

The Benefits of Brownfields Revitalization¹

- ✓ **Protection of Public Health and the Environment.** By encouraging and supporting the reuse of brownfields, communities can facilitate the clean-up of contaminated properties that otherwise would continue to threaten public health and safety.
- ✓ **Location benefits.** Brownfields revitalization can put prime real estate back into productive use, because brownfields are often located in strategic places near waterfronts, railroad and transportation routes, and center city areas.
- ✓ **Infrastructure advantages.** Brownfields are places that have already been developed. They typically are served with existing infrastructure, which can be more efficient to upgrade when compared to extending new infrastructure into greenfield areas.
- ✓ **Economic/tax base development.** Brownfields cleanup and redevelopment can serve as a catalyst for economic development and expand the jobs and tax base of local governments.
- ✓ **Leveraged investments.** Dollars invested in brownfields typically leverage major resources. The International Economic Development Council conducted a 1999 study of brownfields projects, and concluded that for every public dollar invested in brownfields projects, 2.5 dollars in private sector investment are leveraged. Since the launch of the EPA Brownfields program in 1995, the Agency reports that federal investment of \$700 million in brownfields has leverage \$6.5 billion in additional cleanup and redevelopment resources.
- ✓ **Job creation.** Brownfields redevelopment can be an excellent tool for job creation and training. Since 1995, more than 29,000 jobs have been leveraged as a result of the EPA investment in brownfields revitalization. Many more jobs have been catalyzed by State brownfields programs. In addition, many local communities have used EPA Brownfields Job Training and Redevelopment grants to train citizens in the waste assessment and remediation fields, creating 1,740 brownfields employment opportunities.
- ✓ **Sprawl deterrent.** Disinvestments in central cities and brownfields can push growth to the edge of the established communities, and can result in sprawling development on the fringe. Concerns over liability, contamination, and clean-up costs at urban brownfields can make them less attractive to build on than greenfields (open space), which in turn contributes to sprawl and the associated transportation and environmental issues. Clearly, reinvestment in brownfields is a linchpin of "smart growth." In 2001, an EPA-sponsored study by the George Washington University, titled "Public Policies and Private Decisions Affecting the Redevelopment of Brownfields: An Analysis of Critical Factors, Relative Weights and Area Differentials," found that 4.5 acres of greenfields are saved for every one acre of brownfields that is redeveloped.
- ✓ **Environmental Justice.** Brownfields are often located in poor, predominantly minority communities. The cleanup of these blighted sites can bring new hope, investment, and vitality to these neighborhoods.
- ✓ **Community amenity promotion.** Brownfields revitalization can help localities build on their assets and emphasize the character of the community.

For the most recent information regarding the environmental and economic benefits, go to:

[Brownfields Benefits](#)

¹ Unlocking Brownfields, Keys to Community Revitalization, National Association of Local Government Environmental Professional, Northeast-Midwest Institute