

## Brownfield Cleanup Program gets EPA federal recognition

Written by MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG  
Friday, 16 September 2011 12:45

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DEPUTY Mayor for Operations Cas Holloway, Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation Director Dr. Daniel Walsh and I announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has formally recognized the New York City Brownfield Cleanup Program — the first time the EPA ever has recognized a municipal brownfield program.

The city's brownfield program helps land owners and developers clean up contaminated properties and facilitates redevelopment, with a focus on blighted properties in low-income neighborhoods.

The formal EPA recognition enables the city to use federal brownfield grants for site investigation and cleanup activities.

The city's program is the first of its kind in the nation and is a central component of PlaNYC, my comprehensive sustainability blueprint for a greener, greater city.

Previously, brownfield cleanup programs were operated only by state governments and the EPA's recognition follows New York State's formal recognition of New York City's program last year.

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The EPA noted the city's Brownfield Cleanup Program and its collaboration with New York State was a model it would encourage other municipalities across the country to follow.

The EPA also recognized the city's unique and effective programs to promote citizen participation and community planning in cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield properties.

The city's Brownfield Cleanup Program currently is working to cleanup 22 blighted properties across the city, which will help revitalize those locations and create more than 1,000 new jobs and lead to more than \$300 million in new development.

The city's Brownfield Cleanup Program is a first of its kind in the nation, and we are using the cleanup program to revitalize communities and create local jobs, primarily in low-income neighborhoods.

Our unique program took a major step forward last year when New York State agreed to support the program.

And now with federal support of the program, we can clean up and redevelop more vacant land and create new businesses and new jobs, build affordable housing and develop more open space.

The New York City Brownfield Cleanup Program began operation in January 2011 and the program is run by the Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation.

In the program's first seven months, 22 projects have applied to the program and 18 have been approved for cleanup.

The remaining four projects are expected to begin by early Fall.

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The 22 projects will remediate a total of 35 lots and will enable 1.25 million square feet of new development, including more than 480,000 square feet of new retail, commercial and office space and 490 units of new housing — half of which will be affordable housing.

Most of the properties have been vacant for several years or more prior to becoming a part of the city's program.

The new developments created from previously unusable land are expected to generate more than 1,000 new permanent jobs.

The city's program focuses its resources on low-income communities, where turning blighted space into productive locations provides the greatest community benefit.