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**South Carolina Brownfields Environmental Site Testing (BEST) Program**

**Background**

The Brownfields Initiative, established under South Carolina's Voluntary Cleanup Program, was created to attract individuals, non-profit organizations, and/or businesses to redevelop abandoned or underutilized industrial facilities, instead of developing on green, pristine land. These industrial facilities have not been redeveloped because of hazardous materials contamination or perceived contamination on the site. The Brownfields Initiative offers non-responsible parties an opportunity to receive State Superfund liability protection once a site has been cleaned to terms negotiated under the Voluntary Cleanup Contract. In order to be eligible for this program environmental assessments are necessary.

**Program Overview**

Catawba Regional Council of Governments (CRCOG) has received a sub grant from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) for the implementation of the SC BEST program to fund environmental assessments of brownfield sites across the state of South Carolina. As the Program Administrator CRCOG will allocate funding to the ten COG regions in the state. An Environmental Consultant has been procured by the Administrator and will conduct assessments selected for funding under the BEST.

**Funding Allocation**

ACOG will receive $147,604 to use for projects in the region over a 24 month period ending September of 2024. SC DHEC will provide additional funding beyond the 24 month period if the program is successful.

**Eligible Activities**

Activities funded through the SC BEST Program may include Phase I & Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). In general this program has the same eligibility as existing EPA programs.

**Site Specific Environmental Services** **Approximate Cost**

**Phase I**: Identification of potential or existing environmental contamination $3,000-$3,600

**Phase II**: Subsurface investigation, includes sampling and testing $18,000-$36,000

**Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives**: Identify remedial alternatives $5,500-$7,500

**Deadline**

Applications will be accepted at any time.

**Project Selection**

 Projects will be assessed using the following criteria

1. Potential economic redevelopment opportunities- tax revenues/job creation/capital investment potential after clean up

2. Potential to identify and eliminate environmental hazards- reduction of potential imminent public health risk

3. Potential to redevelop a property for public benefit/use i.e. park/recreation space

4. Potential to eliminate slum and blight in a community

5. Potential benefit to low-moderate income and/or rural communities

**Other Program Guidelines**

**•** Site assessments are capped at 50K

• A locality cannot have more than 5 assessments funded by the program

• A single locality cannot utilize more than 50% of allocation

• Private sector applications are allowed but cannot exceed 30% of allocation

• Projects cannot duplicate assessments being funded by an open EPA grant

• These funds cannot be used as a match for an EPA grant

**Project Recommendation**

Potential sites will be evaluated using the project selection scoring. Projects that score within the eligible range will be presented to the Economic Development Committee for recommendation of Board approval.

**Contact Information**

For questions about BEST or to submit a proposal for funding consideration, please contact:

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