



Intervention Equals Prevention in Shreveport

SHREVEPORT, LA

After nearly \$1.3 million in cleanup and redevelopment funding, the former HICA steel foundry and upgrade company has been upgraded and renovated into the new HICA Steel Castings, LLC, with owners committed to running an environmentally safe operation in the Cedar Grove neighborhood of Shreveport, Louisiana. Much of the success in this restoration stems from a public-private partnership involving the Shreveport Brownfields Pilot, which was initiated by a \$200,000 EPA grant as part of the Agency's Brownfields Initiative.

The HICA steel foundry consists of several properties grouped together as a single site. Built in the 1960s, the original steel foundry had been successful until the early 1990s, when operations began to decline due to market conditions. With poverty rates for surrounding residents reaching as high as 75%, the area was designated as a state Enterprise Zone, and the HICA facility eventually shut down in 1996. A proposal emerged to try and reopen a portion of the facility to cater to a more viable market, but fears of environmental contamination proved to be a formidable obstacle.

EPA's Brownfields Pilot award in June, 1996 enabled a prospective purchaser to evaluate the extent of the site's environmental pollution. The Pilot also facilitated review and approvals from EPA and

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JUST THE FACTS:

- Built in the 1960s, the HICA steel foundry had been successful until the early 1990s, but eventually shut down in 1996.
- Fears of environmental contamination kept potential developers away from the property.
- Pilot and other assessments of the site eventually leveraged more than \$1 million in cleanup and redevelopment funding.

The site's \$360,000 cleanup was funded entirely by the facility's previous owners, while the Pilot sought regulatory approvals and agreements between EPA and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to allow redevelopment to proceed.

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.

the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to revitalize the HICA facility.

Previous and current owners of the site spent at least \$10,000 in additional assessments, discovering several contaminants at the older facility, including: hazardous air pollution sludge from foundry furnaces; chemicals (lead, mercury, chromium, arsenic); and pickling agents/processing chemicals such as hydrofluoric acid and pickling liquor. The resulting cleanup involved removal of the contaminants, excavation, off-site disposal, and capping the site with asphalt. This \$360,000 cleanup effort was funded entirely by the facility's previous owners, while the Pilot sought regulatory approvals and agreements between EPA and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to allow redevelopment to proceed. Through its business development program, the city then provided \$200,000 from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant funds to finance HICA's resurrection, while a local bank provided a \$620,000 loan.

The upgraded, renovated HICA facility currently employs 50-60 people, and the total number of jobs is expected to reach 250 within 2-3 years. The city's workforce development unit also provides the facility with employees through the "On the Job Training-Job Training Partnership Act" (OJT-JTPA) program, which pays half the salary of OJT employees for their first six months of employment. The site has enjoyed vast visual improvements due to painting and landscaping efforts, and the surrounding area has experienced a reduction in crime. The remaining properties on the site are currently being marketed for sale/redevelopment, and the new HICA facility is considering expanding its operations to one of these locations.

Thanks to timely intervention, restoring this brownfields property involved a strong element of prevention, as opposed to cure, and Shreveport is reaping the benefits. For more information on the Shreveport Brownfields Pilot, contact Stan Hitt of EPA Region 6 at (214) 665-6736, or Sum Arigala with the City of Shreveport at (318) 673-7552.

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



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