



Today's social and environmental challenges highlight the importance of innovative tools that address urgent community needs and create long-term positive benefits. Connected communities are towns, main streets, neighborhoods, and cities that use data and technology-driven innovations to offer improved services to people and businesses. Together with our partners, we are funding solutions that help make the region the best place in the country to live, work, and play.

The focus areas of this initiative include:

1. Expanding **equitable access to services** through broadband and online platforms,
2. Promoting **economic empowerment** for the Valley workforce,
3. Advancing **energy and environmental justice** in our communities.

Key Dates:

- Equitable Access to Services-related submissions are due **September 30th, 2021**.
- Economic Empowerment or Energy & Environmental Justice-related submissions are due **mid-October 2021**.

Pilot projects should address the following evaluation categories:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Pilot projects should directly address one of the three Connected Communities focus areas, have clear learning objectives, and align with our commitment to equity.
- **Feasibility:** Pilot projects should have a lead organization with the resources and authority to implement, a clear approach and community engagement plan, and evidence of potential for success.
- **Impact:** Pilot projects should demonstrate clear benefits to Valley communities with the potential for long-term or transformative impact. Pilots should be able to provide initial results within two years.

You can find more information about this initiative, including detailed evaluation criteria, at tva.gov/ConnectedCommunities

Please ensure you have the following information on hand to complete your submission:

- Legal name of proposer and all partner organizations
- Detailed project plan including key milestones and proposed timeline
- Proposed budget documentation
- Maps and / or photos of the site (if applicable)
- Supporting documentation of community engagement (optional)
- Supporting documentation related to any prior implementations of the proposed pilot (optional)

Questions? Email us at connectedcommunities@tva.gov.

Brevity is encouraged in your responses. Word counts provided are intended to be a maximum.

Maximum total word count: 4,400 (~8 ³/₄ single spaced pages)



Strategic Alignment

- Please describe the idea, tool, technology, or approach being tested. Include why the proposed pilot is innovative or transformative. (max. 250 words)
- What are you hoping to learn / solve with this pilot? Include what the ideal outcome of your pilot would look like, and how other communities will be able to use the lessons learned. (max. 250 words)
- (Equitable Access to Services) How would the proposed pilot project address inequities related to the digital divide, such as access to broadband or devices, digital literacy, affordability, or other barriers to connectivity? (max. 250 words)
- (Economic Empowerment) How would the proposed pilot project address inequities related to knowledge of and participation in next generation career pathways, including access to workforce development, technology training, and job creation programs? (max. 250 words)
- (Energy & Environmental Justice) How would the proposed pilot project address inequities related to energy and the environment, such as grid interactive technologies, participation opportunities and interest in clean energy, and public health outcomes? (max. 250 words)
- How does your proposed pilot project align with larger strategic goals, including community or regional priorities and your organization's mission? (max. 150 words)

Feasibility

- Please describe your team, including who the team leads are, what each team member brings to the pilot, and the team's relevant experience in the pilot area. (max. 500 words)
 - (Optional) Please upload any supplemental materials, such as organizational charts or team resumes. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload.
- Describe the project plan and approach / methodology to implementing the pilot, including key milestones (e.g., procurement, design, pre-construction, construction, monitoring, closing) and proposed timeline. (max. 750 words)
 - (Optional) Please upload any supporting documentation. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload
- What do you anticipate would be needed to support the pilot beyond the initial implementation? What is your team capable of providing? Please include a description of how the pilot could be funded beyond the initial grant award. (max. 250 words)
- Describe how TVA funding would be used and how the pilot team will contribute the required 30% of the total project cost. This can include other funding sources or in-kind contributions. Please explain any constraints or limitations the team is facing regarding the match requirement, as well as possible solutions or alternative approaches. Information about qualifying in-kind contributions can be found at tva.gov/connectedcommunities. (max. 250 words)
- Please upload the proposed budget. Ensure clearly shows the total project cost and the requested amount from TVA. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload.
- Where will this pilot take place? If applicable, please upload maps and / or photos of the site. (max. 50 words)



- Does your team have the legal authority to conduct this pilot? If not, please explain. (max. 150 words)
- Does your team have the necessary permissions to access any sites or assets required for the proposed pilot? (e.g., right of way permissions, permit approval, owner permissions) If not, how do you plan to obtain them? (max. 150 words)
- Are there any federal, state, or local ordinances that will impact pilot implementation? If so, what are they? (max. 150 words)
- What has your team done in the community to validate the need for this pilot? If your team has not validated the need for this pilot, what is the engagement plan to do so? (max. 150 words)
- How will your team remain accountable to the intended beneficiaries and the community in which the project is taking place? What is the team's plan to involve representatives of the community in governance and oversight of the project? (max. 150 words)
 - (Optional) Please upload any supporting documentation, including letters of support or a community engagement plan. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload.
- Please describe examples (if any) of this pilot being implemented in other places, including references where possible. (max. 150 words)
 - (Optional) Please upload any supporting files related to prior implementation here. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload.
- Are there any potential risks that may impact the team's ability to complete the pilot as planned? How do you plan to mitigate the potential risks? (max. 500 words)

Impact

- Who are the intended beneficiaries for this pilot? (max. 100 words)
- What are the scope and/or scale of the project benefits? How long are the benefits of the pilot expected to last? This can be described both qualitatively and quantitatively (e.g., # of households impacted, benefits to specific populations, proportion of the community that will benefit, level of impact for project participants, etc.). (max. 250 words)
- What Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to track the progress of pilot and its outcomes, and how will you measure them? At least one KPI should be directly address the Connected Communities Focus Area. (max. 100 words)

Evaluation Score Descriptions – Each evaluation category is weighted equally (33%)

	Questions	Significantly Exceeds (5 points)	Exceeds (4 points)	Meets (3 points)	Does Not Meet (2 points)	Significantly Does Not Meet (1 point)
Strategic Alignment	<p>How closely does the idea and its benefits align with the focus area? Are the learning objectives clear, critical, and repeatable for the Valley? Does the project align with our commitment to equity?</p>	<p>Transformative idea that directly addresses the focus area, is equity driven, and has clear, data-driven scalability potential</p>	<p>Forward-thinking idea that directly addresses the focus area, promotes equity, and could be easily adapted for others</p>	<p>Cohesive idea that addresses focus area, has equity elements, and has some potential for scaling</p>	<p>Incomplete idea that partially addresses focus area, hints at equity, and would be difficult to adapt for others</p>	<p>Idea that does not address focus area, does not touch on equity, and is not adaptable for others</p>
Feasibility	<p>Does the proposer have the resources to implement? Is the pilot sustainable beyond the initial phase? Does the proposer have the authority to implement? Is there a community engagement plan? Has the pilot been implemented/tested elsewhere? Are there any risks associated with the pilot and have appropriate mitigation plans been put in place?</p>	<p>Team of experts with robust approach, a post-pilot operations plan, resources secured, community and stakeholders bought-in, and minimal associated risks</p>	<p>Accomplished team with compelling approach, resources partially secured, community and stakeholders engaged, and minimal associated risks</p>	<p>Qualified team with practical approach, resources planned, community and stakeholder engagement plan in place, and minimal associated risks</p>	<p>Unprepared team with approach that presents risks, resources inadequately identified, community and stakeholders identified</p>	<p>Inexperienced team with no clear approach, resources not identified, community and stakeholders not identified and considerable associated risks</p>
Impact	<p>Are the scope and/or scale of the project benefits significant? Will the benefits extend beyond the duration of the pilot? Are the benefits transformational to the beneficiaries?</p>	<p>Idea benefits a major portion of the community or benefits a segment of the community in a transformational way for years to come</p>	<p>Idea benefits a significant portion of the community or has deep benefits for a segment of the community for some time after the pilot concludes</p>	<p>Idea benefits a portion of the community or has meaningful benefits for a segment of the community during the pilot</p>	<p>Idea benefits a small portion of the community for a short duration</p>	<p>No clear benefits or beneficiaries</p>