

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA to Prioritize Projects Supporting Regional Economic and Community Development Planning

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11, 2021 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today announced that USDA is seeking applications to fund projects that prioritize strategic investments that grow the economy and build prosperity in rural communities.

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized USDA to make [Strategic Economic and Community Development \(SECD\)](#) funding available to develop and implement strategic community investment plans. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, the covered Rural Development programs are:

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

To apply for funding, applicants must meet covered program requirements and application deadlines and submit Form RD 1980-88 to the nearest USDA office. Applicants who are applying for SECD funding through a loan guarantee program may submit forms under the [OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative](#) application guidelines.

Additional information is available in the Jan. 11, 2021, [Federal Register](#).

Interested parties can learn more about this opportunity during a webinar on Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 4 p.m. ET. Register to attend at https://globalmeetwebinar.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1415040&tp_key=af3bf09fle.

USDA encourages applications that will support recommendations made in the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB) to help improve life in rural America. Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investment. Key strategies include:

- Achieving e-Connectivity for Rural America
- Developing the Rural Economy
- Harnessing Technological Innovation
- Supporting a Rural Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life

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