

# COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM



## CASE STUDY

## Integrating Pollution Prevention Measures into Brownfields

The Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR)'s mission is to enable the sustainable and equitable reuse of underutilized, vacant and contaminated land (often referred to as "brownfields"), which drives economic investment and creates jobs, housing, parks and services within existing communities. Established in 1996 by the Trust for Public Land, CCLR was the first nonprofit organization designed to identify and encourage land recycling in ways that are community supported, economically viable, and environmentally responsible. CCLR has a proven track record of moving brownfield redevelopment projects to realization and has trained over 7,200 community-oriented redevelopment specialists since its conception.

### Challenge

A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence, or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Brownfields result from a range of industries, so the types of pollutants vary among sites. The pollutants present can be physically dangerous to humans, wildlife, and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that there are close to half a million brownfields in the United States and that over one 1 million people live within 3 miles of one. These sites present health risks to the community in which they are located and limit economic growth potential. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects environmental quality.

### Solution

Many key players including municipalities, local developers and community organizations may not have the experience to develop a comprehensive strategy for safe cleanups that are also optimally sustainable. The goal of the Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR) is to educate municipal and community leaders first, about green methods for contaminated site remediation; and second, on processes for site rebuilding that utilize more sustainable technologies, protocols, and methodologies. The goal is that pollution prevention (P2) is an essential element and guiding principle at each decision point in the redevelopment process.

### Results

To accomplish this, CCLR began by collecting and reviewing available materials on national best practices in "green" brownfield remediation and redevelopment. This included sustainable and less hazardous remediation techniques, measures to protect local residents, strategies to reduce carbon footprints, deconstruction/adaptive reuse strategies, green building codes, storm water management/green infrastructure and transit-oriented development. In addition, CCLR conducted interviews with U.S. EPA, NYS DEC, NYC Office of Environmental Remediation and half a dozen environmental consultants with expertise in P2 and brownfield remediation to gather additional relevant information to contribute to the material for publication through CCLR's Online Resource Center.

### CHALLENGE

- A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence, or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The pollutants present can be physically dangerous to humans, wildlife, and the environment
- Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, and utilizes existing infrastructure

### SOLUTION

- The goal of CCLR is to educate municipal and community leaders first, about green methods for contaminated site remediation; and second, on processes for site rebuilding that utilize more sustainable technologies, protocols, and methodologies

### RESULTS

- CCLR collected and reviewed available materials on national best practices in "green" brownfield remediation and redevelopment and compiled it in their Online Resource Center.
- CCLR created an Eco Innovator Showcase - a case study tool that features the use of alternative energy and other sustainable approaches to land reuse.
- They also held two workshops with at least 50 brownfield practitioners at each and created a strong mentoring network for P2 Brownfield remediation.

## CONTACT INFO

JEAN HAMERMAN

Deputy Director

646-712-0535

Jean.hamerman@cclr.org

www.cclr.org

Center for Creative Land Recycling  
P.O. Box 624  
Hastings on Hudson, New York 10706

## TESTIMONIAL

“The project and our affiliation with the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute was a real win for us and we hope for the NYSP2I as well. The project served as a catalyst for CCLR to more purposefully integrate climate smart brownfield and green and sustainable remediation practices (GSR) practices into our mission and educational programs. We will continue to expand our national leadership on these issues.”

– Jean Hamerman, Deputy Director  
Center for Creative Land Recycling

## NYSP2I PARTNERS



New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership

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## For more information please contact us:

111 Lomb Memorial Drive, Bldg. 78  
Rochester, NY 14623

Tel: 585-475-2512  
Web: nysp2i.rit.edu  
E-mail: nysp2i@rit.edu



Next, CCLR took a baseline survey focused on municipalities and environmental consultants and used this as an opportunity to promote interest and attendance at their state-wide conference in Albany and regional workshop in Rochester. This led to the conceptualization and launch of CCLR's Eco Innovator Showcase, a case study tool that featured the use of alternative energy, which 96 percent of attendees rated extremely effective. The two workshops (one in Albany and one in Rochester) were each attended by at least 50 brownfield practitioners, highlighting key measures for mitigating health and environmental risks and reducing pollution and carbon footprints during remediation and redevelopment.



Following the workshops, CCLR created a strong mentoring network for P2 Brownfield remediation by bringing municipal leaders, environmental companies, and professional experts together who could provide solutions to others in the field. As part of this, they developed three webinars coupled with the Eco Innovator Showcase initiative and shared it to thousands of people through their resources.

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