



Press Release

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EPA Awards Alameda County \$1.5 Million Brownfields Grant to Bring Tax-Defaulted and Contaminated Sites Back to Public Use

Innovative partnership between County HCD, the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, the City of Oakland, and East Bay Housing Organizations will assess 18 priority sites and clear the path for dozens of new affordable homes

HAYWARD, CA – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has selected Alameda County to receive a [\\$1.5 million Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant](#), launching a partnership among the County Housing and Community Development Department (HCD), the Alameda County Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, the City of Oakland, and East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO). The award, announced by EPA Region 9 on June 23, 2026, marks the next step in a coordinated local effort to bring long-vacant, tax-defaulted, and contaminated properties back to public use as affordable housing.

Across Alameda County, hundreds of tax-defaulted properties have sat unused for years, some for more than two decades, becoming magnets for illegal dumping and blight while housing needs go unmet. Environmental uncertainty and unpaid code enforcement liens have kept these sites out of the market even when affordable housing developers were interested. The new coalition addresses both barriers at once.

A Coalition Designed to Unlock Stuck Sites

The Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office has identified 16 tax-defaulted properties in Oakland as particularly promising for affordable housing redevelopment. The City of Oakland has committed to waiving code enforcement liens on those parcels to reduce acquisition costs for nonprofit developers. HCD will administer the environmental assessments that clear the path to financing, and EBHO will lead community engagement to ensure redevelopment reflects local priorities.

What the Grant Funds

The four-year grant, running December 2026 through November 2030, will fund 25 Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, 14 Phase II Assessments, and 7 site-specific cleanup and reuse plans across 18 priority sites in Oakland, Berkeley, and San Lorenzo. Sixteen of the priority sites are tax-defaulted parcels in West and East Oakland. The remaining two are large transit-proximate parcels: the Ashby BART station in Berkeley, where a planned redevelopment includes 309 affordable units, and a 0.87-acre former auto repair site in San Lorenzo capable of supporting roughly 58 affordable units. The coalition's long-term goal is at least 800 affordable and workforce homes built on studied sites.

"This grant unlocks a new way for local governments to work together on the hardest sites," said Michelle Starratt, Alameda County Housing Director. "Tax-defaulted and contaminated properties have been stuck for years because no single agency could clear all the barriers. By combining the County's tax collection authority, Oakland's lien powers, HCD's housing finance expertise, and EBHO's community engagement, we can turn dozens of neighborhood liabilities into hundreds of homes."

What Comes Next

HCD will complete pre-award administrative requirements this summer, with grant activities beginning in December 2026. Community engagement led by EBHO will launch in 2027 alongside site assessments, and cleanup and reuse planning will continue through 2030. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control has committed to technical support and regulatory oversight throughout the grant.



Priority Sites for Environmental Assessment

The 18 priority sites shown below will receive environmental site assessments under the coalition’s four-year work plan. Sixteen are tax-defaulted parcels concentrated in West and East Oakland (shown in the two inset panels), where historic industrial uses, proximity to major freeways and the Port of Oakland, and long histories of vacancy have created significant contamination risk. The remaining two are large transit-proximate parcels: the Ashby BART station in South Berkeley, where a planned redevelopment includes 309 affordable homes, and a 0.87-acre former auto-repair site at 19100 Mission Boulevard in San Lorenzo capable of supporting roughly 58 affordable homes. All 18 sites will receive Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, 14 will receive Phase II Assessments, and 7 will move into cleanup and reuse planning.

#	Address	City / Area
1	1576 7th Street	Oakland (West)
2	1578 7th Street	Oakland (West)
3	708 Peralta Street	Oakland (West)
4	1034 24th Street	Oakland (West)
5	905 Willow Street	Oakland (West)
6	925 Wood Street	Oakland (West)
7	1486 34th Street	Oakland (West)
8	804 27th Street	Oakland (West)
9	2847 Union Street	Oakland (West)
10	1528 100th Avenue	Oakland (East)
11	1090 71st Avenue	Oakland (East)
12	1020 70th Avenue	Oakland (East)
13	1266 79th Avenue	Oakland (East)
14	8215 MacArthur Boulevard	Oakland (East)
15	7951 MacArthur Boulevard	Oakland (East)
16	7963 MacArthur Boulevard	Oakland (East)
17	Ashby BART Station (3100 Adeline Street)	Berkeley
18	19100 Mission Boulevard	San Lorenzo

