

# Property Owner Fact Sheet

## Site Reuse & Revitalization Program

### Sonoma County, California

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**Funding is now available to revitalize underutilized properties in Sonoma County!** Through September 2019, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Assessment Grant funding will be 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. Property owners, businesses and developers are encouraged to take advantage of this funding opportunity that will further economic development initiatives, protect public health, and restore the environment!



### What is a brownfield?

Brownfields are properties whose reuse is complicated by an actual or potential hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Former industrial and commercial properties, including gas stations, warehouses and auto repair facilities often become brownfields. Many other commercial and residential buildings with little or no visible contamination may also qualify due to dated building materials (i.e. asbestos or lead) or past use.

### Benefits of Brownfield Redevelopment

Property owners, businesses 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 adjacent properties (and vice versa).

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!

### Contact Information

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

**Jim Leddy, Special Projects Director**  
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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Do I own a brownfield site?

Ask yourself...

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

If you answered yes to both questions, then you might own a brownfield site.

## 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:** 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 decisions to acquire property.
- Generally required by lenders to secure financing.
- Assess the potential for hazardous or other substances to have impacted the property.

Estimated Value: \$5,000

Estimated Time to Complete: 1-2 Months

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

Purpose of a Phase II ESA:

- Evaluate the findings of a Phase I ESA.
- Determine whether a release has occurred.
- Delineate the extent of contamination.
- Obtain regulatory closure.

Estimated Value: \$20,000-\$25,000

Typical Process: 2-3 Months

## Which sites are eligible for grant funds?

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

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

## How can this assistance enhance the value of my property?

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 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.

## Will an environmental site assessment trigger an enforcement action?

The program is voluntary. Information collected during a Phase I ESA can be kept confidential and typically is not reported to regulatory agencies. In very rare cases, Phase II ESA results that identify a condition of immediate threat to human health and the environment may trigger an enforcement action.

## Will I have control over the work done through this program?

You will have the right to stop participation in the program at various phases of the assessment process. You will be asked to grant property access to our environmental consultant (Stantec Consulting Services Inc.), who will perform all work. You will receive final reports throughout the assessment process.

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

Stakeholders are encouraged to nominate sites for grant funding by completing a Site Nomination Form (available online at [www.sonomacounty.ca.gov](http://www.sonomacounty.ca.gov)).

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

