

BLUE ISLAND: A CMAP COMMUNITY SUSTAINABLE BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

May 9, 2009 - Society for Risk Analysis Workshop: Public Health Benefits of Sustainable Development

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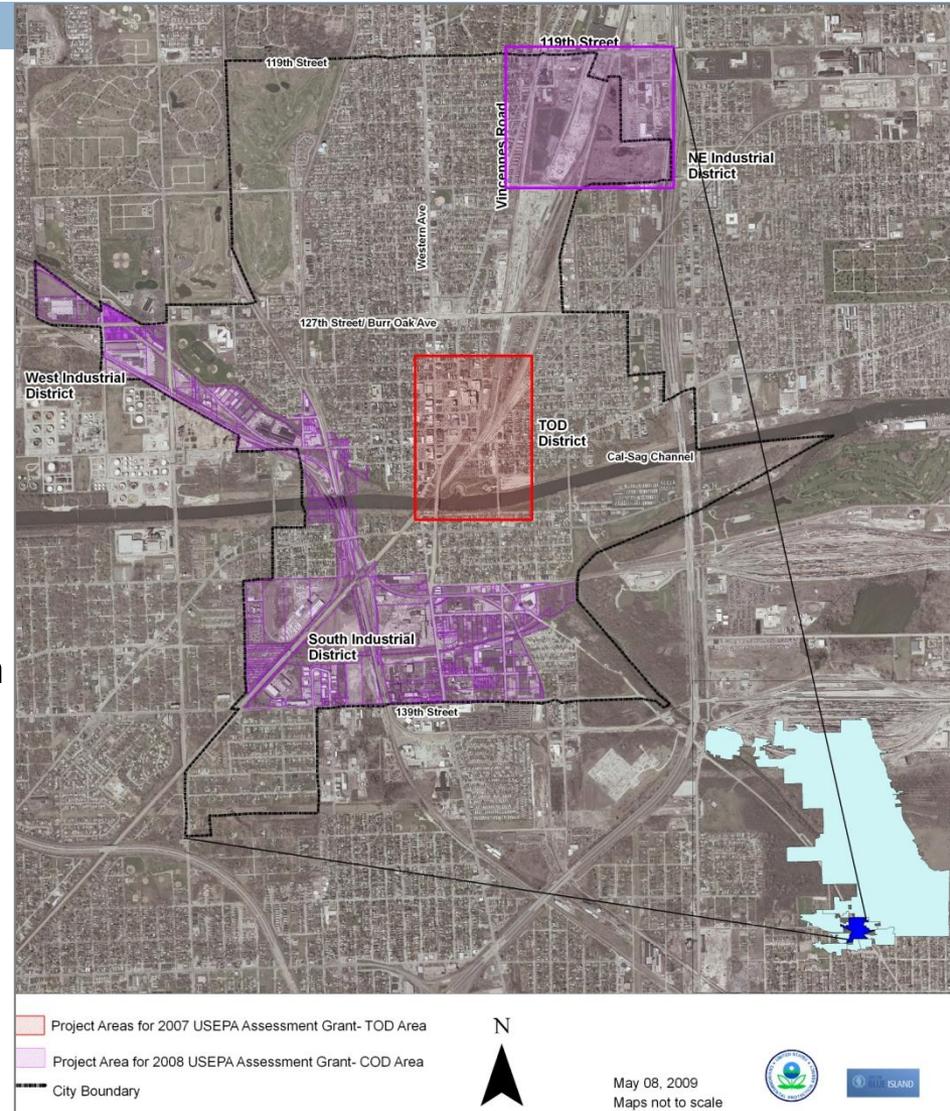
About Blue Island

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- 180-year old, inner-ring suburb located just south of Chicago
- Population: 23,463 (2000 Census)
- Median income: \$36,520
- Ready Industrial Workforce
- 54.2% - high school or community college
- Transportation Assets: I-57, I-294, Metra
- Traditional downtown business district with walkable neighborhoods

USEPA Grant Recipient

- 2007 Brownfields Assessment Grant
- 2008 Brownfields Assessment Grant



Blue Island Economic Development Plan

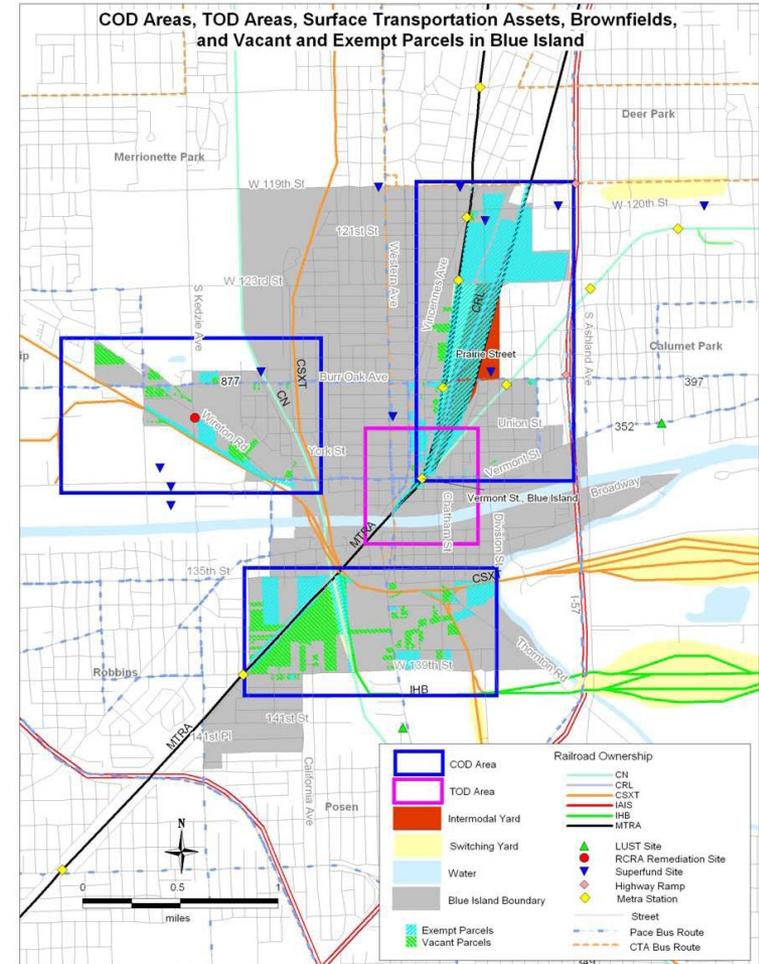
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Goal:

Foster development that will create jobs & raise local tax revenues, while celebrating Blue Island's historic identity, preserving its diversity, enhancing its natural environment, and improving the quality of life for all residents.

Principles:

- Affirm Blue Island's identity
- Make development inclusive
- Make development work for business & the environment
- Direct development planning & oversight from the community
- Make a practical development plan



Priority Redevelopment Areas

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TOD Redevelopment Opportunity:

Correct current negative land use & design of the built environment so that more people will have the opportunity to live and the desire to shop in the Vermont station area and main street district.

COD Redevelopment Opportunity:

Use the advantages of access to freight infrastructure, existing business clusters & a ready industrial workforce to overcome impediments & restore more than *150 acres* of vacant land to productive use.

Benefits of TOD/COD Redevelopment:

- Improve regional economy
- Improve regional environment by establishing new land use and transportation patterns that will eliminate thousands of truck trips and tons of air pollution per year



TOD Opportunity



COD Opportunity

Redevelopment Obstacles

Despite numerous assets, any redevelopment project in Blue Island must overcome several serious obstacles:

- Cook County tax rates that are higher than those of any other Illinois county
- **Environmental conditions and the perception that brownfields may be more widespread and more expensive to improve than they actually are**
- The perception that Cook County industrial property values will not appreciate

Assessment Grant Project Focus

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Extension of redevelopment priorities identified in adopted economic development plan

Why we chose COD/TOD areas:

- Eliminate one of redevelopment obstacles
- Previous efforts using IEPA focused on a former landfill site
- Promote use of existing rail & public transit (Metra)
- Potential for job creation
- Promote healthy community by creating housing and job opportunities



139th Street – TOD Opportunity

Project Summaries

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2007 Assessment Grant

- Brownfields Program
- Define priority sites within TOD areas
- Identify & evaluate potential environmental issues
- Develop strategies to address issues
- Lead/Asbestos Assessments

2008 Assessment Grant

- Inventory & define priority hazardous sites in the south COD area
- Inventory & define citywide priority petroleum sites
- Identify & evaluate potential environmental issues
- Develop strategies to address issues
- Community Health Monitoring

2007 Project Highlights

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Establish Brownfields Program

- To build capacity of staff & volunteer BAT members to make informed and decisions
- Brownfields Nuts & Bolts Training for staff & public
- Technical report by Delta Institute

Site Prioritization & Phase I Selection Criteria:

- City-owned or easily acquirable property
- Tax delinquent
- Poor utilization/difficult owners
- Vacant or abandoned
- Quick redevelopment turnaround potential
- Potential to spur economic activity in the surrounding area

Community Outreach Efforts

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Public workshop #2
Site Selection 2007 Assessment Grant



Brownfields Advisory Team (BAT)

Established team of staff, agencies and local community members. Responsibilities include:

- Attending Brownfields Nuts & Bolts Training Workshop
- Attending and participating in meetings
- Providing input on brownfields issues
- Representing their community in a positive way.

Blue Island Brownfields Initiative Website/Blog

<http://biplanning.wordpress.com>

@BIBrownfields Twitter

www.twitter.com/BIBrownfields

Blue Island Brownfields Initiative Brochure

Community Health Monitoring

Community Health Monitoring

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Partner with ATSDR, CCHD, CMAP & USEPA to implement Action Model

- Community based; 2 public workshops
- Local Stakeholders: Healthy Communities group
- Intro Meeting: March 12
- First of 2 workshops in late May
- Hope to engage broader range of stakeholders, including youth



Expected outcome: Set of measurable, trackable indicators reflective of community determined public health related issues; increased community involvement in brownfields redevelopment

Conclusion

- Next steps, future, accomplishments
- Overall lessons (re)learned
 - Be flexible; Modify approach when necessary
 - Be careful when using words like brownfields with public, especially in writing
 - Partnerships are key
 - Work closely with your USEPA grant coordinator
- Questions ?