



News Release

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USDA Announces 47 Rural Communities and Regions that will Receive Technical Assistance to Help Build Long-Term Economic Growth

WASHINGTON, June 6, 2019 – Acting Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Joel Baxley today announced the names of [47 rural communities and regions that will receive technical assistance](#) to help create and implement long-term economic development plans.

“USDA and its partners are bringing local leaders and economic development experts together to create opportunity in some of the nation’s most economically challenged rural communities,” Baxley said. “Under the leadership of President Trump and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, USDA is committed to building prosperity in America’s rural cities and towns.”

USDA is providing the assistance through an initiative called [Rural Economic Development Innovation](#) (REDI). USDA’s Innovation Center created REDI to support recommendations identified in the [Report to the President from the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#).

Each of the 47 communities and regions will be paired with one of four partner organizations that will provide free technical assistance for up to two years to help rural towns and regions create and implement economic development plans. USDA awarded \$1.2 million in cooperative agreements to these partners in September 2018. The agreements will help the partners finance the free technical assistance.

The partners are the National Association of Counties Research Foundation, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership, McClure Engineering Company, and Purdue University Extension/Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky.

The following is a brief overview of the type of assistance each partner will provide:

- [The National Association of Counties Research Foundation](#) is partnering with the [National Association of Regional Councils](#) to develop a peer-learning program. Local and regional leaders in six rural communities and regions will be trained to implement multi-jurisdictional economic development plans and projects. The program will include workshops, team mentoring, educational webinars, community case studies and interactive learning.
- [McClure Engineering Company](#) is partnering with [CO.STARTERS](#), a Tennessee-based consulting firm, to help four rural communities and regions build plans to spur economic

and community development, strengthen workforce readiness programs, and support entrepreneurship.

- [Purdue University Extension](#) and [Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky](#) will support eight communities and regions to build long-term economic development plans by leveraging public and private funding sources.
- [The Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#) will provide technical assistance to 29 rural communities and regions through the organization's [WealthWorks](#) model. This model will help rural regions and communities identify and market local assets.

“We are thrilled to be working with McClure Engineering and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership as they help two New Mexico regions grow their economies,” said USDA Rural Development State Director Art Garcia. “Both areas will receive the professional training to diversify their job markets and grow the number of businesses that support their respective economies.”

McClure Engineering will partner with the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments in Grant County. The Planning will help increase the amount of export-oriented small businesses in Grant County and the number of businesses that provide recreational activities to Gila National Forest tourists. Planning will also help expand opportunities to secure capital from investors and diversify the local economy.

The California based Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) will work with The Shiprock Chapter of the Navajo Nation of in Northwest New Mexico. The applicant will use economic development planning assistance to support tourism in the Shiprock and San Juan County region.

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force's findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America.

The REDI initiative was developed by the USDA [Rural Development Innovation Center](#) to support recommendations identified in the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#). To view the categories of the recommendations, please view the [Rural Prosperity infographic](#).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

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