciences job growth and \$20 million to

provide annual support for large-scale innovation projects.

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## Funding Opportunities

- [Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator Program](#)
  - [Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grants](#)
  - [Marketing to Attract Tourists](#)
  - [PA State Small Business Credit Initiative \(SSBCI\)](#)
  - [PA SITES \(Pennsylvania Strategic Investments to Enhance Sites\)](#)
  - [PA Small Water and Sewer](#)
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## Upcoming Events

- Mar. 1-9 – [PHS Philadelphia Flower Show](#), Philadelphia
  - Mar. 24 – [IAMC Spring Professional Forum](#), Sacramento, CA
  - Apr. 4 – [Manufacturing PA Innovation Program Expo](#), Harrisburg
  - Apr. 7-9 – [2025 Main Street Now](#), Philadelphia
  - Apr. 16 – [Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence](#), Harrisburg
  - May 5-6 – [CD&H Practitioners’ Conference](#), State College
  - May 11-14 – [SelectUSA Investment Summit](#), National Harbor, MD
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## Share Your News

Want to see the good news from your community featured on our social media channels or in our next newsletter? Let us know what’s happening in your area! Whether a new investment, business expansion, or community development,



we're here to help you celebrate. Send your updates (and a link to a news story, blog, or press release) to the **DCED Communications Office**.

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