



Plan for Brownfields Redevelopment Success

# Community Health Assessment

**Successful brownfields revitalization doesn't just happen. It's planned for.**

Approach brownfield revitalization through creative, inclusive, and efficient planning activities.

- Early on in the site selection process, consider the range of realistic site reuse options.
- Create a brownfields revitalization plan based on the community's vision, site and surrounding area conditions such as environmental, economic, real estate market, assets, challenges and vulnerabilities. These factors will directly influence how the site is assessed and remediated.

Planning activities that focus on brownfields revitalization are eligible under an EPA Brownfields Assessment or Multipurpose Grant.

**Our community needs to:**

- Understand specific public health challenges faced by residents within the brownfields area and their underlying causes.
- Identify opportunities to reuse brownfields to strengthen existing community health assets and prioritize community health improvement.

**How a Community Health Assessment can help:** Determines how community health needs and issues can be addressed through brownfield site assessment, cleanup and reuse by reviewing community public health information.

**Influence on brownfields assessment, cleanup and reuse:** Incorporates public health data and indicators into site selection, assessment and cleanup decisions. Prioritizes community input regarding safety, social and environmental concerns at the site. Shapes a reuse approach that helps alleviate, not exacerbate, local public health challenges.

**What Is involved?**

- Analyzing existing community health information such as a community health improvement plan or other health agency-led assessments.
- Engaging various community organizations such as youth groups, school teachers, churches and nonprofit organizations to gain perspectives on community health, environmental hazards, and social challenges affecting the brownfields area. Challenges may pertain to:
  - Safety: abandoned and derelict structures, open foundations, compromised infrastructure, inadequate lighting or barriers, etc.
  - Health: high incidence of diabetes, heart disease, asthma, drug addiction, etc.
  - Social: blight, crime, vagrancy, reduced social capital, community connectedness.
  - Economic: reduced tax base and private property values may lead to reduced social services.
  - Environmental: biological, physical and chemical effects resulting from site contamination, groundwater impacts, surface runoff migration of contaminants, wastes dumped on site, etc.
- Collecting or linking baseline health and environmental measures to inform redevelopment planning options. For example, health monitoring or [health impact assessment](#) results that show limited access to health care services or a lack of sidewalks, recreational opportunities or food access for the brownfields community can encourage increased health care services, green space, parks, trails and/or fresh grocers during site redevelopment planning

**When to conduct?** Implement early in the brownfields site selection and planning process to ensure that community health challenges are addressed to the extent possible. The community health assessment may take 3-12 months, depending on project scope and availability of data.

**What does it typically cost?** Cost varies; can range from \$10,000 – \$40,000 depending on scope, existing data and community characteristics.

**Who Can Perform?** A local government agency, nonprofit, university or multidisciplinary brownfields reuse team. Must be designed and implemented in collaboration with local, state or tribal health agencies.