



## **VIRGINIA BUSINESS READY SITES PROGRAM**

### **SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

## Contents

VIRGINIA BUSINESS READY SITES PROGRAM.....	4
Article I. Introduction.....	4
Section I.1    Program Background.....	4
Section I.2    Program Priorities.....	5
Section I.3    Program Funding.....	6
Section I.4    Site Replacement Fund .....	6
Article II. Eligible Applicants, Sites, and Funding .....	7
Section II.1    Eligible Applicants.....	7
Section II.2    Eligible Sites .....	7
Section II.3    Eligible Funding.....	9
Article III. Program Awards.....	11
Section III.1    Match Requirement .....	11
Section III.2    Award Determinations and Requirements.....	12
Section III.3    Post-Award and Disbursements.....	13
Section III.4    Post-Award Uses.....	13
Article IV. VBRSP Site Development Applications.....	15
Section IV.1    Application Process.....	15
Section IV.2    Required Application Information .....	16
Article V. Virginia Business Ready Expedited Permitting Program .....	17
Section V.1    Program Background .....	17
Section V.2    Eligible Sites and Projects .....	18
Section V.3    Application .....	18
Section V.4    Expedited Permitting Process .....	19
Section V.5    Non-compliance.....	20
Section V.6    Reporting .....	20
Appendix .....	21
Section VI.1: Site Characterization Tier Levels .....	21
Section VI.2: Eligible Site Localities .....	23
Section VI.3: Required Match .....	24
Section VI.4: VBRSP Site Development Application Overview.....	26
Section VI.5: Sample VBRSP Development Grant Pre-Application .....	27
Section VI.6: VBRSP Sources and Uses of Funding Template.....	29

Section VI.7: VBRSP Interim Report .....	30
Section VI.8: Application for Consideration into EPP for a Site .....	31
Section VI.9: Application for Consideration into EPP for a Project.....	31

# VIRGINIA BUSINESS READY SITES PROGRAM

## Site Development Guidelines

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### **Article I. Introduction**

#### **Section I.1 Program Background**

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority (“VEDP”) administers the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (the “VBRSP”) in accordance with [Section 2.2-2240.2:1](#) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, to identify and assess the readiness of potential industrial sites of at least 50 acres in the Commonwealth of Virginia (the “Commonwealth”) for marketing in alignment with the goals outlined in the Governor's economic development plan. Or an eligible brownfield site as defined in [§10.1-1230](#) of the Code of Virginia and marketed for industrial or commercial economic development purposes.

The VBRSP has three components:

- (i) **Site Characterization Report** (25 acres), to ascertain and designate a site’s level of development, and
- (ii) **Accelerated Site Characterization** (50 acres), to further ascertain and assess the site’s suitability for site development, and
- (iii) **Site Development** (50 acres), to further develop the sites for promoting to economic development projects.

**These Site Development Guidelines (“Guidelines”) govern the Site Development component of the VBRSP. Current versions of these Guidelines and the corresponding guidelines for the Site Characterization and Accelerated Site Characterization components of the VBRSP are available for review by the public online at: <https://www.vedp.org/vbrsp>.**

The mission of VBRSP Site Development is to establish a pool of potential sites across the Commonwealth that are well prepared and positioned for selection and development by economic development projects. To be well prepared and positioned for selection, potential sites are typically ranked at a Site Characterization Tier Level (each, a “Tier Level”) of either 4 or 5. See [Section VI.1](#) to these Guidelines for a breakdown of the five different Tier Levels.

To accomplish this mission, the Governor along with the Site Investment Committee awards available funds appropriated to VBRSP for site development projects to assist with the costs necessary to improve a site’s development status from its current Tier Level to a higher Tier Level. VBRSP funds are awarded to site development projects based on the Program Priorities



and other considerations in accordance with the procedures set forth in these Guidelines.

To guide the program process, there are two primary committees involved in the VBRSP, supported by relevant subject matter experts on an as-needed basis:

- **Project Review Committee**
  - Project management team which oversees VBRSP, reviews project applications, executes site tours, and recommends funding awards to the Governor and Site Investment Committee.
- **Site Investment Committee**
  - Governor, VEDP leadership, and key members of the Governor’s cabinet which approves/denies the Project Review Committee’s recommendations regarding site tours and program funding.

## **Section I.2     Program Priorities**

The goal of the VBRSP is to further business attraction and expansion in the Commonwealth of Virginia through site development. By preparing more competitive project-ready sites, corporate and industrial end-users will be more likely to select Virginia for investment. Funds available through the VBRSP program will be awarded to projects that best align with the following program priorities:

- **Improve project-ready site inventory**
  - The leading program priority is to increase the market-ready product portfolio across the Commonwealth of Virginia. With the ever-changing landscape of product demand and supply chain considerations, market-ready sites are in high demand, driving the need for a strong site inventory. These sites will be more likely to meet the demands and project parameters of corporate and industrial investors and can be developed quickly by an end user after site selection.
- **Create “high-win-potential” sites**
  - High-win-potential sites are sites that support demonstrated market demand. These sites are expected to locate a project within 18-24 months, or less, of VBRSP project completion.
- **Advance sites from lower tiers**
  - While the goal is to locate an investor as soon as possible, the program recognizes the need to develop a robust inventory of sites, which at current state, may vary in the development spectrum. Therefore, projects that advance sites from lower Tiers to higher Tiers (ideally Tiers 4 and 5) will be prioritized.

- **Focus on sites with the potential for regional and statewide impact**
  - VBRSP will fund sites that are at least 50 contiguous acres or a brownfield. However, the program prioritizes funding larger sites given the potential for regional and state-level impact of project wins at larger sites. Applications should include justification for regional or statewide impact and include letters of support from regional partners.
- **Ensure geographic diversity**
  - VBRSP strives to develop industrial sites across the Commonwealth to ensure that all regions participate in Virginia’s economic growth, and that site demands across a wide spectrum of project parameters can be met (e.g., proximity to customers and suppliers, industry cluster).
- **Practice fiduciary stewardship**
  - The VBRSP Site Investment Committee will carefully consider the total investment required for each site and the anticipated return on investment for each proposed project to ensure the grant funds are responsibly invested. Post-award reporting and risk of loss mitigation will be required to ensure fiscal responsibility throughout the program process.

### **Section I.3     Program Funding**

VBRSP is funded through an allocation by the General Assembly into the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Fund (VBRSP Fund) in accordance with Section 2.2-2240.2:1 of the Code of Virginia. For purposes of these Guidelines, “Fiscal Year” means the Commonwealth’s fiscal year, which runs from July 1 of one calendar year through June 30 of the immediately succeeding calendar year.

Grant awards for individual projects will not be limited to a specific dollar amount. The Site Investment Committee will make funding determinations based on available funding, the number of competitive applications, and Program Priorities.

### **Section I.4     Site Replacement Fund**

Created during the General Assembly session in January 2024, for Henrico County. The special subfund of VBRSP shall be known as the Site Replacement Fund. Moneys in the Site Replacement Fund shall be used in accordance with Section §2.2-2240.2:1, Code of Virginia and the guidelines established for the VBRSP Fund. All moneys and any interest earned shall be deposited into the Site Replacement Fund pursuant to sales of that certain Real Estate Purchase Agreement dated May 20, 1996, in Henrico County, shall be maintained for and made available only to the Economic Development Authority of Henrico County, Virginia. The funds will



remain in the Site Replacement Fund until after the fifth anniversary of the deposit, at which time the funds from the deposit will revert to the general fund for the Commonwealth. Each deposit will have its own five-year timetable.

## **Article II. Eligible Applicants, Sites, and Funding**

### **Section II.1 Eligible Applicants**

Site development funds available for disbursement are awarded by the VBRSP Site Investment Committee exclusively to an entity of the Commonwealth, as defined in Code of Virginia. The following two categories of recipients represent entities of the Commonwealth:

- (i) counties, cities, and towns of the Commonwealth, and local industrial or economic development authorities created in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth (each, a “Locality”); and
- (ii) regional industrial or economic development authorities created in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth (each, a “Regional Authority”).

A brief pre-application form will be used to determine applicant and project eligibility prior to issuing a full application.

The VBRSP Site Investment Committee does not make awards to any nongovernmental organizations, businesses, individuals, or other private parties, although it may make an award to a Locality or Regional Authority for a project involving a privately-owned site, subject to the requirements of [Section III.2](#) of these Guidelines.

Privately held sites are eligible to receive funding if they meet the requirements of [Section II.2](#) and [Section III.2](#). The grant must be awarded to a Locality or Regional Authority and since it will be awarded from a public entity to another public entity all application documents are subject to disclosure laws.

### **Section II.2 Eligible Sites**

An applicant may apply for a site development award only for a site that meets all of the below criteria:

- (i) is listed in VirginiaScan; and
- (ii) meets, or at the time of the grant award will be able to meet, the following minimum criteria and be suitable for marketing for industrial or commercial economic development purposes:

***Acreage:***

- (a) At least 100 contiguous, developable acres; or a brownfield as defined by §10.1-1230 of the Code of Virginia
- (b) At least 50 contiguous, developable acres in GOVA Region 1 or 2
- (c) At least 50 contiguous, developable acres where topographic or environmental factors constrain the availability of large sites and the site presents a unique economic development opportunity *or* creates an economic development opportunity not currently available in the regional inventory of economic development sites
- (d) At least 25 contiguous, developable acres if such site is located in a locality with a land area of 35 square miles or less.

Note: The largest contiguous acreage should not have any encumbrances that prevent site development of the entire parcel by a single entity. Encumbrances can include but are not limited to: division of property by a road, significant environmental and/or topographic feature, or major utility corridor such as an electrical transmission line or a natural gas line.

***Zoning:*** Appropriate for industrial and/or commercial development and use

***Ownership:*** Publicly-owned or optioned sites will be more competitive than privately-owned sites, but privately-owned sites are eligible for funding through grants to eligible applicants.

- (iii) And has previously been characterized, and there is a characterization report available. (A sample report is available online at: <https://www.vedp.org/vbrsp>. If the site has not been characterized, the applicant is encouraged to apply for a VBRSP Site Characterization grant.)
- (iv) And the site is in good standing with the VBRSP Review Committee. This could include items such as current awarded grants have an executed performance agreement or all entities are working to execute the performance agreement in an expeditious manner; are in compliance of the performance dates; and have submitted all appropriate documentation, etc.
- (v) Privately held sites are eligible for an award if they meet the requirements set in (i)-(iv) in this section and the private owner commits to marketing and developing the site for economic development projects; grants access to the property for the purpose of development; defines a maximum per acre price for the land for a period of time, and there is a signed performance agreement between the locality and the landowner.

## Section II.3 Eligible Funding

The following eligible funding uses are integral to the site development process and are eligible for VBRSP funding. *The following list is not exhaustive, but applicants should coordinate with VEDP staff prior to applying for funding for uses not listed here.* VBRSP Review Committee and Site Investment Committee has full discretion to limit funding of specific items to avoid potential uses and/or expenditures that would not create sufficient return on investment. Please note VBRSP funding is not for active site selection project pursuits.

While an applicant may apply for funding during a site selection project, if an investor ultimately selects the site prior to a program funding decision, the project and funding request will be ineligible for VBRSP funding. VEDP has other forms of assistance to support active investor attraction.

If the investor/company selects the site after the announcement is made the funding is still available to complete the awarded project.

The funding is given on a reimbursement basis, but the reimbursement must be made for eligible uses completed *after* the award announcement.

At the VBRSP Review Committee and the Site Investment Committee's discretion, up to \$50,000 of unmatched dollars may be awarded for investment and business attraction expenses at a site. A priority will be given to sites that are at market-ready stage and as a last additional item of a larger grant scope. An agreed upon scope of work will be required between the grantee and VEDP. VEDP will provide a suggested template scope of work that the grantee should bid out to a qualified consulting team or firm.

Eligible Funding Uses	Example Activities
Engineering Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Preliminary/final site engineering and design</li><li>▪ Grading plan</li></ul>
Site Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Clearing</li><li>▪ Grading</li><li>▪ Pad Construction</li><li>▪ Mitigation</li><li>▪ Drainage</li></ul>
Due Diligence Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ American Land Title Association (ALTA) survey</li><li>▪ Phase I environmental site assessment</li><li>▪ Phase I archaeological or cultural resource study</li><li>▪ Topographic study</li><li>▪ Floodplain study</li><li>▪ Wetlands delineation/determination</li><li>▪ Geotechnical engineering</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Soil boring</li> <li>▪ Electrical resistivity tomography (ERT)</li> <li>▪ Mitigation study</li> <li>▪ Traffic impact study</li> <li>▪ Rail study</li> </ul>
Site Optioning/ Acquisition/Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Site / Land Purchase</li> <li>▪ Site Option</li> </ul>
Optical Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Marketing Signage</li> <li>▪ Landscaping</li> </ul>
Road Access <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construction/expansion/upgrade</li> <li>▪ Turn lanes</li> <li>▪ Stop lights, etc.</li> </ul>
Rail Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construction/expansion/upgrade</li> <li>▪ Crossings</li> <li>▪ Spurs</li> <li>▪ Switches, etc.</li> </ul>
Utility Extensions <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extend utilities on-site</li> </ul>
Utility Right-of-way/Easement Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secure right-of-way/easements</li> </ul>
Investment and Business Attraction Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LinkedIn</li> <li>▪ Email</li> <li>▪ Digital Campaign</li> <li>▪ Identifying target audience or markets</li> </ul>

Please note that VBRSP funding is ***not to be used as the primary source of funding if other targeted funding sources are available***. For example, if a site access road needs to be constructed, VDOT Economic Development Access Program (EDAP) funding is the first and main funding source. When another funding source is primary, VBRSP may fund elements of projects related to, but not covered or eligible under, the primary funding program.

<sup>1</sup>Road Access: There are other sources of funding for road construction. The applicant must have sought the use of those funds prior to applying for VBRSP funding and show concurrence from VDOT or the Public Works Department that the proposed changes are necessary.

Design, engineering and other soft costs related to road construction remain eligible when meeting a specific need of the site.

<sup>2</sup>Special Considerations for Utility Extensions:

- (i) Water Tank design and construction will require the pre-approval of VEDP prior to submitting an application. The applicant must show the water tank will be required at the site regardless of what type of company ends up at the site and that size would work for any targeted industry at the site. The applicant must also show that the tank is needed solely for the site and not for the system as a whole.
- (ii) Construction of a franchise utility asset (including deposits) will require the applicant provide matching funds of at least 80% in non-distressed locality, 70% in a distressed



locality, 60% in a double distressed locality and an agreement to a special or discounted rate that supports good faith effort towards economic development.

The franchise utility considerations do not apply for design, engineering, or other soft costs related to franchise utility extensions. However, the applicant must exhaust all other utility funding sources prior to requesting funding from VBRSP.

## **Article III. Program Awards**

### **Section III.1 Match Requirement**

As a condition to every VBRSP award, the applicant will be required to contribute matching funds toward site development costs, derived from public and/or private sources, and in either cash, or documented reasonable and necessary costs incurred in connection with the project. The percentage of matching funds required to the amount of the applicable VBRSP award shall be determined in accordance with the schedule set forth in [Section VI.3](#) to these Guidelines, based on the most recent distress level classification of the locality in which the subject site is located or the locality applying for the award as of the date the VBRSP Project Review Committee launches a new grant funding round. The required match must be invested by the award recipient with each reimbursement and be made in full by the Performance Date set forth in its Performance Agreement.

A match must be provided relative to guidelines in place at the time of application and may be cash or in kind. Expenditures for site acquisition (including right-of-way(s) and easements), due diligence, environmental assessments, and other “soft costs,” as well as master planning, infrastructure design and construction, offsite improvements, or similar “hard costs,” may be included as part of a match. Other site preparation activities (e.g., clearing and grading) may also be considered as matching funds. Other types of previous investments may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Privately held sites where no public option exists, but an agreement between the owner and the public entity exists, shall require the match be applied toward future investments and previous investment into the site will not be eligible for matching funds. See [Section VI.3](#) for the match amount required.

The cash portion of the required local match may be in the form of actual cash contributions from the applicant, cash donations, grants, or other sources of funding. Grant funds awarded from other programs disbursing state funds may not be used as matching funds. Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission grant funds are a separate entity and not considered a source of state general funds and may be applied as matching funds for VBRSP funding requests.

In-kind contributions will count towards the local match requirement, in the form of property (land) acquisition and services (personnel, project management and administrative expenses and related costs), provided that such in-kind contributions:

- (i) must be directly related to the scope of work for the project, as determined by the



- VBRSP Project Review Committee;
- (ii) must be assigned a reasonable fair market value acceptable to the VBRSP Project Review Committee; and
  - (iii) must be clearly evidenced with acceptable documentation.

Cash and in-kind contributions made within the five years prior to the time of the application will count directly toward the required local match, but investments made more than five years prior to the program year may not be considered.

**Project Budget and Matching Funds:** site development applications must include a budget outlining the sources and uses of funds being directed to the project, as well as any remaining gaps in funding beyond the requested VBRSP funds and matching funding. The budget must define the investments and specific activities that will be undertaken on each site to enhance its marketability and/or development potential by targeted users.

At the VBRSP Review Committee and the Site Investment Committee's discretion, up to \$50,000 of unmatched dollars may be awarded for investment and business attraction expenses at a site. A priority will be given to sites that are at market-ready stage and as a last additional item of a larger grant scope. An agreed upon scope of work will be required between the grantee and VEDP. VEDP will provide a suggested template scope of work that the grantee should bid out to a qualified consulting team or firm.

### **Section III.2 Award Determinations and Requirements**

All VBRSP awards will be made on such terms, conditions, and requirements as the VBRSP Site Investment Committee may determine in its sole discretion in each case, based on the facts and circumstances specific to the subject site. At the time the award is accepted, the recipient(s) must execute and deliver a Performance Agreement and any other legal documents and/or instruments the VBRSP Site Investment Committee requires, all in form and substance acceptable to the VBRSP Site Investment Committee.

Applicants may only apply for one award per site for each Fiscal Year. Applicants are encouraged to develop their site to the highest Tier Level possible, as quickly as possible, while ensuring a high return on investment.

Sites with regional or state-wide significance will receive special consideration. These applications should include justification for regional or state-wide impact and include letters of support from regional partners.

VBRSP awards will typically be made in the form of grants that need not be repaid so long as the recipient(s) complies with the terms and conditions of its Performance Agreement. Grant funding may be subject to claw back if the property's zoning is changed to be unsuited for commercial or industrial use; the property is sold for a use other than commercial or industrial; the property is

sold for an amount exceeding the agreed upon pricing; or the project is abandoned in a manner that is not conducive to site development.

Site development projects on privately-owned properties require a performance agreement between VEDP and the Locality or Regional Authority, as well as a performance agreement between the Locality or Regional Authority and the owner(s) of record of the land. Specifically, the agreement will grant access to the property for evaluation/study purposes, state the intended commercial or industrial use, and define the maximum per acre price the landowner will charge an interested buyer.

Shortly after notification of selection for award, the applicant will receive a Performance Agreement for review and execution. The applicant is expected to execute the Performance Agreement within 30 days of receipt. If a Performance Agreement is not signed within 90 days of receipt, VEDP reserves the right to return the award to the VBRSP Fund. An applicant whose award is returned to the VBRSP Fund may reapply in future rounds of VBRSP.

### **Section III.3 Post-Award and Disbursements**

The process for disbursement of a Site Development Grant will depend upon the amount of the award and the project timeline. It is expected that a Site Development Grant will be disbursed in at least two installments according to milestones determined to be appropriate for the scope of work. VBRSP award proceeds may be used only for the necessary and reasonable costs included in the scope of work set forth in the Performance Agreement.

Requests for reimbursements can be made up to monthly by the awardee and will be determined within the performance agreement. The awardee must meet the minimum request requirements noted in the performance agreement to request a reimbursement. When requesting a reimbursement the awardee must include the following documentation: (1) annual Commonwealth W9, (2) original invoices, (3) proof of payment, (4) remittance form, (5) an interim or final report, (6) any documentation of the progress of the work such as photographs, documents produced, etc., (7) match documentation (as outlined in the scope of work), and (8) a letter requesting a reimbursement through the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program. If a reimbursement is not required, the awardee is expected to provide quarterly updates in lieu of a request for reimbursement.

### **Section III.4 Post-Award Uses**

Once an award has been made and reimbursements have begun the site will be subject to repayment based on final use at the site. If the locality rezones the site or otherwise makes local land use actions such that the Site may not be used for an industrial or manufacturing purpose, or if the locality allows the site to be used for a sector other than a sector classified pursuant to the North American Industry Classification System as Codes 31-33 (but excluding 3122, 313, 315, 316, 321, 322, 323, and 324), 5132, 54, 55, or 56, the Grantee shall repay a portion of the Grant

proceeds as follows:

- Within one year of the Performance Date, 100% of the Grant;
- Within two years of the Performance Date, 90% of the Grant;
- Within three years of the Performance Date, 80% of the Grant;
- Within four years of the Performance Date, 70% of the Grant;
- Within five years of the Performance Date, 60% of the Grant;
- Within six years of the Performance Date, 50% of the Grant;
- Within seven years of the Performance Date, 40% of the Grant;
- Within eight years of the Performance Date, 30% of the Grant;
- Within nine years of the Performance Date, 20% of the Grant;
- Within 10 years of the Performance Date, 10% of the Grant.

If a sector outside of the specific sectors listed above is listed as a target sector during the VBRSP application period, then a highest and best use justification must be provided. The highest and best use case must show a clear creation of high-quality jobs in line with the application and a return on investment to the Commonwealth.

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## **Article IV. VBRSP Site Development Applications**

### **Section IV.1 Application Process**

An applicant must submit a Site Development Application for evaluation by the VBRSP Project Review Committee. Instructions for completing a Site Development Pre-Application and Application, are set forth in [Section VI.4](#) and [Section VI.5](#) attached to these Guidelines.

Process	Description	Approximate Window
1. Application Window Opens	An application may be requested by any eligible applicant. <b>A brief pre-application is required prior to being eligible to submit the full application via the VBRSP FileShare Site.</b>	
2. Pre-Application	Pre-Applications will be due to VEDP. Pre-applications will be screened for eligibility prior to sharing a full application with the applicant	30 days
3. Application Question Cut-off	All questions about the application must be submitted at least one week prior to the application due date to ensure an answer.	
4. Application Due Date	Applications must be submitted via the VBRSP FileShare Site, to be considered for funding.	30 days
5. Application Review and Virtual Site Tour	An application review and / or virtual site tour will be used for the Project Review Committee to learn more about the proposed project, business case, return on investment, and to ask any questions about the project. The call typically will be 15-20 minutes in length and will require the applicant to prepare a presentation.	Review: 25 days Virtual Site Tour: 25 days
6. Site Tour Selection	All applications will be reviewed by the VBRSP Project Review Committee. Projects will be compared to all projects considered for the funding.	15 days
7. Site Tours	Site tours are expected to be treated by applicants as a real site selection project. This tour will aid in determining funding recommendations.	15 days
8. Final Review and Award Offers	The VBRSP Review Committee will submit recommendations to the Site Investment Committee who will make final decisions. When an award is accepted, the recipient is required to enter into a performance agreement	25 days

## Section IV.2 Required Application Information

There is a standard site application form, which among other items, includes:

- (i) The business case explaining why the site is well positioned to compete for economic development projects, including community support, and regional assets;
- (ii) the proposed scope of work describing the complete nature of the work to be undertaken, and an estimated timeline
- (iii) a description of all activities, timeline, and estimate of the associated costs necessary to raise the Site's current Tier Level and to each applicable Tier Level up to and including Tier 5;
- (iv) a relevant third-party or subject matter expert estimate of the total costs associated with the scope of work;
- (v) a Sources and Uses of Funding document, including a detailed description and value of in-kind contributions being invested in the project;
- (vi) a Site Characterization Report from a licensed engineer or equivalent ("Site Development Professional") who has inspected the site confirming the site's current Tier Level and providing a roadmap for advancing the site to subsequent Tier Levels, ideally through Tier 5, including cost estimates and timeline. A sample report is available at <https://www.vedp.org/vbrsp>
- (vii) RFP documents related to application scope of work

## **Article V. Virginia Business Ready Expedited Permitting Program**

### **Section V.1      Program Background**

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority (“VEDP”) administers the Virginia Business Ready Expedited Permitting Program (the “EPP”) in accordance with [Section 2.2-2240.2:2](#) of the Code of Virginia to annually designate up to two eligible sites and four projects for participation in the EPP. The sites or projects will align with the goals outlined in the Governor's and VEDP's economic development plan. The program is effective January 1, 2025, until June 30, 2028.

The EPP has two components:

- (1) **Site Designation** up to two eligible sites chosen annually, and
- (2) **Project Designation** up to four eligible projects chosen annually.

The goal of the EPP is to demonstrate that the Commonwealth of Virginia will readily work with companies to reduce risks and expedite time to operation. The EPP was designed to create a mechanism for Virginia's agencies and departments to work together expeditiously to streamline permitting processes. The EPP strives to equitably distribute sites and projects chosen for the program geographically throughout the Commonwealth.

To accomplish this mission, VEDP was given the authority to designate the eligible sites and projects for this program and will designate or coordinate the overall permit reviews for a given project.

## Section V.2 Eligible Sites and Projects

- (1) “Eligible sites” means a site that meets the qualifications for a site development grant from VBRSP and was awarded a VBRSP grant. Refer to [Section II.2](#) for all definitions and requirements of the VBRSP program.
- (2) “Eligible project” means an economic development project involving significant capital investment and new job creation in the locality in which the project is located. A project should meet all of the following requirements to be eligible for consideration into the program, although a project that meets most but not all of the requirements and represents a significant economic development project for the Commonwealth may be considered at the discretion of VEDP. The project shall:
  - a. Be for a traded-sector company (requires the company directly or indirectly derives more than 50% of its revenue from out-of-state sources);
  - b. Be in a VEDP target sector;
  - c. Require multiple state permits;
  - d. Be located in a locality that has a defined expedited permitting process for local permits; and
  - e. Involve a company that pledges to create at least 500 jobs with an average wage at least 1.25 times the prevailing average wage of the locality in which the project is located and invest at least \$250 million in capital expenditures.

No more than 2 eligible sites *or* projects shall be designated within one locality annually.

## Section V.3 Application

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis from only a locality on behalf of their site or a project. Any locality wishing to participate in the EPP will only be considered after submitting a formal request to VEDP’s Vice President of Real Estate Solutions and Vice President of Business Investment with a resolution, by a local governing body, requesting consideration to the program. An example of the application can be seen in the appendix [Section VI.8](#) and [Section VI.9](#).

VEDP will make every reasonable effort to consider geographic equity when accepting a site or project into the EPP. No more than two sites or projects will be considered from a single locality in a given year. For the purposes of this program, a year is defined as a calendar year.

Once the application and resolution are submitted to VEDP, VEDP will convene a EPP Review Committee. The Review Committee will include representatives of VEDP’s Real Estate Solutions, Business Investment, and External Affairs divisions. The Review Committee will consider if the site or project meets the eligible requirements outlined in [section V.2](#), as well as due diligence regarding the company associated with the eligible project, and will make a recommendation to VEDP’s CEO. VEDP will have 30 days to make a determination and respond to the applicant locality.

If accepted into the program the locality and the company associated with the eligible project must sign a memorandum of understanding with VEDP setting forth that the company will commit to submitting complete and timely permit applications to Commonwealth agencies and localities and will expedite any additional information requested for such permit reviews.

## **Section V.4 Expedited Permitting Process**

Once a site or project is designated for participation in EPP, VEDP will complete a review process within 45 business days. The review process will allow VEDP and the applicant to review all permits needed at the site or for the project and provide guidance on steps that can be taken to expedite the permit application review. If a site or project requires permits from more than one agency, VEDP may designate a lead agency to coordinate the overall permitting review.

In accordance with its authorizing law, the EPP does not reduce or eliminate any legal requirements for public comment or input related to a requested permit. However, all required reviews by staff at Commonwealth agencies will be prioritized. The EPP is a mutual understanding between the applicant and the Commonwealth that any state, local, or independent agency within the Commonwealth *and* the applicant will review all permits in an expedited manner. The EPP requires the commitment from both parties to work effectively.

The EPP commits any complete permit application request for a designated site or project within 180 days. The applicant may agree to a longer timeframe with a formal memorandum of understanding between the government agency and the applicant.

A government agency has 60 days from receipt of application to notify the applicant that additional information is required to take an action.

The applicant commits to responding to the agency or other entity with the required documentation within 45 days.

Review and approve of federally required permits does not fall within the EPP jurisdiction and therefore is not bound to the 180-day timeline. Any Commonwealth or local agency that cannot make the necessary approvals in the timeframe required by the EPP due to action by another governmental entity over which it does not exercise control will extend the 180-day timeline by the number of days during which a decision is pending.

## **Section V.5 Non-compliance**

If an applicant does not provide additional information within 135 days of the request by the government agency, the applicant will be considered non-compliant and will be removed from the EPP.

Once a project or site has been removed from the program for non-compliance, they cannot reapply to be considered for a full calendar year.

If a project or site is removed for non-compliance, VEDP may consider a replacement project or site, as applicable, for the EPP.

## **Section V.6 Reporting**

That the Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority shall report annually by December 1 to the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations and the House Committee on Appropriations on the progress of the Virginia Business Ready Expedited Permitting Program (the Program) established pursuant to this act for the duration of the Program.

## **Appendix**

### **Section VI.1: Site Characterization Tier Levels**

The following Site Characterization Tier Levels describe the current level of development at a site:

**Tier 1:** *Site is under (a) public ownership, (b) public/private ownership, or (c) private ownership, and of which such owner(s) are agreeable to marketing the site for economic development purposes and allowing access to the property for site assessment and marketing purposes. The site has no established sales price, has minimal or no infrastructure, and has been subject to minimal or no due diligence.*

**Tier 2:** *Site is under (a) public ownership, (b) public/private ownership, or (c) private ownership with an option agreement or other documentation of a commitment by the private owner(s) to a competitive sales price; permit access to the site for site assessment, construction, and marketing; and market the site for industrial or commercial economic development purposes. Comprehensive Plan reflects that the site is intended for industrial or commercial development land use, but site is not zoned as such and a rezoning hearing needs to be scheduled. Preliminary evaluation is complete to confirm site has minimal or no infrastructure and/or minimal or no due diligence in place.*

**Tier 3:** *Site is zoned for industrial or commercial development land use. Site could have minimal or no infrastructure in place. Due diligence is complete including, but not limited to, a waters of the US (wetlands and streams) delineation with US Army Corps of Engineers approval within the last five years (i.e. a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination or Approved Jurisdictional Determination letter), geotechnical borings and preliminary evaluation (i.e. Preliminary Geotechnical Report), boundary survey with easements and encumbrances identified (ALTA preferred), one-foot topographic survey completed for the purposes of design or real property improvements signed and sealed by a duly licensed professional in the Commonwealth of Virginia, a current cultural resources review, a current threatened and endangered species review, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment within the last five years and, if necessary, a floodplain study or geological / karst evaluation. Master planning and preliminary engineering work is complete with associated reports and estimated costs and timelines for infrastructure development quantified.*

**Tier 4:** *Site is positioned to support development such that building construction can take place in 12-18 months or less, with all infrastructure improvements in place, or plans for necessary infrastructure improvements completed and approved and deemed deliverable within 12-18 months by a licensed Professional Engineer in the Commonwealth of Virginia. All infrastructure permit issues are identified and quantified.*

**Tier 5:** *Site is considered “shovel ready” with all site permits in place or identified such that building construction can begin as soon as necessary land disturbance permits can be obtained by prospective industry.*

## Section VI.2: Eligible Site Localities

**As of January 2026, the following GOVA Region 1 and 2 communities may submit sites of 50 contiguous acres:**

Alleghany	Campbell	Giles	Russell
Amherst	Carroll	Grayson	Scott
Appomattox	City of Roanoke	Lee	Smyth
Bedford	Craig	Lynchburg	Tazewell
Bland	Dickenson	Montgomery	Washington
Botetourt	Floyd	Pulaski	Wise
Buchanan	Franklin	Roanoke	Wythe

\*Note GOVA region 1 and 2 communities that are 35 square miles or less are listed below.

**As of January 2026, the following communities may submit sites of 25 contiguous acres:**

Alexandria	City of Fairfax	Lexington	Portsmouth
Arlington	Falls Church	Manassas	Radford
Bristol	Franklin – City	Manassas Park	Salem
Buena Vista	Fredericksburg	Martinsville	Staunton
Charlottesville	Galax	Norton	Waynesboro
Colonial Heights	Harrisonburg	Petersburg	Williamsburg
Covington	Hopewell	Poquoson	Winchester
Emporia			

### Section VI.3: Required Match

<b><u>Minimum Required Local Match</u></b>	<b>Locality Distress-Level</b>	<b>Distress-Level Definitions</b>	<b>Ex. Project total cost = \$1M <u>Minimum Required Match</u></b>
50% - Public 65% - Private	Not Distressed	Site is located in locality with <b><u>both</u></b> : (i) unemployment rate <b><u>and</u></b> (ii) poverty rate are <b><u>below</u></b> the corresponding statewide averages as of the initiation of a grant round.	Public: Local Funds = \$500,000 State Funds = \$500,000  Private: Private Funds = \$650,000 State Funds = \$350,000
33% - Public 60% - Private	Distressed	Site is located in locality with <b><u>either</u></b> : (i) unemployment rate <b><u>or</u></b> (ii) poverty rate are <b><u>above</u></b> the corresponding statewide averages as of the initiation of a grant round.	Public: Local Funds = \$330,000 State Funds = \$670,000  Private: Private Funds = \$600,000 State Funds = \$400,000
25% - Public 55% - Private	Double Distressed	Site is located in locality with <b><u>both</u></b> : (i) unemployment rate <b><u>and</u></b> (ii) poverty rate are <b><u>above</u></b> the corresponding statewide averages as of the initiation of a grant round.	Public: Local Funds = \$250,000 State Funds = \$750,000  Private: Private Funds = \$550,000 State Funds = \$450,000

\*Subject to change at the start of the round

**As of January 2026, the following communities were categorized as double distressed:**

Accomack	Dickenson	Lexington	Prince Edward
Alleghany	Dinwiddie	Lunenburg	Pulaski
Amherst	Emporia	Lynchburg	Radford
Appomattox	Essex	Martinsville	Richmond County
Bland	Franklin County	Mecklenburg	City of Richmond
Bristol	City of Franklin	Montgomery	City of Roanoke
Brunswick	Fredericksburg	Newport News	Russell
Buchanan	Galax	Norfolk	Scott
Buckingham	Giles	Northampton	Smyth
Buena Vista	Grayson	Northumberland	Suffolk
Campbell	Greensville	Norton	Sussex
Carroll	Halifax	Nottoway	Tazewell
Charles City	Hampton	Page	Washington
Charlotte	Harrisonburg	Patrick	Westmoreland
Colonial Heights	Henry	Petersburg	Williamsburg
Covington	Hopewell	Pittsylvania	Wise
Craig	Lancaster	Portsmouth	Wythe
Danville	Lee		

**As of January 2026, the following communities were categorized as distressed:**

Amelia	Floyd	Middlesex	Southampton
Bath	Highland	Nelson	Staunton
Bedford	King and Queen	Prince George	Surry
Caroline	Louisa	Rockbridge	Waynesboro
Charlottesville	Manassas	Salem	Winchester
Cumberland	Mathews		

**As of January 2026, the following communities were categorized as not distressed:**

Albemarle	Falls Church	James City	Prince William
Alexandria	Fauquier	King George	Rappahannock
Arlington	Fluvanna	King William	Roanoke County
Augusta	Frederick	Loudoun	Rockingham
Botetourt	Gloucester	Madison	Shenandoah
Chesapeake	Goochland	Manassas Park	Spotsylvania
Chesterfield	Greene	New Kent	Stafford
Clarke	Hanover	Orange	Virginia Beach
Culpeper	Henrico	Poquoson	Warren
City of Fairfax	Isle of Wight	Powhatan	York
Fairfax County			

## Section VI.4: VBRSP Site Development Application Overview

Carefully review the VBRSP Site Development Guidelines and these application requirements before completing and submitting an application. All applicants must complete a Pre-Application and email it to [sites@vedp.org](mailto:sites@vedp.org). Once the pre-application has been completed, it will be reviewed, and, if approved, the applicant will be emailed the full application and a link to a FileShare folder they will use to upload their completed materials. The application will be an Adobe PDF file. Once complete, the application and any attachments should be saved to the folder on the FileShare platform.

*Use the Provided Format:* Applicants must submit their application information in the Adobe PDF file that is sent by the VBRSP staff.

In addition to the Application Excel file, there are elements that must be provided to support your application:

- Site Characterization Report
- Summary of changes since characterization report was completed
- Detailed scope of work and cost estimates (ideally from engineer)
- Project timeline
- Detailed budget - sources and uses
- Prior Grant Funding
- Marketing Plan
- Letters of Support
  - Regional partners, utilities, state agencies as needed

***All applications must be uploaded to the assigned FileShare folder no later than 5pm on the due date. Only timely filed and complete applications will be considered.***

Submit questions to:

VBRSP Project Review Committee  
Virginia Economic Development Partnership (804) 545-5786  
[sites@vedp.org](mailto:sites@vedp.org)

## Section VI.5: Sample VBRSP Development Grant Pre-Application

**Instructions.** All applicants must complete a pre-application and email it to [sites@vedp.org](mailto:sites@vedp.org). Once the pre-application has been completed, it will be reviewed, and, if approved, the applicant will be emailed the full application and a link to a FileShare platform they will use to upload their completed materials.

### Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Development Grant Pre-Application Form

By submitting this pre-application form, the potential applicant acknowledges and understands this form is to determine eligibility for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program ("VBRSP"). The submission of this pre-application form does not guarantee approval to submit an application for the proposed project.

#### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Organization:

Applicant Contact:

Title:

Applicant Mailing Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

#### SITE INFORMATION

iVS/VirginiaScan Property ID:

Site Name:

Site Address:

Locality:

GO Virginia Region:

Current Site Ownership: ☐ Public ☐ Public-Option ☐ Private – w/ marketing option ☐ Private – w/o marketing option

Site Zoned Appropriately for Commercial/ Industrial Use: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Contiguous Developable Acreage:

Current VBRSP Tier Level: ☐ Unknown ☐ T1 ☐ T2 ☐ T3 ☐ T4 ☐ T5

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Briefly describe the project(s) for which you anticipate applying for VBRSP Funding.

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## **PROJECT FUNDING**

**Estimated Total Project Cost:**

**Basis for Total Project Cost Estimate:** ☐ Professional Estimate ☐ Past Project Experience ☐ Unsupported Estimate

**Requested Program Funding:**

**Estimated Total Matching Funds:**

**Source(s) of Matching Funds:**

**Community Distress Level:** ☐ Distressed ☐ Double Distressed ☐ Not Distressed

**Estimated Total Cost to Advance Site Through Tier 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

(if total cost estimate not available through tier 5, state the highest tier level and estimated cost)

## Section VI.6: VBRSP Sources and Uses of Funding Template



## VBRSP 2023 - Project Sources and Uses

Applicant Organization	
Distressed Community	
Match Requirement	

[illegible]

**Example:**

Design



## Section VI.7: VBRSP Interim Report

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

<b>Project</b>	
<b>Grantee</b>	
<b>Performance Date</b>	

### SUMMARY OF SCOPE OF WORK

- 1) **Provide a brief description of the current stage of project and any completed work with the BRSP funds or matching funds to date.**
- 2) **Please include a percentage of the project completed to date.**
- 3) **What are the immediately planned works?**
- 4) **Has the site been successfully marketed to a new economic development prospect and generated any additional private investment and job creation?**

## **Section VI.8: Application for Consideration into EPP for a Site**

Any locality wishing to participate in the EPP will only be considered after submitting a formal request to VEDP's Vice President of Real Estate Solutions and Vice President of Business Investment with a resolution, by a local governing body, requesting consideration to the program. This will include an email with the governing body's resolution attached. An example of the email is below:

To: VP of Real Estate Solutions and VP of Business Investment

To whom it may concern –

Henrico County wishes to be considered for the Expedited Permitting Program. We wish to submit the Anthony Romanello Site for consideration. Please find attached the resolution by the Board of Supervisors requesting acceptance into the program.

The site requires permitting from DEQ for a pad site and coordination with VDOT on an entrance road.

If you have any additional questions, please reach out to us at 123-4567.

Thank you,  
Jane Doe

Resolution:

The Board of Supervisors is requesting the Anthony Romanello Site at 123 Dreamers Lane in Henrico County be considered as a site for the Expedited Permitting Program under the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program. It meets the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Code of Virginia and the Expedited Permitting Program Guidelines.

Once accepted into the program, the County will commit to working expeditiously with agencies of the Commonwealth to permit the site for economic development uses.

## **Section VI.9: Application for Consideration into EPP for a Project**

Any locality wishing to participate in the EPP will only be considered after submitting a formal request to VEDP's Vice President of Real Estate Solutions and Vice President of Business Investment with a resolution, by a local governing body, requesting consideration to the program. This will include an email with the governing body's resolution attached. An example of the email is below:

To: VP of Real Estate Solutions and VP of Business Investment

To whom it may concern –



Henrico County wishes to be considered for the Expedited Permitting Program. We wish to submit the Wendy Project for consideration. Please find attached the resolution by the Board of Supervisors requesting acceptance into the program.

The site requires an individual permit for construction and air permit from DEQ. The project also requires coordination with VDOT for turn lanes off of Rt 250, Broad St. and a cultural resources review.

If you have any additional questions, please reach out to us at 123-4567.

Thank you,  
Jane Doe

Resolution:

The Board of Supervisors is requesting the Wendy Project in Henrico County be considered as a site for the Expedited Permitting Program under the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program. It meets the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Code of Virginia and the Expedited Permitting Program Guidelines. The project anticipates bringing over 500 jobs to the County and invest more than \$750,000,000 into a new facility.

Once accepted into the program, the County will commit to working expeditiously with agencies of the Commonwealth to permit the site for the Wendy Project.

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