

# Environmental response fund

Cleaning up contaminated sites. Improving communities.

The Environmental Response Fund (ERF) supports the assessment and cleanup of contaminated sites in Hennepin County. The improved properties benefit us all by:

- Increasing the tax base
- Enhancing green space
- Keeping the community in place to enjoy the improvements
- Creating permanent jobs
- Creating affordable and moderately priced market-rate housing

## History behind ERF

As a major economic center for 150 years, Hennepin County has a concentration of contaminated sites. Much of this contamination was caused by chemical spills or improper disposal of hazardous waste prior to the existence of environmental regulations. These improper disposal practices of the past can still cause soil and groundwater pollution that present environmental risks today.

In 1997, the legislature authorized Hennepin County to create the Environmental Response Fund (ERF) for assessment and cleanup of contaminated sites.

## ERF spurs economic growth

Since ERF funding began in 2001, 425 grants totaling \$60,696,997 have been awarded.\* These grants help:

### Create jobs

ERF-assisted projects have resulted in the creation or retention of more than 12,000 jobs.

### Increase property values and generate tax revenue

When comparing pre- and post-assessment and cleanup values, property values of completed ERF-aided projects have increased more than \$2,253,650,900, almost 6 times more valuable than the properties were prior to ERF investments.

In 2019-2020, completed ERF-aided properties generated almost \$47 million more in property taxes than was generated by these same properties prior to ERF involvement.

From 2003 to 2020, completed ERF-aided projects generated \$310 million more in property taxes than was generated by these same properties prior to ERF involvement, a 5:1 return on investment.

### Revitalize neighborhoods and communities

ERF funding can be the critical piece that brings redevelopment projects and businesses to vacant properties. By transforming sites from public safety nuisances into community assets, redeveloping vacant properties can reduce crime.



*Minobimaadiziwin Mpls site before*



*Minobimaadiziwin Mpls site after*

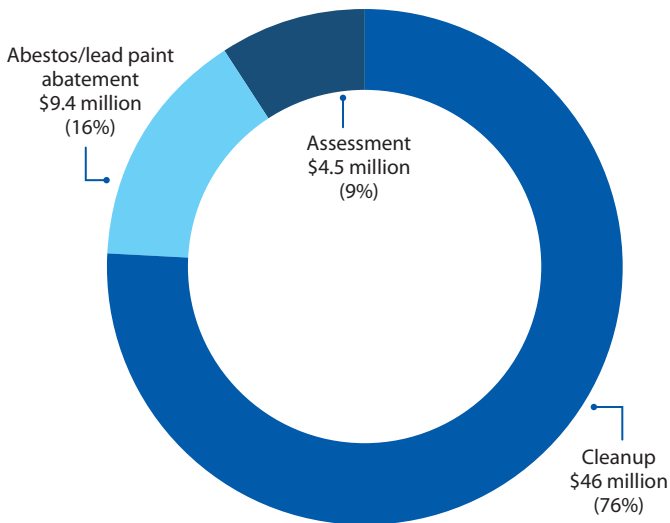
## Commitment to disparity reduction

ERF gives priority to places in Hennepin County with health disparities, including low income areas and communities of color.

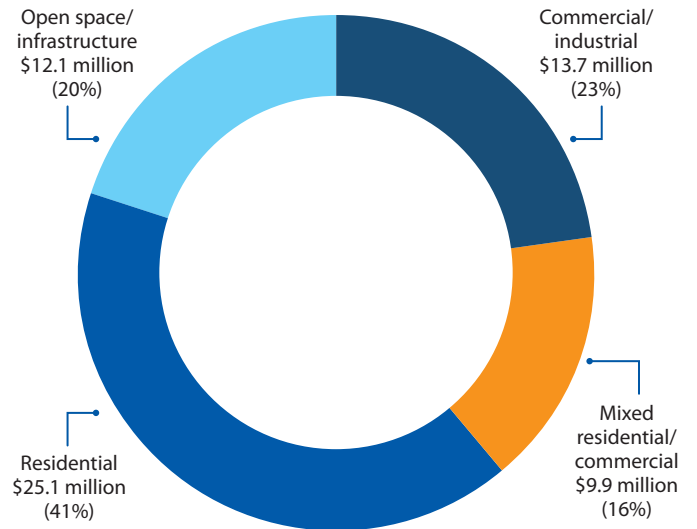
Some of these sites become a catalyst for new development, which can then help address disparities in housing, employment, and income.

\*Note: Data is current to 2022.

## ERF grants by activity



## ERF grants by project type



## The need for ERF continues

Hennepin County has approximately 19 percent of the state's Superfund sites, 19 percent of the state's petroleum release sites, 41 percent of the state's voluntary investigation and cleanup sites, and 8 percent of the state's dump sites, totaling more than 4,300 sites of concern.

This map identifies known contamination sites throughout the county. Many of the sites are vacant or underutilized, due in part to the contamination, and would be good candidates for future ERF funding.

