NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Climate Smart Communities

PE8 Action: Brownfield Clean-up & Redevelopment

1 — 18 Points

A. Why is this action important?

Cleaning up and redeveloping brownfield sites avoids the environmental impacts associated with developing on greenfield sites and puts an environmentally damaged site back into productive use. Investing in brownfields also prevents the loss of open space or land for farming, food production, or other related uses and preserves the ecological benefits of these open areas, such as stormwater management and carbon sequestration. To make brownfield redevelopment even more beneficial to the community, some local governments have focused such efforts on green redevelopment, supporting such uses as renewable energy installations, urban farming, green buildings, smart growth development, or green business siting.

B. How to implement this action

Local governments can start the process by identifying brownfield sites for redevelopment and possible incentives to foster the development of those sites. As one of the first steps, develop a plan for the site(s), either as a standalone redevelopment plan or as part of a larger comprehensive or economic development plan.

The New York State Department of State (DOS) administers a grant program for municipalities that provides funding to identify areas with multiple brownfields sites (Brownfields Opportunity Areas) and perform some preliminary investigation of the site contamination. If a site is government-owned, then local governments will have more control over the use of the site and may elect to issue a request for proposals (RFP) for possible development projects on the site.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) also provides extensive support to help return contaminated sites to productive use through its brownfield and state superfund programs. The DEC Environmental Restoration Program is focused on voluntary cleanup of municipally-owned sites. For private-sector sites, municipalities can promote the DEC Brownfield Cleanup Program to encourage cleanups and redevelopment in their communities.

Local governments should engage the local community to gather public input on the priorities and needs for the community and the best possible use for the site. Local governments can also consider engaging the local development community to promote the use of brownfield sites and provide training on brownfield cleanup.

Master plans or comprehensive plans should be modified as necessary to preferentially remediate and redevelop brownfields sites according to the priorities of the municipality as described in the plans.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

Developing a brownfield plan for a site or several sites could take up to a year, if the planning process involves an environmental analysis, public outreach, and a market survey. Developing a brownfield site can be a multi-year progress, but depends on the needs and demand for new development in the area.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is relevant to any community that has contaminated or potentially contaminated sites. Redevelopment of such sites will require coordination among planning staff, economic development staff, as well as remediation technical experts,

and the State Department of Environmental Conservation.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Points are earned for this Climate Smart Communities (CSC) action are tiered based on the following elements of brownfield redevelopment.

	POSSIBLE POINTS
Update an existing master plan or comprehensive plan to prioritize brownfield redevelopment.	1
Develop a site-specific brownfield redevelopment plan or a strategy for multiple brownfield sites.	3
Utilize green redevelopment (e.g., LEED) or green remediation techniques (e.g., DEC DER-31 or ASTM Standard Guide for Greener Cleanup).	2
Use the brownfield site as the location for green businesses.	2
Provide a Certificate of Completion from DEC to show that a site has been cleaned up.*	2

*Applicants may earn two points for each geographically separate brownfield site that has been cleaned up, up to a maximum of five sites (i.e., there is a maximum of 10 points available for this tier, for cleaning up five different sites within the last 10 years). **A copy of the Certificate of Completion (COC) from DEC is required to show that the cleanup is complete.** The Open NY Website contains a list of Brownfield Cleanup Program COCs issued by site name, DEC site number, and location. Sites in a particular community can also be searched on the DECinfo Locator (DIL), which provides key site documents, including COCs. If the COC is not available on DIL, send an email that includes the specific site names and site codes of interest to derweb@dec.ny.gov to reach the DEC Division of Environmental Remediation.

F. What to submit

In the submittal, make it clear which tiers of points the local government is applying for and submit copies of the documentation associated with each tier. This may include copies of brownfield redevelopment plans, certificates of completion from DEC (demonstrating the completion of brownfield clean-ups), and other evidence of green redevelopment, green remediation techniques, and siting of green businesses/green industry.

Include dates in the documentation. All tiers (i.e., plans, strategies, projects) under this action must have been completed within the last ten years to be eligible for points.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

G. Links to additional resources or best practices

- Open NY Website: Brownfield Cleanup Program, Certificates of Completion: This dataset shows sites that have been issued a Certificate of Completion (COC) in the State of New York under the DEC Brownfield Cleanup Program.
- DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Grants: How to Get Started
- DEC Green Remediation Policy (DER-31)
- DEC Environmental Cleanup & Brownfields
- DEC Brownfield Redevelopment Toolbox
- US EPA Sustainable Reuse of Brownfields
- US EPA Brownfields and Land Revitalization
- American Planning Association, “Creating Community-Based Brownfield Redevelopment Strategies”

- Guidance for Federal Agencies on Sustainable Practices for Designed Landscapes
- ASTM International, News Release: Greener Cleanup Standard Approved
- ASTM International, ASTM E2893-16e1 Standard Guide for Greener Cleanups

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.