

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



United States
Environmental
Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

Solid Waste
and Emergency
Response (5101)

EPA 500-F-98-xxx
May 1998



From Slag to Riches

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Brownfields Success Stories

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 120 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment 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.

More than 240 acres of land considered unusable for decades has re-emerged as valuable residential property for the City of Pittsburgh, thanks, in part, to an EPA Brownfields Pilot that provided \$200,000 to Pittsburgh's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). Those funds allowed the URA to fully assess a long-neglected 238-acre tract known as Nine-Mile Run, along with a second site, the 6.7-acre former Lectromelt facility. Nine Mile Run was formerly a dumping area for industrial slag, an industrial waste product of steel processing, while the Lectromelt facility is



Slag Piles Tower Over Nearby Houses at the Nine Mile Run Site

a former electroplating plant located along the Allegheny River.



The Abandoned Lectromelt Electroplating Plant

The URA acquired Nine Mile Run in late 1995. Public investment in infrastructure improvements for this site, including roads and sewage facilities, is estimated at approximately \$30–50 million. \$6.1 million of these funds has been secured, and \$600,000 has been spent on pre-development costs. Ground work and grading activities will begin after the site receives State environmental clearance

certification in Spring, 1998. Infrastructure improvements and initial residential construction will begin in Summer, 1999. Total private investment is expected to exceed \$200 million, which will be used to develop 713 new housing units, approximately 100,000 square feet of new neighborhood commercial retail space, and 80 acres of park land. By the project's completion, more than \$240 million of new housing stock, \$10 million in new retail construction, and 1,680 temporary and permanent jobs are anticipated.

Since only half of Pittsburgh's EPA Brownfields Pilot funding was needed to evaluate the Nine Mile Run site, the remainder went toward assessment of the former Lectromelt property. Purchased by the URA in 1994, the Lectromelt site has garnered interest from the Rubinoff Company, a developer who has worked throughout the Pittsburgh region. The Pittsburgh Pilot leveraged \$1 million in assessment and cleanup funds for the project from

the State Enterprise Zone (EZ) and Pennsylvania's Industrial Site Reuse Program (ISRP). EZ funds were used for demolition and clearance activities, while ISRP funding was used for environmental cleanup. Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development granted the URA \$500,000 for environmental cleanup activities at the Lectromelt site. The site's cleanup was completed in 1997. Upon redevelopment, a planned 100,000 square-foot structure will serve light industrial and manufacturing purposes. Redevelopment of the Lectromelt site will create 200 full-time jobs and leverage an estimated \$8.0 million in investments from private developers.

Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program legislation, passed in 1995, is a primary reason for the success at the Lectromelt site. Under prior regulations, the entire property would had to have been cleaned up to pristine condition, at a cost of several million dollars. Under the new regulations, those costs were reduced to \$560,000, with 75

JUST THE FACTS

- Brownfields Pilot funds allowed the city to assess a long-neglected 238-acre tract known as Nine-Mile Run, along with a second site, the 6.7-acre former Lectromelt facility.
- Public investment in infrastructure improvements for the Nine-Mile Run site is estimated at approximately \$30–50 million. Private investment is expected to exceed \$200 million, which will be used to develop 713 new housing units, approximately 100,000 square feet of new neighborhood commercial retail space, and 80 acres of park land.
- Redevelopment of the Lectromelt site will create 200 full-time jobs and leverage an estimated \$8.0 million in investments from private developers.

percent of these costs financed through State assistance.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

In order to sustain the Brownfields Pilot redevelopment effort, the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County have committed to creating and capitalizing a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for brownfields site cleanup and redevelopment. The Mon Valley

Infrastructure and Development Fund will be capitalized initially at \$10 million. The sources which comprise the Mon Valley Fund are: \$2.5 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; \$3.5 million from the Allegheny County Economic Development Fund (local sources); \$2.5 million from the City of Pittsburgh Development Fund; \$1.5 million from a City of Pittsburgh CDBG fund; \$650,000 in City of Pittsburgh Capital funds; and the \$350,000 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund. Pittsburgh is one of only 24 Pilots to receive this EPA RLF grant. Although no specific sites have yet been selected, the RLF funds will be used within Pittsburgh's Federal Empowerment Zone or a State Enterprise Community.