



Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham Receives \$100,000 Grant to Help Appalachian Communities Access More Federal Funds

This award will help the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham expand its technical assistance capacity to assist communities in seeking federal funding.

Birmingham, Alabama, June 16, 2023 — This week, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), in partnership with the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), announced nearly \$2.5 million in awards through *READY LDDs*, one of four tailored tracks of ARC’s capacity-building initiative, [READY Appalachia](#). The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) – the Local Development District (LDD) for the Greater Birmingham region – was awarded \$100,000 to expand staffing capacity to better support local communities in identifying, accessing, and implementing federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and other funding sources. This award will establish an Economic Development Fellowship program for the agency’s Economic Development Department to expand the department’s capacity to develop projects for state and federal funding for the 90 local governments in their service area.

“ARC remains committed to working with our partners in our Local Development Districts to build parity throughout all of Appalachia, and this latest round of funding will augment the work these Local Development Districts are doing to help their communities utilize unprecedented amounts of federal funding across the region,” said **ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin**.

The selected Fellow will be dedicated to educating the region’s local governments about available funding opportunities and coordinating project development, from proposal development to implementation, with a special focus on small and distressed areas in the region. In addition, the Fellow will also utilize RPCGB’s existing partnerships with each of the county’s economic development councils and county commissions to coordinate county-wide education events and collaborate on funding opportunities. The fellowship is anticipated to begin in September 2023.

“We are excited for the opportunity to expand the capacity of our Economic Development team to help local governments prepare project proposals for these opportunities,” said **Charles Ball, RPCGB’s Executive Director**. “LDDs play a critical role in shaping regional economies, and we are grateful for the continued support of ARC and ADECA.”

The \$2.5 million award announcement joins the ~\$500,000 in *READY LDD* funds [ARC awarded](#) to five Area Development Districts in Appalachian Kentucky last month, bringing the total to nearly \$3 million for 31 LDDs in 10 states. For questions regarding this project or other ARC grant opportunities, contact Jesslan Wilson, Director of Economic Development at RPCGB, at jwilson@rpcgb.org.

About the ARC:

The Appalachian Regional Commission is an economic development entity of the federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia to help the Region achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation.

About the RPCGB:

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) is one of 12 regional councils throughout the State of Alabama. Serving as both the Economic Development District (EDD) and Local Development District (LDD) for the region, the agency provides technical assistance and planning services to Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker counties, as well as the municipalities within those counties. Services cover a wide range of areas, including community and transportation planning, GIS mapping, data procurement and analysis, grant application assistance, and specialized market studies.