

Brownfields Revitalization

Brownfields are properties, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off greenspaces and working lands. You can find information about US EPA's Brownfields Program – including the Brownfields Law, Brownfields Grants, Land Revitalization Information, and more – at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/index.html>.

The "Brownfields" Law passed in 2002, amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) by providing funds to assess and clean up brownfields; clarified CERCLA liability protections; and provided funds to enhance state and tribal response programs. Other related laws and regulations impact brownfields cleanup and reuse through financial incentives and regulatory requirements.

Many brownfields are in prime locations along waterfronts or transportation corridors with access to existing infrastructure. EPA's Brownfields Program provides federal support for cleaning up our nation's brownfields. EPA has several grant programs that interested parties can apply for including:

- **Direct Cleanup Grants** – EPA provides grants of up to \$200,000 to pay for site-specific cleanup on publicly owned or nonprofit owned properties. Applicants must contribute 20 percent matching funds.
- **Work Force Training Grants** – EPA provides up to \$200,000 for environmental job training of residents in brownfields communities. Public and private training institutions, such as colleges, community or nonprofit job training centers, and state and local governments located within or near brownfields, are eligible to apply.
- **EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA)** – This program is designed to help states, tribes, and municipalities—especially those without EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilots/Grants—minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfields. Targeted Brownfields Assessments supplement and work with other efforts under EPA's Brownfields Program to promote the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields. EPA's TBA assistance is available through two sources: directly from EPA through EPA Regional Brownfields offices under Subtitle A of the law, and from state or tribal voluntary response program offices receiving funding under Subtitle C of the law.
- Additional information about these programs and how to apply can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/index.html> – including past success stories and ongoing projects. Some examples:
 - <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/newsletter/2008-Summer/RiverfrontMakeover.html>
 - http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/newsletter/2007-Fall/frankford_creek.html
 - http://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/gfs/index.cfm?xpg_id=7844&display_type=HTML
 - http://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/gfs/index.cfm?xpg_id=7958&display_type=HTML
- Other EPA-based funding programs that support Brownfields: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/fundingopportunities.htm>
- Especially Smart Growth grants: <http://www.epa.gov/livability/grants/index.htm>
- EPA Region 3 online Federal Resources for Brownfields guide: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/guidetofedprograms.htm>

Other Federal Partnerships, Programs & Agencies

Federal agencies recognize the value of brownfields revitalization projects to community renewal and economic redevelopment. Many federal funding and technical assistance programs can promote and enhance many aspects of local revitalization and redevelopment efforts. Local communities often can take advantage of federal resources to identify and resolve bureaucratic barriers to addressing local needs, and pilot test new approaches and model projects. Federal funding opportunities often can be used to attract and leverage additional local and regional investments in land revitalization projects. For more information on funding and other resources available for brownfields revitalization project across a wide range of federal agencies, consult the [Brownfields Federal Programs Guide \(PDF\)](#).

- One example of a strong federal partnership is the [Partnership for Sustainable Communities](#), an unprecedented agreement to coordinate federal housing, transportation, and environmental investments; protect public health and the environment; promote equitable development; and help address the challenges of climate change. Since 2009, EPA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Department of Transportation (DOT) are working together to promote more sustainable development in communities by more effectively targeting federal resources and removing existing federal regulatory and policy barriers to smart and sustainable development.
- [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#) – Independent agency that oversees Section 106 regulatory process for reviewing effects of federal and federally permitted projects on historic properties. Also administers Preserve America program on behalf of the White House.
- [Federal Housing Finance Board](#) –
 - The [Community Investment Cash Advances \(CICA\)](#) programs of the twelve Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBanks) offer funding, including low-cost, long-term funds for member financial institutions (banks and thrifts) and other eligible lenders to use for financing projects that are targeted to certain economic development and housing activities. Economic development projects include commercial, industrial, manufacturing, social service, infrastructure projects, and public facility projects and activities.
 - A standby Letter of Credit (LOC) can be a useful tool for housing finance and community lending for economic development, as well as with other credit needs. An LOC is a financial instrument in which the issuing bank promises to pay a third party on behalf of a second party. The Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBanks) may issue standby LOCs on behalf of member lenders (banks and thrifts) and certain housing associates, under which the FHLBank agrees to honor drafts or other demands for payment from a third-party beneficiary in the event that the lender cannot fully honor its obligations directly. By guaranteeing the credit obligations and performance of the lender with the AAA credit rating of the FHLBank, the FHLBank's standby LOC allows the lender to borrow funds from other sources on relatively favorable terms.
- [Preserve America](#) – Administration initiative that promotes community revitalization, tourism, and public education through preservation and creative use of heritage resources, such as historic mills. Includes programs for community recognition, grants, awards, and education.
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) – NOAA is a Federal Natural Resource trustee under CERCLA. As a trustee NOAA can conduct a [Natural Resource Damage Assessment](#) against responsible parties in order to restore injured natural resources. NOAA is a natural resource trustee for marine and estuarine species including anadromous (e.g., shortnose sturgeon,

striped bass, American shad) and catadromous fish (American eel) and other resources in the Delaware River. Several of these resources have critical links to the urban Delaware River due to their migratory life history (i.e., required freshwater spawning habitat).

- [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) – HUD’s overall mission is to increase homeownership, support community development, and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination. HUD has seven brownfield-related programs:
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program (CDBG grants for Entitlement Communities, States, Insular Areas, and non-entitlement grants in Hawaii)
 - Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program
 - Office of Community Renewal (and the related Economic Development Initiative)
 - Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)
 - HOME Investment Partnership Program
 - Empowerment Zones (EZ) and Enterprise Communities (EC) Initiative
 - Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Grant Program

For more information, see http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/fed_prog_guide/hud.htm

- [Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration](#) – The Economic Development Administration (EDA) mission is “to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.” EDA underwent reauthorization in 2004 and included the following brownfields-related provisions:
 - Authorizes grants for projects to expand, redevelop or reuse brownfields, within EDA’s existing program structure.
 - Authorizes grants for projects to develop brightfields sites, which will use solar energy technologies to develop abandoned or contaminated sites for commercial use.

EDA provides funding to promote infrastructure development, business development, and economic revitalization – including these brownfields connections:

- Funds public works and infrastructure enhancements — targeted to state, local, and tribal governments; public and private nonprofit organizations.
- Capitalizes revolving loan funds for state and local implementation of strategies to attract private sector investment — targeted to local governments, states, and regional development organizations.
- Provides planning grants to economically distressed states and regions — targeted to state, regional, local, and tribal governments.
- Funds infrastructure modernization at closed military bases — targeted to local governments, development organizations, and reuse authorities.

For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd>

- [Department of Defense — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provides assistance in development and management of the nation’s water resources in an environmentally sustainable, economic, and technically sound manner. There are two primary areas of brownfields connections:
 - **Reimbursable Support:** This form of support is intended to align water resources development and management efforts with community brownfields objectives by

providing reimbursable technical services to other federal agencies engaged in brownfields activities — targeted to local governments working with federal agencies.

USACE may perform project management, engineering, facility design, construction management, and other technical services for environmental restoration and most other types of projects, including technical assistance for brownfields-related activities, for non-Department of Defense federal agencies, states, and local governments. Reimbursable support activities must be fully funded by the customer (e.g., state or local government), and some portion of the funds must come from a federal source (e.g., federal grants).

Access to USACE's reimbursable support may be obtained through the [International and Interagency Services/Environmental Branch](#).

- **Planning Assistance:** USACE provides planning assistance for utilization and conservation of the water and related resources of drainage basins. Section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1974, as amended, provides authority for the Corps of Engineers to assist the States, local governments, and other non-federal entities, in the preparation of comprehensive plans for the development and conservation of water and related land resources. The program can encompass many types of studies, dealing with water resources issues. Studies are cost-shared with 50 percent of the costs (including "in-kind" services) furnished by a local sponsor and 50 percent by the Corps. Implementation of any recommendations is the responsibility of the local sponsor. State and local government officials who are interested in obtaining planning assistance under this program can contact the Philadelphia District Corps office for further details.

For more information, see http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/fed_prog_guide/usace.htm

- **Groundwork Trusts** – These are independent, not-for-profit, environmental businesses that work with communities to improve their environment, economy, and quality of life through local action. The Groundwork USA program is built on partnership and linked together by the Groundwork USA national office, with support from the EPA Brownfields Program and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. Groundwork USA helps people reuse brownfields for community benefit. Because the goal of most publicly funded programs is to reuse brownfields for economic development, many brownfields sites are being left behind because they are too small, surrounded by blight, or located in areas with other constraints, such as flood plains or dense residential neighborhoods. Groundwork Trusts are working to fill the gap.