



Fiscal Year 2026 Brownfield Remediation Program Frequently Asked Questions

Availability of Funding

- 1. Q: Can you apply for both this round and the one in the spring? In the second round can we get additional money for the same property?**

A: It is the intention of Brownfield program to make awards to compete projects.

- 2. Q: How is the lead entity for each County identified?**

A: A "Lead Entity" (aka an applicant) includes a county, township, municipal corporation, port authority, conservancy district, park district or other similar park authority, county land reutilization corporation, or organization for profit. There can be many lead entities (aka applicants) per county.

- 3. Q: For lead entity - how is it established who is allocated the designated \$1M?**

A: The \$1 million reserved funding is not allocated to a single lead entity; it is the total amount available for applicants within a county.

- 4. Q: Can a lead entity put in more than one application?**

A: Yes, a lead entity may submit different applications for different sites but given funding limitations of \$1 million to be awarded per county, they should prioritize accordingly.

- 5. Q: Can you explain the difference between the application window closing in December versus claiming the funds by June?**

A: Applications that are submitted within the application window in December will all be scored against each other. If the full \$1 million is claimed for each county, that county's funding will be exhausted. The counties that do not have \$1 million in requests, will retain any remaining reserved funds until June 30, 2026.

- 6. Q: Do the counties get a set aside, or are they merit based?**

A: Each county must apply for the \$1 million in reserved funds. Development will utilize a merit-based selection process within each county to select the best application at the county level between those submitted.



7. Q: Do the assessment grants count towards the \$1M reserved funds for each county?

A: Yes, all grant types compete against each other.

8. Q: Can you please be more specific on the grant performance period? For example, if round 1 is awarded in January and the Grant Agreement is executed in February, does that mean the awardee must complete the project and be reimbursed by February 2026?

A: Grant agreements will expire one year after announcement date.

Clean Hands Affidavit

9. Q: You expressed that the applicant must have clean hands. What if the applicant is not the owner of the site? Is the Clean Hands Affidavit required for assessment only grants?

A: Per the guidelines, the owner of the site and/or applicant must provide a signed clean hands affidavit for all projects.

10. Q: If asbestos was used in a building as part of previous standard construction practices, how does that affect "clean hands" for an entity who owns the building?

A: This can be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

11. Q: If a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) is required that details cost estimates, is it still necessary to provide separate cost estimates from a contractor, e.g. a remediation contractor, demolition contractor, etc.?

A: A RAP is sufficient if it contains all cost estimates.

12. Q: If you are applying for an asbestos abatement cleanup only, will a cost estimate showing all ACM to be removed suffice for a RAP? The estimate is from a certified professional.

A: Yes, this is sufficient if the scope of work/remedial plan is clear.



Site Assessments

13. Q: If phase I environmental site assessments and asbestos surveys have recently been completed for the site, does the lead entity first have to apply for assessment funding?

A: In order to be eligible for a cleanup award, the project site must be fully assessed.

14. Q: If contamination of a property is highly likely, can an applicant ask for funding for Phase I and Phase II in the same request?

A: Yes, a VAP Phase I and a Phase II can be applied for in the same request under the assessment application.

15. Q: Please define a "recent" environmental report.

A: Assessments must be recent and reliable. If there has been any change to the site since the last environmental assessments were completed, new environmental assessments must be attained and provided to Development. Below are several examples that would warrant the need for a new assessment:

- Change in use of the site
- Updated cleanup standard requirements
- Significant amount of time between applying for the award and the assessment complete.
- The transport characteristics of the contaminants identified previously on the site.

Property Access

16. Q: Is it necessary to have a purchase agreement or own the property versus an Option to Purchase?

A: Access must be established by the time of application. Per the guidelines, property transfer must occur within 60 days of grant award. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of grant award.

Application Process

17. Q: Are applications submitted in early 2025 still valid or do they need resubmitted?

A: Previously submitted and unfunded projects may be eligible but must be resubmitted to be reviewed and scored.



18. Q: Will assessment only applications be eligible for award?

A: Applicants may submit an assessment only application.

19. Q: Do Lead Entities need OH|ID credentials?

A: Yes, an OHID will be required to access the application portal, submit reimbursement requests, and quarterly/final reports.

20. Q: While match isn't required but may be considered as part of the overall project merit, how do we record matching funds in the application?

A: All sources of funds should be identified in the application. Any costs funded from matching sources should be included in the PACE.

21. Q: How many projects can be submitted per application?

A: Each application should only include one project.

Merit-Based Evaluation Criteria:

22. Q: The rubric says that a local ordinance will get points awarded. Many communities are strict about the three-reading requirement for ordinances. Given time restraints, would a city council "resolution" be accepted? If a community takes a while to generate ordinances or resolutions, is there value to a letter of support from the mayor or key department head?

A: All types of local support will show that projects are supported by local governments and communities. Some types of support show a greater level of support and have a different score on the rubric. Please reference the [scoring rubric](#) on the website. Additionally, all final award decisions are at the discretion of the Director.

23. Q: If a local government receives requests for letters of support from both public and private Lead Entities, can they indicate their priority preference, and will that priority preference be taken into account in ODOD's scoring?

A: A local government may indicate their priority preference. Be sure to thoroughly demonstrate local support of the proposed project outlined in the scoring rubric to receive maximum point value.



24. Q: If a Lead Entity Submits multiple applications what is priority for \$1M? Is it scoring or can they set priority?

A: All applications will be reviewed on a merit-based evaluation criteria.

25. Q: Can matching funds be from other government agencies?

A: Yes, matching funds can come from other government agencies. Acceptable sources of match funds may include local government, state government, federal government, and for-profit or nonprofit entities. Costs allocated to matching funds must be associated with eligible activities outlined in the guidelines.

26. Q: Please provide examples of scenarios where "bonus points" are awarded.

A: Refer to [scoring rubric](#) for information on evaluation criteria.

27. Q: Is the merit-based scoring system applied to select projects within each county? Is that just on the ODOD level or is the county also involved in that decision?

A: The [merit-based scoring system](#) is applied to all submitted applications. All applications received within a county will be competing for the \$1 million in reserved funds for that county. Funding decisions are made by Development.

28. Q: Will cleanup applications be evaluated more favorably than assessment applications?

A: The same scoring rubric applies to all applications.

Cost Eligibility

29. Q: For assessment applications, will demolition necessary to conduct assessment be an eligible expense?

A: Generally, yes. The applicant would need to demonstrate the need for demolition to access the contamination, and Development will review on a case-by-case basis.

30. Q: Can you talk any more about using these funds for acquisition and the 10% max?

A: If \$1 million in total was requested by the project, no more than 10% or \$100,000 could go towards acquisition. The acquisition amount also must not exceed the county auditor's property value.



31. Q: For asbestos-only remediation projects, is interior demolition an eligible cost, for existing buildings with redevelopment planned within the structure?

A: Interior remediation and interior demolition would be an eligible cost under the Brownfield Remediation Program.

32. Q: For an assessment application, are conducting a regulated materials survey as well as drafting a remedial action plan and specifications considered eligible costs?

A: Yes, those would be eligible assessment expenses.

BUSTR

33. Q: How are you handling BUSTR UST Closures (i.e. which type of grant can be applied for)? If USTs need to be removed/closed, then BUSTR Tier I/II Assessments will not have been completed yet as they come after the closure of USTs.

A: If the site has a BUSTR approved RAP, then it may be appropriate to apply under the cleanup grant type. Projects that have begun assessment but have not yet had their RAP approved by BUSTR should apply under the assessment grant type.

34. Q: Will a Class C BUSTR site be able to remove USTs, piping, and dispensers with an assessment grant?

A: Yes, as long as the need is demonstrated.

35. Q: Would an existing operating gas station that is being closed soon and redeveloped into housing be eligible?

A: The site must meet the definition of a brownfield in order to be eligible. A "brownfield" is defined as an abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial, commercial, or institutional property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by known or potential releases of hazardous substances or petroleum. Keep in mind, entities that caused or contributed to the contamination of the property cannot be an applicant or eligible partner.



Priority Investment Areas

36. Q: On the priority investment area webpage, it says that brownfield remediation grants can be used to develop a remediation or reuse plan. Is that the case or does the remediation plan need to be included in the application?

A: HB96 identified specific eligible activities for priority investment areas that have obtained the priority investment area designation. Without that designation at time of application the activities available for priority investment area will not be considered. All brownfield applications will be scored and awarded based on the merit-based categories.

37. Q: What is the benefit of a project being part of a "Priority Investment Area"?

A: Please see [Brownfield and Coal Mine Priority Investment Area | Development](#) for additional details.

Prevailing Wage

38. Q: Can you please clarify the prevailing wage requirements? If prevailing wages are required, are they required only for work covered by the brownfields grant award or for the entire development project?

A: Development does not make Prevailing Wage determinations. Applicants must comply with the provisions of ORC Sections 411.03 to 4115.16 as applicable with respect to the payment of state prevailing wages for all mechanics and laborers employed in construction work financed with grant funds. For questions on Ohio's Prevailing Wage Law, applicants must consult the Department of [Commerce's Bureau of Wage and Hour Administration](#) to receive a determination.