

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Is Accepting Applications for Placemaking Cooperative Agreements to Spur Economic Growth and Community Development in Rural America

The Department Increases Total Funding to Up to \$4 Million to Help More Rural and Tribal Communities Access Placemaking Assistance

WASHINGTON, June 30, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small today announced that USDA is accepting applications for cooperative agreements to help eligible entities provide planning, training and technical assistance to foster placemaking activities in rural and Tribal communities.

The funds are being made available through the [Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge \(RPIC\)](#). USDA is increasing RPIC funding to up to \$4 million to assist more rural communities access placemaking assistance. The previous funding level was \$3 million.

Today, USDA is inviting eligible entities to apply for up to \$250,000 to help rural and Tribal communities create plans to enhance capacity for high-speed internet access; preserve cultural and historic structures; and support development in transportation, housing and recreational spaces.

This technical assistance will help communities convene partners and identify community needs to develop placemaking plans. These plans will help rural areas build back better and stronger. The entities must support participating rural communities for up to two years.

The Department seeks to partner with at least one entity in the Northeast, South, Midwest and West regions of the United States. Public or private groups, organizations or institutions that demonstrate experience in providing placemaking technical assistance and administering federal grants are eligible to apply.

USDA is offering [priority points](#) to projects that advance key priorities under the Biden-Harris Administration to help communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, advance equity and combat climate change. These extra points will increase the likelihood of funding for projects that will advance these key priorities in rural America.

USDA encourages applicants who will serve communities participating in the [Rural Partner's Network](#). USDA also encourages applications that support communities planning projects that enhance the capacity to build high-speed internet infrastructure, including investments under USDA's [ReConnect program](#).

Electronic applications must be submitted via [grants.gov](#) by Aug. 15, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. For more information, contact: RD.RPIC@usda.gov or visit page 39053 of the June 30 [Federal Register](#).

USDA will host an informational webinar for applicants on July 13, 2022, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time. To register, visit: https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_Pxqi9XCZQuu6I1wWs8cVSw. The Department will announce in the coming weeks a series of virtual office hours for applicants to ask USDA staff questions about the funding opportunity.

Today's announcement follows the USDA and the University of Kentucky's recent unveiling of the [Rural America Placemaking Toolkit](#). It is a free digital toolkit to help rural leaders build placemaking plans in small towns and communities across America.

Placemaking is a collaborative planning and technical assistance process to build livable communities in rural America. It helps rural community leaders develop plans to create quality places where people will want to live, work, visit, learn and explore. The plans can enhance a rural community's capacity to provide people access to economic development opportunities as well as community infrastructure such as affordable housing, safe and reliable transportation, high-speed internet and more.

For more information about rural placemaking, visit [Rural Placemaking | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#).

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