



***For Immediate Release
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Contact TREO:
Laura Shaw, Sr. Vice President, Corporate & Community Affairs
(520) 243-1940 office, (520) 609-5972 cell or laura.shaw@treoaz.org

TREO Launches Pilot Shovel Ready and Fast Track Permitting Programs

Tucson, AZ (April 3, 2008) – Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities, Inc. (TREO) today announces it is working with all local governing jurisdictions to create two linked programs to address the needs of targeted industries for certified, high quality information about sites (Shovel Ready Program) and for assured quick turnaround on facility permitting (Fast Track Permitting).

“Business location decisions are being driven by market demands that require much quicker turnaround and construction schedules,” said Joe Snell, TREO’s President & CEO. “Timelines are now measured in months, not years. The requirement for new construction in the face of very tight timelines places extreme pressure on decision makers and demands rapid site selection, building design and construction, and permitting timeframes.”

“Our focus at TREO will be to work from both ends – focusing on land owners and developers to make the up front investment to ensure sites are ready to go as well as working with the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and local governments to ensure a faster, streamlined permitting process,” said Kendall Bert, TREO’s Sr. Vice President of Special Projects.

Certified Shovel Ready Sites will be parcels that are on the market, appropriately zoned/pre-qualified, served by utilities, and with identified access to transportation linkages. All certified sites within the Tucson region will be presented on the TREO website with links to the information/data on each site. By completing the pre-development requirements to become shovel ready, projects will be able to move through the permitting phase much quicker.

During the Pilot Phase of the programs, TREO will assemble a Pilot Development Team including representatives of the public sector, landowners, utilities, brokers, and civil engineers to evaluate the structure and content of the program. The Pilot Development Team will work with selected property owners from across the region to test/improve the application and certification process by taking 5-10 sites through the certification process. (See attached document for a full description of the three-phase development plan).

Developing a competitive advantage through better prepared sites and streamlined permitting processes was identified as a strategy under TREO’s Economic Blueprint Power of Five goals. Many economic development organizations across the country are developing similar shovel ready programs to support companies looking to relocate.

Full implementation of the Shovel Ready Program and the Fast Track Permitting Program is expected this fall. TREO will then market the programs both locally and nationally to targeted businesses and site selectors. Certified Shovel Ready Sites will be posted on TREO’s Web site along with other detailed information critical to site selection decisions.

“These programs will increase our region’s ability to compete for high-skill/high-wage companies and will be a strong selling point for companies looking to relocate in Tucson,” said Snell.

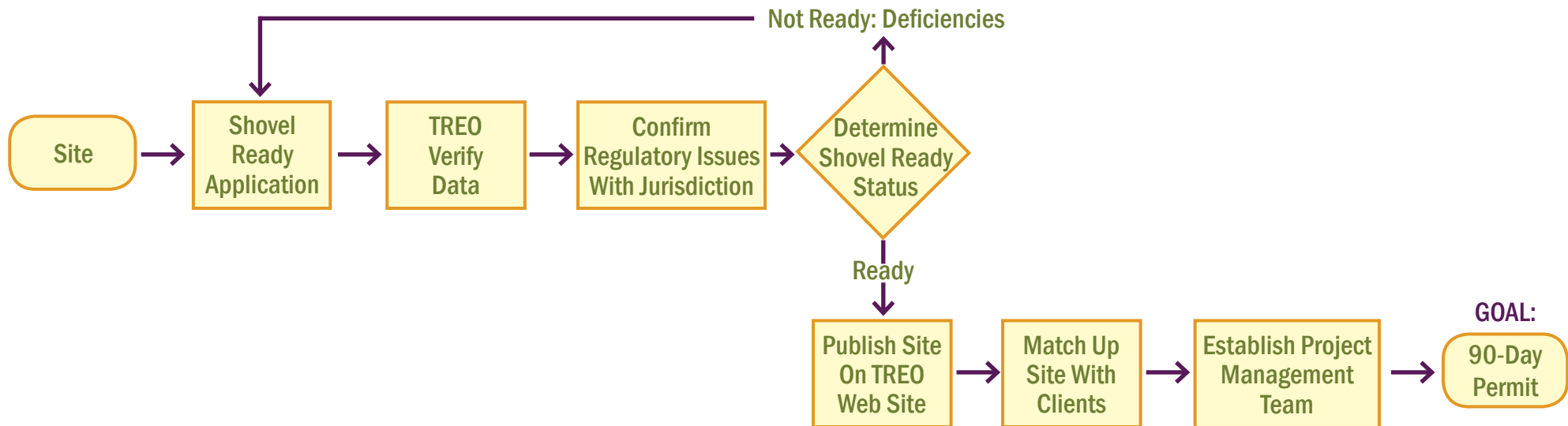
About TREO (Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities, Inc.)

TREO’s mission is to provide insight, infrastructure, resources and development efforts to accelerate economic prosperity throughout the Southern Arizona region. TREO supports the creation of new business, the growth and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of companies that offer high-impact jobs and share the community’s values. For more information, visit www.treoaz.org.

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PILOT SHOVEL READY/FAST TRACK PERMITTING PROGRAMS

SHOVEL READY PROCESS FAST TRACK PERMITTING



PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION

PHASE I: COMPLETED

Initiation—Research/Establish Foundational Support
Jan. 01, 2008 – Mar. 31, 2008

- Researched comparable programs in other states and jurisdictions
- Introduced program at staff level to Pima County, City of Tucson, Town of Marana, Town of Oro Valley, City of South Tucson, Town of Sahuarita. Received strong positive response/interest in creating a local shovel ready program together with an accelerated permitting process of 90 days or less for targeted industries.
- Introduced program to selected land owners and brokers. Received strong positive support for establishment of program.
- Created Preliminary Shovel Ready Application to be used in certifying sites as shovel ready.
- Establish consensus among staff of local jurisdictions and TREO identifying roles and commitments for Phase II of this program.

PHASE II

Pilot Program—Proof of Concept
Apr. 01, 2008 – Sept. 30, 2008

- Establish Pilot Development Team including public sector, land owners, utilities, brokers, civil engineers, etc. to evaluate structure and content of program.
- Work with land owners in various jurisdictions to test/improve application and certification process for shovel ready sites. Certify 5-10 sites as Shovel Ready.
- Document the steps and timeframes for components of a 90-day permitting process.
- Identify and prioritize impediments to moving sites to shovel ready status and impediments to accelerated permit processing.
- Refine and finalize the structure and components of the Shovel Ready Program and the Fast Track Permitting Program.
- Pursue approval from each jurisdiction’s elected body to participate in the program and to prioritize TREO’s targeted industries for Fast Track Permitting.

PHASE III

Program Implementation
Oct. 01, 2008 – ongoing

- Publish certified Shovel Ready Sites on TREO’s Web site.
- Market the program locally and nationally to landowners, expanding businesses, and site selectors.
- Monitor program performance and modify as needed.