

## STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

### USDA Seeks Applications for Projects that Support Strategic Economic and Community Development Across Jurisdictions

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced that USDA is seeking applications for projects that support multi-jurisdictional plans under the Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) program.

Section 6025 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 provides the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to give priority to projects that support strategic economic or community development plans that serve two or more jurisdictions. The priority points can be awarded for applications in [Community Facilities programs](#), the [Rural Business Development Grant Program](#), the [Business & Industry Loan Guarantee Program](#) and in [USDA Water and Environmental programs](#).

To apply for SECD priority points, applicants must submit Form RD 1980-88, "Strategic Economic and Community Development (section 6025) Priority" by Sept. 30, 2018, or by the application deadline for the underlying program, whichever comes first. That form should be sent to the USDA Rural Development Area Office servicing the area where the project is located. For a list of area offices, visit the [state office website](#). See page 21762 of the May 10 [Federal Register](#) for additional information.

Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements of the underlying USDA program. Consideration for regional development priority is based on (1) how well the project supports a multi-jurisdictional plan, and (2) how well the plan addresses collaboration and investments from other federal and philanthropic agencies.

USDA encourages applications that will support recommendations made in the report to the President from the [Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) 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

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