

Livable Communities in Appalachia

Targeted Technical Assistance Application Instruction

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD) are combining resources to work with Appalachian small towns and rural communities that face development-related challenges.

This partnership aims to assist Appalachia to promote economic development and preserve the rural landscape while helping existing places to thrive and improving the quality of life for Appalachia residents.

An important part of this effort is the provision of direct technical support for a pilot group of interested communities. This technical support, known as Livable Communities in Appalachia, will be based on the goals and strategies described in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities 2011 publication *Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities*, available at http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/2011_11_supporting-sustainable-rural-communities.pdf. These include:

- Promoting rural prosperity by creating an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands, preserves natural resources, and increases economic opportunities for all residents;
- Supporting vibrant, thriving and distinctive rural communities by investing in rural town centers, Main Streets, and existing infrastructure to create places that are vibrant, healthy, safe, and walkable;
- Expanding transportation choices by creating communities where everyone - including elderly, disabled, and low-income residents - can conveniently, affordably, and safely access local and regional goods and services;
- Expanding affordable housing by creating communities where everyone - including elderly, disabled, and low-income residents - can afford housing and transportation expenses.

How to Apply

Small towns and rural communities in the ARC-defined Appalachia region that would like to receive this assistance are invited to submit a letter of interest to ARC.

The letter of interest should be limited to two pages, and should describe the needs and goals of the community in the context of the ARC, EPA, and USDA RD efforts as described on page 1.

In advance of applying, interested communities are encouraged to consult with state or local USDA RD representatives and Local Development District representatives.

The selection process conducted by ARC, EPA, and USDA will take into account:

- The potential to address the community's particular development challenges through the strategies described above;
- Interest and support from community leaders and community members for working toward a strong, livable community;
- Potential for the community to receive public and private investments to pursue identified strategies and implementation measures;
- Indications of consultation and coordination with USDA RD, the Local Development District, or other federal agencies able to collaborate with ARC and assist with identified projects; and,
- The extent of social and economic needs of the Appalachian community as measured by per capita market income, poverty rate and unemployment rate.

The letter of interest should indicate a primary point of contact and, if possible, other members of the community who will participate in community discussions and interactive meetings as part of the technical assistance.

Letters of interest must be submitted via email to Greg Faulkner at gfaulkner@arc.gov no later than March 2, 2012, at 6 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Questions about this solicitation may be addressed to Greg Faulkner.

Selected communities will be notified by March 15, 2012.