

USDA: Partners to create thriving, livable communities that will attract people and jobs to rural areas and tribal nations

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 16, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small today announced that USDA [is awarding \\$4 million in cooperative agreements to 17 organizations](#) under the [Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge \(RPIC\)](#). Placemaking is a collaborative planning and technical assistance process that helps leaders from rural communities create quality places where people will want to live, work, visit and learn.

The assistance will help the organizations support people who have been unserved or underserved and live in socially vulnerable communities, Tribal communities and rural areas. For example:

- In Wisconsin, Ho-Chunk Nation will use a \$249,112 cooperative agreement to develop a plan to enhance the Tribe's capacity to develop a high-speed internet network. This project will help improve virtual education, remote job accessibility and telemedicine.

“USDA Rural Development fosters opportunity in rural America by investing in infrastructure, opening doors to better jobs, and access to innovation and technology,” said State Director for Wisconsin Julie Lassa. “This agreement will help the Ho-Chunk Nation develop a plan to enhance the capacity of broadband connectivity in Jackson County, improving access to virtual education, remote work, and telemedicine.”

The organizations will work directly with people in rural communities to develop plans that will enhance people's ability to have access to high-speed internet in their homes, live in affordable housing, and have access to safe and reliable transportation to go to school and work, and more. This assistance will support the communities for up to two years.

The agreements announced today also will support people living in five communities participating in the Biden-Harris Administration's [Rural Partners Network](#). The network is a whole-of-government effort led by USDA to transform the way federal agencies partner with rural places to create economic opportunity in rural America.

The investments will also help people in rural and Tribal communities in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Washington.

For more information about the program, visit www.rd.usda.gov/rpic. To access a placemaking toolkit and additional resources, visit: [Rural Placemaking | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#).

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