



About the Center

The National Center for Neighborhood and Brownfields Redevelopment offers technical expertise and applied research solutions to assess redevelopment land use planning options. Specializing in the areas of community involvement, urban revitalization, and regional planning, the Center has partnered with community organizations, local governments, and state and federal agencies to offer planning perspectives that affect the future of our communities.

The Center operates under the belief that the restoration and revitalization of neighborhoods is a sound investment in the future because it will improve a community's health, economic viability, and quality of life. Through educational, research, and outreach programs, the Center is committed to the improvement and long-term vitality of communities and neighborhoods.

Established in 1998 at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the Center has become a vital part of the university community. The Center builds on the strength of Rutgers as a major research university, and also draws upon the resources of the Bloustein School, one of the premier graduate planning and public policy schools in the nation. Experts from the Center are available to work closely with all levels of government, community organizations, and business leaders, as well as to provide advisory services on the state, regional, and national levels.

Community Involvement

The National Center for Neighborhood and Brownfields Redevelopment works in partnership with community and faith-based organizations, and local, county, and state governments to focus attention on the economic, infrastructure, and quality of life issues affecting communities. We help community organizations participate in what are often complex development and redevelopment decisions that could impact their neighborhood. The Center:

- Conducts surveys to help local officials better understand the needs and values of community members, and the public's willingness to participate in community development decisions.
- Has developed a technical assistance program aimed at building capacity in community-based organizations for greater involvement in brownfields redevelopments, and has implemented the program with organizations in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

"The Center's unique capabilities place it at the forefront of New Jersey's smart growth initiatives to revitalize the state's urban centers."

James W. Hughes, Dean, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

Urban Revitalization

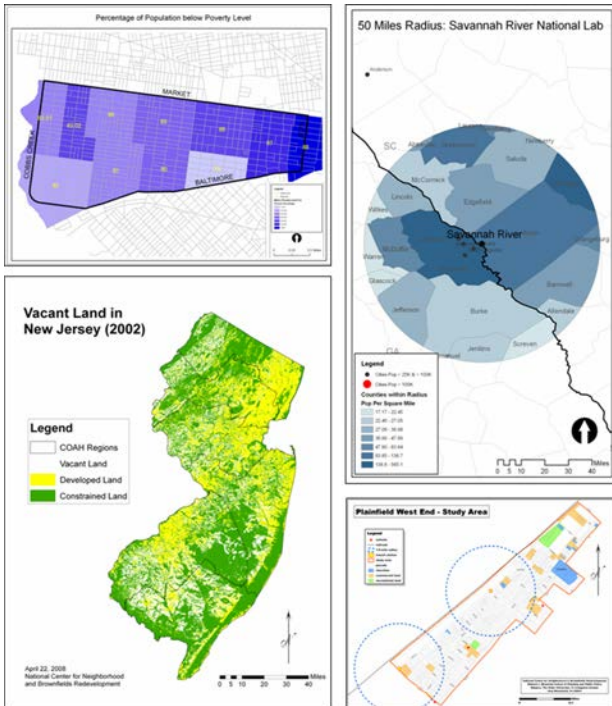
The Center's concentrates on urban revitalization as a smart growth tool and an alternative to sprawled development through the rebuilding of our older communities. We have studied how regional and local land use planning can create vibrant neighborhoods with good schools and affordable housing, and put that knowledge to work in assisting large and small cities prepare for and understand the issues associated with redevelopment choices for their communities. The Center has also:

- Built capacity for community health improvement in Elizabeth, NJ with the establishment of a new pediatric asthma case management program.
- Developed the first Regional Action Plan for the Raritan River region, integrating ecological and planning goals into a coherent plan for the future of the region.
- Analyzed efforts to redevelop older downtown areas and developed a set of tools that help guide local officials and business leaders to develop and implement successful economic development initiatives.
- Guided the formation of a new resident-based organization in Plainfield, NJ and assisted in the creation of a comprehensive neighborhood plan for the revitalization of the West End area of Plainfield.
- Assessed the feasibility of redeveloping a brownfields site as an arts village in Woodbridge, NJ.

Regional Planning

Successful communities depend on the success of the regions around them. The Center, drawing on professional staff and faculty from Rutgers University, can offer expertise in diverse fields ranging from politics to environmental health to economics. Our broad-based understanding of natural, social and urban systems makes us an ideal resource for smart and responsible planning. We can help create partnerships between governments and other organizations at the local, county, regional, or state scale to address common issues related to urban growth and sprawl. The Center:

- Has developed geospatial models to identify undeveloped and unconstrained (vacant) lands, estimate the capacity of those lands to support residential and non-residential development, and approximate the physical and environmental impacts of such growth on a county, region and the state as a whole.
- Similar models have been developed to identify already developed areas within a municipality that are prime areas for possible redevelopment because of building age, use and location, and assist the community in developing and comparing alternative redevelopment scenarios at the local and regional scale.
- Applied a combination of economic simulation models to estimate the regional economic benefits of major investments in infrastructure and the payment of alternative severance packages to thousands of former Department of Energy workers in Washington, South Carolina, and Idaho.



National Center for Neighborhood

and Brownfields Redevelopment

“The Center has been a long-time active participant in Trenton’s Brownfields Stakeholder Advisory Group. They have been invaluable in bringing resources to the table and providing important technical input to move our program forward.”

Leah Yasenchak, Co-founder BRS, former Trenton Brownfields Coordinator

Educational and Information Resource

The Center is committed to transferring its knowledge and expertise to others. Our staff is actively engaged in teaching graduate and undergraduate courses at the Bloustein School; presenting and moderating discussion groups at professional, non-profit, and government-sponsored conferences; and in assisting individuals and organizations as they address specific problems or issues. We periodically offer online courses on urban redevelopment for local officials and community representatives. We are fortunate to be able to partner with the other research centers at the Bloustein School to offer continuing education programs in planning for growth and development. Our work is regularly published in professional journals, as well as in state and national magazines, and the Center maintains a comprehensive online library of downloadable reports and articles on smart growth, brownfields redevelopment, and neighborhood revitalization.

“Land use planning at the regional level is a complex undertaking that requires proper consideration of environmental, transportation, affordable housing, open space, fiscal, and other critical and cross-cutting issues. The Center, through its own staff and access to the larger Bloustein School, is uniquely positioned to provide sound advice and assistance in these areas.”

James J. Florio, Former Governor of New Jersey

Contact Us

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