Portions relevant to the Rochester Higher Education Development Committee

The 2005 legislature provided $3,200,000 for this project:

The law states:
Sec. 16. Rochester University $3,200,000 for FY 2006 $0 for FY 2007

(a) $200,000 is for the Rochester Higher Education Development Committee to carry out its planning activities. This is a onetime appropriation.
(b) $3,000,000 is for a onetime appropriation that must be deposited into the Rochester higher education development account under article 4. With the approval of the Higher Education Services Office, money in this account may be used to:
   (1) provide additional planning and development funds, if needed;
   (2) provide initial funding for academic program development; and
   (3) provide funding related to academic facilities, if needed.

The appropriation under this paragraph is available until June 30, 2009.

ARTICLE 4 ROCHESTER
Section 1. [ROCHESTER HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.]

Subdivision 1. [ESTABLISHMENT.] The Rochester Higher Education Development Committee is established to research and make recommendations to the governor and legislature on the creation of mission-driven postsecondary educational programs or institutions in the Rochester area that meet the educational needs of the region and the state and that capitalize on the unique opportunities for educational partnerships presented in the Rochester area.

Subd. 2. [MEMBERSHIP.] The committee is composed of 11 members, to be appointed by the governor, as follows:
(1) a trustee of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, or the trustee's designee;
(2) a regent of the University of Minnesota, or the regent's designee;
(3) six persons from the Rochester area representing business, health and medical sciences, and technology;
(4) the commissioner of finance, as a nonvoting member, or the commissioner's designee;
(5) one person who by training or experience has special expertise in postsecondary finance and planning; and
(6) one person who by training or experience has special expertise in postsecondary academic planning and programming.

Before the first meeting of the committee, the governor shall select one person from the committee who shall serve as chair.

Subd. 3. [COMPENSATION AND REMOVAL.] Appointments to the committee are not subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 15.0597. Members of the
committee are not entitled to reimbursement under Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, subdivision 6. Members may be removed and vacancies filled pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, subdivision 4. The director of the Higher Education Services Office may provide administrative support to the committee.

Subd. 4. [DUTIES.] (a) The committee shall develop a proposal for establishment and implementation of expanded higher education programs or institutions in Rochester. The committee's report must include recommendations on:

(1) the mission and focus of the programs or institutions;
(2) the nature of undergraduate and graduate programs to be offered;
(3) site and facility needs;
(4) funding sources and opportunities;
(5) operational needs;
(6) alliances or other types of cooperative arrangements with public and private institutions;
(7) governance structures; and
(8) mechanisms to ensure that the expanded programs are aligned with the unique needs and opportunities of the Rochester area and that programs take advantage of opportunities presented by regional business and industry.

(b) If the committee recommends any programmatic changes that result in institutional realignments, the committee must consult with the representatives of affected employees and address the continuation of collective bargaining and contractual rights and benefits, including accumulated sick leave, vacation time, seniority, time to tenure, separation or retirement benefits, and pension plan coverage.

(c) The committee must consider specifically whether expansion of the University of Minnesota in Rochester is the most appropriate method of meeting the region's needs.

(d) The committee may also research and provide recommendations on sites for the facilities and programs. The committee shall recommend any changes to Minnesota law required to implement recommendations of the committee.

Subd. 5. [REPORT.] The committee must issue a report with recommendations to the governor and the legislature by January 15, 2006.


Sec. 2. [ROCHESTER HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT.] A Rochester higher education development account is created in the state treasury in the special revenue fund. Money in this account is appropriated to the Higher Education Services Office for allocation to the committee established in section 1, subdivision 1, and the implementation activities outlined in article 1, section 2, subdivision 16, paragraph (b). The office shall serve as fiscal agent for the committee established in section 1.

Sec. 3. [EFFECTIVE DATE.] This article is effective the day following final enactment."