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# **Commonwealth Site Readiness Fund**

## **Program Information and Guidelines**

### **FY2022**

## 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. What’s New in FY2022

Starting with the Fiscal Year 2022 grant round, which opens in spring 2021, the program will be accepting proposals through a new application process – The **Community One Stop for Growth** – which is 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.

EOHED is launching this Community One Stop for Growth application in partnership with the Department of Housing & Community Development and MassDevelopment. The round will open in January 2021 with a series of informational webinars. Prospective applicants will be able to submit an **Expression of Interest**, through April 2, 2021, outlining projects to receive feedback and suggestions on the best path for submitting proposals through a **Full Application** for funding consideration. Full Applications will be due by June 4, 2021.

### II. PROGRAM FEATURES AND REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Program Highlights

<b>Maximum Award</b>	No set maximum but typical awards range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000.
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	\$3,000,000 <i>(Subject to state budget appropriation)</i>
<b>Grant Use</b>	Site Preparation and Predevelopment Activities
<b>Project Duration</b>	Project timeline may exceed one (1) year.

<b>Project focus examples</b>	Due diligence work, constraint mapping, master planning, pre-permitting and permitting, engineering studies, capital improvements, demolition, property acquisition, etc.
<b>Eligible communities</b>	All municipalities are eligible to apply.
<b>Eligible lead applicant</b>	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, municipalities, municipal agencies or authorities, economic development and industrial corporations, economic development authorities and non-profit entities 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’s public purpose/ benefit. Note that private sector entities are not eligible to apply to the Site Readiness Program this year.

Grantees will be required to execute a standard grant agreement. Commonwealth 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

### **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

## **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 consideration of 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, 2, 3, and 4), plus site information, if applicable,
- Additional Questions (Sections 5 through 10), based on the development continuum and the project components selected by the applicant,
- Additional Questions for Special Projects (Sections 11 and 12) only for communities designated as Housing Choice, Rural, and/or Small Town,
- Certification of Application Submission Authority (Section 13),
- Required Attachments (Section 14), primary repository for required attachments, and
- Other Attachments (Section 15), 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:

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

**Section 2** – Applicant / Community Background: Information about the applicant main goals, challenges, and past projects. Section seeks information about the community's engagement in state initiatives and includes a checklist of various economic and housing development tools and strategies.

**Section 3** – Project Summary: Identification of all the categories for which the applicant seeks funding support, including Capacity Building. Includes the project name, abstract, and project type.

**Section 4** – Project Details / Core Information/Site Information: Main project narrative and questions about leadership and ability to execute the project as well as progress to date. Includes questions related to the project timeline and anticipated outcomes.

**Section 7** – Site Preparation Additional Questions: All of the questions about the specific project Site for which funding is requested. Includes detailed scope of work and budget.

**Section 8** – Predevelopment and Permitting Additional Questions: All of the questions about the specific project Site (buildings or land) for which funding is requested. Includes detailed scope of work and budget.

**Section 13** – Certification of Application Submission Authority: Signature page certifying the authority to submit the application on behalf of the organization, and attesting that all responses are true and accurate.

**Section 14** – Required Attachments: This section is for uploading required attachments.

IMPORTANT: The sections outlined above relate only to the Site Preparation and Pre-Development categories. 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
- 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 commitment letter outlining the recoverable 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.