



BUILD-READY SITE CRITERIA

PURPOSE

The economic development landscape is more competitive than ever. As companies evaluate where to locate or expand, Speed to Market has become a defining factor in the site-selection process. Through responsive problem-solving, streamlined permitting, strong workforce pipelines, and advanced site preparation, Kentucky has made Speed to Market a competitive advantage that sets us apart.

We reduce uncertainty by providing businesses with greater confidence in site availability, infrastructure readiness, development costs, project funding, and construction timelines – from property acquisition and permitting through building construction, groundbreaking, and ribbon cutting.

Kentucky's enhanced Build-Ready designation reflects this commitment. Building upon the foundation established through the Shovel Ready program, Build-Ready sites advance the development process by incorporating certified building pads, preliminary building plans, cost and schedule projections, funding strategies, building renderings, and defined property pricing. These more rigorous, investment-ready standards provide greater certainty to site selectors, shorten the path to construction, and help companies move from site selection to operation with confidence – bringing them one step closer to calling Kentucky their New Kentucky Home.

*The intent of these criteria is to answer **four fundamental questions**:*

1. Can the site be developed?
2. How long will it take to develop?
3. What will it cost to develop?
4. How quickly can a defined industrial building be constructed and delivered?

1 | PROPERTY CONTROL & SITE ELIGIBILITY

Public control of the site should be secured through ownership, option, purchase agreement, or other documented site control. If the site is privately owned, the property owner and local economic development organization must consent to publication of the site by the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development.

The site must have clear title and definition of all restrictions/buffers/easements on an ALTA survey.

The site must be zoned for industrial use or located in an area suitable for industrial development where zoning does not exist. For sites located in unzone areas, protective covenants are strongly encouraged.

2 | UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

TREATED WATER

The site should be served by a waterline at least 8 inches in diameter located within 2,500 feet of the property boundary. A letter from the utility provider confirming available treatment capacity and service availability is required. If the nearest waterline exceeds 2,500 feet from the site boundary, a utility extension plan, schedule, and cost estimate shall be provided. If treatment capacity upgrades are required, supporting plans and cost estimates shall also be provided.

SANITARY SEWER

The site should be served by an 8-inch or greater gravity sewer line and/or pump station located within 2,500 feet of the property boundary. A letter from the wastewater utility provider confirming available treatment capacity and service availability is required. If sewer infrastructure exceeds 2,500 feet from the site boundary, a utility extension plan, schedule, and cost estimate shall be provided. If treatment capacity upgrades are required, supporting plans and cost estimates shall also be provided.

ELECTRICITY

The site should have access to a minimum of 1.5 MW of available electric capacity. A letter from the electric utility provider confirming available capacity and existing infrastructure is required. If available capacity is below 1.5 MW or infrastructure improvements are necessary, an upgraded plan, schedule, and cost estimate shall be provided.

NATURAL GAS

Natural gas services are not required but are strongly encouraged. Where natural gas is available, the site should be served by a gas line at least 2 inches in diameter located within 2,500 feet of the property boundary and have access to a minimum of 5 MCF/hour capacity. A letter from the natural gas provider confirming available capacity and infrastructure is required. If capacity is insufficient or infrastructure extensions are necessary, supporting plans, schedules, and cost estimates shall be provided.

3 | GEOTECHNICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL DUE DILIGENCE

A current Phase I Hazardous Materials Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is required for shovel-ready designation. If necessary, a Phase II ESA and remediation plans should also be completed.

A Geotechnical Report and necessary soil sampling will be required. The report should provide sufficient information to support site development and earthwork planning, including:

- Subsurface conditions
- Native soil bearing capacity
- Earthwork suitability
- Rock presence and strength, where applicable
- Soil treatment needs for stabilization
- Groundwater depths

The site should include sufficient environmental due diligence to identify known environmental constraints, permitting requirements, and development risks.

Environmental reviews should locate, identify, and evaluate waters of Kentucky and US, preliminary jurisdictional determination, endangered species habitat, and necessary/likely permitting needs and timing, resulting in the proper handling and planning for such features.

Cultural and Historic investigations are necessary for most large sites and are required when completing permitting with the USACE. Proper literature research, field investigations, and reporting can take considerable time, and these activities are recommended for completion for any site of significant size.

As a result of the Phase1 ESA, Geotechnical, Waters, Cultural, and Historic work completed, the following items will be identified and properly planned for or addressed;

- Wetlands and floodplains
- Threatened and endangered species
- Cultural, historic, and archaeological resources
- Known hazardous materials and Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs)
- Environmental justice considerations
- Other environmental factors that may affect development

If environmental concerns are identified, shovel-ready designation may be withheld until a No Further Action (NFA) letter or equivalent determination is issued by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet (EEC), or until remediation activities have been completed and documented.

Additional environmental studies and delineations may be required or recommended based on site conditions and identified constraints.

4 | TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

The site must have legal access from an existing public roadway, private roadway, easement, or adjacent roadway from which access can reasonably be obtained.

Any known roadway improvements required to support industrial development should be identified along with preliminary cost estimates and anticipated implementation schedules.

Rail access, if available, should be provided, along with documentation of the rail owners' ability to service the new development.

5 | SITE READINESS, CONSTRUCTABILITY, & DEVELOPMENT COSTS

The site shall have been reviewed for available buildable areas and include sufficient engineering, cost, and schedule information to demonstrate that industrial development can proceed with a high degree of certainty and minimal unforeseen risk.

At a minimum, documentation should include:

- Conceptual site layout(s) identifying buildable areas, access points, utility connections, and known development constraints
- Preliminary grading and earthwork estimates
- Stormwater management considerations
- Utility extension and infrastructure improvement requirements
- Preliminary development cost estimates, including major site preparation and infrastructure costs
- Anticipated development schedules, including permitting, utility extensions, and other critical path activities
- Identification of regulatory approvals required for development

Buildable acreage must be located outside the 100-year floodplain (1% annual chance flood zone). For portions of the site located within the floodplain, proposed mitigation measures shall be documented. The purpose of this documentation is to demonstrate that the site has been evaluated to a sufficient level to understand its constructability, development timeline, and anticipated development costs.

6 | ADDITIONAL BUILD READY REQUIREMENT

BUILDING PAD CERTIFICATION LETTER

A certification letter signed and sealed by a licensed professional engineer confirming that the proposed building pad has been prepared or designed to support the preliminary building plan. The letter should identify the certified pad area, design elevations, relevant geotechnical assumptions, compaction or stabilization requirements, drainage considerations, and any remaining work necessary before vertical construction.

PRELIMINARY BUILDING DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION PLANS

Preliminary plans for a defined industrial building, including at minimum the proposed building footprint, square footage, dimensions, clear height, structural concept, loading and dock configuration, office allocation, parking, truck circulation, utility connections, fire protection concept, and site orientation. Plans should be sufficiently developed to support reliable cost and schedule projections.

BUILDING COST & SCHEDULE PROJECTIONS

A current, itemized estimate of anticipated building construction costs and a preliminary construction schedule identifying major milestones, permitting activities, procurement assumptions, site and pad work, vertical construction, utility connections, inspections, and anticipated substantial completion.

PROJECT FUNDING PLAN

A documented plan identifying the anticipated sources and uses of funds required to complete the building. The plan should identify committed, approved, requested, or anticipated funding; the responsible funding entities; timing of availability; any financing contingencies; and the party responsible for cost overruns.

BUILDING RENDERING

A professional exterior rendering that accurately represents the preliminary building design, materials, scale, access, and site context. The rendering should be suitable for marketing the Build Ready property to prospective companies and site selectors.

SALE PRICE FOR THE BUILD-READY TRACT

A documented sale price for the Build-Ready tract. The price should clearly identify the acreage included, whether site preparation or building improvements are included, the period for which the price is valid, and any material conditions, escalation provisions, or exclusions.

7 | REQUIRED SUBMISSION MATERIALS

The following documentation shall be submitted to support Build-Ready designation:

- Site boundary map and aerial exhibit
- Utility provider letters confirming available service and capacity
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)
- Geotechnical Report
- Water and wetland delineation
- Cultural and historic desktop review
- Conceptual site layout
- Preliminary development cost estimates
- Preliminary development schedule
- Documentation of site control
- Building pad certification letter signed and sealed by a licensed professional engineer
- Preliminary building design and construction plans
- Building cost estimate and construction schedule
- Project funding plan
- Building rendering
- Documented sale price for the Build-Ready tract