

Celebrating Success: Kansas City Structural Steel Kansas City, Kansas



Superfund
Redevelopment
Initiative



Buildings at the American Smelting and Refining Co. site, 1900. (Source: [Kansas City Public Library](#))

“The real test for projects like this one is whether residents feel like, when it’s done, their neighborhood is a better place to live than it was before. This project meets that test in every way.”

Ann Murguia, Executive Director of the Argentine Neighborhood Development Association



Construction for new commercial space, June 2014. (Source: EPA)

For more information, please contact Melissa Friedland at friedland.melissa@epa.gov or (703) 603-8864 or Frank Avvisato at avvisato.frank@epa.gov or (703) 603-8949.



New Walmart opens on site, September 2014. (Source: EPA)

For more than a century, smelting and steel fabrication at the Kansas City Structural Steel site (the Site) contaminated soil and groundwater with heavy metals. After cleanup in the 1990s, collaboration between EPA and local stakeholders transformed this once hazardous waste site into a new grocery center with 61,000 square feet of commercial opportunity for the Argentine neighborhood in Kansas City, Kansas.

Smelting and steel fabrication industries operated on the Site from 1880 until the 1970s. These activities contaminated the soil, leading to EPA cleanup at the Site. Cleanup activities included demolishing vacant structures, and consolidating and placing a remedial cap over contaminated soil.

El Centro, a local nonprofit that aims to improve the lives of Latinos and strengthen communities, worked with EPA in the 1990s to acquire the property and seek out reuse opportunities. Throughout the years, El Centro met many obstacles to site redevelopment, including uncertainty about site development restrictions and appropriate uses acceptable to the surrounding residential community.

Then, in 2013, the real estate group Lane4 Property Group expressed interest in developing a grocery and retail center at the Site. EPA worked to provide El Centro, Lane4 Property Group, the State of Kansas, neighborhood groups and the developer with the tools to move toward reuse of the Site. These included modification of land use restrictions that were part of the cleanup, enrollment in the Kansas Environmental Use Controls program, and transfer of EPA covenants not to sue to the new owner. This allowed construction to proceed while maintaining and enhancing the soil cap at the Site.

After several efforts over the years searching for redevelopment acceptable to the local community, the Lane4 Property Group broke ground at the Site on “La Plaza Argentine” in March 2014. This development brings affordable food options as well as economic opportunities for the Argentine neighborhood through a new Walmart grocery store and development pads for additional retail. The grand opening of La Plaza Argentine took place in September 2014. EPA also recognized reuse efforts by Walmart and the Argentine Neighborhood Development Association by awarding the parties with Region 7’s Leading Environmentalism and Forwarding Sustainability award (LEAFS). Plans for further productive reuse of the Site are currently being supported by EPA and the local community.