

ISSUES & POLICIES

## Brownfield Development

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Connecticut needs to substantially bolster brownfield revitalization in Connecticut. Doing so would have multiple environmental and economic benefits including, the cleanup of sites currently polluting the lands and waters of nearly every community in the state, increased economic activity and jobs, increased property tax revenues for municipalities, more sustainable growth as many brownfields are located near existing infrastructure, and more. While Connecticut has made some progress in recent years, the reality is that measures in place as presently implemented are not producing the desired results.

To enhance Connecticut's progress in stimulating brownfield redevelopment, Connecticut should pursue the following:

- Consolidate various existing office relating to brownfield development, including the Office of Responsible Development, the Office of Brownfield Redevelopment, and the newly created Permit Ombudsman's Office into one, high level office directly reporting to the Governor or the commissioner of economic development, with staff fully dedicated to the mission of coordinating brownfield redevelopment, permitting and responsible growth, including transit oriented development. This office needs to be accessible to the development community and vested with the appropriate authority to oversee and manage large and small projects, implement the funding (grant and loan programs) and administer marketing and educational functions;
- Establish a brownfields revitalization strategic initiative that targets sites (both large and small) and private-sector partners for expedited and coordinated execution of the various governmental obligations and incentives necessary for success. Sites eligible for the initiative would be based on multiple considerations including: jobs created; support in the community where located; incorporation of sustainable development principles or transit oriented development; promotion of environmental justice; or the presence of existing or potential multi-modal infrastructure. Eligible private sector partners would include: "innocent landowners" as defined by state statute, including municipalities, "bona fide prospective purchasers" as defined by federal law (CERCLA); individuals acquiring sites from either an innocent landowner or a bona fide prospective purchaser and having no prior relationship to the site.\*
- Conduct a comprehensive review of all existing brownfields and remediation programs and implementing statutes, including the Transfer Act, with the intent of creating a unified and efficient scheme for remediating brownfields and other impacted properties that will eliminate or reduce duplicity and better coordinate incentives and obligation for the acquisition and/or remediation of brownfields by innocent parties, redevelopers or municipalities.\*

*\*CBIA is pleased that the Governor and 2011 General Assembly enacted Public Act 11-141. DECD and DEEP are working on implementing these initiatives and CBIA members are assisting both agencies with those efforts.*