



Brownfields 2009 Cleanup Grant Fact Sheet

Blue Island, IL

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed to help states and communities around the country cleanup and revitalize brownfields sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The City of Blue Island was selected to receive a brownfields cleanup grant. Blue Island (population 23,463) is an inner-ring suburb of Chicago. Blue Island's blighted, declining industrial community has created a significant barrier to redevelopment. The city will clean up an uncontrolled landfill that is part of the city's adopted economic development plan. For nearly 20 years, the site has been vacant or underused. Developers attracted to Blue Island have considered the site environmentally uncertain. The city's poverty rate of 12.3 percent is double the state average. The unemployment rate, which is 12.3 percent, is twice the state rate. Site cleanup is expected to spur redevelopment of the property as a retail and eco-industrial park that will capitalize on its proximity to Interstate 57 and existing rail access. Two developers interested in the site are completing preliminary site plans for these redevelopment projects.

Cleanup Grant

\$200,000 for hazardous substances

EPA has selected the City of Blue Island for a brownfields cleanup grant. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to clean up the 87-acre NE Mixed-Use Commercial Park at 12245 Division Street. From about 1897 until 1952, the site was used to excavate clay for brick-making. In 1952, the site became an open dump that included hazardous waste disposal. Site soil contains volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, PCBs, and heavy metals. Grant funds also will be used to support community outreach activities.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields Web site (<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>).

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Team
(312) 886-7576

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Web site
(<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields>)

Grant Recipient: City of Blue Island, IL
(708) 396-7138

The information presented in this fact sheet comes from the grant proposal; EPA cannot attest to the accuracy of this information. The cooperative agreement for the grant has not yet been negotiated. Therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.