

Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Worcester, MA

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 Worcester for a Brownfields Pilot. Worcester's Main South neighborhood is one of the poorest and most ethnically diverse areas in the city, with 11,000 residents living in its one-square-mile area. More than 25 percent of the neighborhood residents live at or near the poverty level, and unemployment rates are twice the national average. The neighborhood, and the city itself, thrived until the 1950s, when many local manufacturers abandoned Worcester for other parts of the country. Preliminary assessments on the Pilot-targeted properties indicate contamination resulting from past uses as foundries and wire-fabrication facilities.

In an attempt to reverse this decline, Clark University in 1996 partnered with the Main South Community Development Corporation (CDC) to restore a 100-acre area within the Main South neighborhood, encompassing the university's campus. Their efforts led to a spin-off project also involving the Main South CDC and Clark University, as well as the Boys & Girls Club of Central Massachusetts and the City of Worcester, to restore a six-block, 30-acre area within the Main South neighborhood. Critical to the success of this spin-off effort—known as the Gardner-Kilby-Hammond (GKH) Street Neighborhood Revitalization Project—is an "L"-shaped, 10-acre

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Worcester, Massachusetts

Date of Announcement:
March 1999

Amount: \$161,500

Profile: The Pilot targets a 10-acre strip of four former industrial properties in the heart of the Main South neighborhood.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflld/>

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/>

strip of four former industrial properties, which will be the focus of the Pilot.

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot's objective is to complement and expedite the GKH project by performing site assessments and developing cleanup strategies for the targeted 10-acre strip. The Pilot will also assist the Main South CDC in coordinating community outreach efforts and developing risk assessments. As part of the GKH project, Pilot activities will eventually contribute to a new Boys & Girls Club facility; shared athletic fields available for community use; owner-occupied housing; and affordable rental housing to be managed by the Main South CDC.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase II environmental assessments and risk assessments on properties within the target area;
- Selecting cleanup alternatives and designing cleanup plans; and
- Conducting community outreach regarding the project.

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