



## BROWNFIELD PROGRAM

### Background

Since the Brownfield Program's inception in 1998, it has created more than 7,700 jobs and increased property values by nearly \$1.5 billion. It is estimated that Wisconsin has more than 10,000 Brownfield sites, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is actively seeking to convert more contaminated sites into productive and shovel-ready properties that are attractive for redevelopment.

The Brownfield Program administered by WEDC provides grant funds to assist local governments, businesses and individuals with assessing and remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle or underused industrial or commercial facility or site.

Phase I and Phase II Environmental Reports must be completed prior to seeking Brownfield Program funding. Grants require at least a 70 percent match of the eligible project expenditures. Approved projects are reimbursed for incurred expenditures occurring on or after the date of a WEDC decision letter. Grant funds are awarded primarily to reimburse remediation expenditures incurred so that environmental closure can be attained for the project site and the property can be more productively utilized.

### Eligible Applicants

Any city, village, town, county, individual or business may apply for funds provided that the party that caused the environmental contamination and any person who possessed or controlled the environmental contaminant is unknown, cannot be located or is unable to pay for the remediation of the soil and/or groundwater.

### Eligible Activities

Brownfield Program funds may be used for Brownfields' redevelopment or associated environmental remediation activities on sites with demonstrated soil and/or groundwater contamination. Eligible costs are determined during a review of the grant application. However, grant funds may typically be used for the following activities:

- The environmental investigation, remediation or monitoring of the site
- The removal of underground storage tanks or hazardous waste containers
- Soil removal, capping, barrier installation and vapor intrusion systems

The matching investment for requested grant funds is derived from the investment generated from the following activities:

- The acquisition cost of the Brownfield site
- Site clearance, building demolition or building renovation
- Asbestos and lead paint abatement
- Infrastructure improvements

### Application and Award Process

The Brownfield Program has a continual application process in which applications are accepted year-round. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact WEDC underwriters or Regional Account Managers to discuss the project prior to completing an application so the competitiveness of the project can be ascertained. WEDC

considers the following criteria during the review of an application:

- How does the project promote economic development?
- Does the project have a positive effect on the environment?
- Does the project site have a significant level of soil and/or groundwater contamination?
- Is a real estate transaction in place to take ownership of the property?
- Is an end user committed to utilize or occupy the project site?
- Is financing in place for most project expenditures so that the proposed redevelopment will reach fruition?
- What is the level of public funding being invested in the Brownfield revitalization?
- Is the property located in a distressed community?
- How much full-time job creation will result from the infusion of taxpayer dollars?
- What is the leverage ratio for the grant request compared to the overall project investment?
- How much will projected property values rise after the project is completed?
- How much additional property tax revenue will be generated by the redevelopment?
- How has municipal support been demonstrated for the project; and is it consistent with the community's development planning?

### Other Considerations

- Grant funds cannot be used to pay lien claims to the Department of Natural Resources or the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Grant funds cannot be used to pay delinquent real estate taxes or interest/penalties that pertain to those taxes.
- Soft costs are not covered by grant funds.
- New construction costs are not funded by the Brownfield Program since the focus is on environmental remediation.
- The demand for funds is very competitive, and historically the demand for annual allocated grant dollars will exceed the level of available funding.

### Grant Recipients

Each successful applicant must enter into a contract with WEDC for the purpose of implementing the proposed grant. The contract will require the creation and maintenance of the project's proposed new full-time positions for a minimum two-year period. Recipients must provide regular financial and program reports and ensure compliance with state and federal rules and regulations.

### Contact

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