



FEBRUARY 2024 GRANT RESOURCES NEWSLETTER



GRANTS



CREATIVE GIVE BACK CHALLENGE is open and accepting applications. Creative EDC's 11th Annual Give Back Challenge will offer an award of up to \$25,000 in consulting services to spur creative economic development projects. Creative EDC has expertise in strategic planning, product development, organizational development, downtown and small business development, entrepreneurship, and many other areas of economic development. Units of local government and nonprofit economic development organizations in NC are eligible, which also includes SC and VA.

Communities do not have to be economically distressed. The types of projects we will consider are as wide-ranging as the creativity of the applicant pool. The staff-selected finalist projects are reviewed and assessed by an independent Review Panel of strategic partners who select the winner. **Applications are due February 19, 2024, by 5:00 PM.** For more information, including examples of prior selections and details about the application process, please go to: <https://creativeedc.com/paying-it-forward/the-creative-give-back/aboutapplication/>.



BRIC DTA REQUEST - FISCAL YEAR 2023 PERIOD: Interested communities and Tribes are asked to submit a BRIC Direct Technical Assistance Request Form to be considered for this next cycle of selections. There is no requirement for a previous BRIC grant sub-application or award, or an approved hazard mitigation plan - to be considered for selection. **The open period to submit the form is** Oct. 16, 2023, **through Feb. 29, 2024.** Complete the

attached link to the BRIC / FEMA.gov Direct Technical Assistance Request Form,

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_form-ff-206-fy-22-155.pdf, and email it to fema-bric-dta-submission@fema.dhs.gov <fema-bric-dta-submission@fema.dhs.gov>.



NCDOT, STATE PLANNING and RESEARCH (SPR) Funds: The SPR Grant is a reimbursement-based program; ECC's Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RPOs) are unable to encumber funds that might be necessary to process invoices during the reimbursement process. While ECC administers this program, which directly impacts the RPO budget, its fund balance, unfortunately, is insufficient to sustain and supplement the transactions that could be expected. In our region, grant recipients will provide 5% local match, the state reimburses 15%, and the federal government reimburses 80%.

The plan or study is contracted out by the RPO to a qualified planning or engineering firm to work Full Time on the project; a steering committee may collaborate with the firm, the RPO, and local officials - to guide the project. To apply, reach out to your RPO. The Senior Transportation Planner, Becca Eversole, Down East RPO at beversole@eccog.org, covers 4 counties - Carteret, Craven (outside New Bern MPO), Jones, and Pamlico and Transportation Planner, Mickey Anderson, Eastern Carolina RPO at manderson@eccog.org, covers 4 others - Duplin, Greene, Lenoir, and Wayne County (outside Goldsboro MPO). The application **deadline is February 29th, 2024**

NATIONAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE (NEVI): The NEVI program, stemming from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, was designed to provide \$5B funding throughout the country over the next 5 years (July 2022 - June 2027), to create a network of 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations along designated priority alternative fuel corridors. North Carolina will receive \$109M to install electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure. The main goal of this program is to provide funding to Justice40 communities, filling the disparity gaps by improving transportation infrastructure in at least 40% of disadvantaged communities. Below are the pertinent requirements to participate in NEVI funding.

- Stations must be installed every 50 miles along these priority alternative fuel corridors and must be located within a 1-mile radius of the corridor.
- Stations must be equipped with 4 Combined Charging System (CCS) Ports to allow direct current (DC) to allow fast charging for 4 vehicles.
- Stations must be able to provide at least 150 kilowatts (kW) of direct current (DC) simultaneously to each of the 4 charging ports, totaling 600 kilowatts (kW).
- Stations must be in operation for a minimum of 5 years, be open to the public 24-hours/day, and 7 days/week for charging.

For more information and to learn about host site benefits and how to access the database (updated on Dec. 20, 2023) for networking between host sites and developers, access the link, <https://www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies/environmental/climate-change/Pages/national-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-program.aspx>. For those interested, the NEVI program encourages businesses who may be interested in applying to register, sign up, and enter information in the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) database by clicking, <https://publicinput.com/nevi-networking>. By submitting your information, communities are not under any legal obligation. Please disseminate this information to any contacts within your network - to those who may be interested in participating.

The NC Clean Transportation Team will host a **Zoom webinar on Friday, March 1 at 11:00 AM** discussing the benefits, guidelines and requirements in applying for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program. Join the Zoom Meeting at <https://ncsu.zoom.us/j/98276139983?pwd=OCswQ3JoSoF6cm1FYzVOB3VnaFNhUT09> Meeting ID: 982 7613 9983 Passcode: 648625. For those interested in receiving an invitation to the call, please contact Alrik Lunsford at aklunsfo@ncsu.edu or Heather Brutz at hbrutz@ncsu.edu.

GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION: FLOOD MITIGATION PROGRAM - Golden LEAF's program awards will not exceed \$1,000,000. Projects requesting more than \$500,000 must



complete the application addendum found on the Flood Mitigation Program webpage and submit the addendum with the application.

Eligible projects include:

- Construction of new or improvement of existing publicly owned stormwater infrastructure, including natural drainage infrastructure and flood control equipment.
- Repair of existing stormwater infrastructure damaged or destroyed by flooding, which must include improvements to mitigate against flooding.
- Engineering expenses related to planning and development of flood mitigation solutions. (See guidelines for additional detail on eligible use of funds in this category.)

Characteristics of competitive proposals include:

- Efforts to mitigate against hazards with a frequency beyond a hurricane or other named storm.
- Clear benefit for residents, businesses, and other entities within a community with priority on those where flooding poses a risk for life, health, and safety.
- A demonstrated likelihood of success and feasibility demonstrated by engineering reports and analysis by professional engineers.
- A current (*within the last 6 months*) estimate of probable cost or another similar document.
- Linked to a comprehensive stormwater assessment or planning effort with community support.
- Sustainable outcomes that can be maintained following use of funds.
- Leveraging of non-Golden LEAF funds or demonstrating that local funds are unavailable and/or insufficient to complete the project.

Funds may only be awarded to units of local government from all 100 counties are eligible. For purposes of this program, units of local governments include counties and cities and their boards, agencies, commissions, authorities, and institutions. The **next deadline** for the program is **Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 12:00 PM** with applications **to be considered by the Golden LEAF Board on June 6, 2024**. For more information, visit <https://goldenleaf.org/mitigation/>.



NC TOBACCO TRUST FUND COMMISSION (NCTTFC) 2024 GRANT CYCLE OPENED:

Last year, NCTTFC helped farmers upgrade, diversify, and maintain 150 family farms in 46 counties, including Greene and Wayne Counties. Farmers can apply and possibly receive grants in various amounts. The UMO AgPrime (University of Mount Olive) and NC AgVentures (NC Cooperative Extension Service) programs will serve over 100 families or communities. The

Commission will give priority to projects based on size of geographic area, number of people impacted, and the impact on the agricultural community. **The 2024 Grant Cycle applications are due March 8, 2024;** visit this link for the 6-step process, <https://tobaccotrustfund.org/2022-grant-cycle/>.



GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION OPENS THE SPRING 2024 ROUND of the GOLDEN LEAF SITE Program.

The program is open to nonprofits and local governments in all 100 counties with a priority for rural, economically distressed areas. Through this program, Golden LEAF will award funds to communities to identify potential sites for economic development, enable completion of due diligence sites already identified, or extend public utilities to or conduct grading and clearing of publicly owned or controlled sites for which due diligence has been completed.

Additional details and resources are available at <https://goldenleaf.org/site/>. Interested organizations visit <https://goldenleaf.org/SITE/contact-staff/> or by email to SITE@goldenleaf.org to discuss a potential project. There is approximately \$9.4 M available for the SITE Program during this round. The maximum award for a development project is \$1.5 M. **Applications are due on March 14 at 12:00 PM, noon** for decisions made in June.



GRANTS: Applications are due quarterly and are intended only for “shovel-ready projects” to foster local relationships through technology upgrades, or the arts, and in outdoor spaces or community centers. The **spring deadline for applications is open from January to March 29**. Elected officials, town managers/employees, tribal leaders, or non-profit community leaders from small towns with population less than 50,000 may apply for a maximum grant of \$50,000. For more information see, <https://www.t-mobile.com/brand/honmetown-grants>.



NC DOT, CARBON REDUCTION PLAN (CRP) GRANTS: The CRP grant program (resulted from the American Rescue Plan) provides funding for local projects with a goal of reducing carbon emissions. Funding guidelines for these grants are left intentionally open-ended, leaving municipalities and counties with a wide range of options. Projects may range from purchasing new EV transit vehicles (subject to Buy America), new traffic signalization, roundabouts, bike lanes, greenways, sidewalks, and others. The CRP grant program, as per most federal programs, requires a 20% local match for all grants awarded.

CRP projects are locally administered, but DOT can be used for assistance. If any entity is interested in applying for CRP funding, apply through ***DERPO*** or ***ECRPO***. **NCDOT is accepting applications on a rolling, quarterly basis**. For a CRP summary, visit the spring 2023 overview, [Carbon-Reduction-Program-RPO-Summary-Sheet.pdf \(eccog.org\)](https://www.eccog.org/Carbon-Reduction-Program-RPO-Summary-Sheet.pdf).



NCDIT Launches Expanded FirstNet Network Funding Opportunity to Enhance Public Safety Applications; it provides an increased \$2M funding opportunity through the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) **FirstNet Network**. The FirstNet Network is supported by the NCDIT FirstTech team. This broadband network is designed to maintain communication during disasters and other large-scale events that may disrupt communication channels. Applications will be awarded to projects that demonstrate the largest impact on public safety, with additional focus on unserved and underserved areas.

Funding will be based on a project plan developed by FirstNet in consultation with the applicant. Matching funds will be required from the applicant, and NCDIT’s FirstTech team will use the match rate as part of the grading scale for determining which projects to award. In-kind match will also be accepted.

Applicants must be an entity of North Carolina state government, which includes: All state government organizations; UNC System or individual schools, universities, or centers within the system; and N.C. Community College System or individual schools, colleges, or centers within the system. Only 1 application per campus will be accepted. However, the project plan can involve the deployment of several solutions or infrastructure(s) to achieve coverage enhancement on that campus. Examples of projects include: construction of a new macro cellular tower site; small cell deployments; and temporary deployable assets to achieve needed coverage, among others.

Applications may be submitted on a rolling basis with projects that meet the selection criteria awarded as funding is available. Evaluations of the initial submissions will be conducted in March 2024 with awarded projects announced in April. For more information visit, <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/news/press-releases/2023/11/15/ncdits-firsttech-team-launches-2m-funding-opportunity-expand-public-safety-broadband-network-state>.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED 4 OPPORTUNITIES: NEA Grants for Arts Projects 1, FY2025; NEA Literature Fellowships: Poetry, FY2025; NEA Research Grants in the Arts, FY2025 ; and NEA Challenge America, FY2025. To view the list visit, <https://www.grants.gov/search-grants/?agencyCode=NEA>.

USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT: COMMUNITY FACILITIES DIRECT LOAN & GRANT IN NORTH CAROLINA – This program provides affordable funding to



develop essential community facilities in rural areas, such as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area. Eligible borrowers include: Public bodies, community-based non-profits, and federally recognized Tribes. Private and commercial businesses are ineligible.

Eligible rural areas include: villages, towns, and cities with no more than 20,000 residents, and Federally Recognized Tribal Lands - according to the latest US Census Data. Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment, and pay related project expenses. Examples of essential community facilities include: 1) Health care facilities, such as hospitals, medical clinics, dental clinics, nursing homes or assisted living facilities; 2) Public facilities, such as town halls, courthouses, airport hangars, or street improvements; 3) Community support services, such as childcare centers, community centers, fairgrounds, or transitional housing; 4) Public safety services, such as fire departments, police stations, prisons, police vehicles, fire trucks, public works vehicles, or equipment; 5) Educational services, such as museums, libraries, or private schools; and 6) Utility services, such as telemedicine or distance learning equipment. **Applications are accepted year-round through the local USDA, Rural Development office** via <https://www.rd.usda.gov/find-your-local-area-office>. For more information visit, <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program/nc>



USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT: WATER & WASTE DISPOSAL LOAN & GRANT PROGRAM in NORTH CAROLINA - It provides funding for clean and reliable drinking

water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. This program assists qualified applicants who are not otherwise able to obtain commercial credit on reasonable terms – through long-term, low-interest loans; and if funds are available, a grant may be combined

with a loan if necessary to maintain reasonable user costs.

Eligible applicants include: Most state and local governmental entities, private nonprofits, and Federally recognized Tribes. Areas that may be served include: Rural areas and towns with populations of 10,000 or less and Tribal lands in rural areas. (To determine if a property is in an eligible rural area, click on one of the USDA Loan program links - <https://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do> - and then select the Property Eligibility Program link. When you select a Rural Development program, you will be directed to the appropriate property eligibility screen for the Rural Development loan program you have selected.) **Applications are accepted year-round through the local USDA, Rural Development office** via <https://www.rd.usda.gov/find-your-local-area-office>.

Funds may be used to finance the acquisition, construction, or improvement of:

- Drinking water sourcing, treatment, storage, and distribution;
- Sewer collection, transmission, treatment, and disposal;
- Solid waste collection, disposal, and closure; and
- Storm water collection, transmission, and disposal.

In some cases, funding may also be available for related activities such as:

- Legal and engineering fees;
- Land acquisition, water and land rights, permits and equipment;
- Start-up operations and maintenance;
- Interest incurred during construction;
- Purchase of facilities to improve service or prevent loss of service; and
- Other costs determined to be necessary for completion of the project.

For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs/water-waste-disposal-loan-grant-program/nc>.

USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT: SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING REPAIR LOANS & GRANTS in NORTH CAROLINA: It is also known as the Section 504 Home Repair

Program to provide loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes or grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety



hazards.

To qualify, you must:

- Be the homeowner and occupy the house;
- Be unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere;
- Have a household income that does not exceed the **very low limit** determined by

county; and

- Be age 62 or older - for grants.

Loans may be used to repair, improve, or modernize homes OR remove health and safety hazards.

To repair, improve, or modernize homes a maximum loan is \$7,500 and a maximum grant is \$10,000 with the fixed loan interest rate at 1% for 20 years. Full title service is required if the total outstanding balance on Section 504 loans is greater than \$25,000.

Grants must be used to remove health and safety hazards and have a lifetime limit of \$10,000. If the property is sold in less than 3 years, the grant must be repaid. **Applications are available year-round, as funding lasts.** For more information view, <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-programs/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants/nc>.



USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT: RURAL HOMES LOANS (DIRECT PROGRAM) - It is also referred to as the Section 502 Direct Loan Program to assist low-

and very-low-income applicants obtain decent, safe and sanitary housing in eligible rural areas by providing payment assistance to increase an applicant's repayment ability.

Payment assistance is a type of subsidy that reduces the mortgage payment for a short time.

Borrowers are required to repay all or a portion of the payment subsidy received over the

life of the loan when the title to the property transfers or when the borrower is no longer living in the dwelling.

A number of factors are considered when determining an applicant's eligibility for Single Family Direct Home Loans. At a minimum, an applicant's interest in obtaining a direct loan must have an adjusted family income that is at or below the applicable low-income limit for the area where he/she wishes to buy a house and he/she must demonstrate a willingness and ability to repay debt.

Applicants must:

- Be without decent, safe, and sanitary housing;
- Be unable to obtain a loan from other resources on terms and conditions that he/she can reasonably be expected to meet;
- Agree to occupy the property as his/her primary residence;
- Have the legal capacity to incur a loan obligation;
- Meet citizenship or eligible noncitizen requirements; and
- Not be suspended or debarred from participation in federal programs.

Properties financed with direct loan funds must not have market value in excess of the applicable area loan limit and must not be designed for income producing activities. **Applications are accepted year-round through the local USDA, Rural Development office** via <https://www.rd.usda.gov/find-your-local-area-office>. Search <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-programs/single-family-housing-direct-home-loans/nc>.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE: STRATEGIC ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - **Application Deadline: Open.**

Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) supports projects that promote and implement strategic community investment plans. These plans use the unique strengths of rural communities to advance prosperity. USDA Rural Development helps finance these projects

to build community prosperity by using community assets, identifying resources, convening partners, and leveraging federal, state, local, or private funding.

To be eligible for SECD, a project must:

- Be eligible for the covered program and be carried out in a rural area; and
- Support a multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral strategic community investment plan.



USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT: TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES - Application Deadline: Open.

USDA Rural Development offers financial assistance to eligible service providers that will construct, improve, or expand telecommunication and broadband networks in rural areas. Applications will be accepted from entities that provide telecommunications in qualified rural areas, which include: State and local governmental entities; federally recognized Tribes; non-profits, including cooperatives, and limited dividend or mutual associations; and for-profit businesses, which must be a corporation or limited liability company.

Eligible areas are towns with a population of 5,000 or less, those that are without telecommunications facilities, or areas where the applicant is the recognized telecommunications provider. Contact the local RD office to determine whether the proposed service area qualifies via <https://www.rd.usda.gov/find-your-local-area-office>. For more information on other programs administered by RUS Telecommunications please visit, <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/telecom-programs>.

Types of available funding include:

- Cost-of-Money Loans are direct loans from USDA Rural Utilities Service.
- Loan Guarantees of up to 80% allow private lenders, including the Federal Financing Bank (FFB), to extend credit to qualified borrowers in rural areas.
- Hardship Loans may be used, at the sole discretion of USDA Rural Utilities Service, to assist applicants in meeting financial feasibility requirements for applications to serve underserved areas.



MULTIFAMILY RECYCLING GRANT PROGRAM: The NCDEQ grant offers funding to initiate or expand multifamily recycling programs within the state and is open to local governments, recycling businesses or non-profits, multifamily property owners or management companies, public housing authorities, and colleges and universities for off-campus housing. **Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.**

Search, <https://www.deq.nc.gov/environmental-assistance-and-customer-service/multifamily-recycling-grant-rfp/open>. For more information or assistance please contact Elise Traywick, elise.traywick@deq.nc.gov at (919) 707-8135.

UPDATES



HOST AN UNC SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT LEAD FOR NORTH CAROLINA FELLOW; APPLY BY MARCH 8!

Lead for NC aims to create the next generation of local government leaders in North Carolina. Lead for NC places recent college graduates in full-time, paid local government fellowships to work on transformative community projects that *you* identify.

First, Lead for NC vets and sends candidates to your organization to interview. Subsequently, in July, the UNC School of Government provides up to 3 weeks of training. In August, Fellows start their service and spend the entire year working on projects identified by your organization, receiving ongoing support and training from the UNC School of Government.

Lead for NC Fellows have been working on a range of projects from helping local governments navigate ARP funding to ensuring ADA compliance. Some of our fellows are housed in the manager's office, while others work in departments such as public works, planning and zoning, or parks and recreation. This program is a great way to increase capacity in your organization and to create a pipeline of future employees in your organization. In the previous cohort, half of our fellows continued to work in local government, predominantly continuing the projects they initiated during the fellowship. To date, fellows have secured over \$93 million in grants to advance key community initiatives. Our managers estimate cost savings at \$6+ million due to their contributions.

Every local government partner receives a subsidy to alleviate their cost share in contributing to the program. Thanks to our philanthropic supporters, particularly the State Employees' Credit Union Foundation, our most distressed communities will receive significant subsidies **to hire a full-time Fellow - an employee to increase your government's capacity!** The exact subsidy amount will be determined based on the total need of the jurisdictions that apply. Fellows receive a living stipend and competitive benefits from UNC-Chapel Hill while working at your organization.

The deadline to apply is March 8, 2024. The application only takes 5 minutes. You can access the application, <https://lfnc.sog.unc.edu/apply/>, or navigate to this web address leadfornc.com/hostlfnc. Please navigate to these links to access an informational flyer, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OImUMpxwoaA6fzqRHHA3P2D9woISIsqr/view>, and a FAQs page, <https://lfnc.sog.unc.edu/for-governments/>. Please contact Dylan Russell, LFNC Program Director, with any questions at russell@sog.unc.edu.

The program will host optional virtual informational session for interested governments on the following dates. You can add the times to your calendar by clicking the links below.

- Tuesday, Feb 27 at 2 PM, <https://www.addevent.com/event/dT20138950>.
- Thursday, Feb 29 at 12 PM, <https://www.addevent.com/event/fr20138955>.

THE 2024 STATE ENERGY CONFERENCE OF NORTH CAROLINA: It will be held on April 23-24 at the McKimmon Conference and Training Center in Raleigh. Plan to network, learn best practices, hear about successful case studies, engage in important energy discussions, and other activities. Choose from among 30 different sessions in 6 separate tracks. Network with exhibitors, sponsors and attendees during designated break times. Receive professional continuing education credits (access to all sessions and credits). Register for conference at this link, <https://mckimmoncenter.ungerboeck.com/prod/emc00/PublicSignIn.aspx?&aat=54703943686a30414f5a4e4369326e4374736255364173597936717539707153436e462b776130644e2f513d>. Full access to all conference sessions through the conference app will be available for 3 weeks after the conference is complete.

ECC ASSISTS NC COASTAL FEDERATION WITH EDA GRANT ADMINISTRATION – In partnership with Carteret County, the NC Coastal Federation (<https://www.nccoast.org/>) applied for and received an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to build a shellfish aquaculture hub. The Federation will build an industrial structure that will provide shellfish growers with basic logistical needs – access to prime growing waters, working / staging area, cold storage, and a distribution area. ECC, as the Economic Development District for EDA, supported the grant application and serves as grant administrator for the project.

ECC is also assisting other organizations in developing potential grant applications for EDA. If you have a project idea that you feel may be a good candidate for an EDA grant, please reach out to ECC Executive Director David Bone. at dbone@eccog.org.



VISIT THE EPA'S GRANTS WEBSITE: It has a variety of resources for - applicants and awardees, grant opportunities, training, and guidance for EPA rules and policies. The website provides links for EPA-related and federal websites, as well as a link to subscribe to EPA Grants Update Listserv. Visit, <https://www.epa.gov/grants>.

ECC'S PARTNERSHIP WITH INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (IEDC) STRATEGICALLY PROMOTES PROJECTS FOR REGIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES. IEDC, the non-profit membership organization, is a membership-based organization (of 5,000+) that serves economic developers.



REGIONAL PROJECTS – In April, May, and June, IEDC will be assisting the ECC region achieve economic resilience through 3 strategies that are incorporated into our 2023 – 2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) regional plan, which is available online at <https://eccog.org/economic-development-planning/>. More information will be provided in the future.

- Development of Regional Military Retention Strategies/Action, which is tentatively planned for April 8-12). With 4 bases located within the region and a large number of military members retiring annually, a team of 2 volunteers will conduct stakeholder interviews to learn more about our military talent retention assets and opportunities; available tools, resources, and programs; and the current state of economic development in the area. This may include a tour of the region and various sites, which will help the panel better understand the community's economic development assets. At the end of the site visits, the volunteers will share their informal, preliminary observations, recommendations, and lessons learned to form the basis for the Development of Regional Military Retention Strategies.
- Workforce Housing Strategies, which is tentatively planned for May 6-10. An experienced economic developer will deliver a 1/2-day workshop on workforce housing strategies. Following the workshop, the volunteer will spend several days meeting (probably in 1/2-day sessions) with either single or small groups of counties for targeted discussions on their opportunities and barriers in workforce housing in their counties and recommendations for consideration. After each visit, the economic developer will provide recommendations from their discussions, based on the county/counties with whom they met.
- Talent Attraction and Retention Strategies, which is tentatively planned for June 24-28. An experienced economic developer will deliver a 1/2-day workshop on talent attraction and retention strategies. Following the workshop, the volunteer will spend 3 days (probably in half-day sessions) meeting with stakeholders (from individual or small groups of counties) and will provide recommendations to strengthen their approach.

If your community has an interest in meeting with IEDC economic development volunteers to discuss opportunities and strategies for Workforce Housing (May 6-10) or Talent Attraction and Retention (June 24-28), please email David Bone at dbone@eccog.org.

IEDC INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS are being promoted by ECC - to connect communities in our 9-county region through IEDC member volunteers' technical support. They make site visits to evaluate specific economic development / community development opportunities and make recommendations. US EDA funds their efforts. To provide an example, here are some current / planned IEDC projects in the ECC region:

- Helping a community evaluate options for the highest and best use for a building that the town acquired.
- Supporting a county with developing strategies for business promotion - key corridor beautification.
- Assisting several communities with downtown redevelopment strategies.
- Aiding a city to evaluate opportunities to redevelop 2 properties.
- Providing assistance to a town in developing its economic development vision.

Please contact David Bone dbone@eccog.org if you would like to propose a potential IEDC technical assistance project for your community.



THE MAIN STREET & RURAL PLANNING (MS&RP) works in regions, counties, cities, towns, downtown districts, and designated NC Main Street communities to inspire placemaking through building asset-based economic development strategies that achieve measurable results such as investment, business growth, and jobs. The MS&RP Center is part of the Rural Economic Development Division of the N.C. Department of Commerce, the state's lead agency for workforce, community, and economic development. In this capacity, the MS&RP Center provides downtown revitalization and planning assistance to communities across the state, primarily in economic development planning. The

MS&RP Center's Rural Planning program works with municipalities, county governments, and other organizations in rural areas to provide strategic economic development planning and implementation services,



[GRANTS.GOV HAS PUBLISHED A NEW QUICK START GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS](#) to help register and apply for grants using [Grants.gov](#). Our helpful guide covers registering with [SAM.gov](#), creating workspaces, submitting applications, and more. Grantors can share this Quick Start Guide with prospective applicants through their NOFOs to help streamline the application process. Visit, <https://www.grants.gov/quick-start-guide/applicants>.

[THE NEXT SCHEDULED GRANTS.GOV MAINTENANCE TIMEFRAMES ARE FEB. 17-19, and March 16-18, 2024](#). To view other planned dates for both system-wide enhancements and scheduled downtimes for system maintenance, access the Maintenance Calendar link, <https://www.grants.gov/support/grants-gov-maintenance-calendar>.

ARP UPDATES



Look for more resources in the coming months. In the meantime, feel free to continue sending questions to my office, outside of Office Hours, or work with your COG, the League of Municipalities, or the Association of County Commissioners to navigate the expenditure options and compliance requirements. *Kara Millonzi, UNC, SOG*

UNC, SOG ARP Office Hours:

- Thursday, February 22 — 12:00-1:00 PM (ARP specific)
- Tuesday, February 27 — 8:30-9:30 AM (General local government finance, including ARP)

NEW ZOOM LOG IN

Here is the new Zoom Log in for all Office Hour Sessions:

<https://zoom.us/j/95481909044?pwd=U1E2VHNhN2luSoJEYtJqEzTzTMFRWdz09>

Meeting ID: 954 8190 9044

Passcode: 779726

One tap mobile

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