



Transforming Brownfields Industrial Eye Sores into Recreational and Open Space Attractions

RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE REUSES

Many Brownfields Assessment Pilots target urban, low-income areas that offer their surrounding communities few undeveloped, green areas for recreational uses. With few properties available for reuse in these communities, several brownfields sites are being targeted for various types of recreational reuses. These reuses range from pedestrian walkways and riverfront parks and bike trails to soccer fields and sports arenas. While all of these reuses provide local residents with vital recreational options, many also provide new city taxes and improved local economies. Five EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots are involved in a total of eight projects to transform brownfields sites into recreational areas. Expecting to leverage a total of more than \$370 million, these Pilots alone are helping to facilitate the redevelopment of more than 200 acres of brownfields property.

The Riverside Mills and Lincoln Lace and Braid sites in Providence, Rhode Island, are located approximately two miles outside of downtown near socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Both sites have had long histories of textile manufacturing, and both were destroyed by fires. Currently, they are owned by the city through tax foreclosures. Through the State of Rhode Island's Brownfields Assessment Pilot and additional funding from the U.S. EPA, environmental assessments were performed and the remedial designs and bid specifications were prepared for both sites.

As part of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project, the State of Rhode Island and the City of Providence are redeveloping these brownfields to create two large neighborhood parks as part of their planned 4.4-mile linear green park system and 6.6-mile bike trail reaching from the Providence/Johnston city line to downtown Providence. The construction for both brownfields sites is due to start this fall, while the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project has already revitalized two existing neighborhood parks

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JUST THE FACTS:

- Five projects are expecting to leverage more than \$370 million.
- A 1-acre Dallas brownfield site is being redeveloped into a sports arena.
- A 100-acre brownfield is being developed into a softball/baseball complex, a soccer complex, and 39-acres of undeveloped land.

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and the Rhode Island Golf Association has built a nine-hole urban golf course at the Providence/Johnston town line. Site remediation is scheduled to be completed by fall 2002, and construction on the bikepath will begin shortly thereafter.

Construction funding for these projects comes from a variety of sources, including \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of their Neighborhood Initiatives grant, \$1 million from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation for their assistance in remediation, approximately \$650,000 in other state grants to protect the river and create greenspace, and the rest from the City of Providence bond funds and other small grants.

A similar project is underway in the City of Tallahassee, Florida, where at least five targeted brownfields properties are being redeveloped into the two-mile Cascades Linear Greenway, which runs through Tallahassee's Gaines Street Corridor. The Corridor is undergoing a state-funded road widening project that was the catalyst for the Pilot program. In addition to overseeing the project, the Pilot leveraged \$311,000 from the Florida State Legislature in 1998 for environmental assessments, and is expecting to leverage more than \$90 million for redevelopment. The city also provided more than \$550,000 to design and begin construction on the Greenway. In addition, the Department of Community Affairs provided \$203,000 for landscaping and park improvements. When complete, the Greenway will include numerous parks that connect downtown Tallahassee to nearby universities and link a bike trail to beachfront areas.

Some brownfields are being redeveloped into multi-use areas with recreational components, such as the City of Denver's Northside Treatment Plant Redevelopment Project. Located in a disadvantaged area, a majority of the former 100-acre Northside Treatment Plant site has been redeveloped into a park, urban wildlife area, and National Guard armory/community center.

Denver's Brownfields Pilot provided approximately \$35,000 to the city to conduct a reuse study that ultimately determined that the site's existing structures could not be reused as an operating plant. Parts of the structures were subsequently demolished using an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce combined with \$500,000 in city funding. The Pilot also participated in community meetings designed to determine the needs of the local area residents affected by the site. The City of Denver funded \$75,000 in environmental assessments and conducted cleanup and removal activities, costing approximately \$865,000, during late 1996 and early 1998. In 1997, the owner of an adjacent property respon-

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sible for airborne contaminants conducted an extensive cleanup effort on the impacted property, including the Northside Treatment Plant site. Completed and opened in late 1999, the State of Colorado and the Colorado National Guard funded the \$8 million construction of the 10-acre armory and parking complex. With \$2.1 million in funding from the Colorado Natural Resource Damage Fund and the city, the 13-acre recreational park was also completed. Opened in the summer of 2000, the park consists of wetlands, two playing fields, and a walking trail connecting the park to a 50-acre urban wildlife viewing area. The remaining 25 acres of the former Northside Treatment Plant site will eventually be redeveloped into an industrial park.

In Dallas, Texas, through a \$230 million public/private partnership between the city and the Hillwood Development Corporation, an 11-acre portion of the 60-acre Dallas brownfields site has been redeveloped into a sports arena, the American Airlines Center. Led by the city manager, through the Department of Public Works, and Hillwood, the project involves many city offices as well as the Brownfields Pilot. The Pilot participated in discussions involving environmental concerns and issues. As part of the partnership agreement, Hillwood agreed to conduct cleanup (at a cost of \$10 million), while the city agreed to provide \$125 million toward construction of public infrastructure. Assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment activities at the site have totaled \$420 million. Auxiliary development on the site will be extensive with 8 million square feet of mixed-use development planned for the 60-acre site.



The City of Shreveport, Louisiana, is undertaking several recreational redevelopment projects, one of which is the redevelopment of 26 acres of the 100-acre Cargill brownfields site into a soccer field complex. Formerly owned by the Standard Oil Company, the site was used for oil refinery and tank farm operations during the 1940s and 1950s. After being sold to Cargill in the early 1960s for grain operations, the site was partially donated and partially sold, through a land and water conservation grant, to the City of Shreveport in the early 1970s. In the mid-1970s, the city built a softball/baseball field complex on 35 acres of the site.

Once the city decided to redevelop an additional 26 acres of the property, the Pilot suggested that the city conduct assessments on the entire site prior to redevelopment. The Pilot also took an advisory role to ensure that the project moved through the city's processes and that the local Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Health were consulted. Funded with city bonds, site assessments (\$90,000) were completed in mid-1998, cleanup activities (\$210,000) were completed in mid-1999, and redevelopment activities (\$1.2 million) were completed in late 2000. The site now consists of a 35-acre softball/baseball complex, a 26-acre soccer complex, and 39 acres of undeveloped wooded land.