

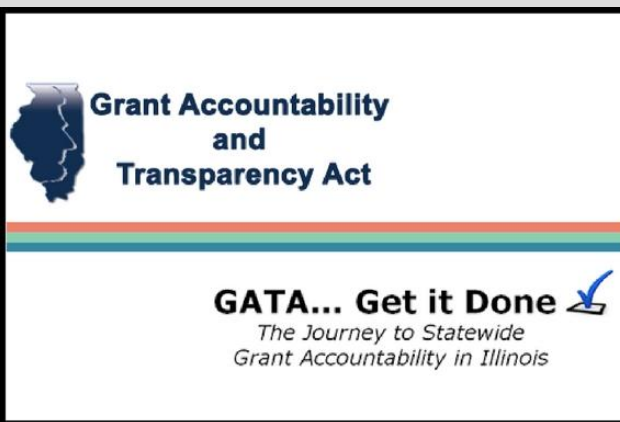
News & funding opportunities from northwest Illinois' non-profit regional planning commission. Geared towards public and non-profit sectors, focused on community & economic development and natural resources conservation. Contact us at [info@blackhawkhills.com](mailto:info@blackhawkhills.com) or (815) 625-3854.

**BLACKHAWK HILLS**  
Regional Council

Jo Daviess • Stephenson • Carroll • Ogle • Whiteside • Lee

**NEWS & GRANTS**

February 2017



### **DCEO, CDBG, DRPI, & Other State Grantees Need to Register with New GATA Database**

All 2014-2016 Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Disaster Response Public Infrastructure (DRPI) grant applicants will need to register with the new Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) database. This applies to all communities that have applied for 2016 housing rehabilitation or public infrastructure improvement grants or that received one of the two grants in the 2014 and 2015 calendar years. Communities must be registered in order to receive grant funding. In short, if you receive or think you might apply for a state grant, make sure your government or organization is registered.

Click [here](#) for more information.  
Click [here](#) to register.

### **BHRC Quick Links:**

[Project proposal](#)  
[Newsletter sign up](#)  
[Facebook page](#)

### **BHRC Events:**

February 20  
Presidents Day  
Office Closed

March 3  
NW IL Grazing Conference (see below)

March 27  
BHRC Council Meeting  
6:00 PM, Lanark Heritage Center

# GRANTS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Limited Time Bonus Rebate for Natural Gas Efficiency Projects (Illinois DCEO)

Fifteen percent rebate bonus being offered for new natural gas efficiency projects through the Illinois Energy Now Program. Apply ASAP to ensure funding.

*Incentives offered until April 14.*

Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.

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## Signature Employment Grant (Kessler Foundation)

The program provides support for non-traditional solutions that increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$250,000 per year for up to two years are awarded nationally to fund pilot initiatives, demonstration projects, or social ventures that lead to the generation of new ideas to solve the high unemployment and underemployment of individuals with disabilities. Preference is given to interventions that overcome specific employment barriers related to long-term dependence on public assistance, advance competitive employment in a manner, and those that serve rural states and other areas with more limited service delivery.

*Grant concepts due March 17, invited proposals due July 10.*

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## CommunityWINS (Working/Investing in Neighborhood Stabilization) Program (US Conference of Mayors & Wells Fargo)

The program supports local nonprofits in promoting long-term economic prosperity and quality of life for their community. The awards recognize outstanding mayoral-based initiatives that can assist their city in promoting economic growth, and aim to share the best practices with other cities to develop programs in their local market. USCM (US Conference of Mayors) members may nominate up to three nonprofit run programs that address either neighborhood stabilization, economic development, and job creation.

*Applications due March 17.*

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## Farmers Market, Local Food Promotion, & Federal-State Marketing Programs (Agriculture Marketing Service, USDA)

These grants will fund innovative projects designed to strengthen market opportunities for local and regional food producers and businesses.

*Applications due March 27.*

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## Regional Conservation Partnership Program (Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA)

The program invests in innovative, workable, and cost-effective approaches to benefit farming, ranching and forest operations, local economies, and the communities and resources in a watershed or other geographic area. The partners develop project applications that address specific natural resource objectives in a proposed area or region, and then promote, implement, and evaluate project outcomes.

*Pr-proposal applications due April 17.*

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## Community Economic Development (CED) Projects (Department of Health & Human Services)

This grant is for Community Development Corporations (CDC) who have well-planned, financially viable, and innovative projects to enhance job creation and business development for individuals with low-income. The projects are expected to actively recruit individuals with low-income to fill the positions created by CED-funded development activities, to assist those individuals to successfully hold those jobs and to ensure that the businesses and jobs created remain viable for at least one year after the end of the grant period. *The Office of Community Services is encouraging applications that target rural and underserved areas*

*in states without current projects, as well as projects that align with the Promise Zones Initiative or Choice Neighborhoods Program.*

*Estimated application due date of April 28.*

*Click [here](#) for more information.*

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### **Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs (Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce)**

The programs support investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities.

*Proposals and applications accepted on an ongoing basis until superseded by a future announcement.*

*Click [here](#) for more information.*

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## **NOTEWORTHY**

### **iFiber Session in Lanark**

The iFiber management team and its Internet service provider partners plan to tour northwest Illinois on February 21. You are invited to attend the 10 a.m. session at the Lanark Heritage Center. Local and regional partners attending include: [Syndeo Network](#), [Stratus Networks](#), [Aero Group](#) (invited), [Sand Prairie](#) (invited) and [WIN](#)(invited). At the session, you will have a chance to speak with iFiber and these ISPs about their broadband deployment efforts via iFiber. A full breakfast will be provided.

*Please RSVP to [info@blackhawkhills.com](mailto:info@blackhawkhills.com) no later than February 13 COB.*

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### **Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference**

This year's conference theme is "Raising Forages, Livestock, but Not Weeds!" The conference will take place March 3rd, from 9:30 - 3:30, at the Holy Cross Catholic Church in Stockton.

*Click [here](#) to register.*

*Click [here](#) to view the flyer.*

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### **Rural Health Grant Writing Institute (National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health)**

The program is a four-month, nine-part webinar series created to help rural health professionals in locating funding opportunities and writing proposals.

*Registration deadline is March 29.*

*Click [here](#) for more information and to register.*

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### **Grants.gov Changes**

All [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) applicants will be required to submit applications through "Workspace," a new feature which allows a team of registered applicants to use a shared, online space for completing applications.

*Click [here](#) for more information on Workspace.*

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### **U.S. Census Bureau Introduces Beta Job-to-Job Flows Explorer**

The online tool provides statistics on work reallocation through an interactive platform and allows tables, maps, and charts to be constructed.

*Click [here](#) to access the tool.*

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### **Federal Highway Commission Releases Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide (Federal Highway Administration)**

A publication of their Bicycle and Pedestrian program, the guide applies existing national design guidelines in a rural setting and highlights small town and rural case studies. It addresses challenges specific to rural areas, recognizes how many rural roadways are operating today, and focuses on opportunities to make incremental improvements despite the geographic, fiscal, and other challenges that many rural communities face.

Download the guide [here](#).

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#### Small Town & Rural Multimodal Networks Report (Federal Highway Administration)

The report is a resource and idea book intended to help small towns and rural communities support safe, accessible, comfortable, and active travel for people of all ages and abilities. It provides a bridge between existing guidance on bicycle and pedestrian design and rural practice, encourages innovation in the development of safe and appealing networks for bicycling and walking in small towns and rural areas, and show examples of peer communities and project implementation that is appropriate for rural communities.

See the report [here](#).

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#### EDGE (Economic Development for a Growing Economy) Extension Signed

Governor Rauner signed Senate Bill 51, the EDGE Tax Credit Extension, into law on January 20th. The new Public Act took effect immediately and can be seen [here](#).

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#### Strong Foundations: The Economic Futures of Kids & Communities

This years' Federal Reserve System Community Development Research conference will explore the interplay between the development of kids and their communities, with an understanding that "development" factors into key economic and social aspects of kids' lives. The event will spotlight research that can inform questions about key drivers of success, differences across subpopulations, scalable intervention strategies, and policy considerations. The conference will take place March 23rd to 24th, in Washington, DC.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

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