

FACT SHEET:

Tamiami Trail Petroleum Brownfields Revitalization Initiative: A Collaborative Partnership for Economic Growth

What are Petroleum Brownfields?

Brownfields are abandoned or under-used properties with active redevelopment potential that are complicated by either real or perceived environmental contamination. Often, **Petroleum Brownfields** are old abandoned Underground Storage Tank (USTs), such as gas stations.

In many communities, these vacant UST brownfields properties represent untapped resources for economic and community revitalization. Real estate activities that redevelop, renovate, or remove these eyesores involve investment lending risks.

What is the Initiative?

The **Tamiami Trail (U.S. Highway 41) Petroleum Brownfields Revitalization Initiative** is designed to *remove the environmental component of that investment risk*. This Initiative is intended to further local economic development projects by enhancing technical assistance, environmental assessment and cleanup services for USTs. The outcome will be to reuse properties, making for a more vibrant and attractive community.

The targeted communities are those along the Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway route, which extends almost 70 miles within Manatee and Sarasota Counties. This corridor includes the cities of Palmetto, Bradenton, Sarasota, Venice and North Port.

Benefits of Brownfields Redevelopment

- Eliminating health and safety hazards
- Eliminating eyesores
- Bringing new jobs into the community
- Bringing new investment into the community
- Increasing the productivity of the land
- Increasing property values and tax revenues, such as from tourism

The Partners

Success of the program depends on effective communication and cooperation among many partners. In this early phase, partners in this collaborative include: the local municipal, County and economic development agencies; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Plans are to expand this partnership to include the Florida Department of Transportation, non-profit groups, businesses, environmental consultants; UST owners/operators; cleanup contractors; site managers; and the people in communities along the Tamiami Trail.



Abandoned gas station along Tamiami Trail.

Recent Activities

The groundwork for the Initiative began with a kick-off meeting of partners in March 2009. A workshop entitled "Brownfields 101 & Tamiami Trail Petroleum Brownfields Initiative" was provided by the U.S. EPA and FDEP UST and Brownfields Program in June 2009. Once a Strategic Plan and Communication Plan are developed, this will provide a road map for short-term and long term activities for this new initiative.

Planning is underway to begin a comprehensive inventory of historic UST sites, with sponsorship from the U.S. EPA. Manatee and Sarasota County jurisdictions will apply for a U.S. EPA Coalition Brownfields Community-wide Petroleum and Hazardous Waste Assessment grant to identify and address sites along the Tamiami Trail. Other leveraging of resources is planned for the future.

Preliminary Objectives

The following is an initial brainstorm list of objectives; the overarching purpose is to deliver business-ready sites to economic development:

- Conduct inventory of USTs along Tamiami Trail.
- Identify economic development opportunities that overlap UST locations.
- Prioritize UST locations that need environmental assessment and/or remediation services to position sites for reuse. Stimulate the removal of abandoned USTs and assist UST owners, operators, and partners with the identification, and cleanup of releases.
- Conduct meaningful community involvement, such as visioning sessions for the community. This innovative interview and visualizing technique captures and integrates individual and community visions. This multi-vision synergistic activity often helps propel the community into dedicated actions.



Former local gas station, now Art Gallery, in Sarasota's Arts and Historic District.

Successful Models

This collaborative initiative to help revitalize the Tamiami Trail highway corridor is in alignment with the 11-page "U.S. EPA Petroleum Brownfields Action Plan." The four strategic components to return abandoned Petroleum Brownfields sites to productive use are outlined:

<http://www.epa.gov/oust/rags/petrobactionplan.pdf>

This Action Plan provides a roadmap for working through these challenges to revitalize communities plagued with old, petroleum-contaminated properties. Other successful Petroleum Brownfields "Highway Corridor" models that have best practices already developed, including:

- Route 66 (a 200-mile stretch in western U.S)
- Colorado Historic Byways Initiative

Basics of EPA's Brownfields Program



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program empowers communities, Tribes, States, and other stakeholders to work together in a timely manner to assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. The Brownfields Program provides grant support for revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessments, individual site cleanups, and community-based revolving loan funds for brownfields cleanup. Since the program began, thousands of properties nationwide have been assessed and cleaned up using federal brownfields grant funds, clearing the way for their revitalization. For more information, visit: www.epa.gov/brownfields

Basics of FDEP's Brownfields Program



FDEP's Brownfields program goals are to reduce public health and environmental hazards on existing commercial and industrial sites that are abandoned or underused due to these hazards; create financial and regulatory incentives to encourage voluntary cleanup and redevelopment of sites; derive cleanup target levels and a process for obtaining a "No Further Action" letter using Risk-Based Corrective Action principles; and provide the opportunity for Environmental Equity and Justice. For more information, visit: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/waste/categories/brownfields/>

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