

welcome

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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT COALITION GRANT PROGRAM

Presented by:

Kerrie Salwa and Joe Sziabowski - CMRPC

Abigale Szlajen - U.S. EPA

Sarah DeStefano and Joseph Spencer - Weston & Sampson



May 6, 2026



AGENDA



Hamilton Woolen Company-Southbridge, MA
Pease, Aaron, H.-1903
Source: Jacob Edwards Library

Introductions

What are Brownfields?

EPA's Community Wide Assessment Grant Program

CMRPC's Brownfields Assessment Grant & Goals

CMRPC's Brownfields Assessment Grant – Status & Next Steps

Brownfields Advisory Committee

Roundtable Discussion / Wrap Up / Q&A

MEET THE TEAM



Kerrie Salwa
Director of Economic
Development - CMRPC



Joe Sziabowski
Associate Planner – CMRPC



Katie Yoder
Planner & Conservation Agent
- Southbridge



Melissa Fales
Executive Director – Quaboag
Valley CDC



Abigale Szlajen
EPA Brownfields Project
Officer

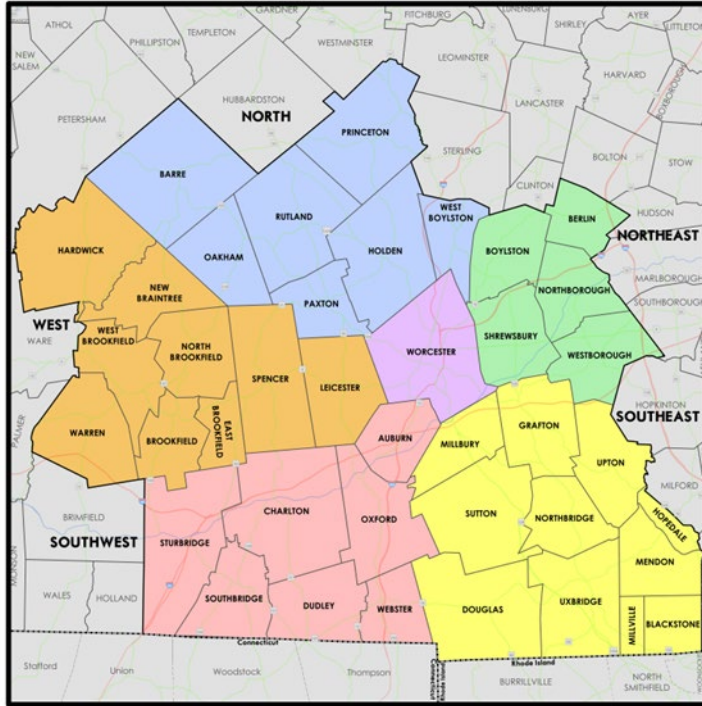


Sarah R. DeStefano, ENV SP
Brownfields Program Manager



Joseph Spencer, LSP, CHMM, ASTM-CEP
Brownfields Project
Manager

CENTRAL MA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



- One of thirteen regional planning agencies in Massachusetts
- Programs include:
 - Transportation
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
 - Regional collaboration
 - Community Planning
- Brownfields assessment program since 2009

COALITION PARTNERS

- Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QV CDC)
 - Non-profit organization committed to economic development and helping small businesses grow and prosper
 - Serves 20 towns in the Quaboag Region and Southern Worcester County
- Town of Southbridge
 - Eclectic blend of hilly and flat farmland, industry, and suburban, urban, and rural neighborhoods.
 - Long history of manufacturing optical products, earning it the unofficial title "Eye of the Commonwealth"



WESTON & SAMPSON



- Multidisciplinary engineering and design firm
- Municipally-focused since 1899
- Employee-owned company
- EPA Brownfields since program inception

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Our mission is to protect, improve, and sustain the natural and built environment to enhance the quality of life.

Our clients are our partners; in our municipal work, we remain sensitive to community concerns and understand the need to minimize impacts to residents, businesses, and visitors.

WESTON & SAMPSON

- Site Assessment and Remediation
(10 Licensed Site Professionals - LSPs)
- ASTM Phase I and II ESA Due Diligence
- Hazardous Building Material Assessment and Abatement
- Vapor Intrusion Evaluation and Remediation
- Remedial Planning and Design
- Remediation Implementation Oversight
- Master Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Resiliency Evaluations and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments
- Permitting
- Site Civil and Geotechnical Engineering
- Geophysical Surveys and Groundwater Impact Investigations
- Geotechnical / Structural Engineering
- Transportation / Utility / Infrastructure
- Landscape Architecture / Urban Planning and Design / Visioning
- Renewable Energy / Climate Resiliency
- Public Outreach and Engagement



transportation



geotechnical
& bridge



water



wastewater



stormwater



environmental
engineering



geomatics
& mapping



climate
resiliency



facility
design



energy &
vulnerability



GIS &
permitting



landscape
architecture



electrical
& mechanical



aquatics



construction,
operations &
maintenance

WHAT ARE BROWNFIELDS?

“Real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.”



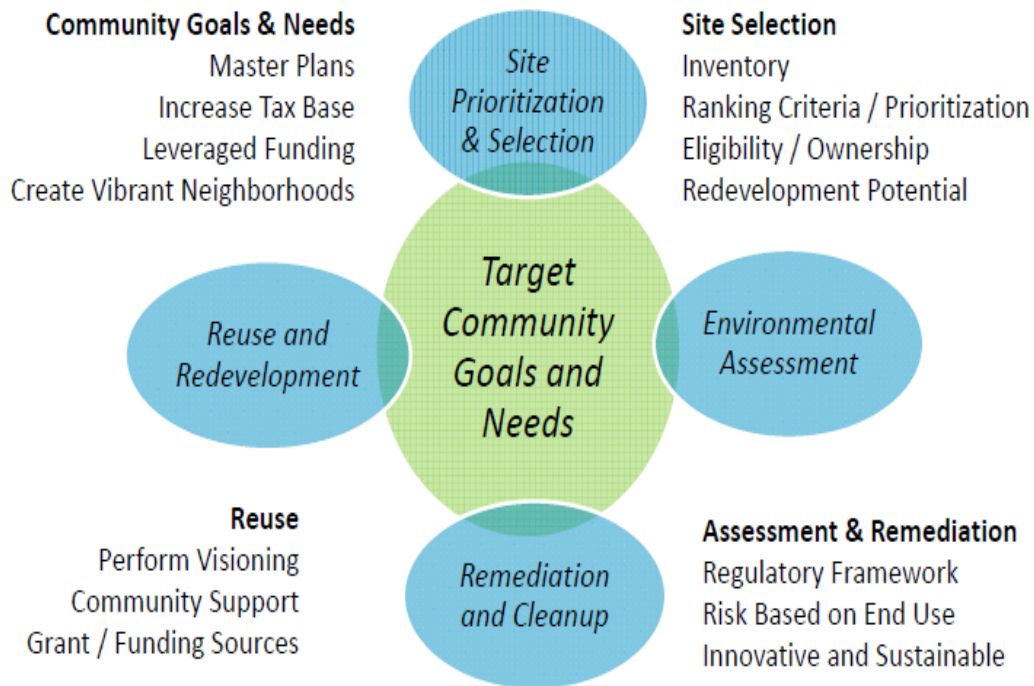
- Former industrial and/or commercial sites
- Underutilized, unused or abandoned properties
- Perceived or real environmental issues are a barrier to redevelopment

EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

- **Site Selection**
 - Generate inventory of potential sites
 - Prioritize sites for selection
 - Complete eligibility determinations
- **Phase I and Phase II ESAs**
 - Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs)
 - Health and Safety Plans (HASPs)
 - Hazardous Building Materials (HBM) Surveys
 - Field assessments and reporting
- **Property Cleanup & Reuse Planning**
 - Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs)
- **Community Engagement and Involvement**
- **Program Management and Reporting**
 - Programmatic support
 - ACRES / Quarterly Reports / etc.



EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM



BROWNFIELDS BENEFITS



Benefits to communities:

- Remove blight
- Create jobs
- Encourage smart growth and promote economic redevelopment
- Create affordable housing options
- Enhance quality of life and community pride for residents
- Create a safer and healthier place to live, work, and play
- Leverage additional investment

BROWNFIELDS BENEFITS

Benefits to landowners and/or developers:

- **Free** assessment and cleanup / redevelopment planning support
- Pre-acquisition **liability relief**
- Remove stigma and **reduce uncertainty**
- Can increase **property values & marketability**
- **Kick-start redevelopment**



BROWNFIELDS ARE OPPORTUNITIES

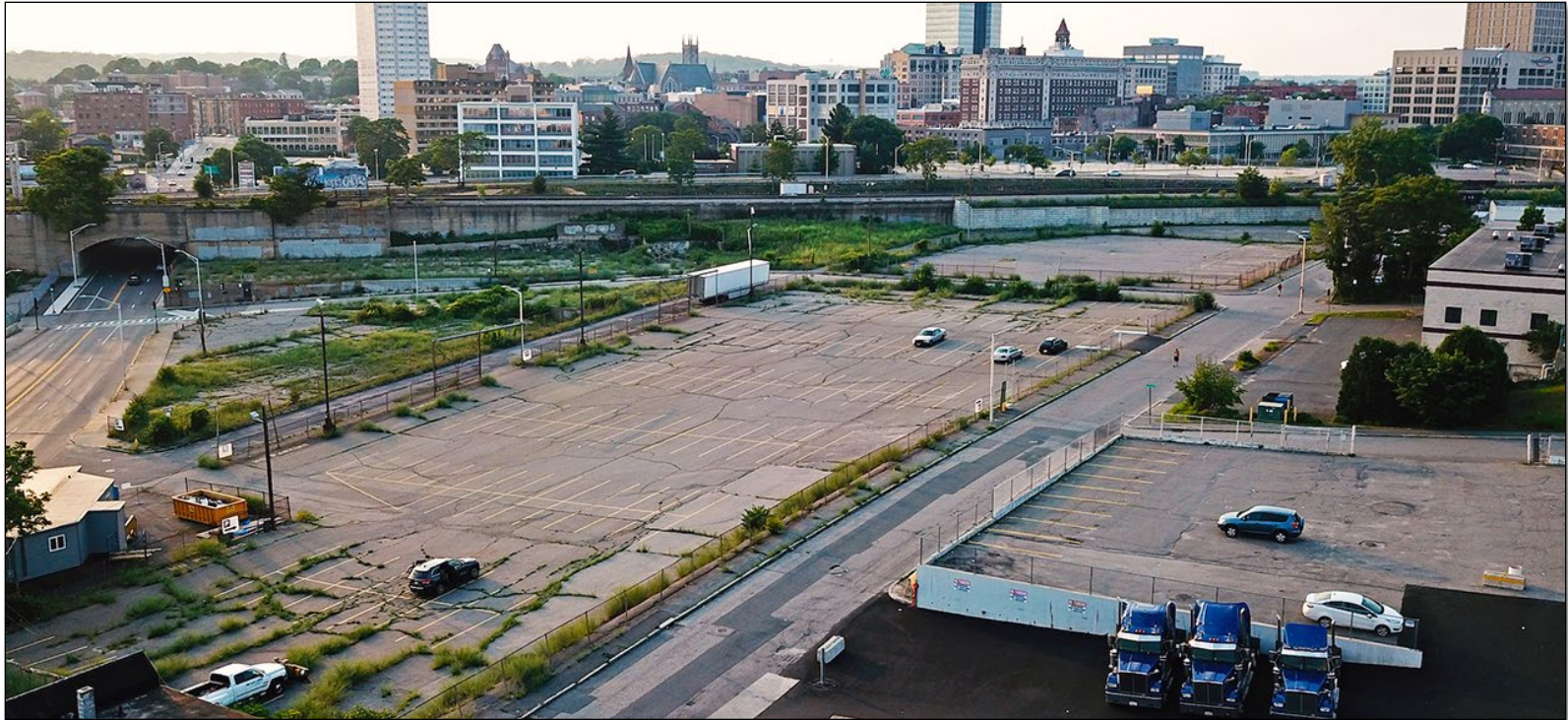
Before



After



EXAMPLE SITE - POLAR PARK, WORCESTER, MA



Source: City of Worcester

EXAMPLE SITE – POLAR PARK, WORCESTER, MA



Source: EPA

BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

INITIAL MEETING

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Objectives
- Municipal Contacts and Support
- Establish Advisory Committee
- Existing Resources
- Project Schedule
- Lines of Communication

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Stakeholder Education and Outreach
- Solicit Candidate Sites
- Marketing Materials

SITE SELECTION

CONDUCT INVENTORY

- Data Collection
- Generate Database
- GIS/Mapping

SITE PRIORITIZATION

- Eligibility
- Ranking Criteria
- Access/Ownership
- Redevelopment Potential
- Neighborhood/Regional Master Plans
- State Regulatory Overlay



REPORTING

- Quarterly Reports
- MBE/WBE/DBE
- Budget
- ACRES

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SITE ASSESSMENT PHASE

PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENTS

PHASE I ESA - ASTM E1527-21
ALL APPROPRIATE INQUIRY (AAI)
PROPERTY RECONNAISSANCE
HISTORICAL/DATABASE REVIEW
PHASE I ESA REPORT

- Identification of RECs
- Recommendations for Phase II

PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENTS

PHASE II SCOPE OF WORK
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROJECT PLAN (QAPP)
HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN (HASP)
SOIL/GROUNDWATER/SOIL GAS/AIR SAMPLING
HAZARDOUS BUILDING MATERIALS ASSESSMENT
PHASE II REPORT

- Nature/Extent of Contamination
- Regulatory Framework
- Next Steps

REUSE / CLEANUP PLANNING PHASE

SITE REUSE AND CLEANUP PLANNING

SITE REUSE OPTIONS
VISIONING
ANALYSIS OF BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP ALTERNATIVES (ABCA)
COST ESTIMATES
PATH TO REGULATORY CLOSURE
FUTURE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

EPA FUNDED BROWNFIELDS

■ General Eligibility Criteria

- Hazardous Substance vs. Petroleum

■ Sites Cannot Be:

- The subject of planned or on-going removal actions;
- Listed or proposed for listing on the National Priority List (NPL) / Superfund;
- The subject of an administrative or court order under solid and hazardous waste laws;
- The subject of corrective actions or closure requirements; or
- A federal facility.



The goal is to ensure that the party that created the environmental contamination pays for the cleanup

SITE INVENTORY

- Existing Resources / Inventories
- Abandoned / Blighted Properties
- Former Industrial Properties
- Properties Eligible for Tax Title Taking
- Involuntarily Acquired Properties
- Regulatory Databases
- Developer Interest
- Owner Interest



Source: MassDEP

PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENTS (ESAs)

- Preliminary Screening
 - Regulatory Databases
 - Historical File Reviews
 - Site Reconnaissance
 - Identify RECs
- ASTM E1527-21 Standard
- All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) – Liability Protection
- Prioritization and Recommendations for Phase II ESAs
- No Environmental Sampling





- EPA Site-Specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)
- Environmental media sampling and analysis
- Hazardous Building Material (HBM) assessments
- Nature and extent of contamination
- Data to support cleanup and redevelopment
- MassDEP Compliance (if necessary)

CLEANUP AND REUSE PLANNING

- Evaluate innovative, green and sustainable cleanup options and costs
- Existing and potential future use scenarios
- Develop ABCA and path to regulatory closure - mirror MassDEP guidance for remedy selection
- Reuse planning and visioning
- Resiliency considerations



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT



- Public meetings
- Informal tabling at local events
- Advisory board, interviews, and/or focus groups
- Project landing page and/or social media
- Online surveys
- Fact Sheets
- Mailing list / email updates

CMRPC'S BROWNFIELDS GRANT

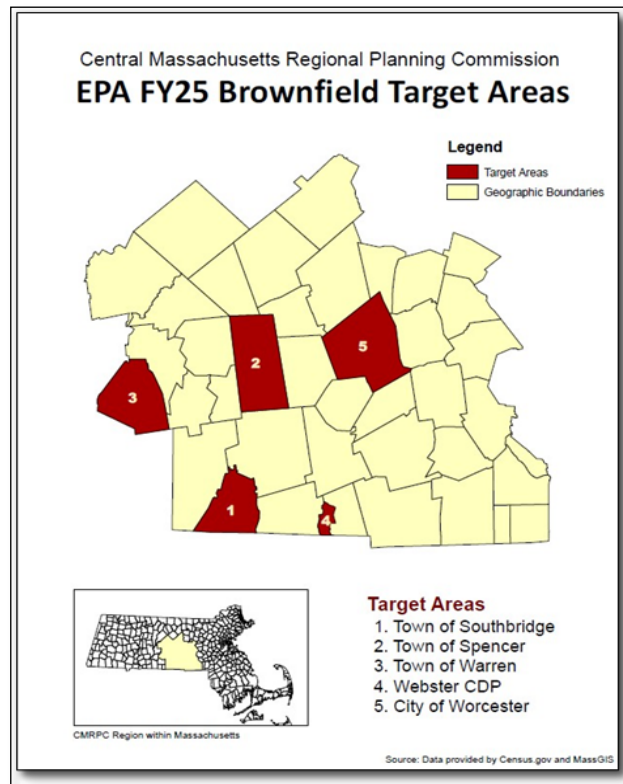
■ Assessment Coalition Grant

- *Designed for one “lead” eligible entity to partner with two to four “non-lead” eligible entities that do not have the capacity to apply for and manage their own EPA cooperative agreement.*
- *The lead coalition member submits an Assessment Coalition Grant application on behalf of itself and the other members for assessment work that will be performed within the geographic boundaries of the coalition members. The lead coalition member and each non-lead member must identify and plan to conduct work in separate target areas. The coalition may request up to **\$1,500,000** to assess a **minimum of two** hazardous substance and/or petroleum sites in each coalition member’s geographic boundary.*
- *The grant recipient (lead coalition member) **must apply for** and administer the grant, be accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of the funds and be the point of contact for the other coalition members. A **Memorandum of Agreement** (MOA) documenting the coalition’s site selection process must be in place prior to the expenditure and draw down of any funds that have been awarded to the lead coalition member. It is up to the coalition to agree internally on the distribution of funds and the mechanisms for implementing the assessment work.*



CMRPC'S BROWNFIELDS GRANT

- EPA Coalition Assessment Grant:
 - \$1,000,000
- Performance Period:
 - July 1, 2025 – September 30, 2029
- Coalition Partners:
 - Quaboag Valley CDC
 - Town of Southbridge
- QEP / LSP:
 - Weston & Sampson



CMRPC'S BROWNFIELDS GOALS

- Conduct outreach to inform priority sites
- Select sites with Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) input
- Conduct assessment and cleanup / reuse planning activities at selected sites
- Catalyze reuse, redevelopment, and revitalization throughout region, with focus on target areas



Source: Town of Oxford

CMRPC'S BROWNFIELDS GRANT

WHERE DID WE START?

- ✓ Planning Phase
 - Project Kick Off

- ✓ Brownfields Site Assessment Program – Current, On-Going Work
 - Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC)
 - Prioritization and Site Selection
 - Eligibility Determinations
 - Plans for Public Outreach & Engagement

What's Next ?

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)
- Phase II ESAs / Hazardous Building Material (HBM) Assessments
- Cleanup and/or Reuse Planning
- Select Additional Sites (as funding allows) and Maintain Inventory
- Future Funding Opportunities



INVENTORY & CANDIDATE SITES

30 Mill Street Southbridge MA

- Historical Industrial Mill Operations 1800s-1900s (most notably: Hamilton Woolen Co.)
- Portion Demolished (April 2026)
- Tax Title Taking
- Regulatory Compliance History:
 - At least one Release Tracking Number (RTN) assigned to the Site (unclassified)
 - Chlorinated VOC / Arsenic (soil)
- Eligibility Form Drafted
- Initial Activity: Phase I ESA

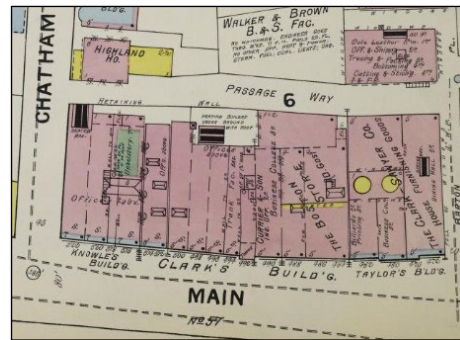


Source: Loopnet, 2021

INVENTORY & CANDIDATE SITES

484 Main Street Worcester MA (Denholm Building)

- Historical uses:
 - Former Department Store Building
 - Elevators/Smokestack
 - HBMs Likely
 - Fuel Oil Heating
- Regulatory Compliance History:
 - RTN (Closed Under "Older" MCP-Regs)
 - Adjoining RTNs
- Downtown Location
- Multi-Family Housing



Source: Library of Congress (1892 Sanborn)



Source: MassLive, 2023

INVENTORY & CANDIDATE SITES

21 & 35 Pearl Street, Webster MA

- Historical uses:
 - Textile Mill 1889-2002
 - Various fabric companies
- Regulatory Compliance History:
 - At least two RTNs (Closed Under "Older" MCP-Regs)
- Adjoining the French River & Railroad Tracks
- Portions demolished following fire



Source: Town of Webster GIS, 2026

NEXT STEPS

- Solicit feedback from the BAC and / or the public
- Conduct Phase I & II ESAs and HBM assessment activities
- Prioritize and select additional sites for Phase I & II ESAs & inventory
- Conduct cleanup and reuse planning
- Leverage progress to apply for future funding opportunities



BROWNFIELDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



What is the role of the Brownfields Advisory Committee?

- Share community priorities and concerns
- Support site inventory and prioritization
- Support public outreach efforts

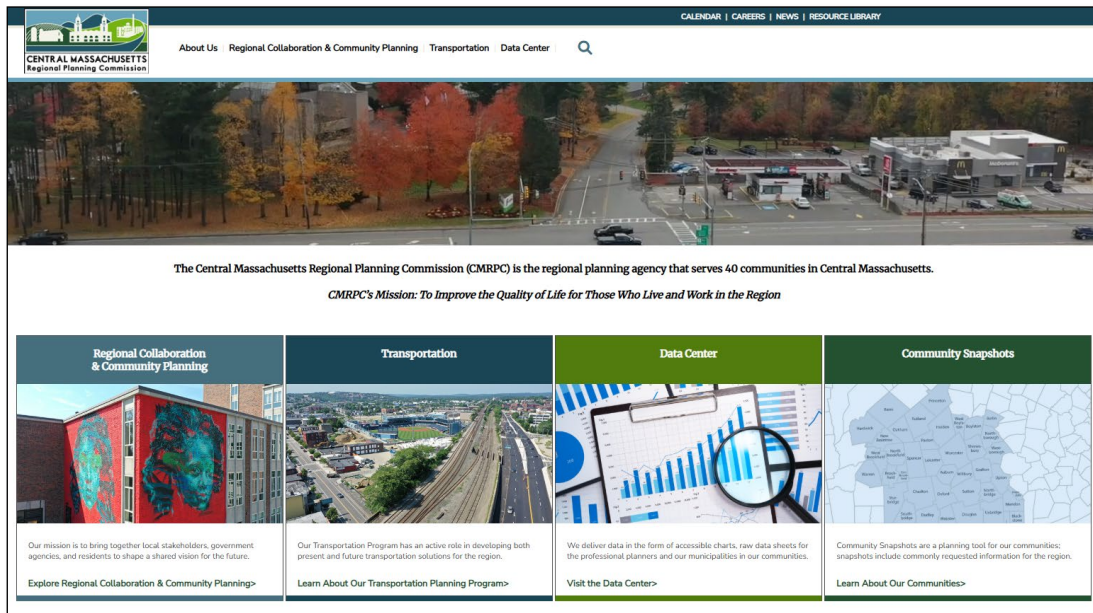
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

1. Are there any additional properties that should be evaluated under this program ?
2. Are there any factors that should increase a site's ranking and/or prioritization for assessment activities?
3. What are the region's biggest redevelopment needs?
4. What are the barriers or hurdles to private landowners and/or developers from participating in this program?
5. How do we get the community, private property owners, and developers interested in the program?

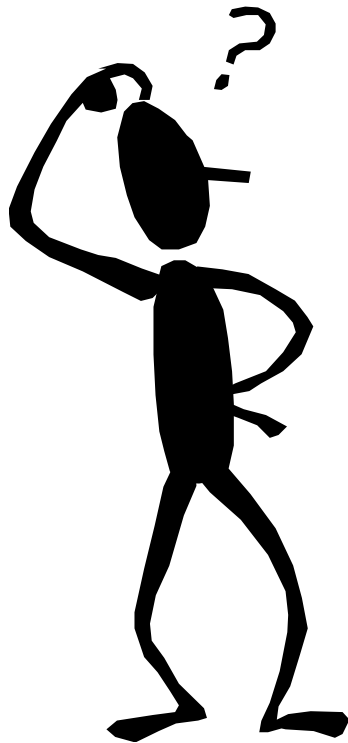
BROWNFIELDS UPDATES

- See the CMRPC website for Brownfields Assessment updates:

<https://cmrpc.org/regional-collaboration-community-planning/economic-development/brownfields/>



QUESTIONS?



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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thank you

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