



# JUST TRANSITION FUND

Presentation to the  
MN Energy Transition  
Advisory Committee

June 5, 2025

# Presentation Overview

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- Introduction to the JTF
- Our Work in Minnesota
- Current Initiatives
- Announcement!



# About Just Transition Fund

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Our mission is to create **economic opportunity** for the **communities hardest hit** by the transition away from coal.

We strengthen local economies by advancing economic solutions that are equitable, inclusive, and low-carbon. We support the following types of projects:

- ☑ Community Economic Development
- ☑ Workforce Development
- ☑ Broadband Infrastructure

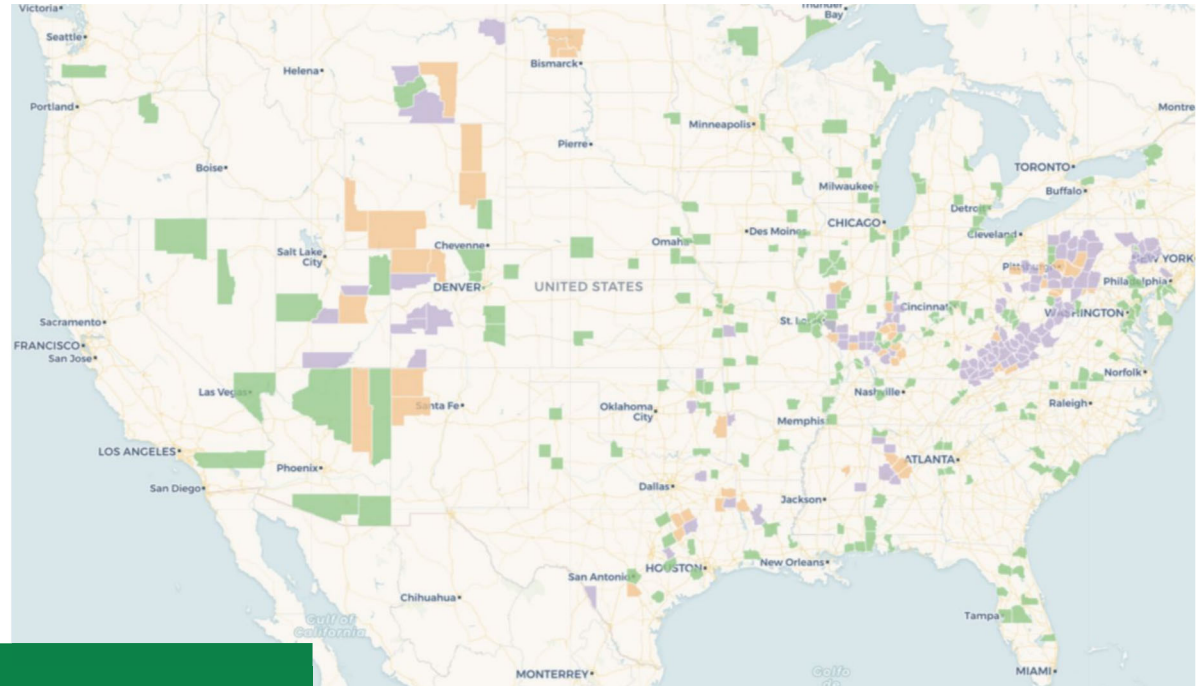


# Where We Work

372 counties across the country that are home to a coal mine, plant, or both – 10% of U.S. counties.

## Counties in Minnesota:

- Cook
- Itasca
- Sherburne
- Washington



**10% of U.S counties**  
are home to a coal mine, plant, or both.

# How We Work

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1

**Provide Grants and Technical Assistance** for community-based organizations, local governments, and Tribal governments to develop and scale local economic transition solutions.

2

**Convene Network of Peers** through annual convening(s) where communities can learn from models and best practices.





# Current Projects

Supporting two community projects in MN through the **Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge:**

## City of Becker

Developing a hybrid center to expand access to affordable co-working options for remote workers and professionals act as an accelerator/incubator for entrepreneurs.

## Itasca EDC

In preparation for the closure of the Boswell Energy Center, facilitated a year-long multi-stakeholder planning effort to develop a community action plan



## Past Projects

### Transition Planning in Becker

Supported early transition planning in response to announced closure of two Sherco units. This included helping secure support from the EDA during the Obama Administration. By starting early, Becker was able attract new businesses years before any units closed.

### CEE Report: *MN's Power Plant Communities: An Uncertain Future*

Supported 2020 study from the Center on Energy and Environment exploring the social and economic implications of MN's energy transition for communities that host power plants.



# Past Projects

## Midwest Governors Association

Facilitated a process for the Midwest Governors Association to prepare Midwestern communities for power plant closures. Supported MGA in identifying best practices and strategies to support workers and communities, culminating in the 2022 report *Growing the Communities that Have Powered the Midwest*.

## MN Transition Policy

In 2019, worked with Coalition of Utility Cities communities to develop strategy and analysis informing state policy addressing coal plant closures.

In 2021, supported development of MN Business Vitality Council's recommendations for state action to support communities in transition.





## What's Next From the JTF?



# Local Economy Lab

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New initiative designed to **grow and scale high-impact, community-led economic projects**, including those with momentum as a result of recent historic federal investment.

Will provide grants of \$250k-500k and tailored technical assistance for up to 10 projects that:

- **Take a place-based approach**
- **Create an outsized local economic impact**
- **Can serve as a model for replication in other transitioning coal communities**

**Timeline.** Applications closed. First cohort announced this fall.

## Example projects:

- **Entrepreneurship & Small Business Incubation.** Downtown revitalization project that attracts and retains local businesses.
- **Outdoor Recreation & Tourism.** A “rails to trails” project or construction of an ecotourism complex.
- **Manufacturing.** Attraction of a new battery manufacturing plant that retrain and upskills local workers.
- **Coal Plant and Mine Reclamation & Repurposing.** Repurposing a shuttered coal plant to promote civic engagement, outdoor recreation, and local business activity.

# Get Ready! Challenge

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Builds the pipeline of innovative economic development projects in early stages and helps communities plan for plant closures

Organizations will receive:

- Capacity grants
- Tailored technical assistance (expert on-the-ground support) to develop projects
- Support finding public and philanthropic funding sources
- Learning opportunities and peer-to-peer exchange

Timeline. Application expected to open summer 2025



# Announcing our Convening!

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We're coming to Minneapolis and you're invited!!

Our signature annual event helps to spread **great ideas**, build **connections**, and address shared **challenge** to transition

## Midwest Gathering - October 28, 2025

- **Gathering of Midwest community leaders** with government, private sector, labor, & philanthropy
- Focus on unique regional transition needs and concerns

## National Convening - October 29-30, 2025

- **Annual gathering** of ~200 transition stakeholders



Any questions?





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