Peterson continues commitment to brownfields clean up with 2004 grant and loan program

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Bart Peterson today announced the city is seeking applications for the 2004 Indianapolis Brownfields Grant and Loan program, continuing the city’s commitment to promote the clean up and redevelopment of abandoned, contaminated properties, known as “brownfields,” in neighborhoods.

The Brownfields Grant and Loan Program will provide grants of up to $10,000 to non-profit organizations to assist with redeveloping brownfield sites into usable properties for business, residences or other community uses. The program is the culmination of a partnership between the City of Indianapolis and Local Initiatives Support Corporations (LISC), an organization that provides funding for neighborhood redevelopment.

“ Redeveloping brownfields not only removes blight from our neighborhoods and helps protect the health and safety of our residents, but it also creates jobs and spurs economic investment in the community,” Mayor Peterson said. “We are committed to working with neighborhoods to redevelop these eyesores into locations that benefit our city.”

The city’s contribution to the brownfield grant program is provided by federal funding allocated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. LISC’s funding is provided by Living Cities, a non-profit consortium of community development funders.

The grants require a 50 percent matching investment. LISC will potentially provide that match with either grant funding or no interest loans, or a combination of both, for any grants given to community development corporations (CDCs) or other non-profit organizations.

“We look forward to continuing a partnership created to revitalize contaminated and underutilized sites into opportunities for new investment in urban neighborhoods,” said Sherry Seiwert, senior program director for LISC.

Other low interest loans are available for both for-profit and non-profit entities and can be utilized for environmental assessment and remediation activities.

Brownfields are abandoned or underused properties where redevelopment is complicated by either real or perceived contamination. Brownfields are often former plants, factories, gas stations or other industrial sites.

The Mayor launched the Brownfields Grant and Loan Program in partnership with LISC two years ago, marking the first time the city earmarked funding specifically for brownfields redevelopment. Brownfields redevelopment was a major plank in both of the Mayor’s “Peterson Plans.”

In Peterson’s first term in office, the city invested more than a million dollars in brownfields redevelopment. While some of that funding was utilized for a few large-scale projects, the brownfields...
grant program has targeted smaller projects initiated by CDCs and other not-for-profit organizations.

Some of these successful brownfields projects funded by the grant program include:

🎶 **Cit-E-Scapes** – A $1,600 grant awarded to Concord CDC funded site testing at 1218 S. Meridian. The test results showed no contamination, and a small start-up business, Cit-E-Scapes greenhouse, was able to open shop on the abandoned property.

🎶 **East 38th St. Library Branch** – The Indianapolis-Marion County Library Association utilized $18,000 in brownfield grant program funding to perform site clean up and soil remediation at 5452 E. 38th St., making way for the new library branch that now serves the public on the city’s northeast side.

🎶 **Wendy’s** – A $19,000 grant was awarded to the West Indianapolis Development Corporation for clean up of a site at the corner of Harding and Morris Streets. The site is now home to a Wendy’s restaurant.

🎶 **Nation of Islam Mosque No. 74** – United North East CDC utilized a $10,000 grant for monitoring wells and groundwater sampling at an underutilized and dilapidated site at 2248 E. 38th St. The site is now serving the city’s Islamic residents as a mosque.

Applications for the grant and loan program both are available on the city’s brownfields website, [www.indygov.org/dmdrealestate/brownfields/brownfields.htm](http://www.indygov.org/dmdrealestate/brownfields/brownfields.htm) or by calling 327-5845. Applications will be accepted through June 18, 2004.