

USDA Invests in Rural Community Facilities in 22 States

Projects Will Provide \$17.4 Million in Essential Services for More Than 220,000 Rural Americans

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WASHINGTON, July 23, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$17.4 million in [41 projects](#) (PDF, 154 KB) that will provide essential services for rural communities in 22 states.

“Rural America represents a wealth of opportunity – from farms to tourism, forestry, mining and manufacturing,” Hazlett said. “At USDA, our mission is to be a catalyst to bring those opportunities to life – whether building infrastructure, helping communities to attract jobs, accessing additional capital, or improving the quality of life in these towns.”

USDA is making the investments through the [Community Facilities Direct Loan Program](#). The funding helps rural areas purchase, construct or improve essential facilities. An essential community facility is one that provides a necessary service for the orderly development or operation of a rural community, such as schools, libraries, health care facilities, day care centers and infrastructure improvements. For example:

- United Community Health Center, Inc. in Storm Lake, Iowa, is receiving a \$1.9 million loan to renovate and expand a health center serving approximately 4,000 people. The current facility lacks adequate exam rooms and sufficient space for the staff to operate at peak efficiency. The expanded number of exam rooms will improve the flow of business by allowing the staff to clean rooms and collect patient information prior to the physician’s consultation. United has also increased its behavioral health services and needs additional treatment space, especially for patients who misuse opioids or other substances.

- The Springerville Municipal Property Corporation in Springerville, Ariz., is receiving a \$350,000 loan and a \$50,000 grant to purchase a commercial property. The 47,045-square-foot parcel contains a building on Main Street with 10,919 square feet. It will house the police and fire departments. Currently, the two departments are in different locations, and their work spaces are not sufficient for staff and equipment. Co-locating the departments will allow the town to save money on utility and maintenance costs. The loan and grant will serve residents in Apache County, which is one of the poorest in the state.
- The Loogootee Public Library in Loogootee, Ind., will use a \$1.1 million loan to construct a new public library for the 5,853 residents of Rutherford and Perry townships. The current 600-square-foot library is too small and lacks sufficient space for meeting rooms, research, special projects or computer connections. The upgraded facility will give schools in the area another resource for their students.

The projects that are being announced today will help improve the quality of life for more than 220,000 rural residents in Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington.

More than 100 types of projects are eligible for USDA Community Facilities funding. Eligible applicants include municipalities, public bodies, nonprofit organizations and federally and state-recognized Native American tribes. Applicants and projects must be in rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less. Loan amounts have ranged from \$10,000 to \$165 million.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Omnibus spending bill increased the budget for the Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant program to \$2.8 billion, up \$200 million from FY 2017.

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force's findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America. Increasing investments in rural infrastructure is a key recommendation of the task force.

To view the report in its entirety, please view the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the [Rural Prosperity infographic](#) (PDF, 190 KB).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community services such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.