

147A.160 Designation of priority communities -- Public interest and public purpose -- Evaluation of projects -- Duties of grant recipients.

(1) The department shall identify and certify the locations for grant funding assistance by utilizing the designation of priority communities established by the Interagency Working Group. The department shall not approve a project unless it finds that the project is in the public interest and the grant funds will be used for a public purpose. For purposes of this subsection, projects that are in the public interest and for a public purpose can provide private benefit, if the department finds the following:

- (a)
 1. The project will enhance a priority community or region;
 2. The granting entity for which the department's matching grant is being used requires a public purpose for grant eligibility; and
 3. The department in its judgment concludes the proposal will enhance the quality of life or services in a priority community or region.
- (b) A public purpose includes but is not limited to projects that:
 1. Enhance economic vitality, including revitalization of structures that have a public purpose or benefit;
 2. Promote or develop an artistic or philanthropic purpose;
 3. Improve traditional infrastructure, such as water and wastewater treatment facilities, transmission lines, transportation facilities, and flood and wastewater management;
 4. Create or enhance telecommunications infrastructure, including cellular towers, fiber optic expansion, and technology infrastructure;
 5. Promote agricultural activities and development;
 6. Enhance development of previously mined areas or areas previously used by the coal industry and other industrial activities into uses that diversify the local economy;
 7. Create or expand recreational facilities, such as walking, hiking, all-terrain vehicle, bike trails, picnic facilities, restrooms, boat docking and fishing piers, and athletic facilities;
 8. Acquire private property that promotes local economic vitality and housing development and enhancement;
 9. Preserve or enhance buildings that are of local historic or economic interest;
 10. Restore or create retail facilities, including related service, parking, and transportation facilities, to revitalize decaying downtown areas;
 11. Construct or expand other facilities that promote or enhance economic development or tourism opportunities, thereby promoting the general welfare of local residents;
 12. Provide facilities and activities for local residences that enhance quality of life, including but not limited to childcare access and public transportation;
 13. Provide vocational and entrepreneurial training for displaced miners and

other persons that have lost jobs or have been unable to find employment or business opportunities in the region;

14. Invest in priority communities housing stock removal and remediation to facilitate community preservation and aesthetics; or
 15. Create drug and substance abuse rehabilitation programs and facilities.
- (2) The department shall evaluate each applicant's eligible project according to the criteria described in this section and KRS 147A.162 for the purpose of compiling a recommendation and score for the eligible project pursuant to KRS 147A.162.
 - (3) As part of the evaluation criteria of this section, the department shall consider the following:
 - (a) Applicant's eligibility when evaluated against the requirements of the federal grant;
 - (b) Application completeness when evaluated against the requirements of the grant;
 - (c) Application content when evaluated against the federal grant program's publicly available scoring rubric or evaluation criteria, if any;
 - (d) Evidence that the project will provide a direct and public benefit to one (1) or more of the priority communities;
 - (e) Evidence of community support for the project;
 - (f) Likelihood that the applicant can successfully implement the grant-funded project;
 - (g) Likelihood that the applicant can successfully manage the federal grant's administration requirements; and
 - (h) Overall positive impact for the surrounding community as evidenced by clear and feasible projected outcomes of the grant-funded project.
 - (4) If a grant applicant is selected as an eligible grant recipient approved under the Government Resources Accelerating Needed Transformation Program, it shall comply with any incentive agreements and reporting requirements deemed necessary by the department to verify that the awarded grant shall go toward an eligible use.

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