

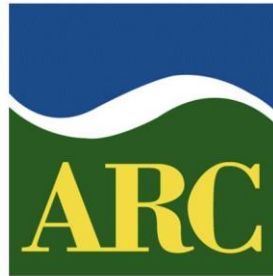
The Brighter Future

A Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Newsletter

Since 1965, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has been funding projects for local communities throughout Appalachia. The ARC is a regional economic development agency that represents a partnership of federal, state, and local governments. As the ARC grant deadlines fast approach, the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC) feels it is important to provide our communities with food for thought.

The ARC funds projects that address four essential goals, which are identified in the Commission's strategic plan: (1) Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation, (2) strengthen the capacity of Appalachia to compete in the global economy, (3) develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive and, (4) build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce the region's isolation.

The Appalachian Regional Commission



ARC provides funding for a wide range of programs:

- Asset Based Development
- Community Infrastructure
- Education & Training
- Energy
- Entrepreneurship & Business Development
- Export & Trade Development
- Health
- Leadership Development & Capacity Building
- Telecommunications
- Tourism Development
- Transportation & Highways

Projects selected for the 2014 full applications include:

- Bartow County Water Systems Improvements; goal is to develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the region economically competitive by adding capital investment and new jobs in Bartow County.
- McCaysville Sanitary Sewer Improvements; goal is to develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the region economically competitive. The proposed improvements will diversify the economy and create new jobs in Fannin County.
- Summerville Theater Acquisition & Renovation Project; goal is to (1) increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation and (2) develop and market strategic assets for the local economy.
- Tallapoosa Water System Improvements; goal is to (1) develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the region economically competitive and (2) will diversify the economy and create new jobs in Haralson County.

Now you may be wondering... How do I apply for an ARC Grant?



NWGRC is more than happy to provide you with guidance needed on project eligibility for funding and assistance in preparing a grant application. It is our goal to assist members of the local government to the utmost of our abilities. The ARC pre-application deadline is August 15th of each year.

The Community and Economic Development Representatives at NWGRC request notification of any potential projects requiring pre-application assistance by May 30th each year. This will allow NWGRC sufficient time to research, prepare, and write the application. It will also allow us to discuss the project with our ARC and DCA Representatives.

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2014 Deadlines

April 30th

Community Development Block Grants

May 29th

Vision & Mission Workshop *
Led by Georgia Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute

May 30th

ARC Notification

June 4th & 5th

Training on Financial Planning for Disasters*

Led by RUPRI & NADO/IEDC Research Foundation

June 13th

EDA Economic Adjustment

Aug 15th

ARC Pre-Application

Oct 17th

EDA Economic Adjustment

*Contact the Regional Commission for further information.

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NWGRC Counties Include:

Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker, & Whitfield

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Revitalization Area Strategies (RAS)

The Revitalization Area Strategies (RAS) designation provides incentives to cities and counties who implement comprehensive redevelopment activities for targeted areas within their jurisdictions. At a minimum, redevelopment activities included in a community's RAS should include both housing and public infrastructure. A community's revitalization strategy may also address crime, education, recreation, youth programs, and other issues specific to the targeted neighborhood. RAS designation allows local governments to apply annually for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds for three years, provided all DCA criteria have been met. Furthermore, bonus points may be awarded on CDBG applications for projects within a designated revitalization area.

The concentrated investment of resources within a limited revitalization area can often have a more substantial impact for a community than the dilution of these same resources city or county-wide. Additionally, a comprehensive strategy for the revitalization of a neighborhood, which addresses multiple issues of concern, generally provides a significantly greater impact in the neighborhood than addressing these concerns individually. These principles are reflected in the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) CDBG Revitalization Area Strategies (RAS) program.

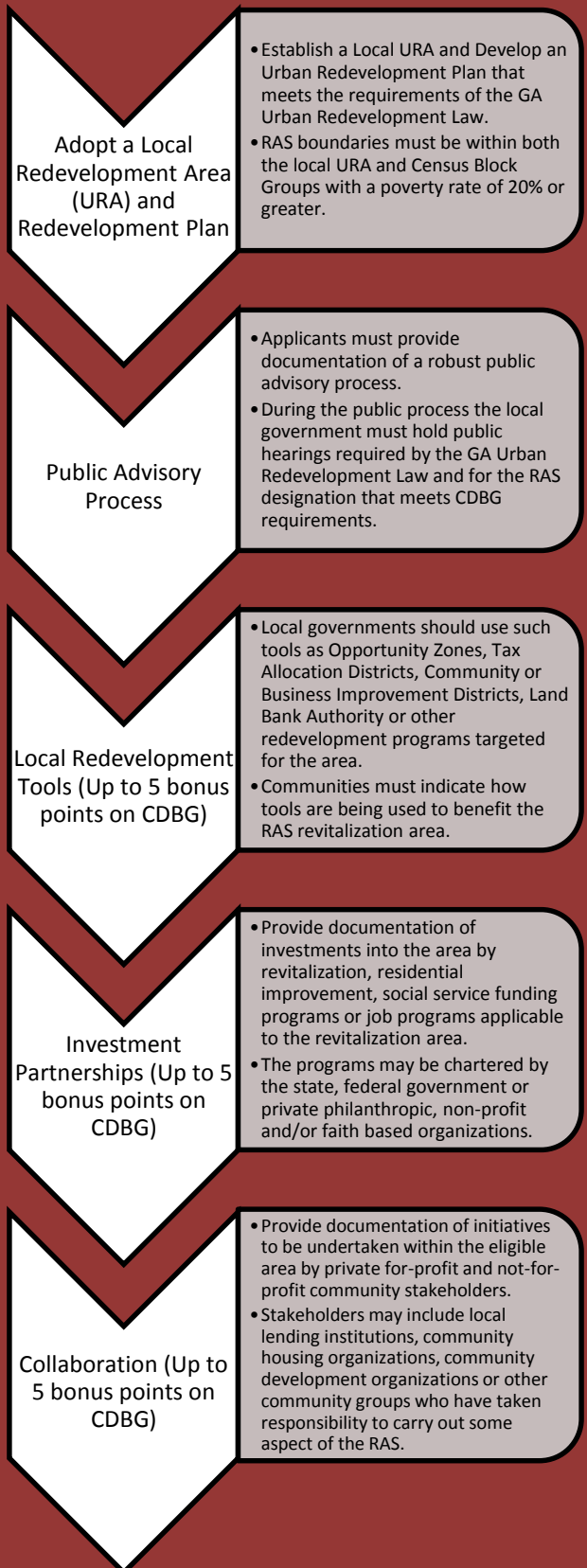
Bonus Points on CDBG Applications

To receive bonus points on CDBG Applications, revitalization areas must be within census block groups that have 20% or greater poverty where an Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) has been adopted by the local government pursuant to O.C.G.A. 36-61-1. Additionally, the RAS program rewards a comprehensive, collaborative approach that includes both public and private partners.

The RAS application must include a narrative describing the activities proposed for the area, how these activities are tied to the urban redevelopment plan, and the strategies to implement the adopted plan. Information about existing conditions within the proposed area is also required in the application. To qualify for RAS designation, the local government must provide a substantial public advisory process. At a minimum, this process must meet the public hearing requirement for Georgia Urban Redevelopment law and include a citizen participation process for the RAS designation that meets CDBG requirements.

Local Redevelopment Tools

A community may earn up to five points on its CDBG application through the local use of redevelopment tools, such as enterprise and/or opportunity zones, Tax Allocation Districts, Community or Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), a local land bank authority, or other redevelopment programs targeted for the revitalization area. The community must demonstrate how these redevelopment tools are being or will be used to benefit the RAS area.



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Investment Partnerships

Up to 5 CDBG bonus points may be earned by documenting investments into the area by revitalization, residential improvement, social service, or job creation/retention programs applicable to and within the revitalization area. These programs may be chartered by state, federal or private organizations.

Collaboration

Points may be earned through the demonstration that initiatives will be undertaken within the eligible area by private for-profit and not-for-profit community stakeholders. Stakeholders may include local lending institutions, housing organizations, community development organizations or other community groups who will carry out some aspect of the Revitalization Area Strategy. Examples may include Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program activities, city code enforcement efforts, credit counseling, and home ownership classes. Up to five bonus points may be awarded for collaborative efforts documented by the applicant. Documentation may include letters of commitment, agreements, and other evidence of capacity and commitment.

Point Calculation

The community will receive five points on its CDBG application for meeting the eligibility threshold for the RAS program. Remaining points are determined by DCA by assessing the documentation provided for economic development tools, the extent of investment partnerships and the degree of collaboration.

How to Begin

If your community is interested in developing a Revitalization Area Strategy for an underserved neighborhood or area, please feel free to contact the Community and Economic Development Department of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission.

ARC Projects under Construction



Highway 278 East Sewer Lift & Force Main: City of Cedartown, Polk County



Carbondale Business Park: 2011 Local Access Road & 2012 Water/Sewer Infrastructure