

(DRAFT)

Governor's Rural Partnership Board Meeting

June 24, 2020 from 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Held virtually by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Office of Rural Development

Present: Lt. Governor Spencer J. Cox, Steve Styler, Geri Gamber, Shannon Ellsworth, Joan Hammer, Brian Higginbotham, Michael McCandless, Emily Niehaus, Brian Raymond, Zac Whitwell, Jason Yerka, Robert Miller, Kent Wilson, Michael McKee, Jeff Peterson, James Toledo

Regrets: Stephen Lisonbee, Tim Munns

Guests: Ryan Starks, Paul Hill, James Dixon, Beckie Page, Rebecca Dilg, Chris Byrd, Scott Cheney and 24 other rural partners

Call to Order

Steve Styler, GRPB Co-Chairperson

Welcome and Minutes Approval

Lt. Governor Spencer J. Cox, GRPB Co-Chairperson

Motion:	Approve the Governor's Rural Partnership Board meeting minutes from April 24, 2020.	
<i>Motion by:</i>	Jeff Peterson	
<i>Seconded by:</i>	Emily Niehaus	
Vote Tally:	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
	15	0
Result:	Motion passes .	

Service Recognition

Spencer Cox, GRPB Co-Chairperson

The GRPB recognized the distinguished service of Tim Munns, Michael McCandless, and Brian Raymond, who have each contributed significantly to the development of rural Utah. Lt. Governor Cox thanked them for their efforts and their willingness to serve and expressed the gratitude of Gov. Herbert as well.

Legislative Special Session Update and Impact on Rural Programs

Ryan Starks, Managing Director of Business Services, GOED

Ryan Starks presented on the recent legislative special session and the impact that state budget adjustments will have on rural programs. The Commercial Rental Assistance program requirements have been altered to allow for the full \$40 million dollars to be distributed in SB 3006. Awards are now \$15,000 for two months rent. The Business Grant Program has been created to encourage local economic development. The program is endowed with \$25 million. The Tourism Marketing Performance fund was cut to \$12 million, with half devoted to regional marketing. \$9 million was also allocated to Talent Ready Utah to develop Utah professional skills. A PPE Support Grant Program was also instituted to assist PPE purchasing. Public health campaigns were also initiated. The Business Resource Center program has also been entirely cut, as has the anticipated Rural Speculative Industrial Building Program. The Opportunity Zone program was upheld, with all the funding being preserved. The upcoming Rural County Grant program, originally anticipated to be made up of a non-competitive part A and a competitive part B, has been reduced to only include part A. Instead of distributing \$200,000 to rural counties, the grant amount has been reduced to about \$93,000. Enterprise Zones have been limited in scope through SB 95, and the Rural Fast Track program and BEAR program will sunset through SB 95. The RCIC funding was diminished, but the program is still in place, along with the Targeted Business Tax Credit and Rural Jobs initiative. Steve Styler asked if the state's CARES ACT Funding would go towards a rural grant program or to support GOED later in the year, maybe to revitalize cut SB 95 programs. Ryan responded that it's possible but might require some advocacy. Ryan said they would take note of the possibility to support rural industry and tourism.

ROI Update

Paul Hill, Extension Associate Professor, Utah State University

Paul Hill presented on USU's Rural Online Initiative Program. The goal of the program is to empower rural communities through remote work and specialized training to keep rural workforces competitive. Russell Goodrich shared some success stories. A man in Carbon County was able to find a job in Customer Service Management through the ROI program, while a woman in Emery County was able to work in Business Support from home. A Duchesne county woman was able to work as a virtual administrative assistant through ROI, Similar examples from Washington, Sevier, and Iron counties were presented. Paul also explained more about the ROI program history. The program has awarded 638 certificates. Enrollment has increased during the pandemic and polling has shown the positive impacts of the program. There have been 209 job placements since October 2018. The ROI program is addressing negative net migration through their course to encourage younger professionals to stay in rural Utah when possible. Steve Styler asked some clarifying questions on the legislative alterations

to the program. Shannon Ellsworth expressed her gratitude to ROI for being ahead of the curve on remote work. Brian Higgenbotham also expressed his gratitude to everyone who helped make sure this program would not be totally eliminated. Mike McKee said hi to Russell Goodrich.

Update Regarding Rural County Grant Program

James Dixon, Program Manager, Office of Rural Development, GOED

James reported that ORD is now only in charge of the REDI, RCIC, and RCG programs, the EZ and TBTC tax credits, and the Rural Jobs program. RCIC funding has been limited. The upcoming Rural County Grant program, originally anticipated to be made up of a non-competitive part A and a competitive part B, has been reduced to only include part A. Instead of distributing \$200,000 to rural counties, the grant amount has been reduced to about \$96,000. Counties must form a County Economic Development (CED) Advisory Board and apply for the grant and outline economic development projects that could be implemented with the funds. Steve asked whether CEDs had all been created.. Brandy Grace had prepared a draft with her agency and assisted counties in preparing applications. Michael McKee asked whether GRPB members could get a copy of James' presentation. Ryan Starks stated that a webinar or similar outreach effort would be made toward the counties. Brian Raymond asked what the matching ratios would be for the counties, and James explained that the ratios depend on class and population of the county. Steve Styler emphasized that matching amounts would get the counties invested. Zac Whitwell would like to see a webinar and asked for clarification on whether board members might risk conflicts of interest in approving part B portions of the bill in the future. James agreed and said members should recuse themselves if needed.

GRPB White Paper Proposals

GRPB Board Members

- Zac Whitwell talked about the 25K Jobs initiative and how many organizations are focusing on remote working in rural counties. Zac asked for the support of the board for the Rural Workforce Network.
- Jeff Peterson presented on rural utilities and how the pandemic has underscored the lack of access to broadband and telecom utilities in rural Utah. Power utilities' costs have also impacted rural Utah during the pandemic with more people working from home and staying home more. Jeff asked for the board's continued support in supporting lower costs for rural utilities.
- Dustin Jansen works with Indian Affairs, and emphasized the importance of broadband access and overall access to online resources for rural Utahns, particularly native tribes. Pandemic conditions have created harsh issues for students of all ages, and the Navajo reservation has a distinct lack of LTE service for students and workers alike. Dustin suggested broadband be a public utility or that steps be taken to make it more accessible in general.
- Mayor Emily Niehaus presented on challenges regarding rural cities including broadband, economic competition, brain drain. Recreation and public lands is particularly important to many Utah localities. Resources are needed for construction contractors, particularly for housing. If housing can be created and maintained, talent from urban areas can be attracted and investments in broadband and telecommunications will result in that. Working parents were hit hard during the pandemic, as well as childcare

providers. Rural communities provide a lot for urban municipalities and the favor needs to be reciprocated.

- Jason Yerka presented on small business issues. Jason assisted in the development of an Entrepreneur Academy to support small businesses in rural Utah online, including millennial. It helps the student create an individualized and customized checklist for starting a business. The SBDC received CARES funds to support the Entrepreneur Academy.
- Mike McKee leads a infrastructure coalition and they were able to bring in recreation funds for Daggett County, a railroad near the Uintah Basin, a road near the Navajo in San Juan County, water infrastructure in that same area, and other initiatives, like connecting a road to Flaming Gorge to Yellowstone. Mike suggested utilizing natural gas resources to shore up rural Utah's economic strength.
- Shannon Ellsworth presented on state incentives for rural Utah. She expressed it might be stronger if the legislature were to consolidate grants to focus one on capital and another on jobs. Shannon also emphasized the need for data to know what is being efficacious and what direction these incentives need to take to have larger impacts.
- Rebecca Dilg read the paper for Stephen Lisonbee. Stephen wanted to focus on investment in small businesses in rural Utah and the need for access to mentors. Workforce development is needed in order to support employers and employees alike. Stephen reported that community development is critical to sustaining innovation and growth, and wants to develop a Utah Rural Leaders Academy to create resources for community leaders to help the continued development of rural Utah.
- Kent Wilson and Geri Gamber reported on behalf of Utah AOGs. The AOGs feel a funding pinch and need more funding and support. They also want to streamline the Rural County Grant program. The Southeastern Utah AOG specifically would like to outline how to diversify funding for economic development. Kent Wilson emphasized the challenge in economic development in Emery County. UAC has made a number of partnerships to help make better economic development happen in Emery County and other counties in rural Utah.

Brian Raymond expressed his gratitude for serving on the board, and echoed the fact that broadband and economic development are crucial. He also expressed a desire to see SB 95 funding continue. Brian also explained that the lack of good housing in Daggett County has deprived the population of reliable healthcare providers.

Steve Styler talked about REDTIF legislation drafting and how tax increment financing would be a good issue to pursue.

New Board Member Appointment Update

Jason Yerka, Designated by Mike McCandless

Jason presented Curtis Wells and Gary Hollows to fill the vacancies created by the departing GRPB members who were recognized at the beginning of the meeting.

Motion:	Motion to recommend Curtis Wells and Gary Hollows to the Governor as GRPB members	
<i>Motion by:</i>	Jason Yerka	
<i>Seconded by:</i>	Brian Raymond	
Vote Tally:	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
	15	0
Result:	Motion passes .	

Adjournment of the Meeting

Steve Styler, GRPB Co-Chairperson

Motion:	Motion to Adjourn	
<i>Motion by:</i>	Jason Yerka	
<i>Seconded by:</i>	Zac Whitwell	
Vote Tally:	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
	15	0
Result:	Motion passes .	

Next meeting: August 13, 2020, 9 - 11 am at the Noyes Bldg., Snow College, Ephraim



RURAL ONLINE INITIATIVE™

Impact Report to the Governor's Rural Partnership Board

June 24, 2020

Purpose & Goals

To ~~connect~~ empower rural communities through remote work.

The Rural Online Initiative (ROI) is a forward-thinking, innovative program designed to prepare Utah's rural workforce for the future of work by providing education and specialized training to prepare individuals to succeed in a rapidly changing economy.

Brian

County: Carbon

Remote Job: Customer Service Manager

Company: Hubstaff



Jessica

County: Emery

Remote Job: Business Support

Company: American Maintenance



Erin

County: Duchesne

Remote Job: Virtual Administrative Assistant

Company: The Bullock Agency



Althea

County: Washington

Remote Job: Legal Administrative Specialist

Company: Veterans Benefits Administration

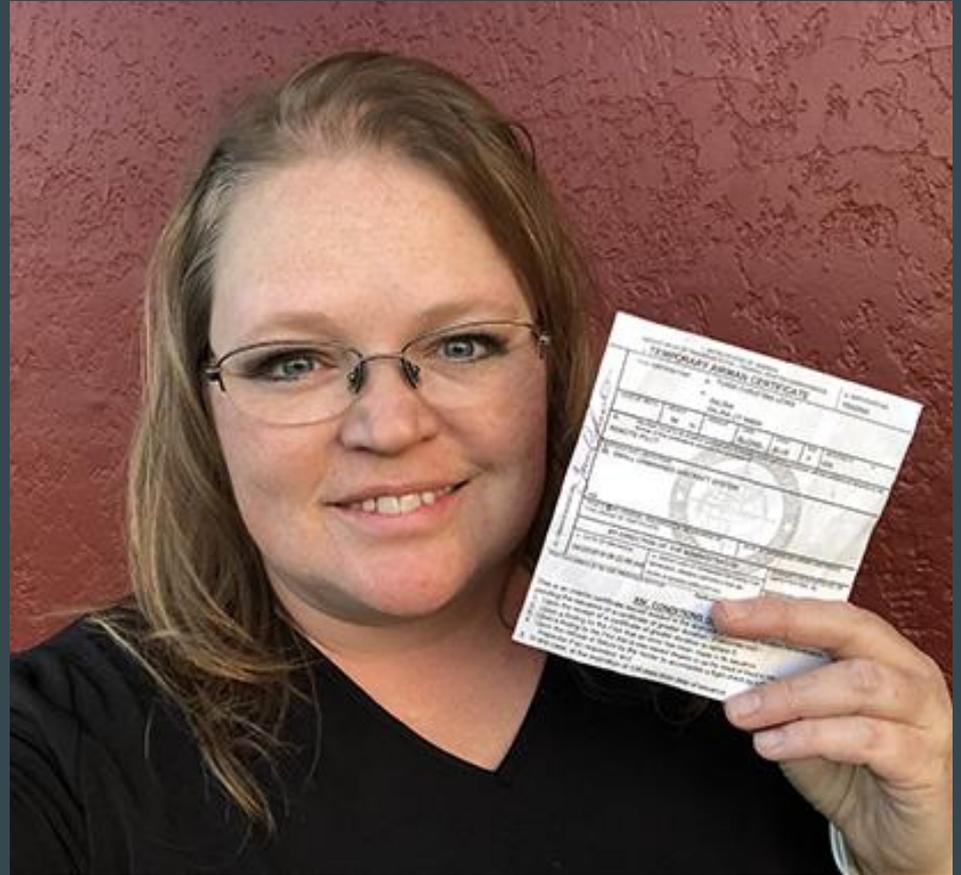


Tonia

County: Sevier

Remote Job: UAV Pilot and Videographer

Company: Entrepreneur & Freelancer



Carri

County: Iron

Remote Job: Accountant

Company: LedgerGurus



Program History

Funding H.B. 327

3-year pilot program
July 1, 2018

Leadership Course

Master Remote Work Leader
certificate
February 2020

Professional Course

Master Remote Work
Professional certificate
October 2018

4-H Remote Skills Camp

For College & Career Readiness
June 1, 2020

EXTENSION 

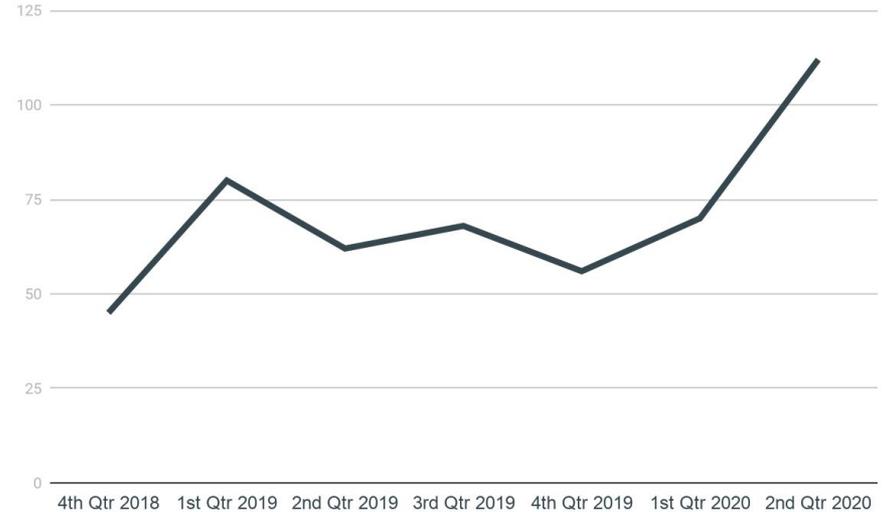
UtahStateUniversity®

Master Remote Work Professional Course

638 certificates awarded

- 30 hours of learning modules
 - 9 remote work projects
 - 4 interactive workshops
 - 819 enrollments
 - 80% completion rate
 - 1330 expressed interest (i.e., barriers, challenges)
-

Master Remote Work Professional Course



Master Remote Work Professional Course

Participant details

- 72% female
 - 51% over age 40 yrs old
 - 69% no remote work experience
 - 93% felt remote work skills were very important
 - 68% resided in rural county avg. of 16 yrs
-

Master Remote Work Professional Course

Participant details

- **54%** believed adequate wages were not available in their local region
 - **59%** reported job opportunities were not aligned with career goals
 - **62%** had no intention of leaving their region in search of better career opportunities
-

Short-Term Outcomes

Knowledge

- Communication: (t = 13.31, p < .001)
- Compliance (t = 33.43, p < .001)
- Critical thinking (t = 27.59, p < .001)
- Productivity (t = 31.51, p < .001)
- Remote Job Development (t = 13.46, p < .001)
- Teams (t = 14.31, p < .001)
- Workday (t = 25.84, p < .001)
- Workflow (t = 6.54, p < .001)

Short-Term Outcomes

Attitudes

- **52%** of participants desired higher incomes between \$35,000 - \$49,999 and \$50,000 - \$74,999
 - **85%** of participants felt favorably towards seeking remote work employment opportunities
-

Short-Term Outcomes

Skills

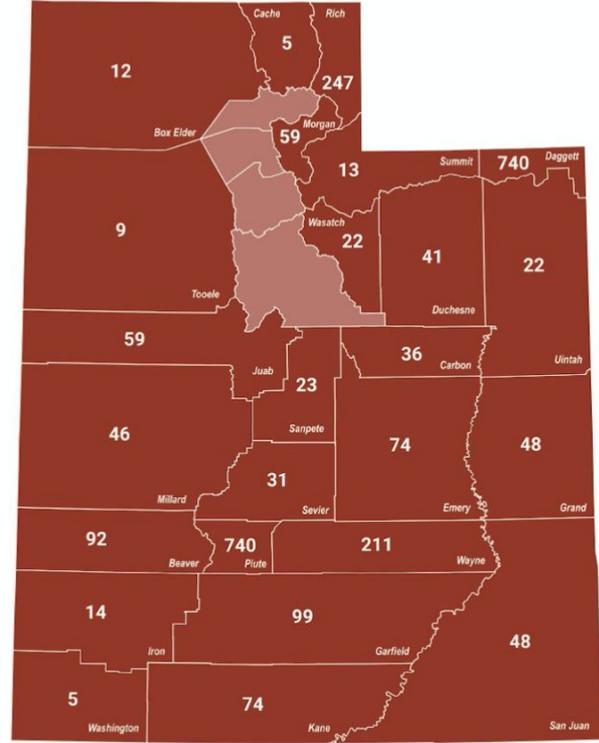
- Work-life balance (M = 4.06, SD = 0.59)
- Productivity (M = 4.28, SD = 0.57)
- Problem solving (M = 4.14, SD = 0.65)
- Digital communication (M = 4.19, SD = 0.62)
- Online technology (M = 4.07, SD = 0.61)
- Teamwork (M = 4.11, SD = 0.66)
- Career management (M = 4.25, SD = 0.58)

Short-Term Outcomes

Aspirations

- **98%** felt their value as a remote worker improved after completing the MRWP course
 - **96%** felt empowered to seek remote employment after course completion
 - **76%** intended to seek remote work after completing the course
-

Remote Job Placements



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services, 2017. Map numbers derived by dividing number of county jobs needed into the average number of jobs needed in a Wasatch Front County. Analysis based on the goal of reducing unemployment by .5%. Statistics based on county labor force, current rate of unemployment and extrapolated number of jobs required. Average Number of Rural Jobs to Reduce Unemployment by .5% is 67. Average Number of Wasatch Front Jobs to Reduce Unemployment by .5% is 1479. Ratio of Rural to Wasatch Front Jobs Needed to Reduce Unemployment by .5% is approximately 22 to 1.

Updated: January 29, 2019

Remote Job Placements

- **109** since October 2018
- Economic equivalency of **3,894** relative to urban counties
- **76%** intended to seek remote work after completing the course

Program Impacts

Those who found remote work

- **90%** were satisfied with their remote job position
- **36%** increase in total salaries
- **40%** believe their salaries would increase by **30%** over the next year

Those who did not..yet

- **46%** were actively searching for opportunities
- **68%** were confident in their ability _____ to find remote work

Master Remote Work Leader Course

April 2020

- 37 enrolled
 - 62% female
 - 46 avg. age
-

Master Remote Work Leader Course

Knowledge

- Change Management: (t = 4.05, p < .001)
 - Conflict Management (t = 5.34, p < .001)
 - Culture (t = 5.10, p < .001)
 - Learning and Development (t = 3.58, p < .05)
 - Performance Management (t = 4.90, p < .001)
 - Vision (t = 7.64, p < .001)
-

Master Remote Work Leader Course

Attitudes

- Relative Advantage (M = 4.24, SD = 0.38)
 - Compatibility (M = 4.13, SD = 0.72)
 - Complexity (M = 3.31, SD = 0.61)
 - Observability (M = 4.44, SD = 0.58)
 - Trialability (M = 4.05, SD = 0.68)
-

Master Remote Work Leader Course

Skills

- Remote Work Culture (M = 4.73, SD = 0.36)
- Communication (M = 4.74, SD = 0.35)
- Performance Management (M = 4.70, SD = 0.43)
- Conflict Management (M = 4.65, SD = 0.42)
- Vision (M = 4.74, SD = 0.40)
- Change Management (M = 4.65, SD = 0.49)
- Learning & Development (M = 4.65, SD = 0.54)

Master Remote Work Leader Course

Aspirations

- **100%** of participants felt their value as a remote work leader improved
 - **96%** felt empowered to hire remote workers
 - **91%** were likely to create remote work job positions
 - **87%** would hire qualified remote workers from rural Utah
-

COVID-19 Response

- **FREE** courses for all Utahns during COVID-19
- **205** participants in April
- **110** participants in May
- **130** participants in June
- **123** participants *converted* jobs to remote (Follow-up Survey)

Addressing Negative Net Migration



Projects in Process

- 4-H Remote Skills Camp
(summers)
 - Reformed & Remote (training for incarcerated populations)
 - Remote Job Search: Skills for Success (online course)
 - E-Commerce (online workshops)
 - Expansion from 15 to 21 counties
(legislative appropriation)
-

Contact

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Office of Rural Development Rural County Grant Program (SB 95)



Utah Governor's Office of
Economic Development

BUSINESS • TOURISM • FILM

ORD Programs, Grants and Incentives

Prior to SB 95—July 1, 2020

5 GRANTS:

- Rural Fast Track Grant (RFT) – for Businesses
- Rural Economic Development Incentive (REDI) – for Businesses
- Business Expansion & Retention (BEAR) – for Economic Development Organizations
- Rural Coworking & Innovation Center Grant (RCIC) – (new from 2019 session) – for organizations & businesses
- Rural Rapid Manufacturing – for Businesses (new from 2019 Legislative session)

4 TAX CREDITS:

- Enterprise Zone Program (EZ) - for Businesses
- EZ Non-Profit Program (EZ Non-profit) – for Non-Profit Organizations
- Recycling Zone (RZ) – for Businesses
- Targeted Business Tax Credit (TBTC) – for Businesses

1 FINANCE:

- Utah Rural Jobs Program – for Businesses (Managed by Compliance Dept.)

ORD Programs, Grants and Incentives

Due to SB 95—Effective July 1, 2020

3 GRANTS:

- Rural County Grant (RCG) – SB 95 – for rural counties
- Rural Economic Development Incentive (REDI) – for Businesses
- Rural Coworking & Innovation Center Grant (RCIC) (new appropriation-FY2021) – for organizations & businesses

2 TAX CREDITS:

- Enterprise Zone Program (EZ) (Modified for FY2021) - for Businesses
- Targeted Business Tax Credit (TBTC) – for Businesses

2 FINANCE:

- Utah Rural Jobs Program – for Businesses
- Rural Speculative Industrial Building Program – SB 95 – rural business attraction

Rural County Grant

Grant Oversight

The grant program is overseen by the Rural Partnership Board and administered by the Office of Rural Development. In overseeing the grant program, the rural partnership board recommends the awarding of grants to rural counties to address the economic development needs of rural counties, which needs may include:

- business recruitment, development, and expansion;
- workforce training and development; and
- infrastructure, industrial building development, and capital facilities improvements for business development.

Rural County Grant

Who Qualifies

Rural counties in the State of Utah of the third, fourth, fifth, or sixth class are eligible to apply

For What?

\$4,600,000 in on-going funding, and \$3,400,000 in one-time funding. The total funding available for fiscal year 2021 is \$8,000,000

Rural County Grant

Two Distinct Parts

They are:

- **Part A: Annual Distribution**—grant funding of up to and including \$200,000 annually, distributed equally to each qualifying rural county, and
- **Part B: Competitive Award**—grant funding, obtained by competitive application, which exceeds the \$200,000 Annual Distribution, up to an overall amount not to exceed \$800,000 per year for a single county.

Rural County Grant

Budget Cuts!

They are:

- **Part A: Annual Distribution**—grant funding of up to and including \$200,000 annually, distributed equally to each qualifying rural county, and
- **Part B: Competitive Award**—grant funding, obtained by competitive application, which exceeds the \$200,000 Annual Distribution, up to an overall amount not to exceed \$500,000 per year for a single county.

Rural County Grant

Budget Cuts!

For What?

Funding for Part A only

\$2,300,000

$\$2.3\text{M} / 24 \text{ counties} = \underline{\underline{\$95,833.00}}$

Rural County Grant

Qualifications

- **Part A: Annual Distribution**

- 1) A rural county must form and have a functioning County Economic Development Advisory Board (CED)
- 2) A formal application must be submitted by the county legislative body
- 3) The application must include a description of anticipated economic development projects and activities that consider the advice and recommendations of the CED Board

100% of Part A Awards will be distributed upon application approval.
Starting in 2021, Part A will require matching funds and reporting compliance

Rural County Grant

Qualifications

- **Part A: Annual Distribution**

County Economic Development Advisory Board (CED) is composed of at least the following members appointed by the county legislative body:

- a county representative;
- a representative of a municipality in the county;
- a workforce development representative;
- a private-sector representative; and
- a member of the public who lives in the county

The county legislative body may also appoint additional members with experience or expertise in economic development matters

Rural County Grant

Application Review, Scoring, and Fund Distribution

Under Part A—

Applications will be reviewed by the GOED Office of Rural Development and the Governor's Rural Partnership Board. There will be no scoring of applications under Part A, as this part of the Rural County Grant is not subject to competitive distribution of grant funds.

- No Application Scoring Obligation
- No Fund Distribution Decisions

Part A application approval is subject the formation of a County Economic Development Advisory Board (CED), and compliance to reporting requirement, starting in 2021.

Rural County Grant

Questions?



Utah Governor's Office *of*
Economic Development

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business.utah.gov/rural // [@businessutah](https://twitter.com/businessutah)