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Jefferson County Announces Third Round of County Infrastructure Grant Program

WATERTOWN, NY — Jefferson County is pleased to announce the launch of its third round of municipal project solicitation under the New York State Empire State Development (ESD) County Infrastructure Grant Program. Beginning November 5, 2026, municipalities throughout Jefferson County are invited to submit proposals for infrastructure projects that will strengthen local communities, encourage private investment, support housing opportunities, and advance long-term economic growth.

The program provides an important opportunity for Jefferson County to partner with the towns, villages, and city to identify and advance infrastructure improvements that might otherwise be difficult to undertake with local resources alone.

“This is exactly the kind of opportunity we want to bring to our communities,” said Jefferson County Administrator Ryan Piche. “Our communities have tremendous potential, and sometimes a relatively modest investment in infrastructure can be the catalyst for something much bigger. We’re excited to see what our municipalities bring forward.”

Through the County Infrastructure Grant Program, ESD provides funding for small- and moderate-scale infrastructure projects that support economic development, housing creation, tourism, and community enhancement. Eligible projects may include water and wastewater improvements, streetscape enhancements, infrastructure supporting new housing or business development, and other public investments that contribute to a community’s economic vitality.

“Our goal is to make this a fair, thoughtful, and competitive process that gives communities across Jefferson County an opportunity to put their best projects forward,” said Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer, Director of Jefferson County Planning and Community Development. “We are looking for investments that address real local needs while creating opportunities for future growth.”

Under the State program, grant awards may provide up to $1 million for eligible infrastructure projects, with awards of up to $1.5 million available for qualifying projects supporting the creation of at least ten housing units. A minimum 50% non-ESD funding match is required.

Municipalities interested in participating must submit proposals to Jefferson County for consideration. The County will review submissions through a competitive evaluation process and select a project for advancement to ESD. Funding is competitive and subject to State approval.

Municipal officials are encouraged to review the County’s Request for Proposals and begin discussions regarding potential projects, local funding commitments, and implementation readiness.

The full Request for Proposals, including submission requirements and evaluation criteria, will be available through the Jefferson County Department of Purchasing here: https://vendors.planetbids.com/portal/69610/bo/bo-search

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