

Celebrating Success: MacGillis & Gibbs / Bell Lumber & Pole Company



Superfund
Redevelopment
Initiative



“No one was going to come forward to reuse this site, and the property owner wouldn’t let EPA and MPCA access the property. The city realized that if it didn’t take the lead, the future was uncertain. We decided that it was time for the city to step up and see what we could do to get things moving [with the property].” - *Kevin Locke, former New Brighton Community Development Director*



“It was clear that the city had put a lot of thought into their plans, and had looked not only at redevelopment, but at how cleanup and redevelopment could work together at the property. We [EPA] see it as part of our mission to enable communities like New Brighton to be able to safely return contaminated properties to beneficial use.” – *Darryl Owens, Region 5 Remedial Project Manager*

Through close collaboration between the City of New Brighton, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), EPA and other partners, a portion of the MacGillis & Gibbs / Bell Lumber & Pole Company Superfund site has been cleaned up and redeveloped into one of the leading examples of mixed-use Superfund redevelopment in the nation.

The 68-acre Superfund site consists of two adjoining properties in New Brighton, Minnesota. Wood preserving facilities operated on both properties through most of the 20th century. The site was added to the Superfund National Priorities List in 1984, after the discovery of contaminated soil and ground water. Cleanup activities included stabilization and removal of contaminated soil, biotreatment of contaminated soil, cap installation over heavily contaminated soils, and a ground water pump- and-treat system. The majority of cleanup operations were completed by 2001.

Since the mid-1980s, the City had been laying the groundwork necessary to redevelopment the 25-acre MacGillis & Gibbs property as part of its plan to revitalize a historic road that was once a main route through the Twin Cities. In 1997, the City along with state and federal agencies successfully negotiated a Prospective Purchaser Agreement to resolve the City’s liability concerns about obtaining the property. Soon after, the City acquired the property through use of eminent domain. This enabled the site’s cleanup and redevelopment to move forward, resulting in the 32-acre New Brighton Corporate Park III. Today, the redevelopment includes manufacturing and distribution businesses as well as 70,000+ square feet of commercial office space, a range of retail shops and restaurants, legal and medical services, a post office, and a 120-unit condominium development. The redevelopment of property illustrates how community leadership, collaborative partnerships, and detailed, flexible long-term planning can result in the protection of human health and the environment and community revitalization.

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