

Brownfields

Success Story

Former Refractory Site Transformed for Transloading

New Castle, Pennsylvania

In 2009, the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation (LCEDC) took a leap of faith and became the intrepid owner of a seven-acre manufacturing complex in the City of New Castle, PA. For more than a century, the property was the home of a long line of refractory businesses, each leaving their mark on Lawrence County's grand industrial past. The owner of the site donated the entire parcel, buildings included, to the LCEDC.

Without sufficient funding to redevelop the site at the time, the LCEDC watched as the property's seven buildings quickly fell into ruin as the result of damage by fire, water, and vandalism. It didn't take long for the property to become an eyesore in the heart of New Castle's industrial corridor.

Despite its appearance, however, the site had a lot to offer. A viable rail spur connected potential new users to two Class A carriers - CSX and Norfolk Southern. In addition, all public utilities served the property including access to 138,000 kV of power. With this in mind, the LCEDC set out to prepare the site for redevelopment.

Assessment Leverages Big Payoff

Before funding could be sought and before any site work could begin, the LCEDC had to overcome substantial environmental hurdles. At the time of donation, wells were in place around the property monitoring the condition of the area's groundwater. Due to the site's long industrial history, the wells indicated unacceptable levels of lead. Fortunately, the lead was contained and not affecting the nearby Shenango River. Of more concern was the presence of potentially hazardous material within the buildings that were to be demolished, including asbestos. The identity and extent of potentially hazardous materials within the buildings was now the main focus.



Refractory buildings before demolition. These buildings were once part of a thriving industrial zone in Lawrence County.

EPA Grant Recipient:

County of Lawrence

Sub Grantee:

Lawrence County Economic
Development Corporation

Grant Types:

Assessment

Former Uses:

Refractory Businesses

Current Use:

Transloading Station



A view of the property after demolition, cleaned up and ready for redevelopment.

“A strong partnership with the EPA has provided Lawrence County with the funds necessary to prepare brownfield sites to be returned to productive locations, creating jobs for local citizens.”

- Linda D. Nitch, Director of Economic Development

Lawrence County Regional Chamber and Economic Development Corporation

As part of the work conducted by the County of Lawrence’s Brownfields Assessment program, funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the LCEDC was able to determine the extent of the contamination, which was limited to the presence of Asbestos. They were then able to formulate a clean-up plan and incorporate the costs into the total redevelopment project budget.

Armed with this information, the LCEDC successfully requested \$1 million in grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development’s *PA First* program. After securing the grant and finishing the environmental review, the LCEDC was able to find a local company interested in helping to bring this former refractory site back to life. A local trucking company, McClymonds Supply & Transit, stepped up to the plate and provided the required local matching funds that were needed.

Moving Industry Forward Once Again

The McClymonds Supply and Transit project, completed in 2016, involved the development of a permanent transload station offering rail-to-truck service for dry bulk goods. Products include fractionation sand for the shale gas industry, limestone and other materials that are placed into specialized tractor-trailers or dump trucks for transport. McClymonds also erected a 30,000 s.f. building, installed hopper and conveyor systems, installed new rail siding, switches, and track and purchased new front loaders and trucks. The total project cost came in at over \$6.9 million and created 40 full-time jobs.

Without the help of the EPA Brownfields Assessment Program, it would be difficult to imagine how this abandoned property could have been successfully restored into a productive site in Lawrence County’s industrial zone.

For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact:

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