

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COLFAX MAINSTREET COALITION ANNOUNCES \$900K GRANT FROM EPA TO ADDRESS REVITALIZATION CHALLENGES ALONG COLFAX

Denver, Lakewood, DURA and Neighborhoods Form Coalition to Study Colfax Corridor

DENVER — The Colfax Mainstreet Coalition, a partnership among the City of Denver, the City of Lakewood, and the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), today announced a \$900,000 Brownfields grant it received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that will be used to study the Colfax Avenue corridor to foster redevelopment of Colorado's original main street.

Twenty community organizations were honored for their support in the grant-writing process at today's commemorative event on the site for the future West Denver Branch Library, a former brownfield located on Colfax Avenue. EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is 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.

"Denver, Lakewood, and the Denver Urban Renewal Authority are taking a strategic approach to reviving blighted properties and creating new opportunities for investment and job creation along the Colfax Avenue corridor," said EPA Regional Administrator, Jim Martin. "These funds will help secure cleaner, healthier neighborhoods by improving the environment and restoring dozens of properties to productive reuse."

The Colfax Mainstreet Coalition is one of only eight groups across the country that received at least \$900,000 in funding. In all, the EPA awarded \$69.3 million in grants nationwide for new investments to provide communities with funding necessary to clean and redevelop contaminated properties, boost local economies and create jobs while protecting public health.

"The great news about this grant is that it will add to the momentum we have underway along Colfax in Lakewood," said Lakewood Mayor Bob Murphy. "We have several redevelopment projects either completed or planned, we have a new business improvement district and best of all, we have a new art district. This grant will be another step in creating the Colfax our businesses and residents want."

The grant will be used to assess contamination of "brownfields" properties along 15 miles of Colfax from Yosemite Street on the east in Denver to Indiana Street on the west in Lakewood. These environmental assessments will help determine the nature and extent of potential contamination at sites, identify specific cleanup needs, and restore properties to beneficial reuse. Examples of potential brownfields targeted by this effort include former gas stations and dry cleaners.

"This grant will build upon the public investment already occurring within the Colfax corridor," says Doug Linkhart, Manager of Denver Environmental Health. "By integrating sustainable development that includes new high-density, mixed-use mainstreet zoning, we're moving closer to achieving our ultimate goal of improving the environment and public health."

The EPA awards millions of dollars every year to assess and clean up abandoned industrial and commercial properties. With more than 50 years of experience in urban renewal projects and brownfield assessments, DURA led the charge in forming the Colfax Mainstreet Coalition with the City of Denver Department of Environmental Health, Denver Office of Economic Development and the City of Lakewood Environmental Services. The Coalition then acquired the Colorado Division of Oil and Public Safety and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment as strategic partners and applied for the federal grant in 2011.

"When assessing an iconic, regional corridor like Colfax Avenue, one that stretches from the eastern plains to the Rocky Mountains, it takes a coordinated effort at the federal, state, city and community level. Without the strong support of the groups in this audience, we would not have this very important piece of funding to catalyze redevelopment and revitalize the Colfax corridor," said Tracy Huggins, executive director of DURA.

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The \$900,000 grant, which will be used for site assessment and remediation planning efforts, includes a three-year project period, and the Coalition will begin utilizing the funds immediately by engaging the community and identifying potential brownfield sites to study in the coming months.

In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed to help states and communities around the country cleanup and revitalize brownfield sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, clean up grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

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About the EPA Brownfields Program

Today's EPA grant recipients are among 245 grantees, including tribes and communities in 39 states across the country, funded by Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup grants, and Revolving Loan Fund Supplemental grants. The grants awarded will assess and clean up abandoned industrial and commercial properties. There are an estimated 450,000 abandoned and contaminated waste sites in America. Since the Brownfields program's inception, investments have leveraged more than \$18.3 billion in cleanup and redevelopment funding from public and private sources and have resulted in approximately 75,500 jobs. More than 18,000 properties have been assessed, and over 700 properties have been cleaned up. Brownfields grants also target under-served and low-income neighborhoods – places where environmental cleanups and new jobs are most needed. List of awarded brownfields grants by state: http://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/. More information on EPA's brownfields program: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>.

About The Denver Office of Economic Development

Denver Office of Economic Development (OED) is dedicated to advancing economic prosperity for the City of Denver, its businesses, neighborhoods and residents. Working with a wide variety of community partners, OED operates to create a local environment that stimulates balanced growth through job creation, business assistance, housing options, neighborhood redevelopment and the development of a skilled workforce

About The Denver Department of Environmental Health

The Denver Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is dedicated to promoting healthy communities by protecting Denver's environment, enhancing sustainability, providing essential public health services and advancing the well-being of the city's pet population.

About the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA)

The Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) is a full service redevelopment agency that engages in neighborhood and downtown revitalization, economic development, homeownership and housing rehabilitation throughout the City and County of Denver. Since 1958, DURA has helped Denver overcome challenging conditions by leveraging public funding to maximize private investment and is an agent for growth and financial opportunity for Denver, its residents and the greater community. Visit <http://www.renewdenver.org>.