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Redevelopment Opportunities Taking Hold in Baltimore

Baltimore, MD

The City of Baltimore, Maryland has begun to see the rewards of its brownfields revitalization efforts as several redevelopment projects get underway, including the creation of information technology business centers and the restoration of wetlands. In September 1998, the Brownfields National Partnership awarded Baltimore its Brownfields Showcase Community designation. Since then, Showcase Community staff have helped spur these and other projects by creating partnerships among federal, state, and local agencies, universities, foundations, and private and nonprofit organizations. These partnerships have already leveraged more than \$185 million towards Baltimore's cleanup and redevelopment projects.

Showcase Communities are selected by the Brownfields National Partnership to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to restore these sites, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. Showcase Communities serve as models for broad-based cooperative efforts to support locally based initiatives. Showcases receive up to \$400,000 from EPA for both environmental assessments and to support the loan of a federal employee to the Showcase for up to three years. Showcase Communities receive additional financial and technical support from the Partnership's more than 20 federal partners, depending on the community need and program eligibility.

Baltimore has a substantial list of brownfields restoration successes that led to its Showcase Community designation, and several projects following the Showcase award that have been supported through the Brownfields National Partnership. The former American Can Company building, for instance, sat abandoned for more than a decade despite its location on Baltimore's waterfront. Once a developer expressed interest, this brownfield became the first property in Maryland to complete the state's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP). Partnerships emerged between the developer and the state to finance redevelopment, resulting in \$24 million in funding from the developer and \$1.5 million from Maryland. A Public Works grant from the Economic Development Administration and financial incentives available through the federal Brownfields Tax Incentive also contributed to this project. The site is now a retail and office center that brought nearly 700 new jobs to the city.

A former Proctor & Gamble manufacturing complex was in a similar situation to the former American Can site, sitting abandoned on the waterfront (with an even more valuable location at Baltimore's Inner

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A view of one of Baltimore's brownfields, prior to redevelopment.

JUST THE FACTS:

- Abandoned for more than a decade, the former American Can site became the first property in Maryland to complete the state's Voluntary Cleanup Program.
- A former manufacturing facility on Baltimore's waterfront is now home to an office complex that houses 1,525 employees.
- Partnerships among federal, state, and local agencies, universities, foundations, and private and nonprofit organizations have leveraged more than \$185 million towards Baltimore's cleanup and redevelopment projects.

A former distribution center is on its way to becoming 1.3 million square feet of office and technology space that will house at least 3,500 employees. Support for this \$100 million project has come from EPA Showcase Community staff, who helped procure \$9 million in HUD loans and grants.

Harbor). Following purchase by a developer and completion of the state's VCP, Baltimore Brownfields Assessment Pilot staff assisted the developer in applying for and receiving \$10 million in city- and state-funded infrastructure improvements, as well as brownfields tax credits. Having preserved the historic facades of the original complex, this site is now home to an office complex that houses 1,525 workers, with the capacity for 175 more.

In the southwest area of the city, a former Montgomery Wards distribution center is on its way to becoming 1.3 million square feet of office and technology space that will house at least 3,500 employees. Support for this \$100 million redevelopment project has come from Brownfields

Assessment Pilot and Showcase Community staff, who helped procure a \$1 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grant and an \$8 million HUD Section 108 loan. This project is located in an economically distressed part of the city, and it is hoped that its success will serve as a catalyst for revitalizing the area. The Maryland Department of the Environment became the new building's first tenant during the spring of 2002. The developer is also working with the city government to establish a First Source Hiring program to employ residents of the surrounding federal Empowerment Zone. Partnerships with the city's Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Program and the Baltimore Brownfields Worker Training Program will provide additional opportunities for area residents.

Officials at the Baltimore National Aquarium, located at the Inner Harbor, are also working with the Brownfields Showcase Community team to create the federal, state, and local partnerships needed to develop a 60,000- to 80,000-square-foot Center for Aquatic Life and Conservation. In addition to providing care for marine wildlife, Aquarium officials plan to use the center to teach visitors about environmental stewardship by showing them the connections between themselves and the natural world around them. The center will also be a training ground for inner city universities to develop curricula and train students in marine biology, aquaculture, marine biotechnology, and marine health. Aquarium officials have also formed a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to create new wetlands and habitat areas along the harbor. The Aquarium will use these new natural areas to teach citizens and organizations about the importance of environmental preservation.

An ambitious redevelopment plan is also taking hold in the Carroll-Camden Industrial Park, located just south and west of the city's Camden Yards sports complex. Using a three-pronged strategy of selective public acquisition, private development incentives, and infrastructure improvements, this former manufacturing center will be transformed into a modern business park for offices, technology businesses, and traditional industry. EPA Region 3 has provided the Maryland Department of the Environment with more than \$400,000 to conduct Targeted Brownfields Assessments (TBAs) in the heavily industrialized and underutilized Carroll-Camden area. The city is applying to HUD to use a previously obtained \$6 million HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative Section 108 loan to assist with site acquisition along the Warner Street corridor.

Other brownfields restoration projects assisted by Baltimore's Showcase Community include restoration of a 20-acre former public housing site, and redevelopment of the 30-acre Port Liberty site into a \$16 million auto import terminal and cable distribution facility that will create 375 jobs. Showcase Community staff are also working with local associations, such as Revitalizing Baltimore and the Parks & People Foundation, to formulate a strategy for reinvestment and to identify potential federal, state, and other partner organizations to help restore these valuable assets.

CONTACTS:

For more information on EPA's Showcase Communities, contact Tony Raia of OSWER's Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment at (202) 566-2758

Or visit EPA's Brownfields Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>