



New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Brownfield and Community Revitalization
Mail Code 401-05K
P.O. Box 420
401 East State Street, 5th floor
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420
Telephone: 609.984.1790

Brownfield Development Area Application Guidance

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Office of Brownfield and Community Revitalization (OBCR) is pleased to provide this application guidance for Brownfield Development Area (BDA) designation. The BDA Program is designed to help communities affected by multiple brownfield sites to plan for and implement investigation, remediation, and redevelopment of those brownfield sites in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The BDA Program represents a unique partnership among the NJDEP and applicants to transform distressed sites into revitalized *neighborhoods* and *communities*. (“Applicant” as referenced in this document will refer to towns, counties, municipalities, redevelopment agencies, and other public entities authorized to exercise redevelopment powers, pursuant to the local redevelopment and housing law (C.40A:12A-4.).

A Brownfield Development Area (BDA) designation creates a long-term partnership with the applicant, Steering Committee, the host municipality, and the NJDEP. The partnership focuses available resources to develop and implement a strategic plan for investigation, remediation, and redevelopment of the brownfield sites within the BDA. The overview of the BDA Program and details on the BDA process are posted at https://www.nj.gov/dep/srp/brownfields/bda/bda_synopsis.htm.

BDA Selection Process and Criteria

In the BDA application process, Steering Committees, and partnering municipalities will apply to DEP for designation of an area affected by multiple brownfield sites as a “Brownfield Development Area” or BDA. BDA projects will be selected based on application completeness, quality (will be points-based) and staff availability. **Applications must be received by the Office of Brownfields and Community Revitalization by April 30, 2024.**

Selection criteria will include:

- Quality and completeness of the BDA application
- Extent to which the boundaries of the proposed BDA are consistent with the boundaries of a community or neighborhood, rather than merely properties that happen to be located near one another
- Extent to which the proposed BDA is consistent with Smart Growth principles (<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/>)
- Description of redevelopment plan for the proposed BDA
- Documents to support the implementation of the redevelopment plan
- Level of community involvement in the BDA
- Anticipated benefits to the community, public health, and the environment from the proposed BDA

Applicants not selected for BDA designation based on the quality of the application will receive feedback in improving their applications for consideration in the future.

Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the BDA

Successful applicants will enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will govern the partnership formed by the Steering Committee, the host municipality, and NJDEP. The MOU memorializes the BDA boundaries, the Steering Committee membership, and sets forth the steps of the BDA process and the commitments of all parties. This MOU will be executed upon designation and renewed biennially upon determination by NJDEP of progress as demonstrated in the required reports. This biennial renewal requirement will impose a responsibility on all parties to ensure progress on the BDA.

Who Can Apply

Applications will be submitted by the applicant on behalf of the local Steering Committee. “Applicant” as referenced in this document will refer to towns, counties, municipalities, redevelopment agencies, and other public entities authorized to exercise redevelopment powers, pursuant to the local redevelopment and housing law, C.40A:12A-4.

Steering Committees should be comprised of but not limited to, representatives from municipalities, counties, redevelopment agencies, housing authorities, improvement authorities, and other stakeholders such as neighborhood residents, property owners (including owners of the BDA sites), potential developers, community organizations, local business leaders, and environmental groups and commissions. All applications must include an ordinance or a resolution of support from the host municipality to partner with the applicant Steering Committee and to adhere to the terms of the MOU governing the BDA project.

How to Apply

Applications will open on **October 30, 2023**. Section-by-section instructions for completing the BDA application form are included in the application. **Applications must be received by OBCR by April 30, 2024**. One (1) digital copy (in PDF format or other compatible format) of the application is required. Please email the application to bdaapp@dep.nj.gov. Please also email a Dropbox link or similar format to bdaapp@dep.nj.gov.

Applicants are encouraged to contact OBCR for more information or assistance with completing the BDA application. Applicants may email OBCR with any questions bdaapp@dep.nj.gov. The applicant may also call OBCR with any inquiries. When calling, please direct your questions to:

Office of Brownfield & Community Revitalization
Phone: 609.984.1790



Guidelines by Section

Applicants are reminded to provide information in response to all components of this application. Applicants may add information that, while not specifically requested, may be important in presenting the overall picture of the proposed BDA project.

Section I: Applicant Information

The applicant needs to provide the complete mailing address, a phone number, and e-mail of a contact person. In the case of co-applications, provide information for each co-applicant.

Section II: Project Information

1. **Project Boundaries.** Clearly state the physical boundaries of the proposed BDA and why these boundaries were selected. The boundaries may be geographic features, including rivers or other bodies of water, railroads or streets/roads/highways. When boundaries are streets, street names should be listed. This statement should be as brief as possible while accurately describing the area. (Example: “A neighborhood bounded by River W, highway X, Y Street and the Z railway line currently containing residential, commercial and light industrial uses. The proposed BDA includes six brownfield sites, which the Steering Committee proposes should be remediated and reused consistent with an overall community vision for the area. The area was selected because...”).
2. **List of Brownfield Sites within the Proposed BDA.** The brownfield sites proposed for remediation and reuse must fit the description of a brownfield: “any former or current commercial or industrial site that is currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been or there is suspected to have been a discharge of a contaminant.” Brownfields may be vacant or improved land. List each site and the corresponding street address or Tax Block(s) and Lot(s). Sites may consist of individual parcels or multiple parcels that function as a single unit (e.g., a large commercial facility covering several lots) and should be identified by their current, rather than anticipated, name or use. To the extent known, the site size and ownership information should be included in this section.
3. **Scaled map or photo.** Provide a single scaled map or aerial photo depicting the boundaries of the entire proposed BDA as well as the individual site boundaries for each brownfield site listed in Section II.B. Clearly identify on the map or photo each brownfield site with the site name as it appears in Section II.B. Identify prominent physical features such as streets, railroads, water bodies, etc.

Section III: Baseline Information for Brownfield Sites within the BDA

For each of the brownfield sites listed in Section II.B., complete a separate Baseline Property Datasheet. The information required to complete the Datasheets is readily available from the municipal tax office or, in the case of environmental information, the local or county health department or NJDEP. Include the site name and address, all blocks and lots, property size, zoning, the name and address of the property owner, a physical description of the property, the current use and any known past uses. Extensive additional site information is not required for this application; however, any existing information concerning past or current owners, site operations and remediation activities must be included. Information pertaining to site remediation activities can be obtained from NJDEP Data Miner Database at <https://njems.nj.gov/DataMiner>.



Section IV: Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will lead the project throughout the process and must be committed to seeing the project through to completion. BDA applications will be evaluated, in part, based on the extent to which the proposed Steering Committee reflects broad community representation and commitment to completion of the BDA project. The Steering Committee may be comprised of but not limited to, representatives from municipalities, counties, redevelopment agencies, housing authorities, improvement authorities, and other stakeholders such as neighborhood residents, property owners (including owners of the BDA sites), potential developers, community organizations, local business leaders, and environmental groups and commissions. These and other potentially affected stakeholders should be informed of the BDA application process and invited to participate or to submit a statement of their support. In this Section, list each of the Steering Committee members, their affiliations, contact information and the stakeholder sector they represent, starting with the Steering Committee Chair. The application must include a separate letter of interest from each prospective Steering Committee candidate that affirms their commitment to the project and the BDA process.

Section V: Steering Committee Support

Demonstrate that the Steering Committee is representative of the community and has the support of the community and the host municipality. Provide a brief description of the method by which the Steering Committee was created. An ordinance or a resolution of support from the municipal governing body for the BDA project, and another ordinance or resolution indicating the municipality's willingness to enter an MOU with the DEP and the Steering Committee, are required. Ordinances/resolutions must have been adopted/passed in support of this specific year's BDA application. Letters of support from local government stakeholders will give added weight to the application. Any funding currently allocated for the project from municipal or other sources should be listed. Additional letters of support for the application from other areas or community organizations should be included as part of this section. These letters are encouraged to be as unique and explicit as possible as to the degree and level of support for the proposed project and the Steering Committee. Letters of support from brownfield site property owners and environmental commissions or organizations are also encouraged.

Section VI: Community Overview

Provide a narrative description for the proposed BDA under the following headings:

- **Justification for the BDA Boundaries.** Provide the rationale for the selection of the BDA boundaries based on neighborhood factors or other designations (examples would include a school sending area, active industrial or commercial area, or other recognized or logical grouping of the sites). Detailed information concerning current uses within the proposed BDA must be provided.
- **Area Population and General Demographics.** Provide an estimate of the resident population by major census categories. Provide general information including, but not limited to, describing income, education, dominant employment sectors, unemployment figures.
- **Housing, Economic Activity and Public Assets.** Describe residential dwellings and existing commercial or industrial entities in the project area. Describe schools and other public assets as necessary to aid in characterizing the proposed BDA.
- **Local Planning Designations.** Identify local planning designations applicable in the BDA project area, including zoning, historic districts, redevelopment areas, etc. Provide an overview of the municipality's master plan goals and a current municipal zoning map for the proposed BDA and immediate vicinity. Other redevelopment plans may be included.
- **Economic Development Designations.** Identify all economic development designations, overburdened communities, such as a special improvement district, Environmental Opportunity Zone, Urban Enterprise



Zone, Federal Opportunity Zones, New Jersey Redevelopment Authority (NJRA) legislatively designated municipalities, and any other relevant local designation that may impact the plan or the resources available for the BDA project.

- State Planning Areas. Please provide the state planning area designation of the proposed BDA.
- Transportation Infrastructure. Discuss transportation infrastructure in the BDA project area including the availability of and access to public transportation, public parking, and/or designated Transit Village.
- Recreation and Open Space Inventory. Identify existing parks, playgrounds, public spaces (gardens, boulevards, etc.) and water bodies within the BDA. Include a description of all existing properties used for public recreation and open space. A general description of street landscaping should also be included.
- Obstacles to Redevelopment. Identify features that may represent obstacles or challenges to redevelopment including the presence of wetlands, floodplains, tidelands, threatened and endangered species, etc.

Section VII: Redevelopment Vision and Community Benefits

Clearly detail the anticipated benefits to the community and the environment as a result of the proposed BDA project. Provide a statement of purpose describing any proposed end uses and demonstrating that the objectives of the project are consistent with Smart Growth principles (<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/>).

Describe all formal or informal planning efforts to date develop a community vision.

Provide a narrative describing the anticipated benefits to the community from the improvements associated with the remediation of the brownfield sites and the community's support for this effort under the following headings:

- Direct and Indirect Environmental Benefits: List potential benefits to air, surface water, ground water, and soil quality from this project. Be as specific as possible. Specifically identify any "green building" elements of the proposed redevelopment. (Refer to <http://www.usgbc.org> for additional information on building "green".)
- Aesthetic Benefits: Describe the potential benefits to the landscape of the neighborhood including improvements to existing street infrastructure and property.
- Community Quality of Life Benefits: Describe the potential benefits from the BDA project that could improve the lives of people living and working in the neighborhood. Specifically identify any "brownfield-to-greenfield" components of the proposed redevelopment.
- Public Health Benefits: List ways in which the BDA project will improve the health of the residents in and around the BDA.
- Economic Benefits: List specific economic benefits, and to the degree possible, quantify in terms of work, income, and other commercial benefits.
- Planned End-Use: Provide a description of the planned end use within the boundaries of the BDA.

