

Brownfield Redevelopment

Restoring Properties, Restoring Communities

Brownfields Assessment Grants are used to return underutilized properties back to a productive reuse.

What are brownfields?

Brownfields are “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” Brownfields can adversely impact human health, decrease the value of surrounding properties, deter potential investments, and represent a significant safety hazard to the community if left unaddressed.

Brownfield sites can include residential, commercial, or industrial parcels of land. Examples include properties with former uses such as:

- dry cleaners
- automotive repair shops
- service stations
- industrial manufacturers
- illegal dump sites
- railroad facilities
- warehouses
- landfills

EPA Brownfields Program

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established the Brownfields Program to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. The EPA provides technical and financial assistance for brownfields activities through an approach based on four main goals: protecting human health and the environment, sustaining reuse, promoting partnerships, and strengthening the marketplace.

The EPA Brownfields Program provides direct funding to eligible recipients for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. The EPA awarded the Village of Antioch a \$200,000 Brownfields Hazardous Substances Assessment Grant in 2012. These funds allow the Village to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup planning on brownfield sites.

Abandoned industrial facilities often pose significant redevelopment challenges due to perceived contamination and liability concerns.

Environmental Site Assessments (ESA)

The Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) process allows individuals to satisfy due diligence requirements pursuant to obtaining innocent landowner, contiguous property owner, or prospective purchaser limitations under CERCLA liability guidelines. The referenced protections help minimize risk for current/potential land owners allowing for the redevelopment of brownfields properties.

A Phase I ESA is a non-intrusive evaluation of environmental conditions at a site. Phase I ESAs accumulate data on the present conditions and historical uses of a subject site and nearby properties to assess the potential for adverse environmental impacts. This research includes visiting the subject site, interviewing individuals familiar with the site including current and past owners/operators and local officials, conducting an environmental records search for the site and surrounding vicinity, and reviewing historical documents related to the area such as fire insurance maps, topographical maps, aerial photographs, and city directories. An environmental professional then compiles the information into a report and concludes either 1) no environmental concerns identified or 2) the presence of a recognized environmental condition (REC) warrants further investigation in the form of a Phase II ESA. An REC is defined as “a presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, ground water, or surface water of the property.”

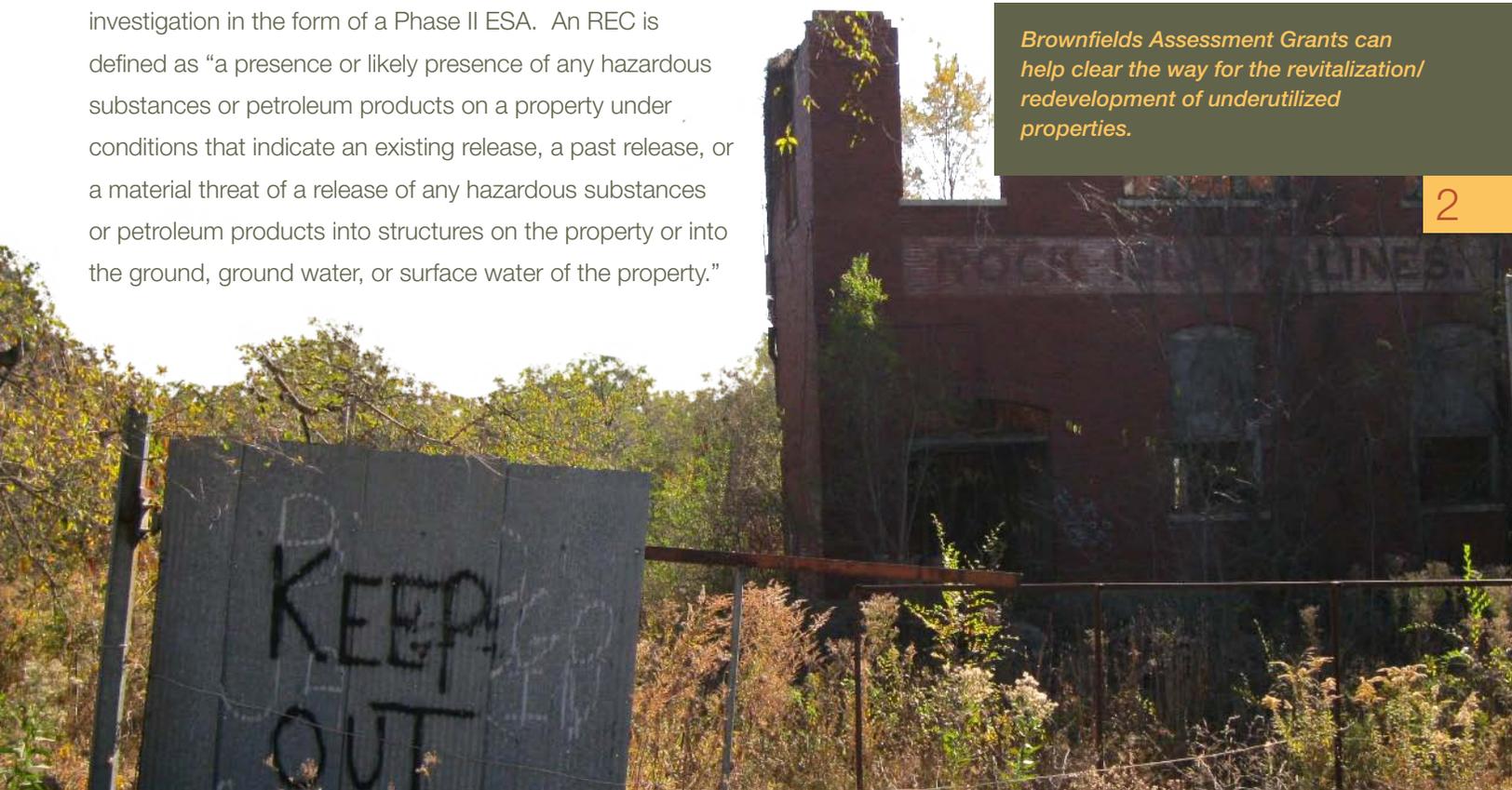
A Phase II ESA involves collecting soil and groundwater samples to identify the types and concentrations of contaminants (if any) and the areas of contamination needing cleanup (if necessary). The resulting report compares contaminant levels to regulatory standards for evaluation of concerns for human health and the environment. A Phase II ESA can also include asbestos and lead-based paint surveys and hazardous materials inventories.

Benefits of Brownfields Redevelopment

Brownfields Assessment Grants help return properties exhibiting signs of potential contamination back to a productive reuse. This process helps achieve the following benefits:

- Facilitates job growth
- Stems urban sprawl by reducing development pressure from agricultural lands
- Avoids costly infrastructure extensions required to serve new greenfield development
- Protects human health and the environment
- Often spurs additional redevelopment activities
- Increases the local tax base
- Eliminates eyesores and safety hazards

Brownfields Assessment Grants can help clear the way for the revitalization/ redevelopment of underutilized properties.



Frequently Asked Questions

Am I eligible to participate?

Sites are generally eligible if they are abandoned or underutilized and **have real or perceived environmental contamination issues**. The Village of Antioch will submit a site eligibility request form to the EPA to confirm the eligibility of a site prior to conducting any environmental site assessment activities.

Why should I participate?

The EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant provides property owners with a chance to **assess contamination concerns free of charge**. Phase I ESAs typically cost between \$2,000 and \$10,000 depending on the size of the property and the number and size of buildings on-site. Phase II ESAs can cost between \$10,000 and \$80,000 depending on property size and chemical testing.

Environmental Site Assessments provide property owners with a clear understanding of the environmental condition of their property. The reports help a property owner to identify what conditions may cause problems when trying to sell a property. More importantly, they will understand the necessary steps required to manage and clear the issues. This situation will ultimately increase the sell-ability and value of the property. Finally, most lending institutions will require a Phase I before lending any money for property acquisition or redevelopment.

How much will a Phase I and a Phase II ESA (if recommended) cost me as a property owner?

Nothing. The Village's EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant covers all costs associated with conducting the Phase I and Phase II ESA activities. Further, money is available to conduct risk assessments, preparation for clean-ups, and redevelopment planning.

What if contamination is found?

Instances of **perceived contamination occur much more frequently** than instances of actual contamination being found. If elevated levels of contamination are found a copy of the report is sent to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) Brownfield group for opinion of hazardous conditions. Often, the IEPA is able to issue a letter stating conditions don't appear to present a hazard and no additional work is required.

If contamination levels are a potential hazard, the IEPA may require additional assessment. This assessment can be completed using grant funds. If additional assessment warrants cleanup, funding may be possible through EPA cleanup grants. Property owners may be responsible for the cleanup if their site activities lead to the contamination. With Brownfields sites, the contaminating activities are generally from the past property uses.

3

Contact Information

Please contact Village staff or our environmental consultant for additional information on the brownfields program:

Dustin Nilsen - Director of Community Development

Office: 847.395.1000
dnilsen@antioch.il.gov

Jim Halverson - Vice President

Office: 319.841.4382
jhalverson@hrgreen.com

