

COLORADO BRIGHTFIELDS: Resources that Support Development

Links to programs that help communities and developers offset cleanup costs and minimize potential risks associated with developing brightfields.

ABOUT COLORADO BRIGHTFIELDS

COLORADO BRIGHTFIELDS was developed by Convergence Associates and its partners, Colorado State University and Bright Rain Solutions. For additional information contact brightfields@ConvergenceAssociates.com.

This research was supported by the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab of the University of Denver. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Colorado Lab or the University of Denver.



The largest roadblocks to developing brightfields include concern about potential liability and potential added costs of cleanup and installation on previously contaminated property. The following programs help offset the cost of cleanup or provide some level of assurance against future liability to help communities address these challenges.

[Colorado Voluntary Cleanup Program \(VCUP\)](#): The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division provides resources to communities and private parties to clean up contaminated sites to a level required for reuse or intended new use. The program is structured to eliminate barriers to the sale, cleanup, reuse, or redevelopment of previously contaminated property; encourage and facilitate prompt clean-up activities; and provide assurances against regulatory enforcement. Once cleanup is complete, or if cleanup is not required, VCUP can provide a “No Further Action” letter as assurance that neither the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nor the state will require additional cleanup. VCUP has provided assistance to nearly 1,400 properties to date.

[Targeted Brownfield Assessments \(TBAs\)](#): The EPA and CDPHE, through contract with EPA, conduct TBAs to evaluate sites for extent of contamination or lack thereof. TBAs are available to public and nonprofit groups, with preferential assistance given to groups who already have redevelopment goals in place for a specific site and where those goals provide a clear public benefit.

[Colorado Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund \(CBRLF\)](#): Organizations can apply to this public-private partnership that offers financing with reduced interest rates, flexible loan terms, and flexibility in acceptable forms of collateral. CBRLF provides an average of about \$1.5 million in cleanup grants to qualifying local governments and non-profits annually.

[1306 Brownfields Cleanup Grants](#): CDPHE budgets up to \$250,000 annually for remediation of contaminated abandoned properties where the project site does not have a responsible party to perform the remediation or the site has been determined to present a threat to human health or the environment. Non-profits, non-federal governmental entities, and watershed or other community organizations are eligible to apply.

[Colorado Brownfields Tax Credit](#): Senate Bill 14-073 authorizes a tax credit for qualifying entities that perform environmental remediation associated with capital improvements or redevelopment projects. The available credit is 40% of cleanup costs for the first \$750,000 spent and 30% of the next \$750,000 for a maximum credit of \$525,000 per project. CDPHE can approve a maximum of \$3 million per year. The credit is due to expire at the end of 2023 if not reauthorized.

[EPA Grants](#) and [RE-Powering America’s Land](#): EPA offers a number of grants, including Assessment Grants to inventory and assess brownfields; Cleanup Grants and Revolving Loan Fund Grants for cleanup; Multipurpose Grants for assessment and cleanup activities at one or more sites in a target area; and Area-Wide Planning Grants for communities to research, plan and develop implementation strategies for cleaning up and revitalizing a specific area affected by one or more brownfield sites. EPA’s RE-Powering America’s Land Initiative encourages renewable energy development on current and formerly contaminated lands, landfills, and mine sites when such development is aligned with the community’s vision for the site.