



News Release

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USDA Invests \$222 Million in Rural Community Infrastructure to Help People in 44 States, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and Puerto Rico

More than \$3 Million in Loan & Grant Funding Will Help Vermont & New Hampshire Rural Communities Rebuild & Build Out

WILLARD, Mo., Nov. 19, 2021 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary for Rural Development Xochitl Torres Small today announced that [USDA is investing \\$222 million to build and improve critical community facilities in 44 states, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and Puerto Rico](#). This community infrastructure funding will benefit nearly 2.5 million people in rural communities. It also includes \$132 million to support health care, food security, and emergency response services for more than 850,000 rural residents in 37 states.

“The Biden-Harris Administration is delivering on its promise to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuild our economy,” Torres Small said. “Rural Americans need emergency response, hospitals and medical facilities, and USDA’s loans and grants invest in critical infrastructure to make that possible. USDA Rural Development puts rural people at the forefront of investment and opportunity to help us all build back better, stronger, and more resilient.”

Cheryl Ducharme, Acting State Director for USDA Rural Development in Vermont and New Hampshire (RD) was pleased to make the announcement, which includes \$3,014,790 in grants and loans for projects within the two states. “We are seeing essential recovery and rebuilding happening every day in our rural towns and villages,” she said. “RD Community Programs are funding transformational projects at a crucial time, securing healthier, happier lives and a more promising future for the families and neighbors who make their hometowns special places to live and visit.”

USDA is investing in 536 projects through the [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#). The assistance will fund essential community services that will help keep rural America resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The projects will finance emergency response vehicles and equipment; build or improve hospitals, clinics and schools; and combat food insecurity.

For example:

- A [\\$341,063 grant to the town of Tuftonboro, NH](#), will help build a new patrol station for the Police Department. Features include a secure lobby and booking

area, private entry for victims and suspects, expanded storage, dedicated administrative area and meeting space, locker and break rooms, and improved video surveillance. 2,387 rural residents will benefit from the project.

- A modern Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) addition at The Sharon Academy (TSA) in Sharon, Vt., will maximize enrollment thanks to a [\\$1.91 million Community Facilities loan](#). The green tech-informed project will provide new learning and teaching opportunities for TSA's students and educators for generations to come. 1,502 rural residents will be positively impacted.
- \$37,490 in grants for the Taproot Farm and Environmental Education Center in Lancaster, NH, will be used to purchase coolers and freezers, thereby expanding access to local food during the pandemic and times of food insecurity. The center's Root Seller Marketplace also will grow its capacity to collect and safely store surplus produce from farms and gardens before distributing it to local food donor organizations. These improvements will benefit 3,507 rural people.

The investments announced today will support community infrastructure projects in Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Wyoming, Guam and Puerto Rico.

Background:

More than 100 types of projects are eligible for Community Facilities funding. Eligible applicants include municipalities, public bodies, nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized Native American tribes. Projects must be in rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less. For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>.

Today's investments complement the recently announced funding availability under USDA's [Emergency Rural Health Care Grant Program](#), which also is being administered through the Community Facilities program. Through this program, USDA is making up to \$500 million available through the American Rescue Plan to help rural health care facilities, tribes and communities expand access to COVID-19 vaccines, health care services and nutrition assistance.

Under the Emergency Rural Health Care Grant Program, Recovery Grant applications will be accepted on a continual basis until funds are expended. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/erhc.

Interested parties should contact their [USDA Rural Development state office](#) for information about additional funding, application procedures and eligibility. Also see the [Community Facilities Direct Loan Program Guidance Book for Applicants](#) (PDF, 669 KB) for a detailed overview of the application process.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate, smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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