South Central Dakota Regional Council

ND Association of Regional Councils Resource Call

Join Us for Our Keeping the Next Generation Engaged Resource Call
Empowering the Next Generation to Get Involved, Lead, and Thrive

You're invited to our next **NDARC Resource Call** featuring **Ben Winchester** from the University of Minnesota Department of Community Development. Ben is a rural sociologist with over 25 years of experience working alongside small towns across the Midwest.

What we'll cover:
• Succession planning for businesses and boards
• Building leadership pipelines for rural youth and young professionals
• Ensuring a successful "baton pass" to the next generation

January 21 - 11:00 AM CT

Click to Join

We're looking forward to an engaging and encouraging conversation and thank you for being part of **NDARC's mission** to support and strengthen North Dakota's rural communities.

DRN Announces Open House Event for The Nest – Ellendale Childcare Center

Ellendale, ND, January 19, 2026—DRN is excited to announce the opening of The Nest - Ellendale Childcare Center, in Ellendale, ND by hosting an Open House on Tuesday, January 27 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Parents, children, and the community are invited to participate in the ribbon cutting at 5:30 p.m. followed by a tour of the facility. Staff will be available to answer questions.

The Nest - Ellendale Childcare Center, officially opens its doors to families on February 2, 2026. Ellendale Childcare Center offers a nurturing environment dedicated to early learning and play-based activities, featuring specialized rooms for infants, toddlers, and Pre-K, as well as a vibrant after-school program.

2026 AARP Community Challenge Grants:
Apply by Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. ET / 2:00 p.m. PT

AARP invites eligible organizations to apply for funding to support tangible improvement projects that help make communities more livable for all residents – especially those age 50 and older.

Applications are being accepted through March 4, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. ET / 2:00 p.m. PT for projects that enhance:
Public places - Housing - Transportation - Digital connetions - Disaster resilience

Three funding opportunities are available:
Flagship Grants - Demonstration Grants - Capacity-Building Microgrants

Since 2017, AARP has invested $24.3 million through 2,100 projects across all 50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Visit AARP.org/CommunityChallenge to learn more and apply if eligible.

Rural Catalyst Grant

South Central Dakota Regional Council assisted 20 local projects with the Rural Catalyst Program through technical assistance. Over 80 applications were submitted in the state.

There was a large interest in the program and we had a variety of applications submitted.

South Central Dakota Regional Council works with the USDA IRP Loan Programs to assist with economic development and gap financing.

South Central Dakota Regional Council Loan Programs

We administer three economic development loan programs to assist in gap financing to start and expand businesses in the nine counties of Region VI. Www.scdrc.org is where you can browse our programs and download an application.

Cooperative Fire Protection Assistance Grant

The Cooperative Fire Protection Assistance (CFPA) Grant program administered through the NDFS has provided grants to Fire Departments across the state. These reimbursable grants are based on a 50/50 cost share. Applications are being accepted now through March 6, 2026.

Possible Grant Awards
- **Project** (firefighting gear and other personal protective equipment (PPE), tools, communication equipment, etc.)
  Awards are up to $15,000 for a project. A department may spend more than $30,000 but the maximum award amount will not exceed $15,000. **Single item total purchase price cannot exceed $10,000.**
- **Vehicle** - Award up to $25,000 for a vehicle. A department may spend more than $50,000 but the maximum amount awarded will not exceed $25,000.

Deadline: March 6, 2026

https://www.ndsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/CFPA%20Instructions%20%26%20Timeline.pdf

North Dakota Forestry - Federal Excess Property Request

The Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) program refers to Forest Service-owned property that is on loan to State Foresters for the purpose of wildland and rural firefighting. Most of the property originally belonged to the Department of Defense (DoD). Once acquired by the Forest Service, it is loaned to state cooperators for fire fighting purposes. The property is then loaned to the state forester, who may then place it with local departments to improve local fire programs. https://www.ndsu.edu/ndfs/fire

NDHFA is Seeking Non-Congregate Shelter Proposals

- NDHFA is seeking proposals for the acquisition and/or development of Non-Congregate Shelter for the HOME American Rescue Plan program.
- Completed proposals will be reviewed and scored under the project selection criteria identified in the Request for Proposal.

Complete proposals must be submitted and received no later than 5:00 p.m. CT on March 23, 2026. Successful proposals will then be invited to submit a formal application. Questions can be directed to hfahomelessprograms@nd.gov.

Deadline—March 23, 2026.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Spring of 2026

South Central Dakota Regional Council (SCDRC) Manages Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for counties and cities.

Eligibility

City or County applying must meet the Low to Moderate income guidelines of 51%. Urgent need or Removal of Architectural Barriers does not need to follow the Low to Moderate Income guidelines.

Call us to find out if you are eligible!

This program will open up in Spring of 2026, get your projects ready now!

We are able to help you complete the pre-application and are excited to help you with your project!

Does your City need Ordinances?
South Central Dakota Regional Council Can Help!

Our Team will work with your team to create the perfect ordinances for your jurisdiction. Ordinances are what you need to have the authority to make your community a great place to live in 2023!

The Activate Rural Learning Lab is a 2-year curated cohort experience for teams of creative entrepreneurs, artists, community activators, elected leaders, and small business owners to cultivate creative third places in rural communities. The Learning Lab provides grant funding and ongoing curated technical assistance through monthly project check-ins, exchange visits, workshops and gatherings, and allocated staff time to support the development of systems for the project's operations, activations, and stewardship.

DoPT will select 10 building activation projects in rural communities with a population under 20,000 residents in Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and the Native nations that share that geography. Ideal projects will (1) be creative and community-focused, (2) be ready to try something new, and (3) demonstrate the potential to build local capacity for creative approaches to building activation.

Applications are due: February 20, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. CST

EDA - 2025 Disaster Supplement Grant Program

The FY 2025 Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity is not just about rebuilding—it's about transforming local economies after disaster, with an emphasis on improving communities' economic outcomes and resilience to future disasters. This funding opportunity encourages broad-based local engagement and places special emphasis on projects that involve private industry in disaster recovery and economic renewal to ensure the maximum impact for taxpayer funding to support these communities. Applicants can choose from three funding pathways based on their recovery stage, capacity, and long-term development vision.

- *Readiness Path* - Non-construction projects to build local capacity and prepare for future implementation projects. Readiness projects include funding for recovery strategies, disaster recovery coordinators or other capacity building activities, and pre-development expenses. Grant amounts are expected to range from $250,000 to $500,000.

- *Implementation Path -* Standalone construction and non-construction projects that help communities recover from major disasters and advance recovery and growth, improving economic outcomes. Grant amounts are expected to range from $2 million to $20 million for construction projects and $100,000 to $5 million for non-construction projects.

- *Industry Transformation Path -* Coalition-led, multi-project portfolios that transform regional economies through industry development. These grants can fund a mix of construction and non-construction projects. Grant amounts are expected to range from $20 million to $50 million.

Projects must be located in, primarily serve, or demonstrably benefit one or more communities in areas that received a major disaster designation occurring in calendar years 2023 and 2024. Check eligibility here: https://www.fema.gov/disaster/declarations . Please direct questions or requests for assistance to the Economic Development Representative (EDR) for the state where the project will be located. Please visit www.eda.gov/about/contact to find contact information for your local EDR.