

BROWNFIELDS COALITION ASSESSMENT GRANT: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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**CREATED BY SPRING/FALL 2022 EOU STUDENTS
REV. 1 BY JACQUELINE BRENNER**



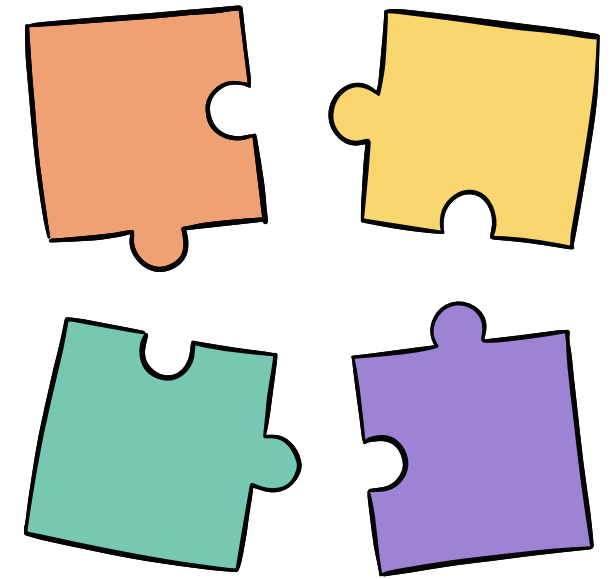
PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Baker Technical Institute (BTI) was awarded a 600,000 dollar grant by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct brownfield assessment and planning efforts in La Grande and Baker City, Oregon.
- Project coalition members include BTI, Eastern Oregon University (EOU), Baker City, and La Grande.
- Properties being considered for assessment are located in Baker City or La Grande. We are largely focused on assessing abandoned or underutilized commercial properties, businesses, and/or properties that could have a larger public benefit.
- Students assist coalition members and consultants with various tasks under the grant, depending on the term, ongoing project status, and class size. Students are consistently involved with public outreach, site visits, interviews, report review, and reporting.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

BTI administrators, instructors, and students leads the grant with the support of EOU administrators, instructors, and students, Stantec consultants, and the La Grande and Baker City communities. Students will be responsible for community outreach through their assigned term, with the instructors, consultant, and coalition members assisting. Coalition members share responsibilities for implementing the EPA grant. EPA Project Officers Angel Ip and Amy Baker are evaluating compliance and progress of the grant. Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Coordinator Rebecca Wells-Albers is providing technical assistance.



BTI, Doug Dalton*

Grant Lead

- Website development, online copy, and publishing, high school student involvement
- Support with ESAs, brownfield identification

EOU, Sustainable Rural System Program*

- Support BTI, conduct outreach, assist with community engagement
- Support with ESAs, brownfield identification

Stantec, Jackie Brenner

- Planning and implementing coalition and public meetings, fielding questions, managing the project timeline, working with property owners

La Grande and Baker City**

- Helping recruit local participants, making sure meetings are accessible, engaging community members

EPA, Angel Ip/Amy Baker and DEQ, Rebecca Wells-Albers

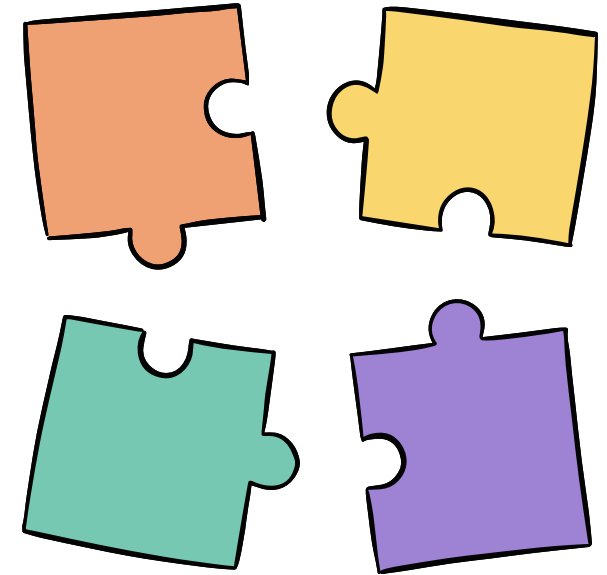
- The EPA evaluates compliance and progress of the grant
- DEQ provides technical assistance

* Support from students and instructors

** Support from Timothy Bishop, City of La Grande Economic Development Director and Beverly Calder, Baker City Mayor

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Coalition members, students, and the consultant engage with community partners to identify brownfields, support public outreach efforts, provide additional revitalization funding to property owners, and provide feedback. Some of our primary brownfield advisory partners are listed below. Additional support (project dependent) may be from Oregon Regional Solutions, the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District, Northeast Oregon Housing Authority, North Central Public Health Department and Community Connection of Northeast Oregon, along with local realtors.



Baker Downtown, Chelsea Judy

- Can provide direction for economic revitalization
- Can provide public outreach support
- Can identify brownfields

HatchLab Baker, Bryan Tweit

- Can provide public outreach support to businesses
- Can identify brownfields
- Can connect students with businesses

Business Oregon, Karen Homolac

- Can provide direction for economic revitalization
- Can provide additional funding for assessment/cleanup

La Grande Main Street

- Can provide direction for economic revitalization
- Can provide additional funding for revitalization

PROJECT GOALS

- Developing engaging advertising
- Creating accessible and equitable opportunities for engagement. The community must be involved and want to change their community for the better!
- Making engagement fun!
- Offering interactive activities
- Involving community members
- Having an open dialogue
- Providing brownfield education to the community
- Tailoring outreach to property owners
- Directing outreach to community groups

OUR VISION IS TO DEVELOP SHOVEL-READY LAND REUSE PROJECTS, CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN OUR COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS TO ATTRACT YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS, AND ELIMINATE BLIGHT BY RESTORING DILAPIDATED HISTORIC BUILDINGS INTO THE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE INVENTORY.



DEVELOPING ENGAGING ADVERTISING

- We aim to make a connection to the big picture.
- We also aim to provide updates on the project.
- We want to use attention-getting advertisements.

Examples:

- "Not In My Backyard... (BROWNFIELDS)
 - Reimagine La Grande's Downtown
 - Baker City of the Future
 - Turning underutilized spaces into places: brownfield redevelopment
- We make the time, location, and other information about events easily accessible to the communities they involve. We will also advertise any incentives we may provide.
 - We will advertise in La Grande, Baker City, and surrounding areas as well as online through social media and our website.
 - The target audience for the advertisements includes downtown business associations, property owners, and any group or person interested in community development.



CREATING ACCESSIBLE AND EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

- We will make sure the location of the event is accessible to everyone and will be ADA accessible.
 - The library is a good place because most people know where that is, and it isn't intimidating to visit. If we use the library again, there needs to be better signage about where in the library to go.
 - Other places could include HQ Venue or The Local.
- We will consider the time of day.
 - Providing food, especially over meal times, increases accessibility.
 - Consider when our targeted audience is most likely to be available.
- We will offer childcare and kid activities so parents can attend.
- We will collect RSVPs to see:
 - if materials are needed in a language other than English.
 - if accommodations for disabled/differently abled community members need to be made with support from the City coalition members.
- We will consider providing a virtual option for attendance.



MAKING ENGAGEMENT FUN!

WE WILL OFFER CHILD CARE/MAKE IT A FAMILY EVENT

Offer activities that are made for entertaining people of all ages. Offering fun and supervised activities for children is a great way to get parents to attend the meetings.



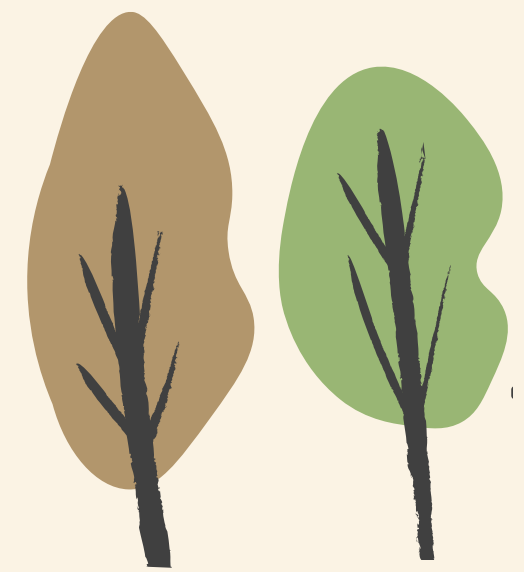
WE WILL CREATE HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Give the participants something to do besides just sitting and listening. Make an activity that is hands-on and makes people excited about the potential surrounding brownfields.

A great creative activity to include is a station where participants can imagine and draw what they want to see in La Grande or Baker City. This is a good activity for people of any age.

WE WILL OFFER FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS

Give the people more than one reason to come to the engagement meeting. Offering an incentive such as food or refreshments (as approved by EPA) is a great way to get people in the door.



OFFERING INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

- Allow for open dialogue between participants. Get people excited to share what they love and don't love about their community.
- Ask People to bring in photos of the community to show how it has changed over time.
- Show before and after photographs of brownfields in the area.
- Show a brownfield in the area and have people imagine what they want in that particular building/area.



Be informative about brownfields and make it fun!



INVOLVING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- We will bring in brownfield advisory and community partners to speak and share their knowledge.
- We will bring in property owners who have redeveloped brownfields to share their experiences at events.
- We will write their successes/progress on the website and on social media.
- We will provide examples of local successes: The Local, The Liberty Theater Café at events, in media, and on the website to educate people.
- We will have Mavis from Mountain Works speak about why she participated.
- We will refer community members with technical questions to Stantec.





HAVING AN OPEN DIALOGUE!

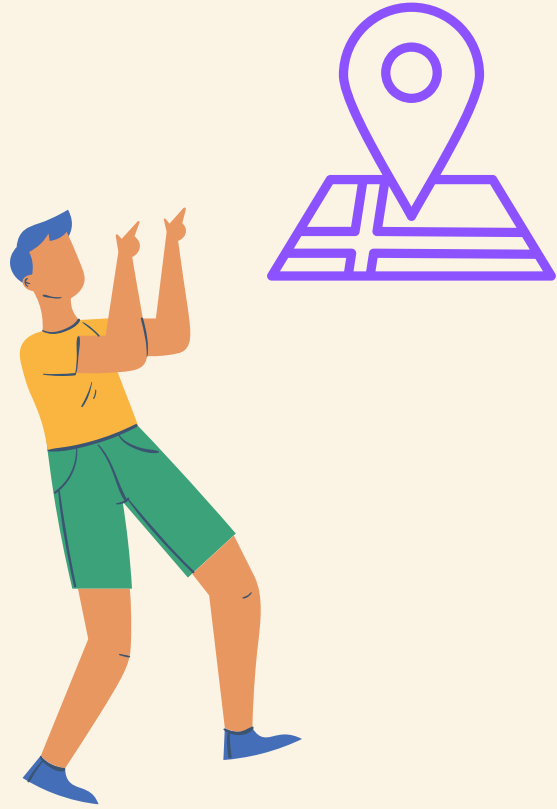


- Allow community members to share visions and ideas.
- Create a safe space to ask questions and further learning.
- Getting people engaged is important, although the grant will not cover redevelopment.
- Share info about what can be done after assessments.

PROVIDING BROWNFIELD EDUCATION TO THE COMMUNITY

- We have a website to answer questions about the grant (<https://bakerti.org/programs/brownfield-projects/>)
- We created community member and property owner fact sheets available on the website and at events!
- We gather organizations and people that understand brownfields to talk about them at events.
- We will educate property owners about other brownfield resources.





TAILORING OUTREACH TO PROPERTY OWNERS

- We hold property owner round table groups once per quarter or as needed held by each of the City coalition members help answer specific questions and help from the Cities, coalition members, students and/or consultant to assist property owners in determining if their properties are eligible.
- We utilize invitations to gatherings held by Baker Downtown, La Grande Main Street, etc. allow a forum for direct outreach from BTI, other coalition members, students, and/or the consultant to existing businesses, including those that may own vacant or underutilized brownfields.
- We direct outreach to local realtors can help identify brownfields and educate property owners about what funding may be available to them.

DIRECTING OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

- We will use our network of brownfield advisory and community partners to connect with additional organizations interested in grant-funded activities.
- We will direct outreach to other students, parents, school staff, instructors, and the Baker school board to provide updates and information about the grant.
- We will connect one-on-one with community group (business, non-profit, professional association) leaders to notify them of the grant.



Scheduling introductory phone calls and going door to door adds a personal touch and promotes listening.



DISTRIBUTING ADVERTISEMENTS FOR EVENTS

- We will advertise events at least two weeks in advance.
- We will use local public resources such as the chamber of commerce, East Talks, and/or radio stations to broadcast information.
- We will approach The Observer and Baker City Herald to publish an article about grants people can get when they have brownfields and how these grants can help businesses and the community.
- The advertisements should get people interested in learning more!



POTENTIAL AGENDA FOR EVENTS



- People enter
 - Get snacks, drinks, and sticky notes, and pick up the agenda.
- Sticky note activity (SEE NEXT SLIDE).
- After ideas are shared, we have Jackie from Stantec give a presentation about brownfields.
 - After the presentation, people can ask questions.
- Then we have brownfield property owners share their experiences.
 - People can ask the property owners questions.
- Mavis shares an interest in having her building be considered a brownfield.
- We play a brownfield Kahoot/game where audience members answer questions about brownfields to ensure understanding.
 - <https://create.kahoot.it/share/brownfields/a6681ab0-4f81-44fd-b792-771a2078466a>
- The audience can go over places they think are brownfields.
- We share info about how to access the funds and apply, then we finish.

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY FOR EVENTS



- Everyone is given three sticky notes and a pen.
- There is a prompt on the board that relates to what people want to be preserved in La Grande or Baker City.
 - What are 3 things you want to be preserved in La Grande or Baker City?
 - What are 3 things you love about La Grande or Baker City?
- Give everyone some time to write their answers.
- The sticky notes are then collected and discussed as a large group.
 - If there are a large number of people, the answers can be discussed in small groups.
- Then, there can be a larger discussion about the responses and the presenter can lightly link what people want with brownfield remediation.

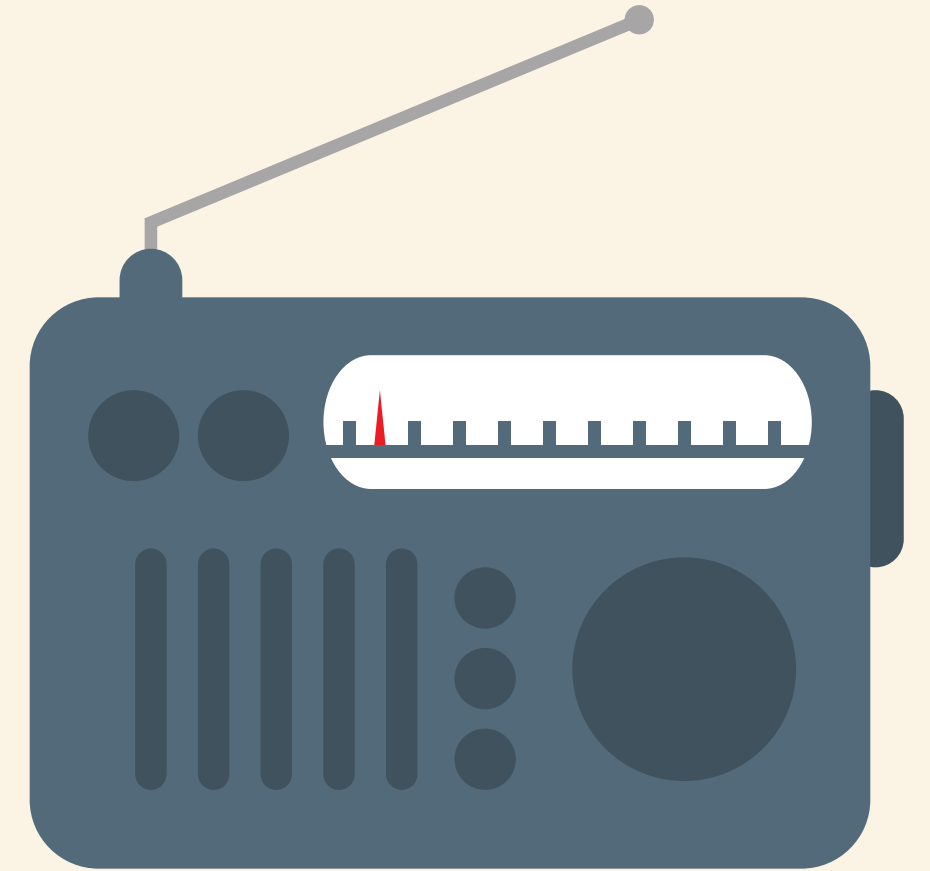
ONLINE RESOURCES



- Brownfields Coalition Assessment webpage available at <https://bakerti.org/programs/brownfield-projects/#communityassessmentCommunity>
- Community member fact sheet available at <https://bakerti.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/brownfield-fact-sheet.pdf>
- Facebook and other social media posts and advertisements
- Elkhorn media advertisements
- Advertisements and articles in local newspapers (Baker Herald, the Observer, etc.)
- EPA Brownfields program information available at <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

OTHER RESOURCES

- Radio advertisements
- Grant updates online and in other print media
- One-on-one property owner meetings
- Talks and presentations to local organizations and groups



PROJECT SCHEDULE

Six more engagement meetings will be held.

- 3 in Baker City
- 3 in La Grande

The meetings will be held two times a year (2022-2024), most likely in the fall and spring. Final dates TBD.

Social media posts will be made monthly with updates on projects in La Grande and Baker City.

Updates to the website will be made quarterly.