

## What is a **Brownfield**?

**Sites that are, or may be perceived to be, contaminated.** Brownfields are vacant and underutilized properties previously used for industrial or commercial activities that may have resulted in contamination from petroleum or hazardous substances. Many other commercial and residential buildings with little or no visible contamination may also qualify as a brownfield site due to dated building materials (i.e. asbestos or lead) or past use. Often seen as eyesores, these sites may stall an area's progress and development. Brownfields can also be seen as **redevelopment opportunities** with the potential to transform community liabilities into assets via revitalization activities that bring new life to an area.

# Property Owner Fact Sheet

## Brownfields Site Reuse & Revitalization Program

### Grays Harbor Council of Governments Coalition

## How is this program **funded**?

The project is funded by a \$600,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the Grays Harbor Council of Governments (GHCOG) Coalition. The Coalition is led by the GHCOG and supported by the Cities of Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Cosmopolis.

The Coalition will work with property owners, developers and other community stakeholders to identify and prioritize brownfield sites in need of environmental site assessments (ESAs) and/or cleanup/reuse plans to support redevelopment. Participation is voluntary.

*Disclaimer: Although this project has been funded wholly or in part by the EPA, the contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the EPA.*

## What are the **benefits** of **brownfield redevelopment**?

Property owners, business owners, and developers who cleanup and reuse brownfields provide benefits to themselves and their communities, including:

- Removing unknowns regarding site conditions that might hold up a sale or redevelopment.
- Increasing return from the property by making it more valuable and marketable.
- Contributing to economic prosperity and environmental restoration in the community.
- Making neighborhoods safer and healthier.
- Avoiding actions by regulatory agencies that may impose penalties and costly cleanups.
- Reducing potential impacts from and to adjacent properties.

The assessment, cleanup and revitalization of vacant and underutilized sites will support several established community goals. We appreciate your support and look forward to your involvement on this transformational project!

## How can you use **grant funding** for your property?

Funding is available to parties interested in completing Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), hazardous building materials surveys, Cleanup Action Plans, and a variety of site-specific reuse planning activities in support of property sale or redevelopment. Property owners, business owners, and developers are encouraged to take advantage of this funding opportunity that will further economic development initiatives, protect public health, and restore the environment!



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Do I own a brownfield site?

If you answer yes to either of the questions below, you may own a brownfield site.

- Is your land idle, vacant, or less productive than it ought to be?
- Are concerns about historic use or environmental contamination contributing to the problem?

## What can grant funds be used for?

For eligible, priority sites, an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), hazardous materials survey, and wide variety of cleanup/reuse planning activities.

- **Phase I ESA:** A research study intended to gather information to assess the environmental condition of the property and identify potential areas where substances may have been released.

Purpose of a Phase I ESA:

- Liability protection under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation & Liability Act (CERCLA).
- Support property sale/acquisition activities.
- Typically required by lenders to secure loans.
- Assess the potential for hazardous or other substances to have impacted the property.
- Typically completed within 6 months of commercial or industrial property transactions and bank or Small Business Administration (SBA) loan applications.

Estimated Value: \$5,000

Estimated Timeline: 1-2 Months

- **Phase II ESA:** A physical study where environmental samples are collected and analyzed to characterize the type, distribution and extent of substances (if present) in the environment.

Purpose of a Phase II ESA:

- Evaluate the findings of the Phase I ESA (if contamination is suspected).
- Determine whether a release has occurred.
- Delineate the extent of contamination.
- Support efforts to obtain regulatory closure from the State.

Estimated Value: \$25,000-\$50,000

Estimated Timeline: 2-3 Months

## Will an environmental site assessment affect the value of my property?

No, an environmental site assessment will quantify the amount of contamination (if any), but assessment itself does not affect property value.

## Which sites are eligible for grant funds?

Generally, a property must be underused, potentially impacted and meet the following criteria:

- The site exhibits high potential for redevelopment and/or other opportunities to benefit the community.
- The site is not included on the EPA National Priority "Superfund" List, under a Consent Decree with the State, or targeted for any federal or state enforcement action.

## How can this assistance enhance property value?

Property values are often affected by uncertainty regarding site history and the financial and legal risks of potential environmental impacts. Environmental site assessments allow property owners to quantify the amount of contamination on a property – if any. For properties with little to no contamination, this knowledge may increase marketability. For sites with significant contamination, property owners can realize increased value through cleanup, tax incentives, and reduced liabilities.

## Will an environmental site assessment trigger a requirement that I take action?

Information collected during a Phase I ESA can be kept confidential and is generally not reported to regulatory agencies. In rare cases, Phase II ESA results may trigger a reporting requirement with the state environmental oversight agency.

## Will I have control over the work done?

The program is voluntary. You will have the right to stop participation in the program at various phases of the assessment process. You will be asked to grant access to your property to an environmental consultant from Stantec Consulting Services Inc. You will receive an electronic copy of all final reports.

## How do I nominate a site for grant funding?

Stakeholders are encouraged to nominate sites for grant funding by completing a Site Nomination Form (download online at website below)

## How do I obtain additional information?

For information or to submit a site for grant funding consideration, contact:

Vicki Cummings, Executive Director  
Grays Harbor Council of Governments  
Phone: (360) 537-4386

Email: [vcummings@ghcog.org](mailto:vcummings@ghcog.org)

Website: <http://www.ghcog.org/brownfield.html>

**Para solicitar información en español contáctese [vcummings@ghcog.org](mailto:vcummings@ghcog.org).**

