

**Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS
Brownfields Project: Community-Wide Hazardous Substance
& Community-Wide Petroleum Grants**

***Planning Process
& Community Involvement Plan***

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1. Introduction

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas (UG) received two grants from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Both grants are intended to fund activities to assess, clean up and redevelop brownfields. The Community-Wide Hazardous Substance Brownfields Project grant (BF97711701) in the amount of \$200,000 is to be used for hazardous substance sites as defined by CERCLA 101 (39). The Community-Wide Petroleum Brownfields Project grant (BF97711601) in the amount of \$200,000 is to be used for sites contaminated by petroleum products. The timeframe for both grants is September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2012. A planning process is proposed in the following document that will result in the selection of the sites for clean up. This planning process will also be used to help formulate UG's future brownfields efforts.

2. Purpose of Planning Process

The purpose of the planning process is to help the Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS (UG) answer the following questions:

1. Where are there legitimate redevelopment opportunities that need site clean up to make them viable for redevelopment?
2. What would be the scope, timeframe and cost of redeveloping these types of sites?
3. What are the action steps necessary to redevelop these properties?
4. Who needs to be involved in the clean up and redevelopment process (identify potential partners)?
5. What should the UG's strategy on funding cleanup be (identify potential sources of funding, determine ways to leverage resources, identify parties responsible)?
6. How do we educate the public about what is needed to make contaminated sites viable for redevelopment and competitive in the development market?

3. Overview of the Process

The following are the broad steps that describe how decisions will be made about selecting sites for clean up. More detail will follow in the remainder of the document.

1. **Target Resources** - The focus of both grants is community-wide meaning the entire county. EPA's Healthy Communities & Ecosystems program gives preference to projects in areas with high concentrations of poverty, minorities, and sensitive populations (particularly sensitive to the environmental contaminations present). The program also gives preference to areas with known environmental issues. Therefore, the grant resources will be targeted to six (6) areas of the county: Argentine, Armourdale, Discovery Point, Indian Springs Mall & out-buildings, Quindaro and State Avenue Corridor.
2. **Begin with UG-Owned Properties** - UG owns over 500 properties as part of their UG Land Bank Program. These properties are primarily vacant lots obtained through judicial foreclosure. These properties will be the focus of this program. These will be entered into a Geographical Information System (GIS) database and mapped. Additional layers of information will be prepared and a desktop analysis conducted. The data to collect includes:

- a. Current land use
 - b. Future land use
 - c. Historic property or district
 - d. Empowerment zones/Economic Development zones
 - e. Review history of property use as a desktop screen of potential contamination (Sanborns, EDRs, State of Kansas databases)
 - f. Verify access to utilities
- 3. Conduct Windshield Assessment of Properties** - Gather additional information about the UG- Owned properties and surrounding properties in the targeted areas & corridors. During the windshield survey, basic information about the property will be identified. A field sheet will be used to gather the information. It will be entered into the GIS database. Some information to be collected would include:
- a. Description of current site conditions: building(s) or vacant land.
 - b. Site location including approximate size(s) and building types, address.
 - c. cursory evaluation of structural integrity (poor, fair, good).
 - d. Age of structure built prior to 1980.
 - e. GPS coordinates.
 - f. Digital photo of front of structure.
 - g. Access to major transportation routes – Proximity of probable sites in relation to major roads & public transportation access.
 - h. Approximate parcel size observed.
 - i. Vacant land space on target property or adjacent property.
 - j. Parking space (for developer interest).
 - k. Proximity /walking distance to bus access to jobs and places of business.
 - l. Other.
- 4. Focus Efforts on Properties Prime for Redevelopment** - Rather than focus on gathering environmental condition on all properties in the targeted areas/corridors, the list will be screened to identify properties prime for redevelopment. Maps will be prepared with associated databases for each corridor/area. Meetings will be set up to interview the key redevelopment stakeholders to gather information about legitimate, highly viable redevelopment opportunities.
- 5. Form Target Area Planning Team** - A group of stakeholders will be appointed to the Target Area Planning (TAP) Team.
- 6. Determine whether redevelopment sites are contaminated and eligible for the grant programs** - Using the information from the desktop analysis, stakeholder interviews and TAP team site selection criteria, properties in the targeted areas/corridors will be selected for further screening. More detailed information will be gathered regarding whether these sites are contaminated and eligible for the grant programs. Some of the steps in this process include:
- a. Screen by EPA referenced document
 - b. Obtain Owner Data and Site Ownership History
 - c. Determine status of Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) involving all appropriate inquiries, bonafied prospective purchasers, contiguous property owners, and innocent land owners.
 - d. If petroleum is involved, screen with KDHE

- e. Create eligibility submittal forms to KDHE and EPA
 - f. Report findings back to UG, Stakeholders and TAP Team
- 7. Rank properties eligible based upon prioritization criteria** - Once the screening has occurred, properties will be identified that are:
- Located in the target areas/corridors,
 - Highly viable for redevelopment,
 - A high priority for the community to be redeveloped, and
 - Eligible for clean up dollars.

This subset of properties will be prioritized using the prioritization criteria developed by the TAP Team. The top 15 with petroleum contamination and the top 15 with hazardous substance contamination will be recommended to the further assessment. These properties will be reported to the UG staff, Stakeholders and the TAP Team.

- 8. Conduct Phase I Site Assessments** - The project team will conduct all appropriate inquiries at approximately 30 sites from the ranked inventory (15 for Hazardous Substance & 15 for Petroleum) for Phase I. Findings regarding, scope, timeframe and costs of moving forward with clean up and redevelopment will be communicated to the UG staff, stakeholders and TAP Team.
- 9. Conduct Phase II Site Assessments** - The project team will conduct Phase II site assessments for approximately 3 -5 eligible sites. Findings regarding, scope, timeframe and costs of moving forward with clean up and redevelopment will be communicated to the UG staff, stakeholders and TAP Team.
- 10. Prepare Brownfield Program Recommendations** - As a result of the steps taking during the planning process, recommendations regarding future efforts to redevelop brownfields in Wyandotte County, Kansas will be developed.
- 11. Clean Up Plan** – Prepare a Clean Up Plan for each site.

4. Community Involvement Plan

Community outreach will plant the seed of brownfield prevention to alleviate financial processes, tools and federal and state resources available that supports the Comprehensive Plan.

4.1 Plan Objectives

It is imperative that the public and stakeholders be engaged and educated on why the program is necessary, how it will impact their quality of life and how it will be funded. The environmental improvement from the community involvement activities is an improved understanding and increased participation in cleanup and redevelopment process as well as an increased awareness of site availability/redevelopment status. To that end, the objectives for communication and public engagement include:

- *Inform* the public by providing balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and solutions.
- *Consult* the public by obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- *Involve* the public by working directly with them throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- *Enlist* advisory groups in developing, testing and communicating the solutions and key messages.

4.2 Key Messages

A primary component of our approach is to craft consistent messages to educate and inform the public about the overall brownfields program.

The following are the key messages developed:

- UG is identifying properties that are likely to be redeveloped but may be limited by environmental hazards or petroleum contamination. This work is being funded through a brownfields grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency. Once properties are identified and a plan of action developed, additional grant funds may be pursued to clean up the properties making them more likely to redevelop.
- UG is focusing on its brownfields efforts on redevelopment of land bank properties located in areas of high concentration of poverty, minorities and sensitive populations.
- UG welcomes community participation in the development of its brownfields program and prioritization process.

4.3 Strategic Approach

Successful public education and outreach requires active communication with the public using multiple communication methods and providing multiple opportunities for participation. Messages must be crafted to educate and inform the public, be delivered in a targeted way that will most effectively reach the targeted audiences and include opportunities for feedback. Feedback will be used to evaluate and enhance the public participation plan. All federal, state and local public participation and public notice requirements will be met or exceeded.

Identification of targeted audiences, communication goals, roles, responsibilities and specific methods utilized to engage those audiences are given in the sections that follow.

4.3.1 Target Audiences and Communication Goals

Elected Officials

This group is defined as all applicable public office holders, including local, state and federal officials. Communication goals of this program with respect to elected officials include:

- Brief elected officials on a regular basis so they can make informed decisions and knowledgeably address constituent concerns about the combined sewer overflow program as well as other Facilities Plan elements.

Target Area Planning Team

A group of 25 stakeholders will be appointed by the City to the Target Area Planning (TAP) Team. The purpose of the TAP Team is to:

- Gain a better understanding of assessment, clean up and redevelopment of brownfields sites;
- Share with project team information on potential redevelopment sites;
- Develop site selection criteria to be used to screen potential sites and prioritization criteria to select priority sites for Phase I & potentially Phase II assessments;
- Develop partnerships with stakeholders needed for redevelopment of brownfields sites; and
- Provide input into future efforts to redevelop brownfields sites.

The TAP Team should consist of a wide variety of stakeholders that will be impacted by the projects. The list of potential TAP Team members includes stakeholders from:

- Downtown Shareholders- Kansas City, Kansas
- Drainage Districts
- Fairfax Industrial Association
- Financial Institutions
- Friends of Kaw Point Park
- Kansas City, Kansas Chamber of Commerce
- Liveable Neighborhoods, Inc.- Unified Government
- Neighborhood Groups from impacted corridors (neighborhood and business representatives)
- Northeast Economic Development Corporation
- Wyandotte Chamber of Commerce
- Wyandotte Economic Development Council

City and County Personnel

In addition to elected officials and project team members, there may be certain departments and staff members of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County that are impacted by this program. This group will include at least:

- Deputy Administrator
- Public Works staff

General Public

Members of the general public are defined as any Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas resident or other interested party not specifically included in one of the groups mentioned above.

Communication goals of this program with respect to members of the general public include:

- Build an informed City, civic, business and neighborhood leadership group.
- Inform the public of the problems that are created by brownfields and enlist their support of the solutions.
- Notify the public in advance of opportunities for input and of meetings where public officials will make major decisions.
- Use feedback received from the public and build trust by demonstrating the public's voice has been heard.

4.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

To efficiently and effectively execute the Community Involvement Plan, the following roles and responsibilities of the study participants have been identified.

Target Area Planning Team

- Provides a city-wide view from the stakeholder perspective;
- Provides input regarding key messages;
- Develops an understanding of issues and provides constructive feedback on information presented;
- Provides input into development of selection criteria and prioritization of sites;
- Advises project team and staff on public participation; and
- Assists the project team with stakeholder outreach activities.

Stakeholder Groups

- Provide a city-wide view from the stakeholder perspective;
- Develop an understanding of issues;
- Communicate with project team and staff on ways that their group may be impacted;
- Provide input into public participation methods; and
- Advocate for the program.

Project Team

- Frames the problem;
- Identifies potential solutions;
- Evaluates potential solutions based on agreed upon criteria;
- Collaborates with the Target Area Planning Team, Stakeholder Groups and the general public;
- Develops final recommendations; and
- Implements the Community Involvement Plan.

4.3.3 Methods

The following methods will be utilized to meet the program goals:

- Build basic information about the program in a number of formats using a consistent identity and key messages.
- Tailor the messages and methods for each audience.
- Distribute materials and make contacts in a targeted way.
- Provide participants with the information that they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Respect diversity among participants.
- Give participants feedback; let people know what was done with their information.
- Demonstrate and celebrate successes and progress.

4.4 Communication Methods

A variety of methods will be used to communicate our messages to the targeted audiences. With two-way communication methods, information will be provided and input will be solicited. With one-way communication methods, information will be provided but input will not be solicited. The following methods will be utilized:

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Target Area Planning Team and Public Meetings
- City Hall Information Repository
- Community Field Events
- Fact Sheets
- Field Day with EPA, State and City
- Press Releases
- Project Website

Stakeholder Interviews

As was stated before, rather than focus on gathering environmental condition on all properties in the targeted corridors, the list will be screened to identify properties prime for redevelopment. Maps will be prepared with associated databases for each corridor/area. Meetings will be set up to interview the key redevelopment stakeholders to gather information about legitimate, highly viable redevelopment opportunities. Stakeholders will be asked about vision for the corridor, revitalization projects planned in the surrounding areas, additional financial support that could be leveraged, etc. The stakeholders to interview include:

- Community Development Director, Economic Development Director, Public Works Director, Property Management & Marketing Director
- Deputy County Administrator & Commissioners from each targeted corridors, Property Management & Marketing Director
- Northeast Economic Development Council, Property Management & Marketing Director

Target Area Planning Team and Public Meetings

Four (4) meetings will be held with the TAP Team. These meetings will be open to the public will be structured to invite a larger group of stakeholders to participate in the meetings beyond the TAP Team members. Meeting participants will be given an introduction into brownfields and sites and then will provide input and feedback into selection criteria and prioritization of sites.

City Hall Information Repository

Informational materials and fact sheets developed will be displayed at City Hall for individuals and groups to obtain.

Community Field Events

The Unified Government will conduct two (2) community field events to involve the general public and the youth.

Fact Sheets

Informational materials and fact sheets will be developed to help educate the public about what is needed to make polluted sites viable and competitive. The fact sheets can be handed out at public meetings, public events, and placed at City Hall. Fact sheets will also be given to community groups to pass out at existing community events.

Field Day with EPA, State, and City

The Unified Government will hold one (1) field day with federal, state and city officials. This may include a project bus tour and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a site that is being redeveloped.

Press Releases

Press releases will be distributed announcing upcoming meetings and activities of interest. The press releases may contain photos to provide local newspapers with visually appealing media stories. The project team may work with local public television stations to develop educational announcements/programming regarding brownfield topics and issues.

Project Website

More and more, citizens receive their information by way of the internet. Younger generations in particular respond only to information that is on the web. The Unified Government's website would be enhanced to incorporate various communication methods for members of the Target Area Planning Team and the general public. The website could include the following information:

- An explanation of brownfields;
- A description of the problem;
- A summary of the regulations concerning brownfields;
- Steps that citizens can take to help the problem;
- An explanation of the planning process;
- Updates on current and future projects;
- Links to other websites concerning brownfields;
- A glossary of terms;
- Frequently Asked Questions;
- Project maps; and
- How to contact the City regarding the issues.

5. Schedule and Timeline

Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9 - 19
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Prepare Maps•Finalize Community Involvement Plan•Submit Early Impact Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Meet with Stakeholders to Interview•Set up TAP Team•Start Phase I on Early Impact Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Convene TAP Team•Start Phase II on Early Impact Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Finalize TAP Team recommendations•Complete list of prioritized properties•Research additional grant opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Start Phase I on High Priority Redevelopment Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Start Phase II on High Prioritized Redevelopment Properties•Prepare Brownsfield Recommendation Report•Begin Cleanup Teams