



Community Economic Recovery and Resiliency Initiative Summary (June 2020)

Description:

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center's Rural Planning program (RPP) has developed a Community Economic Recovery and Resiliency Initiative (CERRI) to help small towns and rural communities recover from the economic impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and build local economies that are more resilient to future crises.

Up to 24 local governments (three per Prosperity Zone) that have previously worked with the RPP on local strategic planning will participate in the initiative. RPP staff will develop an individualized Plan of Work for each community focused on two components: Community Economic Resiliency and Small Business Support. Through the initiative, the RPP will provide and/or make available additional services including analysis of current economic conditions and future opportunities, training and capacity building, formulation of implementation strategies, and project development and implementation assistance.

The RPP has applied for a CARES Act grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support the CERRI. If approved, the grant will enable the RPP to hire consultants to provide each participating community with one of four types of professional services (Branding & Marketing, E-Commerce Development, Design Assistance, and Small Business Expansion & Recruitment) to help implement its Plan of Work.

Virtual training sessions to help participating communities build capacity for supporting economic recovery, growth, and resiliency will be provided through the Leverage NC partnership of the NC Department of Commerce/Main Street & Rural Planning Center, NC League of Municipalities, NC State Historic Preservation Office, and NC Downtown Development Association. The RPP will provide supplemental training opportunities virtually and, eventually, in person as part of the CERRI.

Lead Agency: NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center (Rural Planning program)

Participants: Approximately 61 communities in the state that have previously worked with the RPP on local strategic planning will be eligible for the CERRI. The RPP will select up to 24 of them (three per Prosperity Zone) to participate.

Deliverables for Each Participating Community:

1. Community Economic Recovery Plan of Work
2. Plan of Work Implementation Services
3. Training/Capacity Building Opportunities
4. Ongoing Technical Support

Partners: NC Appalachian Regional Commission program and NC Association of Regional Councils

EDA Grant Funding Requested: \$536,120 (In-Kind Match \$162,338)

Schedule: CERRI services will be delivered over a two-year period beginning in fall 2020. The proposed project schedule submitted with the EDA grant application is included.