



Council Agenda Item # 25-0853R

MEETING DATE: November 10, 2025

SUBJECT/TITLE: RESOLUTION # 25-0853R; Environmental Consulting Services-Brownfield Cleanup Oversight

SUBMITTED BY: Tricia Hobbs – Manager, Economic Development & DEDA

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: NA

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: Back in 2012 the City of Duluth received a \$650,000 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant that was utilized to establish a Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (BRLF). The City Council officially approved the BRLF program guidelines in January of 2017 (resolution 16-077-O), authorizing the city to manage the fund and use the grant money for loans for brownfield remediation.

February 2020- Council approved a resolution (20-0159R) authorizing the acceptance of a \$300,000 Brownfields Community-Wide Planning Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and authorized execution of the Cooperative Agreement.

October 2025- Council officially approves the acceptance of a one-million-dollar (\$1,000,000) Brownfield Revolving Loan Cleanup Fund (BRLF) Grant.

BACKGROUND: The City of Duluth has received multiple grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to support brownfield redevelopment efforts across the city, with a past focus on the St. Louis River Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

- **2012 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Grant:**

The City was awarded \$650,000 to establish a Revolving Loan Fund for cleanup of contaminated brownfield sites. These funds were available city-wide, with priority given to sites within the St. Louis River Corridor. The grant also supported administrative activities necessary to manage the fund. A one-year extension was requested and approved to allow additional time for implementation.

- **2019 Community-Wide Assessment Grant:**

Duluth received \$300,000 to conduct environmental assessments, cleanup planning, and community engagement activities for brownfield sites. Target areas included downtown Duluth, Lincoln Park, Irving/Fairmount, and the Western St. Louis River Corridor—expanding the geographic scope beyond the original focus area.

- **2022 Brownfield Revolving Loan Cleanup Fund (BRLF) Grant:**

The City was awarded \$1,000,000 to recapitalize the RLF and continue providing loans for brownfield cleanup. The grant also included funding to competitively procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to oversee environmental site activities, develop community involvement plans, and maintain administrative records for each remediated site.

Current Status:

Progress on the 2022 BRLF grant has been delayed due to internal staffing changes and turnover. As a result, no funds from the \$1,000,000 grant have been expended to date. The City's internal Brownfields team is



actively working to secure a QEP, as required by the Cooperative Agreement, to resume program activities and advance brownfield remediation efforts.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: Costs for the consultant will be covered using funds from the RLF.

OPTIONS: Approve. If Council votes no, the \$1,000,000.00 U.S. EPA grant will continue to sit without being utilized and would have to go back to the EPA.

NECESSARY ACTION: Approve resolution.

ATTACHMENTS: N/A