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City, LISC continue support of brownfields clean-up; announce 2004 grant awards

INDIANAPOLIS – In a continued effort to clean-up and redevelop abandoned, contaminated properties, the city’s Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) today announced nearly $23,000 in grants to three Indianapolis area organizations as a part of the City of Indianapolis’ brownfields grant program.

Brownfields are abandoned or underutilized properties where redevelopment is complicated by either real or perceived contamination. These areas are often former industrial sites such as plants or factories, as well as gas stations.

“Redeveloping brownfields is an important part of protecting the health and safety of our residents, as well as spurring economic development in communities that need it most,” said Mayor Bart Peterson. “These grants are targeted to help community groups remove barriers to redeveloping these potentially contaminated sites, which typically spurs additional investment on that property and in the surrounding area.”

The following organizations will receive brownfields grants:

Martindale-Brightwood Community Development Corporation (MBCDC), $10,000
Funds will be used to conduct soil testing at the former Ertel Manufacturing site at 1931 Andrew J. Brown to determine the impact on the property of past underground storage tanks. The results of the tests will allow the MBCDC to make a determination on redevelopment prospects for the site.

Southeast Neighborhood Development Corp (SEND), $12,800
SEND will utilize grant funding to complete environmental tests on a number of properties, including 718 South Shelby, where crews will search for underground storage tanks and perform groundwater analysis at this former filling station site. Also, SEND will have a Phase I site assessment performed on 1701 Prospect Avenue, 1651 English Avenue and 1656 English Avenue, all of which house buildings of historic significance built around the turn of the 20th Century. SEND plans to restore these buildings for a mixed-use commercial and residential development.

East 10th Street Civic Association, $8,500
Funding will go towards Phase I environmental testing of four sites along the East 10th Street Corridor. The civic association will use the results of the tests to determine possible redevelopment options for the properties.

Created in April 2002, the brownfields grant program is funded by the city through federal dollars from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as matching grants from LISC. Since April 2002, the program has provided more than $135,000 to 13 local organizations.

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Brownfields redevelopment was a major plank in both of the Mayor’s “Peterson Plans.” In the Mayor’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 Community Development Corporations (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 $15,000 in brownfields 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, dilapidated site at 2248 E. 38th St. The site is now serving the city’s Islamic residents as a mosque.

Applications for the next round of awards will be accepted in the spring of 2005. Applications and information will be made available online at www.indygov.org/dmdrealestate or by calling Brownfields Coordinator Chris Harrell at (317) 327-5845.

LISC is a nonprofit support organization that works to transform urban neighborhoods by providing capital, technical expertise and training to community development corporations.