

# ETDD Newsletter

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## The Appalachian Regional Commission – Steady Progress Towards Parity

This year our good friend, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), turned fifty-five years old. The House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee is currently considering an ARC budget request of \$165 million for non-highway program funding - a mere drop in the bucket when you consider the multi-billion dollar requests of other federal agencies, but for the past 55 years, the ARC has played an indispensable role in the sustained development of the Appalachian Region.

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a regional economic development agency that represents a partnership of federal, state, and local government. Established by an act of Congress in 1965, ARC is composed of the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the President. Local participation is provided through multi-county local development districts such as the East Tennessee Development District. ARC invests in activities that address the five goals identified in the Commission's strategic plan.

Each year ARC provides funding for several hundred investments in the Appalachian Region, in areas such as business development, education and job training, telecommunications, infrastructure, community development, housing, and transportation. These projects create thousands of new jobs; improve local water and sewer systems; increase school readiness; expand access to health care; assist local communities with strategic planning; and provide technical and managerial assistance to emerging businesses. Within the ETDD region, examples of ARC projects include the installation of a water line to a remote elementary school in Cocke County, construction of a new water storage facility to serve businesses on Exit 417 off Interstate 40, and the installation of new high speed broadband fiber to rural areas in Campbell County.

To assess progress in completing its mission, ARC developed an index that compares the economic condition of Appalachian counties with all the counties in the nation (based on unemployment, per-capita income, and poverty rates). While the number of distressed counties for FY 2020 has dropped to a low not seen since pre-recession 2008, Appalachia still has proportionally more of the economically weakest counties and fewer of the economically strongest counties compared to the rest of the nation. Moreover, about 25 percent of the weakest in the nation are in Appalachia, while the Region has only 1.7 percent of the nation's strongest counties. Recently, the ARC published its County Economic Status Designations for FY 2021 and accompanying data on county designations. This is a full analysis of the current economic status for the region and once approved, will be utilized as baseline data for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 (October, 2020-September, 2021). The overall numbers for FY 2021 in the Region show:

78 counties are considered Distressed (down from 80 in FY 2020)  
104 counties are considered At-Risk (down from 110 in FY 2020)  
223 counties are considered Transitional (up from 217 in FY 2020)  
13 counties are considered Competitive (up from 10 in FY 2020)  
2 counties are considered Attainment (down from 3 in FY 2020)

Recent events such as the COVID-19 pandemic reinforce the fact that the Appalachian Regional Commission is needed more now than ever before. ARC's successful road construction campaign has invested billions of dollars in improving access to all communities within the region. ARC's non-highway programs have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in basic infrastructure such as water line extensions, sewer systems development and the extension of broadband coverage into rural areas. But the economic problems persist - Appalachia is still the poorest and least educated region in the country. We need the ARC to continue to invest in our Region so that the original objective of economic parity can finally be realized.

(Sources: Wikipedia, ARC website, ETDD archives)

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

ETDD staff is currently working with the following communities on the submittal of EDA grants under the CARES program:

1. Sevierville Water Board – Improvements to the water intake center
2. Gatlinburg Convention Center – Marketing plan
3. City of Clinton – Water improvements to I-75 Industrial Park
4. Industrial Board of Scott County – Road construction at the Scott County Airport
5. Morgan County Economic Development Board – Wetlands conversion at the industrial park and a Phase II building project.

ETDD staff assisted the City of Loudon with a disaster grant that will allow for the upgrade of a water force main under the Tennessee River to the Blair Bend Industrial Park. The project amount is for \$3.2 million with a grant of \$2.5 million.

ETDD staff is assisting the following communities with economic projects that will provide economic opportunities in the future:

Campbell County Workforce Development; Grant amount = \$84,925.00. Funds to be used for the acquisition of welding equipment to be housed at the Campbell County High School welding laboratory.

Claiborne County Industrial Development Board; Grant amount = \$89,775.00. Funds to be used for a due diligence study that includes resistivity and rail feasibility study for the Russell Industrial property.

Eastbridge Business Park Knox County; Grant amount = \$500,000.00. Funds to be used for the construction of a centrally located pump station and the installation of approximately 4,500 lf of sewer line.

Jefferson City Industrial Development Board; Grant amount = \$500,000; Funds will be used to grade 25 acres at the Jefferson City Industrial Complex and improve road access to the Hunt property.

Niles Ferry Industrial Park Monroe County; Grant amount = \$500,000.00 for site grading.

City of Friendsville - Administration of an EDA grant that will allow the City to place additional wastewater lines along the 321 corridor to assist in the recruitment of future

industrial and commercial endeavors, grant amount of \$440,885.00.

Industrial Development Board of Scott County for assessment of potential industrial sites. Grant amount = \$37,699.00.

## **PINI (TACIR) SURVEY**

ETDD staff recently completed the collection of data that details the infrastructure needs from all 16 counties, 56 cities, 25 school systems, and 94 utility districts. All new and existing TDOT and Bridge projects within the ETDD region have been updated as well. We thank all the participants for their help in supplying this information to ETDD staff. Infrastructure projects for the purpose of this survey included any needed public improvement need over \$50,000 in these categories: transportation, utilities, education (facilities), health, safety, welfare, culture, economic development, and various public facilities. The data has been entered and has gone thru a detailed quality control process. TACIR will publish a lengthy summary that details infrastructure needs for all of Tennessee. The report is presented to the Governor and state legislators for use as a planning tool and a funding decision-making tool. You may view the report at the following link:

<https://www.tn.gov/tacir/infrastructure.html>

## **GRANT INFORMATION**

### **Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)**

Community Development Block Grant applications are still being reviewed by ECD staff with award announcements probably in early fall.

ETDD staff is currently assisting the following communities with the administration of their CDBG projects:

1. Tazewell – Housing
2. Morgan County – Waterline Extension
3. Campbell County Drive for 55 – Dual Enrollment Program
4. Campbell County – Ambulances
5. Mossy Creek Foundation – Façade Improvements
6. City of Sweetwater – Façade Improvements
7. Madisonville – Fire Hall
8. Harrogate – Wastewater Improvements
9. Cocke County – Waterline Improvements

10. Claiborne County – Waterline Improvements
11. Caryville – Fire Engine
12. New Market – Communication Equipment
13. Jefferson County – Waterline Extension
14. Dandridge – Wastewater Improvements
15. Rockwood – Wastewater Improvements
16. Winfield – Fire Truck
17. Rocky Top – Fire Truck
18. Scott County – Ambulances
19. Monroe County – Ambulances
20. Campbell County – Ambulances
21. Sweetwater – Housing
22. City of Sevierville – Façade Improvements

Approximately **98 vests** will be purchased by the police departments listed above with a grant total of \$53,032.00. ETDD staff is currently assisting the following communities with the administration of their current bullet proof vest grant program. Anderson County, Grainger County, Norris, Sweetwater, and Jacksboro.

**YOU MUST REGISTER WITH SAM.GOV and GRANTS.GOV in order to apply for all federal economic and community development grants!**

### Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

ETDD staff assisted the following communities with submitting full applications:

1. Claiborne County School Board – Wastewater system improvements at Springdale School.
2. Claiborne County – Boat dock
3. Clearfork Utility District – Water plant upgrades
4. Campbell County – Broadband extension

ETDD staff is currently working with the following communities with their ARC administration:

1. Dandridge – Water tank
2. Union County – Wastewater at Sharps Chapel School
3. Plateau Utilities – Water system improvements
4. Rockwood – Wastewater project
5. Oneida TCAT – Equipment for diesel classroom
6. Scott County – Reservoir water level study
7. City of Loudon – Marina development
8. City of Sweetwater – Broadband
9. White Pine – Water connection with Morristown
10. Arthur-Shawnee Utility – Water tank
11. Oneida TCAT Power – Education classes

### Police Grants

ETDD staff assisted the following communities with preparing a bullet proof grant application:

Anderson County - 27 Vests; grant amount = \$14,661.00  
 City of Clinton - 40 Vests; grant amount = \$21, 720.00  
 City of Harriman - 24 Vests; grant amount = \$13,032.00  
 Town of Bean Station - 7 Vests; grant amount = \$3,801.00

## SOLID WASTE

### Upcoming Grant Opportunities

In the coming weeks, TDEC will begin accepting applications for Used Oil Grants, Recycling Rebate Grants, Recycling Equipment Grants, and Household Hazardous Waste Grants. With funding limits dependent on grant type, funds can be used to purchase a variety of equipment, including containers, compactors, balers, crushers, sorters, densifiers, and grinders. Additionally, funds can be used to install collection locations for household hazardous waste materials. Please note that except for the Used Oil Grant, TDEC Materials Management grants generally require a 10% - 50% Grant Match. Grant opportunities also exist through the Southeast Recycling Development Council's Recycling Infrastructure Grant Program and through the Recycling Partnership's Residential Curbside Recycling Cart Grant. ETDD staff can assist you with applying for these grants or answer any questions you may have about the application process. If you need assistance with grants or have any other solid waste needs, please call Tim Hendrick at 865-273-6003.

### EPA Nationwide Debris Management Tool

The U.S. EPA recently launched their Disaster Debris Recover Tool, which provides information on over 20,000 facilities that can manage materials commonly found in disaster debris. This tool can assist with public agencies finding and adding recovery, recycling and disposal options into their debris management plans; emergency planners assessing an area's capacity to manage anticipated debris; and communities identifying source reduction and waste minimization options. For more information and to access the Disaster Debris Recovery Tool, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/large-scale-residential-demolition/disaster-debris-recovery-tool>.

### District-wide Needs Assessment

The Solid Waste Management Act of 1991 requires all Development Districts to coordinate, conduct, and maintain an assessment of the solid waste needs for each municipal solid waste planning region in the state. T.C.A. § 68-211-811 also requires that the assessment include demographic and economic information as well as a thorough evaluation of each region's solid waste system. After conducting an online public hearing on May 29<sup>th</sup>, ETDD staff received TDEC approval of the final draft of the assessment. The 2020 District-wide Needs Assessment is available on the solid waste page of the ETDD website.

## **HOUSING**

THDA has extended the current Emergency Repair Program (ERP) grant term due to delays caused by COVID-19. The current grant cycle now ends on July 31, 2020. Any projects under contract at the time the grant term ends must be completed and submitted for payment 45 days after the grant term ends (September 14, 2020).

Additionally, THDA has announced that during its May meeting, the Board of Directors approved an increase in the maximum amount of assistance that may be provided to individual homeowners. The maximum subsidy amount was increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000. This increase will become effective with the FY 2021 contracts.

As a reminder to all service providers: THDA now requires detailed itemized inspection invoices where applicable within pay request packets. Invoice template forms can be found on THDA's ERP page. For more information please contact ETDD or Maree Emberton at [MEmberton@thda.org](mailto:MEmberton@thda.org).

ETDD housing staff is available to discuss housing needs and community housing grant applications. We can also provide information on local and regional housing service providers, agencies and alternate programs that can assist individuals in need of housing repair. For more information on these programs, contact Jonathan Moseley at (865) 273-6003.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is a program through the National Park Service (NPS) that recognizes historically significant places and resources.

NRHP listing provides many benefits, including access to preservation grants and tax incentives, and limited protection from federally funded or licensed endeavors. ETDD staff can assist in the preparation of nominations to the NRHP, which are highly technical and often take around a year to prepare and process. Beyond access to grants, NRHP listing allows for widespread recognition of the site's historic significance and increased heritage tourism opportunities.

ETDD can also assist in the identification of competitive preservation projects that may be eligible for historic preservation grants and can also provide grant writing services to communities in our region. Certified Local Government (CLG) entities receive 15 extra points on grant applications. Of the federal funds for these grants, 10% must go towards existing CLGs. Any current Historic Zoning Commissions (HZG) should consider applying to become a CLG for preservation partnership with the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC).

The Tennessee Historical Commission has awarded the next round of historic preservation grants. ETDD is pleased to announce that the application submitted on behalf of Monroe County was awarded \$25,200 to fund masonry restoration on the National Register-listed Monroe County Courthouse. Grants were awarded to the following East Tennessee counties:

### Jefferson County

Glenmore Preservation Society, Inc.

\$25,000 to fund masonry work on the National Register-listed Glenmore Mansion.

### Monroe County

Monroe County

\$25,200 to fund masonry restoration on the National Register-listed Monroe County Courthouse.

### Morgan County

Morgan County Tourism Alliance

\$14,000 to fund the restoration of the National Register-listed Tanner Store.

The THC has started a new initiative to research Post-WWII suburbs contingent upon their frequent appearances in NR nominations and Section 106 reviews. While there is substantial general context on post WWII suburban development there is nothing specific to TN. Survey time frame for these neighborhoods is circa 1950/1960-1990. The start date can be as early as 1950 but with a preferred



emphasis on 1960 and later eras. Please inform ETDD staff of suggestions for neighborhoods that might meet these criteria.

ETDD also works with a variety of local and regional preservation groups and advocates that can assist with NRHP nominations, preservation grant applications, and tax incentives. Please contact Jonathan Moseley with ETDD for preservation-related assistance and technical guidance.

### **RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RPO)**

The ET SRPO held a virtual joint meeting of the Executive Board and Technical Committee on July 7, 2020. The ET NRPO held a joint meeting of the Executive Board and Technical Committee on July 8, 2020. The meeting included presentations on the I-40 and I-75 corridor study, TDOT's resurfacing schedule and coordination, Multimodal Access Grant update, Community Transportation Planning Grant update, Rural Planning Initiative Grant update and others.

The following communities received 2020 Community Transportation Planning Grants: Campbell County, Harriman, Newport and Sevierville. The CTPG grants can be used for the following planning studies: Community Mobility Plan, Corridor Study, Complete Streets Plan, Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan, Road Diet Analysis or Transportation Systems Management & Operations.

The following communities received 2020 Multimodal Access Grants: Alcoa, Rocky Top and Sweetwater. Notices of Intent to Apply for the next round of the MMAG must be submitted to TDOT by July 31, 2020. These grants are 95% state funds and 5% local funds. The funds can be used for the design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the following facilities: sidewalks, pedestrian crossing improvements, bicycle facilities, multi-use paths, transit stop amenities, complete streets / road diets / traffic calming measures, bicycle / pedestrian / transit related improvements that address ADA requirements, pedestrian scale lighting and others.

The following communities submitted applications for the 2020 Rural Planning Initiative Grant: Campbell County, Claiborne County, Monroe County, New Tazewell, Newport, Oneida, Parrottsville, Plainview, Rutledge and Wartburg. These grants can be used for the following transportation planning studies: Access Management Studies, Corridor Studies, Road Diet Analysis, Resurfacing and Striping Plans for Local Roads,

Transportation Facility Inventories, Transportation Feasibility Studies, and all CTPG eligible planning documents (Complete Streets, Bike/Ped Plans, Transportation Systems Management & Operations). Six of the ten RuPI applications submitted will be selected for transportation planning studies to be prepared by engineering / planning consultants.

The East Tennessee Development District website contains the most up-to-date information on the two RPO's. The web site includes the most up to date TDOT Project Status Reports that provide a description and status of all TDOT projects in each county within the RPO. The link to this website is <http://www.etdd.org/services/community-development/transportation/>.

### **PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE**

Despite the more restrictive environment that communities are contending with in this day and age, a wide array of planning services continues to be provided to local jurisdictions in the region on a contractual basis by the Planning Advisory Services (PAS) at the East Tennessee Development District. The planning advisory service has maintained a steady contract volume for full-time planning services. Planning services are provided to a total of thirty-two (32) cities and counties in the East Tennessee Region with two (2) additional cities that are provided services on an as-needed basis. The program was established to assist cities and counties with growth and development issues at the local and regional levels by providing technical advisory services to local governments. There is a broad array of planning services offered under six (6) different primary program components. The components include comprehensive planning, strategic planning, land use regulations, community development services, mapping services, and training and continuing education. Daily services typically consist of a variety of activities that include site plan and subdivision plat review; advising local officials, developers, and the general public on community processes; staffing local planning commission meetings and other meetings, and making recommendations on agenda items. In addition, ETDD offers planning commissioner training on a regular basis; either coordinating training with other agencies or conducting the training sessions. Lastly, planning staff coordinates with other agencies and planning organizations to foster cooperation for a regional planning approach in East Tennessee.

One noteworthy service that may benefit local communities is the strategic planning services component. The strategic

planning component reinforces the overall planning program of local communities by addressing specific planning issues that the local leadership of cities and counties have identified. This may be a specific need that has arisen or could be used as one of the implementation methods of a comprehensive plan in support of the goals, objectives and policies. Although strategic planning targets an identified need in the community, the types of strategic plans and studies are quite broad and may cover virtually any type of local issue that needs to be addressed as it relates to growth and development. For this reason, the local leadership can craft a plan or study that is uniquely suited to their community. For example, strategic planning studies generally include, but are not limited to: community facilities plans, public improvement plans, waterline extension improvements, corporate limit fringe area analysis, neighborhood studies, fire protection concerns, road improvement/road inventory, demographic analysis, recreational needs, housing improvement plans/inventories, and many other studies that may not fit into a general planning category. Moreover, the strategic planning service that is offered by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) support the well-established grant writing services that has been offered by the East Tennessee Development District for many years. In fact, these strategic plans and studies may not only fully support specific needs of the local community but can potentially translate into a funding mechanism that will lessen the financial burden of cities and counties for community improvements.

Due to restrictions imposed on large group settings, the scheduled training sessions in March were cancelled. These training sessions were sponsored and were to be conducted by staff at the East Tennessee Development District. Planning staff have been coordinating with the Tennessee Department of Health regarding two separate training sessions in the fall of this year. The training sessions would cover “Planning and Public Health” with tentative dates in September. It is anticipated that these will be virtual training sessions. The logistical details are being considered for these sessions and more specific information will be provided at a later date.

## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

New GIS staff settled into ETDD this quarter, with over 40 maps and illustrations prepared for projects in district communities since May 1st. About half of these maps were made in direct support of ETDD’s grant program. A total of 17 were created for EDA grant applications in Clinton, Morgan County, and Scott County, including project area

maps, topographic maps, and flood map illustrations generated as FIRMettes. 7 maps were created for ARC grants in two communities – Claiborne and Clearfork, which also included project area maps, topographic maps, and FIRMettes, along with airport radius maps. Lastly, two maps were created for a CDBG grant in Sweetwater, which required depiction of the project area and topography.

The staff’s work on Planning Advisory Service contracts for this quarter included preparation of proposed rezoning illustrations for the Rocky Top and Plainview communities. The staff also updated zoning maps for Plainview and Pittman Center to reflect changes made by newly signed ordinances in each community respectively. Updates on the Madisonville zoning map that began last quarter were completed as well, which represents incorporation of all changes since 2011. Another major planning task came to a close this quarter in April when the city of Sweetwater signed and adopted their new zoning map, marking the end of a project that began in March of this year.

In tourism projects, ETDD GIS staff lead mapping efforts on a TDOT application seeking National Scenic Byway Designation for the Cumberland Historic Byway – a route that passes through Campbell, Scott and Morgan Counties of East Tennessee and into Fentress, Pickett, Overton, and Clay Counties of the Upper Cumberland. Given the inter-district scope of the project area, this was a considerable undertaking for the GIS staff; however, the potential impact of scenic designation on the communities along the route in both districts is huge in terms of tourism and associated economic development. With nearly 175 miles of byway, the route traverses four distressed counties (Scott, Morgan, Fentress, and Clay) and three at-risk counties (Claiborne, Campbell, and Overton) in the state. It’s been 12 years since the Federal Highway Administration accepted applications for new National Scenic Byways, so this project was an exciting and unique opportunity not only to highlight the scenic value of the landscapes of Middle and East Tennessee, but also to contribute to statewide efforts towards increasing national marketing presence and future federal grant opportunities for the communities in the state that need it the most. The new class of National Scenic Byways will be announced sometime between September and December of 2020.

In transportation projects, ETDD’s GIS staff also prepared a work map for the planning of a new transportation corridor involving Campbell, Anderson, and Union Counties.

## **AREAWIDE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** **SBA 504 NEWS**

Over the last 3 months, small businesses across the district have experienced unrepresented disruption in their business operations due to the economic effects of the Coronavirus response. To assist all businesses during this period, SBA has introduced two new programs. Furthermore, SBA has made unprecedented amendments to their existing loan programs in record time to immediately assist small businesses.

Under the authority of the CARES act, SBA introduced the Economic Injury Disaster Loan or EIDL loan. Businesses could apply directly to SBA for a loan to assist in their daily operations at very low interest rates and loan terms up to 30 years. The second new program was the Paycheck Protection Program. This program was designed to help small business pay their employees through the expected shut down period. Both programs have been widely accepted and utilized by businesses throughout the district.

In addition to these new programs, SBA has once again stepped up to the plate to assist small businesses who have outstanding SBA 504 loans by directly funding their monthly payments for a six-month period from April 2020 to September 2020 and by offering additional payment deferments as needed.

The June 2020 504 loan funding rates were 3.047% for the 25-year debenture and 2.992% for the 20-year debenture. Borrowers were offered the opportunity to defer the first three monthly payment followed by SBA directly funding the next six-monthly payments. Borrowers will begin regular monthly payments on April 1, 2021. These options will be available to borrowers through the September 2020 funding cycle.

Areawide Development stands ready to assist your business by utilizing the SBA 504 loan program! Please call us if we may be of assistance.

### **ETDD STAFF NEWS**

#### **New Geographic Information System Technician** **Staff Member**

ETDD is pleased to announce that Emily Craig has joined our staff as our Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technician. Emily's primary responsibilities will be providing local governments and ETDD staff with GIS technical assistance within a variety of project applications.

Emily received a BA in Sustainability and Geographic Information Science from the University of Tennessee/Knoxville and also received the Chancellor's Citation for Extraordinary Academic Achievement during her final semester. Welcome Emily and we wish you the best!



#### **New Grants Planner Staff Member**

ETDD is pleased to announce that Jaclyn Courter joined our staff as a Grants Planner on May 1, 2020. Jaclyn's primary responsibilities will be providing local governments with technical assistance within the fields of grant writing and grant administration.

Jaclyn received a BS in Urban and Regional Planning from Delft University and is expecting to complete a MPPA degree from the University of Tennessee/ Knoxville in December of 2020. Welcome Jaclyn and we wish you the best!



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### July 2020

- 3 Fourth of July holiday, ETDD offices closed
- 7 South RPO Workshop (virtual meeting hosted by ETDD)
- 8 North RPO Workshop (virtual meeting hosted by ETDD)
- 21 East TN Regional Council of Fire Chiefs, Alcoa FD hosting
- 28 ETDD Executive Committee & ETHRA Policy Council, (Virtual Meeting)
- 28-29 NADO National Transportation Conference (virtual conference)
- 29 CROET Board of Directors meeting, Oak Ridge

### August 2020

- 11 ETDD Executive Committee & ETHRA Policy Council, ETHRA Offices (cancelled)
- 20 TDDA monthly meeting, Nashville, TN
- 31-2 Association of County Mayors Annual Conference, Murfreesboro, TN

### September 2020

- 7 Labor Day Holiday, ETDD offices closed
- 8 ETDD Executive Committee & ETHRA Policy Council Meetings, ETHRA Offices
- 17 TDDA monthly meeting, Nashville, TN
- 30 CROET Board of Directors meeting, Oak Ridge

### October 2020

- 12 Columbus Day Holiday, ETDD offices closed
- 13 ETDD Executive Committee & ETHRA Policy Council Meetings, ETHRA Offices
- 15 TDDA monthly meeting, Nashville, TN
- 20 East TN Regional Fire Chiefs, Sevierville FD hosting
- 17-20 NADO Annual Training Conference, Cleveland OH
- 21-23 TCSA Annual Conference, TBD
- 27-28 Association of Tennessee Valley Governments, Gatlinburg