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**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Ohio Communities Awarded \$600,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds for Brownfield Redevelopment**

**Columbus, Ohio** – Three Ohio communities will each receive \$200,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to remove asbestos from historic buildings. The Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund grants have been approved for the City of Toledo's Madison Building, Midtown Cleveland, Inc.'s Agora Theater, and Youngstown State University's Garfield Building.

Last August, the State of Ohio received \$1.8 million in funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for brownfield revitalization efforts. Up to \$200,000 in funding is available to eligible nonprofit and local government entities for remediating asbestos in historic buildings, which contributes to the economic revitalization of communities, vibrant neighborhood centers, and the health and safety for occupants and visitors of these buildings.

Two of the approved projects are located within Ohio Hubs of Innovation and Opportunity: the Cleveland Health and Technology Corridor Hub and the Youngstown Entrepreneurial Hub of Advanced Materials Commercialization and Software Development. The Ohio Hubs, supported by the Ohio Department of Development, leverage a region's resources and investments to attract clusters of connected businesses, encourage new investments and an influx of talented workers, and help create new opportunities to grow jobs and develop Ohio's key industries.

"These investments are more than just the first step to redeveloping historic buildings, they are playing a vital role in growing and supporting our Ohio Hubs," said Lisa Patt-McDaniel, Director of the Ohio Department of Development. "By renovating and finding new uses for these facilities, we are ensuring that our Ohio Hubs and our communities will continue to attract future economic investments and build upon the successful business clusters unique to the region."

The Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund, administered by the Ohio Department of Development's Urban Development Division, offers below-market rate loans and sub-grants to assist with the remediation of a brownfield property to return it to a productive economic use in the community. Properties receiving assistance from the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund must have been contaminated by hazardous substances.

The **City of Toledo** will receive \$200,000 for asbestos remediation in the Madison Building, located at 607 Madison Avenue. The Madison building, also known as the Nasby Building, was one of the first skyscrapers west of the Allegheny Mountains when it was constructed in 1925. The City acquired the property through a tax foreclosure in June 2000. The landmark is located close to the newly constructed multipurpose arena in downtown Toledo, and the cleanup will allow the site to be redeveloped by potential investors.

**Midtown Cleveland, Inc.** will receive \$200,000 for asbestos remediation in the Agora Theater, located at 5000 Euclid Avenue. The property is within the Cleveland Health and Technology Corridor Hub and will be transformed into a center for the electronic arts, including space for performances, sound recording, video recording, a restaurant, a bar, and an art gallery. The Agora supports the neighborhood's master plan for redevelopment. The Agora Theater complex, built between 1913 and 1922, consists of five buildings and was once used for opera, vaudeville, and orchestra performances.

**Youngstown State University** will receive \$200,000 for asbestos remediation in the Garfield Building, located at 106 West Rayen Avenue. The property, built in 1921, is within the Youngstown Entrepreneurial Hub of Advanced Materials Commercialization and Software Development and was operated by AT&T as a switching station until it was gifted to the University in 1995. The University is seeking to renovate the building into a research facility for the Measurement of Advanced Materials Properties in Sustainable Energy. The proposed facility would advance the academic research capabilities of the University and serve as a landmark structure for the Ohio Hub.

Asbestos was incorporated into past building materials for its fire-retardant properties. It is now known to increase the risk of certain cancers and must be identified and removed by certified asbestos abatement professionals using specialized methods and equipment. Funding from this grant will be used to employ certified contractors and environmental specialists to safely abate the asbestos hazards.

Since 2007, roughly 63 acres of brownfield sites have been remediated using almost \$6 million in grants and loans from the Ohio Department of Development. At least 370 full-time jobs have been supported through the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund.

For more information about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund, please visit [www.recovery.ohio.gov](http://www.recovery.ohio.gov). For more information on the Ohio Hubs of Innovation and Opportunity, [click here](#).

*The **Urban Development Division** assists communities with place-based redevelopment, which creates wealth from personal, business, and community successes. The **Urban Development Division** works to identify the resources and financing necessary to enhance the economic viability of local communities.*

*Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of Development** works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.*

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