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Commonwealth Site Readiness Fund

Program Information and Guidelines

FY2023

Commonwealth Site Readiness Fund – Community One Stop Guidelines

I. INTRODUCTION

A. About the Program

The 2021 Economic Development Bill authorizes $15M for the Commonwealth Site Readiness Fund, to be administered by MassDevelopment, for the purpose of funding "for site assembly, site assessment, predevelopment permitting and other predevelopment and marketing activities that enhance a site's readiness for commercial, industrial or mixed-use development; provided, that a portion of the funds shall be used to facilitate the expansion or replication of successful industrial parks; and provided further, that funding shall be awarded in a manner that promotes geographic equity"

B. FY 2023 Information

In Fiscal Year 2023 the program will again be accepting proposals through the **Community One Stop for Growth** – a single application portal and collaborative review process for several state grant programs that make targeted investments based on a housing and economic development continuum.

The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) launched the Community One Stop for Growth application in partnership with the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) and MassDevelopment.

II. PROGRAM FEATURES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Program Highlights

Maximum Award	No set maximum but typical awards range from $50,000 to $1,000,000.
Total Funds Available	$3,000,000 *(Subject to state budget appropriation)*
Grant Use	Site Preparation and Predevelopment Activities
Project Duration	No maximum duration specified.
Project focus examples	Due diligence work, constraint mapping, master planning, pre-permitting and permitting, engineering studies, capital improvements, demolition, property acquisition, etc.
Eligible communities	All municipalities are eligible to apply.

Eligible lead applicant	Municipalities, municipal agencies or authorities, economic development and industrial corporations, economic development authorities and non-profit entities.

B. Eligible Applicants and Projects

Through the Community One Stop, <u>municipalities, municipal agencies or authorities, economic development and industrial corporations, economic development authorities and non-profit entities</u> can apply for Site Readiness Program funding. All applications not from a municipality or municipal entity must include a letter of support from the municipality clearly articulating the proposed funding public purpose/ benefit. Note that private sector entities are not eligible to apply to the Site Readiness Program.

Grantees will be required to execute a standard grant agreement. Site Readiness grants benefiting specific sites shall be repaid from any net land sale proceeds and/or long-term lease revenue or refinancing proceeds.

A grantee's repayment obligation would terminate without full repayment upon either of the following conditions: (i) no redevelopment of the site commences within 30 years of the date of the grant agreement or (ii) if net land sale proceeds and/or long-term lease revenue or refinancing proceeds are inadequate to repay the grant in full.

Eligible Uses of Program Funds fall into two categories, Site Preparation and Predevelopment and Permitting. Each category is further defined below.

Site Preparation
Available assistance includes, but is not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Site Concept Plans – Including feasibility and planning studies in addition to concept level master planning.
- Site Market Studies – Including broker consultation, market analysis, and development of marketing materials.
- Site Acquisition and Related Tasks – Including costs of property acquisition, title analysis, surveying, and legal fees.
- Demolition
- Construction of Site-Related Upgrades – Including roads and other infrastructure.

Predevelopment and Permitting

Available assistance includes, but is not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Engineering Documents – Including design and pricing of on- and off-site access and infrastructure improvements.
- Pre-permitting and Permitting– Including assistance in reviewing existing zoning, permitting or other regulatory issues as well as in undertaking pre-permitting activities. Also includes studies related to specific site issues including traffic, historic resources, rare species, utilities, etc.
- Pro-Forma Development
- Due Diligence Activities – Including Phase I environmental review and existing conditions analysis.

III. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION

A. Application Components

The new Community One Stop for Growth application is a single online application portal designed to allow applicants to apply for multiple sources of funding to support multiple phases and facets of a project. The application is organized into the following sections:

- Core Questions (Sections 1 and 2), plus site information, if applicable,
- Additional Questions (Sections 3 through 7), based on the development continuum and the project components selected by the applicant,
- Additional Questions for Housing Choice Communities (Sections 8), only for communities designated as Housing Choice,
- Certification of Application Submission Authority (Section 9),
- Other Attachments (Section 10), for attachments related to special projects.

A full proposal packet for consideration of Site Readiness Program funding must include complete responses to all applicable questions in the following sections:

Core Questions (Sections 1 and 2), plus site information, if applicable,

- **Section 1** – Applicant Information: Identifying information of the applicant, and partners, if applicable.

- **Section 2** – Project Information: In this section, applicants will provide general project information, such as the project name, description, leadership and the ability to execute the project, timeline and anticipated outcomes. Applicant will indicate the category of funding for which they would like the project to be considered in question 2.1, which will drive additional questions. Those applying to the Site Preparation,

Buildings and Infrastructure categories must complete the Site Information questions, which include identification of the specific site, ownership, and zoning.

Additional Questions (Sections 3 through 8), based on the development continuum and the project components selected by the applicant in Section 2, Question 2.1,

- **Section 5** – <u>Site Preparation Additional Questions</u>: This section is where applicants will provide detail about the specific project site for which funding is requested. Includes detailed scope(s) of work, site details, historic environmental reports, and budget. Additional questions are required for Brownfields related applications.

- **Section 9** – <u>Certification of Application Submission Authority</u>: Signature page certifying the authority to submit the application on behalf of the applying entity, and attesting that all responses are true and accurate.

- **Section 10** – <u>Other/Optional Attachments</u>: This section allows submit other attachments to support the application, including other site images, partner letters or support letters. Please note that these items will generally not be scored or assessed as part of the formal evaluation of the proposal.

IMPORTANT: The sections outlined above relate only to the Site Preparation category. Applicants may be required to complete other sections of the Community One Stop application, depending on the other categories they may have selected. Please review the instructions for the One Stop carefully.

B. Application Evaluation and Scoring Overview:

MassDevelopment will consider the following criteria when reviewing Site Readiness applications. While few sites will satisfy every criterion, applications will be reviewed on a relative basis. Review criteria will be used to assess the likelihood of requested funding to advance a project towards site readiness, future development, and resulting public benefits.

- Community support for industrial development (43D/Priority Development Area designation may serve as an indicator)
- Consistency with the existing municipal master plan and/or regional plans (required for private-sector applicants)
- As-of-right zoning or an affirmative statement from municipality to seek as-of-right zoning
- Regional impact and regional appropriateness
- Property size and scale of development (the program is targeting a minimum of 50,000 SF of developable space)
- Potential level of private investment on the site

- Benefits enabled (including new permanent and construction jobs created)
- Site access (proximity to highways and/or rail)
- Appropriateness of location (including proximity to housing and known off-site impacts)
- Marketability of the site (active interest a plus)
- Availability of matching funds from landowner and/or local contribution (including, but not limited to, tax increment financing or other financial commitments)

MassDevelopment staff will determine if all statutory and program guidelines are met. A Review Committee will independently review and score the applications. Note that reviewers may request additional information from any or all relevant sources during the application review process.

C. Award Decisions

Applicants that are approved for funding will receive a letter outlining the grant amount and any conditions of the award. All awards are subject to annual state budget appropriation and contingent upon full execution of a contract. Applicants that are not recommended for funding during the round will also be notified in writing, and invited to request feedback about their proposal, if interested.

D. Additional Information

- All applications must be submitted electronically. The online application portal, *IGX*, can be accessed at https://eohed.intelligrants.com. An online webinar outlining the use of the system will be available on the site. The application form template and link to the portal will also be available on the EOHED webpage.

- Eligible applicants may submit funding requests for more than one Site Readiness project in the same round. However, a separate application is required for each project. Each proposal will be evaluated independently against the criteria and will be competing directly with all other proposals.

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to be aware of all requirements and deadlines, and to ensure that their application is complete and submitted on time. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record. Late submissions will not be considered.

- MassDevelopment reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review. MassDevelopment also reserves the right to recommend partial grant awards, as deemed appropriate.