



## What are Brownfields?

Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or underused real property where expansion, redevelopment or reuse is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Environmental problems, or even just the perception of a problem, can be a significant barrier to property redevelopment. The goals of EPA's Brownfields Program are to facilitate redevelopment of property through removal of environmental uncertainties, restore the environment, and reduce human health risks. Cleaning up and reinvesting in brownfield properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure and takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, which both improves and protects the environment. EPA's Brownfields Program has grown significantly since inception, and federal appropriations have consistently been supported by Congress.



## Project Description

Lewis and Clark County (LCC) was awarded a \$200,000 Brownfields Hazardous Substance Assessment Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in September 2006. The grant money will be used to identify underused, potentially contaminated properties within the Helena High School District boundary to determine what measures could be taken so that a property could be redeveloped into a community asset. Site investigations will be conducted on selected properties with willing landowners and if necessary, cleanup strategies will be developed. LCC will use the awarded funds to inventory properties in the assessment area that may have contamination, conduct environmental site assessments on selected sites from the inventory and facilitate public outreach. LCC hired Tetra Tech, a local Engineering and Environmental Consulting firm, to assist them with this project.

## Project Schedule

May 2007 - Establish Task Force

May 31, 2007 - Public Meeting, LCC Library - 9:30 a.m.

Spring-Summer 2007 - Develop Inventory of Potential Properties

August 16, 2007 - Public Meeting On Inventory Results

Fall 2007 - Conduct Phase I Assessments

January 17, 2008 - Public Meeting on Project Status

Summer-Fall 2008 - Conduct Phase II Assessments

Spring-Summer 2009 - Cleanup Planning

## *Benefits of Participating in the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields Project*

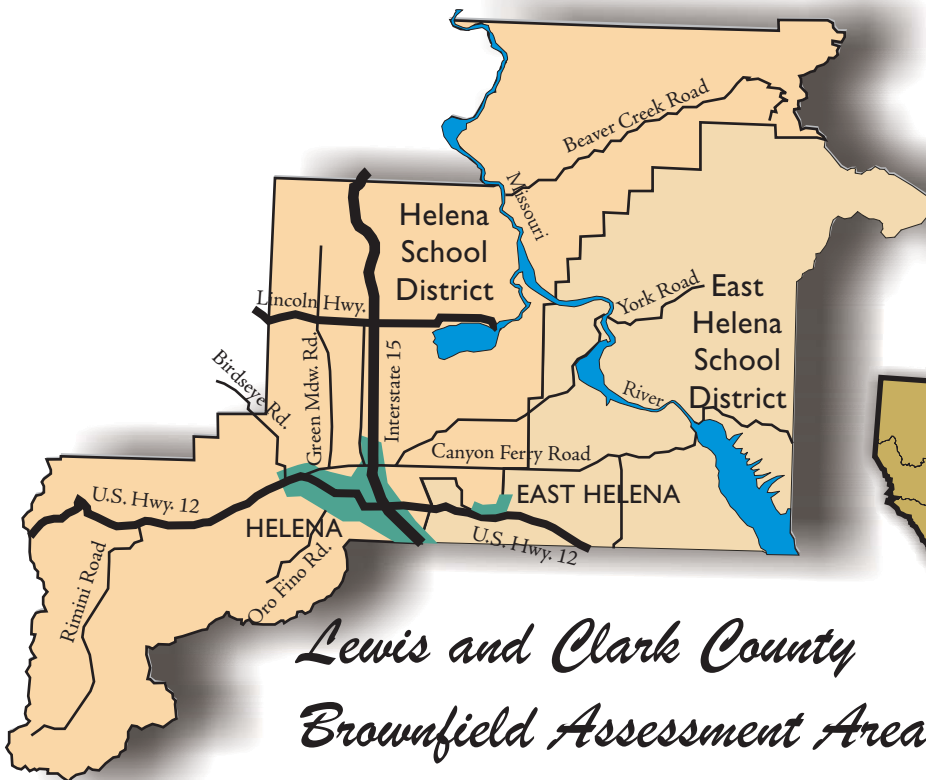
Environmental problems, whether real or perceived, devalue property. Such properties often remain underused and contribute to neighborhood blight, which can affect the overall economic prosperity of a neighborhood. By participating in the LCC Brownfields Project, an owner or developer of a property that may be affected by environmental contamination associated with past uses may be able to determine what, if any, contamination exists, and how best to address it. Benefits of involvement in the program to a landowner or developer may include:

- Completing an environmental site assessment necessary to finalize a property sale.
- Demonstrating property value for financing.
- Dispelling a perceived environmental problem that is holding back investment in a property.
- Taking a proactive approach to satisfying regulatory requirements associated with potential contamination on a property.

In addition, by participating in the LCC Brownfields Project, landowners and developers may have preferred access to grants and low-interest loans to pay for cleanup of contamination. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance or restore vitality and economic well-being to area properties that have sat idle due to environmental uncertainty.

## *What Makes a Good Brownfields Site?*

- In-fill location
- Multiple potential reuses
- Vision for site redevelopment
- Lightly contaminated or more perceived than real contamination



*Lewis and Clark County  
Brownfield Assessment Area  
(Helena High School District)*





## How Does the Brownfields Project Work?

Assessment grants, like the one received by LCC, can be used on properties where access is granted voluntarily by the owner. Under the program, assessments of selected properties are completed at no cost to the participant. Any reports, data, or other documents generated during the assessments are provided to the owner. Data acquired through assessments are also kept at LCC and are available to the public on request.

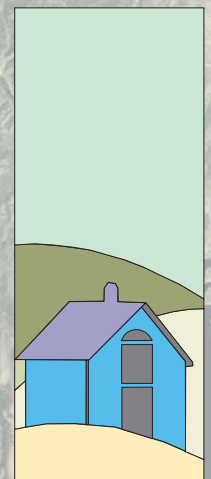
## Brownfields Task Force

LCC is kicking off its Brownfields Project by assembling a Brownfields Task Force. The primary goal of the Brownfields Project is to create redevelopment opportunities of blighted properties in the community that could lead to affordable housing, open space, or vital businesses that create jobs and increase the tax base of Lewis and Clark County. A parallel goal of the project is to strengthen or create partnerships among local government entities and community members while identifying potential brownfield sites in the community and working towards redevelopment.

The Brownfields Task Force is an important aspect of the project as the Task Force is expected to guide the brownfields effort and offer recommendations to LCC. The Board of County Commissioners is formally requesting interested citizens that reside in the planning area to apply for a Task Force position. To ensure the Task Force has balanced and broad representation, LCC would like to assemble a group of citizens that represent the following interests:

- Community-Based Organizations and/or Economic Development Interests
- Local Government and/or Academia
- General Public

Persons interested in applying for a Task Force position will be asked to fill out a short application form indicating their interest in serving on the Task Force, their background, and any experience they have had with environmental issues or redevelopment. Participation in the Task Force will require people to volunteer their time and commit to serving for the duration of the project. The Task Force is expected to meet on a regular basis, at least 12 times during the course of the project, to participate in the following: site inventory, site ranking and site selection; review project information and participate in discussions; attend public meetings; and provide recommendations to the County. Please contact Laura Erikson, LCC Grants Coordinator at 447-8383 for more information.



# Site Inventory Process

A multi-faceted approach will be used to identify potential brownfield sites in the assessment area including an on-line survey so the community can contribute input to the site inventory. Using numerous criteria pertinent to the Brownfield's Program, each site will be ranked, and the top ranking sites further considered for additional assessment.

*Coming Soon, On-Line Survey - [www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us](http://www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us)*

## Types of Hazardous Substance Sites

- Abandoned mines and millsites
- Post and pole treating facilities
- Former sawmills
- Former dry cleaners
- Old dumps or landfills
- Former weed control facilities
- Grain elevators/seed treating facilities
- Former livestock treating sites
- Unexploded ordinance
- Buildings with asbestos and/or lead-based paint
- Methamphetamine labs

## How to Participate

You are invited to become an active participant in the LCC Brownfields Project. As the project progresses, LCC will host public open houses for property owners, developers, neighbors and other stakeholders. To get progress updates and information, check the LCC web site at [www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us](http://www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us). If you would like to be on a mailing list to receive future information about the LCC Brownfields Project, please contact LCC or Tetra Tech at the addresses shown below.

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*Please let us know at Tetra Tech if we can provide future mailings to you electronically*



*Lewis and Clark County*

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