



Unearthing Potential: EPA's Brownfields & Land Revitalization Program

Pacific Southwest, Region 9

Serving: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Pacific Islands, Tribal Nations

What is a Brownfield Site?

Brownfield sites are properties that are not in use or have not been redeveloped due to possible contamination. Contamination sources include industrial facilities, gas stations, dry cleaners, pesticide use, asbestos, lead-based paint, mining operations and fuel storage tanks. Brownfield sites may be privately or publicly owned.

EPA's Brownfields Program is a voluntary, non-enforcement program that provides key support early in property redevelopment. Through technical assistance and "seed" grant funding, EPA helps communities clear contaminated sites for future development, such as affordable housing, commercial buildings, transit-oriented development and open space. EPA's Brownfields Program works to make a visible difference in communities, especially those that are economically distressed.

This guide explains grants and technical support offered by EPA's Brownfields Program and highlights project successes. Successful brownfield redevelopment projects often use a combination of EPA funding and other public and private resources. See our Project Spotlight on the Jacobs Center in San Diego, CA (right).

EPA Resources

Brownfields Grants

- » Assessment Grants
- » Cleanup Grants
- » Revolving Loan Funds
- » Multipurpose Grants
- » Job Training

Technical Support

- » Targeted Brownfields Assessment
- » Land Revitalization Technical Assistance
- » State and Tribal Support

Project Spotlight:

Jacobs Center, San Diego, CA

The Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation is successfully putting resources from the EPA and other sources to work renewing 50 acres in the economically burdened Diamond/Encanto neighborhoods in San Diego. The development offers a mix of commercial space and low-income and market-rate housing. After years of extensive community outreach, a 52-unit affordable housing development, Trolley Park Terraces, provides low-cost rental housing adjacent to the transit station. This first phase of redevelopment created over 150 construction jobs.



Local, state, and EPA partners participate in community ground breaking event for Trolley Park Terraces.

The project is funded through a variety of public and private sources including several from EPA: \$50,000 in technical support to identify sustainable cleanup options; \$600,000 in cleanup funding; \$200,000 in brownfields planning funding to ensure a resident-driven planning process; and \$25,000 in technical support to improve the walkability of the project area.



San Diego Trolley's Euclid Avenue Station sits adjacent to the future Trolley Park Terraces housing development.

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields

Brownfields Grants

Grants

EPA provides millions of dollars each year in Brownfields Grant funding to communities across the country. This guide explores five common types of funding:

- [Assessment Grants](#)
- [Cleanup Grants](#)
- [Revolving Loan Funds](#)
- [Multipurpose Grants](#)
- [Job Training](#)

Environmental Assessments on brownfield sites look at how the property was used in the past, check if there's a chance of contamination, and, if needed, test to find out what kind and how much is present. The EPA's Assessment grant will also cover community outreach and cleanup planning.



Transit-oriented development is planned along Honolulu's rail transit corridor.



EPA provides funding for 15 environmental assessments at five rail stops from Kapolei to Ala Moana Center in Honolulu.



EPA funds supported the City of Mesa's Light Rail Corridor extension, which added four new stations and 5,000 new riders.

Assessment Grants

EPA provides funding to assess brownfield sites. This work includes conducting inventories of potential brownfield sites, research on prior site use, soil sampling for contaminants, cleanup planning and community involvement. Funding amounts range from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 per grant, and recipients may direct the funding towards multiple sites across a community. Government entities, Tribes, and nonprofits are eligible to apply. Example projects are highlighted below.

Honolulu Rail Transit Project, Honolulu, HI

The Honolulu Rail Transit Project will provide high-capacity elevated urban rail service to the City and County of Honolulu on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. A historic agreement between the City of Honolulu and the Federal Transit Administration secured \$1.55 billion in federal funding for Honolulu's rail transit system. EPA joined in the effort by providing a \$400,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant to support transit-oriented development at station locations through the inventory and assessment of brown-field sites. EPA funding will also support community outreach and cleanup planning.

Light Rail Corridor, Mesa, AZ

The City of Mesa received two Community-Wide Assessment Grants totaling \$800,000 to support a 5.8 mile extension of the city's light rail line down Main Street. The city used EPA grant funding to conduct record searches at over 100 properties and soil sampling at 15 sites. The city leveraged tens of thousands of dollars in funding for related community outreach and public engagement efforts.

Cleanup Grants

EPA's Brownfields Cleanup Grant funding is used to conduct remediation and reuse planning on brownfields sites. As of fiscal year 2025, grants range from \$500,000 to \$4,000,000 for eligible sites. Government entities, Tribes, and nonprofits are eligible to apply. Applicants must own the property proposed for cleanup. Below are a few EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant project examples.

Warehouse Artist Lofts, Sacramento, CA

The Capitol Area Development Authority (CADA) received a \$200,000 Cleanup Grant and \$450,000 in EPA Revolving Loan Funding to clean up a site for mixed-use, mixed-income, transit-oriented development. The project sparked additional efforts to revitalize the former warehouse district along the Historic R Street Corridor in downtown Sacramento. 116 housing units and 13,000 square feet of commercial spaces are marketed to the Sacramento artist community to help build an arts and culture district. The project includes performance space, community gardens, and local art.

Rumrill Sports Complex, San Pablo, CA

The City of San Pablo received a \$400,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant and a \$600,000 Cleanup Grant from EPA. Grant funding was used to assess and cleanup the former Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad maintenance yard. The City leveraged local and state funding to redevelop the site into soccer fields, a picnic area, a playground and space for a local, healthy food vendor. The new complex is located in an economically burdened community that has historically had little access to open spaces. One local resident trained through EPA's Job Training Program was hired to work on the site cleanup and installation of the new sports fields. This project is the anchor for street improvements and redevelopment along Rumrill Boulevard.

Fort Lowell Historic Park, Tucson, AZ

The City of Tucson received a \$200,000 Cleanup Grant to address contamination at the 5+ acre Fort Lowell Historic Park. Cleanup included removal of over 1,300 tons of soil, two septic systems, four groundwater wells, two underground storage tanks, and a significant amount of asbestos. The project helped the city preserve historic resources and enhance the park.

Cleaning up and reinvesting in brown field properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off green-spaces and working lands.

CADA removed 5,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil to a depth of eight feet to safely build apartments on a former brownfield site in Sacramento.



The Warehouse Artist Lofts development is breathing new life into Sacramento's Historic R Street Corridor.



The Rumrill Sports Complex boasts three youth soccer fields, a playground, a picnic area and a local healthy food vendor.



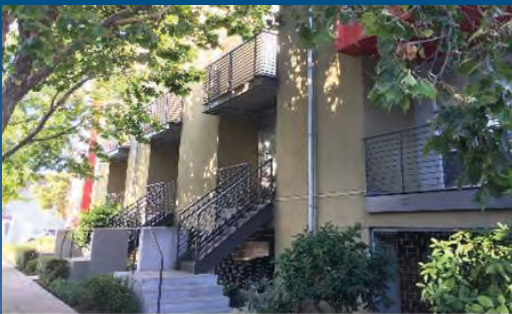
Contaminated soil is removed at the 4.5-acre site that is now the Rumrill Sports Complex.



Historic preservation work at Fort Lowell uncovered 73 archeological features from periods spanning 1,000 years.



A former petroleum-contaminated site, the Rockwood-Colton Park in Los Angeles has solar lighting and other sustainable features.



Developers of Emeryville's GreenCity Lofts used a low-interest revolving loan to clean up the site for this mixed-income, multifamily development.



Peeling lead-based paint on old homes in the historic mill town of Samoa contaminated soil in the surrounding area.

Revolving Loan Funds

Under EPA's Revolving Loan Fund program EPA provides grants to eligible entities to issue low-interest loans and sub-grants for cleanup activities at brownfield sites. Government agencies, non-profits and private developers can receive this cleanup assistance. Repaid loans and interest "revolve" back to the grantee, and those funds are loaned or granted again. Available funding starts at \$1 million per grantee, and government entities and tribes are eligible to apply. Successful grantees may apply for supplemental funding. Example projects are highlighted below.

California Statewide RLF

Since 2006, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received over \$7 million in EPA Revolving Loan Funds to provide sub-grants and low-interest loans for site cleanup. As of 2016, DTSC has awarded 22 sub-grants and six loans under this program. They have funded site cleanups statewide that have been developed into affordable housing, open space and commercial development.

GreenCity Lofts, Emeryville, CA

The City of Emeryville received EPA Revolving Loan Fund Grants in 1999 and 2009. Loans primarily went to developers for mixed-income housing and commercial development projects. The city also borrowed funds for public projects. The success of the program was built on the flexible loan terms and the program's tie into site assessments completed with EPA and state funding. The City of Emeryville successfully leveraged multiple resources including direct EPA Cleanup Grants to the city.

Historic Mill Town of Samoa, CA

The historic town of Samoa, located in the northern peninsula of Humboldt Bay in northern California, is the focus of a lead-contaminated soil cleanup in an area of more than 250 acres. A developer with a vision to restore Samoa and create a vibrant historic community purchased the entire town in 2000. Since 2007, the County of Humboldt has managed an EPA Revolving Loan Fund Grant totaling \$3.2 million. The County loaned a developer funds to clean up lead-contaminated soils and lead-based paint in 100 homes. This project will ultimately preserve historic structures, including the Samoa Cookhouse, and create affordable housing.



DTSC's \$1.6 million loan to the Martin Building Company resulted in the creation of 196 new units, over 300 jobs and \$1.2 million in annual sales and property taxes. This LEED-Gold certified building is located in San Francisco.

Multipurpose Grants

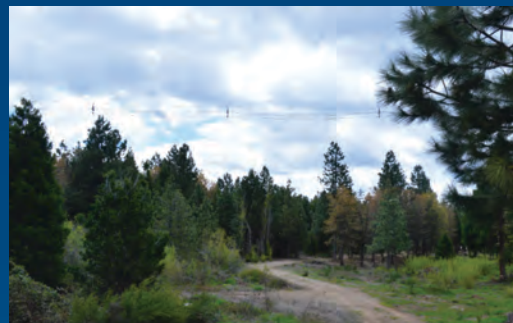
EPA's Multipurpose Grants provide funding to carry out a range of eligible assessment and cleanup activities within a proposed target area, such as a neighborhood, a group of neighboring towns, a district, a corridor, a shared planning area or a census tract. Grant activities include developing brownfields inventories, prioritizing sites, involving the community, performing environmental site assessments, making plans for cleanup and reuse, conducting cleanup work, and creating an overall revitalization plan. As of FY25, EPA has awarded grants up to \$1,000,000 to government entities, Tribes, and nonprofits. An example project is highlighted below.

The Landing, Mount Shasta, CA

Since 1998, the City of Mount Shasta has been actively involved in brownfield goals of assessment, cleanup, and public engagement. The City has carried out assessments, cleanup, and multipurpose grants on the site, with a combined \$4 million in investments from federal, state, and local partners. They used their Multipurpose grant to conduct a Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessment, create a cleanup plan for the identified contamination, and develop an overall revitalization plan for the Landing and the nearby area. As of 2025, the Landing has been fully cleaned up and is attracting developers for hotels, open space, and other community assets.



The Landing, a 127-acre former mill in Mount Shasta, CA, ceased operations in 1980 and was purchased by the City in 1989.



The Old Log Pond area of the Landing has remnants of the historic mill. This area of the site is planned for recreation and open space, connecting trails to the local city park.

Job Training Grants

EPA provides funding for environmental job training in communities greatly affected by brownfields and environmental contaminants. As of FY25, funding of up to \$500,000 has been awarded to eligible government entities, Tribes, and nonprofits.

Current grantees include the Los Angeles County Conservation Corps in Southern California and Cypress Mandela Training Center in Northern California. In addition to receiving training in hazardous materials cleanup and management, students learn how to install residential and commercial solar panels. Both programs serve unemployed and underemployed adults.

Under the Navajo Nation's EPA-funded program, 36 Tribal members completed environmental job training through the Navajo Nation's partnership with Northern Arizona University. The training focused on hazardous waste operations and emergency response (HAZWOPER) work. Students took additional radiological training to work on the cleanup of former uranium mines on the Navajo Nation.



Graduates from Cypress Mandela earn state and federal certifications in environmental management.



Navajo Nation students complete HAZWOPER training at Northern Arizona University.

Brownfields Technical Support

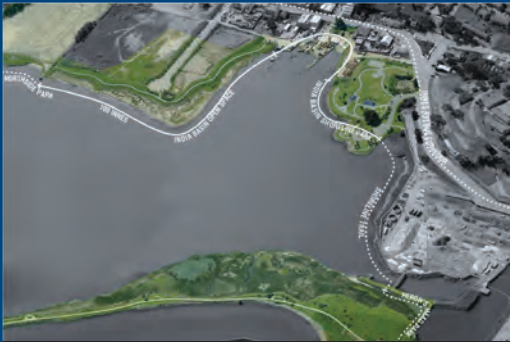
Technical Support

EPA provides three types of technical support to communities across the country:

- [Targeted Brownfields Assessment](#)
- [Brownfields Technical Assistance](#)
- [State and Tribal Support](#)

"EPA's Brownfields Program is one of the most effective ways EPA makes a visible difference in communities. This program results in on-the-ground benefits — environmental, economic, and social."

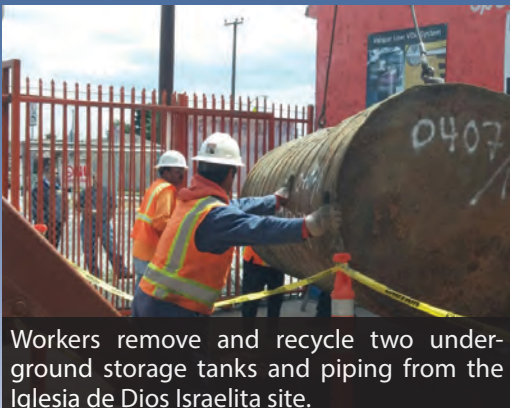
- Enrique Manzanilla, former EPA Superfund Division Director



India Basin Waterfront's proposed park provides open space and bay access in an economically burdened community.



Abatement and demolition at the Beeline Dragway, Scottsdale, AZ.



Workers remove and recycle two underground storage tanks and piping from the Iglesia de Dios Israelita site.

Targeted Brownfields Assessment

EPA provides contractor assistance to research historic property uses, conduct environmental sampling and identify cleanup options and cost estimates. By submitting a short application online, public entities, nonprofits, and Tribes can access free technical assistance for eligible sites. At no cost to the applicant, EPA contractors evaluate whether a property is contaminated and provide follow-up recommendations. EPA prioritizes sites in economically distressed areas and accepts applications on a rolling basis. Sites must be planned to be reused for community benefit. For more information, please see our [brochure](#) and [application](#).

[India Basin Waterfront, San Francisco, CA](#)

EPA's contractors assessed a contaminated property prior to purchase by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department. The site is located in an economically distressed neighborhood with little access to open space. Additional EPA funding, as well as state and local resources, has enabled the city to redevelop the property into a park connecting a network of 13 miles of trails, parks, and Bay access.

[Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Beeline Dragway and Gravel Pit, Scottsdale, AZ](#)

EPA conducted two assessments to determine contamination levels at the Dragway and gravel pit used in the 1970s and '80s. Asbestos and chromium contamination was present at the sites, and the properties have been plagued by illegal dumping since the drag racing and gravel extraction activities ceased. The Tribe remediated the property using their EPA "128(a)" Tribal Brownfield Response grant. The sites will be turned into open space and revegetated with native species. The space will also be used for cultural events, including powwows and other tribal ceremonies.

[Iglesia de Dios Isrealita, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The EPA checked the property to see if any contamination came from previous auto repair activities. The owner wants to turn the property into a food pantry or soup kitchen in this area that faces social and economic challenges.

Free Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Providers

Communities can access free brownfields technical assistance through the [Center for Creative Land Recycling](#), or CCLR. This non-profit entity helps communities understand site risks and health impacts, brownfields cleanup funding, innovative cleanup technologies, state and Tribal response programs, incorporating community considerate redevelopment, and extreme weather resiliency. One-on-one consultation, webinars, workshops and grant application feedback are available.

Land Revitalization Technical Assistance (LRTA)

EPA provides technical assistance to communities for discrete projects that feed into longer-term revitalization projects and serve as examples for other communities. Focus areas include: redevelopment planning, adapting to natural disasters, land revitalization tools, “green” street-scaping, improving stormwater management and preventing illegal dumping.

[Recent projects](#) in California include an assessment of urban garden feasibility in Fresno; a market analysis of green businesses in Chico, CA; recommendations for extreme weather resiliency features for a new bayshore park in San Francisco, CA; and an economic analysis of sustainable redevelopment elements for a new housing complex in National City, CA.

Spotlight on National City, CA

EPA assisted National City to develop a sustainable reuse plan for the 14-acre Paradise Creek Apartment Homes project. EPA consultants assessed the reuse of building materials, coastal climate issues, green building approaches, energy saving opportunities, and green infrastructure for each project phase.

The project suggestions included an analysis of the economic benefits, like identifying the return on investment for sustainable activities. They also proposed financial strategies, such as using emissions and carbon markets, environmental investment funds, and creating local incentives. Additionally, they compared the costs of sustainable development to traditional methods.

The main goal of this project is to encourage relocating industrial activities out of a residential area. The EPA's assessment included a formula and timeline to focus first on the most polluting and underused sites. This helped the city come up with incentive strategies for relocating businesses that don't fit the neighborhood.



Paradise Creek Apartment Homes are the first sustainably redesigned affordable homes in Westside neighborhood in National City.



The community celebrates Paradise Creek's ground-breaking.



Chico is working to redevelop this key brownfield site as part of a larger effort to support green companies in “The Wedge” business area.



The Blue Moon Community Garden illustrates the conversion of a brownfield into urban agriculture in Tucson, AZ.

State and Tribal Support

EPA provides funding each year to states, Tribes, and territories for their Brownfields and Emergency Response programs. This money, also called “128(a)” funding, can help leverage EPA Brownfields Grants for communities. Descriptions of specific programs follow below.

California: The California Department of Toxic Substances Control ([DTSC](#)) conducts marketing and outreach, develops and updates tools for its Brownfields response program, and assists with redevelopment projects in communities across California. Through this program, DTSC created the EnviroStor database which compiles information on known brownfields sites across the state. DTSC operates a Revolving Loan Fund initiated through this EPA program.

Nevada: The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection ([NDEP](#)) assists government, Tribal, and nonprofit entities with site assessments and cleanups and helps explore options for redevelopment, including applying for brownfields grants and identifying other sources of funding. NDEP operates a Revolving Loan Fund initiated through the State and Tribal Response program.

Arizona: The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality ([ADEQ](#)) focuses on sustainability, voluntary cleanups, business operations, and permitting to successfully manage and continually enhance the State Response Program. ADEQ helps cities, counties, nonprofits, and Tribes with brownfield assessments, cleanups, and redevelopment.

Hawaii: The Hawaii Department of Health ([HDOH](#)) and Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response ([HEER](#)) Office provides technical assistance to state, city, and county agencies applying for EPA Brownfields Grants. HDOH also provides community outreach and training in brownfields contaminant risks, protection and redevelopment. HDOH operates a Revolving Loan Fund initiated through the EPA program discussed above.

Tribes and Territories: EPA’s Pacific Southwest have EPA-funded Brownfields and Emergency Response Programs that inventory brownfields sites, develop waste management and cleanup programs and conduct other activities, including emergency response and public outreach.



American Samoa is currently using their 128(a) funding to conduct 40-hr HAZWOPER trainings, develop a brownfields inventory and support air quality monitoring efforts. The Rainmaker Hotel in AS, seen above, was assessed under the TBA program.



The State Hotel in Carlin, NV was assessed under an EPA grant, and asbestos abatement and building demolition will be funded through Nevada’s 128(a) grant. The city plans to reuse the site as a community garden.

For more information

Visit the R9 EPA Brownfields website www.epa.gov/brownfields/r9 or contact Region 9 Brownfields Coordinator, Lisa Hanusiak at: (415)-972-3152 or hanusiak.lisa@epa.gov

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