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Environmental
Protection Agency
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Solid Waste
and Emergency
Response (5101)

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July 1998

Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Ypsilanti, MI

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101) | Quick Reference Fact Sheet

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. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to $200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots 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.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Ypsilanti for a Brownfields Pilot. Ypsilanti is an historic urban community with a population of nearly 25,000, located 20 minutes west of the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The City, four square miles in area, has limited land for development and is seeking to redevelop idle industrial sites located in the City's 34-acre Water Street District. Industrial, residential, and park properties characterize the Water Street area. The City believes contamination exists due to automobile manufacturing and associated industries. Ypsilanti is faced with a declining population, a high poverty rate (18%), limited opportunities for tax base expansion, a deteriorating infrastructure, and a higher unemployment rate than surrounding communities. Eight targeted redevelopment areas are identified in the City's Master Plan, but the Pilot will primarily focus on the Water Street Redevelopment Area.

OBJECTIVES

Ypsilanti plans to redevelop the Water Street area with a mix of commercial and residential land uses, capitalizing on the area's proximity to the Huron River and the City's central business district. The Water Street project will provide a model process for future brownfields redevelopment in Ypsilanti.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Ypsilanti, Michigan

Date of Announcement: July 1998

Amount: $200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the City's 34-acre Water Street district, where abandoned and idle industrial lands provide the best opportunities for redevelopment in a community that has limited land for expansion.

Contacts:

Community and
Economic Development
Department
City of Ypsilanti
(734) 483-9646

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 5
(312) 353-3161

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:
http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/

An Environmental Real Estate Assessment (EREA) of the target area revealed probable contamination and recommended further environmental investigation. Pilot funding will be used for conducting Phase I and Phase II assessments, collecting parcel information to update the EREA, and conducting public outreach activities to involve property owners and developers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Performing Phase I environmental assessments on 15 to 20 parcels;
- Performing Phase II environmental assessments on 8 to 10 parcels;
- Updating the EREA with the results from environmental assessments so that parcels can be prioritized based on their redevelopment potential; and
- Conducting public information meetings where targeted neighborhoods are provided updates of Pilot activities and are encouraged to offer their input in planning redevelopment in their communities.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.