

For Immediate Release: February 27, 2019

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Governor Northam Announces \$1.4 Million in Grants to Support Restoration of Brownfield Sites

Eight Virginia communities to receive site remediation funding from Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced approximately \$1.4 million in Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund (VBAF) Site Remediation Grants for eight localities in the Commonwealth, including Amherst, Pittsylvania, and Russell Counties; the Cities of Charlottesville and Staunton; and the Towns of Bedford, Big Stone Gap, and Vinton. VBAF was established to provide either grants or loans to local governments to promote the restoration and redevelopment of brownfield sites and to address environmental problems or obstacles to reuse in an effort to effectively market to new economic development prospects. VBAF is a partnership program between the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

“Growing the Commonwealth’s inventory of business-ready sites positions Virginia to attract more prospective companies and successfully compete for economic development projects,” **said Governor Northam**. “This program has resulted in significant investment and job creation and we look forward to partnering with these eight Virginia localities to promote their restored sites. VBAF remains a key component of our efforts to ensure that every part of the Commonwealth is able to participate in Virginia’s economic growth.”

The General Assembly allotted funds for Fiscal Year 2019 to be used for Site Remediation Grants in amounts of up to \$500,000. The Site Remediation Grants will cover efforts that include: remediation of a contaminated property to remove hazardous substances and wastes, the demolition and removal of existing structures, and other site work necessary to make a site or property usable for new economic development. In addition to Site Remediation Grants, Site Assessment Grants are available to communities for assistance with environmental and cultural resource site assessments and development of remediation and reuse plans.

“Maintaining Virginia’s position as a top state for business requires an adequate supply of shovel-ready sites and buildings that can accommodate the growth of new and expanding companies,” **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. “VBAF acts as a catalyst

for the redevelopment of brownfield sites across Virginia, and has nearly doubled the number of localities receiving grants to revitalize local assets. We thank all eight grantees for their commitment to economic development in the Commonwealth, and congratulate VEDP and DEQ on the continued success of the VBAF program.”

“Redeveloping brownfield areas saves greenspace, addresses environmental concerns, makes good use of existing sites, and has a lasting, positive impact on Virginia’s communities,” **said Secretary of Natural Resources Matthew J. Strickler.** “These initiatives are an important driver for the local economy, as they help attract new businesses and residents.”

VBAF has awarded over \$8 million in grants to restore brownfield sites since its inception in 2011. The VBAF program is targeted towards projects or phases of work associated with the restoration and redevelopment of brownfield sites that, by their completion, will generate additional private investment and job creation in the immediate future. Grants were awarded to localities meeting at least one of the following priorities:

- Use or reuse of existing infrastructure;
- Limited ability to draw on other funding sources;
- Potential for redevelopment and reuse of the site;
- Economic benefits; and
- Environmental benefits.

Virginia Brownfield Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund Awards

Locality	VBAF Award
Amherst County	\$295,000
Town of Bedford	\$220,000
Town of Big Stone Gap	\$44,398
City of Charlottesville	\$62,290
Pittsylvania County	\$99,800
Russell County	\$215,000

City of Staunton	\$431,200
Town of Vinton	\$39,000

For more information on the Virginia Brownfield Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund program, visit www.vedp.org/brownfields.