

Site or land assembly is a powerful tool cities can use to support housing development. When local governments acquire or have site control of a property, they can control the final development product. Despite increased public control over the land itself, developers are often more interested in the opportunity because of the more predictable development conditions. There are many circumstances in which local governments may come to own or control land:

Land bank

Land banks are nonprofit or governmental entities created to acquire, manage, maintain, and repurpose properties that are vacant, abandoned, underutilized, or foreclosed to a productive use. Organizations such as the [Land Bank Twin Cities](#) strategically acquire and hold land that furthers community objectives such as creating affordable, mixed-income housing, and for economic development purposes. Land banks simplify the site assembly process and support cities who wish to assemble land for affordable housing development by facilitating the acquisition of properties, holding and managing properties as needed, and disposing of properties in coordination with city planners and in accordance with local priorities for land use.

Local governments can partner with land banks to identify sites that are good candidates for affordable or mixed-income housing.

Surplus property

Communities may own land that was once needed for public purposes but is now underutilized, such as closed fire stations, schools, or public works facilities. Even publicly owned land that is still in use may have the capacity to provide affordable or mixed income housing. City halls, libraries, and community centers may have large properties that have additional land available for new development, especially if supporting infrastructure (such as stormwater management or parking) can be shared.

Tax-forfeited land is another potential source of land for site assembly. Tax-forfeited land reverts to state ownership, but its ongoing use and ownership is usually managed at the county level. We encourage you to connect with your applicable county department to discuss coordinated efforts around the use of tax-forfeited land in your community.

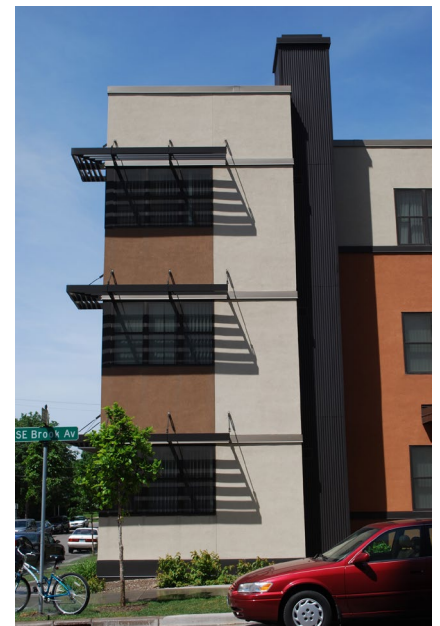
Consider an inventory of publicly owned land in your community as a tool to address existing or future housing needs.

Brownfield cleanup

Land assembly is not only acquiring land but also about preparing land for redevelopment. Contaminated land can create a barrier to redevelopment by adding cost, uncertainty, and complexity to a project. Fortunately, there are many resources in the region to address the clean-up of contaminated land, groundwater, and buildings.

Resources for brownfield cleanup vary in terms of eligibility, priorities, and implementation, and these criteria may change from year to year. To learn more about which resources can meet your community's needs, consider the following:

- Metropolitan Council: [Tax Base Revitalization Account](#)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development: [Site Cleanup and Redevelopment Funding](#)
- Hennepin County: [Environmental Response Fund](#)
- Ramsey County: [Environmental Response Fund](#)
- Dakota County: [Brownfield programs](#) in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



Van Cleve apartments (TBRA) in Minneapolis