

CONCLUSION

This guidebook has described for you the development process, and the techniques and resources available to redevelop abandoned buildings and sites. We began with a discussion of vision and finished with a guide to project implementation. Each of the sections provided direction and lessons on how to make opportunities happen.

Opportunities happen when...

- ✓ **You have the imagination to see abandoned buildings in a new light.**
- ✓ **You know where you want to go.**
- ✓ **You have created a clearly defined, achievable vision.**
- ✓ **The people who live and work in the community have bought in to your vision.**
- ✓ **You build a foundation of public support and confidence.**
- ✓ **You have developed a detailed plan and strategy for implementation.**
- ✓ **You know what you have to work with.**
- ✓ **You respect your community's heritage.**
- ✓ **You take advantage of all your resources and assets.**
- ✓ **You have established partnerships and gained commitments from all stakeholders.**
- ✓ **You know your market and find a niche for your building.**
- ✓ **You have the patience and persistence to implement the many phases of redevelopment - one step at a time ...**

Take a closer look at your community. Those long-neglected and abandoned buildings have the potential to help revitalize your community.

It is a transformation that begins with people who have a vision. Whether you are in government, the community, or the private sector, you need the imagination to see the potential of abandoned buildings as opportunities.

One renovation project can lead to another ... and another ... until the community is transformed, one revitalized building at a time. So take a fresh look at abandoned buildings and abandoned sites in your community and discover the opportunities waiting to happen.



New spaces for old places

APPENDIX

Where to find potential partners for redevelopment projects

New York State

If your building is in a waterfront municipality or a community center, the **New York State Department of State** will be an important partner. The Division of Coastal Resources helps to form and expand collaborative relationships with local governments, nonprofits, businesses, and citizens to assure that waterfronts are accessible and to improve the quality of life, through enhanced environmental quality and appropriate economic growth. The Division uses both traditional and progressive techniques to help solve problems, provide technical assistance, and provide grant funds for New York State's waterfronts. These approaches are being used by the Division of Coastal Resources to help revitalize community centers across the State. More information can be found at: www.nyswaterfronts.com.

If your building is an historic property, the **New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation** will be a valuable partner. Working with governments, the public, and educational and nonprofit organizations to raise historic preservation awareness, the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau (www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/planning) seeks to instill in New Yorkers a sense of pride in the State's unique history and to encourage heritage tourism and community revitalization. In partnership with the National Park Service, the

Bureau helps identify, evaluate, preserve, and revitalize New York's large and diverse collection of historic resources. Early collaboration with the Bureau is encouraged and can help you advance your project.

As New York's State Historic Preservation Office, the Bureau administers programs authorized by both the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980. These programs, including the Statewide Historic Resources Survey, the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places, the Federal Preservation Investment Tax Credit, the Certified Local Government program, the State Historic Preservation Grants Program, State and federal environmental review, and a wide range of technical assistance, are provided through a network of teams assigned to territories across the State.

If you are considering the rehabilitation of your abandoned building for residential use, the **New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)** will be an important partner (www.nysdhcr.gov). DHCR is responsible for the supervision, maintenance and development of affordable low and moderate income housing in New York State. The Division performs a number of activities in support of this mission including oversight and regulation of the State's public and publicly assisted rental housing, administration of housing development and community preservation programs to assist housing developers to partially finance

construction or renovation of affordable housing, and administration of the rent regulation process for more than one million rent-regulated apartments in New York State. DHCR offers technical assistance to providers of affordable housing throughout New York State, providing case-by-case assistance, group training and guidance on a range of topics relating to nonprofit organizational issues and the development of affordable housing. Their website provides information on the full array of assistance that they can provide as you consider how to redevelop your building (www.dhcr.state.ny.us).

If your building or site is going to involve environmental issues, the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** will be an important partner. The Department offers a wide range of programs that conserve, improve, and protect New York's natural resources and environment, and control water, land and air pollution (www.dec.ny.gov). One key area that you may be interested in is site cleanup and remediation. The DEC administers several different programs:

- State Superfund Program
- Brownfields Cleanup Program
- Environmental Restoration Program
- Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program
- Spill Response Program

If you think your site might be a brownfield, you should visit the brownfields web page at: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/brownfields.html. DEC has produced a brownfield manual that will help you understand this issue. It provides assistance to municipalities and the private sector in the redevelopment of brownfield sites (www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/brownmanual.pdf). The manual outlines State, federal and private funding and financial incentives, as well as technical assistance and liability protection available for the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites. DEC has also produced a series of fact sheets on remediation (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8661.html).

The Environmental Restoration Program is an attractive program to be used in conjunction with redevelopment since it provides financial assistance. Qualified municipal applicants can receive up to 90 percent reimbursement for eligible investigative and remedial costs. The Brownfield Cleanup Program is also well suited for redevelopment projects. Remedial plans and subsequent level of cleanup are developed consistent with the contemplated use of a property. In all cases the remedy selected is protective of the public health and the environment. The Brownfield Cleanup Program also includes a release from the DEC for remedial liability for the work completed.

The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program provides communities and qualified community-based organizations with assistance to complete area-wide approaches to brownfield

redevelopment planning. Through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, communities have opportunities to address assistance and investments to revitalize communities by returning idle areas back to productive use and in restoring environmental quality (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8447.html). The Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources is managing this important program in cooperation with DEC.

One issue that often comes up in abandoned buildings is the handling and removal of asbestos. While NYS DEC can offer help with the disposal of asbestos, protecting the public against toxic hazards from asbestos fiber exposure associated with the demolition, rehabilitation and renovation of buildings and other structures containing asbestos is the responsibility of the **Department of Labor's** Asbestos Control Bureau. The Bureau enforces the New York State Labor Law and Industrial Code Rule 56 (Asbestos). Requirements include the licensing of contractors, certification of all persons working on asbestos projects, filing of notifications of large asbestos projects and pre-demolition survey of buildings to identify any asbestos which may be present, to ensure proper abatement of asbestos materials (www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/DOSH_ASBESTOS.shtml).

If you are looking to start up a company, locate a business in New York, or expand existing operations, **Empire State Development (ESD)** will be an important partner. ESD is committed to

creating jobs and encouraging economic prosperity in New York State. They work closely with businesses to identify creative solutions to challenging problems, generate enhanced opportunities for growth, and help them achieve their goals. Financial assistance and other services provided by ESD are summarized on their website (www.nylovesbiz.com).

The Empire Zone Programs offered by ESD enables New York State to have a competitive advantage when vying against other states to attract companies. Empire Zones are designated areas throughout the State consisting of a maximum of either 1 square mile (640 acres) or 2 square miles (1,280 acres), that offer significant incentives to encourage economic development, business investment and job creation. Businesses operating inside a zone are eligible for a range of tax benefits that are applied against new capital investments. Benefits include: tax reduction credits; real property tax credits; sales tax exemptions; wage tax credits; and utility rate reductions; among others. Their website (www.nylovesbiz.com/Tax_and_Financial_Incentives/Empire_Zones) provides information on the program. Another aspect of ESD's support to communities is the Restore NY program (www.nylovesbiz.com/restoreNY), which is designed to encourage economic development and neighborhood growth by providing municipalities with financial assistance to revitalize urban centers, induce commercial investment and to improve the municipal housing stock.

To foster New York State's economic growth, the **Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform (GORR)** works with ESD to coordinate the "Build Now-NY" initiative (www.gorr.state.ny.us/buildnow-NY.html). This grant program allows local governments to decide the appropriate type of development for their community and to strategically market an inventory of pre-approved "shovel ready" sites to a wide range of fast growing, job-creating companies.

The Guide to Shovel-Ready Certification (www.gorr.state.ny.us/SR_Guide.html) provides a brief overview of pre-permitting, along with information on the State Environmental Quality Review process. It also provides a listing of the most common State permits and approvals likely to come into play in developing a site. This guide should be used in conjunction with other Build Now-NY publications, including the specific development type profiles listed above.

If you are concerned with safe and economical energy production in your rehabilitated building, the **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)** will be an important partner. NYSERDA, a public benefit corporation, provides energy-related technical and financial packaging assistance to businesses and institutions to promote energy efficiency and economic development. NYSERDA administers the New York Energy SmartSM Program (www.nyserda.org/program), which is designed to support certain public benefit programs during the transition to a more competitive electricity market.

For economic development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization and economic development, **New York State's Office of Community Renewal** may also be an important partner (www.nysocr.org). The Office administers the Community Development Block Grant Program for the State of New York which provides grants to eligible cities, towns, and villages with a population under 50,000 and to counties with an area population under 200,000 in order to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services.

The **New York State Smart Growth** website (www.SmartGrowthNY.com) is an easy-to-use directory or 'portal' to State agency programs with brief descriptions of services and links to appropriate agency web pages. The site provides guidance on State agency assistance including grant and financial information, technical assistance, as well as data and regional inventories. You will find information that can help you revitalize your waterfront, including economic development, revitalization, transportation and neighborhoods, conservation and environment, planning, technology, and partnerships.

The federal government

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** offers a range of economic development and community renewal programs. Many of these programs offer tax-incentive packages to encourage business owners and developers to open new businesses, rehabilitate

abandoned buildings, provide new jobs, and create new housing. At the HUD website (www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/index.cfm), you will find descriptions of programs offered by HUD, as well as descriptions of programs provided by other federal agencies in the fields of economic development and small business assistance.

The **U.S. National Park Service's** Heritage Preservation Services (www.nps.gov/history/hps), helps individuals and communities identify, evaluate, protect, and preserve historic properties for future generations. It works with State Historic Preservation Offices across the country to administer federal programs and services. It provides a broad range of products and services, financial assistance and incentives, educational guidance, and technical information in support of this mission. If you are working with a historic building, Heritage Preservation Services will be able to help with almost every aspect of your project, from planning and evaluation to repair and rehabilitation.

The National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program is always exploring new ways to help communities work together to improve their special places. They have developed a ToolBox for public participation that can help you to involve the community in your project. (www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox)

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** (www.epa.gov/brownfields) provides information on all aspects of brownfield redevelopment. In



Hudson



Syracuse



Troy

New York State, EPA Region 2 implements the Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative, a multi-faceted program providing technical, legal, and information resources and direct assistance to regional brownfield stakeholders, including State agencies, local municipalities, and community organizations. For more information call the Regional Brownfields Hotline at (800) 346-5009, or visit them on-line at: www.epa.gov/region02/brownfields.

If you want to develop your building as part of a sustainable community development, check out the EPA's Green Communities Program. The Green Communities Assistance Kit is a step-by-step guide for planning and implementing sustainable projects (www.epa.gov/greenkit).

Local governments and related entities

Local governments may have planning, design, engineering, and economic development staff and local committees who can help you develop your abandoned building. They can provide technical assistance at all stages of the project, as well as local plans and consultant studies, such as appraisals, cost estimates, feasibility studies, market studies, reuse analysis, engineering reports, land use studies, and marketability studies. They can aid a development project by directing capital and public works expenditures to coincide with the needs of the development. Building an adjacent parking lot, clearing the site of structures, providing water and sewer to the site, and providing new sidewalks and lighting are

examples of this type of assistance. Sometimes they may be able to provide direct funding assistance and even become joint venture partners. Municipalities can sometimes help with acquisition. A project that would otherwise be impossible may be facilitated if a municipality acquires private land under its power of eminent domain.

The **New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials** (www.nycom.org) can provide technical assistance to its members and holds a Main Street conference annually, that addresses many issues related to the redevelopment of abandoned buildings. The **Association of Towns of the State of New York** (www.nytowns.org) can provide technical assistance to its members and may be able to help with your project. The **New York Association of Counties** (www.nysac.org) provides information on local governments and county links.

Industrial Development Agencies

Local governments, whether county, city, or town, may have an **industrial development agency (IDA)** to help develop the economic environment and support infrastructure in their municipality. An IDA is a corporate governmental body, constituting a public benefit corporation created pursuant to General Municipal Law, Article 18-A. IDAs are an important financing vehicle in those communities. You can contact your municipality's community development or planning office to see if your community has an IDA.

IDAs work to provide financial incentives and assistance to eligible private-sector businesses to induce the construction, expansion, or equipping of facilities to stimulate capital investment and job creation for a wide range of commercial and industrial projects. Financial assistance may involve issuance of tax-exempt or taxable bonds to cover the costs of construction, rehabilitation, and equipping of a wide range of projects. Further financing benefits that IDAs may offer are sales, mortgage, and real property tax abatements, and lease back agreements. Other types of assistance that IDAs can provide may include expediting the local development review and permitting process.

Business Improvement Districts

Your local **Business Improvement District (BID)** may also be in position to provide redevelopment assistance. A BID is a public/private partnership through which a special assessment is used to finance improvements or services within a designated commercial area, for instance in Albany (www.downtownalbany.org). The procedure to establish a Business Improvement District is described in the General Municipal Law, Article 19-A.

In simple terms, it is a self-help program to restore or promote business activated by self-imposed assessment. Frequently, BIDs play a role to boost local redevelopment efforts. The property owners and merchants in a district agree to be assessed for improvements that will benefit the entire district. The municipality collects the funds for the district management association and uses them to pay for enhanced services or for services which

are not ordinarily provided by the municipality. BIDs can provide landscaping, lighting, sidewalk improvements, pedestrian amenities, parking, signage, enhanced security, and marketing and promotion of the district. The success of a Business Improvement District is dependent upon local support and the participation of property owners and merchants. Over 70 Business Improvement Districts exist in New York State, with over half located within New York City.

Nonprofit organizations

If your building is a historic property, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** may be an important partner. The Trust is a national nonprofit organization that provides leadership, education, and advocacy to save the diverse historic places of the United States and revitalize communities. On its website, the Trust provides details of its programs (www.nationaltrust.org). It also provides links to other programs that can help with your rehabilitation.

If your building is located on main street or in the downtown area, one program that can help you understand your building's role in the revitalization of your community is the National Trust's Main Street Program (www.mainstreet.org). This program helps communities revitalize their traditional commercial areas using historic preservation and grassroots-based economic development. It serves as a clearinghouse for information, technical assistance, research and advocacy on preservation-based commercial district revitalization.

You should also establish a partnership with the **Preservation League of New York State**. This nonprofit organization is dedicated to the protection of New York's diverse and rich heritage of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes. The Preservation League's website provides details of its own program and links to programs that could assist with the historic preservation aspects of your vision (www.preservenys.org).

Local Development Corporations are also an important potential source of assistance. They are private, nonprofit corporations, unlike an industrial development agency or urban renewal agency which are public benefit corporations. Local Development Corporations can work in partnership with, and assist, local governments to achieve emerging economic challenges and opportunities related to economic development, job growth, marketing, and research. Local Development Corporations may assist existing and prospective business in downtown areas, identify potential financing sources, and create business and marketing plans. As a private entity, they may also acquire property and finance development, using techniques that may not be permissible for a public agency. In terms of financing, local development corporations may have access to risk capital often not available to government. Resident-led community-based development organizations are instrumental in transforming distressed neighborhoods and communities into healthy places to live and work. Talk to your municipality's planning or community development office to find these organizations.

Community Builders is a nonprofit organization focused on building and sustaining strong communities (www.tcbinc.org). They develop, finance, and operate high quality affordable, mixed-income housing by coordinating access to support services, and by planning and implementing other community and economic initiatives critical to the communities served. Community Builders works in collaboration with neighborhood groups, residents, public and private agencies, and philanthropic interests. Becoming a long-term stakeholder in the neighborhood, Community Builders can help create effective local implementation teams that combine neighborhood understanding, technical skills, and managerial ability. If you are considering the renovation of abandoned buildings for housing, they may be able to help.

Increasingly, partnerships are forming to encourage Smart Growth. Reuse of abandoned buildings in urban settings is one way to achieve Smart Growth. The **Sustainable Communities Network** (www.sustainable.org), the **Smart Growth Network** (www.smartgrowth.org) and **Smart Growth America** (www.smartgrowthamerica.org) provide links and tips that can help in your project.

An example of these partnerships can be seen in the **National Vacant Properties Campaign** that was launched in July 2003. Groups ranging from environmentalists to real estate agents are focusing on redeveloping the hundreds of thousands of abandoned buildings and lots in cities, large and small. Their goal is to help

educate communities around the country about vacant property reclamation and to share information on ways to breathe life back into rundown and neglected areas (www.vacantproperties.org). The initiative is led by Smart Growth America, the **International City/County Management Association** (www.icma.org), and the **Local Initiatives Support Corporation** (www.lisc.org).

Another example is **KnowledgePlex@** (www.knowledgeplex.org), a collaborative partnership among leaders in the affordable housing and community development field, funded by the Fannie Mae Foundation. It is a far-reaching resource for practical information on all aspects of affordable housing and community development.

Universities

The **Center for Community Design Research** (<http://esf.edu/la/ccdr>) is an outreach program within the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Department of Landscape Architecture. The Center works in partnership with communities, elected officials, agencies, and nonprofits to provide technical assistance, educational programs, and research projects that build community capacity. The SUNY Sourcebook of Community Assistance Programs provides a list of SUNY-wide resources to address your redevelopment issues (www.esf.edu/la/ccdr/Resources/pdf/Sourcebook_2002-2003.pdf).

The **Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI)** located at Cornell University has partnered with Penn State University (<http://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/outreach/cardi>) to create the Community and Economic Development Toolbox. The website contains a wide variety of resources and information that can strengthen community capacity and provide you with information that will help in your redevelopment project.

The **City College Architectural Center (CCAC)** (www1.cuny.cuny.edu/ci/ccac) is a community design center affiliated with the School of Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture at The City College of New York/CUNY. CCAC offers technical assistance and advocacy in planning and design to nonprofit, community organizations concerned with the physical and economic development of their neighborhoods.

