

TLG CASE STUDY APPLICATION

Presentation Category: Strategic Alliances
Title of Presentation: Northwest Fire Station Brownfields Redevelopment
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NORTHWEST FIRE STATION BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

CITY OF CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

Submitted to:

The Innovation Groups (IG)
Transforming Local
Government (TLG) Conference

Submitted By:

The City of Clearwater
Economic Development &
Housing Department



BLIGHT TO RIGHT

“From Blight to Right” Northwest Fire Station Brownfields Redevelopment

The City of Clearwater needed to reduce fire response times in the northwest area of the City. Land was scarce because the area was heavily developed with residential and industrial uses. Instead of using condemnation to acquire land, the City and TBE took a proactive approach focusing on redevelopment of an old 4.2 acre contaminated junkyard.



Former Junkyard

The core team obtained a \$400,000 EPA Brownfield grant to partially pay for the remediation. The project could not wait on a linear approach to environmental assessment, remediation and design. Instead, environmental tasks were undertaken simultaneously with site design, saving time and allowing Engineers to integrate the environmental and site design challenges.

The project team worked closely with the public, holding community workshops throughout the process. Regulators worked side by side with the Core team to facilitate approval of a combined stormwater and environmental permit.



Contaminated Site

The core team used several innovative techniques to overcome environmental challenges. Over two hundred tons of contaminated soil was removed from “hot-spots.” The stormwater system was designed around the remaining contamination to hydraulically hinder migration of groundwater contamination to abutting residential and environmental areas. Engineered fill, vapor barriers and chemical-resistant pipe gaskets were designed to prevent potential contaminant exposures.

Integrated environmental, brownfields, and site design services resulted in redevelopment of this blighted site to a functioning fire station, with the remaining portion of the site slated as a staging area for restoration of an abutting environmentally sensitive creek and future community park. This project is a model for Clearwater’s Brownfield Redevelopment, which achieved the primary goals of environmental restoration, sustainable reuse, environmental justice and promotion of community Brownfield redevelopment.



Redevelopment

COMPONENTS OF THE PRESENTATION

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY

How did you unleash or encourage creativity in order to generate solutions? What ideas or opportunities emerged during your creative process? How did your program/concept stretch or improve the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations?

Aware of the environmental challenges faced by this project, core team members implemented several innovative techniques that ultimately provided a model for Brownfields Redevelopment which achieved the primary goals of environmental restoration, sustainable reuse, environmental justice and promotion of community Brownfield redevelopment.



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

What quality management principles, tools, and procedures were applied to your service delivery?

The core team provided environmental/civil engineering services including extensive knowledge in brownfields redevelopment experience for municipal clients. Leading the core team, the City was able to keep members on task. Strong project management skills were essential for completing the technical aspects of this project on task. The consultant worked as adjunct staff to the City of Clearwater ensuring that all project objectives were achieved and that quality standards were met and project schedules were maintained.



VALUE PROPOSITION

What customer needs and expectations were identified and fulfilled? How did your initiative improve access to your government? How was the health of your community improved as a result?

The City of Clearwater needed to reduce fire response times in the northwest area of the City. The challenge was to find a suitable project site and fast-track its development. The City already owned a property in the neighborhood, but it was too small to support the new fire station. However, the adjacent property, could offer a solution. It was an eyesore, a former auto salvage yard, posing a dual challenge of clean up and construction. Instead of using condemnation to acquire land, the City's public works administration stormwater division took a proactive approach focusing on redevelopment with the purchase of an old 4.2 acre contaminated junkyard site in September 2002. Securing a \$400,000 EPA Brownfields grant helped to partially pay for the remediation. Working on environmental tasks simultaneously, saved time and allowed Engineers to integrate the environmental and site design challenge. Two hundred and ten tons of contaminated earth had been removed and the citizens of North Greenwood could sleep a little easier, knowing that their neighborhood was protected.

BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

How did you remove the barriers to innovation? If you incorporated critical thinking and problem solving techniques, explain your execution process. If your project involved teams, describe the level of autonomy, i.e. setting goals, HR function, budget authority, etc. What technological barriers did you overcome?

The project was hampered by setbacks: contamination findings, gas price increases and the concrete scarceness hampered our aggressive schedule. The project team, expedited the Department of Environmental Protection paperwork, provided alternative concrete mixes and designed acceptable piping solutions for the stormwater collection system. Issues and concerns were addressed by holding community workshops throughout the process. Regulators worked side by side with the Project Team to facilitate approval of a combined stormwater and environmental permit.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE

What philosophy, literature, or body of research influenced your service delivery? How is it evident in your program/concept?

By working with a brownfields specialist, the City of Clearwater was able to utilize Brownfields funding towards a blighted area where real environmental issues had resulted in an under utilized property. Applying best management objectives; The City was successful in transforming an environmentally impaired and stigmatized property into a viable Fire Station.

RESULTS/REAL WORLD ADVICE

If performance measures were used, indicate what they were within the category of qualitative, quantitative, efficiency, effectiveness, or workload statistics. What final lessons learned could you share with other local governments?

On August 25, 2004, the \$3 million dollar City of Clearwater Northwest Fire and Rescue Station opened its doors adding nine new employees to this location. The Brownfields area is now considered an Enterprise Zone and the North Greenwood residents have a neighborhood fire station. The parcel has been reclaimed, replacing the blight. The direct benefits include fire and rescue response, area flooding abatement and higher property values and an increased responsiveness for the Clearwater Fire and Rescue Department.



There are a number of lessons learned from this project. Clear communication with team members and government agencies, technical ability, innovative approaches to difficult tasks and dedication to the project are crucial. Great care in assembling a team is imperative to ensure that all objectives of the project are met. This includes professional synergy and familiarity with the engineering consultant.