

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Announced FY11 Brownfields Grantees

Portland - On Friday, June 10, EPA officials announced \$2.95 million in Brownfields grants to six Maine entities, including a \$400,000 award to the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG). James T. Owens III, Director of the EPA Region I's Office of Remediation and Restoration, made the announcement.

The Adams School was chosen for the announcement because the site is currently participating in the GPCOG Brownfields program. Environmental assessments have been completed using EPA Brownfields funds to assist AVESTA Housing with the demolition of the school and associated redevelopment into 16 townhouses. According to the EPA, a Brownfields site is defined as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant."

The Adams School served as an elementary school from 1958 to 2006. Before its use as a school, the 1.5-acre site was home to a railroad maintenance repair shop and a hand grenade factory. Following a neighborhood planning process, the City of Portland sold a portion of the Adams School property to AVESTA Housing to build 16 energy-efficient townhomes for middle income families. The GPCOG Brownfields program provided for Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments, removal of an underground storage tank, and a pre-demolition survey, while a Brownfields remediation grant from the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection is covering the cost of asbestos removal prior to demolition and disposal of onsite contaminated soils.

Other FY11 Maine grantees include the Town of Canton, City of Augusta, City of Belfast, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, and Kennebec Valley Council of Governments.

In August of 2009, GPCOG was awarded a total of \$400,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus funds from the EPA to conduct Brownfields Assessments on sites in Cumberland County potentially contaminated by hazardous substances and petroleum products. Through a partnership with Credere Associates, LLC, an environmental consulting firm based in Westbrook, six sites, including the Adams School, have been assessed through the GPCOG Brownfields program:

- Bridgton Memorial School, a 20-acre downtown parcel built on the site of the former Bridgton and Saco River narrow gauge rail yard
- Town-owned properties on Shaker Road in Gray, a 1.71-acre parcel prominently sited in the village on the site of a former gas station
- Greater Maine Auto Auction, a 23.7-acre parcel located on Route 202 in Gray at Maine Turnpike Exit 63
- Main Street Fire Station in Gray, a 0.11-acre parcel in the village that will be reused as the new home of the Gray Historical Society
- Former Public Works site in Windham, a 0.23-acre parcel in the historic town farm district adjacent to a new four-lot residential subdivision.

Municipal officials, property owners and developers in Cumberland County with potential Brownfields sites should contact Caroline Paras, GPCOG's Community and Business Development Specialist, at 207-774-9891.