

## **NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

### **OneGeorgia Authority**

#### **Equity Program – Rural Site Development Initiative**

**May 8, 2025**

OneGeorgia Authority (hereinafter, “OneGeorgia” or the “Authority”) releases this Notice of Funding Availability (the “NOFA”) for the Rural Site Development Initiative. Funding will be made available to assist local communities with support to develop sites critical to economic development across Georgia.

The purpose of this NOFA is to outline available financial assistance, in the form of grants, for activities that result in developing industrial sites that meet the needs of companies that are locating to rural Georgia. In order to remain competitive in economic development, sites across Georgia must be continuously identified, assessed, and developed. This initiative will provide a small amount of state funding, matched at various levels depending on the community’s OneGeorgia eligibility determination, for a minimum of fifty (50) contiguous acre sites. Projects will be awarded funds on a competitive basis to sites that demonstrate an ability to address:

- Lack of available industrial sites for recruitment and retention of employment opportunities;
- The difficulty of satisfying project sites in communities or regions with high unemployment;  
or
- A community or regional commitment to expand and improve existing sites.

This initiative is intended to provide a flexible funding source to support any eligible activity that results in rural site development. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, site studies, grading of land, and essential community infrastructure specifically needed to support site development.

GRAD certified or GRAD select sites may request funding under the Site Improvement program.

For sites without current GRAD certification, applicants should seek Due Diligence funding and complete the GRAD certification process before requesting Site Development funding.

At such time that the community receives GRAD certification for a site, the property then becomes eligible to seek Site Improvement grant funding.

Grantees will be expected to demonstrate transformational change in rural site development. OneGeorgia funds are offered to support site development; therefore, resulting in the increase of available development ready sites in rural Georgia. Further a robust marketing strategy is required of the applicant to demonstrate local commitment to attract business and industry at an accelerated pace.

A copy of this NOFA, the Application package, and other related materials will be available on the Department of Community Affairs’ website at the link listed below: <https://dca.georgia.gov/financing-tools/infrastructure/onegeorgia-authority/equity-fund/rural-site-development-initiative>

## **A. FUNDS AVAILABLE**

The Amended Fiscal Year 2025 Budget includes twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) for this initiative. This funding will be awarded at regular semi-annual intervals through an ongoing, competitive grant cycle, subject to funding availability. The amount of funds available may be increased or decreased at the Authority's discretion.

## **B. GRANT FUNDING LIMITATIONS**

Studies for due diligence on site development are limited to no more than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000). Site Improvement grants are limited to no more than two million dollars (\$2,000,000) per application and development. The Authority reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to this NOFA. Applications for less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) will not be accepted; however, the Authority reserves the ability to waive minimum and maximum funding limits at its discretion. Only one application will be considered per applicant, per cycle. Should an applicant receive a Due Diligence award and achieve GRAD certification on said property, the applicant may pursue Site Improvement grant funding in any subsequent funding cycle. However, funding for a second location will not be considered by the Authority prior to an original funded site receiving GRAD certification (if not already achieved), all infrastructure installed within the industrial park, and marketing of such property being undertaken.

## **C. MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT**

Applications are expected to leverage other sources of funding – private debt or equity, philanthropic support, or other public funds. Applicants located in an OneGeorgia “Eligible” community, should generally contribute at least a ten percent (10%) match to the amount of grant funds requested. Applicants located in an OneGeorgia “Conditionally Eligible” community, should contribute at a minimum twenty five percent (25%) match to the amount of grant funds requested. Communities located in an OneGeorgia “Non-eligible” county are not allowed to apply or receive grant funds. Local public and private investment will factor in an application's overall competitiveness.

## **D. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Units of general-purpose local government (e.g., city, county, consolidated government), as well as local, regional, and state authorities, are eligible to apply. Prospective applicants should consult the Authority with questions about eligibility.

Additional eligibility requirements include the following:

- Applicants should notify Wylly Harrison (wharrison@georgia.org), Site Development Program Manager at the Georgia Department of Economic Development, to hold an initial meeting.
- Applicants may only submit applications for activities within OneGeorgia eligible and conditionally eligible counties. For purposes of this initiative, both eligible and conditionally eligible counties are considered eligible.
- Local government/authority applicants must be in compliance with the audit report and

grant certification form submission requirements contained in O.C.G.A. 36-81-7 and 86-81-8.1.

- Local government and authority applicants must be current and in compliance with all reporting, audit, and survey requirements, as required by statute.
- Prior recipients of OneGeorgia funding must resolve any outstanding audit and/or compliance monitoring findings or deficiencies prior to submitting an application. Sanctions associated with any other OneGeorgia grant will also apply to this initiative.

## **E. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

This initiative is intended to provide flexible funding to support the development of rural industrial sites. Any OneGeorgia eligible activity will be considered for funding, subject to the following overarching objectives.

- 1) Any infrastructure/construction costs that include, but are not limited to, the following activities are eligible to receive funding through this initiative: grading, clearing, grubbing, infrastructure development, road improvements, accel/decel lanes, engineering, purchase of adjacent or expansion property, easements, and due diligence studies.
- 2) Sites must be publicly controlled at the time of the application submission. Site must be a minimum of fifty (50) contiguous acres. If the site is not publicly owned, the development authority must hold an option to purchase extending for a period of no less than three (3) years in order for an application to be considered.
- 3) Applicants seeking Site Improvement Grants must be GRAD certified or GRAD select at the time of application.
- 4) Applicants seeking Due Diligence grant funding for a site must commit to applying for GRAD certification within one year. If a site is not GRAD certified, completion of due diligence activities and receiving GRAD certification are both prerequisites to the Authority considering the site for Site Development funding.
- 5) Sale or lease activities not compliant with the parameters set forth under this NOFA are subject to penalties that will be addressed in the award documentation. These include, but are not limited to, restrictions on the property that no portion of the OneGeorgia-improved property under this program be used for solar farm activities, data centers, or mini-storage facilities.
- 6) Developments must comply with state environmental and historic preservation requirements.

## **F. APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

- Applicants should notify Wylly Harrison (wharrison@georgia.org), Site Development Program Manager at the Georgia Department of Economic Development, to hold an initial meeting.
- A pre-application is due thirty (30) days prior to the full application deadline. The pre-

application will be provided by Wylly Harrison to eligible applicants. The pre-application should be submitted via email to [OGA@dca.ga.gov](mailto:OGA@dca.ga.gov).

- Each completed application will first be reviewed to reconfirm eligibility and determine completeness. Then, applications will be thoroughly vetted and competitively scored.
- The full application should include but is not limited to: a preliminary engineering report; and commitment letters for all local funding match.
- The Authority will consider recommended applications and make a final determination on any and all awards.

## **G. APPLICATION DEADLINES AND AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

For funding requests, applications must be submitted online. The link to access the application will be provided by program staff after staff determines eligibility. (Hard copy applications will not be accepted.)

Fiscal Year 2026 submission deadlines are as follows:

- October 10, 2025, for December/January award announcement
- April 10, 2026, for June/July award announcement

Successful applicants will receive written notice of award, including all necessary grant or loan documents, requirements, timelines, and other details.

## **H. TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION**

OneGeorgia funds must be expended within the timeframe specified in the grant/loan award documentation, which is generally two years from the date of the award. For purposes of the Authority, “completion” is defined as 1) all activities for which funds were received are complete, 2) all awarded funding has been expended, and 3) all award close-out procedures have been finalized.

## **I. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Authority is the administrator of the Rural Site Development Initiative. This initiative is subject to funding availability, and the Authority reserves its right to amend the initiative at any time. Use of funds is subject to all applicable state laws and regulations, as well as to the policies and requirements of the Department of Community Affairs and OneGeorgia Equity program.

For additional information, please contact Wylly Harrison, Site Development Program Manager at the Georgia Department of Economic Development, at [wharrison@georgia.org](mailto:wharrison@georgia.org).