



Northeast Council of Governments

March 2020 Newsletter

NECOG Office Update on COVID-19

At this time, our office remains open and is conducting business, we have eliminated nearly all travel and our office building has visitor restrictions. If you need to contact our office, please do so by phone or email and we will work through your request.

NECOG Council Meeting

Our March 25 Council Meeting has been cancelled due to COVID-19 and the next scheduled meeting is set for June 24, if travel and meetings are appropriate at that time. At this meeting the SD Department of Transportation will be presenting a preliminary review of the Departments 4-year transportation plan for our region. Additional information will be provided closer to the meeting.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) has notified our office that the funding round for this year's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) applications may be earlier than in past years. In addition, it appears that the money available may be increased as well. Although the exact date applications will be due, and the amount of funding has not yet been finalized we are

providing this information to provide additional time to think about potential projects that you may have.

The LWCF provides matching grants to local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Some eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Playgrounds
- Swimming Pools
- Ballfields
- Sport and play fields
- Picnic facilities
- Pools
- Ice rinks
- Golf courses
- Amphitheaters
- Winter sports facilities
- Visitor information facilities
- Land Acquisition

Grants are awarded for up to 50% of eligible project costs and are distributed on a reimbursement basis. Local match can be cash or in-kind donations. The minimum grant amount is \$10,000. NECOG staff can assist your city or county in preparing your application, please contact us if you are considering applying.

Community Access/Industrial Park/Agri-Business Grant Program

Community Access Grants are State funds for all Counties and Towns with less than 5,000 in population and are for the construction or reconstruction of major streets in town such as Main Street and roads that lead to elevators, schools, hospitals, and farm-to-market roads. This program provides for 80% of the construction costs of the project, not including engineering or utility work. Grant size is limited to \$600,000 and applications are due July 15.

The Industrial Park and Agri-Business Grant Programs provide funds to assist communities and counties who have a new industry or agri-business and need new or expanded access to the facilities. The Industrial Park grant has a \$500,000 grant limit.

Only applications for new projects will be considered. These two programs

accept applications 3 times each year (April, July and October 15). If you have projects that may qualify for this program or you would like more information, please contact our office. Additional information is also available through the South Dakota DOT website at <https://dot.sd.gov/doing-business/local-governments/transportation-economic-development-grants>

NECOG DC Awarded EDA Grant

The NECOG Development Corporation has been awarded \$500,000 by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). These funds will enable NECOG-DC to relend the money to small businesses in our 12 County region.

Loans can be made for the purchase of a business, building or land, building renovations, inventory, equipment, start-up costs and permanent working capital.

NECOG-DC has provided financing for businesses such as retail, general contractors, electricians, grocery stores, gas stations, hardware stores, and other businesses important to rural areas.

NECOG-DC is an alternative source of financing for new and expanding small businesses in South Dakota. As a gap lender, NECOG-DC works in conjunction with other lenders to provide flexible rates and terms that meet the individual needs of small business borrowers.

The loan funds provided by NECOG-DC are effective economic development tools that assist small businesses and communities by promoting job creation and retention in northeast South Dakota.

For more information please contact Alison Kiesz, RLF Manager at (605) 626-2595 or alison@necog.org. Information and application are also available at www.necog.org

Since 1989, NECOG-DC has made 239 loans totaling more than \$16.8 million. These funds have leveraged more than \$90 million in other funds and have created or retained 1,771 jobs in the region. NECOG-DC's mission is to foster economic development, create/retain jobs, stimulate business opportunities, and attract and retain business in northeast South Dakota through various economic programs and relationships with Federal, State and local officials.

County Zoning Changes - SB 157

During this legislative session SB 157 was passed and signed by the Governor. This bill has changes that will affect all County's with zoning in the NECOG region and the changes may be different for each county. From my perspective this bill primarily deals with County Zoning process as they relate to conditional use permits, special use permits and appeals. As our office has assisted most of our County members with zoning, I wanted to make you aware of the bill. This bill involves multiple changes and our office is available to discuss with each County how it may impact your zoning processes moving forward. Please contact Eric Senger, Executive Director at (605) 626-2595 or eric@necog.org for more information.

US Census 2020

The 2020 US Census is happening now. Homes should have received their invitation to respond to the 2020 Census between March 12-20. These official Census Bureau mailings will include detailed information and a Census ID for completing the Census online.

For the first time, you can choose to complete the census online, by phone or by mail. As of March 21, 21.5% of South Dakota households had already responded with 18.7% doing so online. Please take a few minutes to complete your 2020 Census.

**FIND THESE INSIGHTS VALUABLE?
SHARE THEM WITH OTHERS.**

FORWARD

**NOT YET SIGNED UP TO RECEIVE THESE
INFORMATIVE EMAILS?**

SIGN UP

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