

District III Digest

Volume 27, Issue 1

June 2009

2010 Budget New Program Proposals

According to the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), the President's 2010 Federal Budget Proposal contains several development program changes and a number of new initiatives. There are no guarantees that the initial version will survive congressional amendments.

USDA Rural Development

- \$26 Million for a new Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program

Economic Development Administration

- \$50 Million transfer from the Public Works Program to a new regional innovation cluster initiative

Housing & Urban Development

- \$150 Million for a new Sustainable Communities Initiative

Housing & Urban Development

- \$25 Million for a new Rural Innovative Fund

Interior Development

- \$3.1 Million for a new Preserve America Grant Program

District III will provide additional information on these programs if they are enacted.

For a complete review of the budget proposal please check the following link <http://www.districtiii.org/documents/2010budgetsummary.pdf>. Virtually all federal categorical grant programs are competitive in nature. Many programs are national in scope. In other words, projects compete for assistance on a national level, rather than in a specific federal region or state. §

Save the Date

The August 12th District III Committee Meeting will be in Yankton. The 7:30 p.m. meeting will be preceded by a social hour at the District III office. Burgers and brats will be grilled and refreshments served. Weather and insects permitting, we will greet, eat and meet outside. §

Energy Assistance

The South Dakota version of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program should be forthcoming later this summer. Approximately \$5.7 million is expected to be available for improvements that have an energy payback of 15 years or less. Although program details remain to be finalized, several application elements may be assumed:

- Applicants will have to document their energy savings estimate through vendor or industry sources. An energy audit is not expected to be required.
- Projects with a faster payback will rank higher than longer energy savings periods.
- Applicants may be able to bundle their energy saving activities and average the payback periods.
- The grant percentage may depend upon the number of requests and projects with higher local contributions may be given preference points.

Approximately 30 area governments have expressed an interest in applying for the assistance. The planning districts are expecting to assist local sponsors with applications and project administration. §

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Director's Corner

By Greg Henderson

Expectations

This issue of the Digest contains several articles about financial assistance. The 2008 flood disaster, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) and the proposed 2010 federal budget all offer opportunities for additional infrastructure and development project assistance.

A problem shared by all recent funding announcements is that expectations are not meeting reality.

The amount of publicity surrounding the stimulus funding has some people thinking that federal assistance is just there for the asking. While certain programs and activities have been awarded direct grants, the majority of projects have to seek the assistance using normal application procedures. Processing proposals takes time, especially when new requirements are added to the mix of red tape.

The impacts of the funding will also take time to materialize. Once a grant has been approved, the project still has to go through final design and bidding. The way the construction season is slipping away, many construction contracts will not be fully implemented until 2010. §

Beware

The sheer volume of the stimulus has brought out both devious and well intentioned but unhelpful, assistance providers. Certain unethical entities are promising individuals stimulus grants in exchange for a subscription or service fee. For example, one group will guarantee you a \$25,000 grant for a fee of \$50.00. This "offer" is a scam.

Another concern is the offer by unexperienced entities to assist local project sponsors with application writing, especially on USDA Rural Development projects. While District III does not have a monopoly on application writing in the region, it does provide the service in return for membership dues that you are already paying. Packaging projects involves more than filling out forms. Professional expertise also extends beyond a program "cheat sheet". Please exercise caution if someone approaches you about writing proposals. Take advantage of our 35+ years experience in grant application writing. §

ARRA Impacts

The America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is making its presence felt in several program areas.

Water & Sewer

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is working through its application process to support additional State Revolving Fund (SRF) projects. USDA Rural Development will also have extra money for water and waste disposal projects.

Transportation Enhancements

The Department of Transportation is allocating a portion of its additional funding to enhancement projects. Announcements on successful projects are expected soon.

Fire Station Construction

The Department of Homeland Security has additional resources available for fire station building construction. The deadline for this national competition is July 10, 2009.

Energy Conservation

The South Dakota Energy Office is putting the finishing touches on a program to help local governments with energy efficiency and conservation projects. The program application period is expected to open in late summer or early fall.

In addition, the South Dakota Housing Development Authority has limited assistance available under its Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Unfortunately, only three District III counties are targeted for this program (Davison, Sanborn and Yankton Counties). The assistance may be used for shelter projects and the removal of dilapidated structures. The NSP is technically not part of the ARRA, but its origin stemmed from the home mortgage crisis. §

ARRA Information & Tracking

There are several web sites that offer information on stimulus program funding and project outcomes.

Grants.gov

Program announcements (U.S. Government)

Recovery.gov

Program news and funding reports (U.S. Government)

(Continued on Page 3)

(ARRA Information & Tracking Continued...)

RECOVERY.SD.GOV

Program information and South Dakota projects (State Government)

usmayors.org/recovery


Program deadlines and local issue discussions (National Conference of Mayors)

NADO.org

Program details and associated information (National Association of Development Organizations)

The status of specific programs may change on short notice. District III attempts to monitor funding announcements on a daily basis. §

Shovel Ready?



The Stimulus Bill emphasized the need for "shovel ready" projects. Although the initial urgency has subsided, project sponsors still need to be able to meet specific deadlines. Most programs are now giving successful applicants several months to finalize their plans and complete bidding activities. However, deadlines still apply to the funding. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has hard deadlines for stimulus assistance being allocated through the SRF Program. The Department of Transportation has deadlines for the completion of certain administrative activities for Enhancement Grants. The NSP program requires commencement of construction within 6 months of the grant award. Although the majority of projects will have until some time in 2010 to start construction, earlier deadlines may have to be met for preliminary activities. §

Survive & Thrive Small Business Education Series "Marketing Matters"

These no cost one hour training sessions will provide guidance on various areas of business management and are designed for small businesses who want to improve marketing practices and be better positioned in today's economy. All that is needed to participate is a computer with internet access and a phone to call a toll free 800 number. Each session will begin at 10:00 A.M. Central Time.

Lines are limited - call 605-330-4243 and press 0 to register. §

Announcements & Deadlines

July 1	<i>Consolidated Applications Due Solid Waste Mgmt Applications Due</i>
July 3	Independence Day Observed - Office Closed
July 10	<i>Fire Hall Construction Grants Due</i>
July 15	<i>DENR SRF Applications Due</i>
August 1	<i>Community Access Applications Due State Water Plan Amendments Due</i>
August 12	Full Committee & Executive Board Meetings in Yankton
September 7	Labor Day - Office Closed
September 15	<i>Mary Chilton DAR Applications Due</i>

District III Website

Your "one stop shop" for economic development is easily accessible on-line. Visit us at www.districtiii.org for information on:

- Funding Programs
- Planning Assistance
- Marketing Assistance
- Housing Programs
- GIS/Mapping Services
- Areawide Business Council
- Small Business Development Center
- Regional Classified Ads
- Census Information
- Business Support Services
- Tourism
- And Much More...

Please contact the District III office for assistance in applying for Stimulus or other grants, and call us with any questions you may have about the availability and requirements of any funding.

Executive Board:

DELAYNE PERSSON, *Aurora County*
REX WINTER, *South Central Water Development Center*
ARTHUR HERTZ, *Great Lakes of South Dakota Association*
DONALD REINESCH, *Brule County*
DONITA LOUDNER, *Buffalo County*
LONNIE TJADEN, *City of Freeman*
NICOLE WESTERHUIS, *City of Platte*
RICHARD ZIEGLER, *Davison County*

Organization:

Planning & Development District III is a voluntary association of city and county governments. A committee of elected officials and private citizens govern the agency by setting the work agenda and overseeing the performance of the Director and staff. The office serves a 15-county area that includes the following counties: Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule, Buffalo, Charles Mix, Davison, Douglas, Gregory, Hanson, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Lyman, Sanborn, Tripp, and Yankton. There are 68 communities and three tribal governments within the service area.

If you would like to receive this publication in digital form via email, please contact our office.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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