

# Transforming Brownfields to Brightfields (B2B)

**The **Brownfields to Brightfields** project aims to transform underutilized and/or contaminated urban, industrial sites into solar developments, generating local, clean energy and returning land to productive use throughout the Midwest.**

## **What is a brownfield?**

A brownfield is a previously developed site, often industrial, where the potential for future use is affected by real or perceived environmental contamination.

The Midwest has a significant inventory of vacant, previously developed sites, some of which carry risks related to contamination, due to its history as a manufacturing center. Remediating and redeveloping every brownfield site for commercial or residential purposes may not be possible, but many have great potential for becoming solar ‘brightfields.’ Because brownfields are generally industrial or commercial, they often have both unobstructed sunlight and easy, low-cost access to the electrical grid. They are also the right size to house solar projects that are large enough to make economic sense but small enough to not require grid upgrades.



## **Brownfield to Brightfield Advantages**

Brownfields to Brightfields projects can provide a win-win-win model for growing the green economy: good for the site owner, good for the local community and good for the environment. B2B can:

- Bring significant value to otherwise low-value land
- Reduce dependence on fossil fuels, which contribute to both air quality problems and climate change.
- Help communities address public health and other concerns related to vacant, contaminated sites
- Potentially attract businesses interested in supporting green investments or directly sourcing clean power

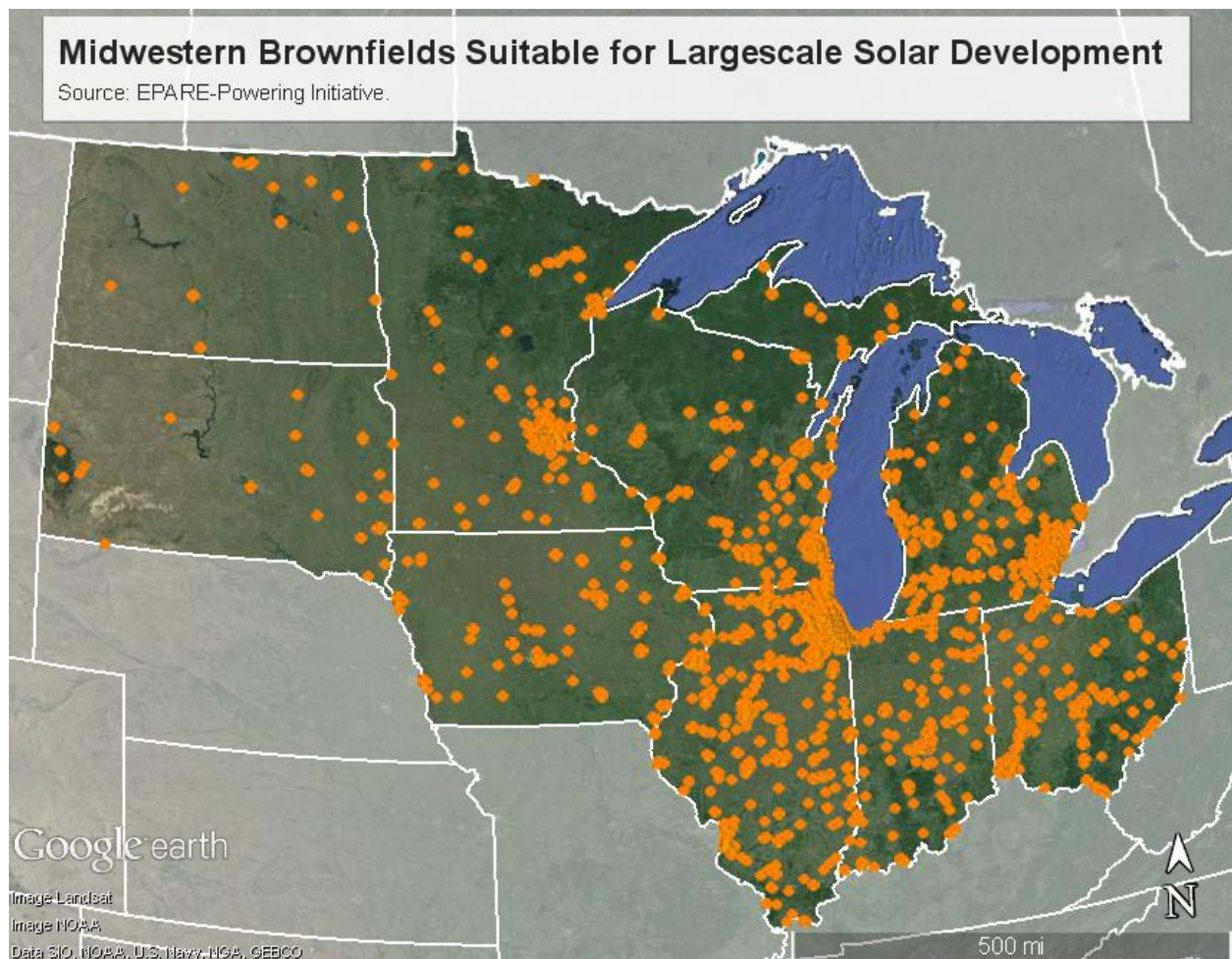
## **What is ELPC Doing?**

ELPC is working simultaneously (1) in the policy arena to remove barriers to solar energy development and incentivize brownfield solar and (2) on the ground to meet with stakeholders – site owners, energy users, government officials, brownfield and solar developers, and community groups – to identify opportunities and work through barriers to project development.

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## Are there Brownfields near me?

There are 3,995 brownfield sites (including landfills) throughout the Midwest that the EPA has identified as being suitable for largescale solar development. Taken together, these sites represent the potential to generate nearly 370,000 MW of clean power through solar arrays reclaiming over 2.2 million acres of contaminated land. ELPC has screened a large portion of these sites to eliminate those which have already been redeveloped, are too small, or are otherwise not ideal for brightfield development.



## Contact Information

For more information on ELPC's Brownfield to Brightfield program or if you have an idea for a pilot B2B project, see our website below or contact [mhessel@elpc.org](mailto:mhessel@elpc.org).