

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



Underserved rural communities experience distinct capacity challenges in responding to local affordable housing and community development needs. It's often difficult for these communities to apply for and receive public and private resources due to capacity constraints, which typically include small, under-resourced local governments and fewer community development organizations. **The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)** is an important resource for funding nonprofit housing and community development organizations that invest in housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

What is RCDI?

- The RCDI program is **the only specific capacity building resource provided through USDA's Rural Development programs**, and it helps scale the ability of nonprofits to further their community development work in rural areas.
- RCDI grants are competitively awarded to help non-profit housing and community development organizations, low-income rural communities and federally recognized tribes support **housing, community facilities and community and economic development projects in rural areas**. These grants provide recipient organizations with **technical assistance, training, and education** that strengthens their operational capacity and their capacity to successfully develop, implement and manage housing, community and economic development projects.
- RCDI funds are **matched on a 1 to 1 basis**, and then used to leverage additional private capital. RCDI grants have been used to revitalize underserved rural communities through the expansion of affordable housing, job creation, economic development, and other activities.
- RCDI grants are competitively awarded and currently capped at \$500,000.

What has been LISC's Involvement?

- LISC has deployed some **\$3 million USDA RCDI resources** to build the capacity of **67 CDCs** close to **500 communities** across **32 states**.
- To date, LISC's RCDI grants have leveraged **more than \$1.6 billion** and supported numerous some **17,506 affordable homes, 3.6 million square feet** of facilities, assisting **357 businesses** creating and retaining **10,351 jobs**.
- LISC has also invested RCDI resources for a diverse array of programs, including such as green building, the development of **healthcare and childcare facilities, the strengthening of neighborhood commercial corridors, economic development projects, workforce development, job creation, broadband, creative placemaking, and community safety**.

What can Congress do?

- **Provide funding of at least \$22 million for the RCDI program in fiscal year 2024** to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to meet the full array of needs in underserved rural areas, including affordable housing, community facilities, and community and economic development.

LISC is a national nonprofit housing and community development intermediary with offices in 38 different cities and a national rural network of 146 organizations.

For more information about RCDI, please contact Mark Kudlowitz at mkudlowitz@lisc.org.