BAD Buildings

Brownfields, **A**bandoned, & **D**ilapidated Buildings

Program Guide

An Initiative of the

Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center

Funded by the

Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

wvbrownfields.org

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Program Background

The BAD Buildings Program, funded through a grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, is a statewide initiative developed by the Northern WV Brownfields Assistance Center (NBAC) which provides technical assistance and site analysis tools to develop and enhance abandoned/ dilapidated buildings programs in West Virginia communities. The program addresses barriers to identifying, prioritizing, and redeveloping BAD buildings. The NBAC is a program of the West Virginia Water Research Institute at West Virginia University.

Definition of BAD Buildings

Structures and properties which are vacant, uninhabited and in a state of disrepair, whose owner is taking no active steps to bring the property back into functional use.

Abandoned and dilapidated buildings are a common sight in West Virginia communities. The NBAC developed the **B**rownfields, **A**bandoned, **D**ilapidated (**BAD**) Buildings Program in response to frequent requests from its partners to provide tools and resources to help WV communities address their BAD Buildings.

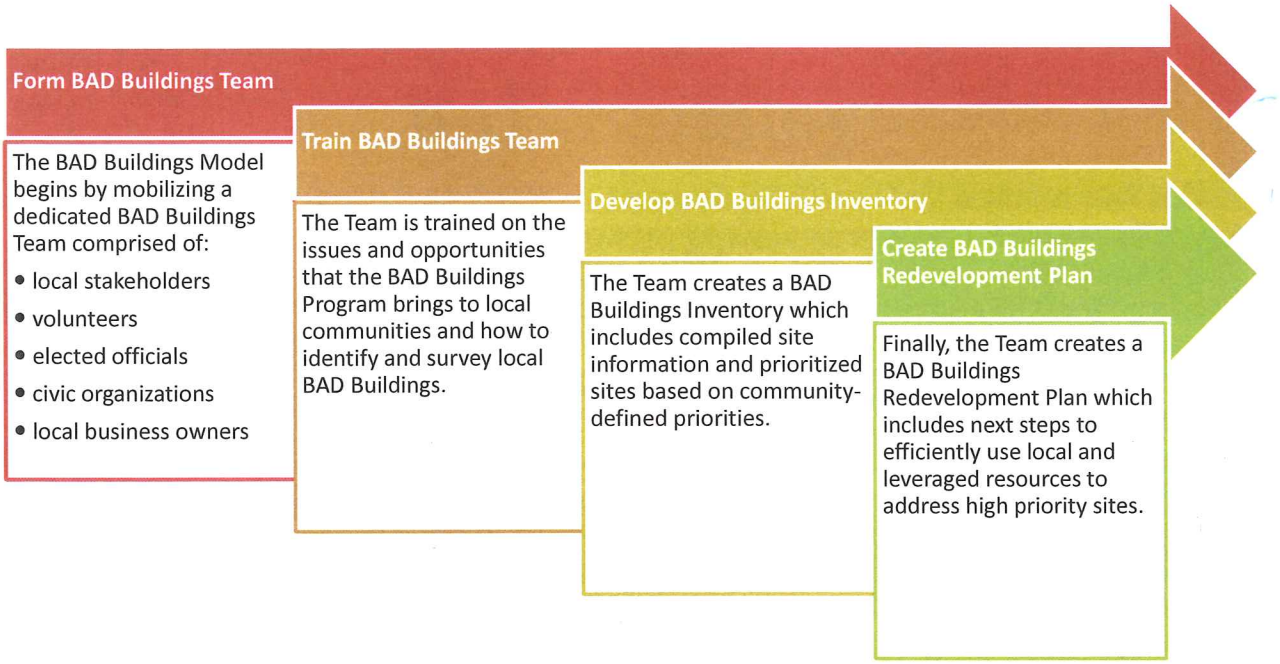
Failure to address BAD Buildings imposes severe social and economic costs on neighborhoods. BAD Buildings negatively impact communities through increased costs due to fire risks and crime as well as the costs of reduced tax revenue from depressed property values. BAD Buildings also act as a drain on local infrastructure, such as road, sidewalk, and utility maintenance, and increase costs by requiring public services such as police and fire protection. In addition, these properties demoralize communities; pose environmental, health, and safety hazards; and provide an attractive nuisance for illegal activities, including drug use. BAD Buildings slow local economic development by reducing available commercial and industrial properties as well as making a community much less attractive to entrepreneurs and developers.

BAD Buildings in WV Communities

- McDowell County - 500+ identified BAD Buildings
- Richwood - 110+ identified BAD Buildings
- Beckley - 180 BAD residential buildings
- Huntington - 170+ buildings on demolition wait list
- Thomas - 25+ BAD Buildings
- Grafton - 100+ identified BAD Buildings

Program Overview

The BAD Buildings Model supports West Virginia communities which have limited local capacity and no abandoned/dilapidated buildings program. The model is based on the NBAC's effective approach to brownfield redevelopment throughout the state. While not all abandoned/dilapidated buildings are brownfields, all brownfields can be viewed as abandoned/dilpidated buildings. The same challenges and opportunities surrounding a brownfield project are commonly encountered when addressing BAD Buildings.



Components of a BAD Buildings Redevelopment Plan

- A prioritized BAD Buildings Inventory
- Identified high priority sites and properties with significant economic redeveleopment potential
- Next step recommendations for property owners, local revitalization groups, businesses, and the municipal government to address BAD Buildings
- Redevelopment options for high priority sites including demolition, deconstruction, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse

BAD Buildings Technical Assistance Model

Communities selected for participation in the BAD Buildings Program will receive technical assistance support to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Form a BAD Buildings Team,
2. Train the team to identify and research potential BAD Building sites,
3. Develop a BAD Buildings Inventory of sites through assessment and prioritization,
4. Research property ownership,
5. Identify next steps for the redevelopment of high value sites, and
6. Create a BAD Buildings Redevelopment Plan.

Examples of anticipated activities include: regular team meetings, community engagement, visual property assessments, site history research, and the identification of potential public funding and private investment in order to begin redevelopment of high priority properties.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Support

The NBAC will provide GIS support to participating communities through data collection guidance, mapping community BAD Buildings Inventories and prioritized properties, and generating preferred documents to store site information. GIS maps will be developed in tandem with BAD Buildings Team leaders so that local members can maintain and update their inventory after the completion of the BAD Buildings Program.

Tools and Resources

In addition to technical assistance, the NBAC will provide tools to communities which will enhance inventory development and site reuse planning. Economic redevelopment assessment tools (e.g., Decision Enhancer Tool) will be used to assist communities in identifying appropriate strategies for site cleanup and reuse, based on site attributes and regional market conditions. These tools will generate metrics typically used by real estate developers and investors to analyze the feasibility of specific redevelopment scenarios. Funding gaps that may be supplemented by public funding opportunities will also be identified.

Five Principles of the BAD Buildings Program

1. A BAD Buildings Program prepares property to be reused and reintroduced into the local market.
2. A local effort utilizes a transparent and efficient process for identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing buildings targeted for demolition, deconstruction, or rehabilitation.
3. Priority criteria are determined by local stakeholders in order to most efficiently use limited resources targeted toward sites that will have the highest redevelopment impact.
4. An effective local effort includes all stakeholders throughout each step of the process.
5. An engaged and supportive local municipal government plays a vital role in the success of a BAD Buildings Program.