



Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot *Philadelphia, PA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

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. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots 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.

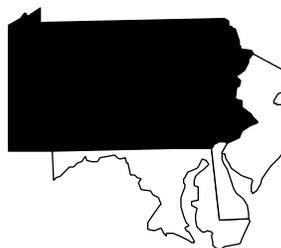
BACKGROUND

EPA Region 3 selected the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) for a Regional Brownfields Pilot. A decline in Philadelphia's manufacturing industry has led to a tremendous loss of industrial jobs and the abandonment of many former manufacturing plants. Redevelopment of these properties is difficult because potential buyers are hesitant to purchase them for fear of unknown contamination and associated liabilities. Because there are only a few tracts of undeveloped land remaining for development in Philadelphia, the City would prefer to recycle the many brownfields throughout the City.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the PCPC Pilot is to assist in the conversion of brownfields into productive land parcels by developing a timely and flexible procedure for assessing abandoned sites in areas targeted for redevelopment. The Pilot has undertaken a site investigation and environmental assessment program of abandoned industrial and commercial sites in the City. The City seeks to improve community involvement and outreach in these site assessment activities.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Date of Award:
April 1995

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets at least five priority sites throughout the City for assessment and redevelopment. The first five sites cover approximately 45 acres including a former water purification plant.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Developed site selection criteria for targeted assessment based on an analysis of former site uses, the potential for existing contamination, and the redevelopment potential of the site;
- Created an inventory of proposed sites, which the City shared with the community throughout the site selection process;
- Prioritized and selected five sites for assessment and potential redevelopment. The City will target another five sites in the near future; and
- Initiated environmental assessments of the five selected sites. Phase I assessments are currently underway. Phase II assessments will be conducted if Phase I results warrant further sampling.

The Pilot is:

- Establishing a revolving loan fund to conduct Phase I and II environmental assessments;
- Preparing a report (a complete Phase I environmental assessment) of each targeted site for submission to EPA; and
- Preparing a formal report by the Planning Commission that will use the results from one of the first five sites and will include a description of the obstacles and problems encountered during the various stages of the assessment and development process.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Philadelphia Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- Developed reuse proposals for each of the five priority sites including: a commercial shopping center complete with a 24,000 square foot building and 65 space parking lot; 130 single family homes; a 70,000 square foot industrial warehouse and a 38,000 square foot industrial warehouse; 24 single family dwelling units for low income families.