

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****U.S. Codex Office****Codex Alimentarius Commission: Public Meetings of the Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Committee on Contaminants in Foods; the Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection Systems; the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling, and the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods****AGENCY:** U.S. Codex Office, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting changes.

**SUMMARY:** Due to circumstances related to the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), USDA is publishing this notice to announce that arrangements have been changed to make the public meetings conducted by telephone conference only.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Doreen Chen-Moulec at 202-720-4063 or Mary Frances Lowe at 202-205-7760; U.S. Codex Office, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4861, South Agriculture Building, Washington, DC 20250. Phone: (202) 205 7760, Fax: (202) 720-3157, Email: [uscodex@usda.gov](mailto:uscodex@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The U.S. Codex Office is publishing this notice to announce that arrangements for the public meetings for the Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (March 23, 2020) (85 FR 11047), Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection Systems (March 25, 2020) (85 FR 12887), and Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (April 16, 2020) (85 FR 10399), have changed and will be conducted by telephone conference only to be consistent with public health guidance related to outbreaks of novel coronavirus (COVID19). The arrangement for the public meeting of Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (April 30, 2020) (85 FR 13822) will be also be conducted by telephone conference only for the same reason. Please find information on the schedule, telephone conference number and passcode for public meetings at the following address: [www.usda.gov/topics/trade/international-food-standards/codex-federal-register-notices-and-public-meetings](http://www.usda.gov/topics/trade/international-food-standards/codex-federal-register-notices-and-public-meetings). Please note that the documents related to these

public meetings will remain accessible via the internet at the following address: [www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en](http://www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en).

Done at Washington, DC, on March 17, 2020.

**Mary Lowe,***U.S. Manager for Codex Alimentarius.*

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BILLING CODE P

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****Rural Housing Service****[Docket No. RHS-20-MFH-0007]****Notice of Solicitation of Applications for the Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants for Fiscal Year 2020****AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Housing Service (RHS), an Agency within Rural Development, announces that it is soliciting competitive applications under its Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program. This action is taken to comply with Agency regulations which requires the Agency to announce the opening and closing dates for receipt of pre-applications for HPG funds from eligible applicants. The Agency will publish the amount of funding on its website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/notices-solicitation-applications-nosas>. Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's risk.

**DATES:** The closing deadline for receipt of all paper pre-applications in response to this Notice is 5:00 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State Office on May 7, 2020. If submitting the pre-application in electronic format, the closing deadline for receipt is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 7, 2020.

Rural Development State Office locations can be found at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>. RHS will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by the United States Postal Service or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX) and postage due applications will not be accepted.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For general information, applicants may contact Bonnie Edwards-Jackson, Finance and Loan Analyst, Multi-

Family Housing Preservation and Direct Loan Division, USDA-Rural Development, STOP 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-0781, telephone (202) 690-0759 (voice) (this is not a toll-free number) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service) or via email at, [bonnie.edwards@usda.gov](mailto:bonnie.edwards@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Priority Language for Funding Opportunities**

The Agency encourages applications that will help improve life in rural America. See information on the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity found at: [www.usda.gov/ruralprosperity](http://www.usda.gov/ruralprosperity). Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investments in infrastructure, partnerships and innovation.

Key strategies include:

- Achieving e-Connectivity for Rural America
- Developing the Rural Economy
- Harnessing Technological Innovation
- Supporting a Rural Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life

To leverage investments in rural property, the Agency also encourages projects located in rural Opportunity Zones where projects should provide measurable results in helping communities build robust and sustainable economies. An Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated for that designation by the State and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury via his delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service.

To combat a key threat to economic prosperity, rural workforce and quality of life, the Agency also encourages applications that will support the Administration's goal to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse) in high-risk rural communities by strengthening the capacity to address prevention, treatment and/or recovery at the community, County, State, and/or Regional levels:

- Key strategies include:
- Prevention: Reducing the occurrence of Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse) and fatal

substance-related overdoses through community and provider education and harm reduction measures such as the strategic placement of overdose reversing devices, such as naloxone;

- **Treatment:** Implementing or expanding access to evidence-based treatment practices for Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse) such as medication-assisted treatment (MAT); and

- **Recovery:** Expanding peer recovery and treatment options that help people start and stay in recovery.

To focus investments in areas with the largest opportunity for growth in prosperity, the Agency encourages applications that serve the smallest communities with the lowest incomes, with an emphasis on areas where at least 20 percent of the population is living in poverty, according to the American Community Survey data by census tracts.

#### Overview

*Federal Agency Name:* Rural Housing Service, USDA.

*Funding Opportunity Title:* Housing Preservation Grants.

*Announcement Type:* Notice.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:* 10.433.

#### Paperwork Reduction Act

The reporting requirements contained in this Notice have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under OMB Number 0575–0115.

#### A. Program Description

The HPG program is a grant program, authorized under 42 U.S.C. 1490m and implemented at 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N, which provides qualified public agencies, private non-profit organizations including, but not limited to, Faith-Based and neighborhood partnerships, and other eligible entities; grant funds to assist low- and very low-income homeowners in repairing and rehabilitating their homes in rural areas. In addition, the HPG program assists cooperative housing complexes and rental property owners in rural areas in repairing and rehabilitating their units if they agree to make such units available to very low- and low-income persons. Rental property owners can include Section 515 rental properties if the eligibility requirements for the HPG program are met. In accordance with 7 CFR part 1944.663, rental property owners must agree to make the units repaired or rehabilitated available for occupancy to very low- or low-income persons for a period of not less than 5 years. The minimum 5-year restriction to rent the very low- and low-income

tenants will only apply to the units that are repaired with the HPG funding. Any units within the property that were not repaired with HPG funding will not be subject to the 5-year restriction.

#### B. Federal Award Information

The funding instrument for the HPG program will be a grant agreement. The term of the grant can vary from 1 to 2 years, depending on available funds and demand. No maximum or minimum grant levels have been established at the National level. In accordance with 7 CFR 1944.652, coordination and leveraging of funding for repair and rehabilitation activities with housing and community development organizations or activities operating in the same geographic area are expected, but not required. You should contact the Rural Development State Office to determine the allocation. HPG applicants who were previously selected for HPG funds are eligible to submit new applications to apply for fiscal year (FY) 2020 HPG program funds.

The amount of funding available for the HPG program may be found at the following link: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/housing-preservation-grants>. In addition, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (Pub. L. 116–6) set-aside for grants located in Rural Economic Area Partnership Zones (REAP Zones). The State Office will indicate on the list submitted to the National Office if the application is eligible for the REAP Zones set-aside. The National Office will then compile a national list, rank the REAP Zones applicants based on the point allocations set forth in this **Federal Register** Notice, and distribute the HPG REAP Zones set-aside starting with the highest scoring eligible HPG REAP Zones applicants. Other funds will be distributed under a formula allocation to States pursuant to 7 CFR part 1940, subpart L, “Methodology and Formulas for Allocation of Loan and Grant Program Funds.” Decisions on funding will be based on pre-application scores. Anyone interested in submitting an application for funding under this program is encouraged to consult the Rural Development website periodically for updated information regarding the status of funding authorized for this program.

The commitment of program dollars will be made to selected applicants that have fulfilled the necessary requirements for obligation.

#### C. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants.* Eligible entities for these competitively awarded grants

include State and local Governments, non-profit corporations; which may include, but not be limited to Faith-Based and community organizations, federally recognized Indian Tribes, and consortia of eligible entities. HPG applicants who were previously selected for HPG funds are eligible to submit new applications to apply for FY 2020 HPG program funds. More eligibility requirements can be found at 7 CFR 1944.658, 1944.661, and 1944.662.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching.* Pursuant to 7 CFR 1944.652, grantees are expected to coordinate and leverage funding for repair and rehabilitation activities; as well as replacement housing, with housing and community development organizations or activities operating in the same geographic area. While HPG funds may be leveraged with other resources, cost sharing or matching is not a requirement for the HPG applicant as the HPG applicant would not be denied an award of HPG funds if all other project selection criteria have been met.

3. *Other.* Awards made under this Notice are subject to the provisions contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (Pub. L. 116–6) sections 744 and 745 regarding Corporate Felony Convictions and Corporate Federal Tax Delinquencies. To comply with these provisions, only applicants that are or propose to be corporations will submit this form as part of their pre-application. Form AD–3030, “Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants,” can be found here: <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad3030>.

#### D. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* Applicants wishing to submit a paper application in response to this Notice must contact the Rural Development State Office serving the State of the proposed HPG housing project in order to receive further information and copies of the paper application package. You may find the addresses and contact information for each State Office following this link: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>. Rural Development will date and time stamp incoming paper applications to evidence timely receipt and; upon request, will provide the applicant with a written acknowledgment of receipt. You may access the electronic grant pre-application for Housing Preservation Grants at: <http://www.grants.gov>.

2. *Content and Form of Application:* 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N provides details on what information must be contained in the pre-application package. Entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the Rural Development State Office to receive further information, the State allocation of funds, and copies of the pre-application package. Unless otherwise noted, applicants wishing to apply for assistance must make its statement of activities available to the public for comment. The applicant(s) must announce the availability of its statement of activities for review in a newspaper of general circulation in the project area and allow at least 15 days for public comment. The start of this 15-day period must occur no later than 16 days prior to the last day for acceptance of pre-applications by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Rural Development. Federally recognized Indian Tribes, pursuant to 7 CFR 1944.674, are exempt from the requirement to consult with local leaders including announcing the availability of its statement of activities for review in a newspaper.

All applicants will file an original and two copies of Standard Form (SF)-424, "Application for Federal Assistance," and supporting information with the appropriate Rural Development State Office. A pre-application package, including SF-424, is available in any Rural Development State Office. All pre-applications shall be accompanied by the following information which Rural Development will use to determine the applicant's eligibility to undertake the HPG program and to evaluate the pre-application under the project selection criteria of 7 CFR 1944.679.

(a) A statement of activities proposed by the applicant for its HPG program as appropriate to the type of assistance the applicant is proposing, including:

(1) A complete discussion of the type of and conditions for financial assistance for housing preservation, including whether the request for assistance is for a homeowner assistance program, a rental property assistance program, or a cooperative assistance program;

(2) The process for selecting recipients for HPG assistance, determining housing preservation needs of the dwelling, performing the necessary work, and monitoring/inspecting work performed;

(3) A description of the process for coordinating with other public and private organizations and programs that provide assistance in rehabilitation of historic properties in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.673;

(4) The development standard(s) the applicant will use for the housing preservation work; and, if not the Rural Development standards for existing dwellings, the evidence of its acceptance by the jurisdiction where the grant will be implemented;

(5) The time schedule for completing the program;

(6) The staffing required to complete the program;

(7) The estimated number of very low- and low-income minority and nonminority persons the grantee will assist with HPG funds; and, if a rental property or cooperative assistance program, the number of units and the term of restrictive covenants on their use for very low- and low-income;

(8) The geographical area(s) to be served by the HPG program;

(9) The annual estimated budget for the program period based on the financial needs to accomplish the objectives outlined in the proposal. The budget should include proposed direct and indirect administrative costs, such as personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contracts, and other cost categories, detailing those costs for which the grantee proposes to use the HPG grant separately from non-HPG resources, if any. The applicant budget should also include a schedule (with amounts) of how the applicant proposes to draw HPG grant funds, *i.e.*, monthly, quarterly, lump sum for program activities, etc.;

(10) A copy of an indirect cost proposal when the applicant has another source of Federal funding in addition to the Rural Development HPG program;

(11) A brief description of the accounting system to be used;

(12) The method of evaluation to be used by the applicant to determine the effectiveness of its program which encompasses the requirements for quarterly reports to Rural Development in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.683(b) and the monitoring plan for rental properties and cooperatives (when applicable) according to 7 CFR 1944.689;

(13) The source and estimated amount of other financial resources to be obtained and used by the applicant for both HPG activities and housing development and/or supporting activities;

(14) The use of program income; if any, and the tracking system used for monitoring same;

(15) The applicant's plan for disposition of any security instruments held by them as a result of its HPG activities in the event of its loss of legal status;

(16) Any other information necessary to explain the proposed HPG program; and

(17) The outreach efforts outlined in 7 CFR 1944.671(b).

(b) Complete information about the applicant's experience and capacity to carry out the objectives of the proposed HPG program.

(c) Evidence of the applicant's legal existence, including, in the case of a private non-profit organization, which may include, but not be limited to, Faith-Based and community organizations, a copy of, or an accurate reference to, the specific provisions of State law under which the applicant is organized; a certified copy of the applicant's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws or other evidence of corporate existence; certificate of incorporation for other than public bodies; evidence of good standing from the State when the corporation has been in existence one year or more; and the names and addresses of the applicant's members, directors and officers. If other organizations are members of the applicant-organization, or the applicant is a consortium, pre-applications should be accompanied by the names, addresses, and principal purpose of the other organizations. If the applicant is a consortium, documentation showing compliance with paragraph (4)(ii) under the definition of "organization" in 7 CFR 1944.656 must also be included.

(d) For a private non-profit entity, which may include, but not be limited to, Faith-Based and community organizations, the most recent audited statement and a current financial statement dated and signed by an authorized officer of the entity showing the amounts and specific nature of assets and liabilities together with information on the repayment schedule and status of any debt(s) owed by the applicant.

(e) A brief narrative statement which includes information about the area to be served and the need for improved housing (including both percentage and the actual number of both low-income and low-income minority households and substandard housing), the need for the type of housing preservation assistance being proposed, the anticipated use of HPG resources for historic properties, the method of evaluation to be used by the applicant in determining the effectiveness of its efforts.

(f) A statement containing the component for alleviating any overcrowding as defined by 7 CFR 1944.656.

(g) A signed copy of the documentation in accordance with 7

CFR 1944.673 (as a companion to (a)(3) above);

(h) The applicant must submit written statements and related correspondence reflecting compliance with 7 CFR 1944.674(a) and (c) regarding consultation with local Government leaders in the preparation of its program and the consultation with local and State Government pursuant to the provisions of Executive Order 12372.

(i) The applicant is to make its statement of activities available to the public for comment prior to submission to Rural Development pursuant to 7 CFR 1944.674(b). The application must contain a description of how the comments (if any were received) were addressed.

(j) The applicant must submit an original and one copy of Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement" and Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement" in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.676.

Applicants should review 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N for a comprehensive list of all application requirements.

3. *Address Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management:* As part of the application, all applicants, except for individuals or agencies excepted under 2 CFR 25.110(d), must be: (1) registered in the System for Award Management (SAM); (2) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its applications; and (3) maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or application. An award may not be made to the applicant until the applicant has complied with the unique entity identifier and SAM requirements.

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* The HPG program is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials.

5. *Funding Restrictions:* There are no limits on proposed direct and indirect costs. Expenses incurred in developing pre-applications will be at the applicant's risk.

6. *Other Submission Requirements:* To comply with the President's Management Agenda, USDA is participating as a partner in the Government-wide *grants.gov* site. Housing Preservation Grants [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #10.433] is one of the programs included at this website. If you are an applicant under the HPG program, you may submit your pre-application to the Agency in either electronic or paper format. Please be mindful that the pre-application deadline for electronic format differs

from the deadline for paper format. The electronic format deadline will be based on Eastern Standard Time. The paper format deadline is local time for each Rural Development State Office.

Users of *Grants.gov* will be able to download a copy of the pre-application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the *Grants.gov* site. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant pre-application to USDA Rural Development; however, the Agency encourages your participation in *Grants.gov*.

The following are useful tips and instructions on how to use the website:

- When you enter the *Grants.gov* site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the website as well as the hours of operation. USDA-Rural Development strongly recommends that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through *Grants.gov*. To use *Grants.gov*, applicants must have a DUNS number.

- You may submit all documents electronically through the website, including all information typically included on the Application for Housing Preservation Grants, and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- After you electronically submit your application through the website, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from *Grants.gov* that contains a *Grants.gov* tracking number.

- RHS may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

- If you experience technical difficulties on the closing date and are unable to meet the 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) deadline, print out your application and submit it to your State Office; you must meet the closing date and local time deadline.

- Please note that you must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA Number or FedGrants Funding Opportunity Number, which can be found at <http://www.grants.gov>.

In addition to the electronic pre-application at: <http://www.grants.gov> website, all applicants must complete and submit the FY 2020 pre-application package, detailed later in this Notice, for the Section 533 HPG program. A copy of a suggested coversheet is included with this Notice. Applicants are encouraged to submit this pre-application coversheet electronically by accessing the website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/housing-preservation-grants>. Click on the Forms & Resources tab to access the "FY 2020 Pre-Application for Section

533 Housing Preservation Grants (HPG)."

Applicants are encouraged; but not required, to also provide an electronic copy of all hard copy forms and documents submitted in the pre-application/application package as requested by this Notice. The forms and documents must be submitted as read-only Adobe Acrobat PDF files on an electronic media such as CDs, DVDs or USB drives. For each electronic device that you submit, you must include a Table of Contents listing all of the documents and forms on that device. The electronic medium must be submitted to the local Rural Development State Office where the project will be located.

*Please Note:* If you receive a loan or grant award under this Notice, USDA reserves the right to post all information that is not protected by the Privacy Act submitted as part of the pre-application/application package on a public website with free and open access to any member of the public.

## E. Application Review Information

1. *Criteria.* All paper applications for Section 533 HPG funds must be filed with the appropriate Rural Development State Office and all paper or electronic applications must meet the requirements of this Notice and 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N. Pre-applications determined not eligible and/or not meeting the selection criteria will be notified by the Rural Development State Office.

2. *Review and Selection Process.* The Rural Development State Offices will utilize the following threshold project selection criteria for applicants in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.679:

(a) Providing a financially feasible program of housing preservation assistance. "Financially feasible" is defined as proposed assistance which will be affordable to the intended recipient or result in affordable housing for very low- and low-income persons.

(b) Serving eligible rural areas with a concentration of substandard housing for households with very low- and low-income.

(c) Being an eligible applicant as defined in 7 CFR 1944.658.

(d) Meeting the requirements of consultation and public comment in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.674.

(e) Submitting a complete pre-application as outlined in 7 CFR 1944.676.

3. *Scoring.* For applicants meeting all of the requirements listed above, the Rural Development State Offices will use weighted criteria in accordance with 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N as selection

for the grant recipients. Each pre-application and its accompanying statement of activities will be evaluated and, based solely on the information contained in the pre-application, the applicant's proposal will be numerically rated on each criteria within the range provided. The highest-ranking applicant(s) will be selected based on allocation of funds available to the State.

(a) Points are awarded based on the percentage of very low-income persons that the applicant proposes to assist, using the following scale:

- (1) More than 80%: 20 points
- (2) 61% to 80%: 15 points
- (3) 41% to 60%: 10 points
- (4) 20% to 40%: 5 points
- (5) Less than 20%: 0 points

(b) The applicant's proposal may be expected to result in the following percentage of HPG fund use (excluding administrative costs) to total cost of unit preservation. This percentage reflects maximum repair or rehabilitation with the least possible HPG funds due to leveraging, innovative financial assistance, owner's contribution or other specified approaches. Points are awarded based on the following percentage of HPG funds (excluding administrative costs) to total funds:

- (1) 50% or less: 20 points
- (2) 51% to 65%: 15 points
- (3) 66% to 80%: 10 points
- (4) 81% to 95%: 5 points
- (5) 96% to 100%: 0 points

(c) The applicant has demonstrated its administrative capacity in assisting very low- and low-income persons to obtain adequate housing based on the following:

(1) The organization or a member of its staff has at least one or more years' experience successfully managing and operating a rehabilitation or weatherization type program: 10 points.

(2) The organization or a member of its staff has at least one or more years' experience successfully managing and operating a program assisting very low- and low-income persons obtain housing assistance: 10 points.

(3) If the organization has administered grant programs, there are no outstanding or unresolved audit or investigative findings which might impair carrying out the proposal: 10 points.

(d) The proposed program will be undertaken entirely in rural areas outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas, also known as MSAs, identified by Rural Development as having populations below 10,000 or in remote parts of other rural areas (*i.e.*, rural areas contained in MSAs with less than 5,000

population) as defined in 7 CFR 1944.656: 10 points.

(e) The program will use less than 20 percent of HPG funds for administration purposes:

- (1) More than 20%: Not eligible
- (2) 20%: 0 points
- (3) 19%: 1 point
- (4) 18%: 2 points
- (5) 17%: 3 points
- (6) 16%: 4 points
- (7) 15% or less: 5 points

(f) The proposed program contains a component for alleviating overcrowding as defined in 7 CFR 1944.656: 5 points.

In the event more than one pre-application receives the same amount of points, those pre-applications will then be ranked based on the actual percentage figure used for determining the points in item (a) in the "Scoring" section of this Notice (7 CFR 1944.679(b)(1)).

*Example of 1st tie-break:*

*Both Applicants score 80 points  
Applicant X's percentage in "Scoring" section item (a) is 65%  
Applicant B's percentage in "Scoring" section item (a) is 75%  
Applicant B is ranked higher than Applicant X  
Applicant B will be funded before Applicant X*

Further, in the event that pre-applications are still tied, then those pre-applications still tied will be ranked based on the percentage figures used for determining the points in item (b) in the "Scoring" section of this Notice (7 CFR 1944.679(b)(2)).

*Example of 2nd tie-break:*

*Both Applicants score 80 points  
Both Applicants percentage in "Scoring" section item (a) is 65%  
Applicant X's percentage in "Scoring" section item (b) is 55%  
Applicant B's percentage in "Scoring" section item (b) is 60%  
Applicant X is ranked with a lower percentage than Applicant B  
Applicant X will be funded before Applicant B*

Further, 7 CFR 1944.679(c), for applications where HPG assistance to rental properties or co-ops is proposed, those still tied will be further ranked based on the number of years the units are available for occupancy under the program (a minimum of five years is required). For this part, ranking will be based from most to least number of years.

*Example of 3rd tie-break:*

*Both Applicants score 80 points  
Both Applicants percentage in "Scoring" section item (a) is 65%  
Both Applicants percentage in "Scoring" section item (b) is 55%*

*Applicant X's rental unit will be available for occupancy under the program for 10 years  
Applicant B's rental unit will be available for occupancy under the program for 5 years  
Applicant X is ranked higher than Applicant B  
Applicant X will be funded before Applicant B*

If any of the applicants that remain tied after the 1st and 2nd tie-breaks are offering to assist single family owners, then the 3rd tie-break would not be applicable, and a lottery would be used to select the applicant to be funded.

If there is still a tie after the first two [or three, when applicable] tie-breaks, then a lottery system will be used to select the applicant to be funded. The lottery will be conducted at the National Office. The lottery will consist of the names of each application with equal scores printed onto a same size piece of paper, which will then be placed into a receptacle that fully obstructs the view of the names. The Director of the Preservation and Direct Loan Division, in the presence of two witnesses, will draw a piece of paper from the receptacle. The name on piece of paper drawn will be the applicant to be funded.

After the award selections are made, all applicants will be notified of the status of their applications by mail with form AD-622 Form, "Notice of Pre-Application Review Action." Applicants will be given their review rights or appeal rights in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.682.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

1. *Federal Award Notices.* The Agency will notify, in writing, applicants whose pre-applications have been selected for funding. At the time of notification, the Agency will advise the applicant what further information and documentation is required along with a timeline for submitting the additional information. If the Agency determines it is unable to select the application for funding, the applicant will be informed in writing. Such notification will include the reasons the applicant was not selected. The Agency will advise applicants, whose pre-applications did not meet eligibility and/or selection criteria, of their review rights or appeal rights in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.682.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements.* Rural Development is encouraging applications for projects that will support rural areas with persistent poverty and in Opportunity Zones. This emphasis will support Rural Development's mission of

improving the quality of life for Rural Americans and commitment to directing resources to those who most need them.

3. *Reporting.* Post-award reporting requirements can be found in the Grant Agreement.

#### **G. Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior

civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (*e.g.*, Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service, at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at: [http://](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html)

[www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) *Mail:* United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410;

(2) *Fax:* (202) 690-7442; or

(3) *Email:* [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**Bruce W. Lammers,**

*Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*

**BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P**

## Fiscal Year 2020 Pre-application for Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants (HPG) Instructions

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit this pre-application form electronically by accessing the website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/program-services/housing-preservation-grants>. Click on the **Forms & Resources** tab to access the "Fiscal Year 2020 Pre-application for Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants (HPG)." Please note that electronic submittals are not on a secured website. If you do not wish to submit the form electronically by clicking on the **Send Form** button, you may still fill out the form, print it and submit it with your application package to the State Office. You also have the option to save the form and submit it on an electronic media to the State Office.

Supporting documentation required by this pre-application may be attached to the email generated when you click the **Send Form** button to submit the form. However, if the attachments are too numerous or large in size, the email box will not be able to accept them. In that case, submit the supporting documentation for this pre-application to the State Office with your complete application package. Under item **IX. Documents Submitted**, indicate the supporting documents that you are submitting either with the pre-application or to the State Office.

- | <b>I.</b>      | <b>Applicant Information</b>  | <b>Total Score:</b> |
|----------------|---|---------------------|
| a.             | <b>Applicant's Name:</b> _____  |                     |
| b.             | <b>Applicant's Address:</b><br>Address, Line 1: _____<br>Address, Line 2: _____<br>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____  |                     |
| c.             | <b>Name of Applicant's Contact Person:</b> _____  |                     |
| d.             | <b>Contact Person's Telephone Number:</b> _____   |                     |
| e.             | <b>Contact Person's Email Address:</b> _____  |                     |
| f.             | <b>Entity Type:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> State Government <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government<br>(Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Federally Recognized<br>Indian Tribes <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnership<br><input type="checkbox"/> Community Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other consortia of an eligible entity |                     |
| <br><b>II.</b> | <br><b>Project Information</b>  |                     |
| a.             | <b>Project Name:</b> _____  |                     |
| b.             | <b>Project Address:</b><br>Address, Line 1: _____<br>Address, Line 2: _____<br>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____  |                     |
| c.             | <b>Organization DUNS number:</b> _____  |                     |
| d.             | <b>Grant Amount Requested:</b> _____  |                     |
| e.             | <b>This grant request is for one of the following types of assistance:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Homeowner assistance program   |                     |

- Rental property assistance program
- Cooperative assistance program

**f. In response to e. above, answer one of the following:**

The Number of low- and very-low income persons that the grantee will assist in the Homeowner assistance program: \_\_\_\_\_ OR

The number of Units for low- and very-low income persons in the Rental property or Cooperative assistance program: \_\_\_\_\_

**g. This proposal is for one of the following:**

- Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program (no set-aside)
- Set-aside for Grant located in a Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) zone

**III. Low-income Assistance**

Check the percentage of very low-income persons that this application proposes to assist in relation to the total population of the project:

- More than 80 percent (20 points)
- 61 percent to 80 percent (15 points)
- 41 percent to 60 percent (10 points)
- 20 percent to 40 percent (5 points)
- Less than 20 percent (0 points)

Points: \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Percent of HPG Fund Use**

Check the percentage of HPG fund use (excluding administrative costs) in comparison to the total cost of unit preservation. This percentage reflects maximum repair or rehabilitation results with the least possible HPG funds due to leveraging, innovative financial assistance, owner's contribution or other specified approaches.

- 50 percent or less of HPG Funds (20 points)
- 51 percent to 65 percent of HPG Funds (15 points)
- 66 percent to 80 percent of HPG Funds (10 points)
- 81 percent to 95 percent of HPG Funds (5 points)
- 96 percent to 100 percent of HPG Funds (0 points)

Points: \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Administrative Capacity**

The following three criteria demonstrate your administrative capacity to assist very low- and low-income persons to obtain adequate housing (30 points maximum).

- a. Does this organization or a member of its staff have at least one or more years of experience successfully managing and operating a rehabilitation or weatherization type of program? (10 points) Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Points: \_\_\_\_\_



b. Does this organization or a member of its staff have at least one or more years of experience successfully managing and operating a program assisting very low- or low-income persons obtain housing assistance? (10 points)

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Points: \_\_\_\_\_

c. If this organization has administered grant programs, are there any outstanding or unresolved audit or investigative findings which might impair carrying out the proposal? (10 points for No) No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Points: \_\_\_\_\_  
If Yes, please explain:

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#### VI. Area Served

Will this proposal be undertaken entirely in rural areas outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas, also known as MSAs, and identified by Rural Development as having populations below 10,000 or in remote parts of other rural areas (i.e., rural areas contained in MSAs with a population of less than 5,000) as defined in 7 CFR 1944.656? (10 points)

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Points: \_\_\_\_\_

#### VII. Percent of HPG Funds for Administration

Check the percentage of HPG funds that will be used for Administration purposes:

- More than 20 percent (Not eligible)
- 20 percent (0 points)
- 19 percent (1 point)
- 18 percent (2 points)
- 17 percent (3 points)
- 16 percent (4 points)
- 15 percent or less (5 points)

Points: \_\_\_\_\_

#### VIII. Alleviating Overcrowding

Does the proposed program contain a component for alleviating overcrowding as defined in 7 CFR 1944.656? (5 points): Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Points: \_\_\_\_\_

#### IX. Documents Submitted

Check if the following documents are being submitted electronically with this pre-application or will be mailed to the State Office with your complete pre-application package.

**NOTE:** You are only required to submit supporting documents for programs in which you will be participating as indicated in this pre-application. Points will be assigned for the items that you checked based on a review of the supporting documents. **Please refer to the Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) for the complete list of documents that you are required to submit with your complete pre-application package.**

Reference	Item	Submitted with this Preapplication	Submitted to State Office
I.	Applicant Information		
II.	Project Information		
III.	Low Income Assistance		
IV.	Percent of HPG Fund Use		
V.	Administrative Capacity		
VI.	Area Served		
VII.	Percent of HPG Funds for Administration		
VIII.	Alleviating Overcrowding		

#### **X. HPG 2020 Scoring**

**PLEASE NOTE:** The scoring below is based on the responses that you have provided on this pre-application form and may not accord with the final score that the Agency assigns upon evaluating the supporting documentation that you submit. Your score may change from what you see here if the supporting documentation does not adequately support your answer or, if required documentation is missing.

**IMPORTANT:** Please read and follow these steps before submitting this form. Have all of your supporting documents ready for submission before you submit this form.

1. **Step 1:** Please **Save** the form with the Project name and State in the Filename, before you click the Send Form button. Pre-applications submitted with the default filename will not be accepted as it will default to a blank form with no data.
2. **Step 2:** Once your supporting documents are ready for submission, click **Send Form** to open up an email window with the pre-application attached as a .pdf data file. You must submit this file in order for your pre-application to be processed. Please **add** the .pdf file that you saved in Step 1. Attach all supporting documents as well. Enter the **Project Name** and **State** in the Subject line of the email and then send the email with all of your attachments.
3. **Step 3:** You may print the form for your records.

### Please Note

By submitting this electronic pre-application file and its supporting documents you have completed one step of the application process.

You **must** also complete the electronic application at: <http://www.grants.gov>

[FR Doc. 2020-05984 Filed 3-20-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XV-C

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

[Docket No. RHS-20-CF-0006]

#### Notice of Request for Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

**AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; comment requested.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the above-named Agencies to request Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) approval for a revision of a currently approved information collection in support of the servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by May 22, 2020 to be assured of consideration.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Arlette Mussington, Rural Development Innovation Center—Regulations Management Division, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4227, South Building, Washington, DC 20250-

1522. Telephone: (202)720-2825. Email [arlette.mussington@usda.gov](mailto:arlette.mussington@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB for revision.

#### Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) The accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection

techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments may be sent by the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and, in the lower "Search Regulations and Federal Actions" box, select "[insert Agency name]" from the agency drop-down menu, then click on "Submit." In the Docket ID column, select [insert docket number] to submit or view public comments and to view supporting and related materials available electronically. Information on using *Regulations.gov*, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "User Tips" link.

*Title:* 7 CFR 1951-E, Servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

*OMB Number:* 0575-0066.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* May 31, 2021.

*Type of Request:* Revision of a currently approved information collection.

*Abstract:* The Community Facilities program is authorized to make loans and grants to public entities, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes for the development of essential community facilities primarily serving rural residents. The Direct Business and