



Hugh McDonald
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Clint O'Neal
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ARKANSAS ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

H.3(a)

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMO

TO: Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders
FROM: AEDC, Division of Rural Services
RE: Arkansas Rural Community Grant Program, FY 26, Cycle 1
DATE: October 6, 2025

PURPOSE:

To present funding recommendations from AEDC Rural Services for the Arkansas Rural Community Grant Program

BACKGROUND:

Each fiscal year, AEDC Rural Services receives legislative appropriation to award funds from the above-named grant programs. Applications received by AEDC Rural Services go through the following process:

1. Reviewed for eligibility by Rural Services staff;
2. Eligible applications and rankings are then reviewed by the Rural Development Commission;
3. Recommendations are forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce and Governor
4. Recommendations are forwarded to Legislative Council for final approval.

COMMUNITIES IMPACTED:

- Cities and towns with a population of less than 3,000 (no limit on unincorporated areas). Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, community centers, fire stations, parks, storm sirens, storm shelters, beautification projects and any equipment associated. The cap for this grant program is \$15,000 and requires a 50/50 match from all applicants.

PROPOSED FUNDING:

- Rural Community Grant Program (Attachment)

- o Total Amount Requested from Complete and Eligible Applications: \$471,795.86
- o Amount Available for Distribution for FY 2026: \$700,000.00 (split between two cycles)
- o **Amount of Total Funding Recommended for FY 26 Cycle 1: \$352,244.36**

RECOMMENDATION:

AEDC Rural Services requests your approval on the funding recommendations for the program listed above. An attachment outlining recommendations is included with this memo. These grants have been reviewed and recommended by the Rural Development Commission. While we present their initial recommendations, we also recognize that there may be some changes to the recommendations that would better serve the Governor's priorities, and we fully support any changes that the Governor indicates. In addition, Secretary McDonald and Executive Director O'Neal would like to present proposed changes to this grant program, to be implemented for the next fiscal year cycle, that we believe would make this grant program more effective. The goal is to consolidate the cycles from two per fiscal year into one and to explore the possibility of increasing the amount of funding that can be requested so that it reflects the increasing costs of projects. We would also like to help streamline this grant so that it fits within the Governor's priorities. We aim to make this grant program the most effective it can be for our rural communities and to also align with the Governor's set priorities for future program years.

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

10/29/25

Date

Arkansas Rural Community Grant Program

Recommended Report

Fiscal Year: 2026 Cycle: 1

Applicant	County	Requested	Project Summary	Previous Funded Narrative	Senator	Rep	Recommended
Town Of Big Flat	Baxter	\$15,000.00	The town of Big Flat is requesting \$15,000 in funding for phase 2 of their renovation of the community center.	The town of Big Flat received \$15,000.00 in 2024 to renovate and update their community center - phase I of project.	Flippo	Walker	\$15,000.00
Highfill VFD	Benton	\$12,151.42	The Highfill VFD is requesting \$12,151.42 in funding to purchase helmets, hoods, boots and gloves.	The Highfill Volunteer Fire Department received \$14,915.92 in 2024 to purchase a new air compressor.	Hester	Underwood	\$12,151.42
City Of Diamond City	Boone	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The city of Diamond City is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to repair the public restrooms in Dietz Park. They would like to expand the existing restrooms to allow for accessibility, new plumbing, electrical and a mini split to allow for heating and cooling.		Flippo	Breaux	\$15,000.00
City Of Hampton	Calhoun	\$15,000.00	The city of Hampton is requesting \$15,000 in funding for their baseball field batting cage replacement project. This will include dirt work, concrete foundation, carport style roof installation and netting. The current batting cage area is very old and looks as if it will fall in, potentially a safety concern.	The city of Hampton received \$15,000.00 in 2024 to aid in the phase II construction of the Youth Baseball Fields. They will be leveling the field, hydroseed field, fertilizer treatment, replace outfield fence with sheet metal fence and replace outfield side fences with chain-link fence.	Stone	Barker	\$0.00

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Town Of Oak Grove	Carroll	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The town of Oak Grove is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to install a pavilion and pickleball court with sidewalk to parking lot and picnic tables in their city park.	The Town of Oak Grove received \$15,000.00 in 2020 to aid in paving a walking trail and adding new playground equipment at its city park.	King	Breaux	\$0.00
Prim Fire Department	Cleburne	\$5,203.00	The Prim VFD is requesting \$5,203.00 in funding to purchase 10 SCBA units.	The Prim Fire Department received \$14,630.00 in 2024 to purchase new sets of turnout gear.	Payton	Brown	\$5,203.00
Woodlawn VFD	Cleveland	\$6,758.75	Resubmit. The Woodlawn VFD is requesting \$6,758.75 in funding to purchase new front and rear tires for their water tankers.	The Woodlawn VFD received \$11,278.10 in 2024 to update the fire protection equipment to include radios.	Gilmore	Holcomb	\$6,758.75
Town Of Emerson	Columbia	\$14,986.26	The town of Emerson is requesting \$14,986.26 in funding to renovate their community center to replace ceiling tiles and to install AC units.	The town of Emerson received \$15,000.00 in 2024 to aid in the purchase of a mini-excavator for storm pick up and repairs.	Crowell	Jean	\$14,986.26
City Of Bay	Craighead	\$15,000.00	The city of Bay is requesting \$15,000 in funding to construct two new storm shelters.	The City of Bay received \$15,000.00 in 2020 to continue work on a new fire station. They will be working to install sewer and water lines in the new fire station. This is phase two of the project started in 2018.	Wallace	Rye	\$15,000.00
Lake City FD	Craighead	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The Lake City Fire Department is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to purchase a new set of Jaws of Life tools (extrication equipment).	The Lake City Fire Department received \$7,169.97 in 2024 to purchase updated SCBA bottles.	Wallace	Milligan	\$15,000.00

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City of Cedarville	Crawford	\$5,094.29	Resubmit. The city of Cedarville is requesting \$5,094.29 in funding to renovate their city parks playground to include a toddler safe area.		Petty	Hall	\$5,094.29
City Of Mulberry	Crawford	\$15,000.00	The city of Mulberry is requesting \$15,000 in funding to aid in the purchase of a permanent generator for the city's senior center and storm shelter.	The city of Mulberry received \$9,453.71 in 2025 (CY 2024) to add lights and netting to their pickleball courts.	Petty	Puryear	\$15,000.00
City Of Sparkman	Dallas	\$15,000.00	The city of Sparkman is requesting \$15,000 in funding to aid in the purchase of a new city work truck.		Stone	Barker	\$15,000
Town Of Prattsville	Grant	\$9,345.00	The town of Prattsville is requesting \$9,345.00 in funding to purchase and install a new emergency warning siren.		Stone	Mayberry	\$9,345.00
Izard County	Izard	\$15,000.00	Resubmit: Izard County is applying on behalf of the community of Flat Rock for \$15,000.00 in funding to repair the community center's roof and structural issues with the ceiling and trusses.	Flat Rock has not received funding in the past.	Flippo	Walker	\$15,000.00
Strawberry VFD	Lawrence	\$14,974.40	The Strawberry VFD is requesting \$14,074.40 in funding to purchase a side x side to function as an off road fire suppression equipment. This will enable them to fight brush fires located in off road locations.		Payton	Tosh	\$14,974.40

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Star City FD	Lincoln	\$7,259.00	The Star City Fire Department is requesting \$7,259.00 in funding to replace the flooring in their fire station.		Gilmore	Holcomb	\$7,259.00
City Of Ogden	Little River	\$7,401.95	The city of Ogden is requesting \$7,401.95 in funding to aid in the purchase and install a new generator at their community center building.	The city of Ogden received \$5,150.00 in 2021 to renovate the interior and exterior of their community center.	Hickey, Jr.	Vaught	\$0.00
City Of Scranton	Logan	\$8,142.00	The city of Scranton is requesting \$8,142.00 in funding to install a fence around the perimeter of the Scranton City Park.	The City of Scranton received \$10,750.00 in 2019 to install new storm sirens.	Stubblefield	Eubanks	\$0.00
Town Of Caulksville	Logan	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The town of Caulksville is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to construct a pavilion in its new city park which was established recently with the FUN park grant in 2024.		Stubblefield	Eubanks	\$15,000.00
City Of England	Lonoke	\$14,700.00	The city of England is requesting \$14,700 in funding for their beautification project along Main Street and Fordyce Street in their downtown district.	The city of England received \$15,000.00 in 2021 to replace fencing and dugouts at the England Ball Complex for their little league and t-ball fields.	Flowers	Lynch	\$0.00
Town Of Keo	Lonoke	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The town of Keo is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to make improvements to the city park. They plan to add a drinking fountain, planters and shade sails.	The city of Keo received \$13,200.00 in 2022 to install a new storm warning siren.	Flowers	Lynch	\$0.00

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Oakland PLVFD	Marion	\$15,000.00	Resubmit: The Oakland Promise Land FPD is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to replace their 1988 rescue truck with a newer model which has a larger water tank and a powered pump. This is part of a larger project, total project cost is \$50,000.00	The Oakland Promise Land FPD received \$15,000.00 in 2024 to purchase new Fire Engine Truck to replace their 44 year old truck. \$109,000 total project cost.	Flippo	Nazarenko	\$15,000.00
Town Of Etowah	Mississippi	\$6,841.55	The town of Etowah is requesting \$6,841.55 in funding to install a pickleball court in their city park.	The Etowah VFD received \$13,932 in 2013 to purchase and repair a building next to the fire station to be used to store firefighting equipment.	Wallace	Milligan	\$0.00
City Of Harrisburg	Poinsett	\$15,000.00	The city of Harrisburg is requesting \$15,000 in funding to add concrete paths around their baseball field and update their existing bleachers.	The City of Harrisburg received \$6,125.00 in 2017 for the purchase of a new skid unit and a 10 gallon foam cell.	Wallace	Tosh	\$15,000.00
City Of Des Arc	Prairie	\$15,000.00	The city of Des Arc is requesting \$15,000 in funding to purchase and install a new server and phone systems for the Des Arc city hall complex.	The city of Des Arc received \$15,000.00 in 2025 (calendar 24) to construct a new concession stand/bathroom facility at their ballpark facility to make the facility ADA compliant.	Caldwell	Lynch	\$0.00
City Of Hazen	Prairie	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The city of Hazen is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to renovate the restroom and fencing at the Hazen Ballpark Complex	The city of Hazen received \$14,850.00 in 2023 to construct a new roof on their indoor batting facility.	Caldwell	Lynch	\$15,000.00
Landis VFD	Searcy	\$15,000.00	The Landis VFD is requesting \$15,000 in funding to purchase a used water tanker truck.		Irvin	Walker	\$15,000.00

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Searcy County	Searcy	\$15,000.00	Searcy County is requesting \$15,000 in funding to perform much needed upgrades to their county ballpark. These include updating and replacing lighting, addressing drainage issues, remodel the restrooms and repair an area of the concession stands. *Building owned by the Searcy County Civic Center, not the county - we do not make exceptions for the county, but do for unincorporated communities within a county.*	Searcy County received \$15,000.00 in 2023 to redo their civic center's electrical work, trim exterior doors and windows.	Irvin	Walker	\$0.00
Town of St. Joe	Searcy	\$7,488.24	The town of St. Joe is requesting \$7,488.24 in funding to assist with the replacement of the damages ceiling tiles and repair of the drop ceiling frame.	The Town of St. Joe received \$10,053.75 in 2011 to purchase cabinets, displays, computer systems, and renovations to M & NA Railroad Depot Bldg.	Irvin	Walker	\$7,488.24
Welcome Home	Searcy	\$9,000.00	RESUBMIT: The Welcome Home Community is requesting \$9,000.00 in funding to complete the construction of an outdoor pavilion at its new community park/walking trail. This project was part of the FUN grant they received, but did not have enough funds to complete.		Irvin	Walker	\$9,000.00
Hackett VFD	Sebastian	\$15,000.00	The Hackett Volunteer Fire Department is requesting \$15,000 in funding to purchase 3 complete sets of SCBA units.	Hackett Fire Department received \$14,038.84 in 2019 to purchase new radios.	Rice	Johnson	\$15,000.00

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Junction City VFD	Union	\$15,000.00	The Junction City VFD is requesting \$15,000 in funding to aid in the purchase of an SCBA filling station (air pack refill station).	the Junction City VFD received \$14,952.00 in 2025 to purchase 8 complete sets of turnout gear.	Stone	Shepherd	\$15,000.00
Town Of Shirley	Van Buren	\$15,000.00	The town of Shirley is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to replace the flooring in the community center.	The City of Shirley received \$13,668.00 in 2020 to renovate the old 1st National Bank Building. They will be converting this building into an expansion of their community center.	Irvin	Beck	\$15,000.00
Town Of Goshen	Washington	\$7,466.00	Resubmit. The city of Goshen is requesting \$7,466.00 in funding to add electricity at the trailhead site. This is part of a larger project to add a welcome pavilion to their park's trailhead.		Petty	Puryear	\$0.00
City of Pangburn	White	\$15,000.00	RESUBMIT: The City of Pangburn is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to resurface their city park walking trail. The trail needs to be resurfaced and brought up to ADA Standards.	The city has not received funding for a community project, but the Fire Department has received many grants.	Dismang	Pearce	\$15,000.00
Town Of Letona	White	\$4,984.00	The town of Letona is requesting \$4,984.00 in funding to purchase two outdoor security cameras to be mounted on the city street light poles.		Dismang	Pearce	\$4,984.00

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City of McCrory	Woodruff	\$15,000.00	Resubmit. The city of McCrory is requesting \$15,000.00 in funding to purchase new scoreboards for their baseball fields, rehab the fields and add concrete under the bleachers.	The City of McCrory is received \$12,147 in 2014 to make improvements to their city park.	Caldwell	Moore	\$15,000.00
Total Requested: \$471,795.86				Total Recommended: \$352,244.36			