



## Rural Florida Site Preparedness Grant Program

### Program Description

To gain a competitive advantage when it comes to business attraction and expansion projects, EFI must assist Florida's rural communities with the development/enhancement of sites to make them build ready and competitive for site selection projects. Build ready sites may be defined as a site that has appropriate planning, zoning, surveys, title work, environmental conditions, soil conditions, infrastructure is in place or preliminary engineering is completed, the property is available for sale and development and site information is ready and up-to-date. A list of the criteria can be found below.

Grant funds may be available for, but are not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Matching funds for federal grants
- Renovation of existing building or demolition of old buildings (county or city owned)
- Stormwater project for potential commercial sites.
- Phase one environmental study.
- Gas line extension.
- Water and sewer construction or upgrade.
- Access road construction (including engineering or architecture costs).
- Broadband initiatives.
- Other approved infrastructure costs.

### Grant Information

Grants may be awarded up to \$25,000. A local match is strongly recommended and will be a consideration for a competitive project. Grant activities must be initiated and/or completed during the EFI Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. Deadline for application submissions is May 15, 2023.

Grant applications will be reviewed bi-weekly. Applicants will be made aware of the award decision up to 30 days from receipt of application.

### Eligibility

Eligible Applicants must meet the minimum criteria set forth in this section.

- Applicants must be either a local government or an economic development organization serving in the official capacity of a governing board of a county, municipality, special district, or state agency within a Rural Community as defined in 288.0656 ( e) Florida Statutes.
- Agree to match at least 10% of any grant awarded. The matching funds must be received from the identified sources and types indicated in the Project Budget. The term for the matching funds must be concurrent with the Agreement period. Matching funds must be "cash contributions".

## Funding Guidelines

Grant recipients may only be reimbursed for allowable project costs resulting from obligations incurred during the Agreement period. Activities for which state funds may NOT be spent include the following (this also applies to any subcontractors or consultants that are paid with Grant funds):

- Staff salaries.
- Purchase of equipment, furniture, or fixtures.
- Receptions, gifts, gift cards, awards, trophies, or membership dues.
- Lobbying any branch of state government.
- Administration of the project in excess of 10 percent of the Grant award.
- Project costs incurred related to the Agreement prior to its beginning date or after its ending date.
- Travel expenses not made pursuant to Section 112.061, Florida Statutes.
- Business entertainment expenses, including meals or activity fees.
- Participation in trade shows, air shows, consultant events, and congressional delegations for more than three (3) key staff members and/or officers of the prospective Grantee per activity.
- Participation in activities or events that are not located in the Continental United States (CONUS).

## Site Criteria:

Site is confirmed as available for sale and development, has appropriate planning/zoning, boundary survey, clear title, environmental conditions, soil conditions, and infrastructure in place or engineer-planned (cost & timeline). Site is listed on **FIND IT FLORIDA**. A site profile or spec sheet is available, including a site map/diagram containing (at a minimum): site name & address, site boundaries, surrounding road names, north arrow and a distance scale.

## Site Criteria Description:

- **Site Available for Sale:** Site is confirmed as available for sale and development by local economic development partner. Prospective companies and consultants will typically view the strongest form of availability as a site being owned by the local community, economic development organization or other development partner that is promoting the site for development. When this is not possible, a land option secured by the community or economic development partner would be viewed favorably. A letter of intent to sell for economic development purposes from the landowner is acceptable; however, may be viewed with a lower level of certainty by companies and consultants.
- **Planning/Zoning:** Site must be zoned to accommodate the development use for which it is being marketed. For example, if a site is being marketed for industrial projects, the zoning must be light, general or heavy industrial, or another designation that permits at least light industrial uses.
- **Boundary Survey:** Boundary survey or other reliable diagram showing site boundaries (including any easements if known) and dimensions must be available for preliminary planning purposes.

- **Clear Title:** Owner or local economic development partner must be able to reasonably demonstrate that property is clear of liens or other items that would be impediments to a timely sale of the property.
- **Environmental Conditions:** While a current or past environmental assessment is helpful, it is not required. In the absence of an environmental assessment, the owner and local economic development partner must be able to provide information on historical uses on the property to allow a company or consultant to preliminarily weigh the probability of environmental risks.
- **Soil Conditions:** A geotechnical report on the site's soil conditions is helpful but is not required for the purposes of marketing a site. In the absence of a geotechnical report, the owner and local economic developer must be able to articulate the types of surface and subsurface soils that are predominant on the site or surrounding area.
- **Infrastructure:** Water, sewer, electric, natural gas, telecommunications/fiber, and all-season roads (and rail if site being marketed as rail served) must be available at the boundaries of the sites to be promoted as build ready. If a site does not have all infrastructure to the boundaries, it must have a mitigation plan that includes a description of the required improvement, cost estimate and timeline to extend the infrastructure to the site.
- **Site Listing on FIND IT FLORIDA** (the State's real estate database): EFI utilizes **FIND IT FLORIDA** to promote sites and search for available sites for company or consultant site searches. Sites must be uploaded and maintained on **FIND IT FLORIDA** by the owner or local economic development organization.
- **Site Information:** A site profile or spec sheet must be completed and must include a site map/diagram containing (at a minimum): the site name, address, site boundaries, surrounding road names, north arrow, and a distance scale. Inclusion of topographical contour lines and location and size of utilities on the map is preferred but not required to promote the site. It is also highly recommended that the profile include 5-digit NAICS codes for up to five industry targets for the site.