

**SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES
FOR BUILDING OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS**

**REUSE OF
VACANT AND
UNDERUTILIZED
PROPERTIES**

**GREYFIELD REDEVELOPMENT
VACANT LAND/UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES**

Greyfield Redevelopment



Background:

Urban development has altered the retail market in many ways. The once popular strip developments and mall settings of the 1960's do not have the strong appeal they once had to consumers. Greyfields, those half-empty shopping plazas and malls that can no longer compete with newer nearby retail centers, are the legacy of our changing preferences in shopping experience and community aesthetics.

Concept:

Reconfiguration of outdated plaza configurations presents an opportunity for communities to redefine themselves. These sites already contain utilities, connections to roadways, stormwater collection systems and often commercial zoning. Reuse of these sites is the largest example of recycling and reuse. It also has the potential to bring life to vacant structures and parking lots.

Key Statistic:

About 140 Regional Malls in the U.S. are greyfields and another 250 are in danger of becoming so¹.
18 percent of regional malls are in danger of becoming greyfields¹.





Artist rendering of a transformed greyfield

Sources: ¹Congress for New Urbanism and PriceWaterhouse Coopers. "Greyfields into Goldfields – From Failing Shopping Centers to Great Neighborhoods"

Greyfield Redevelopment



TARGET GROUP	WHAT CAN I DO
<p>All members of the Rochester community</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the re-use and reconfiguration of abandoned structures and plazas. This may require the adoption of development standards to accompany new zoning regulations and may involve changes in land use patterns, with possible setback changes. Get involved in any municipal public meetings that involve zoning or plans. • Learn more about greyfields and the re-use of vacant structures and plazas by clicking here.
<p>Developers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the re-use of vacant plazas structures and parking lots. Discuss options with the City of Rochester Bureau of Planning and Zoning.

Vacant Land/Underutilized Properties






Background:

Rochester has many abandoned properties. The solutions of how to handle these properties varies for each city due to a number of factors.

Concept:

Rochester has several agencies that assist homeowners with decisions about what to do with properties along with providing assistance to support renovations. The choice of whether to renovate or demolish is the primary choice that exists for homeowners (and municipalities). The trouble with demolition is that it is very final. When a housing structure is demolished, the frontage of the street is broken. Depending on your perspective, this may be an opportunity for a pocket park or it can be seen as an unfor-giving gap in the streetscape – “a missing tooth”.



TARGET GROUP	WHAT CAN I DO
<p>All members of the Rochester community</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in City of Rochester initiatives and meetings regarding vacant or unused properties. Get informed about any local initiatives to preserve houses and neighborhoods.
<p>Developer, Landlord</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend the city's property auction. Click here to learn more about this opportunity to rehabilitate properties.

Potential Resources/Agencies to Contact:

Our community has numerous agencies that are primed to assist homeowners. They include (but are not limited to):

- [NeighborWorks](http://nwrochester.org/) – Provides funding, construction management and financing. (<http://nwrochester.org/>)
- [Action for a Better Community](http://www.abcinfo.org/about-us/mission-and-history) – Promotes and provides opportunities for low-income individuals and families to become self-sufficient. (<http://www.abcinfo.org/about-us/mission-and-history>)
- [Pathstone](http://www.pathstone.org/about/) – Regional community development and human service organization. (<http://www.pathstone.org/about/>)
- [Rochester Land Bank](http://www.cityofrochester.gov/landbank/) – Acquires, holds and disposes real property that is vacant, abandoned or underutilized with a goal of retuning those properties to productive use. (<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/landbank/>)

Hyperlink: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/realestate/>



Potential Approaches to Underutilized Properties

Renovate / Upgrade Existing Houses

Positives:

- Preserves interior woodwork, exterior façade, and the history of the structure
- Maintains original streetscape appearance

Challenges:

- Potential material challenges: lead paint, asbestos, lead solder in domestic piping.
- Upgrades to HVAC likely needed
- Building insulation upgrades likely needed

Relocate Existing Structure to a New City Lot

Positives:

- May allow for the restoration of a missing house on a street.
- Preserves frontage appearance of street

Challenges:

- Cost – Transportation, foundation construction at destination
- Cost – Structure may need to meet all codes once moved

Demolish and Rebuild

Positives:

- Allows for the building of an energy efficient house meeting all current codes.
- Allows for use of updated materials and technology

Challenges:

- Costs for demolition, new foundation, structure, HVAC, Electrical
- The cost / value may exceed assessments of some of the surrounding homes