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## **Raimondo Admin. names first round of site readiness awards**

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Providence, RI Rhode Island Commerce secretary Stefan Pryor named the first round of awards from the Raimondo Administration's Site Readiness Program. Created in the governor's FY2020 budget with the support of the General Assembly, the Site Readiness program partners Rhode Island Commerce with municipalities, companies, or developers to catalyze developments throughout Rhode Island and to improve municipal development process. The Site Readiness awards allocate over \$800,000 across eleven municipalities impacting over 300 acres of potential development.

"I'm thrilled to announce the first round of our site readiness awards," said governor Gina Raimondo. "These projects will spur economic growth and make nearly 300 acres of land across our state ready for potential development."

"We are very pleased that, across our state, eleven cities and towns will soon be unlocking economic activity through the governor's new site readiness program," said Pryor. "With a series of modest but important investments, this initiative is helping to prepare sites for a range of development -- from industrial to residential to wind energy-related projects. We thank governor Raimondo for her leadership and the General Assembly for their support."

The Rhode Island Commerce Corp. received 22 applications requesting a total of \$4.4 million in site readiness assistance. After a deliberative review process, fifteen projects have been chosen for funding. The awards announced today take into account the readiness of the project to proceed, the potential catalytic impact of the project, and the extent the project involves additional, private investments or matched funds.

These include:

1. Blount Boats in Warren (up to \$75,000): The grant funding will be used to support master planning for developing 6 acres along the Warren River. Once complete, the development of this land will allow the facility to increase capacity and allow the shipyard to service Crew Transfer Vessels for the Atlantic windfarms, potentially supporting the doubling of the company's workforce from 50 to 100 employees.
2. Brookwood Finishing in Richmond (up to \$125,000): This grant funding will fund feasibility and engineering studies for a proposed combined heat and power plant. The project will have several

positive impacts including more efficient use of fuel for the production of electrical and thermal power, reducing the carbon footprint of Brookwood Finishing's manufacturing operations, and reduced strain on the local power distribution grid.

3. City of Central Falls (up to \$30,000): The City of Central Falls will use this grant to help pay for the city's efforts in drafting and preparing a new Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. Central Falls current comprehensive plan expired in 2012. It's expected the plan will be complete by January 2021.

4. LEDVANCE – Osram Site in Central Falls (up to \$50,000): LEDVANCE, the owner of the Osram-Sylvania site in Central Falls, is requesting funding to support engineering analysis for the potential demolition of all or part of the former OSRAM manufacturing buildings located on Broad Street. The grant funding will be used to develop engineering plans, surveys, and risk assessments.

5. City of Central Falls (up to \$20,000): This \$20,000 will assist in unlocking a \$286,000 grant from the United States Economic Development Administration to support planning for redevelopment of the Osram-Sylvania / LEDVANCE site, which has been vacant since 2014.

6. Economic Development Foundation and the City of Woonsocket (up to \$48,500): This is a joint application by the City of Woonsocket and the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island. The grant funding will support site master planning and engineering studies needed to prepare Highland Park and 6.1 acres of land adjacent to Highland Park for development.

7. Town of Exeter (up to \$50,000): The proposed multi-phase project will investigate a potential 150-acre site at the intersection of routes 102 and 3 and prepare a zoning overlay district to streamline development. The grant funding will be used to hire a consultant to conduct GIS analysis and a high-level market study, as well as to draft a zoning overlay district.

8. Town of North Kingstown (up to \$15,000): The grant funding will be used to support town efforts to identify redevelopment sites and conduct an audit / review of the area's existing regulatory framework. This study will lead to the recommendation of new regulatory language and processes to expedite development.

9. Town of North Smithfield (up to \$100,000): The Town of Smithfield is looking to kickstart the redevelopment of Branch Village, an 80-acre industrial-business park site in North Smithfield. The grant funding will be used to procure professional services to begin the civil design and permitting effort for the town of Smithfield.

10. RI Waterfront Enterprises in East Providence (up to \$100,000): Rhode Island Waterfront Enterprises is planning a unique, mixed-use development site on approximately 40 acres on the South Quay in East Providence. The grant will be used to conduct the planning study to analyze the potential for South Quay as a general port facility and how it can achieve a permanent position with ProvPort and coastal Rhode Island in the constellation of port facilities.

11. Rubius Therapeutics in Smithfield (up to \$75,000): The grant funding will be used to enable further development of a preliminary masterplan study and support engineering studies of the site.
12. Town of Smithfield (up to \$100,000): The grant funding will be used to fund analysis and improvements related to the sewer and water system within the Town's designated growth center.
13. City of Westerly (up to \$5,000): The grant funding will be used in order to review and map out the process flow for both zoning permits and planning applications. This will help with the implementing of an e-permitting system for zoning and planning applications.
14. What Cheer Flower Farms in Providence (up to \$15,200): What Cheer Flower Farm purchased a 2.7-acre site in Olneyville and began remediating and developing it as headquarters for Rhode Island's first nonprofit flower farm and job training site. The grant funding will support architectural and structural engineering work as well as perform modest improvements to secure the site while under redevelopment.
15. Rhode Island Fast Ferry, Inc. in Quonset (up to \$30,000): Rhode Island Fast Ferry is pursuing an expansion of its offshore wind services in Quonset Point and down the East Coast. This grant funding will support a third of total permitting costs for the project. Permitting from the Coastal Resources Management Council, Department of Environmental Management, and Army Core of Engineers is required. Rhode Island Fast Ferry's Quonset Point Facility is ideally located to support the offshore wind industry; in order to support this industry growth, shoreside investment in Rhode Island Fast Ferry's terminal facility is needed.

#### About the Site Readiness Program

Created in the governor's FY2020 budget and passed by the General Assembly, the program partners Commerce with municipalities and/or developers to fund municipal technical assistance and site-specific planning and improvements.

Funding was available in two categories: site specific improvements and municipal assistance.

#### Site Specific Improvements

Funding was available to support the planned or future development of specific sites. The activities that were considered for funding included:

Site specific planning and pre-development activities including property surveys, master planning, engineering surveys, or environmental studies.

Site specific project improvements including activities that will support planned or future build out of significant sites including infrastructure improvements, land assembly activities, site clearing or demolition, and building improvements.

To be considered for site specific funding, urban projects needed to consist of a minimum of two acres or 100,000 s/f of existing or planned building space and suburban or rural projects should be a

minimum of 10 acres.

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