

USDA Announces Availability of Economic Impact Initiative Grants

Targeted communities that are experiencing a high rate of residents unable to find employment may apply for Economic Impact Initiative (EII) grant funds made available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development. The funds may be used for a variety of community facility needs including road maintenance equipment, police vehicles, computer and communication equipment, energy efficiency improvements and municipal buildings. The maximum grant is \$100,000. Last year, three communities received grants: Slippery Rock Borough (Butler County), Shippensburg Township (Cumberland County) and McNett Township (Lycoming County). McNett Township, for example, received a \$100,000 EII grant and was awarded a Community Facility direct loan for \$33,500 for building renovations that included insulation in the township's garage/shop, additional office space, and a handicapped accessible restroom. The township also purchased a used truck and snowplow. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor provided data to assist USDA Rural Development in determining the 36 communities that are eligible. They are: Boroughs - Applewold, Coaldale, Shoemakersville, Troy, Slippery Rock, West Sunbury, Loretto, Lumber City, New Washington, Centralia, Ohiopyle, Shade Gap, Glen Campbell, Bryn Athyn, Collegeville, Schwenksville, Ursina, Polk, California, Dunlevy and Bolivar; Townships – Maxatawny, Woodward, Shippensburg, Millstone, Howe, Jenks, Kingsley, Smithfield, McNett, Lafayette, Abbott, Mahanoy, Fairhope, Colley, and Gregg. For more information, visit Rural Development's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov to locate a nearby office.