

BROWNFIELDS ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

FHWA and FTA Role

On August 28, 1996, the President proposed a \$700 million expansion of the EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative to 300 cities over the next four years. The program would empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together to assess, clean up, and sustainably reuse moderately contaminated urban industrial sites known as brownfields. Furthermore, the President's Council on Sustainable Development has called for government at all levels to coordinate with the private sector and citizens to overcome impediments to the cleanup and use of brownfields. The new initiative will add the US Department of Housing and Urban Development as a partner in EPA's administration of Federal funding.

Possible FTA and FHWA short and long term actions are:

Program and Policy Support

Short Term Actions

The FHWA and FTA role is to support strategies that encourage appropriate transportation access for brownfield redevelopment. The agencies will ensure that brownfield redevelopment is addressed as appropriate in the state and local transportation planning process.

FHWA and FTA will advise the field offices on the current 29 brownfields pilot grantees and EPA regional Brownfield coordinators. The agencies will disseminate information to the field on brownfield success stories and advertise the Brownfield Internet Homepage.

Longer Term Actions

FTA and FHWA will explore the development of working partnerships with a broad range of environmental, state, local and private sector partners interested in supporting the redevelopment of brownfields. This effort will support working efforts to achieve brownfield redevelopment, including partnerships with HUD, EPA, state and local agencies.

FHWA and FTA will initiate a process to reexamine existing policy guidance that stresses avoidance of contaminated properties during transportation development activities. Where feasible within limits of liability exposure, fiscally prudent and cooperating partners are available, these policies will be revised to encourage acquisition and or clean up of land within brownfields.

We will work with States to identify State laws and procedures that support the ability to cooperatively acquire, manage and/or utilize ROW in support of brownfield

redevelopment. A compendium of best practices will be prepared to support State and local exploration of transportation strategies for supporting brownfield redevelopment.

In conjunction with EPA, the agencies will investigate the liability of public agencies when they use brownfields.

Planning and Program Assistance

Short Term Actions

FHWA and FTA will develop or modify existing guidance, technical assistance activities and training to the States and local governments, including MPO's. This guidance will focus on the reuse of brownfields in relation to transportation purposes where appropriate and the need to coordinate with the communities involved in brownfields redevelopment, especially the pilot areas.

We will provide technical assistance as needed to these communities on planning and developing transportation projects utilizing federal funds. Often, that assistance will include making them aware of the federal planning requirements, such as coordination with metropolitan planning organizations and the State transportation departments, to ensure the community leaders' awareness of the metropolitan and statewide transportation improvement programs development processes.

Long Term Actions

FHWA and FTA will seek to create cooperative partnerships between transportation, permit and resource agencies in the effective utilization and or redevelopment of brownfields. In addition, opportunities to share funding and project scope with other governmental agencies, as well as the private sector, will be explored to facilitate appropriate innovative financing. FTA and FHWA will solicit examples of best practices of transportation investments that support or facilitate brownfield redevelopment and disseminate them to States and local governments.

The agencies also will explore issues concerning liability and the level of clean-up necessary to make brownfields reusable. As a part of the technical assistant effort, best practices of the brownfield clean-up effort will be sought among states. Technical practices and innovative financing techniques to support analyses of brownfield options will be researched and disseminated where possible.