



MINNESOTA BROWNFIELDS

2025 Year in Review

OUR MISSION

Minnesota Brownfields is a 501 ©(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is to promote, through education, research, and partnerships, the efficient cleanup and reuse of contaminated land as a means of generating economic growth, strengthening communities and enabling sustainable land use and development.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Charlie Vander Aarde, MB President
Senior Account Supervisor, Tunheim

December 2025

This message is shared with gratitude and appreciation. When I first joined Minnesota Brownfields in 2017, the Advisory Committee was a good home for a lobbyist who wanted to contribute a local government perspective to the organization.

When brownfields professionals talk to me today, I ask what they are interested in and how they want to contribute. For many, the Advisory Committee remains a great first stop in their Minnesota Brownfields participation journey.

Committee membership led to board service, and since taking that step six years ago, I have worked with so many wise, dedicated, strategic leaders who share their time and expertise to support our members and the association.

To the programming and membership committee members, thank you for volunteering and creating value and professional development opportunities for our members. We held seven in-person events in 2025 where 524 attendees learned and networked with other industry professionals.

Minnesota Brownfields continues to push the geographic edges of where we work. Members come from the metropolitan region and from greater Minnesota. Outreach and engagement this year in southeast Minnesota and the Iron Range demonstrate our commitment to be a statewide organization.

We also push to ensure more developers are included. Our emerging developers event is always a highlight of our programming year, and we enjoyed inviting more new developers to the table and connecting with the new faces who will become leaders in the field.

Our sponsors keep Minnesota Brownfields fueled, and I thank all of you for your ongoing support. Our individual members provide additional capacity for the important work, and I thank you too.

As my term ends, I encourage you all to invite someone new to an event in 2026. Show them what they can experience by participating in Minnesota Brownfields and getting involved with an important network.

Enjoy the highlights of 2025 as we look forward to celebrating our 20th year in 2026.

Warmly,

Charlie Vander Aarde

Minnesota Brownfields President
Senior Account Supervisor, Tunheim

Membership by the Numbers

- **207** Total Members
- **1** Gold Member
- **7** Silver Supporters
- **22** Bronze Partners
- **17** Public Sector, Non-Profit, and One-Person Companies
- **5** Student Members
- **58** Individual Members

Highlights

- 7 in-person events
- Held the Annual ReScape Gala at the historic Grain Belt Offices in Minneapolis
- Toured the ReScape Award Winning Confluence Project in Hastings, along with a walking tour of the Hastings Riverfront Redevelopment Project highlights
- Held our first CLE course providing a workshop on ASTM Certified Environmental Professionals standard
- Continued the Emerging and Diverse Developers Program with a program focused on financing options for Brownfield Projects.
- Added a Meet the Regulators open house to the annual State of Brownfields Event – Keynote speakers included: Representative Peter Fischer; Deputy DEED Commissioner Kevin McKinnon; and Assistant MPCA Commissioner Kirk Koudelka
- Held a Minnesota Brownfields Board in-person retreat this summer
- Attended the Iron Range Brownfields Coalition Fall Lunch & Learn Sessions and the Spring Brownfields Conference in Virginia, Minnesota
- Minnesota Brownfields Executive Director, Elizabeth Kluesner, spoke at the National Brownfields Conference in Chicago about the important role statewide brownfield organizations play in redevelopment success stories.
- Minnesota Brownfields held a happy hour at the National Brownfields Conference



ReScape 2025 Award Winners



Community Impact Award – Small Project

Bimosedaa,
Minneapolis, MN



Community Impact Award – Large Project

Minneapolis American Indian Center, Minneapolis, MN



Economic Impact Award

Hatchery Row,
City of Battle Lake, MN



Environmental Impact Award

Settlers East, Woodbury, MN



Innovation Award

Soul, St. Paul, MN



Mac Hyde Scholarship Award Winner

Firdows Mohammed



Mac Hyde Scholarship Award Winner

Lucille Hugunin

RESCAPE AWARDS

ReScape 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

- 6** Projects Nominated
- 1** Project started in the Minnesota Brownfields/Hennepin County Gap Financing Program
- 2** Mac Hyde Scholarship Checks Awarded
- 197** People Attended ReScape 2025

Master of Ceremonies:
TONYA BAUER
Saint Paul Port Authority

Raised

\$45,900

at the 2025 ReScape Event with

\$10,500

of it raised for the Mac Hyde Scholarship Account

Gold Sponsors:



Fredrikson



Mac Hyde Scholarship Award Sponsors:



Silver Sponsors:



Table Sponsors:

- Rachel Contracting LLC
- Frattalone Companies
- Terracon Consultants, Inc.
- Landmark Environmental
- GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc
- Vonco & Veit

Ad Sponsors:

- Carlson McCain
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- Stoel Rives LLP
- WSB

ReScape 2025



2025 Educational Forums

Minnesota Brownfields held five in-person educational forums in 2025 around Minnesota. We focused on professional development and private/public sector collaboration. Curriculum for the 2025 programming was generated by our members continuing our emphasis on responding to the educational needs of our membership.

Hennepin and Ramsey Counties Grant Program Luncheon in partnership with EDAM February 28, 2025

SPONSOR:



LOCATION:

Barr
Engineering Co.

TOPIC:

Hennepin and Ramsey
programs including, eligibility
and how to apply.

TOTAL ATTENDEES:

43

SPEAKERS:

- **Michael Zazzera** – Hennepin County
- **Ella Mitchell** – Ramsey County



This year, Minnesota Brownfields hosted its first joint event with the Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM) on Site Assessment Grants in the Metro Region.



County representatives, Ella Mitchell, Ramsey County, and Michael Zazzera, Hennepin County, spoke to EDAM and Minnesota Brownfield members about funding opportunities available to brownfield redevelopment projects.



Jenni Brekken, Senior Environmental Engineer, Barr Engineering, welcomed attendees to the event.

2025 Educational Forums

Spring Tour | May 14, 2025

SPONSOR:



TOPIC:

Riverfront Industrial to
Riverfront Recreation

TOTAL ATTENDEES:

43

SPEAKERS:

- **Michael Ginsbach**, Hydrogeologist, MPCA
- **Sarah Jarman**, Environmental Project Manager, MN DOT
- **Todd Renville**, Ramboll Engineering
- **Dave Knight**, MPCA VIC Program
- **Cathy Udem**, Dakota County
- **John Hinzman**, Community Development Director, Hastings
- **Lindsey Brown**, Project Manager/ Funding Specialist, Stantec



As part of Minnesota Brownfields' annual Spring Tour event, participants began the event by hearing from project experts as they walked the riverfront property.



After the walking tour, attendees learned about the unique challenges The Confluence Project faced along with funding opportunities and other project nuances.



Minnesota Brownfield members tour the recently renovated Confluence Hotel in Hastings, MN. The Confluence project was a 2024 ReScape Award-winner.

2025 Educational Forums

ASTM Workshop | September 9, 2025

SPONSOR:



TOPIC:

What is ASTM's Certified Environmental Professional Program? And, do you need a CEP for your project?

TOTAL ATTENDEES:

37

SPEAKERS:

- **Jeri Massengill**, Owner, Historical Information Gatherers, Inc
- **Sean Leary**, GZA, Moderator
- **Kaitlin Oувerson**, Geosyntec
- **Christopher Cerny**, Associate, Winthrop & Weinstine
- **Rick Kubler**, Lathrop GPM
- **Aaron Vap**, MidCountry Bank
- **Michelle Hosfield**, Stantec
- **Graham Hanson**, Mortenson



Minnesota Brownfields' ASTM panel, moderated by Director Sean Leary, fields questions about how CEP could be utilized for various brownfield projects.



Historical Information Gatherers, Inc. Owner Jeri Massengill presents an introduction and history of how ASTM CEP has evolved.



Winthrop & Weinstine Associate Christopher Cerny presents an interesting due diligence case study at the ASTM Workshop sponsored by WSB.

2025 Educational Forums

Emerging Developers Workshop | October 9, 2025

SPONSOR:



TOPIC:

Financing options for Brownfield Projects

TOTAL ATTENDEES:

87

SPEAKERS:

- **Elizabeth Schmiesing**, Partner, Winthrop & Weinstine
- **Kevin Carroll**, Principal Project Coordinator, City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department
- **Daniela Lorenz**, Principal Project Manager, City of Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
- **Michael Zazzera**, Hennepin County
- **Ella Mitchell**, Ramsey County
- **Kristin Lukes**, Department of Employment & Economic Development
- **Shannon Martin**, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- **Mike Bisanz**, Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer – HUD/FHA Colliers Mortgage
- **Mary Stoick**, Senior Vice President, Director of Tax Credit Lending Sunrise Bank
- **Andy Donahue**, State Director - Minnesota Small Business Development Center
- **Kate Speed**, Director of Transformative Development, LISC
- **Scott Anderson**, Director of Community Lending, Land Bank Twin Cities
- **Miluska Linares Novota**, Hortensia PLLC



Winthrop & Weinstine Partner Betsy Schmiesing opens the Emerging and Diverse Developers event with a discussion on brownfield basics: What is a brownfield?



Municipal representatives Kevin Carroll, City of Minneapolis, and Daniela Lorenz, City of St. Paul, discuss how cities approach brownfield projects and how they can collaborate with other public and private entities to work towards redevelopment.



Minnesota Brownfields' highest attended educational event, the Emerging and Diverse Developers Workshop, took place on October 9, at Westwood Hills Nature Center.

2025 Educational Forums

Meet the Regulators at State of Brownfields | November 13, 2025

SPONSOR:



TOPIC:

Learn from Minnesota's public policy leaders and meet the regulators.

TOTAL ATTENDEES:

65

SPEAKERS:

- **Kirk Koudelka**, Assistant Commissioner, Land Policy and Strategic Initiatives, MPCA
- **Kevin McKinnon** – Deputy Commissioner, Economic Development and Research, DEED
- **Legislator – Rep. Peter Fischer**
- **Open House Participants:** MPCA, DEED, Minnesota Department of Agriculture; Minnesota Department of Transportation; Met Council, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, Capital Region Watershed District



Minnesota Brownfields' annual Meet the Regulators at State of Brownfields event was held at Herbie's in the Park in St. Paul. Attendees learned from speakers through a formal presentation, an interactive open house and a networking hour.



Kirk Koudelka, Assistant Commissioner, Land Policy and Strategic Initiatives, MPCA, gave a policy update to event attendees.



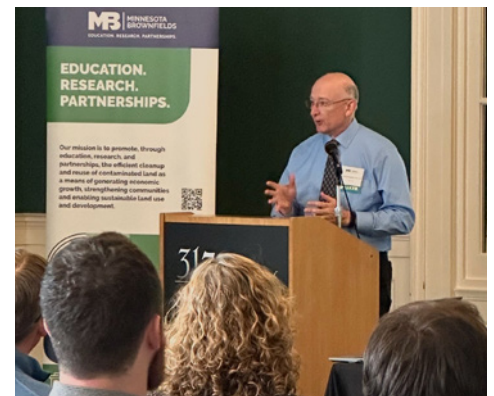
Representatives from the MPCA, DEED, MN Dept. of Ag., MNDOT, Met Council, Hennepin County, Ramsey County and the Capital Region Watershed District were present to answer questions about policies and projects relating to brownfield redevelopment.



Public and private sector members come together to discuss recent brownfield project issues.



Kevin McKinnon, Deputy Commissioner, Economic Development and Research, DEED, spoke to attendees and gave a policy update.



Representative Peter Fischer, District 44A, provided an elected official's perspective on state brownfield policy.

BROWNFIELD GAP FINANCING PROGRAM

Minnesota Brownfields continues to be the co-administrator of the BGFP in partnership with Hennepin County.

2025 was the first full grant cycle where emerging developers were included in the program eligibility. The program funded 7 brownfield redevelopment projects from emerging developers.

The Brownfield Gap Financing Program (BGFP) provides grants to nonprofit developers and local units of government for environmental assessment of property in Hennepin County through funding from the County's Environmental Response Fund (ERF).

13 Minnesota Brownfields member firms were approved contractors in the BGFP for 2025.



2025 Grant Project Highlights:

27

**Total Projects
Funded**

7

**Emerging Developers
Projects**

\$408,426

**Total Project
Dollars Awarded**

AFFORDABLE
HOUSING:

14 projects

PARKS/CIVIC:

4 projects

YOUTH AND FAMILY
SERVICES:

5 projects

HOUSING:

2 projects

COMMERCIAL:

2 projects

Hennepin County Brownfield Gap Financing Project Examples

APPLICANT: Little Earth Housing

PROJECT: Rehabilitation of Little Earth Housing

The Little Earth of United Tribes Housing Corporation received funding for its rehabilitation of Little Earth, a Housing and Urban Development subsidized housing complex located in the urban industrial core of Minneapolis in the East Phillips Neighborhood. Little Earth was founded in 1973 and remains the only American Indian/Native preference project-based Section 8 rental assistance community in the United States. Its residents represent 39 tribes.

It is developed with 34 multi-family buildings that contain a total of 212 units; a management office building that includes offices, a gym, a kitchen and laundry room; another community building occupied by offices, a teen center, and a kitchen; and a maintenance building. Little Earth has been continuously operated by a 100% Native Resident Governing Body and 75% Native Executive Team since 1983.

The Project is the substantial rehabilitation of the property—the first since its initial construction in 1973. The 212 units of housing (all 30% AMI) are comprised of 134 townhomes and three apartment buildings.

APPLICANT: Investoration Development, LLC

PROJECT: The CORA Townhomes

Investoration Development, LLC received funding for *The CORA Townhomes* project. The Site is currently occupied by three single-family homes and a commercial structure. Sam Owens III is the sole owner of Investoration. Altogether, five parcels were assembled during 2022-2024 for the development of the Project, a two-phase affordable cohousing project located in the Southeast Como neighborhood of Minneapolis within a Qualified Census Tract. The 16-unit project will feature four townhome buildings, each with four side-by-side units designed for shared, community-focused living. The Project addresses the need for affordable, inclusive, and sustainable urban housing. When complete, it will support no less than 96 residents, many of whom are underserved by traditional housing, and aims to offer a replicable model for intentional, community-led living.

Investoration and its owner Sam Owens III is an emerging developer who focuses on real estate acquisition, renovation, and inclusive housing development. This Project is his first project as a developer.

RAMSEY COUNTY SITE ASSESSMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Ramsey County Site Assessment Grant Program



Minnesota Brownfields was awarded the contract by Ramsey County to administer the Site Assessment Grant Program beginning in November 2023. The Site Assessment Program offers financial assistance to help offset the cost of environmental assessment for affordable housing and mixed use development projects, including youth, family, homeless supportive and community services, to improve indoor air quality and/or remove, prevent, or reduce blight. Site Assessment Grants support projects in the early stages of development where site assessment and investigation are needed. Eligible applicants are registered non-profits, emerging developers or a government supported organization or government entity.

Maximum Grant Requests: \$25,000

The program continued to grow in 2025. 12 Minnesota Brownfield members are approved contractors in the program.

November 2023-2024 Grant Program Highlights Include:

- 12 total projects funded
- \$167,671 total grant funds awarded
- 4 Affordable Housing
- 3 Mixed Use Commercial/Affordable Housing
- 3 Youth & Family Services
- 1 Park
- 1 Education

Site Assessment Grant Project Highlights



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Clues Early Childhood & Wellness Center

APPLICANT: CLUES

PROJECT: CLUES Family Wellness Center

CLUES, a Minnesota nonprofit organization received funding for the CLUES East Side Early Childhood Education and Family Wellness Center in St. Paul.

CLUES (Spanish for: Latino Communities United in Service) is Minnesota's largest Latino-led organization.

It was founded in 1981 by and for Latinos to provide culturally and linguistically relevant services with the mission of advancing social and economic equity and wellbeing for Latinos.

CLUES recently purchased a site located on the East Side that had previously housed a Head Start early childhood education program and a multi-purpose community facility. The Site will be redeveloped to create a new East Side Early Childhood Education and Family Wellness Center that will offer low-income Spanish speaking Latino and immigrant families one-stop access to integrated, holistic, and culturally responsive services. The Center will be located near CLUES' headquarters on the East Side of St. Paul, in one of the lowest-income neighborhoods in the city and an area that is considered a food and childcare desert. When it opens in 2025, the Center will offer 56 childcare slots in a subsidized space for at least four Latina childcare providers to launch their own small businesses. The second floor of the building will offer

RAMSEY COUNTY SITE ASSESSMENT GRANT PROGRAM

coordinated access to other integrated services aimed at improving early childhood health and outcomes, including mental health, family services, employment and housing assistance, case management and resource navigation, benefits screening, etc. The Canasta Familiar food pantry will be on the main floor with a separate entrance. It is anticipated that 15 FTE jobs will be created.



Childcare Center at Clues

APPLICANT: Metro Deaf School

PROJECT: Metro Deaf School Addition

Metro Deaf School, a Minnesota nonprofit organization, received funding for its school addition and parking improvement project in St. Paul. Metro Deaf School was founded as a charter school in 1993 to serve Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing students birth-12th+ grade in the Twin Cities area and western Wisconsin.

The Site was used by GND, Inc. between 1952 and 1986 for manufacturing lead acid automobile batteries. Documented impacts to soil, groundwater, and soil vapor are associated with the petroleum products and chlorinated solvents that were handled, stored, and released during GNB, Inc. operations, including known petroleum impacts to soils that originated from a leaking underground storage tank. The potential also exists for impacts from releases to nearby and upgradient sites, including the Koppers Coke Superfund Site.

The Project includes re-surfacing and re-sloping the parking lot to improve accessibility for students who use wheelchairs or have other mobility impairments. Additionally, the metal garage structure that is west-adjacent to the school building will be demolished and an addition to the school will be constructed in its place. The addition will house a gym, additional classroom, office space, conference rooms, storage space, locker rooms, and common areas. The Project will result in the retention of 109 FTE jobs and the creation of 10 FTEs over the next two to three years. They estimate 50 retained construction jobs. The Site is located in an MPCA Environmental Justice Area of Concern.



Artist Rendering of the new Metro Deaf School

Minnesota Brownfields Committees

ADVISORY:

- **Kristin Lukes**, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development - Chair
- **John Kinny**, The Opus Group
- **Mary Finch**, Hennepin County
- **Bruce Johnson**, Bay West
- **Rick Kubler**, Lathrop GPM
- **Amy Hadiaris**, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- **John Berger**, Minnesota Department of Transportation
- **Lee Zettler**, MN Department of Agriculture
- **David Liverseed**, Kiewit
- **Ania McDonnell**, Metro Cities
- **Kevin Carroll**, City of Minneapolis
- **Jon Blaha**, Ryan Companies
- **Torre Ippolito**, US EPA Region V Brownfields
- **Tigh Surdez**, Bell Bank

MEMBERSHIP:

- **Richard Manser**, milepost12 LLC - Chair
- **Jim Crowl**, Carlson McCain
- **Adam Zobel**, Stantec
- **Caroline Elling**, Landmark Environmental
- **Christopher Cerny**, Winthrop & Weinstine
- **Matthew J. Robey**, Terracon

RESCAPE/PROGRAM COMMITTEE :

- **Derek Schilling**, Braun Intertec - Chair
- **Cathy Udem**, Dakota County Water Resources
- **El Langland**, DEED-Brownfields and Redevelopment
- **Eric Blodgett**, Barr Engineering
- **Jeffery Sepesi**, Environmental Law and Science PLLC
- **Jennifer Force**, Braun Intertec
- **Kaitlin Oувerson**, Geosyntec
- **Michael Zazzera**, Hennepin County
- **Michelle Hosfield**, Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
- **Richard Manser**, milepost12
- **Ryan Spencer**, WSB
- **Sara Collova**, Frattalones
- **Sarah Illi**, Port Authority of St. Paul
- **Sean Leary**, GZA GeoEnvironmental
- **Sheri Fling**, Partner Engineering and Science, Inc
- **Thomas Braun**, Stoel Rives LLP

Minnesota Brownfields Members

GOLD MEMBER

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- Braun Intertec Corporation
- Geosyntec
- SEH
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- Carlson McCain
- Fredrikson
- GZA GeoEnvironmental
- Inland Development Partners
- The Javelin Group
- KLJ Engineering
- Landmark Environmental, LLC
- Lathrop GPM LLP
- Loucks

- Merjent, Inc.
- The Opus Group
- Pace Analytical Services, LLC
- Ramboll Engineering
- Rock Leaf Water Environmental LLC
- Stinson LLP
- Stoel Rives LLP
- Tankenoff Families Foundation
- Vonco
- Winthrop & Weinstine
- WSB

PUBLIC SECTOR, NON-PROFIT, AND ONE-PERSON COMPANIES:

- City of Minneapolis - CPED
- City of Rochester
- City of St. Cloud Economic Development
- Condition Services LLC
- Dakota County CDA

- Dakota County Water Resources
- DEED
- Duluth Economic Development Authority
- Duluth Seaway Port Authority
- Hennepin County
- HTB Project Navigation LLC
- Metropolitan Council

- MN Dept of Transportation
- Parkway Law LLC
- Port Authority of St. Paul
- Ramsey County Community & Economic Development
- St. Louis County Economic & Community Development

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RETIRED MEMBERS

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- Tom Binsfeld
- Jonathon Blaha
- Eric Blodgett
- Sarah Jo Boser
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- Christopher Cerny
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- Alana Crawford
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- Shanna Schmitt
- David Schultz
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- Jacob Smokovitz
- Jerry (Gerald) Strub
- Tigh Surdez
- Mark Umholtz
- Sherry Van Duyn
- Stacey Van Patten
- Charlie Vander Aarde
- Michael Wardwell

STUDENT MEMBERS

- Sean Bartlett
- Ashley Crowl
- Wendy Erickson
- Lucille Hugunin
- Peter D. Michel

Staff



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Executive Director,
Minnesota Brownfields



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HTB Project Navigation, LLC
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Financing Grant Program & Ramsey
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MEGAN THORSTAD
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