



Stamford, Connecticut: Running Whole Hog into Brownfields Cleanup

Stamford, CT

The South End community in Stamford, Connecticut is now enjoying the sound of successful redevelopment, through the patented sound of Harley-Davidson's engines. With the cooperation of the city, EPA, a private developer, and the community, a new Harley-Davidson dealership and maintenance facility replaced formerly abandoned lots in Stamford's industrial community. The project represents a \$1.8 million investment of the dealership owner's own funding for purchasing and redeveloping the site. This investment in one of Stamford's poorest communities will result in a cleaner environment, up to 10 new jobs for residents, and increased tax revenues for the city.

The cooperative effort that led to this success story illustrates why Stamford was selected as a Showcase Community in 1998. Showcase Communities are selected by the Brownfields National Partnership to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to restore these sites, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. Showcase Communities serve as models for broad-based cooperative efforts to support locally based initiatives. Showcases receive up to \$400,000 from EPA for both environmental assessments and to support the loan of a federal employee to the Showcase for up to three years. Showcase Communities receive additional financial and technical support from the Partnership's more than 20 federal partners, depending on the community need and program eligibility.

The road to success in the South End community began in early 1999, when Blues Brothers, LLC, the company that owns the Harley-Davidson franchise in Stamford, began looking for a place to relocate and expand its existing showroom. An abandoned .75-acre site a few blocks from the showroom looked promising, but the property's former uses as a machine shop and printing and engraving facility meant that environmental assessments were needed to determine whether any contamination existed. Blues Brothers funded a series of site assessments from March-June 1999 that revealed the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), lead, arsenic, chromium, and other metals. Although the company was only required to clean up the property to Connecticut's commercial standards, Blues Brothers was committed to working with the city's Brownfields Cleanup Revolving

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The abandoned former machine shop site, prior to redevelopment.

JUST THE FACTS:

- With assistance from a \$160,000 BCRLF loan, Blues Brothers removed 3,500 tons of soil from the site, at a total cost of \$395,000.
- Additional brownfields targeted by Stamford's Showcase Community include a 40-acre former utilities site that will be reused for offices, housing, and a new marina and ferry terminal; a 12-acre former fuel depot being converted into a \$50 million, 390,000-square-foot development of luxury rental units; and a new urban transitway that will accommodate future redevelopment and rehabilitation projects within the area.

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Loan Fund (BCRLF) award team (Stamford received a \$750,000 BCRLF grant from EPA to establish this fund) to clean up the site to residential standards, to allow for broader future reuse options for the property. With assistance from a \$160,000 BCRLF loan, Blues Brothers removed 3,500 tons of soil from the site, at a total cost of \$395,000 (\$45,000 of which was paid by the seller when contamination exceeded estimates). Using its own funds, the company also gutted an existing brick building on the site, maintaining its wide plank floors and overhead exposed beams, and installed new windows and lighting; the company also prepared another abandoned building on the property for redevelopment. These two buildings are now a service and a retail center.

Prior to these cleanup efforts, the president of Blues Brothers attended a neighborhood meeting to present his company's proposed cleanup and redevelopment plans to residents. The South End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Task Force had been meeting for three years to address the community's revitalization needs; Blues Brothers attended one of the meetings to demonstrate the company's commitment to the community and its revitalization efforts. The BCRLF Manager also attended this meeting, encouraging Blues Brothers to participate in EPA's loan program. Together, these groups worked tirelessly to secure funding, complete the cleanup, and open the new dealership for business, all with the full support of the community and the Task Force. The dealership officially opened in November 2000, and the BCRLF loan has already been repaid.

The retail and maintenance shops that have replaced the formerly blighted, vacant property represent a tremendous success for the impoverished community of South End. As the shiny chrome on a new Harley motorcycle attests, this project serves as a shining example of what can be accomplished when the community, a conscientious property owner, and local, state, and federal officials work together to create an outcome that benefits everyone.

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CONTACTS:

For more information on EPA's Showcase Communities, contact Tony Raia of OSWER's Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment at (202) 566-2758

Or visit EPA's Brownfields Web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>



The new Harley-Davidson showroom built on the former brownfield.