



Rural Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NORTH DAKOTA STRATEGIC PLAN

**For
Fiscal Year
2024**

MISSION STATEMENT

USDA Rural Development in North Dakota is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life of our state's rural and Tribal communities.

VISION STATEMENT

USDA Rural Development in North Dakota strives to maximize the opportunities and benefits available through USDA Rural Development programs to ensure that our state's rural and Tribal areas remain safe and thriving places to live and work.

GOALS:

1. Be leaders in the future development of North Dakota and role models for USDA.
2. Provide resources and assistance that expand opportunities for economic development and improve the quality of life in rural, Tribal, and strategically identified communities.
3. Develop effective partnerships to deliver greater investments of resources and technical assistance to rural and Tribal communities in North Dakota.
4. Provide timely, equitable, and impartial services to internal and external customers.
5. Engage in continuous organizational improvement for appropriate alignment and delivery of resources.

OBJECTIVES:

Goal 1: Be leaders in the future development of North Dakota and role models for USDA.

Objective 1: Promote and engage in authentic partnerships to improve services and expand opportunities in North Dakota.

Objective 2: Attract, inspire, and retain an engaged and motivated workforce of individuals who are mission-driven, service-minded, and reflect the values and diversity of those we serve.

Objective 3: Remain well-informed on current events, initiatives, and regional and local dynamics and challenges as it relates to supporting economic and community development.

Objective 4: Be a team of data-driven, customer experience-centered, learning professionals and community members that values collaboration, communication, and mutual respect.

Goal 2: Provide resources and assistance that expand opportunities for economic development and improve the quality of life in rural, Tribal, and strategically identified communities in North Dakota.

Objective 1: Improve rural and Tribal community infrastructure, including access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet and power, clean and safe water and sewer systems, and cornerstone community facilities.

Objective 2: Boost the financial security of rural and Tribal communities and generational wealth of individuals and families through access to affordable, accessible housing.

Objective 3: Increase capacity, sustainability, and economic vitality of small businesses, nonprofit organizations, service providers, and cooperatives in rural and Tribal communities.

Objective 4: Support investments in renewable energy infrastructure and energy efficiency improvements, prioritizing those that enhance the sustainable economic growth and prosperity the community.

Objective 5: Implement and coordinate outreach activities to maximize the use of special funding authorities, set-aside funds, and disaster funds to support strategically-identified [priority communities](#) and [REAP Zones](#) in North Dakota.

Goal 3: Develop effective partnerships to deliver greater investments of resources and technical assistance to rural and Tribal communities in North Dakota.

Objective 1: Identify, build relationships, collaborate, and regularly communicate with federal, Tribal, state, regional, and local agencies, and non-profit organizational partners to provide training, increase awareness, and improve understanding of Rural Development programs and initiatives to support rural and Tribal areas.

Objective 2: Maximize the use and leveraging of public and private funding sources to expand capacity and increase the benefits of Rural Development resources.

Objective 3: Increase outreach and partnerships with financial institutions and non-traditional lenders to encourage access to and investment of capital in rural and Tribal areas.

Goal 4: Provide timely, equitable, and impartial services to internal and external customers.

Objective 1: Create opportunity for and listen to feedback from internal and external customers to drive informed decision-making and service delivery.

Objective 2: Identify opportunities that build trust and reduce barriers to increase access and program participation to Rural Development.

Objective 3: Manage loan and grant portfolio and uphold civil rights through effective customer service practices and actions.

Objective 4: Embrace a culture that respects, welcomes, and advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for all employees and those we serve.

Goal 5: Engage in continuous organizational improvement for appropriate alignment and delivery of resources.

Objective 1: Identify new opportunities and assess effectiveness of existing communication and marketing tools, strategies, resources, and platforms using qualitative and quantitative analyses.

Objective 2: Develop and deliver consistent, effective onboarding and ongoing training that supports successful employee performance and contributes to reaching organizational goals and key performance initiatives.

Objective 3: Encourage all employees to be creative and innovative as it relates to processes and systems to reduce processing times and paperwork, improve service delivery, and ensure time and resources are dedicated most effectively and efficiently.

Objective 4: Evaluate needs and advocate for adequate allocation of staffing and resources to support a strong workforce and workplace environment, and deliver programs to serve North Dakota, and uphold the Rural Development mission.

CORE VALUES:

Our success requires:

- **Transparency** -- Making our agency's priorities, processes, investments, and opportunities more open so that the public can learn how USDA Rural Development supports North Dakotans every day in every way.
- **Participation** -- Providing opportunities for the public and stakeholders to shape and improve services provided by USDA Rural Development.
- **Collaboration** -- Working cooperatively on policy implementation and program development.
- **Communication** -- Developing and adapting tools and strategies to improve service and program delivery.
- **Accountability** -- Ensuring that team member performance contributes to the achievement of USDA Rural Development and North Dakota strategic goals.
- **Customer Focus** -- Serving our rural and Tribal neighbors by providing information and advice that is timely, accurate, and responsive to address diverse and unique needs.
- **Professionalism** -- Recruiting, maintaining, and supporting a highly skilled, diverse, and mission-driven workforce.
- **Results Orientation** -- Measuring performance and making organizational decisions to direct staffing and resources to serve most effectively and efficiently the public and the needs of our team.
- **Responsible Lending** -- Serving as a catalyst to increase the availability of resources in rural and Tribal areas through sound grant and loan underwriting, strong portfolio management, and consistent oversight and management of the programs.

Leadership Strategies:

- Take significant and measurable steps toward the accomplishment of [priorities](#) identified under the Secretary and Administration's leadership: Addressing Climate Change, Advancing Racial Justice, Equity, Opportunity, and Rural Prosperity, Creating More and Better Market Opportunities, and Tackling Food and Nutrition Insecurity.
- Increase cross-training opportunities and program knowledge among Rural Development team members and with partners and stakeholders.
- Identify and create opportunities for professional development and growth, promotion, and recognition of team members.
- Evaluate strategies to improve internal and external communication.
- Implement effective methods to discuss and resolve conflict and management challenges.
- Empower leadership to make informed decisions.
- Pursue new and creative approaches to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness in the delivery of programs and agency initiatives.