

Small Investments. Big Projects.

How the Southwestern Commission's PER/PAR Development Program Helped Rural Communities Compete for Infrastructure Funding

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The Problem

Small, rural communities consistently identify engineering and architectural planning costs as one of the barriers to pursuing federal funding.

1

Identify Project

Community has a highly needed infrastructure project.

2

High Upfront Costs

Unable to afford preliminary engineering or architectural work.

3

Funding Lockout

Without a full PER/PAR, they are locked out of accessing federal dollars.

4

Project Dies

The critical infrastructure project dies in early development.

Our Solution

A creative partnership with the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina to build rural capacity and access disaster-related federal funding.

\$1.5 Million Initial program investment from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina.

26 Projects Supported across eighteen county Western NC region.

\$300M+ Total project costs requested from federal funders.

1

Connect & Procure

SWC connects communities with pre-qualified and procured engineering & architectural firms.

2

Develop PER/PAR

Preliminary reports are fully funded and developed by qualified professionals.

3

Apply Competitively

Communities submit highly competitive, fully-planned funding applications.

4

Secure Infrastructure

Unlocking millions in major infrastructure funding for rural communities.

COG Partners

The Southwestern Commission managed Community Foundation of WNC funds for the eighteen county Western North Carolina region in close partnership with regional Councils of Governments (COGs).

Initial Program Design

Project Sourcing

**Project and Relationship
Management**

Partner Councils of Governments



Program Basics

\$1.5M Planning Fund

Dedicated capital supporting preliminary engineering and architectural reports.

Eligible Applicants

Funding is restricted to local governments and institutions of higher education.

PERs & PARs Only

Program is limited strictly to Preliminary Engineering and Architectural Reports.

Federal Alignment

Projects had to actively pursue federal infrastructure funding.

Procured Firms

Engineering and architectural firms selected through SWC procurement process.

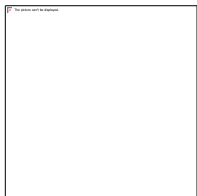
Rolling Process

Applications were accepted and evaluated on a rolling basis.

Lessons Learned

Early Planning

Dramatically improves competitiveness.



Regional Partnerships

Stretch limited resources.



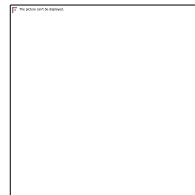
Small Investments

Unlock transformational projects.



Good Relationships

With engineering and architectural firms are essential for project success.





Communities don't fail to compete because they lack good projects.

They fail because they can't afford to get to the starting line.



Thank You!

Contact Information

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