



Brownfield Redevelopment Newsletter

Phase I Environmental Site Assessments Initiated for Grant

Special points of interest:

- **Initiated Phase I ESAs**
- **O'Neill Manufacturing Assessment**
- **Northwest Georgia Housing Authority — A Working Partnership**

The City of Rome recently conducted Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) on several properties. A Phase I ESA is a document review and site inspection that reveals the historical uses of a property and with it, possible environmental problems. If environmental concerns are found, environmental samples of soil, sediment, ground water, or surface water may be recommended.



This process typically occurs prior to the transaction of a property and is known as “Due Diligence.” The properties assessed included the following:

- Former Midas Auto Repair
- Former Rome Paper Company
- Former O'Neill Manufacturing
- Former Celanese Village Landfill
- Poteete's Starter/Generator Repair
- Curtis Packing Property

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The Former Midas Auto Repair property, located on Turner McCall Boulevard, was selected to facilitate a potential sale of the property. Based on the historical operations at the property, soil and ground water samples were recommended for the site. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently reviewing the work plan for sampling activities and Phase II assessment activities should begin this Spring.

The Former O'Neill Manufacturing property was selected because it is a blight to the local community. For additional information on the Phase I ESA and additional work planned at the Former O'Neill Manufacturing facility, see Page 2.

Poteete's property and the Former Rome Paper Company property, both in East Rome, were selected based on interest by the Northwest Georgia Housing Authority (NWGHA). They are discussed further on Page 2.

The Former Celanese Village Landfill was selected to better understand its history and to locate and compile all historical data previously collected at the site.



Recently assessed Brownfield Property located in the City of Rome.

“ previously collected data was compared with current regulatory screening criteria to determine what additional assessment may be required to establish remedial goals for the site.”



Former O’Neill Manufacturing Environmental Assessment

The Former O’Neill Manufacturing property is located about one mile northeast of downtown Rome. The abandoned 9.9-acre industrial property was formerly utilized for wood treating, manufacturing of architectural wood products, and manufacturing of concrete blocks.

Previous environmental assessments have been conducted at the site and have identified contamination in soil and ground water by the wood preservative pentachlorophenol (PCP), a preservative used to treat wood, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, and pesticides. Previously collected data is being compared with cur-

rent regulatory screening criteria to determine what additional assessment may be needed before cleanup plans can be set. The City will work with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) in order to prepare an appropriate sampling plan.

In addition, several of the buildings located at the property are structurally unsound and plans to demolish several buildings are under way.



Northwest Georgia Housing Authority and The City of Rome A Working Partnership

The Northwest Georgia Housing Authority in partnership with the City of Rome continues to advance the improvement of the East Rome neighborhood and the goals of the East Rome Redevelopment Plan with the submission of a \$16.8M Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOPE VI grant request late last year. The grant application targets the redevelopment of Altoview Terrace which is the second-oldest public housing complex in Rome. The grant request is currently being evaluated by HUD staff in Washington, DC; winners of this highly competitive grant opportunity will likely be announced this spring.

HOPE VI is one of the most powerful and effective neighborhood revitalization and affordable housing tools available to housing authorities and municipalities. Launched in 1992, the HOPE VI program strives to correct both the physical obsolescence of public housing and its blighting effects on its surroundings. Typically, a HOPE VI revitalization will center on a public housing property that is severely distressed and outdated in design and construction. The property is re-planned and redeveloped as a mixed-income community that incorporates design elements of traditional neighborhoods – walkable streets; safe and recogniz-

A Working Partnership Continued

able public spaces; critical amenities such as schools, resource centers, and recreation facilities; and a mix of housing types reflective of local building traditions.

Mixed-Income and Leveraging

The notion of mixed-income is key, for no HOPE VI project is built back as purely public housing. Instead, the redevelopment is carefully designed to mix subsidized public housing and workforce / affordable housing with conventional market-rate units. HOPE VI projects also encourage homeownership, with a certain percentage of the total units offered for sale to qualified buyers including public housing residents that have the will to own a home and the commitment to fulfill their mortgage agreements.

Another essential HOPE VI concept is leverage. Since the goal is not to reduce the number of public housing units but instead de-concentrate poverty and improve living conditions, the best HOPE VI revitalization plans include new mixed-income housing on additional vacant or blighted sites near the base property. Density is carefully controlled so that the new developments do not overpower their surroundings, but instead stabilizes and strengthens them. In this way the HOPE VI program becomes a catalyst for greater neighborhood improvement. Leverage is also important to winning a grant, because HOPE VI relies on strong local partners to invest in the redevelopment. HUD will only fund public housing demolition and construction, and so successful HOPE VI revitalizations always have financial commitments by market-rate or affordable housing developers, local lenders, institutions like schools and community colleges, and the public sector.

Beyond Altoview Terrace

While the East Rome HOPE VI revitalization originates with the redevelopment of Altoview Terrace, the program extends to sites between the target property and the Norfolk Southern railroad. The 95 distressed units at Altoview Terrace would be replaced by 282 new mixed-income units, 14 of which would be made available for homeownership. The diverse housing program strengthens the 12th Street and Maple Avenue corridors and includes single-family homes, duplexes and townhouses, walk-up apartments, and a senior living center. The redevelopment also features a Montessori-based Early Childhood Education Center and additional preschool facilities at Southeast Elementary; improvements to Banty Jones Park; new sidewalks and streetscaping along 12th Street; and landscape upgrades to John Graham Apartments.

In the spirit of increased collaboration between HUD, EPA, and USDOT, several of the HOPE VI sites are being reviewed for their environmental profiles under the city's Brownfield assessment grant. The Phase I assessments being conducted on sites either near the railroad or with prior manufacturing facilities will move the vision for a revitalized East Rome closer to reality. It also provides a tangible example of the benefits the brownfield process can have on the future of other neighborhoods and key properties.



Brownfield Property assessed for potential redevelopment by the NWGHA

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What is a Brownfield?

A Brownfield is a property that is abandoned, idle, or underused because of concerns about contamination. Sometimes these concerns are based on real environmental hazards, but sometimes the perception of environmental contamination can make it hard to redevelop a property even when there is little or no actual contamination.

How to Participate

Residents, property owners, prospective developers, and other stakeholders are invited to become active participants in the City's Brownfield Assessment Program. As the grant progresses, we will host public meetings and visit regularly scheduled community meetings. If you have a community group which would like to hear more about the City's Brownfield program, we would be happy to do a presentation at your meeting.

For further information, to schedule a presenter at a community meeting, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list please contact Eric Lindberg or visit the City's website at www.southeastbrownfields.com/romea.

Eric H. Lindberg
Director, Rome-Floyd
County Environmental Services
PO Box 1433
Rome, GA 30162-1433
Phone: 706-236-4674
Fax: 706-236-4548
Email: elindberg@romea.us

**Visit the City's website at
www.southeastbrownfields.com/romea**



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