

Honolulu TOD Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Project

Project Fact Sheet

Project Overview

The City and County of Honolulu is planning for future development and redevelopment within the 20-mile rail system corridor. Many of the 21 rail station areas provide opportunities for transit-oriented development (TOD), which concentrates higher density and mixed uses near the rail stations.

Redeveloping properties sometimes requires addressing issues from previous uses that may have caused soil contamination from petroleum or other hazardous materials. Contaminated sites are commonly referred to as “brownfields,” and they can be effectively cleaned up and reused, such as for housing, retail stores, or parks.

Honolulu has received two grants, totaling \$700,000, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help identify brownfields in the TOD neighborhoods. The City is seeking interested property owners to help them determine if their site requires cleanup for redevelopment to occur. Participation is voluntary and free.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this funding opportunity, please contact Tim Streitz of the Department of Planning and Permitting at tstreitz@honolulu.gov, or (808) 768-8042.



Example Phase II ESA sampling work

What Will the Project Fund?

The EPA grant will fund up to 14 Phase I and up to six Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), as well as a cleanup plan. This brownfields assistance will help to address suspected brownfields sites along the rail corridor.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessments

A Phase I ESA is a review of information about current and previous uses on a site to determine if further analysis of potential contamination is needed.

Phase II Environmental Site Assessments

A Phase II ESA uses on-site testing and soil sampling to determine the type and extent of contamination so that appropriate clean-up planning can be done. The EPA grant will also fund Sampling and Analysis Plans for the Phase II sites selected.

Site Investigations

If a Phase II ESA identifies the presence of contamination, grant funds may be used to conduct a site investigation. A site investigation defines the magnitude and extent of the contamination and often involves extensive soil borings and several rounds of groundwater monitoring.

Remediation Planning

Once a property has been thoroughly investigated, the next step is to select a remediation strategy. Remediation strategies are evaluated based on their effectiveness in cleaning up the contamination, cost, and the redevelopment plans proposed for the site.

How Will Sites Be Selected for Brownfield Assessment Funding?

Properties within TOD areas that have potential brownfield issues will be ranked according to criteria that reflect their readiness for redevelopment, how closely their plans align with TOD program priorities, their ability to leverage other funds for remediation and redevelopment, and additional factors that indicate their ability to be a timely and effective catalyst for other TOD redevelopment in the neighborhood.

Benefits to the Land Owners and Property Developers

ESAs are generally required for redeveloping or selling sites where there is reasonable cause to suspect potential contamination from previous usage. Owners and developers of such sites can have these ESAs prepared at no cost if their sites meet certain criteria. Nationally, about 30 percent of sites assessed through this grant funding are found to have no significant brownfield issues, thus reducing redevelopment uncertainty and increasing values.

Benefits to the Community

TOD along the rail corridor offers unique and unprecedented opportunities to improve the urban communities of Oahu. The ability to address brownfield issues on selected sites will stimulate and accelerate overall redevelopment activities and help realize the benefits of more livable, walkable, and transit-accessible neighborhoods for current and future generations.

Redeveloped Former Brownfields in Honolulu

The Senior Residence at Iwilei



This retirement community residential complex was built on former Oahu Railway Depot land after cleanup was completed.

John A. Burns School of Medicine



The University of Hawaii medical school campus was built on a former warehouse site and animal quarantine facility in Kakaako.

Kroc Center of Hawaii



This 15-acre community center was built on a former sugar plantation and a nearby remediated pesticide mixing area in East Kapolei.

Further Information

For more information, please visit www.honolulu.gov/tod/dpp-tod-resources/brownfields-assistance, or contact:

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