

# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Syracuse, NY*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Syracuse for a Brownfields Pilot. Syracuse was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at Brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Syracuse covers approximately 26 square miles and has a population of 152,215. According to the 1990 census, more than 50 percent of the households are low-income and 25 percent are minorities.

Syracuse has a 150-year history of manufacturing, but beginning in the 1960s, the city suffered a three-decade-long decline brought on by a series of closings, restructuring, and relocations. The city was left with abandoned or idled sites, environmental contamination, and decaying facilities, many of which are located in and around low-income and minority neighborhoods. Recently, the city has been experiencing moderate economic recovery; however, brownfields continue to hinder development. The city is attracting cleaner industries and service providers, but these industries are choosing to locate outside of the city because of the lack of clean, developable land within the city.

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



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**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2000

**Amount:** \$200,000  
**Greenspace:** \$50,000

**Profile:** The Pilot will inventory brownfields in Syracuse and select up to five for assessment and characterization studies. Greenspace funding will be used for assessments at two sites in the Southern Creekwalk Zone.

#### Contacts:

Department of Community  
and Economic Development  
City of Syracuse  
(314) 448-8100

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 2  
(212) 637-4314

Visit the EPA Region 2 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfnd/brownfld/bfmainpg.htm>

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

## OBJECTIVES

The city's comprehensive brownfields redevelopment plan will develop a holistic, sustainable approach to cleaning up and redeveloping brownfields. This plan will use and expand the city's existing community development programs, such as Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today. With the Pilot's assistance, this plan seeks to reverse the negative impacts often associated with brownfields—increased crime, health concerns, reduced property values and tax base, fewer job opportunities—into opportunities for social and economic revitalization.

The Pilot will use greenspace funding to carry out site assessments and characterizations at two brownfields in the Southern Creekwalk Zone, a 3.5-mile corridor along Onondaga Creek south of downtown and part of the city's redevelopment plan. This portion of the planned multi-use recreational trail system traverses several brownfields in many of the city's poorest neighborhoods.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of the Pilot include:

- Conducting a citywide inventory of brownfields and creating a database with geographic information systems (GIS) mapping;
- Conducting environmental assessments at up to five targeted brownfields;
- Seeking community involvement to develop priorities for targeted brownfields and recommendations for site reuse; and
- Inventorying brownfields for greenspace redevelopment in the Southern Creekwalk Zone and conducting environmental assessments at two sites within the Zone.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*