



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Hennepin County, MN

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA selected Hennepin County for a Brownfields Pilot. The county contains one-quarter (1,050,000) of Minnesota's population and includes the city of Minneapolis and 45 suburbs. Because of past industrial development, the county must now contend with environmentally contaminated lands. The county is responsible for addressing almost 100 brownfields, many of which they have assessed or are assessing.

The target area for the Pilot is adjacent to and northwest of downtown Minneapolis. The population of the area is nearly 10,000—more than 70 percent of whom are minorities and 50 percent of whom live below the poverty level. This area has the lowest income and the highest crime rate in the state. The Pilot will focus on 14 sites in this area, including the Doc's Auto, Warden Oil, and Chemical Marketing Corporation sites. Redevelopment of these sites is complicated because of heavy concentrations of contamination, poor accessibility, and a high crime rate. The Doc's Auto site formerly housed an auto salvage yard and sits directly above the Basset Creek tunnel. This site is located in a federal Enterprise Community. Warden Oil, a 1.6-acre site about 200 feet from Basset Creek, operated for approximately 65 years refining waste lubricating oils and transmission fluids. The Chemical Marketing Corporation site, a

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Hennepin County, Minnesota

Date of Award: September 1998

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets 14 brownfields in a distressed area northwest of downtown Minneapolis.

Contacts:

Hennepin County
Community Works
(612) 348-5859

U.S. EPA – Region 5
(312) 353-3161

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

0.8-acre private parcel also next to the Basset Creek waterway, previously housed a waste solvent recycler.

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot's main focus was to implement a community visioning process as a means of interacting with area residents, including non-traditional populations that do not normally participate in such processes; community and environmental groups; businesses; and lenders to develop cleanup and reuse strategies for identifying both interim- and long-term-use cleanup and redevelopment strategies for the area's brownfields. Community involvement was the most important tool for the overall success of brownfields redevelopment that the Pilot hoped to see accomplished in the Basset Creek community. The Pilot also planned an interim use—an innovative way to address brownfields sites, which may include adoption of recreational park and greenspace uses as an intervening approach to spark future neighborhood and commercial redevelopment strategies by enhancing the livability and desirability of the distressed areas. The Pilot will evaluate different options for interim use of the targeted sites. The Pilot will also evaluate creative funding mechanisms.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Created an inventory of 15 properties and targeted 14 for assessment, cleanup, and reuse;
- Launched an outreach campaign to communicate Pilot activities to interested individuals and organizations, including creating a web site that provides current updates on the Pilot's progress; and
- Conducted a community visioning process to ensure public and private participation in environmental cleanup and land use planning.

The Pilot is:

- Implementing a long-range cleanup and redevelopment plan for the area.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Hennepin County Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities, including the following:

- The county was awarded an additional \$500,000 grant under EPA's Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot program.
- The county was awarded an additional \$200,000 as one of EPA's Brownfields Job Training and Development Demonstration Pilots.