



Round 12 Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund Grant Redevelopment Ready Track Former Sandusky Cabinets Site



Attachment A1 Application Summary Document

1. Goals of the Brownfield Project

The City of Sandusky is requesting \$952,608.80 under the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) grant Redevelopment Ready track. Our grant request is to help fund cleanup, demolition and infrastructure improvement activities at a 1.7-acre property of prime real estate located at 513 East Washington Street, just two blocks from Sandusky Bay and on the edge of our downtown. From the late 1800s to 2002 the property was used for industrial purposes that included significant handling, use and storage of petroleum products and hazardous substances, most recently by the Sandusky Cabinets company. Today, a dilapidated building laden with asbestos remains where an important community asset once thrived. Soil and groundwater contamination at the site deter private reinvestment in the property and the surrounding mixed-use neighborhood continues to face declining property values as a result. This project will transform the former plant site into a rejuvenated corner property suitable for the mixed commercial-residential use that our community has envisioned. The City's own commitment to this site, which we acquired nearly three years ago, is underscored by the plans we have to upgrade the roadway that borders the site to the west. Warren Street is severely worn and flood-prone but, once the City's plans are complete, will be upgraded to a boulevard complemented by rain gardens to sustainably manage stormwater and a bike path and improved sidewalks to boost community connectivity and walkability and prompt reinvestment in the project property.

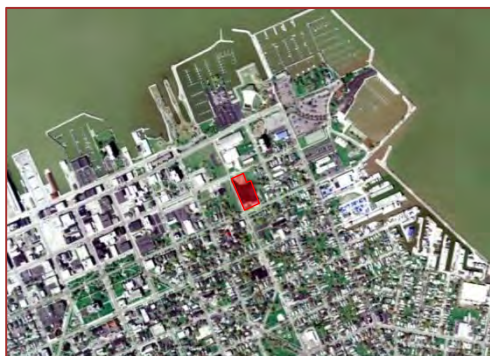


Located on Sandusky Bay, the City of Sandusky has over 22 miles of shoreline within the city limits. We are the governmental seat of Erie County and are noted for our beautifully landscaped parks, our historical architecture and the Sandusky Bay Pathway.

Yet the former Sandusky Cabinets property, blighted from its century old industrial history and situated in the heart of a mixed-use neighborhood, significantly detracts from our city's mission to achieve the highest quality of life for our community.



Economic Benefit: To travel through Sandusky's historic Kilbourne Plat where the site is located is to be jarred by this property's current condition. The looming boarded-up and condemned building starkly punctuates the otherwise pleasant commercial/residential neighborhood. Our residents tell us, and the Erie County Auditor's data and City of Sandusky Planning, Engineering and Development Department data confirm, that this former plant property is an increasing drag on our economy and diminishes the value of proximate properties. Property values within the one-block area surrounding the former plant property have not only diminished more than those in a comparable Wayne Street neighborhood, those proximate properties to the former Sandusky Cabinets plant have not had a single record of value increase over the past five years, like those in the comparable neighborhood. A successful CORF award will help us remove the current threats to





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environmental health and safety and will prompt new investment, new employment, and increased property values.

This corner property offers superb opportunities for community connectivity: in addition to its proximity to Sandusky Bay and the city's central business district, it is less than one-half mile from U.S. Route 6 and State Route 4, and three major employers for the county: the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Office of Wildlife Management, Adams Junior High School (a City of Sandusky school), and ODNR's Office of Coastal Management. Additionally, the main campus of the Firelands Regional Medical Center, which employs 1,374 area residents, is located within one mile of the project property.

According to Evans Paull, Director of Policy Analysis at the Northeast Midwest Institute, cleanup and redevelopment often leads to property value increases of five to 15 percent for properties that are up to 3/4 mile from the once contaminated site. Some cleanup projects, such as those that convert idle industrial land to mixed use property, even exceed 100% increases in value.

- The Environmental and Economic Impacts of Brownfields Redevelopment, 2008

The site is ripe for redevelopment and is already provided with utilities including municipal water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, natural gas, electric, and telephone services.

Community Benefit: In 2009 the City of Sandusky adopted a 5-Year Strategic Plan that specifically targets the former Sandusky Cabinets site for cleanup and redevelopment. The City anticipated the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to help fund the revitalization activities. With an unwavering commitment to rejuvenate this site, the City has solidified plans to support site redevelopment with the use of CDBG and other funds to upgrade Warren Street where it borders the project property. The roadway investment will be more than simple surface improvements: the new Warren Street, complete with rain gardens and accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, will embody the City's sustainability and livability goals currently being developed by the City's Planning, Engineering and Development Department.



In 2011 our City Commission unanimously voted to declare the revitalization of the former Sandusky Cabinets site a high priority for the City. We did so, in part, because we recognize that both the health and wealth of our residents suffer from the presence of blighted, contaminated properties such as the former Sandusky Cabinets site.

In the U.S. census tract in which the site is located, 33.9% of the residents are poverty-stricken. A new mixed-use development on the site will provide new employment opportunities as well as affordable housing proximate to the city center and nearby employers, facilitating affordable transit to and from work, shopping, and other amenities. Area residents whose property values have fallen due in part to the threats this nearby property presents, will have renewed options for economic vitality.

Other Funding Sources: The City of Sandusky is proud to dedicate a 26% match toward this important project; nearly half of the match has already been invested in the project. We used \$152,542 of U.S. EPA funds to help complete assessment activities at the site and to remove an underground storage tank from the property.

We invested another \$13,717 from the City's General Fund to complete an updated assessment, to clear and grub the property, and to board and secure the property. Our



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engineering department has estimated a \$168,449 investment to upgrade the adjacent Warren Street in a manner that we believe will create maximum value and private investment in the project property.

The \$121,052 investment from a 2006 Clean Ohio Assistance Fund (COAF) award for site assessment activities pre-dates the eligible look-back period to match this CORF grant request. Nevertheless, the successful COAF project is evidence of our ongoing initiative to transform this important property.

2. History of the Project Property

The earliest known use of the project property was as a lumber yard. Beginning in the early 1900s the property was used to manufacture wooden barrels by the Michel Cooperage Company. But the site's most notable use was that which employed hundreds of our local residents over nearly eight decades: cabinet manufacturing. Since 2002 the former plant, a two-story, 51,000-square foot brick building, has been an idle eyesore. Understanding that the property was a drain on the surrounding neighborhood, the City of Sandusky acquired the project property in 2009 with the intent to seek funds to rejuvenate it. Now, becoming increasingly aware of the severe structural, environmental, and safety hazards that prompted this property's recent condemnation by City officials, and recognizing the ongoing plummeting values of properties surrounding the former Sandusky Cabinets site, we believe there has never been a more urgent time to revitalize this property.

3. Environmental Improvements and Benefits

Cleanup Benefits: Our plans to remediate the site include removal of the extensive asbestos throughout the building and cleanup of lead, arsenic, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in soil to residential standards. Groundwater contamination at the site includes the presence of a single semi-VOC, which will be managed with a restriction prohibiting the use of groundwater on the property.

Use of this property in its current condition presents health risks via three separate exposure pathways: direct contact to soil; ingestion of groundwater; and inhalation of friable asbestos fibers. Once these environmental hazards are removed, we plan to demolish the former plant building and the onsite pavement and prepare the property for mixed use commercial/residential development, a vision that coincides nicely with a 2010 feasibility study for the area and our city's 5-Year Strategic Plan. This project will finally remove overt economic disincentives for private reinvestment in this geographically desirable property.

Sustainability:

Recycling of Demolition Materials and Non-structural Items: As evidence of our commitment to sustainable practices, we are proud of our plans to minimize the disposal of over 99% of the materials, excluding steel and concrete, that will be dismantled and/or demolished at the project property. The existing building will be selectively dismantled and demolished for future use. Dismantling the building prior to its demolition will allow us to recycle timber and usable doors, windows, and lighting fixtures at the local Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Duct work and wood (shredded and ground) will also be salvaged for reuse and/or recycling. Plans are in place to crush and recycle all of the building's bricks as well as the remaining pavement on the property that can be used as clean hard fill into the excavations created from the removal of impacted soil and the removal of one underground storage tank.

Minimizing Stormwater Run-off Impacts: In the City's Remedial Action Plan for the site, we have required that the remediation activities ensure that surface water run-off is contained on the



Round 12 Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund Grant Redevelopment Ready Track Former Sandusky Cabinets Site



property and is not released to the storm sewer system. Furthermore, as part of our match commitment for this project, the City plans to make significant improvements to the adjacent Warren Street, west of the site. Warren Street not only offers direct access to the site, it is an important corridor to Sandusky Bay from multiple Sandusky neighborhoods. We envision Warren Street as a model for sustainable community connectivity. A new boulevard featuring low maintenance rain gardens for stormwater management and a bikeway and sidewalks will replace the existing dilapidated and flood-prone road that is currently Warren Street.

We have prepared a concept plan that depicts the use of bio-swales on the former plant property itself, with the intent to inspire the future end user to incorporate such sustainable measures into the final site design. The payoff is not just in aesthetics; it offers an economical way to improve stormwater discharges by both reducing its pollutant load and slowing its flow to the surrounding sewer.

Use of Green Building Techniques: Our commitment to sustainability is resolute: we will require that new development on the site follow the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, a factor that we believe will help attract end users to the site because of the enhanced long-term efficiency LEED principles promote.

Use of Alternative and Sustainable Energy: In the absence of a defined development plan that would include the use of alternative energy on this redevelopment ready project property, the City has required that certain measures be employed during cleanup and demolition activities in an effort to further reduce impacts to the environment. We will require that remedial and demolition activities at the property: limit idling of construction equipment to no more than five minutes; use low sulphur diesel fuel; use water, other wetting agents, or suitable cover such as tarpaulins for stockpiles of materials to control fugitive dusts; and use remediation systems that employ renewable energy sources in their design and operation where applicable. The City will strongly encourage the site's future developer to consider implementing alternative energy technologies at the site.

4. Project's Readiness to Proceed

Match-sponsored cleanup activities have already been completed at this property. An underground storage tank was removed from the property in October 2010. The progress to date at the site is part of our ongoing effort to protect public health and help our residents achieve a high quality of life and reflects our earnest desire for this property's transformation.

The City is prepared to take immediate action upon grant award, State Controlling Board approval, and execution of a grant agreement. Because the City of Sandusky already owns the property, our first steps following execution of a grant agreement will be to prepare the asbestos abatement and demolition specifications. Specifications for asbestos abatement, demolition, and remediation activities will be completed in the third quarter of 2012. Abatement, remediation, deconstruction, and demolition activities are expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2013. Site grading activities and infrastructure upgrades will be completed by the fourth quarter of 2013. The No Further Action Letter will be prepared and submitted to the Ohio EPA in the fourth quarter of 2013. This versatile property, once unencumbered by detrimental environmental conditions, will improve the existing local business climate, attract new business, reduce the potential for crime and injury, and enhance the quality of life for local residents.