

Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund

Eligible Applicants

Must be located in Allegany, Garrett or Washington County, MD. Applicants eligible include local government entities, institutions of higher education, workforce development organizations and other not for-profit entities.

Amount of Funds Available - \$10,000,000

Matching Requirements – None

Maximum Amount Allowed - \$10,000,000

Program Description and Purpose

The Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund seeks to fund infrastructure projects that will support economic development activity, stimulate private investment, and grow jobs in the state's rural counties.

The Maryland Department of Commerce will provide grant funds from the Fund for projects proposed by the state's five tri-county councils which serve the rural regions of Maryland. The regional councils shall coordinate with the local jurisdictions within their regions to identify the priority projects to be included in the application. Counties may identify projects that benefit the entire region as an eligible use of funds

Eligible uses include developing public infrastructure such as utilities, transportation, and broadband to support the attraction, retention or expansion of businesses, as well as infrastructure projects related to specific industry sectors such as, but not limited to, manufacturing, clean energy, life sciences, cybersecurity and agribusiness. In addition, funds can be used to purchase commercial/industrial properties for business parks or for attracting, expanding or retaining businesses. Funding can also be used for workforce development and stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation. Planning and feasibility studies are eligible, as well as capital and operational expenses.

Ineligible uses include direct private sector incentive, subsidy, grants or loans and residential/housing projects. Granting land or buildings purchased or constructed with these funds to private sector entities is prohibited, however the sale or lease of these properties is permitted.

Grant Funding Criteria

- Regional projects which foster collaboration between multiple counties are encouraged.
- Multiple projects can be included in one application. Each project should be identified and described separately in the application.
- Awards from the Fund do not require matching funds. However, if there are other sources of funds for the project, they must be identified.
- Eligible costs may include planning and feasibility studies in addition to “hard” project costs.
- Regional Councils and subgrantees may include NEW administrative costs associated directly to oversight and implementation of this funding as an eligible cost, up to 3% percent of the total award
- Existing projects (such as a business parks) which are known to previously have received investments from the Maryland Department of Commerce should be identified as such, including the amount of funds invested and the date(s) of the investments.

Project Timeframe

June 30 – Solicit Projects
July 26 – Projects have to be to the County
August 10 – Projects must be received by TCC
August 17 – Identify those projects that will be invited for funding and request a full application to be returned by August 26
August 31 - Submit TCC and project applications to Commerce.

(Please do not ask for an extension on submittal because this is a hard deadline set by the Maryland Department of Commerce and an extension will not be granted)

Award Term

All grant funds must be expended within 24 months of the date of the grant award.

Reports summarizing progress of the project(s) funded by the grant award are required. An interim report is due at the end of the first year, with a final report due at the end of the second year. 2 interim reports will be required at the 6-month and 18-month point of the grant term. Applicants and sub-grantees will need to request demographic/MBE information for all contractors and vendors selected to perform work under this grant.

Contractor/vendor response will be voluntary, and additional information will be provided regarding the demographic survey at the time of grant agreement.

If additional time is required after 24 months the rationale/justification for additional time must be explained in the report.

Funds which are not expended within the required time period are subject to clawback.