Brownfields Basics is an introductory, four-part program on brownfield redevelopment offered by Minnesota Brownfields for communities of all sizes throughout the State of Minnesota. This program breaks down the complex layers of redevelopment into clear and coherent components to enable communities across the state with the tools needed to develop a local process for removing barriers to successful redevelopment. The four-part program consists of:

1. Foundation
2. Fundamentals
3. Friends
4. Financing

**PART 1

FOUNDATION**

Brownfields are properties that are difficult to redevelop due to past use and the presence or suspected presence of contaminants or hazardous substances. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) offer incentives and funding to assist communities in reusing brownfield sites to create new jobs and spur economic development. Over 10,000 brownfields are scattered throughout Minnesota.

Many communities across the State of Minnesota are faced with economic challenges and seek to repurpose previously developed properties for new uses. Faced with several hurdles and equipped with minimal information, such as lack of access to process and resources, communities’ apprehension and the reality of an intimidating scenario often stifle redevelopment before it begins. In addition, smaller property owners and developers often lack adequate information about environmental due diligence. Learning how to navigate the process of environmental due diligence can help prevent headaches, including increased project costs and inability to apply for public resources.

Identifying a shared end-goal for the redevelopment is the most critical starting point for any redevelopment project. The Foundation session answers a community’s basic questions about the redevelopment process, and outlines options for repurposing older, blighted and/or vacant sites. Participants will leave the Foundation session with a solid grounding in appropriate environmental due diligence and steps to successful site reuse.
PART 2

**FUNDAMENTALS**

The Fundamentals session offers a custom-designed educational curriculum via a half or full-day workshop that covers a range of specialized knowledge and skills needed to develop a local brownfield redevelopment program. Some of the core session objectives are:

- Building community support, developing a timeline for the redevelopment and dealing with unexpected scenarios.
- Instructing community leaders and stakeholders on managing projects on-time and on-budget.
- Overview of required environmental due diligence involved in most site reuse to protect property owners and potential developers.
- Engaging on-site workshops featuring local experts in redevelopment to share direct project experience and knowledge.
- Best practices and information sharing on the tools needed for initiating local projects.
- Review and assessment of Main Street revitalization, scattered vacant sites, hard-to-reuse properties (gas stations, etc.), and other redevelopment opportunities.

Participants will leave the Fundamentals session with tools and strategies to assist them in preparing for successful redevelopment in their communities.

PART 3

**FRIENDS**

Finding industry partners, advocates, and collaborators is an essential piece of the redevelopment process. The Friends session provides instruction and access strategies to assist local leaders in building relationships to enhance capacity and successfully navigate the redevelopment process from start to finish.

Depending on the geographic region, and project scope and nature, potential collaborations exist to build a brownfield program. These may include non-traditional partners at the federal, state, regional, and local level from both the private and public sectors. Minnesota Brownfields is viewed as an industry leader in fostering new partnerships across sectors to make a redevelopment project a reality. We work in a targeted manner to connect communities to the right professionals at the right time to help make redevelopment successful. Participants will finish the Friends session informed about the resources that will best support their redevelopment goals.
PART 4
FINANCING

Funding can be the greatest obstacle to instigating brownfields redevelopment. The Financing session features a hands-on, interactive workshop and engaging discussion with state and federal agencies, along with other organizations that participate in funding for redevelopment. Many redevelopment projects depend on multiple funding streams in order to be feasible.

Minnesota Brownfields will assist communities in creating a “Redevelopment Roadmap” and provide tools to identify which grants, loans, and other funding sources can best support a redevelopment from start to finish. This session provides an opportunity for one-on-one discussions with State agency representatives, and is an excellent fit for rural or small communities. Participants will leave the Financing session equipped with financial strategies and programs to support their redevelopment.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Minnesota Brownfields offers additional customized educational programs and trainings on topics relevant to the redevelopment sector. After the introductory program has been completed, supplemental training is encouraged. Topics covered include:

- Redevelopment visioning workshops
- Economic feasibility and sustainability analysis
- Assistance with environmental justice issues
- Site investigation & assessment
- Identification of potential funding sources
- Environmental cleanup and remediation
- Guidance in finding and contracting with environmental firms
- Negotiation and risk management
- Grant writing training
- Connecting communities with state and federal agencies and other partners

ABOUT MINNESOTA BROWNFIELDS

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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