

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Seeks Applications to Strengthen Economic Conditions in Rural Areas

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14, 2020 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today announced that the department is accepting applications for grants for projects that promote economic development and job creation in rural areas.

USDA invites applications for loans and grants under the [Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant \(REDLG\)](#) program, subject to the availability of funding. USDA is issuing this notice to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, prepare and submit their applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within Fiscal Year 2021.

Through the REDLG program, USDA provides zero-interest loans and grants to rural utilities, which in turn pass through to local businesses for projects that will retain or create employment opportunities in rural communities. The funding may be used to assist with business start-up and expansion costs; business incubators; feasibility studies; advanced telecommunications and computer networks for medical, educational and job training services; and community facilities that spur economic development.

The deadlines for completed applications are:

- First Quarter, Sept. 30, 2020;
- Second Quarter, Dec. 31, 2020;
- Third Quarter, March 31, 2021; and
- Fourth Quarter, June 30, 2021.

Applications must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. (local time) to the USDA Rural Development [State Office](#) where the project is located.

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 investments in infrastructure, partnerships and innovation. Key strategies include:

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

For additional information, please see page 57186 of the Sept. 15 [Federal Register](#).

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