

### **1. What is a Brownfield?**

Brownfields are properties for which expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated due to the presence, or potential presence, of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants. Common sites include former gas stations, automotive repair shops, schools, dry cleaners, print shops, and other service-oriented businesses.

### **2. Will I be liable for contamination at the site?**

Typically, ownership of a contaminated property will give rise to liability under state and federal environmental laws. However, both federal and Vermont state laws provide a level of liability protection to purchasers of contaminated property when appropriate procedures are followed. Protection may also be made available to “innocent owners” of contaminated property.

### **3. What do Brownfields Cleanups Cost?**

As with any development project, overall cost is affected by many variables. The type, volume, and concentration of contaminants are particularly relevant factors at brownfields sites. Completing a thorough environmental assessment and site investigation will provide most of the information needed to establish a cleanup cost estimate and assess a project’s feasibility. In Vermont, technical and financial assistance is available for site assessment, investigation and cleanup.

### **4. How long will the cleanup and redevelopment take?**

Once the cleanup plan is approved, a brownfields project will not take significantly more time than a standard development project. In some cases, redevelopment can take place simultaneously with cleanup activities. Consulting with the Department of Environmental Conservation at the outset will reduce the potential for delays related to the cleanup portion of the project.