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City, LISC continue support of brownfields clean-up; announce 2005 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 more than \$27,000 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 neighborhoods that need it most," said Mayor Bart Peterson. "These grants help community groups remove barriers to redeveloping potentially contaminated sites, which can spur additional investment in that property and in the surrounding area."

The following organizations will receive brownfields grants:

Southeast Neighborhood Development Corporation (SEND), \$10,000

Funds will be used to remove underground storage tanks at 924 S. Shelby, clearing the way for the site to be redeveloped into a flower shop and possibly other retail uses.

Near North Development Corporation, \$14,275

Near North will utilize just over \$4,000 dollars to perform a Phase II environmental assessment at 2131 - 2151 N. Meridian, which will likely be redeveloped into commercial office space. The rest of the grant funding will support further remediation work at the site of a former laundromat at 1352 N. Illinois. That site will be transformed into a headquarters for a locally based insurance restoration company.

East 10th Street Civic Association, \$3,200

Funding will go towards asbestos inspections and Phase I environmental assessments at 3042, 3125 and 3201 E. 10th Street. 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 \$160,000 to 16 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:

- ④ *1520 N. Alabama* - This site was the former location of a taxi company. Underground storage tank removal and site assessment was conducted with a \$7,500 City of Indianapolis/LISC brownfields grant, and the site is now in the process of being redeveloped into condominiums.
- ④ *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.
- ④ *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.
- ④ *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.

There is still brownfields grant funding available for 2005. Applications and information are 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.