



October 5, 2015

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## CITY OF MIDDLETOWN AWARDED 2015 COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT GRANT

Through the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

Middletown, CT – Mayor Drew is pleased to announce that the City of Middletown has been awarded a 2015 Community Health Project Grant through the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Middletown is one of seven recipients of the ATSDR 2015 Community Health Projects Related to Contamination at Brownfield/Land Reuse Sites Grants. The purpose of these grants is to protect human health during the expansion, redevelopment, and reuse of brownfield sites in the United States.

The title of Middletown's project is "Engaging Community Stakeholders to Increase Recreational Opportunities for Children in Middletown's Urban Districts through Brownfield Reuse." The City of Middletown was awarded \$143,970 to implement this project, which intends to address health disparities, including childhood obesity and associated illnesses, in target neighborhoods by increasing recreational opportunities on unused brownfield properties. The program will serve as an educational outreach tool to raise community awareness on the health risks associated with brownfields to reduce or prevent exposure to hazardous substances.

The project includes the establishment of a Stakeholder Committee made up of representatives from the City's health, planning, board of education, recreation, and parks departments as well as local pediatric and child care service providers, the State Board of Health, and community outreach organizations such as the North End Action Team (NEAT), the Middlesex Coalition for Children, and the Opportunity Knocks program. The Committee will act as a steering committee to design and solicit a resident survey, hold community forums, identify opportunities to implement community stakeholder feedback in brownfield land reuse, and participate in educational outreach through local health fairs.

The core purpose of this project will be to better the health of the community by working collectively to educate and address the concerns of the public related to brownfields and land reuse. The project is anticipated to strengthen relationships among the development community and increase community and health agency involvement in redevelopment. The project also intends to increase public health considerations in redevelopment and expand resources for promoting community health related to redevelopment projects.

Mayor Drew commented, "This grant will help maintain and foster the environmental health and vitality of Middletown, while also ensuring the continuation of positive economic development and recreational opportunities within the community."

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