

# FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE: PROSPECTIVES OF EPA SHIFTS FROM THE TRENCHES

Presented by

Amy E. Schifferli, AICP

Michele Christina





# INTRODUCING

## **Amy E. Schifferli, AICP**

Managed Niagara County brownfields program since 2003. Created a brownfield development corporation in 2008 and spearheaded the founding of a regional landbank in 2017.

## **Michele Christina**

Worked with international consulting firm on federal and state superfunds sites before becoming municipal Brownfields Coordinator in 1998.



# Where Did We Start?

1993–2001

## THE BEGINNING: TESTING A NEW IDEA



→ EPA launches **Brownfields Program** (1993)



→ Focus: Assessment grants only



→ Typical funding: ~\$200,000 per site



→ Goal: Reduce uncertainty & encourage redevelopment



2002–2010

## FROM PILOT TO NATIONAL PROGRAM



2002 Brownfields Law  
formally establishes program



Introduces Cleanup Grants  
& Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)



Expands to communities  
nationwide



Builds state & local  
partnerships



## 2011–2020 BUILDING MOMENTUM



– Increased annual appropriations



– Focus on jobs, revitalization & environmental justice



– Assessment grants: –\$200K–\$600K  
– Cleanup grants: up to –\$500K



– Communities see measurable transformation



## THE ERA OF ACCELERATION



## 2021–PRESENT A HISTORIC INVESTMENT



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)  
dramatically expanded funding



Cleanup grants increase to  
**UP TO \$5 MILLION PER SITE**



Enables large-scale,  
transformational projects



Drives jobs, housing, and  
community growth



# THEN vs. NOW

1993



- ✓ \$200,000 grants
- ✓ Assessment focus
- ✓ Limited site-by-site progress

2026



- ✓ Up to \$5 MILLION per site
- ✓ Cleanup + redevelopment
- ✓ Community-scale transformation

What started as a \$200,000 experiment is now a multi-million dollar engine for community transformation

# Where are we going?



## EXECUTIVE ORDER 14318

Directed the EPA Administrator to identify brownfields and superfund sites for use by data center projects. It also ordered EPA to “develop guidance to help expedite environmental reviews for qualified reuse and assist State governments and private parties to return such Brownfield Sites and Superfund Sites to productive use as expeditiously as possible.”



# HOUSE DRAFT LEGISLATION

As of last month:

- ⚙️ Brownfields Revitalization for a Better Tomorrow Act
- ⚙️ Brownfields Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act
- ⚙️ Brownfields Inventory and Permitting Efficiency Act
- ⚙️ Brownfields Reauthorization for an Affordable and Revitalized America Act

# Amy E. Schifferli, AICP

Director of Planning and Brownfield Development  
Niagara County Department of Economic Development  
(716) 278-8754  
[amy.schifferli@niagaracounty.gov](mailto:amy.schifferli@niagaracounty.gov)

# Michele Christina

Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc.  
(856) 964-6456 ext 1  
[michele@BRSinc.com](mailto:michele@BRSinc.com)



## Q & A

