

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Land & Community Revitalization

BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

FORMER MODERN ELECTROPLATING FACILITY

BOSTON, MA



PROPERTY DETAILS	Address:	2430 Washington St., Boston, MA
	Size:	2.5 acres
	Former Use:	Electroplating facility
	Contaminants:	Heavy metals, asbestos-containing material, trichloroethylene (TCE)
	Current Use:	Police station and developable parcel
	Owner:	City of Boston
PARTNERS	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), City of Boston, Dudley Vision Advisory Task Force, Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee, Dudley Square Main Streets	

FUNDING DETAILS	EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants:	\$78,311	
	EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant:	\$200,000	
	Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) Grant:		\$1,400,000
	Section 108 Loan:	\$5,050,000	
	CDBG Funds:	\$70,000	
	City Capital Budget:	\$15,460,000	
	City Operating Budget:	\$50,000	
	HIGHLIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaned up one of the most contaminated sites in the City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development inventory. • Redevelopment represents renewed investment and hope for low income minority community. 	

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Motivation for Redevelopment: Located in Dudley Square, the 2.5-acre Modern Electroplating site is in the heart of Roxbury, a historic neighborhood of Boston. For the first half of the 20th century, Dudley Square was a vibrant commercial hub. The area, a center for African American culture in Boston, began to decline in the 1960s. Years of economic hardship fueled rampant arson, property abandonment, and violent crime, creating a desolate inner city landscape.

At the end of the 20th century, the abandoned Modern Electroplating site, with its deteriorated building and extensive contamination, personified disinvestment in the Dudley Square community. The site, one of the most contaminated and high-profile brownfields in Boston, also highlighted environmental justice issues in the area, which has an almost exclusively minority population and higher rates of poverty and unemployment than the city and state. Revitalizing Dudley Square has been a priority for Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, who launched the Dudley Square Vision Project, a comprehensive redevelopment plan, in 2007. Cleaning up the blighted Modern Electroplating site and redeveloping it as a new police station is a centerpiece of this plan and signifies renewed investment and hope for the community.

Property History: The Modern Electroplating Company opened in 1955 and operated as an electroplating, anodizing, enameling, spray painting, and silk screening business for nearly 40 years. These activities generated thousands of pounds of chemical waste that were poorly managed and improperly stored. In 1994 the facility was shut down for violation of environmental regulations. When the owner abandoned the facility in 1995, EPA and MassDEP conducted an emergency response action, removing over 800,000 pounds of hazardous materials to avoid imminent hazard. Using EPA funds, Phase I

and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) were conducted soon after. The assessments identified significant contamination; heavy metals and organic solvents had polluted the soil and groundwater and affected indoor air quality in surrounding buildings through vapor intrusion.

In 1999, the City assumed ownership of the site through a tax foreclosure. Using EPA Brownfields Assessment grants, the City conducted further site investigations. Given the high cleanup costs, private redevelopment was unlikely and in 2008 the City moved forward with site cleanup and redevelopment, aided by an EPA Brownfields grant and other financing.

Project Results: After years of environmental investigation and remediation, a new police station now stands on the Modern Electroplating site. The LEED Silver facility was designed by an award-winning architecture firm, and the design, in sharp contrast to the building it replaces, symbolizes openness and civic engagement. The remainder of the Modern Electroplating site is a large developable parcel, which is slated to become a mixed-use commercial and retail development. The remediation and redevelopment of the Modern Electroplating site represents a renewed commitment from the City to the Dudley Square community and should help catalyze economic growth in the area.

TIMELINE	
1994	Modern Electroplating shut down
1995	Emergency response action
1996	Phase I ESA completed
1997	Phase II ESA completed
1999	City forecloses on property
2001-2006	Supplemental site investigation
2008	Cleanup and construction begins
July 2011	New police station opens