



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | JUNE 9, 2021

CITY OF COUNCIL BLUFFS BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

The City of Council Bluffs is pleased to announce the Brownfields Program continues with new funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Program is funded through an EPA Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant and will allow the City to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup and reuse planning activities on brownfield sites.

Ever wonder why abandoned warehouses, factories, or businesses remain uninhabited? The property might be a brownfield. A brownfield is real property for which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by the environmental contamination that is either real or perceived. The EPA estimates that there are more than 450,000 brownfields in the country. Since its inception in 1995, EPA's Brownfields Program has grown into a proven, results-oriented program that has changed the way communities address and manage potentially environmentally impaired property. Cleaning up and reinvesting in brownfields increases the local tax base, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, and improves and protects the environment.

"We are thankful to have received new funding from the EPA," said Dessie Redmond, City of Council Bluffs Housing & Economic Development Planner. "Through our Brownfields Program, we will inventory potential brownfields, conduct environmental site assessments, and make plans for cleanup and reuse."

The City of Council Bluffs Brownfields Program will focus primarily on the South Expressway Corridor. A previous EPA grant received in 2013 indicated several brownfields within the general vicinity of the South Expressway Corridor. This area also houses parts of the city's Qualified Opportunity Zones which allows the potential for tax incentives on investments designed to spur economic development and job creation. The City's Brownfields Program will identify potential hazards, remove perceptions of contamination, prepare for remediation, and create local redevelopment opportunities.

The City of Council Bluffs has a dedicated webpage for the Brownfields Program located at councilbluffs-ia.gov/brownfields. The webpage is an information portal for Brownfields Program activities, public meetings, and community events.

This summer, the City of Council Bluffs will begin public outreach to actively engage the community via public meetings, community events, door-to-door conversations, and other activities. "We will solicit input regarding sites and redevelopment possibilities and educate our community on any perceived or known contamination," said Redmond.

Environmental site assessments will begin this fall. The City of Council Bluffs has selected Impact7G, Inc. to serve as the qualified environmental professional for the Brownfields Program. Impact7G will conduct Environmental Site Assessments on eligible properties in Council Bluffs. Beginning with a visual assessment, Impact7G will visit sites to look for indications of potential contamination. If hazards are identified, testing will follow in a second phase of the assessment. The environmental site assessments will serve as a planning tool for reclaiming the underutilized sites.

Anyone with a property that might be a good fit for the Brownfields Program can contact Dessie Redmond, Housing & Economic Development Planner, at dredmond@councilbluffs-ia.gov or by phone at 712-890-5352.

The mission of the City of Council Bluffs is to continuously improve the quality of life and attractiveness of the City of Council Bluffs.