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Brownfields: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Announces Grants of \$55.2 Million for 131 Communities (Includes Two Arkansas Projects)

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") issued a May 20th press release announcing \$55.2 million in grants for brownfield projects in 131 communities in the United States.

EPA states that grant recipients will receive approximately \$200,00 to \$820,000 in funding toward agency cooperative agreements.

Properties with current or historical industrial or commercial use that are evaluated for redevelopment sometime pose a dilemma. Potential purchasers or lessees must assess the possibility that certain environmental statutes might impose responsibilities on them for contamination that is present or time at the acquisition of release. This analysis will typically consider the probability that contamination is present, and if so, the costs to definitely delineate and/or remediate. Related issues could include the likelihood of a third party claims resulting from site conditions, ability to obtain financing and availability of definitive cleanup standards.

There has been both federal and state (including Arkansas) interest for many years in encouraging the reuse or redevelopment of properties whose marketability has been impaired because of perceived or real environmental contamination issues. Properties or facilities subject to the previously described impediments are sometimes called "brownfields."

The Arkansas General Assembly in 1995 provided the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality authority to address brownfield issues. See 1995 Ark. Acts 125.

EPA's May 20th news release states that these Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund and Cleanup grants will go to communities that are underserved and economically disadvantaged, including neighborhoods where environmental cleanup and new jobs are most needed. The agency notes that approximately \$14 million of the assessment and cleanup funding will go to applicants who are also EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning grant recipients and Department of Housing and Urban Development/Department of Transportation EPA partnership communities.

The two grants listed for Arkansas are:

- Pulaski County, Arkansas - RLF (Type of Grant) - RLF Coalition (Site Name) - \$820,000 (Approved Funding)
- Western Arkansas Planning and Development District – Assessment (Type of Grant) – Community-wide (Site Name) - \$400,000 (Approved Funding)

[Click here to download a copy of the news release.](#)