

Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge (RPIC)

What does this initiative do?

This initiative provides planning support and technical assistance to foster placemaking activities in rural communities. Funds will help enhance capacity for broadband access; preserve cultural and historic structures; and support the development of transportation, housing, and recreational spaces.

Who may apply?

Public or private groups, organizations, or institutions that demonstrate experience and expertise in providing placemaking planning support and technical assistance to rural communities. Applicants must demonstrate existing and proposed partnerships with public, private, philanthropic, and community partners to provide assistance.

What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is a technical assistance, and planning process rural community leaders use to create places where people want to live, work and play.

What kind of funding is available?

USDA is making \$1 million in grants available. The maximum grant award is \$250,000.

The Agency seeks to partner with organizations located in the northeast, southern, midwestern and western regions of the United States.

How may funds be used?

Funds can be used to help rural communities access planning resources and technical assistance to develop actionable placemaking plans, convene partners, identify community needs, and implement priorities to build rural prosperity. Since broadband access is an essential component to providing this type of assistance, the Agency encourages planning support and technical assistance that helps build capacity for rural broadband expansion.

The assistance must be provided for up to two years.

What is an eligible area?

Planning must directly benefit cities or towns with 50,000 residents or less.

What key factors must plans include?

USDA encourages organizations to develop multijurisdictional or multisectoral plans that include, but are not limited to the following elements:

- evidence-based understanding of community assets, challenges and opportunities;
- a description of distinct community qualities and placemaking strategies to incorporate them into the planning process;
- a description of how planning process will respect and promote the distinctiveness of the community;
- a summary of qualitative and quantitative outcomes the community seeks to achieve;
- a vision statement that summarizes the most important outcomes that the community wants to see achieved through this plan.
- a list of goals, strategies, and tasks that are logical, targeted, measurable, and timely;
- a list of values for placemaking that leaders and stakeholders should use to determine planning strategies;
- evidence of broad community participation, public input and public buy-in to the project goals;
- a description of partners and partnerships involved in the planning process; and
- placemaking strategies intended to improve the local and regional economy, foster social and cultural vitality, and build capacity for increased broadband access.

How to apply

Applications are available at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Electronic applications must be submitted via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and a copy of the submission must be emailed to RD.Innovation@usda.gov by midnight Eastern Standard Time on Sept. 10, 2020.

For more information

For more information, contact Angela.Callie@usda.gov or call (202) 568-9738.

You may also contact your local office for assistance. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at rd.usda.gov. *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*