



CALIFORNIA LAND RECYCLING CONFERENCE

Imagine | Innovate | Implement
September 29 – October 1, 2026 | Foster City



Words of Wisdom:

**Successful Brownfields Recycling, Housing, and
Land Use Planning in Northern California**

9/29/2026



OFFICE OF BROWNFIELDS

Department of Toxic Substances Control | Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative



CENTER FOR CREATIVE
LAND RECYCLING

RECLAIM. CONNECT. TRANSFORM.

SPEAKERS



JAMES RITCHIE
SCS



KEN BUSCH
Sares Regis



ROSS STEENSON
Regional Water Quality Control
Board, San Francisco



TOM GRAF
GrafCon

Session Overview

Purpose:

Ground attendees in Northern California brownfields redevelopment examples and preview key conference themes.

Themes:

Climate resilience

Housing production

Regulatory tools

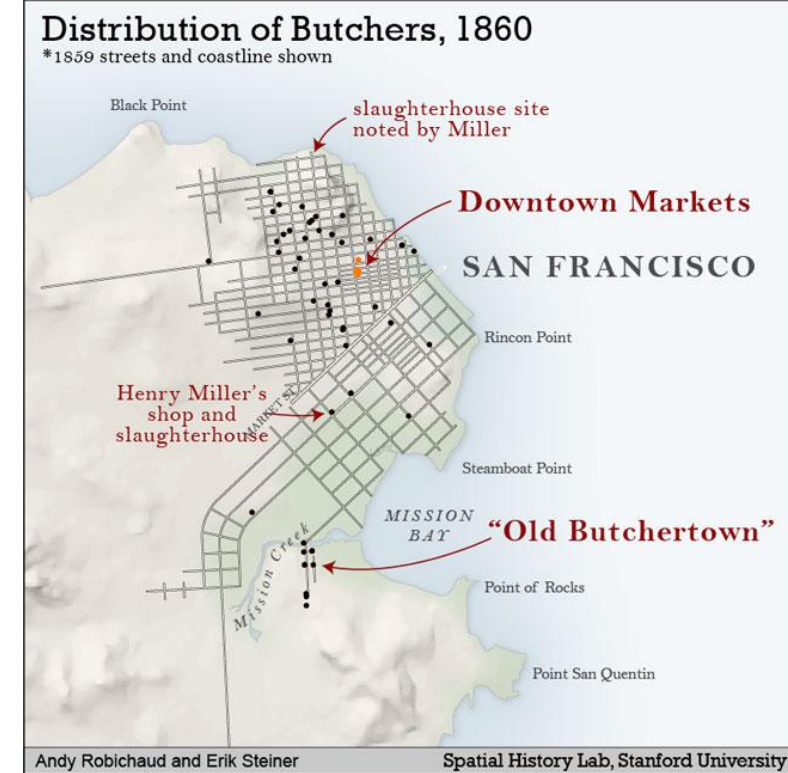
Funding

Infill development

Long-term stewardship, sustainability and resilience

Discussion Focus:

How teams imagine future uses, innovate through barriers, and implement successful redevelopment strategies.



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Question 1: Opening Context

What makes successful brownfields redevelopment possible in Northern California today?



Question 2: Imagine

When evaluating a complicated site, what helps teams envision a viable future use instead of seeing only obstacles?

Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective



Question 3: Project Framing

What early decisions most shape the path to approval and implementation?



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Question 4: Regulatory Navigation

What should teams do early to understand which agency expectations will drive the process?



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Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

Question 5: Agency Engagement

What does effective agency engagement look like, and how can teams avoid late-stage



Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

Question 6: Funding and Safe Harbor

How can teams communicate schedule sensitivity when deadlines depend on regulatory approvals?



Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

Question 7: Regulatory Tools

Which regulatory tools have been most useful, and what are their limits?



Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

Question 8: Housing & Infill Pressure

How are housing laws and regional housing needs changing brownfields redevelopment?

The Housing Continuum



Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

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Question 9: Lessons Learned

What would you do earlier, differently, or more deliberately on the next project?



Discussion prompts: regulator perspective • developer perspective • consultant perspective

Question 10: Audience Application

What is one practical question attendees should ask at the start of any brownfields redevelopment effort?



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THANK YOU!

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THE FUTURE OF LAND RECYCLING



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Join the conversation, use #CALRC2026 to share
your photos, insights and highlights!



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