Fixer to Fabulous: Transform Community Obstacles Into Opportunities

ECIA – April 2024
What is a Brownfield:

- Former industrial/commercial properties
- Abandoned or continually available for sale/lease
- Site has a “reputation” that it is contaminated (often not warranted)
- Issues of asbestos materials, buried tanks, waste disposal, etc. causes lack of interest in purchase, liability concerns
- Banks, lenders, investors leery of investment unless they are assured the site is “clean”
- Brownfields are a “syndrome” rather than a regulatory determination
Iowa DNR Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Who we can help:

• Local governments
• Non-profits with community redevelopment or impact
• Area economic development corporations

What we can offer:

• Help determine whether an environmental hindrance exists at a property through site assessment services
• Make recommendations for additional assessment, if contamination indicated; and
• Identify financial assistance programs that may provide grants for environmental cleanup assistance.
What Is Required of the Community?

Communities should identify a key brownfield site they wish to acquire and redevelop, with at least one of the following reuse options:

1) resale for redevelopment, and creation of tax base and jobs;

2) a public reuse of the site of significant value to the community (e.g. - new library); or

3) creation of improved greenspace, recreational use, or natural habitat restoration
Iowa Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Property Assessment Resources - up to $25,000 per site

- **Pre-Purchase Environmental Due Diligence**
  - Phase I assessment grant to learn about site’s history
  - Phase II site assessment to sample soil and groundwater to determine if past uses have contaminated the site
- Grants for asbestos and lead-based paint inspection
Iowa Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Environmental Cleanup Grants – Post Acquisition

75% reimbursement of up to $25,000 for eligible environmental cleanups, including:

- Asbestos & Lead-Based Paint Removal
- Contaminated Soil Removal and Disposal
- Groundwater Cleanup
Brownfield Site Assessment, Acquisition, Cleanup & Redevelopment Process

**PROJECT TIMELINE**

- Phase I
- Tax Foreclosure
- Eminent Domain, or
- Abandonment Proceedings

**Asbestos Inspection**

**Lead-Based Paint Inspection**

**Phase I ESA**

**Phase II ESA**

**Site Acquisition**

**Site Env Cleanup**

**Redevelopment**
Iowa Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Financial Assistance Process:

- Consultation with DNR
- Formal Letter of Request for Assistance
- Grant Reimbursement Contract Issuance
- Performance Period for Grant
- Reimbursement / Closeout
- Your Redevelopment & Success
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

2021 - Former Jim’s Service, Fort Dodge (Webster Co.)

Six former USTs removed and site closed out in UST Section with “NFA” in 2016”
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: 
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities
Former Jim’s Service, Fort Dodge (Webster Co.)

City goal to acquire and renovate into a telecommunication service center
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Former Jim’s Service, Fort Dodge (Webster Co.)

- City conducted Phase I ESA prior to taking title
- IDNR assisted with cost coverage for Asbestos and Lead-based paint inspection ($4,600) and asbestos abatement grant ($1,100)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Former Jim’s Service, Fort Dodge (Webster Co.)

Building was then ‘rehab ready’, and remodeling and conversion begins
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: 
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Former Jim’s Service, Fort Dodge (Webster Co.)

2022 - Remodeled building again a ‘service’ center!
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Abandoned manufacturing plant - Monticello, Iowa
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: *Turning Obstacles into Opportunities*

Monticello, Iowa

Iowa DNR Assistance through Fed Brownfield Funds/Phase I // Asbestos Inspection & Removal - $34,000

Federal EPA CERCLA Removal Action - $400,000
Brownfields in Small and Rural Communities:

*Big Improvements in Small and Rural Communities*

Recreational and Greenspace Creation

Community & Private Investment - $450,000
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities
2004 - Abandoned warehouse - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

2004 - Abandoned warehouse - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)

Improper Demo / Back Taxes Owed / $16,000 for asbestos abatement
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories:
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

2005 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)

Reuse Plan! / County Acquires / DNR $8,000 grant for Asbestos Abatement
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

2006 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: 
*Turning Obstacles into Opportunities*

2006 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: 
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

2008 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
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2008 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities
2018 – Veterans’ Monument / Park - Emmetsburg (Palo Alto Co.)
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: 
Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Community & Charity Investment / $150,000
Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories: Community Visioning and Planning

- Communities should have the primary investment in plans, capital and resources needed to move the site back into reuse

- DNR Brownfield assistance designed to provide solutions to environmental questions that have hindered interest in reuse

- Getting the first dollar into a project is often the catalyst to focus interest, enthusiasm, and partners for a site
Questions? Projects? Scenarios?

To discuss any site or facility in your community you’d like to revitalize contact:

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