

direct benefit to the Government and in direct furtherance of the objectives of the proposed agreement. Federal funds cannot be used to pay non-Federal employees to attend meetings.

(o) Not commingle or use program funds for administrative expenses to operate an intermediary relending program (IRP).

(p) Submit to USDA Rural Development National Office, in writing, any request for revising the project work plan, budget, or requesting a no-cost extension amending the cooperative agreement.

(q) Assist the USDA Rural Development State Office in conducting a semiannual on-site review of the recipient's project.

(r) Collaborate, as needed, with the USDA Rural Development National and State Offices in performing the tasks in the agreement and providing the Rural Development National Office with the information necessary for the Agency to fulfill its responsibilities in the agreement.

(s) Sign an Agency approved Cooperative Agreement.

USDA Rural Development is responsible for:

(a) Monitoring the program as it is being implemented and operated, including monitoring of financial information, to ensure that there is no commingling or use of program funds for administrative expenses to operate an IRP or other unapproved items.

(b) Terminating activity, after written notice, if tasks are not met.

(c) Reviewing and approving changes to key personnel.

(d) Providing technical assistance as needed.

(e) Approving the final plans for any community business workshops; cooperative, business, and economic development sessions; and training workshops to be conducted by the recipient.

(f) Providing reference assistance, as needed, to the recipient for technical assistance given on a one-on-one basis to entrepreneurs and startup businesses.

(g) Reviewing and commenting on strategic plans developed by recipients for targeted areas.

(h) Reviewing economic assessments made by the recipient for targeted counties, enabling USDA Rural Development to determine the extent to which its programs are beneficial.

(i) Carefully screening projects to prevent First Amendment violations.

(j) Monitoring the program to ensure that a Web site link to USDA Rural Development is established and maintained.

(k) Ensuring that USDA Rural Development State Offices conduct

semiannual on-site reviews and submit written reports to the National Office.

(l) Participating in 1890 outreach and development program workshops, seminars, and conferences as needed.

(m) Providing any other work agreed to by USDA Rural Development in the Cooperative Agreement.

IX. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact:
Edgar L. Lewis, Program Manager, Rural Development, Cooperative Programs, USDA, Stop 3252, Room 4221, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-3252. Telephone: (202) 690-3407, e-mail: edgar.lewis@wdc.usda.gov.

X. Paperwork Reduction Act

The paperwork burden associated with this initiative has been cleared by the Office of Management and Budget under OMB Control Number 0570-0041.

Dated: June 23, 2006.

Jackie J. Gleason,

Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Deployment and Implementation of the Preservation Information Exchange (PIX) Application

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; Announcement of PIX System.

SUMMARY: The Rural Housing Service (RHS) announces the deployment and implementation of the PIX System. PIX is a web-based automated system that will allow interested non-profit organizations and public bodies to register to receive e-mail notification of all relevant prepayment requests and potential sales to non-profits or public bodies of Section 515 Rural Rental Housing (RRH) properties.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, applicants may contact Cynthia Reese-Foxworth, Senior Loan Officer, Office of Rental Housing Preservation, RHS, USDA, Stop 0782, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250, telephone (202) 720-1940 (voice) (This is not a toll free number.) or Anita Kapoor, Program Analyst, Program Support Staff, RHS, USDA, Stop 0782, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250, telephone (202) 690-1337 (voice) (This is not a toll free number.) or (800) 877-

8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Programs Affected

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance numbers for the programs impacted by this action are: 10.415, Rural Rental Housing Loans and 10427, Rural Rental Assistance Payments.

Discussion of Announcement

Authority

Section 515 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1485) provides RHS with the authority to provide written notice of the offer of a sale or a request to prepay an RHS loan to interested non-profit organizations and to any appropriate State and local agencies.

Accessing the PIX Web Site

State and Servicing Offices will refer all interested non-profit organizations and public bodies to register for participation in preserving low-income housing by accessing <https://pix.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Once interested non-profit organizations and public bodies register, Office of Rental Housing Preservation (ORHP) will activate their registration by sending an e-mail with their user ID and password. A link that provides instructions for navigating PIX can be found on the Web site listed above.

External Users

Access to the Web site is restricted to non-profit organizations and public bodies. The purpose of PIX purpose is to replace paper listings of interested non-profit organizations and public bodies formerly maintained by Agency staff. PIX will also eliminate the need for program borrowers to notify non-profit organizations and public bodies of the potential sale of their property. Non-profit organizations and public bodies of each prepayment request received by RHS and of the potential sale of RRH properties. Instead non-profit organizations and public bodies can access PIX at anytime in order to identify prepayment requests and potential sales. The ORHP will use PIX to establish a database of interested non-profit organizations and public bodies to assist in the preservation of valuable low-income housing stock in rural America.

Dated: June 26, 2006.

David J. Villano,

Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

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