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Green Municipal Fund



Building partnerships
to support brownfield
redevelopment

Leadership in Brownfield Renewal Program
Guidebook Series

Acknowledgements

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The Government of Canada endowed the Federation of Canadian Municipalities with \$550 million to establish the Green Municipal Fund™. An additional \$125 million top-up to this endowment was also announced in Budget 2016 and will be added to the Fund in 2017-18. The Fund supports partnerships and leveraging of both public and private-sector funding to reach higher standards of air, water and soil quality, and climate protection.

Building partnerships to support brownfield redevelopment

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About this guidebook

This guidebook is part of a series developed for FCM's [Leadership in Brownfield Renewal](#) (LiBRe) program. Based on a seven-step [best practices framework](#), the LiBRe program aims to help municipalities become better facilitators of the brownfield redevelopment process. This guidebook is designed to help municipalities achieve the third step of the framework: “build partnerships.” It provides guidance on whom municipalities should engage to ensure the success of their brownfield initiatives.

LiBRe Best Practices Framework



Commit to action

Raise awareness and secure a formal municipal commitment to support brownfield redevelopment

► [Read the guidebook](#)



Understand the landscape

Conduct a detailed analysis of brownfield sites and the local context

► [Read the guidebook](#)



Build partnerships

Build relationships with key brownfield stakeholders



Devise a strategy

Develop a formal policy and programs for facilitating brownfield redevelopment

► [Read the guidebook](#)



Promote programs and opportunities

Build awareness of brownfield issues, programs and redevelopment opportunities

► [Read the guidebook](#)



Manage programs and projects

Foster the redevelopment of local brownfield sites

► [Read the guidebook](#)



Evaluate, improve and celebrate

Assess and improve brownfield redevelopment policies, programs and processes, and celebrate success

► [Read the guidebook](#)

Introduction

There are numerous ways in which municipalities can help catalyze the redevelopment of local brownfield sites. They can provide financial incentives, modify zoning, or streamline approval processes, for example. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Consulting those that are on the front lines of the brownfield redevelopment process (e.g. developers, landowners, industry experts) is key to choosing approaches that respond to the realities of your local context. Engagement is particularly important:

- ▶ In the **preliminary stages**, when you are increasing your understanding of redevelopment barriers and obtaining buy-in for municipal action.
- ▶ At the **program development stage**, when you are tailoring your brownfield programs to your local context.
- ▶ At the **program implementation stage**, when you are managing your brownfield programs and redevelopment projects.
- ▶ At the **program review stage**, when you are evaluating and making improvements to your programs and processes.

The sections below detail whom you should engage, when and how.

Engaging brownfield stakeholders		
Who?	When?	Why?
▶ Municipal staff ▶ Elected officials ▶ Development professionals ▶ Brownfield industry experts ▶ Funders ▶ Local community ▶ Provincial ministries ▶ Other municipalities	In the preliminary stages	✓ To increase your own understanding of brownfield redevelopment barriers and opportunities ✓ To obtain buy-in for municipal action
	At the program development stage	✓ To develop municipal brownfield programs tailored to the needs of your community
	At the program implementation stage	✓ To ensure that you are efficiently managing your brownfield programs and effectively facilitating brownfield redevelopment projects
	At the program review stage	✓ To evaluate and make improvements to your brownfield programs and processes

Whom should you engage?

▶ Municipal staff

Implementing measures to address barriers to brownfield redevelopment often requires collaboration across multiple municipal departments, particularly in the case of financial incentives. To ensure a smooth implementation process, engage relevant departments early on to obtain their feedback and buy-in on the measures you are considering.

Form an interdepartmental brownfield working group to help you:

- ✓ Develop municipal policies and programs to support brownfield redevelopment
- ✓ Streamline approval processes
- ✓ Gather data for a municipal brownfield inventory
- ✓ Promote your brownfield programs to external stakeholders
- ✓ Review brownfield incentive applications to ensure that qualified projects are approved
- ✓ Track the progress and impacts of approved projects
- ✓ Monitor financial incentive disbursements to maintain municipal financial cash flow
- ✓ Review and improve policies and programs over time

These working groups often consist of representatives from key municipal departments, such as:

- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Economic development
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Taxation
- ▶ Legal
- ▶ Public works / engineering

It is helpful if at least one team member has a basic understanding of different remediation approaches and when they are typically used

Engaging municipal staff

The **Town of Oakville, ON**, formed a working group to improve internal communication and to better position itself to comply with the new reporting requirements under Section PS 3260 of the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada Public Sector Accounting Handbook. The working group was comprised of representatives from: Financial Operations, Realty Services, Development Engineering, Planning, Facility Construction & Management, and Environmental Policy. The group met on a monthly basis for a period of ten months until an inventory of municipally owned contaminated sites was established and their associated liabilities were assessed and audited. The group continues to meet annually for updates.

▶ Elected officials

Brownfield programs that include financial incentives have an impact on municipal budgets and, as such, require council approval. Engage your elected officials early in the development of your programs to obtain their buy-in and to secure the financial and human resources required for your programs to succeed.

Consider forming a brownfield committee made up of elected officials to:

- ✓ Increase council awareness of brownfield challenges and solutions
- ✓ Oversee the development and implementation of municipal brownfield programs
- ✓ Align brownfield programs with other municipal plans, strategies and priorities
- ✓ Gain council support for brownfield policies and programs

Engaging elected officials

The **City of Edmonton, AB**, created the Contaminated Gas Station Task Force, which operated from 2010 to 2013. Comprised of five city councillors, the task force helped review and improve the city's 2005 brownfield pilot program. Through research and consultation with brownfield industry experts and other stakeholders, the task force developed a more focused and comprehensive set of incentives targeting refueling sites in mature neighbourhoods.

▶ Development professionals

Developers, land owners and real estate agents can help you better understand the realities of your real estate market. Consult them when developing, implementing and reviewing your brownfield programs to ensure that your municipality is addressing redevelopment challenges effectively. These professionals can help you:

- ✓ Identify which types of incentives would help make local brownfield redevelopment projects economically viable
- ✓ Generate interest in your brownfield programs
- ✓ Get feedback on the customer service experience offered by your municipality
- ✓ Gain insights on program impacts and potential improvements

Some municipalities form an advisory group, made up of development professionals and brownfield industry experts, that meets regularly, while others engage these stakeholders as needed.

The following organizations can help you identify development professionals in your community:

- ▶ The Canadian Real Estate Association
- ▶ The Canadian Home Builders' Association
- ▶ Your provincial chapter of the Urban Development Institute (e.g. UDI Pacific Region, UDI Manitoba)
- ▶ Building associations (e.g. BILD Toronto, BILD Calgary)

► Brownfield industry experts

Organizations involved in brownfield advocacy, research and education can help you get a high-level understanding of brownfield redevelopment approaches across Canada and internationally. Consider attending workshops or conferences offered by groups such as:

- The Canadian Brownfields Network
- Environmental industry associations (e.g. the British Columbia Environment Industry Association, the Ontario Environment Industry Association and Réseau Environnement)

The websites of these organizations often include useful resources and publications, as well as membership lists that can help you identify brownfield industry experts in your area (such as consultants and engineers). Contact local industry experts to inform them of your brownfield programs. They may work on projects that could benefit from your programs, and could therefore help promote your programs to their clients.

► Funders

Financial institutions and funding organizations can play a key role in brownfield redevelopment by providing capital. Meet with local financial institutions to better understand if and how they support brownfield redevelopment. Your municipality may be able to fill financing gaps through its brownfield programs. Contact funding organizations, such as FCM's Green Municipal Fund, to learn how to access funding that could support your brownfield programs and projects.

► Local community

Stakeholders such as community groups, residents, and businesses can provide valuable insights on what the community envisions for local brownfield sites. Consulting them can be an important means of generating buy-in for brownfield redevelopment early on in the process.

Some municipalities stay connected to these stakeholders by:

- ✓ Arranging information and consultation sessions (e.g. brownfield study tours, panel discussions and open houses)
- ✓ Communicating using a network email list
- ✓ Conducting surveys
- ✓ Forming a community advisory group

Engaging the local community

The **City of Brantford, ON**, formed the Brownfields Community Advisory Committee in 2002 in response to health and safety concerns arising from local brownfield sites. The mandate of the committee has evolved over time to include:

- advising council on the community's perspective regarding brownfield-related issues
- reviewing applications to the city's brownfield incentive programs
- advising and conducting research on brownfield prevention

The committee leads projects annually to raise local awareness about brownfield issues. Past projects have included: a Brownfields 101 session for the local home builders' association, panel discussions on remediation technologies, and a map for a self-guided walking tour of brownfield sites in the city.

Provincial ministries

Municipalities need to understand their regulatory obligations regarding contaminated sites (both municipally owned and privately owned). Provincial ministries of the environment or municipal affairs often create briefing documents that explain the regulatory framework and the municipal role in brownfield redevelopment. Consult provincial websites and contact departmental representatives to ensure that you fully understand the municipal requirements in your province. FCM's [brownfield redevelopment roadmaps](#) provide information on legislation, funding, incentive programs, and contaminated site registries for every province and territory.

Other municipalities

Municipal peers who are actively involved in brownfield redevelopment provide an opportunity for you to learn what works and what doesn't. Your peers can help you to identify best practices that you can build into your brownfield program, and they can provide suggestions for potential program improvements.

Join FCM's [Leadership in Brownfield Renewal](#) (LiBRe) program to connect with other municipal practitioners and participate in learning activities that will help you develop knowledge and skills to better facilitate brownfield redevelopment.



The path forward

Connecting and partnering with a variety of stakeholders is key to understanding local challenges and opportunities for brownfield redevelopment. These stakeholders can provide insight, information and feedback during the research, development, implementation and improvement stages of your brownfield redevelopment programs. Consider working with these stakeholders through each step of the LiBRe best practice framework.

More Funding. More Opportunities.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities can help your community with funding to:

- Improve the quality of air, water and soil
- Adapt to climate change impacts
- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Invest in infrastructure planning
- Make informed infrastructure/asset investment decisions

We also provide peer learning, training and knowledge resources to help you achieve your goals.

Funding is available through the Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program, the Municipal Asset Management Program and the Green Municipal Fund.

Learn more at **fcm.ca/funding**