

The Ross County Board of Commissioners is applying for a grant from the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund for the purpose of remediating the environmental conditions at the Former CSX Rail Depot property located at East Main Street, Chillicothe, Ohio. The application is available for review at the Chillicothe and Ross County Library, located at 140 South Paint Street; Chillicothe, Ohio until March 14. A public meeting to discuss and solicit comments regarding the grant application will be held on March 13 at the City Transit Center Conference Room located at 575 East 7th Street at 5:30 PM. Any questions may be referred to the Ross County Board of Commissioners at 740-702-3085.



Attachment 1
Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund Application Summary
Former CSX Rail Depot; East Main Street; Chillicothe, Ohio



1. Goal of the Brownfield project.

The Ross County Board of Commissioners and its Development Partner, Ralph I. Cooper, are pleased to submit this application to the Clean Ohio Council and to the State of Ohio Department of Development for a Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) grant for the purpose of remediating the environmental conditions at the former CSX Rail Depot located in the 400 block of East Main Street in Chillicothe, Ohio 45601 (hereafter referred to as the subject property).

In 2008, the City of Chillicothe was awarded a U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant. The City quickly began an area-wide assessment and inventory of brownfields in the City for evaluation and review. The results were astonishing. Hundreds of sites were identified that are presently brownfields, or have a potential to become brownfields in the future. The properties include abandoned factories and known disposal sites where process wastes were dumped by businesses no longer in operation. Vacant properties reduce property values and place a strain on police and fire resources. They can also harbor unlawful activities, as was demonstrated in one incident when an attacker attempted to drag a school girl into an abandoned chemical factory.

The subject property, with its boarded and vacant building, was identified as one of the brownfields. **Nearly 12 acres in size, the subject property is prominently located in eastern Chillicothe with significant frontage along Main Street.** Seen while crossing the Main Street Bridge, the subject property is within easy access to U.S Route 50, State Route 104 and CSX and Norfolk Southern rail lines. Its size and location make the subject property a desirable property for redevelopment. Such a large well sited parcel of ready to develop land is rarely found within the city limits of Chillicothe.



Despite its appeal, the possibility of contamination from historical use of the property as a rail yard stalled plans. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted at the subject property using funds from the U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant to evaluate the absence or presence of contamination. The assessment found that on-site petroleum use, a former machine shop, railroad maintenance activities and an off-site dry cleaning facility may have led to contamination of soil and groundwater beneath the subject property. A subsequent Phase II screening investigation, conducted utilizing U.S. EPA funds, revealed the presence of contamination, threatening the livelihood of the community. The contamination was widespread and additional funds were needed to properly delineate the extent of contamination.

A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was performed using funds obtained through the Clean Ohio Assistance Fund program. Analytical results showed extensive soil and groundwater contamination. It became apparent that remediation of the subject property was the only option to return the property to productive use.

As such, the goal of the Brownfield project is to utilize a \$1,142,231 CORF grant to conduct cleanup activities which will allow for restoration of the subject property, eliminate the threat to human health and the environment and provide employment opportunities and tax revenue to the citizens of the Chillicothe and Ross County.

Restoration and redevelopment of the subject property will have a positive impact on the surrounding community. No longer will the subject property be plagued with contamination and vandalism. The subject property will instead be home to lively retail venues made possible by a change in zoning designation completed in 2009. It was realized by the Development Partner that by changing the property's zoning from industrial to commercial/retail, the development options would be immeasurable, allowing the subject property to serve multiple purposes. In fact, the Development Partner has been approached by parties interested in redeveloping portions of the property for restaurants, charitable organizations and large retail and self-storage facilities. All or a combination of these end users could take place simultaneously at the subject property, if it is remediated.

The redevelopment of the subject property would provide much needed jobs for an impoverished community and drive related investment into the area. Approximately 21.4% of the residents in this census tract live below the poverty line and 9.8% are unemployed. Significant support has also been expressed for this project and for the creation of much needed employment and job training opportunities for Ohio University of Chillicothe students. With many students maintaining full or part-time jobs to cover expenses and practice their skills while enrolled at the Ohio University of Chillicothe, redevelopment of the subject property will bring employment to a location where students can easily commute to the campus and allow them to see brownfield redevelopment firsthand.

However, due to the lingering contamination, these benefits cannot be realized without first obtaining the CORF grant monies. Since 2009, it has required funding from U.S. Brownfield Assessment and Clean Ohio Assistance Fund grants to complete site assessments and subsurface sampling at the subject property. Without the help of CORF, the environmental conditions at the subject property will be unaddressed as the possibility of receiving additional funds from the U.S. Brownfield and Clean Ohio Assistance Fund programs are near impossible and the Development Partner is unable to fund remedial costs. Furthermore, businesses will not locate at contaminated properties, nor will banks make the necessary loans required for building improvements. Families will be left to struggle financially as no new jobs will be created.

Obtaining the CORF grant will allow for restoration of the subject property, unlocking its potential to improve the County's economy and the general welfare of the community by removing the stigma of contamination associated with its historical uses. The grant will help to improve the standard of living and quality of life of many disadvantaged citizens through job opportunities; neighborhood reinvestment that

will prompt improved living conditions, safety and property values; and new venues for shopping and entertainment. Moreover, because the private sector cannot make this project financially viable unless the cost of the cleanup is supplemented by the grant, the future of this property and its great potential is contingent upon the receipt of CORF funds.

The Development Partner acquired the subject property in 2006 and did not contribute to the on-site contamination. Funding from the U.S. EPA in the amount of \$71,737 assisted in the success of the project. A Phase I assessment, a sampling and analysis plan and a Limited Phase II subsurface investigation were performed using funds from a U.S. EPA Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant. A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was also conducted in 2011 utilizing a Clean Ohio Assistance Fund grant of \$242,013. Additional funding for the project comes from the Norfolk Southern Railroad who is providing \$309,340 match for the CORF grant.

2. History of the project property.

The property was used as a rail depot from before 1884 until sometime after 1976. Between 1976 and 1994, depot activity diminished and the passenger depot was primarily used as office space and for the refinishing of antiques. The passenger depot building is still present on the subject property, although boarded and vacant. The vacant land has also been used agriculturally for the production of hay by the current owner. Freight and livestock depot facilities have been removed, as have other historical facilities including a gas station, carpenter shop, machine shop, tin shop, paint and pipe shop, feed warehouse, stock pen, beer vault, offices and lumber storage facilities.



3. Environmental Improvements and Benefits

Soil and groundwater below the subject property were sampled in 2009 and 2011 as part of Phase II Property Assessment activities. Based on the findings and conclusions of those assessment activities, several areas of the subject property require remediation.

Elevated levels of arsenic in soils were detected site wide at concentrations as high as 433 ppm (commercial/industrial standard for arsenic is 83 ppm). Cleanup activities proposed for the project include selective removal of soils containing elevated arsenic concentrations.

Concentrations of common solvents such as tetrachloroethene and carbon tetrachloride were detected in soil gas at the subject property and are most likely associated with contaminated groundwater from a dry cleaner. Additionally, petroleum impacted soils at the subject property have the potential to off-gas contaminants at levels exceeding indoor air risk goals. To prevent soil gas vapors

from entering buildings, contaminated soils will be removed and inhabited buildings will be required to have vapor barrier systems.

A groundwater contamination plume of tetrachloroethene is present through the center of the property from north to the south. Remedial activities will consist of a pump and treat system to prevent contaminants from leaving the property in excess of potable use standards, as well as a groundwater use restriction to prevent unsafe use of groundwater on the subject property.

Plumes of free product (petroleum) and 2-methylnaphtalene have been identified in the southeastern and southwestern areas of the subject property. Cleanup activities proposed for the project include skimming free product from groundwater wells, monitoring of the plume and removing contaminated soils that are the source of contamination.

Soils in the western and southeastern areas of the subject property were found to be contaminated with petroleum compounds. These soils will be excavated and disposed off-site.

Environmental benefits of the cleanup will include reducing the threat to human health and the environment by cleaning up contaminants above applicable standards. Additional environmental benefits will be removing the stigma of contamination and returning the site to productive use.

4. Project's Readiness to Proceed if Funded

Other than securing the grant, there are no impediments or conditions to be satisfied for this project to proceed. No property acquisition activities will need to take place, the Development Partner already has ownership and control of the subject property. There are no zoning issues to resolve as the Development Partner has changed the zoning designation from industrial to commercial/retail to facilitate a range of development options. With infrastructure already in place, the property is well suited for redevelopment.

The Development Partner has been preparing for the redevelopment of the subject property for several years. Environmental site assessments and sampling investigations were conducted in 2009 and throughout 2011 to evaluate the subsurface conditions at the subject property. With soil and groundwater sampling complete, the remedial activities necessary for the subject property have been identified.

The redevelopment of the subject property has the support and commitment of the Ross County Board of Commissioners and the City of Chillicothe. The surrounding community also has plenty of interest in seeing the completion of the remedial and redevelopment project. Much needed jobs will help lift financial hardships faced by local college students and disadvantaged citizens. With the subject property's optimal size and location and the commitment of the Ross County Board of Commissioners and its Development Partner, this redevelopment project will benefit the surrounding community for many years to come.