Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Comments from Brownfield Remediation Panel Meeting and CMAP Staff Responses
January 21, 2009

Attendees

Via web	Anne Cole	MCIC
	Chris De Sousa	University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
	Roberto Rodriguez	Lake County
	Alan Quick	Illinois Housing Development Authority
In person	Reggie Greenwood	South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
	Jim Van der Kloot	US EPA Region 5
	Deborah Orr	US EPA Region 5
	Gary Deigan	Deigan & Associates, LLC
	Anja Claus	Center for Humans and Nature
	Paul Heltne	Center for Humans and Nature
	Ryan Richter	Metra
	Ken Mirabella	Cambridge Homes
	Roger Dahlstrom	NIU Regional Development Institute
	Kristi DeLaurentis	Metropolitan Planning Council
	Lisa DiChiera	Landmarks Illinois
	David Dubois	McHenry County
	Karie Friling	Village of Orland Park
	David Galowich	Urban Land Institute, Chicago District Council
	Dennis Sandquist	McHenry County
	Karen Stonehouse	Illinois Chapter of the APA
	Kai Tarum	Kane County
	Nathaniel Werner	City of Elmhurst
	Mike Walczak	Northwest Municipal Conference
	Paul Lauricella	DuPage County
	Damon Lee	Land Use Business Services

Comments and Responses
- Why screen contaminated sites for vacant and publicly-owned land?
    - Many active sites have some sort of contamination picked up by the US EPA databases (TRI, RCRAinfo, or LIT), but this doesn't necessarily mean they are brownfield sites. By including only those that are *also* considered vacant or publically-owned, those sites which are not in operation are highlighted, thereby creating a more accurate depiction of potential brownfields.
    - The term "vacant" is used in assessor data, but doesn't necessarily mean there is no development – it represents sites not in operation.

- o "Publically-owned" land was also included because many local governments acquire lands to promote redevelopment – assembling lands into larger parcels, or taking on liability until clean-up is complete.

- Why are there only 3,450 sites targeted for clean up according to the sample program, even though your analysis found over 8,000 sites as potential brownfields?
  - o Brownfields are often remediated privately, without any public funding. CMAP assumed that subzones with high land value and high growth were less likely to need public incentive for private investment to remediate and redevelop potential brownfield sites.

- The sample program focuses on potential brownfield sites that need public funding the most. An alternative strategy is to focus on those projects that are "catalysts" for other development, or those that create the greatest economic return per public investment.
  - o The thought was to support those communities which aren't going to see private development, and focus on the brownfields that will need the most help to clean-up.
  - o The sample program doesn't go so far as to rank or prioritize any of the eligible sites yet, this gets into implementation.

- The private sector looks for redevelopment possibility through demographics – they want to invest in marketable areas. Sites in some of the areas targeted by CMAP's sample program, even if remediated, wouldn't necessarily attract private development funds.
- There is a benefit to screening out the economically strong areas in the region, the maps represent an accurate picture of which sites are cleaned-up privately versus publically. Targeting the sites in this way reveals how this is an environmental justice issue.
  - o Perhaps a compromise between these two points of view is a better strategy which focuses on both these communities originally targeted *as well as* the "low hanging fruit" – the sites which just need a push to get the private sector to invest.

- The estimate of $800,000 to remediate a site is likely high. Most petroleum contaminated sites can be cleaned up for $100,000-$150,000. The chemical contamination brings up the average. Furthermore, remediation costs could go down in the future as environmental stewardship increases.
- If the sample program is targeting "low value" sites, shouldn't the estimate of the percentage of public funding be increased? It doesn't seem realistic to assume the same percentage (25% public funding) of the average brownfield site, if these are sites which are targeted as needing more public funding.
  - o These are both good observations. Perhaps the total cost of remediating a brownfield site should be decreased, but the percentage borne by the public sector increased.

- The estimate of 45% of sites receiving public funding is high if you are just considering brownfield funds. If that includes any type of public funding – TIF, municipal bonds – that may be accurate.
  - The estimate does include all type of public funding. Perhaps this should be adjusted to more accurately represent just brownfield funding.

- Is there a way to determine, through NFR letters, to what level these sites are cleaned-up? If this was known, it could influence the cost estimates.
  - No, this information isn't included in the same database. It would be difficult to compile on a region scale.

- Has CMAP considered linking the prioritization of sites to those with historical significance? These sites also have a potential for attracting private development because of tax credits.
  - No, this wasn't considered, but if historic survey data is available in the correct format to overlay on top of our potential brownfields data, it could be.
- Has CMAP considered which of these sites might be high risk, either as public health issue or to groundwater or endangered species?
  - Unfortunately, there isn't a way with our data to determine this.
  - Note that if a site is a hazard, it isn't actually considered a brownfield site, but is considered an immediate threat and dealt with by the Superfund Emergency Response and Removal Program.
- How were the sites identified? Is there a way to tell if they are clustered near each other?
  - They were mapped by address. It is an option to see where sites are grouped together, and where there is potential for sites to be assembled into larger parcels more attractive for redevelopment. But because this is a regional analysis, CMAP is wary to look at sites on such a local scale. Perhaps looking at which subzones have the highest density of brownfield sites can reveal similar results.
- Whatever eligibility requirements are included in this sample program are going to be important – historic buildings, health risk, proximity to other sites, developer readiness, etc.

- The 10% increase in land value is a good estimate – this coincides with research done in Milwaukee and Minnesota.

- How was the estimate of 67,000 jobs and households created?
  - This estimate was created by increasing land values near brownfields. CMAP's transportation model was used to estimate how much additional household and employment growth (or "activity") would be attracted to these areas based on this increased land value. Beyond this, other parts of the region that were accessible from these brownfield sites also experienced increased activity as a secondary impact.
- Although you are clear in stating that this sample program is only dealing with brownfield remediation, not also redevelopment, the predictions of jobs and households assumes there is some development. If you are going to measure this, it is important to realize that the

costs would increase significantly – probably upwards of $15 billion – to incorporate the redevelopment cost side of this.

- o This is correct. We are going to deal with the other half of this in some of our other strategies that deal more specifically with redevelopment.

- In terms of implementation, there is another argument for also including marketable areas in the sample program – some of the proceeds from the "easy" projects in the stronger-market areas can be reinvested into the program and help finance remediation in the lower-market areas over time. Funding some "catalyst" projects can lead to greater private investment over time, which would help the entire region.
  - o This is a good point, but CMAP needs to determine a way to find these "catalyst" projects on a regional scale.
- Some implementation examples:
  - o St. Paul Port Authority – actually generates revenue to reinvest in program
  - o Cleveland – industrial land bank, assembles land into large parcels
  - o Michigan – brownfield redevelopment authority – like a TIF structure
  - o Lake County – brownfield grant program.