

# **Bond Case Briefs**

*Municipal Finance Law Since 1971*

---

## **Learning from Buffalo and Denver: Can Tax Credits Help Restore Polluted Sites?**

Tax credits can help clean up pollution and renew communities, three experts from Buffalo and Denver told Oregon leaders and professionals during a visit to Portland last week – but it’s important to think carefully as they’re set up.

There are thousands of known or suspected polluted properties – often called “brownfields” – around greater Portland, ranging in size from big industrial sites to corner gas stations and dry cleaners. Leaders, advocates and business are all interested in finding workable tools to get these sites cleaned up and renewed for better uses, including jobs, homes and commercial opportunities.

The Legislature has expanded the brownfield toolbox several times in recent years, making tools like land banking and property tax abatements available to local governments that want to use them to help spur cleanup and development.

But Oregon still does not have a tool that more than a dozen other states are using to help with particularly troublesome brownfields – those where whoever is responsible for the pollution has gone bankrupt, disappeared or abandoned the site.

Last week, three brownfield experts shared how state tax credit programs have helped make cleanup of abandoned brownfields possible in Denver and Buffalo, New York. Their visit culminated with a lunchtime discussion at the Collaborative Life Sciences Building in Portland’s South Waterfront, itself one of the region’s ongoing brownfield cleanup stories.

They shared tips for how tax credits can help with brownfield cleanup. Here are a few of the highlights.

[Continue reading.](#)

### **Oregon Metro News**

By Craig Beebe

March 29, 2017 10:40 a.m.