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**ANNUAL
REPORT**



MISSION

GENERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH BY FOSTERING JOB CREATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MISSION

VISION

INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL TENNESSEANS

VISION



FROM OUR COMMISSIONER

In 2025, for the second consecutive year, 70% of all capital invested statewide came from foreign direct investment (FDI)—a strong signal of global confidence in Tennessee’s economy and workforce. This momentum was highlighted by Korea Zinc’s \$6.6 billion investment, the largest corporate investment in state history, further cementing Tennessee’s leadership in advanced manufacturing and energy innovation.

Growth this year has been both significant and inclusive. Nearly 60% of the 8,000+ new jobs committed are locating in rural communities. Strategic investments like the \$70 million Nuclear Energy Fund, supporting nearly 1,300 jobs in 2025 and anchored by Oak Ridge’s world-class assets, continue to strengthen rural Tennessee and position the state as a leader in next-generation nuclear energy.

Following a historic \$63 million investment in research and development (R&D), we also

launched the Office of Innovation to accelerate commercialization, deepen industry-academic partnerships and shape a more ecosystem-driven economic development strategy for 2026.

To close out the year, in October, I was honored to be sworn in as Deputy Governor as we enter Governor Lee’s final year in office. His forward-thinking leadership and strategic infrastructure investments have helped position our state for continued growth and opportunity as we prepare for a new administration in 2027.

None of this progress happens without the support of Tennesseans. We are grateful for your partnership and commitment to ensuring Tennessee remains the very best place to live, work and raise a family.



Stuart C. McWhorter
Deputy Governor & TNECD Commissioner

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Ranking in 2025 as the No. 3 best state for business by Chief Executive magazine, Tennessee continues to be recognized for its pro-business regulatory environment, fiscal responsibility and quality of life. Our business climate garners attention from companies across the globe and is further solidified by the continued growth of companies in our own backyard.

In addition to the department's business development wins, we also provide significant grant funding to communities across the state. From programs like Site Development and Downtown Improvement Grants to Infrastructure Planning and Placemakers, TNECD provided grants or services in 90 of the state's 95 counties in 2025.



DUKSAN ELECTERA GRAND OPENING | JANUARY

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

75 Projects Landed
55% Rural | 45% Urban
Highest Rural % to Date

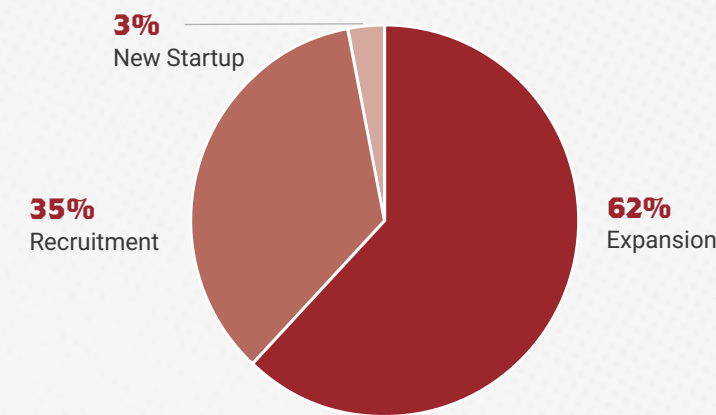
8,086 Jobs Committed
56% Rural | 44% Urban
Highest Rural % to Date

\$11.2B+ Capital Invested
33% Rural | 67% Urban
Highest Rural % to Date

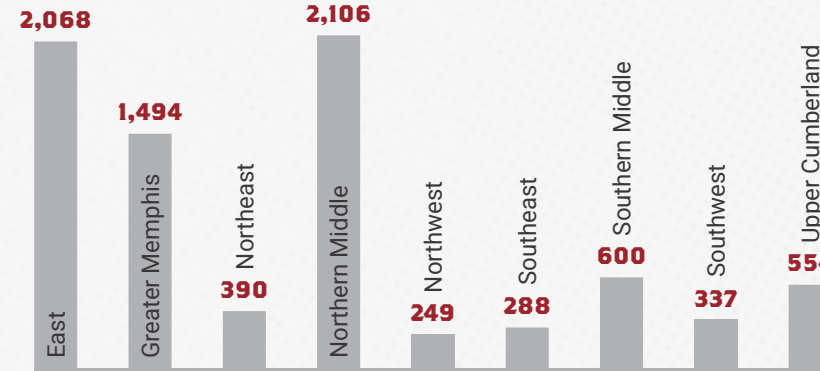
100% High-Quality Jobs
100% Rural | 100% Urban

41 Counties Impacted
28 Rural | 13 Urban

Job Commitments by Project



Jobs Commitments by Region



1 Project in a Distressed County
Cocke Co. | 10 Jobs | \$1.8M Capital Investment

12 Projects in At-Risk Counties
882 Jobs | \$427M Capital Investment

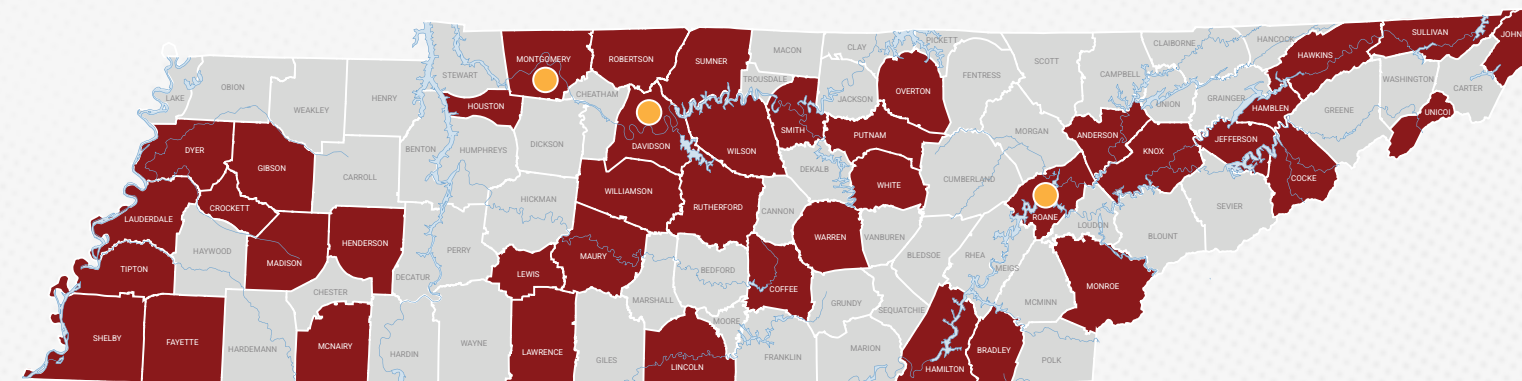
#1 Most Projects Landed
Davidson County | 6 Projects

#1 Most Jobs Committed
Roane County | 1,047 Jobs

#1 Most Capital Invested
Montgomery County | \$6.6B

County Impact

- Landed Projects
- #1 Counties



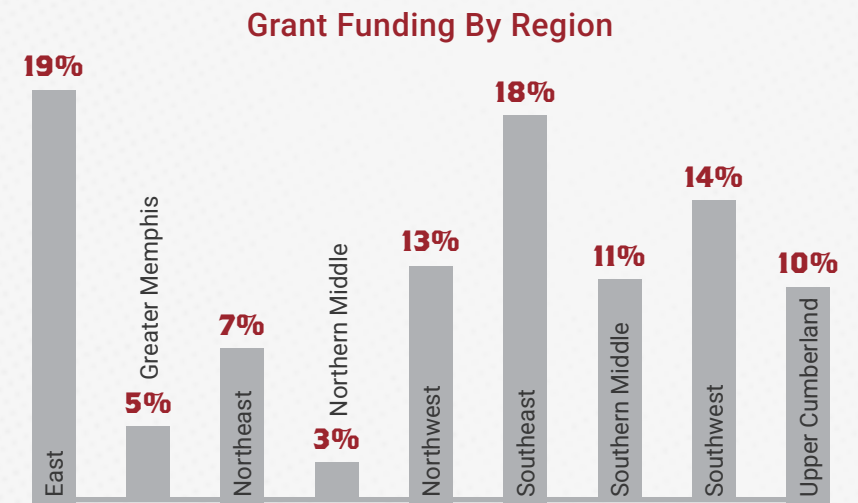
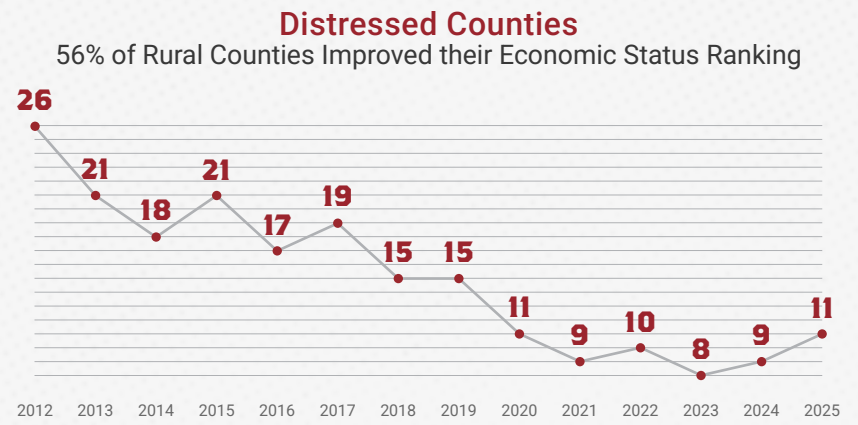
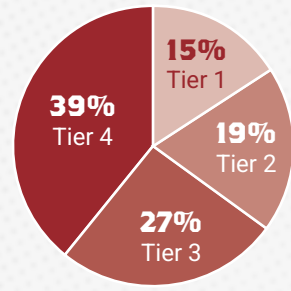
COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

327
Grants Awarded
89% Rural | 11% Urban

\$129M+
In Grants and Services Provided

90 OF 95
Counties Impacted by Grants

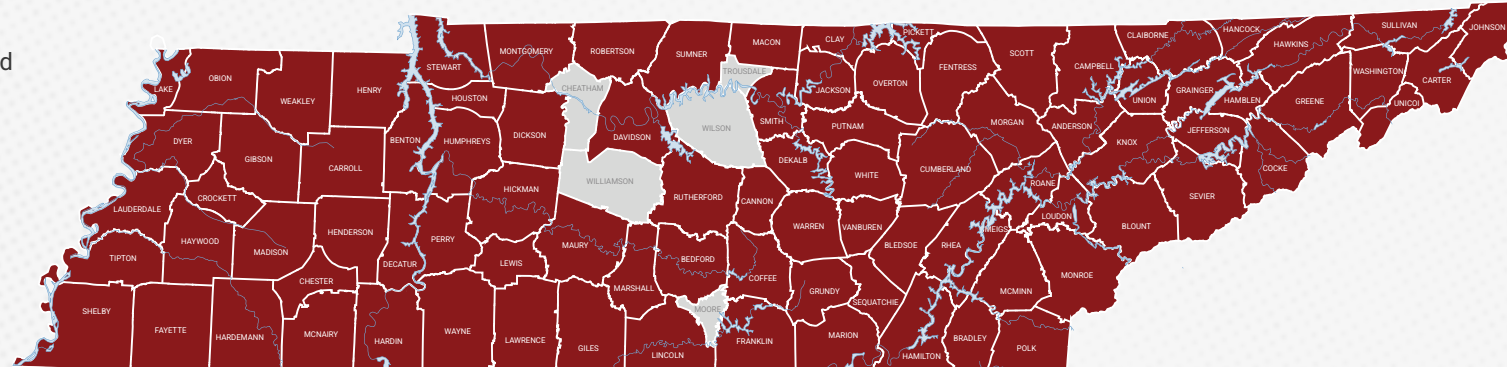
Grant Funding By County Tier



Grant Programs	Impact	Award
Appalachian Regional Commission	21 Grants	\$11M+
Asset Enhancement	7 Grants	\$2.9M+
Community Development Block	51 Grants	\$37.9M+
Downtown Improvement	16 Grants	\$4.3M+
Historic Development	11 Grants	\$5M+
Infrastructure Planning	36 Grants	\$7.3M+
ThreeStar	48 Grants	\$12.4M+
TN Placemakers	15 Grants	\$1.6M+

County Impact

Grant/Service Provided



Select Tennessee Programs

\$36.5M+
Awarded to 26 Counties in Site Development Grants (SDG)

29
Sites Improved Through Site Development Grant (SDG) Assistance

49
Sites Evaluated Across 8 Counties Through the Property Evaluation Program (PEP)

348
New Jobs Committed on Certified Sites by 2 Projects, Representing \$79M+ in Capital Investment

RANKINGS & RECOGNITIONS

#2 Business Incentives Programs
Area Development

#2 Site Readiness Programs
Area Development

#3 Energy Availability
Area Development

#3 Best States for Business
Chief Executive

#3 Business Friendliness
CNBC

#4 Overall Cost of Doing Business
Area Development

#4 Cooperative State and Local Government
Area Development

#4 Automotive Industry
Business Facilities

#5 Best Business Climate
Business Facilities

2025
STATEWIDE EDO AWARD
Nuclear Energy Supply Chain Investment Fund
Business Facilities

2025
IMPACT AWARD
Nuclear Energy | Orano USA, Oak Ridge
Business Facilities

2025
IMPACT AWARD
Rural Renewal | Silver Hills Bakery, Rossville
Business Facilities

2025
CICI COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD
AAON, Inc., Memphis
Trade & Industry Development

OVERVIEW

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

TNECD is charged with attracting new, high-quality jobs and investment to the state, strengthening Tennessee's position as the No. 1 location in the Southeast for economic opportunity. This includes recruiting new companies to establish operations in Tennessee while also supporting the expansion of existing Tennessee-based businesses. Through strategic industry targeting, competitive incentives and close collaboration with local and regional partners, the department works to ensure communities across all 95 counties are positioned for long-term growth.

In 2025, these efforts resulted in 75 landed projects, representing \$11.2 billion in capital investment and 8,086 new jobs for Tennesseans.

75

PROJECTS LANDED

8,086

NEW JOBS COMMITTED

\$11.2B+

CAPITAL INVESTED

NEW BUILDING:
XXENTRIA USA

166,827 SF | Mt. Pleasant, TN



XXENTRIA GROUNDBREAKING | JUNE

BREAKING RECORDS IN 2025

Tennessee reached new heights in 2025, setting historic benchmarks across the metrics that matter most. These record-breaking achievements in rural growth and global investment underscore our commitment to delivering opportunity statewide.

55%

Rural Projects

55% of landed projects were in rural counties, representing the highest percentage to date.

56%

Rural Jobs

56% of new jobs committed were in rural counties, representing the highest percentage to date.

45%

FDI Projects

45% of landed projects were a result of FDI, representing the highest percentage to date.

50%

FDI Jobs

50% of new jobs committed were a result of FDI, representing the highest percentage to date.

\$6.6B+

Single Largest Project CapEx

Korea Zinc, the world's leading nonferrous metal manufacturer, selected Tennessee for its first U.S. operations. The project totals 740 new jobs and \$6.6B+ in capital investment.

TOP INDUSTRY

AEROSPACE & DEFENSE

When people think of aerospace and defense, they think of loyalty, precision and service—a call to something greater. In Tennessee, that commitment is reflected in a deep and steady Volunteer Spirit that powers an industry essential to national security and technological innovation. Since 2019, Tennessee’s employment in these industries has grown nearly 45%, with over 11,800 workers across the state’s nearly 170 aerospace and defense companies. Anchored by brands like Bell Helicopter and Oshkosh, East Tennessee remains the largest cluster, but emerging assets position Middle Tennessee for the next phase of sector growth.

In 2025, announcements included Howmet Aerospace, Barrett Firearms and West Star Aviation, among others.

6

PROJECTS LANDED

898

NEW JOBS COMMITTED

\$275M+

CAPITAL INVESTED

OVERVIEW

Tennesseans Employed in Aerospace & Defense



Aerospace & Defense Companies in Tennessee



Aerospace & Defense-Related Graduates Since 2019



44% Job Growth in Aerospace & Defense Employment Since 2019

\$351.7M+ Capital Investment Since 2019

\$2.3K+ New Job Commitments Since 2019

\$960M+ Aerospace Products & Parts Exported in 2024

\$35.5M+ Arms and Ammunition Exported in 2024

Proud to Promote the Company We Keep



BARRETT FIREARMS GROUNDBREAKING | AUGUST

HOWMET AEROSPACE FRANCE VISIT | JUNE

TOP INDUSTRY

APPLIANCE & ELECTRICAL

Tennessee is a hub for some of the world's most renowned appliance and electrical manufacturers. Companies are drawn to our state's business-friendly environment and strategic location, making it an ideal place for manufacturing and distribution. From new innovations in household appliances to lighting and electrical components, Tennessee continues to provide the resources and talent businesses need to succeed.

In 2025, announcements included Hitachi Energy, Hyosung HICO and Nidec Motor Corporation, with Hyosung HICO announcing two expansions in a single year.

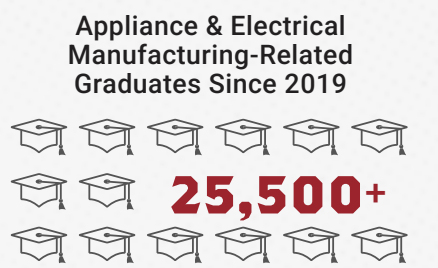
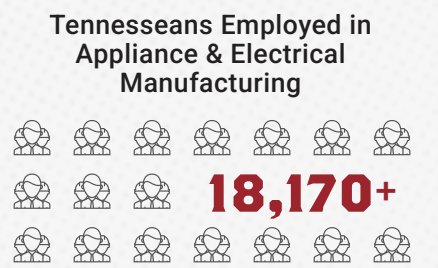


11
PROJECTS LANDED

1,411
NEW JOBS COMMITTED

\$541M+
CAPITAL INVESTED

OVERVIEW



Proud to Promote the Company We Keep



HITACHI ENERGY ANNOUNCEMENT | AUGUST



HYOSUNG HICO ANNOUNCEMENT | MAY

TOP INDUSTRY

AUTOMOTIVE

Since 2019, Tennessee has created nearly 30,000 new jobs by companies in the automotive sector and attracted more than \$21 billion in capital investment, reinforcing the state's position as a national leader in vehicle manufacturing and mobility innovation. As one of only three states nationwide home to four automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), industry leaders like Nissan, General Motors, Volkswagen and Ford continue to drive growth across the state's thriving automotive sector. Their presence strengthens Tennessee's competitive edge in electric vehicles, advanced manufacturing and next-generation transportation technologies, supported by the 900+ suppliers that also call Tennessee home.

In 2025, announcements included Carlex Glass America, MAHLE Industries and PolyFlex Products, among others.

10	510	\$829M+
PROJECTS LANDED	NEW JOBS COMMITTED	CAPITAL INVESTED



OVERVIEW

Tennesseans Employed by Automotive Companies

144,700+

Automotive Companies in Tennessee

900+

Automotive-Related Graduates Since 2019

25,900+

#1 In the Southeast for Automotive Employment

\$21.3B+ Capital Investment Since 2019

27.3K+ New Job Commitments Since 2019

88 Out of 95 Counties Have Automotive Companies

\$5.3B+ Automotive Products Exported in 2024

4 OEMs Automotive Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)

Proud to Promote the Company We Keep



TOP INDUSTRY

FOOD & BEVERAGE

From smooth whiskey to sweet candy bars—and even Japan’s No. 1 mayonnaise brand—Tennessee’s tradition of taste has a global reach. Iconic names like Jack Daniel’s, M&M Mars, Bush Brothers & Company, Moon Pie and Little Debbie snack cakes were born from Tennessee’s deep-rooted culture of agriculture, hospitality and craftsmanship. That foundation continues to fuel innovation, creating a business climate where homegrown brands thrive and global favorites like Kewpie choose to grow. In Tennessee, great taste isn’t just a product, it’s a way of doing business.

In 2025, announcements included Vibrant Health Products, Little Leaf Farms and Newly Weds Foods, among others.

6 PROJECTS LANDED | **904** NEW JOBS COMMITTED | **\$295M+** CAPITAL INVESTED



OVERVIEW

Tennesseans Employed in Food & Beverage Industry



Food & Beverage Companies in Tennessee



Food & Beverage-Related Graduates Since 2019



#1 Exporter of Whiskey in the U.S. with \$840M+ in Whiskey Products Exported in 2024

\$1.9B+ Capital Investment Since 2019

\$4.7K+ New Job Commitments Since 2019

11% Job Growth Since 2019

\$1.5B+ Food & Beverage Products Exported in 2024

Proud to Promote the Company We Keep



Q&B FOODS / KEWPIE GRAND OPENING | MAY



LITTLE LEAF FARMS ANNOUNCEMENT | JUNE

TOP INDUSTRY NUCLEAR

A center of science and technology since the 1940s, Tennessee is primed to support research and development efforts in the nuclear space with internationally recognized research institutions like Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the Arnold Engineering Development Complex and our vast network of universities. These assets have guided our efforts and positioned Tennessee as the top state nationwide for nuclear development.

Thanks to Tennessee's Nuclear Energy Fund, we supported five projects, including Radiant, Oklo, Master Machine and BWXT, which announced expansions at two facilities in one year.

5

PROJECTS LANDED

1,289

NEW JOBS COMMITTED

\$2B+

CAPITAL INVESTED

OVERVIEW

Projects Landed in 2025

Company	New Jobs	CapEx	County
BWXT	60	\$45M	Roane
BWXT	198	\$121.9M+	Unicoi
Master Machine	44	\$11.7M	Hamilton
Oklo	812	\$1.6B+	Roane
Radiant	175	\$279M+	Roane

Rankings & Recognitions

#1 In the Nation for Nuclear Development
American Nuclear Society

#8 Largest Nuclear Power Capacity in the U.S.
U.S. Energy Information Administration

42%
Tennessee

18%
United States

The Nuclear Power Share of Electricity Generation in TN is 2x the National Average
U.S. Energy Information Administration

\$400M DOE GRANT TVA to Advance Deployment of Small Modular Reactors
Clinch River Site | Oak Ridge

Proud to Promote the Company We Keep



OKLO ANNOUNCEMENT | SEPTEMBER



RADIANT ANNOUNCEMENT | OCTOBER

OVERVIEW

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

Foreign direct investment (FDI) played a significant role in Tennessee's economic success in 2025, generating nearly \$8 billion in investment and more than 4,000 new jobs. Companies such as Hitachi Energy, Advanex Americas, ALUKO Group and Korea Zinc have chosen to grow in Tennessee, reinforcing the state's strength as a global business destination.

These results reflect a deliberate, relationship-driven strategy to international recruitment. In 2025, TNECD's executive team conducted strategic economic development trips to France, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan to strengthen ties with global leaders. This engagement builds long-term partnerships and translates into meaningful economic impact at home as Tennessee continues expanding opportunity and prosperity statewide.

34

PROJECTS LANDED

4,030

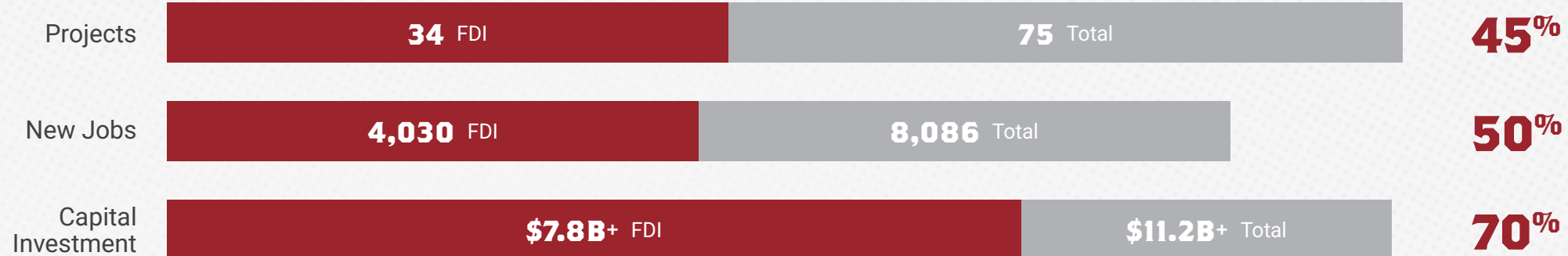
NEW JOBS COMMITTED

\$7.8B+

CAPITAL INVESTED

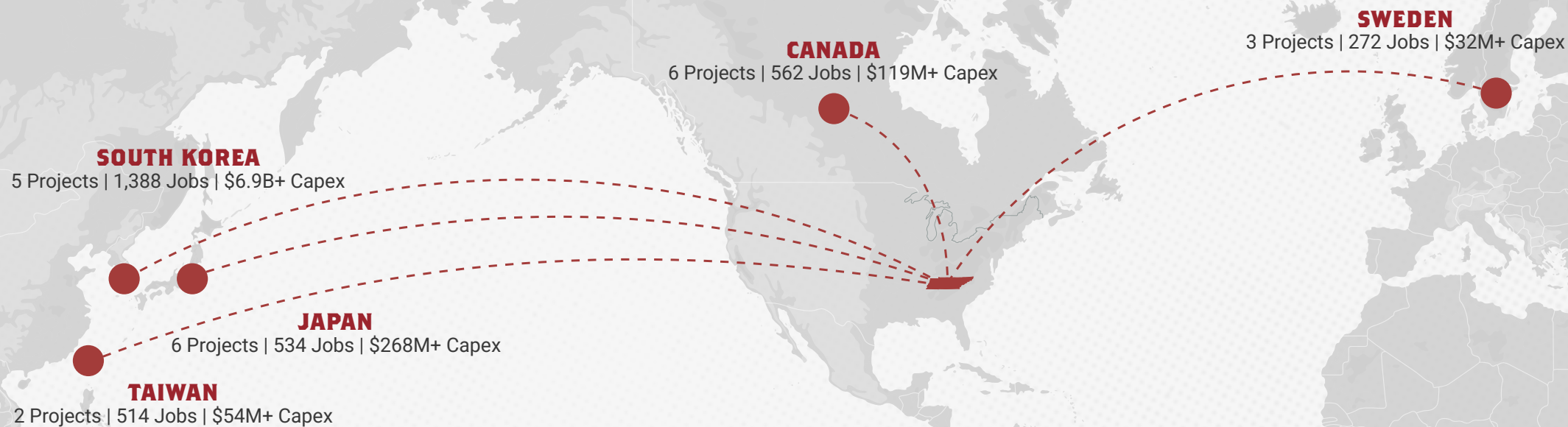
FLORIM USA VISIT | FEBRUARY

2025 FDI IMPACT



"As we expand our business, we remain committed to advancing American manufacturing, strengthening our community and honoring the Korea-America collaboration that fuels our success."

— Jason Neal, President, Hyosung HICO



OVERVIEW

DISASTER RECOVERY INITIATIVE

In August 2025, TNECD launched a first-of-its-kind disaster recovery initiative, awarding more than \$7 million in workforce retention and retraining grants to four Unicoi County companies impacted by Hurricane Helene. Located along the Nolichucky River in the heavily damaged Erwin Riverview Industrial Park, Foam Products, PlastiExports, PolyPipe and Impact Plastics faced extensive facility losses and operational disruptions. Through grants of at least \$1 million each, the state supported the retention of more than 230 jobs, the creation of new positions and significant private-sector reinvestment, marking the first time Tennessee deployed workforce funding in direct response to a natural disaster.

4 SUPPORTED PROJECTS | **233** JOBS RETAINED | **56** NEW JOBS CREATED | **\$50M+** CAPITAL INVESTED



UNICOI COUNTY GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT | AUGUST

The initiative played a critical role in stabilizing Northeast Tennessee’s economy following one of the most devastating storms in state history. By prioritizing workforce continuity alongside physical rebuilding, the grants helped families remain employed, preserved critical industrial capacity and accelerated long-term recovery. The program not only restored confidence in Unicoi County’s economic future but also established a scalable, innovative model for disaster response that strengthens Tennessee’s resilience for years to come.

Company	Retained Jobs	Capital Investment
Foam Products	47	\$4.4M
PlastiExports	53	\$7.4M
PolyPipe	66	\$27.1M
Impact Plastics	67	\$11.8M

“The devastation from Hurricane Helene was unlike anything we’ve faced in our company’s history. This grant is not just funding—it’s a lifeline for our employees, our customers and our future here in Erwin. We are deeply grateful for TNECD’s support, which enables us to rebuild with greater strength, speed and innovation. Together, we’re turning a difficult setback into a new opportunity for renewed growth and resilience.”

– Mark Brenon, CEO, PolyPipe

Flight Recruitment

In 2025, TNECD partnered with BRIDGE to incentivize new flights to the Tri-Cities Airport through Breeze Airways, connecting the region to international hubs like Orlando and Washington, D.C. Through the disaster recovery initiative, the department assisted in rebuilding manufacturing plants and constructing access roads to recruiting new flights that will boost travel and tourism in Northeast Tennessee. TNECD is committed to ensuring Tennessee remains a great place to live and work, even in the aftermath of a disaster.



INTERSTATE 26 BRIDGE COLLAPSE



ERWIN RIVERVIEW INDUSTRIAL PARK

OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT

Whether it is revitalizing buildings, extending broadband infrastructure, developing industrial sites or upgrading utilities, our grant programs enable local governments to implement projects that foster growth, create jobs and increase the prosperity of their communities.

Tennessee's vibrant communities are places where families grow, businesses thrive and lasting memories are made. Our goal is to ensure communities continue to be places of opportunity for future generations.

327

GRANTS AWARDED

\$129M+

FUNDING ALLOCATED

90

COUNTIES IMPACTED



OVERVIEW

Program Updates

94

ThreeStar Certified Counties

90

Tennessee Downtowns

49

Main Street Communities

72

SmartStart Communities

Featured Highlights

Historic Development Grant Program

In 2025, this program approved funding to facilitate the preservation and redevelopment of 11 of the state's historic county courthouses in distressed or at-risk counties in partnership with the Tennessee Historical Commission.

Grant Recipients: Chester, Dickson, Giles, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Maury, Morgan, Pickett, Polk, Scott and Weakley

Rural Fellowship Program

The first cohort of fellows continued to work in six distressed and at-risk counties across the state where they add capacity for community and economic development projects.

Participating Counties: Bledsoe, Cocke, Grundy, Hardeman, Haywood and Sequatchie



GOVERNOR'S RURAL OPPORTUNITY SUMMIT | OCTOBER



RURAL FELLOWS | JULY

T E N N E S S E E

MAIN STREET PROGRAMS

Tennessee Main Street is the state's flagship downtown revitalization and development assistance program that helps communities preserve historic assets, support entrepreneurs, create jobs and stimulate long-term investment through technical assistance, training and organizational development.

Its affiliated Tennessee Downtowns program serves as the entry point for communities beginning their revitalization journey, offering competitive, cohort-based support and innovation project grants to catalyze transformation. Designated Tennessee Main Street and Tennessee Downtowns communities are also eligible for tools such as the Downtown Improvement Grant, further advancing sustainable economic growth and vibrant downtown districts across the state.

61

GRANTS & SERVICES AWARDED

\$4.6M+

FUNDING ALLOCATED

40

COUNTIES IMPACTED



OVERVIEW

Program Participation Totals

49

Total Main Street Communities

90

Total TN Downtowns

Tennessee Main Street Program Impact in 2025

1,064

Net New Jobs

570

Rehabilitation Projects

238

Net New Businesses

255

Public Improvement Projects

\$247M+

Total Public & Private Investment
\$132M Private | \$115M Public

92,000+

Volunteer Hours Contributed

CROSSVILLE

Two New Main Streets Added

NEWPORT

Downtown Improvement Grants in 2025

16

Grants Awarded

\$4.3M+

Funding Allocated

"What happens in rural Tennessee matters to all Tennesseans, and our downtown districts serve as vital economic engines for tourism, economic development and quality of life."

– Governor Bill Lee



GREENVILLE COMMUNITY VISIT | JUNE

SAVANNAH COMMUNITY VISIT | OCTOBER

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SELECT TENNESSEE

Select Tennessee (SelectTN) programs assist communities across the state in identifying, evaluating and preparing industrial sites for investment and job creation. By helping communities strengthen their site readiness and competitiveness, SelectTN plays a critical role in positioning Tennessee for long-term economic success.

Through comprehensive site evaluation and preparation programs, as well as a rigorous certification process, the initiative ensures that communities are equipped to meet the needs of modern industry. SelectTN's strategic approach reduces risk for prospective companies, shortens project timelines and enhances marketability in today's fast-moving, global economy.

30

GRANTS AWARDED

\$36.5M+

FUNDING ALLOCATED

31

COUNTIES IMPACTED

OVERVIEW

Site Development Grants (SDG)

\$36.5M+ Awarded for Improvements to 29 Sites Across 26 Counties

398 New Jobs Committed by 3 Projects Landing on SDG Sites, Representing \$155M+ in Capital Investment

2 Counties (Meigs & Sequatchie) Participating for the First Time, Both Designated At-Risk

13 Grants Awarded over the Former \$1M Limit

40% Grants Awarded to At-Risk or Distressed Counties

Property Evaluation Program (PEP)

49 Sites Impacted Across 8 Counties

2 Counties Participated for the First Time (Roane & Clay), with Clay Designated as Distressed

Certified Sites

348 New Jobs Committed by 2 Projects Landing on Certified Sites, Representing \$79M+ in Capital Investment

Making History in 2025

\$36.5M+ In SDG Represents the Largest Amount of Funding Allocated to Date for the Program, more than 3x the Average of the Last 9 Years



DYER COUNTY SPEC BUILDING GROUNDBREAKING | JANUARY



FRANKLIN COUNTY PEP VISIT | JANUARY

OVERVIEW

OFFICE OF INNOVATION

Launched in February 2025, in conjunction with the state's historic \$63 million investment in R&D and innovation, Tennessee's Office of Innovation serves as the state's front door to forward-thinking growth—aligning strategy, investment and partnership to accelerate innovation statewide. Building on Tennessee's legacy of manufacturing strength, we strive to ensure that companies are supported at every stage of the production lifecycle, from design and research to commercialization and advanced manufacturing.

By amplifying the flow of talent, capital and collaboration across industries, universities and communities, the Office of Innovation connects sectors including advanced manufacturing, life sciences, mobility, energy and digital technologies—positioning Tennessee to compete and lead on a global stage while creating lasting prosperity at home.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER VISIT | FEBRUARY

IRIS GRANT PROGRAM

The Innovation & Research for Industry Success (IRIS) Grant amplifies industry-driven research by connecting Tennessee companies with the state's leading research institutions. Backed by a historic \$63 million state investment in R&D and innovation initiatives, IRIS was designed to remove barriers to applied research and development—empowering businesses to tackle real-world challenges, strengthen local partnerships and bring forward-looking solutions to market. Launched in July 2025, IRIS reflects Tennessee's commitment to accelerating innovation-led economic growth across the state.

NUCLEAR ENERGY SUPPLY CHAIN INVESTMENT FUND

TNECD supported five nuclear-related companies in 2025 through its Nuclear Energy Fund, which now totals \$70 million with another \$25 million in funding proposed in Governor Lee's 2026 budget. The fund assists nuclear power-related businesses choosing to relocate or grow in the Volunteer State and supports the state's universities and research institutions in further developing their nuclear education programs. Since its inception, the fund has attracted over \$7 billion in capital investment and nearly 2,000 new jobs, primarily funneling into rural Tennessee economies.

Recipients of Funding

- BWXT Enrichment Operations (Roane County)
- Master Machine (Hamilton County)
- Oklo (Roane County)
- BWXT Nuclear Fuel Services (Unicoi County)
- Radiant (Roane County)

FUND TENNESSEE

Tennessee's SSBCI program includes InvestTN (equity), LendTN (debt). In 2025, Fund Tennessee deployed \$16.4 million and leveraged \$47.6 million in private capital to support 62 businesses and create or retain 813 jobs across the state.

LendTN

- Managed by TNECD, LendTN deployed \$9 million and leveraged \$27 million in private capital, supporting 26 businesses and impacting 432 jobs

InvestTN

- Managed by Launch Tennessee, InvestTN deployed \$7.4 million and leveraged \$20.6 million in private capital, supporting 38 businesses and impacting 381 jobs

AssistTN

- Managed by Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee Small Business Development Center, AssistTN supported 827 clients statewide
- Delivered training to 1,103 attendees
- Enrolled 80 participants in the Tri-Star Angels Program, strengthening the state's early-stage investment ecosystem

TN SMARTSTART GUIDE

In 2025, TNECD launched a redesigned TN SmartStart Guide, a centralized online platform that helps individuals and businesses navigate the process of starting and growing a business in Tennessee. The updated site features an interactive chatbot, Ask Iris, and a step-by-step guide to registering a business, while also connecting users to funding opportunities, technical assistance and local support resources. By simplifying access to trusted information and statewide programs, TN SmartStart makes it easier to launch, operate and expand a business anywhere in Tennessee.

OVERVIEW

MARKETING &

MAR·COM

COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing at TNECD is rooted in a simple goal: tell Tennessee's story in a way that reflects the strength, innovation and collaboration driving growth across our state. Whether highlighting communities attracting new investment, elevating leadership in action or convening partners from all 95 counties, our approach is strategic and people focused. Throughout the year, we communicate Tennessee's economic momentum with clarity and purpose, showcasing expanding businesses, a skilled workforce and strong partnerships.

GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE 2025

The Governor's Conference is one of the clearest examples of this work in action. In 2025, 900+ leaders and stakeholders from all 95 counties gathered in Murfreesboro for the largest conference in the event's history. The sold-out, two-day event emphasized collaboration, workforce alignment and practical strategies communities could immediately apply. Through engaging breakout sessions, high-profile speakers and memorable moments, including major brand unveilings for TNECD and TNWorks, the conference reinforced Tennessee's commitment to partnership and innovation while delivering meaningful value statewide.

TNECD GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE | NOVEMBER

MARKETING AWARDS

TNECD is proud to celebrate the storytellers behind Tennessee's economic momentum, the Marketing and Communications team. Throughout the year, they showcased the communities, businesses and leaders driving growth, earning national recognition and demonstrating creativity, precision and purpose. By highlighting the people and projects shaping the state's future, they ensure Tennessee's story resonates at home and around the world.

Awards & Recognitions

- Bronze Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) for the 2024 Annual Report
- Special Judge's Award from the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) for the 2024 Governor's Conference

MCWHORTER ON THE MOVE

TNECD launched the #McWhorterOnTheMove video series to position Tennessee as a national and global leader in business attraction and workforce development by elevating Deputy Governor/Commissioner McWhorter as an authentic voice for the state. Filmed in an unscripted, on-the-move format, the series highlights the people, places and projects driving growth, from higher education to companies investing across Tennessee, showcasing leadership in action and the state's strength in R&D, innovation and advanced manufacturing. In 2025, nearly 35 short videos generated 300,000+ views across TNECD's social media platforms, strengthening public trust through consistent, accessible storytelling.

Series Highlights

- Vanderbilt, Belmont, MTSU, UofM, TSU, UTK, UT Martin, Roane State, ETSU, Tennessee Tech, BNA, Ryman, Florim USA, Schneider Electric, LG Chem, McKee Foods and a host of other events and announcements—including several filmed on location in Asia.



SEDC ANNUAL CONFERENCE | AUGUST



MCWHORTER ON THE MOVE | NOVEMBER

T E N N E S S E E

ENTERTAINMENT COMMISSION

Tennessee's creative economy reaches every corner of the state—from Memphis' historic stages to Nashville's world-class studios and Knoxville's renowned TV production facilities.

The Tennessee Entertainment Commission (TEC) launched major initiatives in 2025. In partnership with Sound Diplomacy and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD), regional music ecosystem studies covering 61 counties are underway, with studies already launched in West, Middle and East Tennessee.

Additionally, up to 180 free outdoor concerts will be held from 2026–2028 to expand access to live music and boost local economies. Lawrenceburg, Maryville, Dyersburg, Loudon, McMinnville and Shelbyville were the first selected for the Levitt AMP Series.

In June, "9-1-1: Nashville" began filming in Music City, creating more than 1,200 jobs, \$140 million in economic output, \$86 million in worker income and \$3 million in state sales tax revenue.

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Film & TV

New Jobs Created



3,187

\$116.2M+ Total Investment

Production Days Generated



2,161

172 Projects Supported

Music Scoring

New Jobs Created



552

\$1.1M+ Total Investment

Production Days Generated

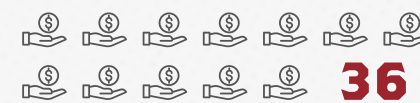


50

8 Projects Supported

Sponsorship Program

Sponsorships



36

\$8.3M+ Total Investment

Counties Impacted



20

\$220K State Support

Industry Resources

Production Directory

3,583 Profiles (+8.3%)

Locations Database

2,265 Locations (+8.8%)

Music Directory

778 Profiles (+25%)

Job Board

76 Companies (+65%)



KNOXVILLE MUSIC STUDY ROUNDTABLE | SEPTEMBER

"I CAN ONLY IMAGINE 2" SET VISIT | MAY

