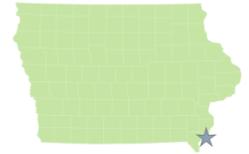


Planning for Sustainable Brownfield Redevelopment

BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

BURLINGTON, IOWA, EPA REGION 7



Burlington, Iowa, is like many towns across America: it has a historic downtown in need of investment and revitalization to restore economic development and community services to the broader city. While several organizations are working to improve development opportunities in Burlington, the disconnected approach was leading to duplicative efforts. However, by working together to build a Brownfields Program, these organizations can achieve a revitalized vision for downtown Burlington and further their own goals for the region.

From January to June 2014, EPA provided technical assistance to build a cohesive Burlington Brownfields Program. The Burlington Brownfields Program instituted a Sponsor Group to lead future brownfield and development efforts. Sponsor Group members included the City of Burlington, the South East Iowa Regional Planning Commission and Downtown Partners, Inc. The Sponsor Group set goals for the program, including a focus on redeveloping property downtown.

EPA technical assistance supported a webinar series to help build local capacity and support the formation of the Burlington Brownfields Program. The first webinar focused on helping the community organize its brownfield program goals and objectives, as well as identify individual brownfields projects throughout Burlington. A second webinar focused on site prioritization and identifying the key opportunities, challenges and connections to available properties and interested development projects.

In May 2014, EPA Region 7, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the project team met with key stakeholders and property owners to identify redevelopment opportunities. The project team developed a site prioritization tool to help the Sponsor Group understand assets and challenges associated with each site. The project team also developed a program report that outlined the goals of the Burlington Brownfields Program, available tools and resources, and next steps to continue to build toward a sustainable vision for downtown Burlington and surrounding neighborhoods.

For more information, please contact Whitney Rawls, EPA Region 7, rawls.whitney@epa.gov.



Figure 5: The Burlington Brownfields Program will focus on sustainable redevelopment at brownfields downtown.

LESSONS LEARNED

- A defined group of leaders helps consolidate limited resources and presents a stronger story to attract economic development.
- Site prioritization helps communities with limited resources identify immediate opportunities while still cataloging all potential resources.
- Successful planning for sustainable brownfield redevelopment relies on communication between all entities supporting development, economic revitalization and infrastructure improvements.

PLANNED POST-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

- The Sponsor Group will accept the Brownfields Program and identify a redevelopment vision.
- The Sponsor Group will conduct broader community outreach to educate stakeholders about the Brownfields Program and seek input.
- The Sponsor Group will develop a downtown redevelopment vision and strategy that will direct future growth to the city's downtown (reusing existing structures/ infrastructure, creating a more compact development pattern and enhancing downtown vibrancy).