

COMMUNITY LIAISON PACKET

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***University of Connecticut's
Technical Assistance to
Brownfields and
The New England Rural
Health Association***



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PURPOSE

This packet is designed to provide municipalities and community partners with a foundational understanding of brownfields, from site identification to community-driven redevelopment. It brings together essential guidance, tools, and frameworks to support informed decision-making, meaningful engagement, and equitable revitalization. By outlining key concepts, assessment processes, stakeholder strategies, and redevelopment considerations, this resource equips communities to navigate brownfield projects with confidence and clarity.

ABOUT US

The UConn Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Program, supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, provides free technical expertise to help New England communities advance brownfield assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. UConn TAB offers technical and regulatory guidance, grant and document review, and assistance with community engagement and education. The rural outreach and engagement partner, **The New England Rural Health Association (NERHA)**, promotes the health and vitality of rural communities across the six New England states. Through its broad membership and collaborative partnerships, NERHA strengthens regional learning, resource sharing, and support for organizations working to improve rural health.

BUILD A BROWNFIELDS FOUNDATION

OVERVIEW

This section provides a baseline understanding of brownfields and brownfields redevelopment for community liaisons and partners. Recognizing that brownfields projects can be complex and technical, equipping people with foundational brownfields knowledge is an important first step.

WHAT TO EXPECT...

BROWNFIELDS 101 FLYER

A concise, plain-language document explaining what brownfields are, why they matter, and how redevelopment can benefit communities. The contents of this Brownfields 101 flyer can be shared in many different formats including, social media posts, posters, brochures and more.

COMMON ACRONYMS IN BROWNFIELDS

This document includes different types of acronyms that you may come across when supporting brownfields work, reducing barriers to understanding. Many of these are commonly known while some are very technical.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR MUNICIPALITIES

This tool is designed for municipal officials and nonprofits organizations. It provides different strategies for opening a dialogue and gaining buy-in for affordable housing from community members that may be opposed to the idea.

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT IN BROWNFIELDS

Brownfields redevelopment is often associated with gentrification, which can sometimes lead to displacement. UConn TAB's Anti-Displacement Guides discuss preventing displacement and advocating for equitable outcomes in brownfields projects, with resources designed for both municipal partners and community members.

COMMON CONTAMINANTS FACT SHEETS

These are easy-to-understand fact sheets describing typical brownfields contaminants, potential health impacts, and how the contaminants are safely assessed and cleaned up. The fact sheets are meant to educate community members on environmental hazards, building understanding instead of fear.

GET TO KNOW YOUR SITE(S)

OVERVIEW

The following resources are available **at no cost** through UConn TAB. Each resource includes a written report that documents findings and recommendations, helping communities access additional technical support, clarify site conditions, and make informed decisions throughout the brownfields redevelopment process.

Community liaisons can use these resources to support local conversations, answer questions, and collaborate with municipal partners to build knowledge.

WHAT TO EXPECT...

BROWNFIELD INVENTORY

A brownfields inventory is a living list of properties with known or suspected contamination that helps communities understand redevelopment opportunities and prioritize sites for future action. Brownfields Inventories take into account public databases, municipal lists, zoning, ownership, environmental conditions and more to help you identify sites and begin reuse planning.

RECORD REVIEW

A record review examines available historical, environmental, and regulatory documents to better understand a site's past uses, potential contamination, and existing conditions. Record reviews do not take the place of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, but they can get your community better prepared for one as well as determining next steps.

DATA GAP ANALYSIS

A data gap analysis identifies missing or incomplete information needed to make informed decisions about site assessment, cleanup, or reuse, and is used to guide next steps such as additional investigation, technical assistance, or funding opportunities.

SITE REUSE ASSESSMENT

Site reuse assessments explore potential future uses for brownfields properties by considering community needs, market conditions, and environmental constraints. Site Reuse Assessments include detailed, visual renderings (images) of what the site could become, making this tool very valuable for building project momentum, community visioning, stakeholder engagement, and redevelopment planning.

ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY

OVERVIEW

This section introduces the SEEDS framework and related tools that support effective community engagement in brownfields projects. It guides communities in identifying and involving stakeholders, evaluating local conditions and capacity, and planning inclusive meetings and discussions that build trust, share information, and support sustainable redevelopment outcomes.

WHAT TO EXPECT...

SEEDS FRAMEWORK

This is UConn TAB's framework for community engagement. It outlines different steps for meaningfully involving local residents in your brownfields projects. S stands for Stakeholders, E stands for Educate, E stands for Empower, D stands for Disseminate and S stands for Sustainable Outreach.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

This tool will help you find diverse stakeholders, explore who has the most power and influence in your community, and determine who has the most interest in your brownfields redevelopment project.

SWOT ANALYSIS

This tool allows you to examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in your community as they relate to brownfields redevelopment and community engagement.

COMMUNITY MEETING CHECKLIST

This tool provides a helpful checklist for planning a community meeting, hosting the actual event, and evaluation / follow-up once the meeting is over.

LISTENING SESSIONS

This tool provides an overview what a listening session is, how to plan one for your community, and how they can support your brownfields redevelopment / community engagement goals.

FOCUS GROUPS

This tool briefly summarizes focus groups and provides some guiding questions to help you get started in hosting one in your community.