Compendium of Superfund Redevelopment Initiative 1999 Pilot Snapshots

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Superfund Redevelopment Initiative 1999 Pilot Snapshots

The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative is a coordinated national effort to facilitate the return of the country's most hazardous waste sites to productive use by selecting cleanup remedies that are consistent with the anticipated future use of the sites. The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative makes it possible for communities to have a strong voice in local land use decisions, helping ensure the effectiveness of clean ups, generating jobs, and increasing property value near sites.

In July 1999, EPA awarded nearly $1 million to ten local governments for the first round of SRI Pilots. The First Round Pilots were selected based on preliminary eligibility and evaluation criteria, and to serve as models for subsequent pilots. At most of these Pilot sites, EPA entered into cooperative agreements with the local governments to help facilitate the advancement of the Pilot reuse activities. Working with communities to determine their preferred reuse of these properties is an integral part of the cleanup process and enables EPA to select the most appropriate cleanup remedies to ensure protection of people and the environment.

The following are brief descriptions of the sites and redevelopment activities of the ten First Round Pilots:

Region 1

Pownal Tannery (Pownal, Vermont)

$97,250 to Pownal, Vermont
Mixed: Commercial and Green Space

The Pownal Tannery Superfund site originally hosted a woolen mill in the late 1880s, but was converted to a tannery in 1935. The Pownal Tanning Company ceased all operations on the property in 1988. The groundwater, soil, and building materials at the site were contaminated with metals, semi-volatile organic compounds, and dioxin. In January 1999, EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup. EPA recycled and cleaned 140 old forest wood beams from the former tannery building, and decontaminated and demolished the building in 1999. These beams were donated to the Town of Pownal to build a recycling center and a town equipment shed.

In 1999 the site was selected for a Superfund Redevelopment Pilot grant and the Town of Pownal hired a consultant to assess the potential for reusing the site. The consultant organized a Reuse Assessment Committee made up of residents, local business owners, and local officials to prepare a preliminary list of site reuse options. The Town of Pownal completed the Reuse Assessment Report entitled "Pownal Tannery Superfund Reuse Assessment Report" in February 2001. The reuse plan indicated interest in using the site for mixed recreational purposes and as the location of a wastewater treatment facility. The recreational plans include a soccer field, seasonal skating rank, walking paths, and picnic area. EPA completed remedial construction at the site in September 2004. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is currently performing operations and maintenance under a Superfund state contract. The Town began construction of a wastewater treatment plant in 2005 and completion is scheduled for 2007. The Town continues to refine plans for future recreational use and seek funding for implementation of these projects.

Region 2

Roebling Steel (Roebling, New Jersey)

$100,000 to Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Commercial and Public Services / Public

The Roebling Steel Superfund site was used for steel manufacturing from 1906 until the early 1980s. Groundwater and soil at the site were contaminated with metals, and the buildings with contaminated materials and exposed asbestos. In September 1983, EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup. Cleanup and disposal began in 1987 and some construction work associated with demolition and decontamination is ongoing. The Florence Township Redevelopment Agency chose a consulting firm to perform a reuse assessment of the site and a Reuse Assessment Plan was completed in 2002. The Reuse Assessment Plan compiled the findings and recommendations of the steering committee, a community needs assessment, a market analysis, and physical site evaluation. EPA worked closely with Florence Township, the site owner, local community members, and developers during the cleanup process to ensure that construction of the remedy was compatible with the reuse plan. EPA drafted a Prospective Purchasers Agreement with the NJ Transit Corporation, which planed to lease five acres of the site for construction of a light rail commuter train station and parking lot. The New Jersey Transit light rail station stop for Roebling was completed in March 2004. Restoration of the historic Main Gatehouse for use as a local museum is ongoing.

Region 3

Avtex Fibers (Front Royal, Virginia)

Awarded to City of Front Royal
Mixed: Commercial and Green Space

The plant at the Avtex Fibers Superfund site manufactured synthetic fibers from 1940 until its closure in 1989. The groundwater is contaminated with carbon disulfide, phenol, sodium, and heavy metals, including lead, arsenic, and cadmium, from wastes dumped in on-site basins. Also, carbon disulfide, phenol, arsenic, lead, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have been found in soils, and the nearby Shenandoah River is contaminated with PCBs from the manufacturing process. EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup in June 1986. EPA, the Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority (EDA), the responsble party FMC, and the state sponsored a multi-stakeholders group to facilitate public participation and input on the site's reuse. This provided an interactive forum to consider site-related issues critical to the future of the area. EDA acquired the property and, to ensure that reuse remains safe for humans and the environment, the city has placed restrictions on how the property may be used in the future. Stakeholders informed a redevelopment plan that divides the site into three areas: a 240-acre river conservancy park along the riverfront, a 25-acre active recreation park, and a 165-acre eco-business park. The plan allows for enjoyment of the Shenandoah River by providing boat landings, picnic shelters, recreational facilities, and open areas. The park opened to the public in 2003. The city, one of the site owners, and EPA are also working with the U.S. Soccer Foundation to make land on a portion of the site suitable for soccer fields. Then EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, visited the Avtex site in 1999 to announce the selection of the first ten Pilots, while many young soccer players and coaches from Front Royal looked on. EDA is taking the lead on planning the eco-business park. The centerpiece of the park will be the refurbished historic former Avtex administration building, which will set a high environmental standard for the entire park. The planned office buildings in the park will be developed to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Region 4

Escambia Treating Company (Pensacola, Florida)

$95,000 awarded to Escambia County
Mixed: Industrial, Commercial, and Green Space

From 1942 until 1982, a wood preserving plant operated on a 26-acre tract of land now called the Escambia Treating Company Superfund site. Excess wood preservative drained from the treated products into drip tracks, contaminated the area with pentachlorophenol, dioxin, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. EPA added this site to its list of hazardous waste sites in December 1994. EPA excavated 225,000 cubic yards of contaminated materials and stored it under a secure cover on the site. The Escambia County Board of County Commissioners plans the redevelop of the site to include commercial and light industrial use. EPA signed a Cooperative Agreement in September 1999, allowing the board to begin Pilot activities. The board hired a firm to create the conceptual plan for the future use of the site. Relocation of the four residential neighborhoods around the former wood preserving facility is complete for three of the four neighborhoods, but relocation activities in Clarinda Triangle are ongoing. The neighborhoods around the site are ethnically diverse and have a poverty rate above the national average. The Palafox Commerce Master Plan was completed in 2001 outlining an eco-industrial park that will include commercial, industrial, and green space uses. In 2006 the final remedy was selected for the soils at the site and its design too into account the reuse plan and the community's desire to seethe site reused. Funding of the final remedy has been approved and construction is scheduled to begin in 2008. The reuse plan can be implemented after construction of the final remedy is complete. A copy of the reuse plan for this site can be found at: http://www.co.escambia.fl.us/departments/nesd/documents/PalafoxPlan2004.pdf.

Region 5

Tar Lake (Mancelona, Michigan)

Awarded to Antrium County
Mixed: Commercial, Residential, and Green Space

The Tar Lake Superfund site is a 200-acre property where an iron works facility operated between 1910 and 1944. The manufacturing processes at the facility created a tar residue, which was discharged into a surface depression on the property. The site also contains a municipal landfill. In 1998, EPA began a time-critical response action, which included excavating and transporting tar wastes from the depression, installing a poly-liner, and backfilling the depression with clean soil. The cleanup activities were completed in 2004. The area is unzoned, close to downtown Mancelona, and provides significant opportunity for reuse to address multiple community needs. The site is currently not in use and is surrounded by low-density residential and light industrial properties. The future use of the Tar Lake site will take place as part of the community's consideration of a larger area, referred to as the Mancelona Community Redevelopment Area. The current reuse plan includes residential housing in the eastern portion of the site (mostly the uncontaminated area), recreational uses such as open space and trails in the western and southern portion of the site, and a commercial district along the western border of the site. With a community-based redevelopment vision in mind, EPA, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and Community Resource Development, Inc., of Mancelona, Michigan (current owner of the majority of the site) worked together to update the site's property use restrictions to allow uses for which the remedy is protective. The new restrictive covenants and an environmental protection easement will allow for non-residential uses with specific restrictions on ground water use and types of construction activities. In 2005, EPA deleted the 40-acre uncontaminated area from National Priorities List (NPL) to lessen the stigma associated with the area. In a further attempt to combat stigma, EPA is writing a Ready for Reuse (RfR)

Determination for the site. These steps are moving the site toward the reuse envisioned by the community.

Region 6

Many Diversified Interests (MDI) (Houston, Texas)

$100,000 awarded to City of Houston
Mixed: Residential, Commercial, and Green Space

In 1926, Texas Electric Steel Casting Company (TESCO) began operations as a metal casting foundry at the MDI Site. A second foundry was built on the eastern portion of the site during the latter half of the year 1970. In 1990, MDI bought the TESCO note from Texas Commerce Bank and TESCO ceased operations the next year. MDI reopened as the San Jacinto Foundry (SJF), but only operated for a year before filing for bankruptcy. The Site is located approximately 2 miles east of downtown Houston and 1 block south of Interstate Highway 10 in an area of mixed industrial and residential land use in a part of Houston known as the "Fifth Ward." As many as 5,600 drums of spent catalyst, flammable or corrosive liquids, and oxidizing agents were abandoned on the property. High concentrations of arsenic, chromium, copper, lead and nickel were found in the soil, the on-site landfill, and nearby residential yards. EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup in January 1999. In September 1999, the Mayor's Office of Environmental Policy received a Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) Grant. The City used the grant to conduct a reuse assessment and public outreach to help determine how best to redevelop the former MDI property in Houston's Fifth Ward. The city worked with the neighborhood around MDI, where the average income is below the poverty level, to identify the best reuse options. The MDI Citizen Advisory Group, in the "Reuse Assessment Report," recommended reuse of the site for mixed residential, organized recreational, and neighborhood-scale commercial uses. In May 2006, the prospective purchaser for the Site, Clinton Gregg Investments, Ltd., signed an "Agreed Order on Consent and Covenant Not to Sue" with EPA. This is the first-ever agreement in the nation by a non-liable party to clean up a Superfund Site and implement the remedy identified in the Record of Decision. The prospective purchaser agrees to implement the remedy identified in the ROD for OU 1 (On-Site Soils and Ground Water). This agreement will save the EPA and taxpayers $6.6 million, the EPA's estimated cost to implement the remedy. The remedy consists of, among other actions, cleanup of the soils to residential standards. The 36 acres within the Site's fenced boundaries can be redeveloped for beneficial use once the selected Remedial Action for OU 1 is implemented.

Region 7

National Mine Tailings (Park Hills, Missouri)

Reuse Plan funded by Responsible Party
Mixed: Commercial and Green Space

The National Mine Tailings Superfund site, 90 minutes south of St. Louis, was used for lead mining operations. The site contains ten million cubic yards of mine tailings and could cost $20-30 million merely for engineering controls to prevent additional off-site migration. EPA's overall site strategy includes stabilizing wind and water erosion of the mine waste areas, cleaning up residential areas, and implementing an educational program to help the community reduce the currently elevated blood lead levels. The county has the lowest per capita income of the ten pilots and a high rate of unemployment. The city worked with a volunteer community group to identify reuse options and to make reuse recommendations, which were incorporated into the city's reuse plan. The potentially responsible party also worked with the community to incorporate the recommendations from the city's reuse plan into an engineering evaluation and cost analysis,

which will outline reuse alternatives. In October 2001, a contractor for EPA region 7 prepared a reuse plan for the Park Hills Superfund Redevelopment Community Work Group. This plan was revised in August 2003. The work group received input from community members about possible reuse of the site and concluded that if the site was not used by the Missouri Department of Transportation for transportation corridor, that portions of the site should be developed for private commercial or recreational uses, such as hiking and biking trails. However, recently the Responsible Party for the site has changed its reuse priorities and and therefore plans for the site's redevelopment are still pending.

Region 8

Midvale Slag (Midvale, Utah)

Awarded to City of Salt Lake
Mixed: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Green Space

The 530-acre Midvale Slag Superfund site, 12 miles south of Salt Lake City, is divided into two units. One 200-acre parcel, on the southern portion of the site, was used for smelting and refining activities from the 1870s until 1958. These activities resulted in large amounts of waste material with heavy metals, including lead and arsenic, covering the property. The other parcel is 330 acres on the northern portion of the site, which was contaminated with mining wastes from the smelting and refining activities. The site contains more than 500,000 cubic yards of various wastes ranging from old building materials to highly contaminated chemical wastes and several large slag piles. EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup in February 1991. In the fall of 1999 Midvale City was awarded an EPA Pilot Redevelopment Grant, which was used to develop a master plan for reuse of the site. The site was zoned for industrial use however, the City of Midvale used Pilot funds to examine a range of uses for the property, including open spaces and parks, and residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The city formed a stakeholder group made up of government officials, community members, and property owners, to hold monthly meetings on reuse. The city also hired a consulting firm to develop a reuse plan for the site. The plan, entitled "Bingham Junction Reuse Assessment and Master Plan," was completed in April 2000 and adopted by the Midvale City Planning Commission later that year. The city used the remaining funds to actively participate with EPA on remedy selection and implementation as they affect reuse. In November 2001, the Midvale City Council adopted the Bingham Junction Ordinance, which spells out institutional controls placed on the property to facilitate the protective reuse of the property. The ROD was selected for the site in 2002 and construction of the site's selected remedies is ongoing. The city and the site owner are working to secure approval for the mixed-use redevelopment plan.

Region 9

Frontier Fertilizer (Davis, California)

Awarded to City of Davis
Mixed: Commercial and Industrial

The 18-acre Frontier Fertilizer Superfund site was used to store, sell, and apply fertilizers and pesticides from 1972 until 1987. Unused chemicals in the application equipment were routinely washed from the equipment and disposed of into a shallow, unlined disposal basin on the property. The contaminants of concern in the soil and groundwater are organic chemicals, which includes ethylene dibromide, 1-2 dibromo-3-chloropropane, and 1-2 dichloropropane. Groundwater is also contaminated with carbon tetrachloride, the source of which has not yet been identified. The contaminated groundwater plume has migrated north of the site, where houses are being built. EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup in May 1994.

The site is currently zoned for light industrial use such as a business park. With the grant from the Superfund Redevelopment Pilot program, the City of Davis selected a consultant to develop a reuse plan for the site. The Frontier Fertilizer Site Reuse Plan was released in July 2001 and is available online at: http://www.ci.davis.ca.us/topic/pdfs/FF-Final.pdf. The planning approach undertook three separate activities concurrently to inform the reuse plan: land use analysis, public participation, and a market overview. The process yielded three reuse alternatives: light industrial, office park, and combined light industrial and public uses. The Reuse Plan proposed updating the market analysis and reuse alternatives in 2004, once the site's remedy had been selected.

Region 10

McCormick and Baxter Creosoting Company (Portland, Oregon)

Awarded to City of Portland
Green Space / Recreational

The McCormick and Baxter Creosoting Company Superfund site was used for wood treatment from 1944 until 1991. The site, situated on the Willamette River, includes 43 acres on land and 15 acres in the river. The soil was contaminated with wood-treating chemicals, including heavy metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and pentachlorophenol, to depths of 80 feet. Soil contaminants migrated to sediments in the Willamette River, resulting in contamination of river water. Sediments are contaminated with PAHs to depths of 35 feet. The City of Portland Site Reuse Assessment Report presents the results of a site reuse assessment conducted between February 2000 and June 2001 by the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and funded by the SRI Pilot grant. In developing reuse recommendations, the City analyzed the site's redevelopment potential and engaged stakeholders and the interested public in learning about and proposing what uses would best fit the site. The City's findings were presented in the final report, which has been endorsed by the Portland City Council. In conducting the assessment, the City developed a list of reuse criteria that would need to be balanced in order to arrive at the most feasible land reuse, such as minimizing traffic impacts, ensuring adequacy of infrastructure, being compatible with cleanup remedies, serving an identified market or community needs and being consistent with the City of Portland Comprehensive Plan. Using these criteria, the City developed, presented and discussed a variety of reuse ideas and conceptual site plans including: an open space demonstration site, recreational use, industrial use, and mixed use (residential, commercial and university facilities). Project consultants prepared market feasibility and traffic analysis reports for these four scenarios after which the City concluded that the site is best suited for recreational use. The final Reuse Assessment is available online at: http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=59140.