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Brownfields Grants to provide momentum for Seven projects statewide

West Virginia communities, from Chester in the northern panhandle to Itmann in the southern coalfields, will be creating plans to redevelop dilapidated and abandoned former industrial locations known as “brownfield sites” thanks to winning \$5,000 grants each from the 2011 FOCUS WV Brownfields program.

“The FOCUS program allows the West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Centers at West Virginia University and Marshall University to provide financial and technical assistance to these communities to create redevelopment visions and overcome major obstacles in turning problem sites into community resources,” said Luke Elser, FOCUS WV Brownfields program manager at WVU.

FOCUS stands for Foundation for Overcoming Challenges and Utilizing Strengths. Funding for the program is provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation through the West Virginia University Foundation.

The winners, who will use the awards to create community-based revitalization plans, include:

- **Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning & Development Council**, to conduct community visioning and stakeholder generation for the former TS&T Pottery Site
- **City of Fairmont**, to kick start community visioning and conduct environmental assessments on the downtown Masonic Temple Property
- **Fairmont Community Development Partnership**, to conduct environmental and building assessments and build community support for the redevelopment of the Former Fairmont YMCA building
- **Monongalia County Solid Waste Authority**, to gather crucial site data and hold community interest meetings in the redevelopment of the Morgantown Ordnance Works site into a county wide recycling center
- **Mount Hope Heritage and Hope, Inc.**, to engage the community in the planning for reuse of dilapidated and abandoned brownfield properties in the town, beginning with a downtown site
- **Upper Guyandotte Watershed Association**, to assess the opportunity for redevelopment of the Old Itmann School through environmental assessment and community meetings

- ***Upshur County Development Authority*** , to conduct environmental and building assessments and hold community visioning meetings to redevelop a historic downtown property

Information about the FOCUS WV Brownfields Program and Northern Brownfield Assistance Center can be found at www.wvbrownfields.org. The Northern WV Brownfields Assistance Center is located at the West Virginia Water Research Institute, a program of WVU's National Research Center for Coal & Energy; the WV Brownfields Assistance Center at Marshall University is located in the Center for Environmental, Geotechnical and Applied Sciences.

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