



**Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation  
Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2023**

**Program Name:** Idle Sites Redevelopment Program

**Program Inception:** WEDC FY14

**Lead Division:** Business and Community Development

**New**                       **Revised**    [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**Aid**                       **Pass-thru Aid**             **Technical Assistance**

**Program Goal:**

The goal of the Idle Sites Redevelopment (ISR) Program is to incent community redevelopment in the state of Wisconsin.

**Program Description:**

The program generally offers grants to Wisconsin communities for the redevelopment of sites that have been idle, abandoned, or underutilized for a period of at least five years. Blighted properties may be perceived as eyesores that can lead to decreased property tax revenue for a community. The Idle Sites Redevelopment Program provides incentives to help rejuvenate abandoned blighted sites and assistance in elevating local economies. Approved projects can use funds for demolition, environmental remediation, infrastructure or site-specific improvements to advance the site to shovel ready status or enhance the site's market attractiveness.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

Definitions:

“Economically Distressed” means a county or municipality so designated by WEDC by considering the most current area and state data available for the following indicators:

- Unemployment rate
- Percentage of families with incomes below the poverty line
- Median family income
- Median per capita income
- Average annual wage
- Manufacturing assessment values by county
- Other significant or irregular indicators of economic distress – such as a natural disaster, or plant closings and layoffs

“Opportunity Zone” means a designated qualified opportunity zone in the State of Wisconsin under Internal Revenue Code § 1400Z-1.

## The Applicant:

- Any city, village, town, county, government entity, or tribal entity that has one of the following:
  - If a private developer is participating in the project, a draft of a development agreement that describes the project and its goals, anticipated outcomes, project timeline, and actions, obligations and investments to be made by each party that must be executed prior to the first draw of funds; or
  - If the project does not have a private developer, an officially approved resolution that describes the project and its goals, anticipated outcomes, project timeline, and actions, obligations and investments necessary to achieve redevelopment.

## The Project Site:

- May be:
  - one or more contiguous industrial parcels that exceed 5 acres and had long term (over 25 years) industrial usage; or
  - one or more contiguous commercial parcels that exceed 10 acres and had long term (over 25 years) commercial usage; for projects in an Economically Distressed community or Opportunity Zone, parcels need to exceed 5 acres; or
- one or more contiguous institutional parcels that exceed 5 acres and had long term (over 25 years) institutional usage; properties of less than 5 acres may be considered when the property is located within a commercial corridor.
- Applicants must own the targeted site or demonstrate the legal ability to access the property and perform the work proposed in the application

## Eligible Costs:

- Grant and matching funds can be used for demolition, environmental remediation, rehabilitation or infrastructure improvements.
- Match may also include acquisition costs.

WEDC funds cannot exceed 25% of eligible project costs, unless a project is located in an economically distressed community where WEDC may provide up to 50% of eligible costs. Activities ineligible for grant assistance or matching funds include, but are not limited to:

- Past costs
- In-kind contributions
- Costs of new construction
- Indirect construction costs (a.k.a. "soft" costs)
- Environmental work occurring on properties in which the current owner is also a causer who possessed or controlled the contaminant(s) on the site

Applicants must provide a signed resolution by the governing elected body authorizing the submittal of an application to the ISR Program.

WEDC may take the following into account when considering an ISR grant:

- The potential of the project to promote economic and community development in the area
- A written financial commitment by a lending institution and / or government entity to the applicant enabling the project to reach fruition
- The adequacy and completeness of the site investigation and remediation effort

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The extent to which costs are budgeted and itemized by qualified parties
- The size and location of the property and the site's relationship to economic centers
- Increase of taxable property values
- Reduction of urban sprawl
- Use of existing infrastructure
- Reduction of environmental risks
- Creation of full-time jobs
- Located in an Economically Distressed community
- Demonstrates involvement of diverse businesses, including women and veteran-owned contractors, in eligible project costs
- Feasibility and readiness of the proposed project

### **Incentives and Available Funding (FY23): \$2,000,000**

The maximum award generally does not exceed \$250,000 unless the request for funds is for a project that, due to the size and scope of the redevelopment, clearly justifies an award beyond normal parameters. Applicants may receive one award per fiscal year.

### **Activities and Expected Outcomes:**

Assist eight communities and achieve a 20:1 leverage of other investment.

### **Performance Reporting:**

Recipients will be required to annually submit a performance report documenting capital investment, assessed taxable property values, as well as any other contract deliverable.

WEDC annually selects awards on a sample basis for an audit. All backup to the performance report is required to be maintained for the life of the award.

WEDC may impose additional reporting requirements to evaluate project performance and to ensure compliance with contract deliverables.

### **Application and Awards Process:**

The ISR program has a continuous application process. Applicants for an ISR grant should complete an application through an Account Manager. The completed application will be assigned to an underwriter and will go through the award review process.

For more information on application review, internal process, and award distribution, please refer to WEDC's award administration policies and procedures.

**Revision History:**

Effective Date	Description of Change
7/1/2017	Changed to an ongoing application process
7/1/2017	Added requirement for signed resolution of support from local government unit submitting application
7/1/2017	Added limitation for one award per fiscal year per community
7/1/2018	Clarified the terms development agreement and redevelopment plan
7/1/2018	Expanded types of eligible sites and reduced acreage requirements in a Designated Rural County
7/1/2019	Clarified eligible costs; reduced acreage requirements for projects in an Opportunity Zone; clarified performance reporting requirements
7/1/2021	Clarified eligibility requirements; replaced Designated Rural County with Economically Distressed; added consideration for diverse businesses; reduced maximum grant.
07/1/2022	Clarifies that obligations and investments made by each party must be executed prior to the first draw of funds; Reduces acreage requirements for certain projects in commercial corridor; Provides reduced match for projects located in an Economically Distressed County



**PROGRAM REVIEW:**

This document has been reviewed by the following parties (Check all that apply):

- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Legal Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Senior VP Strategic Investment and Policy:** \_\_\_\_\_  
enter a date.

**Date** Click or tap to

**Division Vice President:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** Click or tap to enter a date.

**AUTHORIZED APPROVAL:**

**CEO or Designee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** Click or tap to enter a date.