

TAX BASE REVITALIZATION ACCOUNT (TBRA) SITE INVESTIGATION

Site Investigation grants are intended for redevelopment sites suspected or known to include contamination. They can help determine if contamination exists, what type of contamination is there, how much, and where it is located. They can also help inform how the contamination could affect redevelopment plans and the potential costs of cleanup.

Funding

Available Funding: \$500,000 per year

Award Limit: \$50,000 per project; up to \$250,000 per applicant for multiple sites within a Target Area. Grant funds will be available until expended on a first come first served basis

Local Match: 25%

Grant Term: 1 Year (single site) 3 years (multi-site)(no extension)

Application Limit: Applicants with an open grant for multi-site investigations with less than 80% of the funds awarded expended are ineligible to apply

Key Dates

Round 1 Application Due: May 1, 2025 at 3PM

Round 1 Decision: July 2025

Round 2 Application Due: Nov 3, 2025 at 3PM

Round 2 Decision: January 2026

Site Investigation Eligible Sites Table

Eligible Sites

- Properties with contamination that exceeds or is perceived to exceed safe standards set by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) or the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for the intended use
- Properties that are publicly-owned or privately-owned that will
 - increase the tax base and
 - add or preserve jobs and/or
 - add or preserve affordable housing after redevelopment is completed

Ineligible Sites

- A party likely responsible for the contamination has been identified and is also likely financially capable of carrying out the investigation in the foreseeable future
- No known or suspected environmental contamination is demonstrated
- TBRA funding is not needed in order for the redevelopment to proceed
- Redevelopment proposals that will not generate property taxes or payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT/PLT)

Applications may also be determined ineligible for funding if:

- Individual project sites are not approved by the Council staff prior to incurring eligible costs. Changes to the eligible Target Area will require a grant amendment prior to incurring costs to be reimbursed for grant funds
- adequate investigation funding is available from other public and private sources;
- any part of a redevelopment site will be funded by the State or Federal Superfund Program in the current or following fiscal year
- the redevelopment requires extensive new regional infrastructure beyond that which is already planned
- the redevelopment is not consistent with the redevelopment component of the city's comprehensive plan after the redevelopment is completed.

Program Coordinator

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Site Investigation Eligible Activities Table

Eligible Activities

- Creating or updating environmental investigation documents* including:
 - Phase I environmental site assessment
 - Phase II environmental site assessment work plans
 - Phase II environmental site assessment
 - Hazardous building materials, asbestos, or lead based paint assessments**
 - Development of a Response Action Plan (RAP)***
 - Abatement plans
 - Asbestos emissions control plans (ECP)
- Limited demolition (as necessary to assess contamination only)
- Environmental oversight

Ineligible Activities

- “Soft costs” such as:
 - Administrative overhead
 - Travel expenses
 - Legal fees
 - Bonds
 - Insurance
 - Permits
 - Licenses or authorization fees
 - Costs associated with preparing grant proposals or applications or bids
 - Applicant’s project coordination costs operating expenses, planning costs, and prorated lease and salary costs
- Cleanup or abatement costs
- Construction costs (e.g., geotechnical or structural assessments)
- Costs for environmental assessments outside of the redevelopment site or Target Area (as identified in the application)

* The costs for the investigation work incurred within 180 days before the application submission deadline may be considered as matching funds.

** Costs associated with asbestos and lead-based paint assessments must meet state standards established by the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as well as federal standards including Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) and the Environmental Protection Agency Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule.

*** Response Action Plan (RAP)—and amendments, if any—must be submitted to the MPCA or MDA for the redevelopment being proposed.

The Council considers the following additional factors when reviewing future costs to be paid using grant funds:

- To minimize the amount of funds needed to replace contaminated soils, applicants are encouraged to design and implement projects in a way that minimizes the amount of backfill needed to replace the contaminated soils (e.g., underground parking, basements). Any underground use must be consistent with the approved RAP.
- Future mitigation costs associated with soil vapor mitigation must be based on data provided that shows soil vapors are over 33 times the MPCA intrusion screening value thresholds.
- Contractor markups for subcontractor costs are eligible but limited to 10% or less.

TBRA Site Investigation Scoring Table

Successful TBRA applications support redevelopment that improves safety and health by reducing risks from prior contamination, increases the property tax base, and adds new or keeps existing jobs or affordable housing.

Site Investigation grants are intended for applicants with projects that have development rights or recently purchased a redevelopment site that may have contamination or is known to be contaminated and are seeking public funding to find out where the contamination is concentrated on the property, how much contamination is present, and estimate how much it would cost to clean up before starting construction on a redevelopment project.

What: Proposed Project Outcomes

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Tax Base	Increase to the tax base of the recipient municipality	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the current tax base? What will the future tax base be after construction is complete and the building is fully occupied? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New construction or renovation that increases the annual tax base
Jobs and Housing	Build or preserve affordable housing opportunities with priority given to projects that serve residents who have barriers finding safe, affordable housing or new housing units affordable to households with income at or below 30% of the median income	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the project meet the needs of a specific population who has challenges finding safe, affordable housing? Will the project expand housing choices in the census tract in which the project is located, relative to housing choices in the city overall? Will the project include housing units affordable to households living on 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less? How many affordable units (affordable to households living on 60% AMI or lower for a minimum of 15 years) will be created or preserved? To see rents or sales prices that qualify as affordable go to 2024 Ownership and Rent Limits (2025 limits will be added when available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add apartments, condos, or other types of housing for a specific market type (for example, senior housing, youth shelters, workforce housing, units for people leaving incarceration, units for people escaping domestic violence, units for people with developmental disabilities etc.) at locations where there aren't many different choices Include housing with uncommon features such as units with more bedrooms for families, universally designed units, micro-units, or units that include social services Add or preserve deeply affordable units (affordable to households living on 30% of the area median income or below) Add affordable housing in areas (census tracts) with the most households already paying over 30% or more of their income towards housing costs
	Create or preserve long-term job opportunities with priority given to projects with living-wage jobs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the proposed development project create or preserve living wage jobs (jobs that earn \$59,500/year or more)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential living wage jobs created/preserved relative to other applications, especially if existing jobs in project area pay lower average wages than jobs in the city or in the region

What: Proposed Project Outcomes				
	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Compact, Connected Development	Develop vacant lots or re-use vacant buildings	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the proposed redevelopment site on a vacant lot or require renovation of an existing building? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose redevelopment projects on vacant sites or projects that will re-use vacant buildings
	Increase the use of transit and alternatives such as walking or biking		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the redevelopment site located near existing transit and/or a regional bike trail? Does the site location, sidewalks and/or proposed or existing building placement encourage tenants to walk to nearby destinations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a project location near transit services Select a location near a regional bike trail
	Support efficient growth in the region by increasing density and intensity through redevelopment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the proposed redevelopment site on a vacant lot or require renovation of an existing building? If the project involves housing, what will be the future number of units per acre? What is the proportion of gross floor space relative to the size of the redevelopment lot(s)? (This is sometimes known as the floor-area ratio or FAR.) If the project includes an industrial use with at least 2 jobs per acre, is the location near a street designated as a freight corridor or within an area with an existing regional concentration of jobs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose redevelopment projects that increase the number of residential units per acre (residential density) and/or the floor-area ratio of the site Projects with potential to increase the number of jobs particularly within existing areas with a high regional concentration of jobs
	Demonstrate a market demand for future redevelopment proposals	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What similar developments have been built or are under construction near the proposed redevelopment site in the past 3 years? How full are the similar development sites nearby? Have tenants been identified for the proposed redevelopment? Have pre-construction leases been signed for the proposed development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify similar developments existing or soon to be open near the proposed redevelopment site Identify occupancy or vacancy rates for similar developments near the development site Identify commitments by tenants, if any, for the proposed redevelopment

What: Proposed Project Outcomes				
	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Environmental Impact	Investigate contaminated sites with the greatest potential to improve the environment and reduce risk to human health	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the expected contaminants of concern for the redevelopment project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites that pose the greatest expected risk to human health and the environment
	Potential to support equitable environmental protection based on project location and potential impact of exposure	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the expected exposure risk for the contaminants identified (i.e., soil, water, soil vapor, interior abatement, etc.)? Where is the project located? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites within equitable development areas (meaning a Seeding Equitable Environmental Development (SEED) eligible area) or with vulnerable populations where contaminants pose the greatest expected risk to human health and the environment
Subtotal Outcomes		48		
How: Proposed Project Process				
Process	Address a residential and/or workforce need that was identified by or with residents or workers most impacted by inequities	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the need for the project determined (e.g., private market, local policy, community, communities of color)? Who will benefit from the project, now and in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project needs were identified to reduce inequities or were identified by those most impacted by inequities The project is expected to provide short- and long-term benefits to individuals and communities most impacted by inequities
	The city is taking steps toward addressing racial and other inequities at the local level, especially efforts to implement equitable development practices	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the city taken steps to define and understand local disparities in measurable outcomes influenced by development patterns and decisions? Has the city adopted policies that are intended to mitigate disparities and/or create more equitable development outcomes? Is the city taking tangible actions to integrate equitable development practices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city has adopted policies, like a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) policy, racial equity action plan, inclusionary zoning or environmental sustainability building standards or workforce programs that prioritize equitable development outcomes The city participates in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), has an equity, human rights or similar commission or advisory committee that informs local decisions, or other municipal efforts to address inequities
Subtotal Process		7		

Who: Proposed Project Team				
	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Capacity	Project team's capacity to begin an environmental investigation and commit sources for required matching fund contribution	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When will the investigation begin? Do the requested grant activities reflect a good understanding of the eligible uses of funds? Are access agreements in place? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate how prepared the project team is to begin the investigation Sources for matching funds are committed
	The team demonstrates a need for public financing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the total cost of the environmental investigation? What sources are being or have been pursued to finance the environmental investigation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant gap is demonstrated after all other public and private sources for the investigation are identified
	The project team, including partners, is designed to reflect and be responsive to those underrepresented and most impacted by the project; or the predevelopment activities will seek to build such partnerships in a meaningful way		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project team (meaning any person or organization with a decision-making role, e.g., advisory group member, consultant, service provider, developer) intentionally structured to reflect or have experience working effectively with those historically impacted by racial or other inequities, or are traditionally under-represented in the community or the region? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A direct connection between demographic makeup of the project area and the lived experience of project team-members (in a meaningful and appropriate way) or their experience responding to the needs of that or similar communities A direct connection between the population intended to be served (e.g., persons with disabilities, persons experiencing homelessness) and the lived experience of project team-members or their experience responding to the needs of that or similar communities
	Demonstrate public applicant's capacity to oversee environmental investigations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have city staff managed prior contamination investigation grants? If the applicant has received prior TBRA grants, how much of the grant funding has been relinquished in the past five years? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior successful grant management of TBRA funding, including consistent provision of required reports and meeting grant administration deadlines Providing an executed development agreement between the city and private developer for projects involving public-private partnerships on publicly-owned land
Subtotal Capacity		15		
Total		70		
Applicants must score at least 35 of the 70 available points to be eligible				

TBRA Site Investigation Checklist

TBRA Site Investigation Application Contents

- 2025 TBRA Site Investigation Form (Online Form in WebGrants Funding Opportunity)

Application Attachments

- Resolution from applicant authorizing TBRA application submission (PDF).

Name the file “TBRA Resolution – [Project Name].”

- Legal Description of Site (PDF).

Name the file “TBRA Legal Descrip – [Project Name].”

Maps (include project boundary)

- Target Area Map using LCA online mapping tool – a street map showing parcels and parcel identification numbers (including a unique county ID) for the redevelopment project.(PDF)
- Aerial Map using LCA online mapping tool – An aerial map showing the redevelopment project boundary. (PDF)
- Overview Map using LCA online mapping tool – An aerial map showing ¼ mile and ½ mile radius from the project site. (PDF)

Project Images and Figures

- Site Plan Map (PDF)
- Current Conditions (Include image(s) of building interiors for abatement requests.)
Name the file “TBRA Current Images – [Project Name].”
- Proposed Development (e.g., elevations, architectural renderings, concept sketches, etc.)
Name the file “TBRA Development Images – [Project Name].”

Environmental Reports

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (PDF)
Name the file “TBRA Phase I ESA - [Project Name]”
- Other prior environmental reports (e.g., Limited Site Investigation, Limited Hazardous Materials Report, Asbestos or Lead-based paint Survey, etc.)
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, prior RAP