



Advancing Adaptive Reuse to Expand Housing Supply, Support Community Revitalization, and Reduce Childhood Lead Exposure

Purpose

The Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) is charged with providing advice and recommendations to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on issues affecting local governments. This proposed charge would help EPA refine its outreach materials, guidance, and potential technical assistance offerings related to the conversion of existing buildings to new residential use (“adaptive reuse”) when lead and other environmental contaminants are present, including asbestos, PCBs, mold, and PFAS. The charge would support the Senior Lead Leadership Coordinating Committee (SL-LCC) established by the [Administrator to implement the 2018 Federal Lead Action Plan](#), by helping advance private sector innovation and public-private partnerships that facilitate safe and effective reuse projects.

Client Office

Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, with support from Office of External Affairs and EPA program offices as needed.

Background and Need

Adaptive reuse can help cities and counties increase housing supply, revitalize underused corridors, strengthen the local tax base, and improve economic and environmental outcomes, but it can also present significant implementation challenges. Local governments working with private developers often must navigate financing gaps; late-discovered hazards; zoning, permitting and building code issues; liability questions; and the need to coordinate across multiple departments. These challenges are often more complex than those associated with greenfield development or new infill construction, and they can make it harder for communities to redevelop vacant or underutilized properties. At the same time, adaptive reuse directly advances Administration priorities by increasing the supply of new homes, improving affordability for American families, and reducing childhood lead exposure.

In May 2026, EPA hosted a private sector forum on adaptive reuse and lead, and the agency also published an adaptive reuse case study as part of its [FY26 milestones](#) for implementing the 2018 Federal Lead Action Plan. The May forum, along with a similar forum held in April in Manchester, New Hampshire, made clear that developers, investors, and public-sector partners want clearer guidance, a more predictable compliance pathway for addressing lead and other environmental hazards, and better access to EPA tools and resources. The Sandstone, Minnesota case study shows the value of early coordination and effective partnership between a city and a developer. The city stabilized and cleaned up the building before transferring it to the developer, using EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds as part of a layered capital stack. Local zoning and permitting were applied flexibly, which helped move the project quickly into construction to create new workforce housing in a beloved building.

This charge is aligned with EPA’s “Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership”; [Executive Order \(EO\) 14192](#) on federal deregulation; [EO 14394](#) on reducing burdens on housing construction, preservation, and adaptive reuse; and Section 210 (the RESIDE Act) of the [21st Century ROAD to Housing Act](#).



Charge

EPA is seeking LGAC's advice to help shape practitioner-facing resources that better resonate with local governments, developers, investors, and other public-private partners working on adaptive reuse projects where lead and other environmental contaminants are present. The goal is to improve awareness of EPA programs, clarify liability and compliance questions, and identify practical steps EPA can take to help communities turn vacant or underutilized buildings into housing and other productive uses. This work builds on the April and May forums, which highlighted the important role EPA can play by providing funding and technical assistance to support early environmental planning, offering predictable compliance pathways, and facilitating better coordination among public and private actors across the development process.

The charge has four core questions:

- 1) What existing EPA funding, technical assistance, regulatory or voluntary programs could EPA better leverage to help local governments and private-sector partners navigate adaptive reuse projects more efficiently?
- 2) Looking beyond EPA's existing programs, what additional activities or resources, including partnering with other federal agencies, would best help local governments and private-sector partners navigate adaptive reuse projects more efficiently?
- 3) What are the biggest barriers and greatest opportunities for advancing adaptive reuse and community revitalization when lead and other hazards are present?
- 4) What actions could EPA take to help local governments work more effectively with developers, investors, and other public-private partners to move adaptive reuse projects forward?

This charge would help EPA refine its outreach materials, guidance, and potential technical assistance offerings so they better meet the needs of local governments and the private sector, while also creating more opportunities for public-private partnerships that support private-sector innovation. It would also enhance understanding of EPA programs, regulatory pathways, and liability considerations.

Details of LGAC Workgroup Action

This charge would be presented at a public meeting in September 2026 for discussion among LGAC members and input from the public. LGAC members would be selected to join workgroup(s) dedicated to responding to the charge questions. Staff from OCIR would lead the effort and OEA would be available to support the workgroup(s) during and between meetings along with representatives from EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, Office of Water, Office of Air, and Office of Land and Emergency Management, as well as outside representatives as needed.

During these meetings, EPA staff could provide an overview of how EPA's funding, technical assistance, regulatory and voluntary programs intersect with adaptive reuse and community revitalization, including key program, compliance, and liability considerations. LGAC members would use this information, along with input from the public, EPA and industry subject matter experts, to develop responses to the charge questions and identify opportunities to improve EPA's outreach materials, guidance, and technical assistance offerings.



Progress updates from the workgroup would be provided at subsequent public meetings.

Details of LGAC Workgroup Action

The LGAC will draft a letter with recommendations to the Administrator and SL-LCC.