

Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant Program: Letter of Intent Form (LOI)

We recommend that you download this document and use it to prepare your answers for the [online LOI](#). Responses must be submitted through the [online LOI form](#) to be considered.

Program Background:

[HB22-1304](#) created the [Strong Communities Program](#) to support local governments in planning for sustainable growth and development patterns and affordable housing into the future. The Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant Program provides local governments with grants to fund infrastructure projects that increase the supply of affordable housing and that are within or adjacent to a downtown area, a core business district, or a transit-oriented development (some flexibility allowed for rural counties).

These grants can cover public and private infrastructure elements that support a healthy and resilient built environment on or near the infill project site. Examples include upgraded streetscapes, pedestrian and cyclist safety improvements, investments meant to address equity concerns, accessibility, age-friendly improvements and amenities, parks, playgrounds, open space/trails or trailhead lots, and other public amenities. Other eligible expenses include local government fees related to any infrastructure serving the affordable housing development (including tap fees).

Local governments are encouraged to pick one or two shovel-ready projects that can spend all of the funds by October 31, 2026. The most competitive projects will provide community benefits (e.g., include a child care center), provide accessibility features, address equity needs in their community, and the community will have one or more sustainable development policies in place.

Please review the program guidelines and scoring matrix on the program webpage for additional information on what projects will be most competitive.

Program webpage: <https://dlg.colorado.gov/strong-communities>

Program contact:

Lisa Loranger
Strong Communities Program Manager
lisa.loranger@state.co.us
303-565-6200

Email

Name

You must be a municipal or county representative to submit a Letter of Intent for the Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant Program.

Jurisdiction (municipality/county)

Huerfano County

Priority project summary (1,000 character limit)

Please provide an overall summary of the project (be clear which is your priority project if you intend to apply for multiple projects).

Huerfano County seeks to develop approximately 31 acres of County owned land around and including the County's Raymond Aguirre Community Center in Gardner into a mixed use development that provides for affordable and attainable housing, economic opportunities, and encourages a healthier and more vibrant Gardner. The project comes from a community led master plan, funded in part by a DOLA REDI Grant, that centers around the development of between 20-40 housing units structured in a co-housing model that encourages frequent interactions and the formation of close relationships among their members with large common areas for residents to enjoy. The development would feature a variety of housing options, rental and for sale, for a range of incomes from 50% to 120% of AMI. This LOI is a request for assistance with water, sewer, electric as well as other public infrastructure.

Additional project ideas

Describe any additional projects that you may apply for. Please include a brief description, estimated start date, estimated budget and funding request, and a ranking of your priority for the project.

What is the location of your priority project?

Gardner, CO (Unincorporated Huerfano County)

What is the estimated total budget for your priority project?

\$7,150,245.27

What is the estimated amount of funding you would request from DOLA for your priority project?

\$3M

Does the project have the required 20% local matching funds?

Not yet, the County is still building the capital stack for this project and anticipates applying for Prop 123 Funds, utilizing County ARPA funds, and applying for private grants to complete the capital stack

Who are your key project partners?

Land Use Best Practices

What qualifying strategies, if any, do you have in place (or will have in place by December 31, 2023) if awarded? (Please refer to the [Land Use Best Practices document](#) and the fact sheets for additional information.)

1. Higher Density near service areas
2. Land donation/acquisition/banking or affordable housing incentives
3. Multi-family housing options

4. Accessory Dwelling Units
5. Mixed use zoning districts
6. Use by Right Affordable Housing

Other

Use this space to describe your other novel, innovative, or creative approaches to incentivize affordable housing development. You may propose more than one.

Policy Documentation

Please provide code citations or links to documentation that correspond with each implemented/adopted strategy that was selected above. If you need to send attachments, you may email those to [Lisa Loranger](#).