

## STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

### **USDA Seeks Applications to Support Regional Economic and Community Development Planning to Create Thriving Rural Communities**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 2024 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Acting Under Secretary Roger Glendenning today announced that USDA is seeking applications to implement regional economic and community development projects to create thriving communities for people in rural America.

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized the [Strategic Economic and Community Development \(SECD\)](#) initiative to support projects that will help rural people and economies prepare for the future. It can be used to implement projects that are included in multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral strategic community investment plans.

In fiscal year 2024, reserved funding is available under the following USDA Rural Development programs:

- [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#)
- [Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program](#)
- [Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loan and Grant Program](#)
- [Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees](#)
- [Rural Business Development Grants](#)

To be eligible for SECD reserved funding, applicants must meet the requirements and deadlines under the covered programs. Applicants must also submit a Form 1980-88, along with the strategic community investment plan to be implemented in part or in whole by the proposed project's completion. See additional requirements below.

- Applications for SECD reserved funding through the [Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loan and Grant Program](#) should be submitted electronically via [RD Apply](#). If submitting an electronic application is not possible, applicants may submit paper forms to the [USDA Rural Development office](#) where the project is located.
- To apply for SECD reserved funding under other covered grant programs or direct loan programs, applicants must submit forms to the [USDA Rural Development office](#) where the project is located.
- To apply for SECD reserved funding under covered loan guarantee programs, applicants must submit their Form 1980-88 concurrent with the Form 5001-1 and any documentation required under the [OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative](#) application guidelines.

For more information on requirements and deadlines under the covered programs, visit [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov). For additional information on SECD reserved funding, see page 10026 of the Feb. 13, 2024, [Federal Register](#).

USDA is particularly interested in applications that will advance Biden-Harris Administration priorities to:

- Reduce climate pollution and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.
- Ensure all rural residents have equitable access to Rural Development (RD) programs and benefits from RD-funded projects; and
- Help rural communities recover economically through more and better market opportunities and through improved infrastructure.

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