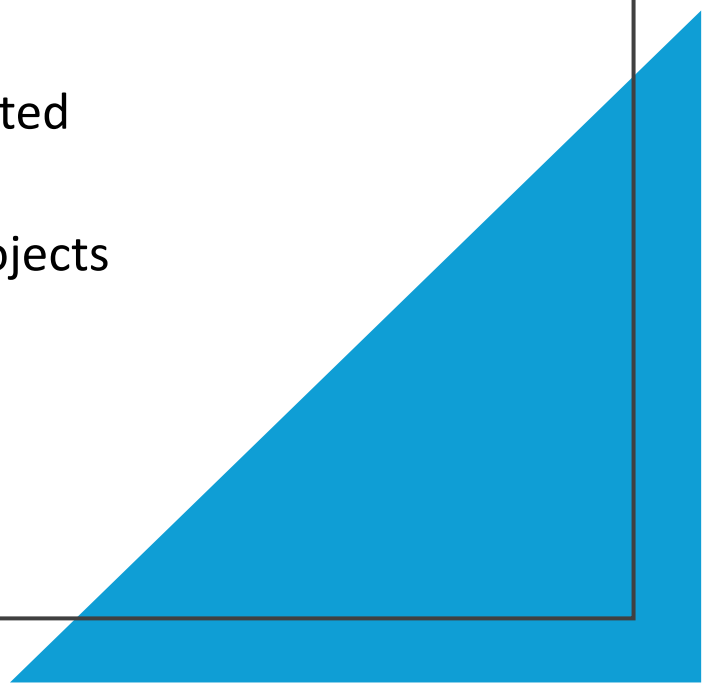


Topic Talk:
**Leveraging Earmarks to
Advance Brownfields
Development**

Ashley Badesch
Partner, Sustainable Strategies DC
CALRC 2025



What are earmarks?

- Congressional provisions that direct funds to local governments, nonprofits, and institutions.
 - “Community Project Funding” (in House) vs. “Congressionally Directed Projects” (in Senate)
 - Submit requests to your Members of Congress, who then select projects to submit to appropriations subcommittees
 - Every Member has a different timeline, process, and application
 - Represent ~1–2% of domestic spending.
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Why Earmarks Matter for Brownfields

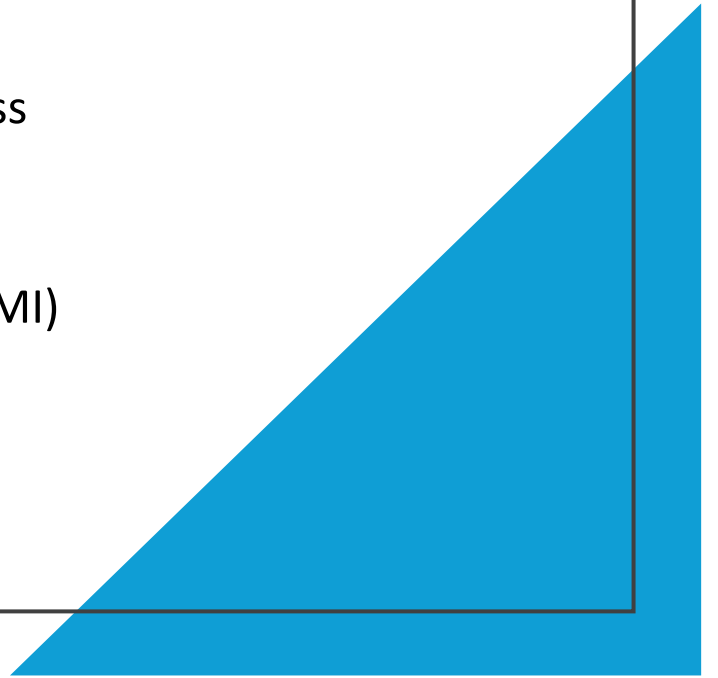
- Support cleanup and revitalization of contaminated sites.
- Fund infrastructure upgrades tied to redevelopment.
- Leverage EPA Brownfields competitive grants and other resources.
- Example brownfields earmark projects:
 - Brownfield cleanup tied to new housing and mixed-use redevelopment.
 - Infrastructure upgrades (water/sewer, roads) supporting site reuse.
 - Transit access improvements for redeveloped sites.
 - Community facilities built on former industrial land.

Relevant Earmark Accounts for Brownfields

- **THUD – Community Development Fund**
- **Interior & Environment EPA – State & Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)**
- **THUD DOT – Highway Infrastructure Projects**
- **THUD DOT – Transit Infrastructure Grants**
- **USDA – Rural Community Facilities (rural <20K population)**
- **SBA – Small Business Administration**
- **Homeland Security FEMA – Pre-Disaster Mitigation / BRIC**

THUD Economic Development Initiative

- **Range:** \$30,000 – \$30M (rarely > \$7M).
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$1.5M.
- **Eligible:** revitalization, community facilities, parks, arts/culture, business corridors.
- Brownfields cleanup & redevelopment explicitly eligible.
- Target low- and moderate-income areas or beneficiaries (below 80% AMI)
- Example project: \$\$ for utilities at affordable housing development on remediated brownfield property



Interior & Environment EPA – State & Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)

- **Range:** \$72,000 – \$23.6M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$2M.
- **Eligible:** water, sewer, stormwater projects.
- Projects must appear in state IUP.
- Requires 20% non-federal match.
- **Example project:** \$\$ to replace failing sewer mains and stormwater drains that allow runoff and possible contaminants to leach into soil and groundwater from brownfields site

THUD DOT - Highway Infrastructure Project Grants

- **Range:** \$54,000 – \$67M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$2.5M.
- Eligible: road upgrades, trails, access improvements.
- Projects must be in TIP/STIP.

THUD DOT – Transit Infrastructure Grants

- **Range:** \$92,000 – \$9.5M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$1.5M.
- Eligible: station upgrades, electric buses, rail expansions.
- Strong fit for brownfield-adjacent transit access.

SBA – Small Business Administration

- **Range:** \$69,000 – \$5M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$500K.
- **Eligible:** small business support tied to redevelopment (e.g., façade programs, business incubators).

FEMA – Pre-Disaster Mitigation / BRIC

- **Range:** \$33,000 – \$5.1M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$1.5M.
- **Eligible:** flood/hazard mitigation supporting site reuse.
- Requires 25% match + state emergency mgmt support.

USDA – Rural Community Facilities (rural <20K population)

- **Range:** \$17,000 – \$6.8M.
- **Recommended ask:** ~\$1M.
- **Eligible:** community centers, fire stations, rural facilities.
- Match required (25–85% depending on income/population).

COMPLETED

- August 2021
Appalachia Regional Commission Visitors and Heritage Center Feasibility Study Completed
- January 2023
Wheeling Ohio County Convention Visitors Bureau Acquires Former Wheeling Inn
- July 2023
Wheeling National Heritage Area Foundation Funds Tipping Point Contract
- July 2023
Senator Joe Manchin Awards \$5MM HUD EDI Grant
- November 2023
Site Technical Diligence, Engineering, and Design Team Selected - Desmone Architects
- February 2024
Governor Jim Justice Announces \$2MM AMLR Grant
- March 2024
Site Technical Diligence, Environmental Remediation and Technical Plan Completed
- May 2024
Environmental Remediation and Demolition Contract Awarded to RAZE by City of Wheeling
- June 2024
Mobilization of Crews on Site Begins
- July 2024
Environmental Remediation Officially Begins
- July 2024
Collaboration with WV Department of Tourism to Establish Visitors and Heritage Center Design Concepts
- October 2024
Community-Centered Designs of the Visitors and Heritage Center are Unveiled to the Public
- January 2025
Remediation and Demolition of the Former Wheeling Inn is Officially Completed.
- February 2025
TimeLooper Selected for Heritage Experience Design through RFP Process.

IN PROGRESS

- Geotechnical Testing - June 2025
Site testing is currently underway to assess soil conditions. This critical step will inform the foundation design by Desmone and their engineering team.
- Heritage Experience Concept Drawings - July 2025
Initial concept drawings for the Heritage Experience will be completed, offering a first glimpse into the future visitor experience.

NEXT STEPS

- AI-Powered Community Memory Wall - Sept. 2025
An interactive online platform will launch, allowing the public to explore Wheeling's history through shared community stories. This will be the first digital component of the Heritage Experience.
- Design Development Drawings - Sept. 2025
The full design development package will be finalized, building on the current schematic design to optimize quality and functionality of the Gateway Center.
- Construction Bid Process - November 2025
The project will enter the bidding phase, inviting contractors to participate in the construction process.
- Construction Start - Spring 2026
Groundbreaking is scheduled for Spring 2026, marking the beginning of construction on the Wheeling Gateway Center.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PHASE JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2025



Geotechnical on Site - June 18, 2025

The Gateway Center project team is excited to share that the development is efficiently moving through the design development drawing phase. During this time Desmone Architects and other technical teams are working to define project details, such as the foundation package.



Geotechnical on Site - June 18, 2025

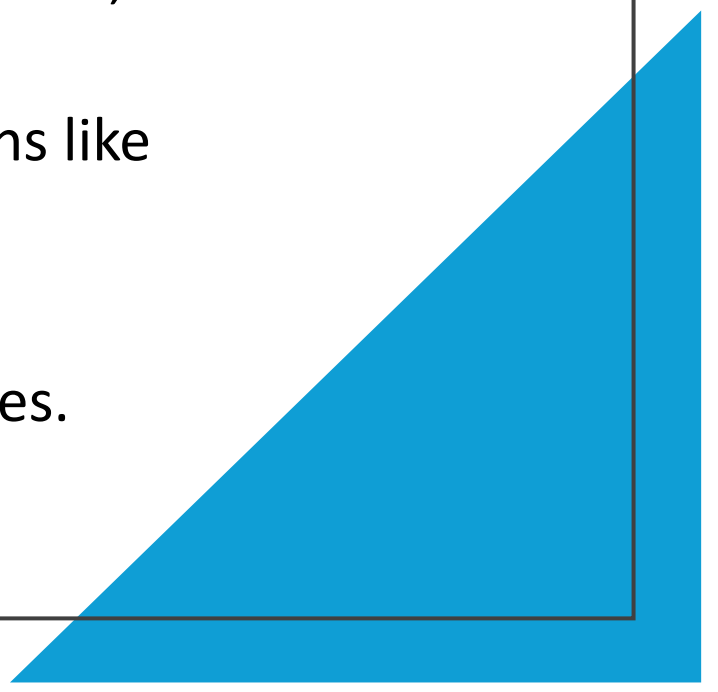
Geotechnical drilling teams have been on site throughout the week to assess the underlying soil conditions and inform an appropriate foundation design. This process involves core drilling at multiple locations across the site and along the Heritage Trail. The collected core samples are sent to a laboratory for analysis, which will result in a detailed report outlining the soil's characteristics and suitability for development.

Success Story Wheeling Gateway & Heritage Center

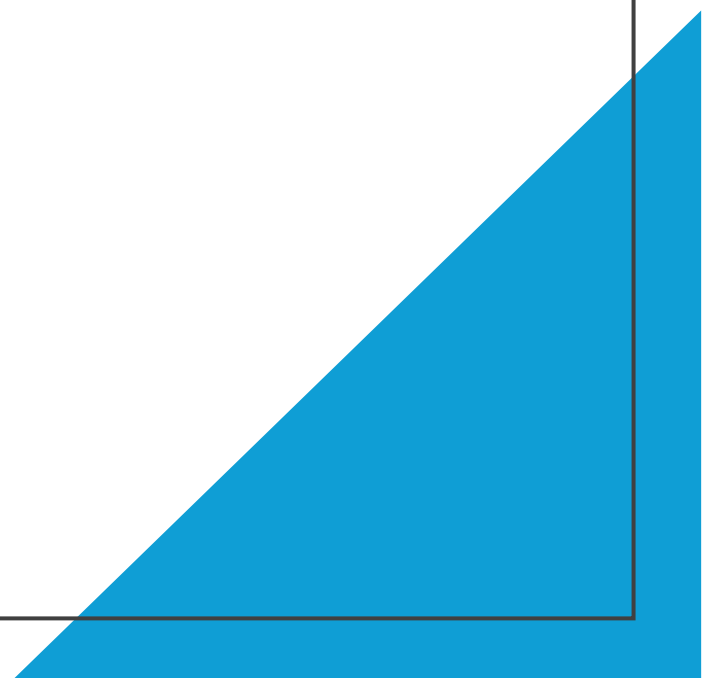
- The City of Wheeling, WV, won \$5 million FY24 HUD EDI for the Wheeling Gateway Center, a new visitors center that will host the CVB, a WV Tourism booth, and exhibits on Wheeling's history atop a former brownfield site.
- An additional \$2 million is in FY26 bill THUD Highway Infrastructure Project account to connect the Gateway Center to the 16-mile Wheeling Heritage Trail throughout their downtown and develop new interpretative signage to complement the planned exhibits in the Gateway Center.



Keys to a Successful Request

- Demonstrate broad **community support** (letters, resolutions, press).
 - Show **project readiness** (shovel-ready or included in plans like TIP/STIP or IUP).
 - Provide **matching funds** where required.
 - Align project with **Member priorities** and committee roles.
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Steps for Your Community

- Identify priority brownfield redevelopment projects.
 - Match projects to eligible earmark accounts.
 - Prepare project forms, briefing sheets, and a priority matrix.
 - Meet with House/Senate offices early (starting this fall/winter).
 - Be proactive about seeking information on deadlines in early 2026.
 - Gather letters of support and stakeholder endorsements.
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Key Take- Aways

- Earmarks offer a flexible, alternative funding path to competitive grants.
- Brownfields projects fit well under HUD, EPA, DOT, and other accounts.
- Start early: Congressional offices will set deadlines in March–April 2026.
- Strong local support and readiness will maximize success.