Keeping up with the Evolution of Brownfields Redevelopment

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‘As brownfields advocates and consultants we have focused on protecting public health and the environment as we beat blight, cleanup properties and strengthen local economies. Increasingly, we turn our attention to creating healthier and livable communities. It is essential that we begin to look at the ways the community engagement, assessment, and brownfields cleanup process can improve sustainability, health, environmental justice, preparedness and resilience.’

-brownfields conference 2015 materials
Keeping up with publicly funded special projects and sustainably designed end-uses.
- Construction of the project funded by the municipal, MAPS 3 penny sales tax for capital improvement projects that create a better quality of life for OKC residents ($132M).

- Planned 70-acre Urban Park connecting the urban core of OKC to the Oklahoma River.

- Construction of the 40-acre Upper Park will be completed in 2018. Lower park will be completed in 2021.
- Economically depressed area, predominantly minority.
- Few residential parcels, homeless population.
- Blighted, light industrial and commercial properties.
• OKC Brownfields Program funded Phase I ESA’s as properties were acquired.

• The due diligence for 40-acre Upper Park identified numerous recognized environmental conditions.

• As an acquisition strategy, the City did not negotiate property values based on potential environmental concerns.

• $350,000 site-specific brownfields assessment grant funded additional Phase I ESA’s and Comprehensive Phase II ESA.
Environmental Assessment Goals

- “Funnel-style” Characterization Approach- Address all potential COC initially, reduce COC testing requirements during parcel-specific assessment as feasible.

- Early coordination with regulatory agencies.

- Assessment designed to address the potential for hazardous waste concerns –RCRA 8 Metals.

- Construct a data set that provides a foundation for overall area risk assessment and regulatory compliance.

- Obtain comprehensive and workable data set for land clearance specifications.

- Collect a sufficient amount of subsurface data to facilitate specifications that reduce overall land clearing costs.
- Step 1 Phase II ESA

-XRF Screening Survey of near-surface soil for metals.

-28 soil borings and groundwater samples to assess near-surface, vadose zone soil and groundwater. Installation of 13 small diameter monitoring wells.

- Step 2 Phase II ESA

-45 soil borings to assess COC in near-surface and vadose zone.

-23 direct-push borings to assess COC in groundwater. 13 small-diameter monitoring wells for future sample collection and to monitor groundwater conditions.

-Collection of near-surface soil samples for analysis of total lead and chromium concentrations.
Keeping Up…

- Soils main concern. Hot spots of regulatory exceedances for metals (lead), volatiles and petroleum constituents (groundwater data indicated low level solvent plumes across the site).

- Design, community engagement and funding discussions were concurrent with environmental assessment. Communication was key.

- Applied for funding at every opportunity, emphasizing brownfields to greenfield and restored natural functions! Received $600,000 (in 3 applications) brownfields cleanup grant.

- Innovative mitigation measures. Cleanup dollars will help pay for a liner in the water feature.
downtown airpark

Keeping up with changing markets, interim uses and sustainably designed end-uses.
- 80 acres purchased by Humphreys Company.

- Developer enrolled site in the ODEQ Brownfields Program. Requested brownfields funding assistance from the City.

- *Original* Plan included mixed-use redevelopment with hotel anchors, residential, commercial, the ferris wheel and a restored connection to the Oklahoma River.
- Operated as a small commercial airfield that provided fueling, repair and painting operations from 1957 until 2004.

- Multiple and sporadic assessments completed and paid for by developer. Estimated $1M remedial action.

- Some tank removal; hangar facilities previously decommissioned.

- Known TCE impacts to soil and groundwater, salvage yard and fueling operations.
- Source area was unknown, due to complicated geology.
- Quick and inexpensive soil gas investigation helped to locate source area.
- Investigation indicated COC levels were lowering and not migrating off-site. Re-sampled after 6 months and levels were below regulatory thresholds.
- Brownfields certificate was issued with deed restrictions for drinking water; no restrictions for development.
downtown airpark

Keeping Up...

- Brownfields certificate was issued with deed restrictions for drinking water; no restrictions for development.
- Prepare for interim uses!!!!!!!
- Design the assessment to accommodate flexibility in end uses and sustainable or low impact development.
- New name and new development concept. Newly expanded project area to include adjacent property. How will the assessment plug-in?
keeping up...

- **BUILD CAPACITY; SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES IN REDEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT/CLEANUP**

- **CHANGING MARKETS; PREPARE FOR BOTH THE NEAR- AND LONGTERM** - Developing flexible longer-term strategies with multiple options

- **PROMOTE INTERIM USES FOR A SITE BEFORE A PERMANENT USE** - Interim uses can provide a development resolution for challenging sites.

- **BE PREPARED TO ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY**
QUESTIONS?