United States
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EPA 100-R-02-004
March 2003

Evaluation of Community-Based Environmental Protection Projects: Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 23 2003

OFFICE OF POLICY,
ECONOMICS, AND INNOVATION

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: *Evaluation of Community-Based Environmental Protection Projects: Accomplishments and Lessons Learned*

FROM: Jay Benforado
Director
National Center for Environmental Innovation

TO: EPA Innovation Action Council

I am pleased to forward to you copies of our newly completed evaluation of five Agency place-based projects. The study, *Evaluation of Community-Based Environmental Protection Projects: Accomplishments and Lessons Learned*, was completed with assistance from Regions 3, 4, 7 and 8, as well as state and local governments and community organizations. This project was one of the evaluations selected for funding in the OCFO/OPEI 2001 Program Evaluation Competition.

Background:

As you know, EPA supports and participates in a rich array of community-based environmental protection efforts throughout the U.S. A community-based approach emphasizes building capacity at the local level to achieve more integrated environmental protection and fosters linkages between economic prosperity, and social and environmental well-being. In1999, EPA's *"Framework for Community-Based Environmental Protection,"* the EPA identified several attributes that characterize the community-based approach, including:

- a focus on a geographic area;
- collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders;
- assessments that cut across environmental media to support integrated decision making;
- integration of environmental, economic, and social objectives;
- integration of regulatory and non-regulatory tools and approaches;
- integration of adaptive management approaches driven by ongoing monitoring information.

Study Focus:

This report evaluates five community-based projects in which EPA Regions participated, either as a project leader or in a supporting role. The objective of this study was to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the community-based approach in these projects; to identify the benefits that would not have been realized under traditional environmental management programs; and to identify ways that the EPA can tailor its participation and support of community initiatives to help produce the best results.

The five projects were chosen to satisfy several criteria, including geographic diversity, diversity of mission (e.g., ecosystem management versus public health protection), and a range of EPA roles (e.g., lead versus support role). The projects we evaluated were:

- **San Miguel Watershed Initiative**: A multi-stakeholder effort to address impacts of development and other stressors on a sparsely populated western Colorado watershed.

- **North Charleston/Charleston Community-Based Environmental Protection Project**: A multi-stakeholder project to address cross-media environmental and other quality of life concerns for urban communities on the Charleston, South Carolina peninsula.

- ***Eastward Ho!***: A regional partnership to address sprawl through revitalization of cities on the eastern side of South Florida.

- **York, Pennsylvania Community-Based Strategic Planning and Green Development**: A comprehensive planning process involving active community participation, brownfields reuse, and other green development strategies.

- **St. Louis Abandoned Buildings Project**: A multi-agency partnership to assist the city in abandoned building demolition and compliance with hazardous substance management requirements.

Key Evaluation Findings:

The findings of this evaluation suggest that community-based environmental protection strategies can be very effective, provided that the process is carefully designed to organize input of participants and delineate clear roles and responsibilities. The approach can also yield a variety of benefits that traditional regulatory approaches may not. These "value-added" benefits include:

- more integrated and comprehensive environmental protection strategies that address both regulated and non-regulated activities;
- creation of new community partnerships and awareness of many community issues;
- development of local capacity to independently address environmental issues;
- increased understanding of EPA's relevance at the community level.

These overall findings along with a summary of the report's recommendations are further detailed in the attachment to this memo. The findings of the study for the individual projects are in the report itself. These findings and recommendations suggest a number of opportunities for the EPA to promote the community-based environmental protection approach and optimize the results for communities.

Attachments:

Key Findings and Recommendations
Evaluation Report

Evaluation of Community-Based Environmental Protection Projects
Attachment A - Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Findings:

1) - The Community-Based Approach Poses Unique Challenges But Can Positively Affect Achievement of Project Goals:

- a meaningful geographic boundary can enhance project success,
- community-based projects require carefully designed decision-making processes,
- stakeholders' roles and leadership responsibilities require clear definition,
- community-based projects may require investment of time, resource, and leadership commitments,
- clear performance indicators are essential to managing for results.

2 - The Community-Based Approach Provides Value-Added Benefits:

- community-based approaches can yield new forms of integration and coordination,
- the approach provides partnership benefits that extend beyond the project,
- the approach promotes capacity building and sustainability,
- the community-based approach can create legitimacy and signal community support,
- community-based approaches can influence broader public policy.

3 - EPA Can Foster Better Use of the Community-Based Approach:

- as a participant in community-based projects, EPA should identify "niche" roles (e.g., provide data or analytic support) that are complementary to project needs,
- EPA funding (even in small amounts), and how it is provided, can be critical to project success,
- EPA can be instrumental in organizing diverse interests and potential partners around multi-disciplinary issues and approaches.

Recommendations:

These findings suggest some possible future actions that the Agency can take to be a more effective community partner and to promote adoption of the community-based approach in more communities:

- ***EPA often supports community-based initiatives best by being a partner in a niche-role rather than leading every effort. One of the EPA niche roles communities find useful is as an information resource.*** To improve its value as an information resource and to make its efforts more broadly available to communities, EPA could promote the development, availability and use of geospatial tools and information (e.g., geographic information systems that help communities identify resources and risks so that communities can plan and manage more effectively). EPA can be useful in helping communities identify a variety of strategies for achieving their goals. EPA could also develop information and guidance on how communities can identify and use integrated systems of measures of community progress. These measures could help guide communities' efforts toward success.

- ***EPA cannot be a hands-on partner with every community, but it can provide assistance to a large number of community-based environmental efforts indirectly through State and Tribal governments***. EPA has neither the resources nor the authority to be directly involved in most communities. EPA might extend its effectiveness and build stronger partnership with States and Tribes by fostering the development of Centers of Expertise for Community Development at the State and Tribal levels as a resource for technical assistance and mentoring to communities that are looking for ways to plan and promote environmentally compatible economic development. One model might be the creation of assistance centers at the State and Tribal level to assist and advise communities (e.g., as an adjunct to the Land Grant College system) through integration of many areas of academic expertise and a knowledge of local conditions and issues, similar to the Office of Water's Local Governments EMS Peer Assistance Centers. EPA could explore cooperation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service Districts to support "one-stop shopping" for Federal assistance on environmental matters.

- ***There are community-based projects where EPA's direct involvement has been welcome and beneficial. Consistent with the problem-solving orientation identified in the Agency's Innovation Strategy, EPA could identify priorities for its direct involvement in community-based projects.*** In partnership with States, Tribes, and other Federal Agencies, EPA could identify priority places based upon criteria such as:
  - the national or regional significance of ecosystems and landscapes and their natural resources and the significance of risks to those systems;
  - the likelihood that a community-based partnership approach will address human health risks and other environmental risks more effectively than regulatory approaches alone;
  - the likelihood that particular projects might yield important lessons through demonstration and evaluation.

We think that the Regions have demonstrated some notable successes through partnerships to promote community-based environmental protection approaches. We believe that the approach offers considerable additional potential if we can do more to optimize our critical roles and build state and tribal capacity to assist their communities.

Acknowledgments

This report, *Evaluation of Community-based Environmental Protection Projects: Accomplishments and Lessons Learned*, was developed under contract for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation by Industrial Economics, Incorporated (IEc), of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The EPA acknowledges the assistance of Robert Black and Ann Jones of IEc in the preparation of this report as well as the contributions of peer reviewers: Dr. JoAnn Carmin of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Dr. Toddi Steelman of North Carolina State University, and Michael Mason from EPA Office of Water. The EPA also acknowledges the assistance of the people identified in Exhibit 1-1, who provided expertise and information about the five projects evaluated in this study. In the Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Gerald Filbin (202-566-2182; filbin.gerald@epa.gov) was the project manager for this study and may be contacted for additional information.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The EPA supports and participates in an array of community-based environmental protection (CBEP) efforts throughout the United States. CBEP refers to an integrated, place-based, participatory approach to managing the environment that simultaneously considers environmental, social, and economic concerns (U.S. EPA, February 1999). In its CBEP framework document, the Agency describes CBEP as a process that "brings together public and private stakeholders within a place or community to identify environmental concerns, set priorities, and implement comprehensive solutions. Often called a place-based, or ecosystem approach, CBEP considers environmental protection along with human social needs, works toward achieving long-term ecosystem health, and fosters linkages between economic prosperity and environmental well-being." The Agency has identified several key attributes that characterize CBEP, including a focus on a geographic area; collaboration through a range of stakeholders; assessments that cut across environmental media; integration of environmental, economic, and social objectives; use of regulatory and nonregulatory tools; and monitoring to allow adaptive management.

The EPA facilitates CBEP efforts by coordinating traditional regulatory programs to support CBEP; providing tools to communities pursuing CBEP activities; and collaborating directly with stakeholders. The Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation (OPEI) coordinates the Agency's CBEP efforts.

The San Miguel Watershed Initiative, discussed in detail in chapter 2, provides an excellent illustration of key CBEP principles. The coalition leading the initiative emphasized collaboration between diverse stakeholders representing environmental as well as economic interests. The EPA contributed technical assessments of resources in the basin to provide the analytic foundation for decisionmaking. The Watershed Plan, developed with input from citizens and institutional stakeholders, calls for an array of voluntary actions while at the same time, the San Miguel County Planning Department has drawn on the CBEP project for crafting local land use guidelines.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate a set of regional CBEP projects in which EPA participates. The evaluation considers both environmental outcomes of each of the projects as well as the overall effectiveness of the CBEP process. Specifically, the evaluation focuses on a set of key questions:

- To what extent have the selected CBEP projects provided measurable environmental results related to EPA's strategic goals as well as improvements in the long-term sustainability of communities? Alternatively, how have the CBEP projects helped to lay the groundwork for environmental and sustainability improvements?

- Which CBEP attributes are prominent in the selected projects? Overall, how are these important in making the projects work well? What factors affect projects that do not work as well?

- What was the value added of the CBEP approach for EPA's community partners and for the Agency itself? For example, does CBEP help foster an enduring community process focused on natural resource management and environmental quality (i.e., a stewardship role)?

The evaluation is intended to assist EPA as it considers advantages and disadvantages of community-based projects and how it can tailor its role to best support CBEP efforts.

METHODOLOGY

We examine five projects as part of this evaluation. The projects are briefly summarized in Exhibit 1-1. We worked with the OPEI project manager to identify a set of projects that met several basic criteria, including geographic diversity and a range of EPA roles (e.g., lead versus support role). Although all of the projects have noteworthy successes, we also intentionally selected projects that encountered institutional challenges, thereby yielding useful lessons regarding how EPA can overcome obstacles and avoid future problems. Furthermore, we chose projects that featured EPA contacts committed to supporting and assisting with the evaluation.

Phone interviews served as the primary source of information for this evaluation. Exhibit 1-1 lists the people interviewed and their affiliations. We attempted to gather perspectives from a cross section of people. We contacted at least one EPA participant to get the Agency's perspective and gather adequate

EXHIBIT 1-1
PROJECTS INCLUDED IN EVALUATION

Project Name	Project Description	People Interviewed
San Miguel Watershed Initiative	Multistakeholder effort to address development and other stressors in sparsely populated western Colorado watershed.	Michael Wireman, EPA Region 8 April Montgomery, San Miguel County Planning Department Linda Luther, San Miguel Watershed Coalition Stacey Wright, Sawpit Town Board Genne Boles, Last Dollar Community Representative
North Charleston/ Charleston CBEP Control	Multistakeholder project to address cross-media environmental and other quality-of-life concerns for urban communities on the Charleston, South Carolina, peninsula.	Cynthia Peurifoy, EPA Region 4 Daphne Neel, SC Department of Health and Environmental Marcy Guerriero, SC Coastal Conservation League Lonnie Gleeten, Community Advisory Group (CAG) Industry Representative Wilson Gautreaux, CAG Industry Representative Dr. Elfonzo Evans, CAG Community Representative Carolyn Stribling, Medical University of South Carolina
Eastward Ho!	Regional partnership to address sprawl through revitalization of cities in South Florida.	Terry Manning and Carolyn Dekle, South Florida Regional Planning Council Betsy LaRoe, EPA Office of Water (HQ) Lee Rawlinson, Miami-Dade County Planning Office Donna Masson, ChamberSOUTH
York, Pennsylvania, Community-Based Strategic Planning and Green Development	Comprehensive planning process involving active community participation and drawing on brownfield reuse and other green development strategies.	Eric Menzer, City of York Office of Economic Development Susan McDowell, EPA Region 3 Tim Fulton, Susquehanna Real Estate
St. Louis Abandoned Buildings Project	Multiagency partnership to assist city in abandoned building demolition and compliance with hazardous substance management requirements.	Kerry Herndon, EPA Region 7 Art Spratlin, EPA Region 7 Julie Stone, St. Louis Mayor's Office/Missouri Department of Natural Resources Timothy Dee, St. Louis Air Pollution Control Department

detail on EPA's role. We also contacted at least one project manager from a local partner organization to characterize the community's perspectives. However, time and resource constraints precluded contacting the complete set of relevant project participants. Studies on the effectiveness of program evaluation techniques suggest that conducting evaluations on the basis of interviews or surveys of a limited set of participants can lead to significant biases (Leach et al. May 2000). In addition, other studies emphasize the importance of fully representing diverse stakeholders in evaluation interviews (Kellogg Foundation 1998; Muraskin 1993). Therefore, although we have attempted to implement representative interviews, conclusions presented in this report should be considered preliminary and potentially subject to revision if additional research is pursued.

We constructed a basic set of questions that served as a foundation for the interviews, and we sent them to most of the contacts prior to our conversations. These basic questions are included as Appendix A to this report. In advance of each interview, we also assembled questions that we customized to the role of the interviewee on the project.

The evaluation incorporates information from a wide variety of written material on the projects, including formal project reports, online project descriptions, and internal tracking materials made available by the interviewees. In one case (*Eastward Ho!*), a formal evaluation of the project had already been completed. All relevant written materials are listed in the references section at the end of the report.

OVERVIEW OF DOCUMENT

The remainder of this report is divided into six chapters. Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 discuss the different CBEP projects by addressing the following seven components:

- **Project Description:** Reviews the origins and objectives of the project.
- **Project Activities:** Examines in detail key activities pursued under the project.
- **EPA's Role:** Reviews EPA's contributions to the project and discusses project participants' views and recommendations regarding the Agency's involvement.
- **Project Accomplishments and Shortfalls:** Examines quantitative and qualitative indicators of project accomplishments, including environmental and socioeconomic outcomes. Also addresses aspects of the project that have fallen short of stated objectives.
- **Effectiveness of the CBEP Process:** Focuses on measures of how the process of community-based environmental protection has succeeded or failed.
- **CBEP Value Added:** Considers additional benefits of CBEP projects that would not be realized under traditional regulatory approaches. For example, CBEP projects may foster cross-agency coordination, enhance local capacity to address future environmental challenges, and improve the cost-effectiveness of environmental management efforts.
- **Summary of Key Themes and Recommendations:** Briefly reviews key findings for each project

The final chapter of the report synthesizes the findings for each project into a single evaluation that identifies themes that emerge across all the projects and makes practical recommendations for the Agency's future CBEP efforts.

SAN MIGUEL WATERSHED INITIATIVE CHAPTER 2

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

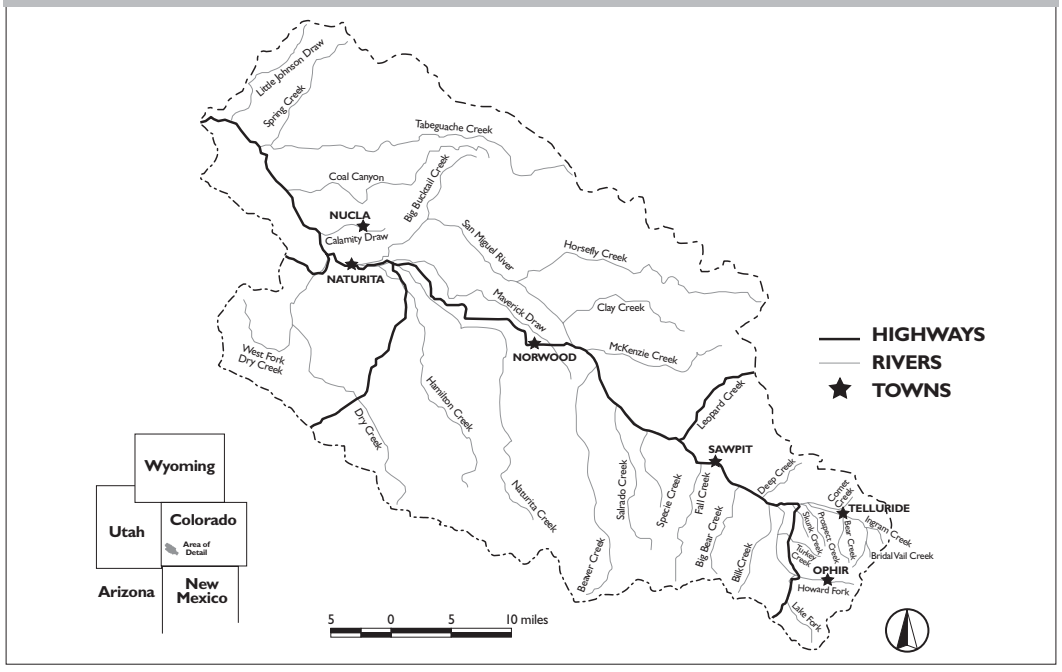
Background

Colorado's San Miguel Watershed (see Figure 2-1) covers 1 million acres and consists of near-pristine ecosystems ranging from alpine environments in the upper portion of the basin to desert environments in the lower basin. Although sparsely populated (roughly 8,000 residents), development pressure in the region is significant, with much of the growth associated with recreational resorts. In addition, contamination associated with mining and agriculture threatens both surface and ground water quality.

Resort-based population increases have increased the local water demands to the point that the in-stream flows in the Upper San Miguel River were below the levels required to support native fish populations.[1] Long-term conflict and misunderstanding had caused friction between the upper basin of the watershed (home to resort communities and mining) and the lower basin (the location of ranches, farms, and additional mines). In 1989, a wetlands violation related to resort development was discovered during an EPA-funded wetlands mapping project in San Miguel County. The settlement included restoration activities and a wetlands management plan under which all wetlands on property belonging to the defendants were placed under easement. The continued presence of EPA activity in the Telluride area prompted the San Miguel County planners to request EPA assistance to protect the fragile alpine ecosystem in the face of ski resort expansions and 10 percent annual growth of new homes.

In 1995, citizens, community groups, local governments, and state and federal agencies initiated a watershed approach to addressing the environmental and development issues facing

FIGURE 2-1
SAN MIGUEL BASIN



[1] *"San Miguel Watershed Coalition,"* River Voices, *Winter 1997.*

the San Miguel Basin. They were looking for a balance between environmental protection and recreational and economic development. The San Miguel Watershed Coalition was formed as an outgrowth of watershed protection efforts initiated by the Telluride Institute, a local environmental and cultural advocacy organization. The approach they chose focuses on developing a thorough understanding of the ecology of the area to inform development plans that restore, preserve, and sustain the entire watershed.

EPA Region 8 is a key participant in this broad CBEP initiative to manage the water and land resources of the San Miguel River watershed. The San Miguel Watershed Initiative addressed in this evaluation consists of two parallel and related components:

- **San Miguel Watershed Coalition:** The San Miguel Watershed Coalition is a broad-based partnership of citizens, municipal officials, county officials, state agencies, and federal agencies (including EPA) dedicated to watershed preservation and restoration. Through a variety of outreach efforts, the Coalition developed a detailed Watershed Plan (published in 1998) that makes recommendations for management of the watershed, focusing on conservation, sustainable resource use, economic development, and other policy areas (see below).
- **Region 8 Technical Assessments:** Under funding from a variety of EPA programs, staff members in EPA's Region 8 office have completed a series of technical analyses that support the larger watershed protection effort. Described in more detail below, the analyses include an assessment of alpine ecosystems and an analysis of drinking water resources and potential stressors. The analyses themselves are community-based in nature because they were performed in collaboration with citizens, local governments, state and federal government offices, and other stakeholders.

For the remainder of this discussion, we use the term "San Miguel Watershed Initiative" to refer collectively to these two components of the CBEP effort.

Goals and Objectives

EPA Region 8 has identified the protection of valuable ecosystems as its primary mission. One of the six major goals of its Ecosystem Protection Program is the prioritization of ecosystem protection and community-based environmental protection. The needs of the San Miguel Basin—the protection of pristine ecosystems and the restoration of highly impacted ecosystems—were identified as being in clear alignment with this Region 8 goal. Various project objectives also aligned well with EPA's strategic goals:

- **Clean Water:** To develop data to support the updating of local zoning policy, which will result in restoration and preservation of wetlands, elimination of river system sedimentation, and identification of potential stressors/threats. These actions will enable long-term management policies to guide future resource use, conservation, and preservation.
- **Healthy Terrestrial Ecosystems:** To use land acquisition and redesigned zoning requirements to increase biologically diverse and linked land areas.
- **Citizen Empowerment:** To develop natural resource data, and ensure its availability to the community, that will aid community stewards and stakeholders in making informed decisions.
- **Management:** To develop community-based environmental protection through broad-based stakeholder collaboration and decisionmaking.

The San Miguel Watershed Coalition also identified its own mission and goals. The mission of the Coalition was "to develop, through a process of collaborative planning and substantive public involvement, a basinwide management plan that conserves and enhances . . . our communities." Its goals include conservation, sustainable resource use, and economic development as well as preservation and restoration of the watershed.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The San Miguel Watershed Initiative includes a diverse set of activities that range from outreach to advanced ecological analysis. Although a comprehensive inventory of the project's activities is outside the scope of this evaluation, we discuss key activities below.

The first major project of the Coalition was the development of a formal Watershed Plan, completed in 1998. The Plan describes a vision of the watershed's future, reviewing the history, economy, and hydrology of the region and identifying an extensive set of potential actions that stakeholders can take to ensure the sustainable use of resources and ecological stability. The Coalition structured the process of developing the Plan as a community-based effort, conducting a variety of activities that involved the local stakeholders:

- Public outreach, stakeholder identification, and meeting facilitation;
- Development, organization, and staffing of committees, including the Planning, Oversight, and Management Committees;
- Development of outreach materials, including brochures and newsletters.

Subsequent to the Watershed Plan, the Coalition has continued to pursue various other activities. A Coordinating Council, composed of 15 representatives of key interest groups (e.g., ranchers, miners, recreational interests), is currently implementing elements of the Plan. The Council has met monthly since October 1998 to focus activities. In addition, the Coalition has participated in a 3-year study of instream flows, assisted the Telluride Institute in completing an atlas for the San Miguel Watershed, and led the development of an educational program (Living Classrooms) focusing on hands-on learning at three sites along the San Miguel River.

As noted, EPA's primary involvement directing the San Miguel Initiative comes in the form of several technical analyses. Most notably, it organized resources to provide exceptional scientific support for local land use controls and source water inventories. First, EPA worked with San Miguel County and the University of Colorado to complete an ecological assessment of 18 alpine basins, upper portions of the watershed that are critical to overall watershed health. The EPA and its partners gathered data on landscape types and water quality and compiled the data in a geographic information system (GIS). The GIS allows identification of areas highly sensitive to perturbations and also helps identify alpine ecosystems potentially affected by atmospheric nitrogen deposition. The data are accessible to the public via a dedicated Web site. As described below, the county used the results of the analysis as the foundation for land use regulations adopted for the basin.

A second analysis developed by EPA and its partners (San Miguel County, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management [BLM]) was a pioneering source water protection assessment completed in accordance with new Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments Source Water Protection regulations. The analysis focused on seven public water supplies and delineated source water protection areas, identified potential contamination sources, and developed susceptibility profiles. Completion of the assessment involved outreach to local land owners, water boards, local officials, and environmental groups to enlist their participation in the analysis.

The EPA was a major source of funding for the various activities pursued under the San Miguel Initiative, both through the Regional Geographic Initiative (RGI) as well as through programmatic funding. Overall, funding for the period 1996 through the present can be roughly allocated as follows:

- **Watershed Coalition:** $30,000 in RGI funding (FY96); $14,000 from an EPA grant to address problems related to purple loose strife; in-kind services from participating local, state, and federal organizations.
- **Technical Assessments:** $45,000 in initial RGI funding (FY96); additional RGI funding of $38,000 (FY98); staff support from participating agencies, including one EPA full-time equivalent (FTE) divided across several EPA staffpersons.

EPA'S ROLE

The EPA's involvement in the San Miguel Watershed Initiative demonstrates how the Agency can play different roles on different facets of a CBEP project. On the one hand, EPA took the lead with the technical assessments, integrating its efforts with a relatively limited set of partners (e.g., the county, BLM, U.S. Forest Service) and bringing its technical expertise to bear. In contrast, EPA participated in the overall efforts of the Watershed Initiative as an equal partner, coordinating its contributions with those of numerous other organizations (see below).

Project leaders highlighted two lessons regarding the success of EPA's involvement in the initiative:

- The importance of EPA staff bringing unique and relevant skills to the effort. The Agency brought "technical horsepower" to the table and focused that expertise on specific analyses that form an analytic foundation for the overall watershed protection effort.
- The importance of working with local groups. The EPA further enhanced its role by meeting exhaustively with local officials and citizens and working with them collaboratively rather than in isolation. These meetings yielded critical information for the technical assessments and garnered the support and confidence of local residents. Furthermore, EPA staff consciously worked to make technical analyses understandable by the general public, recognizing how important the support of the public was to the project.

Staff members from San Miguel County and the Watershed Coalition voiced great satisfaction with EPA's involvement on the overall initiative. They stressed that the Coalition probably would never have formed if not for the initial RGI funding. They also applauded EPA's willingness to assume its role as a niche player on the effort, the technical sophistication of Agency staff, and EPA's efforts to establish a physical presence at public meetings in this relatively remote area.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTFALLS

The San Miguel Initiative has realized a variety of environmental accomplishments. Although the primary goal of ecological protection and recovery will be achieved only over the course of many years, a variety of intermediate, programmatic measures demonstrate the success of the initiative:

- Under the alpine ecological assessment, EPA has recorded about 200 baseline water quality observations; developed 18 GIS maps identifying 45 landscape types; and identified tens of thousands of acres of sensitive ecological areas. These accomplishments directly satisfy Region 8's goal of developing data to assist local zoning efforts.
- Source water assessments were completed for the seven pilot communities well in advance of other communities in EPA Region 8. This accomplishment meets the Region's goals of water protection and development of data for use in local zoning.
- The technical assessments served as the foundation of local land use protection ordinances controlling development in sensitive areas. Although exact figures are not available, more than 10,000 acres are likely to be protected.

The success of the initiative is further demonstrated by a series of awards recognizing the project's accomplishments, both internal to and external to EPA. For example, the National Association of County Commissioners presented San Miguel County with its award for outstanding government. Likewise, EPA Region 8 awarded the county the Regional Administrator's Environmental Excellence Award in 1998. Furthermore, the effort has been featured in EPA publications and at conferences such as the Aldo Leopold Conference in October 1999.

Small communities have noted additional benefits of the project. One benefit is the ability to apply for waivers on certain water supply tests, a direct result of the source water assessments conducted during the Coalition research. For example, the unincorporated community of

Last Dollar indicated that it will likely be able to waive certain annual tests of the community's water supply and was happy with the information and assistance from EPA.

The impacts of the work go beyond the immediate San Miguel Watershed. The research process undertaken to change the land use codes helps fill a scarcity of scientifically based management tools available for setting Western water resources policy (Inyan and Williams 1999).

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CBEP PROCESS

The San Miguel Initiative exhibits many attributes associated with community-based environmental protection. A variety of measures and descriptive information demonstrate that CBEP was a central organizing principle for the project and that the project was successful in implementing this alternative approach to environmental management:

- The boundaries of the geographic area—in this case, the watershed—are well delineated and help in identifying the appropriate set of stakeholders. In addition, the boundaries transcend the traditional jurisdictional boundaries to allow the different stakeholders in the watershed to come together.
- Multistakeholder partnerships are the essence of the project, with a wide array of organizations taking part in one or more facets of the project (see Exhibit 2-1). These partnerships are crucial because of the large number of groups that had jurisdiction for resource management in the area.
- Community participation is critical to the San Miguel efforts. As an indicator of the project's success in this regard, roughly 70 people attended the first watershed planning meeting, which was followed by a series of successful issue-identification meetings in several towns. In addition, participants reviewed and commented on the initial draft of the Watershed Plan. This type of participation is significant given that the population of the basin is small (about 8,000) and scattered across the region. The EPA and county officials felt that the numbers reflect involved communities, particularly in the smaller towns and unincorporated areas that do not have a large town staff to handle environmental management issues.

The success that the initiative has had in involving active local participants directly satisfies goals established by EPA Region 8. Specifically, the initiative has contributed to citizen empowerment through provision of key data and has fostered collaboration among local stakeholder groups (see "Goals and Objectives").

EXHIBIT 2-1
ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE SAN MIGUEL WATERSHED INITIATIVE

National Park Service
Telluride Institute
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
San Miguel County*
U.S. Forest Service
Town of Telluride
The Nature Conservancy
Town of Mountain Village
Town of Norwood
Montrose County
Town of Naturita
Town of Nucla
Town of Ophir
Town of Sawpit
Town of Placerville
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
Colorado Water Conservation Board
Colorado Division of Wildlife
Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Colorado Department of Local Affairs
U.S. Geological Survey
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

* Interviewed for this assessment.

CBEP VALUE ADDED

Watershed-based approaches such as the San Miguel Watershed Initiative directly address many of the shortcomings of traditional environmental and water resource management programs. Traditional approaches are characterized by fragmented decision processes that focus on narrowly defined environmental problems (e.g., water supply, point source pollution control, nonpoint source pollution control), often overlooking the relationships between these problems. Furthermore, traditional approaches may create competition between key resource managers and interest groups, pitting neighboring municipalities, landowners, regulators, and other groups against each other.

The San Miguel Watershed Initiative overcomes many of these pitfalls through a cooperative, watershed-based approach. Several aspects of the project illustrate the benefits of CBEP:

- **Integration and Coordination:** San Miguel shows how the CBEP process can serve as a meeting point to integrate diverse ongoing research and resource management efforts in a given geographic area. Project staff noted how the Watershed Coalition was a forum for federal regulators, state regulators, county land-use officials, and others to assemble their collective knowledge on the ecology and sustainability of the region. Furthermore, in the San Miguel Basin, the public held valuable information, and the CBEP efforts represented a means to elicit and apply this information. For example, in the source water assessment, local landowners assisted in identifying possible sources of contamination such as abandoned mines on their land. Overall, such integration and coordination likely yields resource savings by pooling expertise and avoiding redundant efforts.

- **Acquiring Funding:** Project staff also noted how the integration that comes from CBEP efforts can aid in acquiring grant funds for the region. The Watershed Coalition represents a focus for regional efforts as well as a forum for ensuring that research findings are applied to real-life problems. Furthermore, action items that are part of the Watershed Plan are assured to have the support of the community because of the stakeholder-directed process by which the Plan was developed. All of these factors help to attract grant funding and may even be explicit criteria/conditions in the grant award process. Similarly, the number of agencies involved with the initiative is an asset in funding the Coalition's activities; that is, small contributions from involved agencies can be pooled.

- **Capacity Building and Sustainability:** The EPA and other agencies that lead CBEP efforts often seek to create long-term expertise in an area to ensure that a locality can manage its own environmental affairs in the future. For example, this type of capacity for stewardship is being achieved through the source water assessment pilot. The seven participating communities are acquiring tools (e.g., source water maps and data) that will help them address discrete land use and water protection issues. One such community is the town of Telluride; it used the source water assessment data in its recent sediment mitigation effort, demonstrating the community's enhanced ability to address local issues using new tools. In addition, all of the alpine and source water maps (and underlying data) have been made available on a Web site. Likewise, as mentioned, the Watershed Coalition has established a continuing coordinating council to implement the action plan, further illustration that initial CBEP efforts have produced enduring institutional changes.

- **Public Education and Support for Environmental Initiatives:** The CBEP approach has also helped educate the public in the San Miguel Watershed and has garnered support for environmental protection initiatives in an area that normally resists government involvement in land use decisions. The very words used by the communities, "resort" or rural, have changed; project staff have noted how concepts such as "watershed," "stewardship", and "excess nitrogen" have made their way into public discourse and feel that the initiative's outreach efforts have contributed to these changes. Furthermore, they believe that the public's enhanced understanding of environmental issues has increased the credibility and reputation of the Agency and may have improved EPA's ability to operate in the region.

- **Early Identification of Future Environmental Work:** The water quality data obtained through the ecological studies revealed unexpectedly high levels of nitrates in alpine waters. The Coalition suspected airborne deposition from coal-burning power plants and worked to obtain air monitoring equipment from EPA's Research Triangle Park. In partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Coalition is monitoring the quantities, potential sources, and effects of external nitrates on this watershed ecosystem. These studies would not have been undertaken as soon, and possibly not at all, without the research conducted under the San Miguel Initiative.

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As discussed, the San Miguel Watershed Initiative reveals a variety of useful lessons on the successful implementation of a CBEP project. The following are most noteworthy:

- The EPA's niche is often the provision of technical analysis that serves as the foundation for community-based decisionmaking.
- CBEP projects can act as an umbrella to integrate ongoing research and environmental management efforts. This integration can help in acquiring funding because of the demonstrated community support for the initiative.
- The tools yielded by CBEP projects can help communities independently manage their own resources and craft policies for local environmental issues such as land use.
- CBEP projects can educate the public on the importance of key environmental issues and foster a clearer understanding and appreciation of EPA's mission.
- Initial EPA funding can represent critical seed money that enables a project to get off the ground.
- Long-term involvement can enhance the Agency's effectiveness in CBEP activities, making EPA a trusted partner.
- Interaction with and use of local experts (e.g., a professor at the University of Colorado–Boulder) can lead to long-term partnerships with people who have a vested interest in the community.

CHARLESTON / NORTH CHARLESTON CBEP

CHAPTER 3

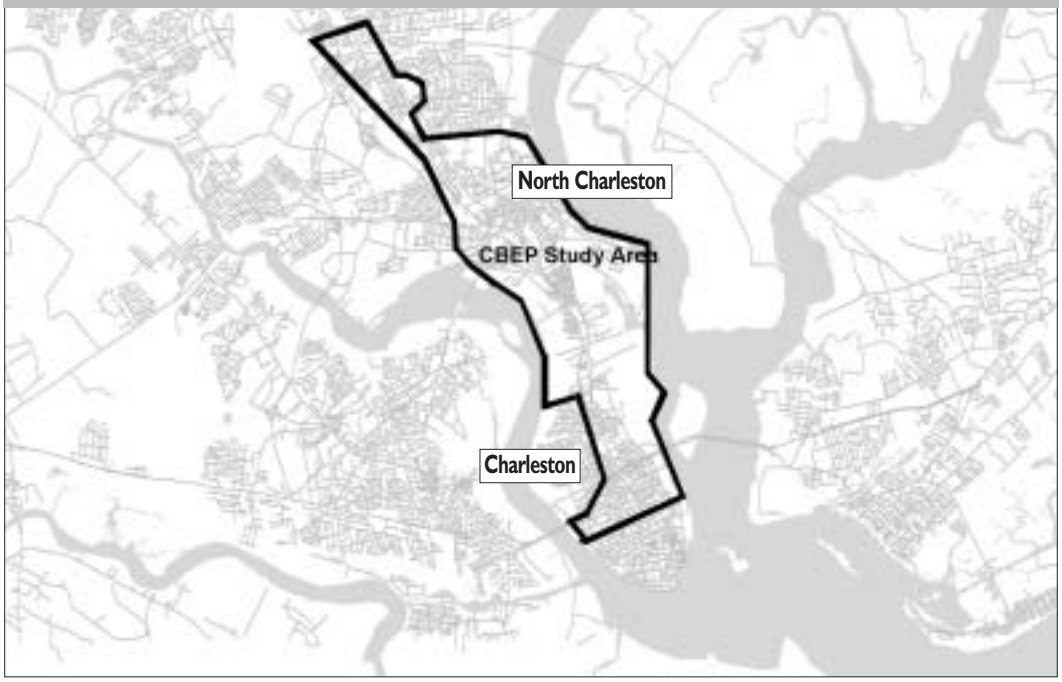
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The Charleston/North Charleston CBEP project focuses on the 17 square-mile neck area of the Charleston, South Carolina, peninsula that is bordered on the west by the Ashley River and on the east by the Cooper River (see Figure 3-1). The area consists of more than 20 neighborhoods in the cities of Charleston and North Charleston and is home to more than 40,000 people, roughly 70 percent of whom are minority and 40 percent of whom live at or below the poverty level. Running throughout the area is an industrial corridor in close proximity to the residential population as well as to the peninsula's abundance of tidal creeks, marshes, and rivers. Heavily industrialized since the 1800s, the neck area faces a complex set of environmental problems, including historical releases of hazardous waste and former and active industrial and commercial sites.

Environmental contamination at one of these industrial properties, the site of a former wood-treating facility, brought EPA Region 4's Superfund program to the Charleston/North Charleston area in the mid-1990s. As part of the program, EPA provided a grant for hiring a community technical advisor to meet with area residents and respond to questions about the site cleanup. Based on environmental justice and other concerns raised by several of the area neighborhoods, EPA began exploring the value of helping to organize a CBEP project.

FIGURE 3-1
CHARLESTON CBEP PROJECT STUDY AREA



The EPA held initial conversations and brainstorming sessions with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and other partners, and in the spring of 1997, assisted in the formation of a multistakeholder group to guide the CBEP project. Based on the Agency's earlier CBEP experiences, EPA suggested that a Community Advisory Group (CAG) could provide an effective vehicle for the community to develop and guide its community-based environmental protection project. The resulting CAG consisted of representatives from neighborhoods and businesses in the CBEP area, local environmental and social advocacy organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies. The EPA provided funding to the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) to support the organization of the CAG. Through a detailed organizational process, a 25-member self-nominated group emerged, complete with a chairperson and other elected officers to serve 2-year terms, a mission and a vision statement, and a comprehensive set of bylaws. The CAG consisted of voting community and business representatives and nonvoting ex officio members, including MUSC and the other founding partners. The CAG also established subcommittees (e.g., a group addressing business/industry issues) to solidify its operation.

Once organized, the CAG confronted a complicated, overlapping set of human health, socioeconomic, environmental, and other quality-of-life issues in the Charleston neck area. The environmental concerns cut across all media, including air, surface water, groundwater, sediments, and soil. Residents had long-standing concerns about cancer rates, childhood lead poisoning, and other health problems in their communities and the potential for links to chemical releases, contamination, and other effects of improper environmental compliance and management. Although the original idea for the project arose because of concerns expressed by a handful of central neck-area neighborhoods, the CAG set the project boundaries to cover the 7 square mile area described above, which encompasses the historical industrial corridor and also approximates the boundary lines of Charleston's Enterprise Community (now the Greater Charleston Empowerment Corporation), a distressed area targeted for economic and cultural revitalization.

Goals and Objectives

The long-term goal of the Charleston/North Charleston Community Project is to improve the quality of the land, air, water, and living resources to ensure human health, ecological, social, and economic benefits. To achieve the multiple aspects of this goal, project managers have established many short-term objectives through partnerships with citizens, industry, conservation groups, and other stakeholders. Initiating outreach and collecting data for setting priorities and developing environmental indicators were two early objectives, and the end results of those projects yielded further objectives for addressing the overall goal.

The CAG developed its own mission and vision statements to guide it in its activities. Its stated mission is "to address environmental quality programs and concerns as they relate to the community's well-being and that of the environment. It exists to increase environmental awareness through education and effective collaboration with diverse groups and to promote and cultivate cooperation with industry and government. Finally, the group exists to empower, create, and sustain a healthy, livable community that will positively impact residents' quality of life."

The CAG's initial objective for the project was to characterize the concerns of residents and other stakeholders in the neck area. Both the CAG and the overall CBEP project have environmental improvements and human health concerns as long-term goals as well as ecological, social, and economic well-being. To accomplish these overall goals, CAG members have established the following short-term objectives:

- To develop a baseline for environmental conditions;
- To reduce both lead contamination of soil and childhood lead poisoning;
- To identify and remediate locations with elevated indoor radon levels;
- To minimize the effects of environmental contamination from former phosphate/fertilizer facilities; and
- To provide targeted compliance assistance and pollution prevention information for small businesses.

In developing and carrying out efforts to address these objectives, the CAG has drawn on several partnerships with industry, government, academic institutions, and other stakeholders. Numerous activities and indicators have been developed to facilitate progress toward these objectives.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The first activities undertaken by the CAG were the development of the above objectives, which emerged from its neighborhood research. To begin to address all of the challenges facing the more than 20 neighborhoods in the targeted area, the CAG and its partners embarked on outreach, research, environmental remediation, and other activities. Through monthly gatherings, public forums, and subcommittee meetings, the CAG developed several short-term and long-term initiatives to help in the achievement of its goals. The short-term activities, the full set of which is beyond the scope of this evaluation, have included river cleanup events, Earth Day fairs, and other outreach events aimed at increasing understanding of community-based environmental protection and environmental awareness in general. Long-term initiatives led by or associated with the CBEP project are as follows:

- **Characterization of Community Concerns:** As previously mentioned, the first major activity of the CAG was dedicated to community outreach events and gathering concerns from the neighborhoods. The priority concerns as determined by the CAG are the ones addressed by the activities described below. Other issues identified among residents relate to crime; excessive noise; poor air quality; the need for economic development; a lack of safe playgrounds and open spaces; improper drainage and flooding; contamination of open ditches and associated safety risks; environmental justice concerns; and poor environmental compliance among local commercial and industrial facilities.

- **Baseline Environmental Data Compilation:** CAG partners undertook an extensive effort to assemble data about regulated industrial facilities, chemical releases, water quality, and other environmental conditions to meet their first objective of a baseline environmental characterization of the CBEP area. The collected data were to represent baseline conditions for the CBEP project. The CAG also intended to complete an outreach effort to make the information available to residents in the surrounding communities.

- **Lead Poisoning Prevention:** The purpose of this effort was to provide education to new and expectant mothers to meet the objective of reducing childhood lead poisoning. Much of the housing stock within the neck area dates from the early and mid-1900s, when lead paint was still used widely. With the help of EPA grant money, MUSC provided training to community members (termed "advisors") hired to conduct outreach with new and expectant mothers and other family members about how to protect their children from lead exposure in homes and other locations. The introduction of lead exposure tracking will provide indicator data for the success of the initiative.

- **Testing for and Mitigation of Elevated Indoor Radon Levels:** Because of past phosphate mining (a factor in the presence of elevated radium levels in soil), the CBEP area is considered to be at risk for elevated indoor radon levels. CAG members began a radon testing survey and a related educational outreach effort and will provide mitigation in homes where elevated levels are discovered. These efforts address both radon reduction objectives and broader goals of community involvement.

- **Assessment and Remediation of Former Phosphate/Fertilizer Facility Sites:** The goal of this initiative is to evaluate the contamination present at nine former phosphate/fertilizer facilities. Where unacceptable risk is found, CAG partners will ensure that an adequately protective site management strategy is implemented.

- **Small Business Compliance Assistance:** In light of the number of industrial and commercial facilities, including many small businesses, two CAG partners, EPA Region 4

and DHEC, have collaborated to address compliance assurance issues. This initiative focuses on providing targeted compliance assistance to two industries, dry cleaners, and auto paint and body shops, which appear to present the greatest potential for environmental impacts to the CBEP area. Researchers are using behavioral change, compliance records, and environmental and human health improvements as indicators of success in meeting the compliance objective.

- **Environmentally Friendly Small Business/Pollution Prevention Initiative:** Focusing mostly on auto paint and body shops, CAG partners undertook an outreach effort to inform small businesses of pollution prevention opportunities. Outreach team members conducted site visits and provided small business owners with information on environmental performance beyond that relating to regulatory compliance. This initiative will ensure that environmental gains are sustained and enhanced in the future and that small businesses are part of the process.

While several of these initiatives are still ongoing, the CAG and its partners are currently evaluating the results of the CBEP efforts thus far and determining next steps. One of the most significant developments since the CBEP project's inception is the decision to incorporate the CAG as an environmental subcommittee of the Greater Charleston Empowerment Corporation to take advantage of issue and organizational overlap.

Like the initial CAG formation process, the majority of CBEP activities have been fully funded by EPA. The lead poisoning prevention, radon reduction, and small business pollution prevention projects were all funded by EPA through the RGI. The project has also leveraged in-kind contributions and other resources from a variety of sources, including MUSC; the USGS; DHEC; other local, state, and federal health agencies; Youth Build and other local nonprofit organizations; and businesses, such as Lowe's and Home Depot. Part of the rationale for making the CAG part of the Greater Charleston Empowerment Corporation is to leverage resources between efforts with similar sustainable development goals.

EPA'S ROLE

According to everyone involved, EPA has acted as the driving force within the Charleston/North Charleston CBEP project from the beginning. The Charleston site became a major EPA project when it was listed on the Superfund National Priority list (NPL). The Agency has supplied specialized information, facilitation support, and sources of funding to launch and carry out all of the activities detailed above.

At the same time, the key role played by EPA has had both positive and negative implications, as viewed from the perspectives of different CAG members and project stakeholders. Given the project's multifaceted nature and the number of stakeholders and partnerships involved, a truly comprehensive evaluation of EPA's role would require additional participant interviews beyond the scope of this evaluation. Working within the limitations of this evaluation, we chose interviewees who represented some of the different viewpoints existing among project participants (e.g., that of EPA, local government institutions, community members, and local NGOs). While the sample size for this evaluation is clearly not large enough to determine the specific extent of concern or other more precise details about particular views, the following observations emerged from the interviews:

- **Impact of Operational Differences Between EPA and Other Stakeholders:** Some participants feel that the project has been influenced by differences in expectations and approach between EPA (as well as other institutional members) and community members. Although the priority of everyone involved has always been to improve the area's quality of life, some residents expected more immediate results (e.g., health screenings, repair work to address risks posed by drainage ditches). Some feel that EPA and others have been overly concerned with developing the project itself, such as through formation of CAG procedures, use of resources to publicize the project, and so on. Some participants noted, for example, that the communities had previously voiced their priority issues, so they felt that the effort to record resident concerns was not the most

efficient use of time and resources. For some participants, EPA-facilitated developmental process was perceived as only further bureaucracy rather than a process to build credibility and trust, and added to the cynicism of residents who viewed previous partnership efforts as failing to deliver concrete results. However, some CBEP participants viewed the structured CAG process as an asset. In fact, these participants credit the CAG structure with gathering different community viewpoints at the table and keeping participants engaged when differences of opinion arose.

- **Ensuring that EPA Funding Best Fits CBEP Needs:** EPA financial resources have played a critical role within the project, in large part because the CAG, which does not have official nonprofit status, cannot receive grants directly. All participants agree that funding is one of the most helpful aspects of EPA's involvement with the Charleston/North Charleston CBEP project. At the same time, some participants have offered constructive criticism as to how and to whom the Agency supplies financial resources. In particular, one participant expressed the view of some community members that instead of funding MUSC, EPA should have provided resources more directly to the CBEP area neighborhoods by hiring a resident to act as an organizer for the project.[2] In the opinion of this observer, empowering residents to assume more tangible CBEP project leadership roles may have overcome issues of trust and helped to increase public participation in many of the project's activities. Along these lines, participants point to the project's hiring of the lead outreach advisors (rather than appointing them to voluntary positions, as originally planned) as an example of successfully increasing ownership of and accountability for CBEP efforts among residents by providing financial resources directly to the community.

- **Striking a Balance Between EPA Support and Facilitation:** The EPA has always expressed the desire that the Charleston/North Charleston efforts be community-led and thus has encouraged operational mechanisms such as the CAG. From the perspective of some participants, however, the project has been neither community-directed nor particularly responsive to community voices. This sentiment originates from perceptions about a lengthy CAG formation process dominated by EPA and other institutional partners, which may have helped lead to a subsequent lack of involvement from residents (e.g., lack of public attendance at CAG-sponsored meetings and events). Participants holding this view would have preferred that EPA provide less overall facilitation in exchange for more up-front support for existing community priorities (e.g., technical assistance for targeted health screenings, repair of drainage ditch hazards, etc.). Some participants also suggested performance tracking and evaluation as a valuable niche role for EPA within CBEP projects.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTFALLS

Confronted with a complex set of environmental problems and other challenges, some of which are described above, EPA and its partners have established an ambitious agenda of objectives and strategies for the Charleston/North Charleston CBEP project. Tracking of some of the project's completed initiatives remains unfinished, and other efforts are still ongoing. Measuring progress toward the project's overall goals of improving the environmental quality to ensure human health and ecological, social, and economic benefits is a long-term process. Nevertheless, participants can point to several environmental and other accomplishments to

[2] *In the case of the Charleston project, the direct role of MUSC created a lack of credibility from the perspective of some community members (uncertainty exists as to exactly how many) because of perceptions about the institution's record in handling previous grants (e.g., a Department of Energy grant). To be successful in the long run (and avoid similar credibility and trust issues), the community organizer hiring process would need to be as transparent as possible and attempt to take community "politics" into account perhaps through a combination of an open resume collection, nomination process, and final selection by a multistakeholder panel.*

characterize the project's progress in meeting the previously stated objectives:

- In the summer of 1999, CAG partners finished the environmental data compilation effort to meet their objective of determining the baseline environmental conditions. They released a draft document titled *Summary of the Environmental Information Collected for the Charleston/North Charleston Community-Based Environmental Protection Program*. The document contains more than 20 maps and tables with data ranging from a summary of area Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) releases to the location of facilities with NPDES permits discharges. The CAG has provided comments on the document as well as recommendations for the next phase of the effort. Based on these recommendations, the CAG is making plans to use the information to assess certain environmental conditions, create maps showing the data points on a neighborhood-specific level, and develop a user-friendly system to enable community access to the data.
- To address the lead poisoning prevention goal, MUSC trained eight area residents who were hired to be community educators or advisors. The purpose of the outreach was to inform new and expectant mothers and other family members about childhood lead poisoning and preventative behavioral measures (e.g., frequent washing of hands). By the summer of 2000, the advisors had reached more than 900 community members in interactions that ranged from brief one-on-one conversations to group meetings in residents' homes. To the surprise of the advisors and their CBEP partners, a large percentage of young mothers were unaware of lead poisoning risks and reported that their children were not being screened at their regular medical check-ups. As a result of the outreach efforts, many families have reported taking their children in for lead level screening. In addition, DHEC CBEP participants are investigating the adequacy of regular lead level screenings within the Charleston area.
- Identification of homes with elevated radon levels is under way. Thus far, testing is complete at 200 out of a targeted 2,000 residences for which test kits have been obtained. CAG members have secured support from the Southern Regional Radon Training Center, which will provide training to the local Youth Build program to complete the mitigation work, and Home Depot and Lowe's have offered to contribute mitigation materials.
- The minimization of impacts from former industrial sites is under way. Preliminary environmental assessments are now complete at the nine former fertilizer/phosphate facilities targeted by CAG partners. Additional results to date under this initiative include a removal action at one site, a remedial investigation at another site, a Superfund NPL designation and subsequent remediation plan at one site, and voluntary cleanup agreements with several responsible parties.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CBEP PROCESS

The Charleston/North Charleston project exhibits effective CBEP attributes in the leveraging of resources to complete assessments, remediations, and other environmental outcomes; increase capacity-building within the community (e.g., lead poisoning prevention training); and nurture multistakeholder partnerships (e.g., through the CAG). Although in some ways the CAG represents the most controversial aspect of the project, its continued operation is perhaps the strongest demonstration of the effectiveness of the CBEP process. Despite the group's difficulties, many local organizations have participated in the CAG (with some requesting to join following its initial formation). In fact, several participants noted that the CAG represents a significant first in terms of bringing diverse community viewpoints to the table to discuss environmental issues. They noted that without the unique collaborative, comprehensive nature of the CBEP approach, this enlarged discussion could not have occurred. Although some project participants questioned the extent to which community voices are represented on the CAG, the group's membership includes the leadership

of diverse organizations, most of which are new CBEP recruits. DHEC, for instance, which had no previous CBEP experience, has maintained active CAG participation all along and has implemented changes suggested by the group (e.g., providing better public access to an environmental release log within its offices). Exhibit 3-1 provides a partial listing of groups involved in the CBEP project, including several of those represented on the CAG.

Although many of the project's objectives were either accomplished or are in progress, frustrations with the initial stages of the CBEP process were still evident. The EPA respondent noted that EPA's method of ensuring community involvement from the ground up—to start from scratch with community members and groups—may not have been the most effective method. In retrospect, the groundwork laid by a local organization such as the Greater Charleston Empowerment Corporation might have been more effective at facilitating long-term community support and involvement. The EPA is still assisting the community in the CBEP process; for example, in early 2002, EPA organized and delivered a workshop for planning boards and citizens on the planning process and methods for encouraging public participation.

EXHIBIT 3-1
PARTIAL LIST OF GROUPS INVOLVED OR REPRESENTED IN THE CHARLESTON / NORTH CHARLESTON CBEP PROJECT

AKA Parenting Center
ACLU
NAACP
Bayside Neighborhood
League of Women Voters
Charleston County Metro Chamber of Commerce
Charleston Naval Shipyard
U.S. EPA*
SC Dept. of Health and Environmental Control*
National. Employee Trades of America
Sierra Club
SC Aquarium
SC Coastal Conservation League*
Rosemont Neighborhood
Union Heights Neighborhood
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Westside Neighborhood Association
Palmetto Community Hope Foundation
Youth Build
U.S. Geological Survey
City of Charleston
City of North Charleston
Medical University of SC*
College of Charleston
Office of Congressman J. Clyburn
Enterprise Community
Southern Regional Radon
Training Center

* Representative interviewed for this assessment.

CBEP VALUE ADDED

One reason for the effectiveness of the CBEP approach is that it brings into focus issues that affect conventional environmental protection programs yet remain largely ignored. These issues can include the role of EPA and other institutions versus that of the community at large, the impacts of differing viewpoints, and the connections between environmental, socioeconomic, and other quality-of-life issues. CBEP projects face these types of issues head on. Even the project participants most critical of the Charleston/North Charleston efforts recognize much value in the CBEP approach. In addition, project participants acknowledge the following value-added aspects of the Charleston/North Charleston activities:

- **Community Capacity Building and Environmental Protection Goals:** Although systematic performance tracking

is not yet complete, participants are confident that the CBEP area's capacity to address its environmental concerns is being enhanced through the project's various outreach efforts and through education of CAG representatives. For example, participants report that the lead poisoning outreach has helped to fill an important information gap, increasing the awareness of a large number of young families, motivating mothers to take their children in for lead level screening, and driving CBEP partners to investigate the adequacy of regular lead level screenings within the Charleston area. This type of community capacity building has the added benefit of helping EPA work toward its environmental protection goals. EPA Region 4 pointed to examples in which businesses have approached the permitting process differently (e.g., providing more up-front public notice and dialogue) in communities that understand and organize around environmental issues. Job training and brownfield development have been encouraged by the CBEP process, which has helped the overall goal of improving the quality of life and the environment in Charleston.

- **Reorientation of EPA Programs:** EPA Region 4 points to the reorientation of its programs toward greater integration across environmental media and issue areas. In one example, the Charleston/North Charleston project established a workgroup from among EPA programs operating in Charleston. As a result of this workgroup, EPA programs have a better understanding of the overall environmental quality of the CBEP area and the cross-media concerns faced by residents.

- **Groundwork for Collaborations:** The most important value-added aspect, as described by participants in Charleston's project, is the extent to which CBEP has worked to build partnerships (e.g., via CAG participation and resource sharing) among the leadership of local groups and institutions and laid the groundwork for further collaborations. The CAG, for instance, has provided the first opportunity for some stakeholders to hear first-hand the perspectives of other stakeholders. Participants noted that although many conflicts about specific issues remain, several personal relationships (i.e., person to person) now exist where there were none before, and these participants feel that this is a critical development for the day-to-day work needed to reach effective, consensus-based environmental protection. The groundwork laid by the CBEP process will serve the community most immediately in the form of an environmental subcommittee of the Greater Charleston Empowerment Corporation, which is planned to assume the CAG's activities.

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Charleston/North Charleston project offers a rich CBEP case study, especially with regard to issues concerning the interaction among EPA, other institutional partners, and the community at large. The complexity of the area's environmental problems, the historical interaction between community residents and institutions, and several other factors all have presented challenges to EPA and its partners in determining appropriate and effective roles within the project. Important themes that emerge from the Charleston experience include the following:

- To the degree possible, CBEP projects should try to build upon ongoing community efforts and address priority issues that stakeholders have already identified. This type of initial approach may help the project to quickly achieve some visible results and thus win community support. However, project managers must also plan carefully to resist implementing short-term localized efforts inconsistent with relative health and ecological risks in the CBEP area.
- Funding residents to perform community education and fill other CBEP roles may be useful in responding to trust and credibility issues. Along these lines, EPA may want to consider pilot testing the use of paid community coordinators hired from among CBEP project area residents.
- CBEP partners should strive for a balance between (1) ensuring that decisionmaking processes are as transparent as possible and possess enough structure to encourage adequate representation, communication, and strategic planning, and (2) avoiding decisionmaking processes that are overly bureaucratic in operation from the perspective of participants.
- Even if they encounter conflict or other difficulties, community advisory groups and similar decisionmaking bodies provide benefits by allowing stakeholders to hear diverse perspectives and build better relationships with one another, a CBEP priority in and of itself.

Finally, given the collaborative, comprehensive nature of CBEP efforts and the complexity of issues they are meant to address, EPA and its partners may need to employ a longer timeframe than normally used when evaluating the results of CBEP projects. The Charleston project highlights several inherent difficulties associated with developing a definitive evaluation of CBEP project performance. Because the project is in a relatively early stage and many of the anticipated environmental and human health improvements have not yet been realized, this evaluation relies on participants' observations, which are subjective and therefore can vary a great deal. For example, although some participants commend the accomplishments of the CAG process, others point to overly structured procedures and a lack of overall community participation. The interviews conducted with program managers, CAG members, and other partners reveal differences of opinion on how the CBEP process should be structured, what actions should take priority, and whether the project has succeeded in meeting its initial goals. Although such mixed findings are to be expected when diverse interests collaborate on an innovative, far-reaching initiative, a complete evaluation of the project (i.e., the CBEP process and environmental accomplishments) will be more feasible once the initiative has matured and all project elements (e.g., the lead poisoning prevention effort, the radon testing effort) have been fully established.

EASTWARD HO! CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

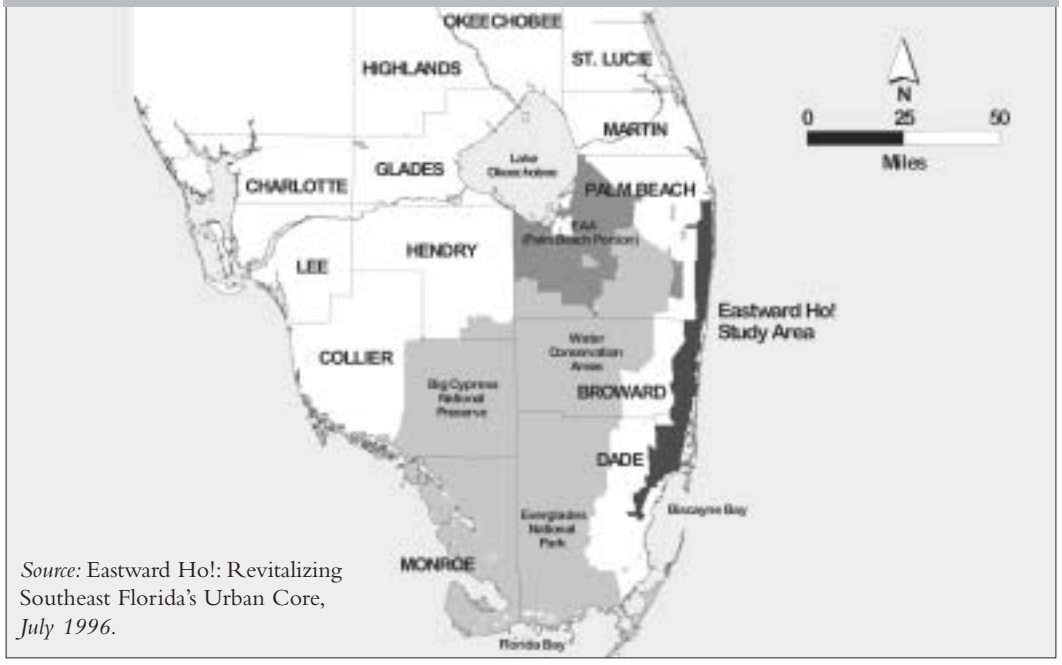
Background

The Florida Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida released a report in 1995 that provided recommendations on restoring the Everglades ecosystem, including how to approach issues of water management, transportation, and urban sprawl. The report emphasized that without curtailment of the westward spread of urban sprawl into the Everglades, any efforts to restore and protect the South Florida ecosystem would have limited effect. The *Eastward Ho!* Initiative, the urban counterpart of Everglades restoration, was undertaken in 1996 as a result of these recommendations. Initially administered by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), *Eastward Ho!* is spearheaded by the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC), in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies as well as Florida citizens. *Eastward Ho!* focuses on the 150-mile long corridor running from Fort Pierce in St. Lucie County to Florida City in Miami-Dade County, near the southern tip of Florida (see Figure 4-1). Major cities in the corridor include Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach.

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the *Eastward Ho!* project has been to create sustainable communities in Southeast Florida. One of the major tenets to meeting this goal has been smart growth through redevelopment. The goals of *Eastward Ho!* are to "revitalize and improve the quality of life in Southeast Florida's historic urban areas and attract a portion of future regional growth back toward [the] communities to the east" through innovative redevelopment strategies.[3] Infill development and redevelopment, both of brownfields and other areas, were identified as major components of minimizing sprawl and enhancing urban revitalization.

FIGURE 4-1
***EASTWARD HO!* CORRIDOR AND SURROUNDING AREAS**



Source: Eastward Ho!: Revitalizing Southeast Florida's Urban Core, *July 1996.*

[3] Building on Success: A Report from Eastward Ho! *South Florida Regional Planning Council and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, 1998, p. 10.*

Consistent with this overall goal, *Eastward Ho!* has identified several specific objectives:

- To support the creation of communities that are environmentally, economically, and socially healthy;
- To improve the regional quality of life for existing and future residents, particularly the quality of life in Southeast Florida's historic urban areas, and attract a greater portion of future regional growth to the urban infill corridor;
- To lessen sprawl and development pressure on sensitive lands that are important to the Everglades ecosystem and regional groundwater supply through the revitalization of Southeast Florida's historic urban communities.

Parallel to these local efforts, EPA has pursued a variety of activities under its South Florida Initiative. The broad objective of the initiative is to protect key ecosystems in Florida (e.g., the Everglades) by addressing stressors such as agriculture and land development resulting from population growth in the region. The urban component of the initiative focuses primarily on control of suburban sprawl through promotion of environmentally sound transportation and site redevelopment policies. Hence, EPA Region 4 Regional Administrator and Florida officials agreed to have EPA participate in the *Eastward Ho!* program, drawing on Region 4 resources as well as resources available from EPA Headquarters.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Many of the *Eastward Ho!* activities most relevant to CBEP are focused on brownfield assessment, remediation, and redevelopment. The Brownfields Partnership's brownfield strategy is a component of the larger *Eastward Ho!* program. Under the Partnership, municipal governments, state and federal organizations, private interests, and other participants collaborate on brownfield-related community revitalization efforts. In addition, a portion of the *Eastward Ho!* corridor was designated as a National Brownfields Showcase Community in 1998. Although a complete chronology of all the initiatives under the Brownfields Partnership is beyond the scope of this evaluation, examples of recent or ongoing brownfield-related activities include the following:

- **Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Projects:** The Brownfields Partnership manages and supports numerous site-specific projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to assessing contamination, remediation, and redevelopment at underutilized industrial and commercial properties. These efforts relate directly to the urban infill and sprawl prevention goals of the project.
- **Inventory and Assessment of Miami River:** The Partnership completed an environmental inventory and assessment of the Miami River to guide potential redevelopment along the river. This effort addresses the goal of environmental health and ultimately influences the ability to attract infill development.
- **Brownfields Toolbox and Information Guide:** The Partnership will release a guide to developing brownfields in Southeast Florida, providing both information on key contacts as well as step-by-step information on completing a redevelopment project.
- **Job Training:** *Eastward Ho!* was involved with two job training initiatives for residents of brownfield areas, one sponsored by EPA and one by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. This capacity-building project involves training enrollees in skills such as site assessment and reconstruction techniques. A total of 88 students have been trained under the two programs. These efforts directly address the objective of economic health and ultimately affect the goals of urban revitalization.
- **Brownfields Partnership GIS:** Currently under development, *Eastward Ho!*'s planned geographic information system will include data on waste sites and waste generators combined with aerial photographs and other GIS layers. Targeted users include developers searching for land parcels most conducive to certain types of redevelopment. SFRPC has established a Web site (www.sfrpc.com/brwnflds.htm) to accompany this effort. Information available as of October 2002 includes maps of brownfield sites throughout Miami-Dade County.

- **Brownfields Conferences:** *Eastward Ho!* sponsors a variety of conferences on brownfields. For example, the *Eastward Ho!* Brownfields Partnership Summit was held in September 1999 to address lessons learned and problems encountered in brownfield redevelopment, drawing on case studies of actual projects in South Florida. In May 2000, symposia were held for the banking and business sectors to assist them in understanding what constitutes a brownfield project and to examine brownfield financing issues.

Eastward Ho! conducts a variety of other activities that extend beyond brownfield redevelopment into broader areas of smart growth and sustainable development. Examples include the following:

- **Technical Assistance:** The SFRPC and TCRPC have designated full-time staff to specifically support *Eastward Ho!* activities. The Regional Coordinator, Brownfield Coordinator, and Project Facilitators prepare newsletters and technical reports and conduct public outreach, project coordination, data collection, and GIS analysis to help promote and facilitate demonstration projects and other local smart growth activities.
- **Community Investment Grants:** The SFRPC manages grant funds to assist local governments, nonprofits, and tribes in community revitalization projects. In 1999, about $175,000 in Community Investment Grants were awarded and more than $1 million in local matching funds leveraged.
- **Design Charrettes and Workshops:** *Eastward Ho!* organizes design charrettes and other workshops for cities interested in giving residents, businesses, and other stakeholders a direct voice in the planning and design of key development projects.

Consistent with these diverse participants and activities, *Eastward Ho!* is funded from an array of sources. It is primarily implemented by local government and private sector activities and local investment in the region's historic communities. *Eastward Ho!* activities are also supported by dues paid by member counties to the regional planning councils. In years past, the State of Florida provided funding to support *Eastward Ho!* activities and dedicated staff at the regional planning councils. Additional funding has been received from several federal agencies including EPA (see below), private foundations, and developers.

EPA'S ROLE

The EPA's efforts in the *Eastward Ho!* project centered on forming and facilitating the Brownfields Partnership and on providing technical support to specific *Eastward Ho!* redevelopment efforts. These functions are consistent with the *Eastward Ho!*'s overall goals of infill development and redevelopment. The EPA has provided technical support and funding to various aspects of the *Eastward Ho!* project since 1996. Key elements of this support include the following:

- In the 1996 through 1998 period, EPA's Office of Sustainable Ecosystems and Communities (OSEC) provided funding, contractor support, and staff to *Eastward Ho!* Specifically, OSEC provided $900,000 in funding to the Growth Management Institute and its subcontractors to facilitate meetings and analyze transportation issues such as upgrading the existing rail system for use in mass transportation in the corridor. OSEC also deployed staff (one FTE) in South Florida (primarily to support the Brownfields Partnership) and maintained an additional FTE at Headquarters for other program support.
- The Brownfields Partnership received resources from EPA through its designation as a Brownfields Showcase Community. Resources provided include $400,000 as well as a federal employee assigned to the SFRPC office to provide technical support.
- The EPA also has provided numerous grants for brownfield assessment and redevelopment. For example, the cities of Miami, Opa-Locka, and Fort Lauderdale as well as Miami-Dade County have been the focus of approximately $1 million in EPA funding for assessments and demonstration pilots.
- The South Florida Regional Planning Council and the *Eastward Ho!* Brownfields Partnership have received a $2 million grant from EPA

to capitalize a revolving loan fund that will be used to assist in the cleanup and reuse of brownfield sites in Southeast Florida.

- The EPA provides $200,000 for a job training demonstration program run through Miami-Dade Community College. The training focuses on construction techniques applicable at brownfield sites.

- EPA Region 4 and its South Florida Office have provided technical assistance on several brownfield issues, including implementation of an environmental assessment and land parcel inventory for a portion of the Miami River and a similar parcel inventory for the Model City area.

Project managers contacted for this evaluation offered several observations and suggestions regarding EPA's role in the *Eastward Ho!* project. On the positive side, SFRPC staff pointed out that EPA involvement in the project has had clear benefits beyond the fact that EPA is a direct source of funding for various activities. In particular, EPA has provided legitimacy and visibility to *Eastward Ho!*, creating momentum for the project and assisting in securing funding from other organizations.

Other observations regarding EPA's involvement have been more critical and reveal significantly different perspectives on how the Agency can best support CBEP projects. SFRPC staff members stress the importance of local leadership on a project such as *Eastward Ho!* Their suggestion is that EPA find a strong local partner and provide funding not just for specialized activities but for core functions of the local organization (e.g., staff, outreach), allowing local project staff to use its expertise to manage the funding as it sees fit as long as the local partner works within the constraints established by EPA. Although community members do not expect or suggest that EPA provide a blank check, fewer restrictions on EPA funds would provide the maximum flexibility to design programs that leverage local funds and engage communities. Additionally, local partners emphasized the insight, perspective, and resources that federal agencies can bring to a joint collaboration but also expressed concerns that federal partners and contractors at times presume that local partners are unsophisticated.

In contrast, EPA headquarters staff highlighted several factors affecting how the Agency interacts with local organizations:

- The Agency recognizes an obligation to bring national expertise to bear on policy problems; hence, the decision to involve contractors and Headquarters staff. The EPA points out that many technical policy issues benefit from broad expertise and that local entities cannot be left to solve all problems for themselves.[4]

- The EPA needs to operate within the limits of its statutory authority and support the objectives outlined in the Agency's strategic plan. Because of its focus, EPA cannot simply provide funding to local organizations without directing how the money is to be spent.

- Direct involvement of EPA Headquarters in projects such as *Eastward Ho!* is suboptimal. Strong support from the EPA Region is preferable to direct Headquarters participation, and those interviewed felt that the resources and commitment from the EPA Regional office have been insufficient.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTFALLS

Several accomplishments demonstrate how *Eastward Ho!* has helped improve the quality of life in South Florida and protect the resources on which the region depends. Most notable is the success that the project is having in encouraging the fundamental land use and demographic shifts that are at the core of the Everglades protection strategy (i.e., reclaiming and revitalizing the urban corridor of eastern Florida). The activities listed in the preceding sections demonstrate the myriad directions in which the project is progressing. Below, we discuss additional redevelopment efforts under way, the influence these projects are having, and other measures of *Eastward Ho!*'s accomplishments.

[4] *It is noteworthy that, in some cases, local leadership and national expertise may not be mutually exclusive; for example, a national expert may be available at a local university to assist with a CBEP project.*

Demonstration Projects Under Way

As noted, *Eastward Ho!* has provided assistance to an array of community redevelopment demonstration projects that seek to improve the environmental quality and overall livability of urban areas. Projects currently under way include revitalization efforts in Stuart, Overtown, North Miami, North Miami Beach, Ojus, Homestead, Goulds, Little Haiti, El Portal, Miami Shores, Oakland Park, Boca Raton, San Castle, Kendall, Fort Pierce, Hollywood, and Pompano Beach. Although most of these projects are still in process, several have moved on to the advanced planning stage, including the following:

- The city of Fort Pierce has identified a developer and approved the proposed design of the $18 million Marina Square Project on the city's waterfront. The waterfront hotel complex will include restaurants, meeting facilities, and retail stores. Fort Pierce's redeveloped downtown will include a new public library, mixed-income apartments, offices, and a waterfront park.
- In April 2002, the city of North Miami Beach celebrated the opening of Hanford Boulevard, a key boulevard anchoring the city's downtown business district revitalization. Planning for this effort began in 1999 when the city was awarded an *Eastward Ho!* design charrette (a collaborative process, often a series of meetings for empowering people who are important to a project to work together and support the goals and results) and engaged the public in planning. The city followed up this community planning effort by developing a revitalization strategy featuring revised land development regulations, updated zoning codes to allow mixed uses, business incentives, and grants to help pay for improvements.
- Developers have planned a nine-story residential, retail, and office building on the site of the old Boca Raton News building in downtown Boca Raton. This site is near the Royal Palm Plaza, a shopping center that is already being redeveloped as apartments, condominiums, and office space.

In promoting these projects, developers have been promoting many of the same advantages of urban living that environmental proponents highlight: shorter commuting distances, decreased dependence on automobiles, and efficient use of underutilized urban land. Other advantages of infill development include the aesthetic appeal of older, more established neighborhoods as well as socioeconomic considerations such as increased racial and economic diversity.

Kendall Redevelopment Project

The redevelopment vision for the suburban region of Kendall in south Miami-Dade County is perhaps one of the most dramatic examples of the development strategies implemented under *Eastward Ho!* What began as a local chamber of commerce discussion over where the community could hold a parade became a crusade to develop a city center and a town identity. The area had been epitomized by the extremely successful Dadeland Mall, a sprawling suburban complex that draws shoppers from the community, from Miami, and from all over the world (more than half of the clientele are shoppers who have come to the community specifically to shop). ChamberSOUTH, which covers approximately half of Miami-Dade County, spearheaded a revamping of the zoning ordinances with the support of the community, the Miami-Dade County Planning Office, and SFRPC. The Kendall project is different from many redevelopment projects nationwide in that it is proposed for an area that is currently undergoing a sustained economic boom, despite downturns in the general economy. Rather than being a solution for urban blight and urban flight, the Kendall vision is to recreate an economically successful area to include environmental and social concerns.

An initial weeklong charrette led to a vision for the area that focused on developing a pedestrian-friendly town center. Objectives included redesigning streets to provide shade trees and pedestrian crossways, adding colonnades to buildings to encourage outdoor transit, and replacing current residential areas with denser structures. The local land development rules were amended to require new or replacement construction to meet an updated set of codes that would require increased public open space, increased pedestrian thruways, and denser development. The Kendall area already had the benefit of being near two major transit stations, which provide greater flexibility in

planning to reduce the number of cars used for daily commuting.

With buy-in from the public, businesses, and local government, the Kendall area has developed a 30-year plan for redevelopment. Officials at the Miami-Dade County Planning Office emphasized the importance of having a local business group (ChamberSOUTH) spearhead this effort. This choice validated the project's importance from a community perspective and created a unique public–private collaboration. Currently, redevelopment plans are under way for more than 200 acres of land, resulting in 4,000 new residential units. Primarily, the plans involve removing low-rise (2- to 3-story) apartment buildings and replacing them with 25- to 30-story buildings. More than 300,000 square feet of commercial units are also currently proposed by developers. The continuing growth and expansion demands in the South Florida area are fueling this redevelopment surge.

Demographic and Land Use Impacts

A major goal of the *Eastward Ho!* effort is to attract people and development back to Southeastern Florida's historic urban areas. The influence that infill development is having is evidenced by trends in South Florida's real estate market. Although systematic data for the *Eastward Ho!* corridor are not readily available, a variety of articles in local newspapers and magazines demonstrate that demographic changes are under way:

- Observers point out that "a small but growing number of Floridians are heading back downtown, choosing new and renovated condominiums, apartments, and townhomes that are close to jobs, shopping, and entertainment." [5]

- This influx of homebuyers is having a direct impact on real estate markets. One article states that "agents are scrambling for listings and sellers getting full-price offers—or above—within hours or days." [6]

- Many of these changes, including notable increases in property values, are occurring in areas where *Eastward Ho!* has focused its efforts—such as in Kendall. For example, one article notes that "a $250,000, four-bedroom, three-bath, 2,800-square-foot home with a pool in the west would cost $400,000 in East Kendall." [7]

The real estate boom in the *Eastward Ho!* corridor extends beyond just single-family residential housing. Multifamily residential, retail, and office space are in demand as well. For example, along Miami's Brickell Avenue, near the Miami River, a variety of mixed-use and larger condominium projects are under way. Similarly, downtown Boca Raton is attracting mixed-used development, including conversion of old office buildings into retail/residential/office complexes (see above).[8] Considered together, these changes offer indirect evidence that development pressure may be decreasing in areas near the Everglades and groundwater supplies, thereby fulfilling the primary environmental objectives of the *Eastward Ho!* initiative.

Although the move eastward has its detractors, who point to increased traffic congestion and other issues, support for redevelopment of urban centers is widespread. Examples of this support include the following:

- Commissioners for Miami-Dade County voted 10 to 0 to approve the zoning plan for downtown Kendall.[9]

- Local newspapers and other publications have praised *Eastward Ho!* in editorials that recognize the need for redevelopment and that call attention to how the program fits into the larger Everglades protection plan.[10]

The evidence remains anecdotal, and quantitative change is difficult to show because there was no system of direct measures incorporated into the project.

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[5] *"Heading Back Downtown,"* Florida Trend Magazine, *August 2000.*
[6] *"Real Estate on the Move,"* Miami Herald, *August 13, 2000.*
[7] *"Real Estate on the Move,"* Miami Herald, *August 13, 2000.*
[8] *"Nine-Story Residential, Retail Building Proposed in Downtown Boca,"* Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel, *August 11, 2000.*
[9] *"Zoning Approved to Change Look of Kendall Community,"* Miami Herald, *December 17, 1999.*
[10] *"Making Environmental Peace Saving Water, Managing Growth,"* Miami Herald, *January 5, 2000.*

Other Measures of Success

In addition to the demographic and land use changes noted above, the success of *Eastward Ho!* can be gauged in other ways:

- *Eastward Ho!* has produced several environmental and socioeconomic assessments of the corridor that have assisted in characterizing the problems facing the region and guided allocation of project resources. For example, as mentioned, the effort has produced a variety of site inventories and assessments. Some of these assessments have been completed with direct community involvement; the Model City site inventory will be completed with support from senior citizens trained by the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Management. In addition, under DCA and EPA funding, *Eastward Ho!* contracted with the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University to analyze alternative development scenarios in and around the *Eastward Ho!* corridor.

- Participation in the brownfield training programs also provides measures of success. The training program funded by EPA recently graduated seven students and began the second class in January 2000. Another program funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences graduated 19 students last year and also began its second session in January 2000. A total of 88 students have been trained under the two programs. Approximately 75 percent of the students were initially employed in environmental cleanup-related jobs.

- Local governments in the *Eastward Ho!* Brownfields Partnership area have designated 21 sites and areas, totaling 47,578 acres, under the Florida Brownfields Program. This accounts for 70 percent of the acreage identified in Florida as brownfields. Furthermore, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and EPA have signed a Superfund Memorandum of Agreement under which EPA will forego enforcement at brownfield sites. This provides greater certainty to developers undertaking brownfield rehabilitation.

- Brownfields assessments and remediation have had positive environmental and economic effects on the area. Approximately 400 sites have received some level of contamination assessment. Approximately 78 sites need no further assessment and will not require remediation. Five sites have undergone remediation and are either undergoing redevelopment or will shortly undergo redevelopment. The redevelopment activities will create 375 to 500 new permanent jobs.

Finally, both *Eastward Ho!* and the Brownfields Partnership have established measures of success that they plan to track to gauge future progress. Exhibits 4-1 and 4-2 summarize these measures. Project managers have not yet compiled formal findings using these measures, but the discussion above suggests that many of the goals are being met. For example, the demographic information reviewed above indicates that the goals to increase the percentage of the region's population

EXHIBIT 4-1
MEASURES OF SUCCESS FOR *EASTWARD HO!*

Adequate, and eventually improved, level of service for public facilities in the corridor, such as transit, parks, water, and sewer.

An increasing share of the region's public and private investment in the corridor.

An increasing share of trips using transportation alternatives, such as public transit, biking, and walking, instead of single-occupant vehicles.

An increasing number of residential and commercial projects featuring pedestrian-friendly, energy-efficient, and transit-oriented design.

An increasing percentage of home ownership in the corridor.

A decreasing rate of per-capita consumption of resources such as water and electricity.

An increasing number of local residents participating in *Eastward Ho!* activities.

Adoption of state/federal/local legislation and regulations to provide incentives and resources to improve the corridor.

An increasing percentage of the region's employment growth in areas within the corridor.

An increasing personal income in every socioeconomic group.

Source: Building on Success: A Report from Eastward Ho!, *December 1998.*

and employment in the corridor are being met. Likewise, the various redevelopment demonstration projects are evidence of progress toward Brownfields Partnership goals of increased brownfield identification, assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

EXHIBIT 4-2
MEASURES OF SUCCESS FOR BROWNFIELDS PARTNERSHIP

Number of Brownfield Properties Identified:
Number of properties estimated in brownfield pilot jurisdiction
Number of properties reported to be contained in pilot inventories (if applicable)
Number of properties reported to be targeted by pilot

Number of Brownfield Property Assessments:
Property assessments started with pilot funding
Property assessments completed with pilot funding
Property assessments completed with other funding

Number of Brownfield Property Cleanups:
Number of properties with brownfields assessment that do not require cleanup
Number of properties with brownfields cleanup activities started
Number of properties with brownfields cleanup activities completed

Number of Properties with Redevelopment Activities Under Way

Number of Cleanup/Construction Jobs Leveraged

Number of Cleanup Dollars Leveraged

Number of Redevelopment Jobs Leveraged

Number of Redevelopment/Construction Dollars Leveraged

Number of Brownfield-Related Partnerships with Other Organizations:
Number of partnerships with other federal agencies
Number of partnerships with state and tribal agencies
Number of partnerships with local government agencies
Number of partnerships with private entities and nongovernmental organizations

Brownfield-Related Funding Received from Other Sources:
Funding received from other federal agencies
Funding received from state and tribal agencies
Funding received from local government agencies
Funding received from private entities and nongovernmental organizations

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CBEP PROCESS

Eastward Ho! exhibits many attributes associated with community-based environmental protection. Several of these attributes can be measured and help to demonstrate the success of the CBEP process. Examples include the following:

- The Brownfields Partnership has successfully integrated the efforts of numerous organizations. The signatories to the Brownfields Partnership Agreement (see Exhibit 4-3) illustrate the number and diversity of participants involved with this aspect of *Eastward Ho!* This collaboration has grown over time, as evidenced by the total number of partnerships that the Brownfields Partnership has instituted with federal, state, regional, local, and private organizations (see Exhibit 4-4) following Brownfields Showcase designation.
- The response to SFRPC's Community Investment Grant Fund is also an indicator of the community-based nature of *Eastward Ho!* and the level of community involvement. In 1999, more than 49 grant proposals were received from local governments, nonprofit organizations, Native American Tribes, and other groups. The grant proposals totaled $1.2 million, a significant figure when contrasted with the $175,000 in funding that was available.
- As noted, *Eastward Ho!* partners have conducted several workshops and design charrettes to involve citizens directly in the selection and design of redevelopment sites. Although complete data are not available, SFRPC staff indicate that turnout at these sessions is good, with some sessions attracting more than one hundred people.

CBEP VALUE ADDED

The value added offered by the *Eastward Ho!* CBEP approach is best understood in the context of conventional land use planning. Throughout the United States, sprawling development is prevalent because it is perceived to be cost effective relative to redevelopment in urban areas.

The collective result of individual decisions by municipalities and developers is loss of rural open space and continued neglect of defunct industrial, commercial, and inner-city residential areas. In South Florida, this sprawl pattern is especially detrimental because of the threat it poses to the sensitive Everglades ecosystem. As discussed below, however, *Eastward Ho!* offers a distinct alternative by supporting cooperative decisionmaking across municipalities and educating planners on the advantages of brownfield redevelopment and regional land use planning.

One positive outcome of the CBEP process as it was applied in *Eastward Ho!* pertains to the collaboration between neighboring municipalities and counties. SFRPC staff noted that municipalities typically compete to attract development and other forms of business activity. *Eastward Ho!* represents a more collaborative model of regional planning whereby city and county governments recognize shared environmental and social concerns and develop regional solutions. SFRPC staff note how the regional cooperation inspired by *Eastward Ho!* has been transferred over to other programs and policy areas. For example, staff point out that the Empowerment Zone designation recently awarded to Miami-Dade County resulted from a joint application effort by the county and five municipalities. The application explicitly cited the *Eastward Ho!* principles and the success realized by the cooperative efforts implemented under *Eastward Ho!*

Eastward Ho! offers other value-added benefits in that it enhances the long-term capacity of the corridor to manage its own environmental problems. For example, the Brownfields Partnership's Toolbox/Information Guide is directly targeted to giving region-specific guidance to South Florida municipalities considering brownfield redevelopment. The brownfields conferences sponsored by *Eastward Ho!* have similar objectives. This transfer of practical and technical knowledge provides momentum for brownfield redevelopment and helps develop self-sustaining institutions in corridor cities.

Eastward Ho! has produced further value by promoting the smart growth concepts that EPA and other federal agencies espouse. The basic themes of *Eastward Ho!*—urban revitalization and sprawl reduction—are central tenets of smart growth as well. Through successful demonstration projects and other activities, the *Eastward*

EXHIBIT 4-3
BROWNFIELDS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES

Miami-Dade County*
Broward County
Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
(Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties)
Palm Beach County
Florida Department of Community Affairs
South Florida Housing and Community Development Coalition
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Liberia Economic and Social Development
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
South Florida Regional Planning Council*
Greater Miami Neighborhoods, Inc.
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Broward Soil and Water Conservation District
National Audubon Society Everglades Ecosystem Restoration Campaign
Cities of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Hialeah, North Miami Beach,
and Pompano Beach
Florida International University, Hemispheric Center for
Environmental Technology
Miami/Miami-Dade County Weed & Seed
The Conservation Fund
The Trust for Public Land

*Interviewed for this assessment.
Source: Evaluation of EPA's Community Based Efforts in South Florida, *ICF Consulting Group, January 1999.*

EXHIBIT 4-4
NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS UNDER THE BROWNFIELDS SHOWCASE PILOT (THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 1999)

Number of Partnerships with other Federal Agencies	15
Number of Partnerships with State Government Agencies	4
Number of Partnerships with Regional Government Agencies	2
Number of Partnerships with Local Government Agencies	12
Number of Partnerships with Private Sources and Nongovernmental Organizations	31

Ho! project provides a working example of smart growth concepts in action, illustrating the links between land use planning, brownfield redevelopment, sustainable economic growth, and ecosystem protection. Without community input and acceptance, the changes to land use and development patterns in South Florida may never have been undertaken.

Another value-added aspect of supporting specific CBEP efforts is the potential for influencing broader local and state policy. In 1997, the Florida Legislature passed brownfield redevelopment legislation that incorporates many of the recommendations generated by the *Eastward Ho!* legislative task force teams. The legislation provides financial incentives to municipalities and businesses to redevelop infill sites and introduces a process for community participation. In addition, in 1999, the Florida Legislature passed the Urban Infill and Redevelopment Grant Assistance Program that provides funding, in part, to Brownfields Showcase Communities.

Finally, performing the *Eastward Ho!* project as a community-based, collaborative effort was instrumental in revealing and addressing key impediments to the region's redevelopment goals. For example, initial brownfields development efforts in South Florida were not successful because of the outdated water infrastructure in the region (e.g., many properties still use septic systems and private groundwater supplies), and this discouraged potential reinvestment. Direct collaboration with developers and local officials diagnosed this problem. Through on-the-ground place-based efforts such as *Eastward Ho!*, EPA can better understand these types of cross-media obstacles and apply this knowledge in broader regional and national policymaking.

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The experience of *Eastward Ho!* highlights several themes instructive to the Agency's future CBEP efforts:

- On CBEP projects, there is a delicate balance to be struck between allowing local leadership versus incorporating national expertise on an issue, especially when EPA Headquarters is participating directly.
- CBEP projects can foster collaboration (rather than competition) between neighboring municipalities that produces more efficient regional solutions to problems. These alliances can be useful in addressing other regional problems beyond the environmental policy arena and can generate momentum for legislation at the state level.
- *Eastward Ho!* demonstrates how CBEP efforts rely heavily on outreach and development of partnerships between existing stakeholders in a given area. These partnerships ensure broad participation in program activities (e.g., conferences), provide a pool of funding, and produce continued results after the Agency's involvement is complete.

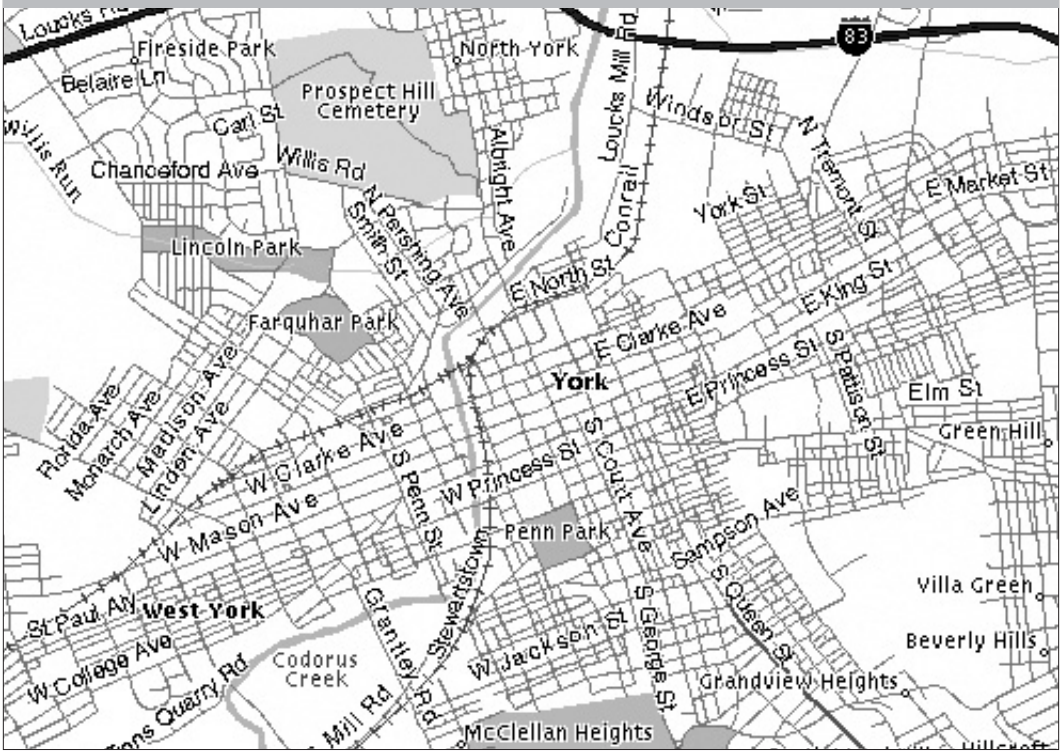
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GREEN DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER 5

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

In 1995, York, Pennsylvania, began the process of updating the strategic comprehensive plan that would lead it into the 21st century. Before undertaking the process, city officials had recognized that the standard planning process, focused solely on land use zoning and related matters, would not suffice for York, a city that already had three centuries of development history (Figure 5-1). An established center of manufacturing by the late 19th century, York, like many other U.S. cities, underwent a dramatic industrial decline in the 1980s characterized by facility consolidations and closings. When the time arrived to update York's strategic plan in the 1990s, city leaders faced a wide host of challenges, including many abandoned or under-utilized former industrial properties and the need to bring in new economic development to replace lost manufacturing jobs. Although still a community with a rich architectural and historical legacy and active civic involvement, York had an unemployment rate of more than 7 percent and was approaching a poverty rate

FIGURE 5-1
CITY OF YORK, PENNSYLVANIA



of 20 percent by the late 1990s. The population had dropped by a third in 50 years, from nearly 60,000 in 1950 to just over 40,000 in the 1990s.

To address York's challenges and opportunities, city officials embarked on designing a truly comprehensive, or holistic, planning process characterized by extensive community involvement. Although the process is similar to standard participatory town planning, York is a relatively large city to undertake participatory planning on such a large scale. The resulting strategic planning effort, spearheaded by the York City Planning Bureau and other city staff, consisted of two different focal points:

- **Community-Wide Visioning Process:** Through several different opportunities for public involvement, such as community meetings and participation on a community partnership advisory board and other committees, York residents produced an overall community vision statement as well as policy and action plans. These plans addressed a range of social, economic, and quality-of-life priorities, including expansion of employment opportunities, inner-neighborhood revitalization, and establishment of greenway linkages.

- **Redevelopment Efforts for Brownfields and Other Sites:** With multistakeholder participation through planning workshops and other opportunities, York crafted redevelopment strategies for city sections of special concern, including its downtown area and Rail Corridor district. For its underutilized industrial Rail Corridor district, for example, York developed a strategy to recruit new environmentally friendly businesses and to address environmental concerns about abandoned properties through brownfield technical assistance.

The 4-year planning process culminated in production of a strategic comprehensive plan document, which was officially adopted by York's City Council in August 1999.

In 1997, EPA Region 3 recognized York's community-based, holistic planning process and brownfield redevelopment work by naming the city the first Green Community under its Green Communities CBEP Program. As part of the Green Community designation, EPA Region 3 partnered with York to further the city's efforts in green development and brownfield reuse. In this evaluation, we discuss activities that EPA and York have completed together as part of the Green Communities Program as well as CBEP-related initiatives that York began on its own as part of the strategic comprehensive planning process.

Goals and Objectives

The overall vision developed by the city of York included a 20-year plan to restore York to "a vibrant urbanized community in which people live, work, play and visit."[11] This covers housing opportunities, safe and efficient transportation, attractive neighborhoods, improved public services, and a healthy local and regional economy. The vision specified various economic and neighborhood goals:

- Creation of investment opportunities in the downtown area for entertainment, shopping, business services, tourism, and housing;

- Enhancement of the infrastructure in the Rail Corridor for manufacturing facilities and business expansions;

- Facilitation of redevelopment of special planning districts within the city through improved public services, facilities, and infrastructure;

- Strengthening and connection of residential neighborhoods through "cleaner, greener, and safer streets, pathways, greenways, and parks";

- Promotion of historic preservation efforts and quality architectural design;

- Provision of employment and public and private services within the city;

- Upgrade and maintenance of public spaces and recreation and park facilities.[12]

In the development of specific projects to meet the overall goals and objectives, York officials established various subobjectives related to environmental quality. These include targets for

[11, 12] The City of York Strategic Comprehensive Plan, *Vision Summary (1999), p.8*.

creation of greenways and open space, goals related to cleaner transportation modes, and environmental goals focusing on the Rail Corridor.

The EPA's goal as a partner with the city of York was similar to the general overall goal of the EPA Green Communities Program: to make the necessary tools for sustainable planning and development accessible to communities as well as to integrate environmental goals into the economic planning process.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

In designing the city's strategic comprehensive planning process, York officials drew on existing public and private partnerships and other community strengths to put public opinion at the forefront. The planning approach helped the city reach the goal of community involvement through a variety of activities, as demonstrated below:

- Publicizing the status and results of the planning process through a supplement to the local newspaper and through distribution of information handouts at locations throughout York;
- Assembling a community partnership advisory board, planning area committees, neighborhood committees, and technical advisory committees to represent specific community areas and to advise York city staff on particular areas of concern for the planning process, such as land use/historical preservation, housing, and community services;
- Holding town meetings and "visioning sessions" to gather input about York's assets and challenges and to map out what community members want the city to be like in the year 2015;
- Mailing a survey to all households in York to give all residents a chance to agree or disagree with the opinions expressed at the public meetings;
- Convening review sessions for the public to comment on the policy plans, action plans, and the complete strategic comprehensive plan.

The priorities identified through community outreach were used to shape redevelopment goals. Several efforts have already started in York to respond to the priorities expressed by the community during the planning process:

- **Rail Corridor Revitalization Initiative:** York's Office of Economic Development and other local agencies are partnering with businesses and others to restore brownfield sites along the 400-acre Rail Corridor that runs through the city. York is leveraging assistance from Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program and Enterprise Zone and Federal Trade Zone designations to encourage businesses to locate within the corridor.
- **Rail Trail and Greenways Expansion:** York's local agencies are working to develop interconnected networks of trails to provide citywide opportunities for recreation and alternative commuting (e.g., walking, biking). This initiative involves expanding the existing rail trails and greenways and making safety and other kinds of improvements. The 20-mile Heritage Rail Trail County Park was dedicated in 1999 with the completion of the Codorus Creek extension.
- **Downtown Action Plan Implementation:** Private and public partners are focusing on implementing strategies from the comprehensive planning process to preserve and enhance the neighborhoods, public spaces, and cultural and economic opportunities within downtown York.
- **Codorus Creek Enhancement:** The city is partnering with local and regional groups to develop strategies for improving the water quality, odor, and appearance of the Codorus Creek and its banks to expand recreation and other opportunities along the urban waterway. A $2 million endowment from the Glatfelter Paper Company, situated on the banks of the creek, has been leveraged into multimillion-dollar support from the Army Corps of Engineers for environmental improvements along the creek.

Interestingly, in neither the comprehensive planning process nor the earlier urban redevelopment efforts did York officials see themselves as undertaking a CBEP-related project. Rather,

the city viewed itself as responding to citizens' concerns about economic opportunity and quality-of-life issues, some of which "by accident" turned out to be environmental in nature. When EPA Region 3 heard about these efforts, it recognized York as a CBEP leader and, as previously mentioned, designated the city as its first Green Community.

The EPA's direct involvement in York has been primarily through the Green Communities program. As part of its CBEP Program, Region 3 has given York technical assistance, including an opportunity to pilot test the Green Communities Assistance Kit, as well as other resources to help the city with its green development and brownfield redevelopment projects. The ongoing partnership is now mainly characterized by information exchange, as Region 3 provides York with networking opportunities by inviting city officials to talk at CBEP conferences and other events. Other specific examples of EPA involvement with York include the following:

- **Green Development Workshop:** In the fall of 1997, EPA sponsored a workshop that brought national experts to York to speak on environmentally sound construction practices, energy-efficient design, and other green development topics. The event also featured a 2-day charrette devoted to redevelopment options for the Rail Corridor.
- **Green Development Strategy:** The EPA funded consultants to assist York in developing a green economic development strategy. Although still ongoing, this project thus far has identified green industry targets with favorable growth potential in the York area and suggested strategies that the city can adopt to increase its share of sustainable development opportunities.

In addition to EPA funding for the Green Development Workshop and Strategy work, York has leveraged resources from several other public and private partners to fund its redevelopment work. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Site Reuse Program, for example, provided two grants totaling $165,000 for site assessment and cleanup plan development activities along the Rail Corridor. Other sources of funding for Rail Corridor brownfield redevelopment include the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. Community Development Block Grants through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development also have been used to restore particular neighborhoods within York. For the strategic comprehensive planning process itself, York used $250,000 of its Community Development Block Grant funds, and the city supplied approximately $200,000 from its own general fund. Perhaps most important, hundreds of York businesses, nonprofit organizations, and private citizens donated their time and services throughout the multiyear comprehensive planning process.

EPA'S ROLE

In its involvement with York, Region 3 has illustrated how to mold EPA assistance to suit the individual shape and developmental stage of a particular CBEP project. The activities listed above demonstrate EPA's role in addressing environmental objectives in York. Although the York story may be unique in terms of the city's "accidental" progress as a CBEP pioneer, it shows that EPA can assume a useful role in a CBEP project even if only on a limited or intermittent basis. Moreover, York demonstrates that the most desirable approach in some cases may be to introduce the CBEP concept and then use the ideas behind it to build upon relevant work already taking place in a community. In this way, both EPA and the CBEP community can leverage their resources effectively and work together to determine the most valuable niche for the Agency's expertise and other assets.

Both EPA and York expressed great satisfaction with the niche role played by Region 3's Green Communities Program. As important as the funding provided were the new ideas and information that the Green Communities Program brought to York's brownfields and green development work. City of York staff members reported that without EPA, they would never have been able to draw on the national expertise that was made available to them through the Green Development Workshop and that the

technical assistance provided directly influenced the way they think about redevelopment issues. Finally, EPA's recognition alone of the city's CBEP-relevant work has helped York staff leverage the comprehensive planning and redevelopment initiatives into CBEP speaking engagements and networking opportunities, something that is beneficial to both York and the Green Communities Program.

York is now continuing the redevelopment process on its own, meeting EPA's goal of giving communities the tools for sustainable development. The public portion of York's redevelopment money now comes primarily from the State of Pennsylvania.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTFALLS

Because the planning process finished in the summer of 1999, it will likely be several years before York can document achievement of many of the longer-term goals outlined in the strategic comprehensive plan. That said, several of the efforts undertaken since York started its comprehensive planning process have begun to show signs of progress in reaching the city's revitalization objectives and in laying the groundwork for future successes. The activities listed above and the projects described below demonstrate York's progress:

- The 2-day brownfields charrette sponsored by EPA involved the Rocky Mountain Institute, the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, and other national experts and was attended by more than thirty representatives from York city agencies and the business and real estate communities. The charrette succeeded in generating a redevelopment design for a Rail Corridor property: the former Columbia Gas/Smokestack site. The York City Redevelopment Authority obtained $650,000 from the State of Pennsylvania to acquire the site, and environmental assessment and remediation of portions of the property is now complete. The original $12 million multitenant office development project envisioned for the site at the charrette was expanded to a $23 million adaptive reuse/new construction project, with the support of State Brownfields legislation and private investors. The adaptive reuse portion was completed and occupied in August 2001, and the remaining new construction was set for occupation in October 2002.

- Redevelopment is now complete at two other Rail Corridor properties: the Industrial Plaza and the former Thonet Furniture Manufacturing facility. These redevelopment projects resulted in restoration of 7 acres of brownfield land; construction of 2 modern manufacturing facilities and commercial office space, including facilities offering services for minority entrepreneurs; creation of more than 250 jobs; and an increase of more than $2 million in the tax assessment value of the properties. Perhaps the most telling indicator of all is a statement from one of the site's developers, who noted that without the efforts of Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program and the other partnerships involved in the Rail Corridor revitalization work, "we would have built on 5 acres of land at some greenfields site outside of the city. We would have ploughed under five acres of agricultural land." Additional milestones established for the Rail Corridor efforts include completion of a marketing plan for the area (set for 2003) and acquisition and resale by the city of all key abandoned properties targeted for redevelopment (set for 2001).

- York and its partners have begun to implement several of the initiatives called for in the downtown action plan developed by the city's residents. In one example, the city of York has joined together with the State of Pennsylvania's Communities of Opportunity program and a corporate partner, Danskin, Inc., to begin redevelopment of a blighted downtown mill site and renovation of surrounding sidewalks and residential properties. The city has also completed connection of the Codorus Creek Bikeway with the Heritage Rail Trail and made other enhancements to this recreational and open space resource, including adding bike storage and wayfinding amenities as well as improved lighting and landscaping. Additional work planned for the future includes completion of a downtown market assessment and initiation of a public spaces sponsorship program.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CBEP PROCESS

York's community-based planning process and urban redevelopment initiatives demonstrate several measurable CBEP attributes of the kind that earned the city its Green Community designation and its other successes thus far:

- Throughout its more than 4 years of activity, the strategic, comprehensive planning process produced several socioeconomic and quality-of-life assessments of York, all of which included some degree of direct community involvement. In just one example, the city of York worked with outside consultants to develop a baseline site assessment and design prospectus for 14 priority sites, including several brownfield properties in need of redevelopment and greenway sites in need of enhancement. The priority sites and their proposed revitalization options were identified in part through input received from York citizens during the comprehensive planning process.

- Multistakeholder partnerships drove the planning process. Early on, the city of York planning team articulated the principle that "planning [is best] undertaken with a diverse group of individuals, residents, businesses, and private, public and nonprofit sector partners representing the entire knowledge base of the city."[13] York later attributed much of the success of its planning to the active private and public partnerships that were a cornerstone of all aspects of the process, from the facilitation of town meetings to the technical analyses developed around the issues and assets identified as significant for the city's future. For example, the 70-member community partnership advisory board and other planning committees drew their membership and other support from a wide array of nonprofit associations, businesses, municipal organizations, and other groups, some of which are listed in Exhibit 5-1.

- Active community participation was key to informing the process. In the first round of town meetings alone, more than 380 citizens expressed at least 2,000 opinions about York assets and issues, all of which were incorporated into the planning committees' analyses. Later, the followup survey that the planning team mailed to every household in York exhibited a response rate of more than 30 percent.

- The comprehensive planning process and follow-on activities it helped generate are illustrations of an adaptive, holistic approach for management of issues related to a community's sustainable development. York's strategic planning process successfully integrated social, economic, and environmental objectives by performing holistic assessments of the city that helped to produce policy strategies on a range of issues, from brownfield development in the Rail Corridor to neighborhood

EXHIBIT 5-1
PARTIAL LIST OF GROUPS INVOLVED OR REPRESENTED IN YORK'S PLANNING PROCESS AND FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITIES

South George Street Partnership
Crispus Attucks Community Development Corporation
York Office of Econ. Development*
York County Industrial Dev. Corp.
University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center
Rocky Mountain Institute
York Christ Hope Church
York Grace Lutheran Church
Enterprise Community Task Force
Goodridge Business Resource Center
York City School District
Historic York
Main Street York
York Foundation
York YMCA
Martin Library
York County Chamber of Commerce
Unitarian Society of York
U.S. EPA Region 3*
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

* Interviewed for this assessment.

[13] *City of York, Pennsylvania,* The City of York Strategic Comprehensive Plan*, July 1999.*

enhancement to cultural and recreation opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, the 104 strategies on more than 40 policy topics adopted in the strategic comprehensive plan were shaped directly by a combination of citizen input and the holistic assessments performed by York.

- The ongoing CBEP process in the community facilitated York's selection as a Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), which opened up additional business and investment incentives. The program was introduced in Pennsylvania in 1999 and reduces state taxes and provides other incentives for business relocation to selected areas. Requirements to be considered as a KOZ include having a development vision and strategy and having both public and private resource commitment. The community support and direction garnered through its planning process enabled York to be a key contender for a KOZ designation.

CBEP VALUE ADDED

In many ways, the vision and strategic plan development in York epitomized the standard participatory planning process. However, the community-based strategic planning process and urban revitalization initiatives that originally grew out of necessity have gone on to provide the city and its residents additional and sometimes unexpected benefits. Chief among these gains is progress associated with the private and public collaborations that took root during the comprehensive planning process and related efforts. Although multistakeholder partnerships are a hallmark of CBEP activity itself, the nature of collaboration is such that partnerships lay the groundwork for more partnerships. In this way, York's strengthened emphasis on partnerships has brought value-added benefits both within and outside of the city's boundaries:

- **Partnerships Within York:** The serious attention devoted within the planning process to the building and utilization of collaborations among a diversity of municipal, nonprofit, and business groups set the stage for expanded partnering afterward. City officials point to these new and strengthened civic partnerships as a key factor behind the last few years of success in implementing the downtown action plan and other redevelopment strategies and in accomplishing other collaborative efforts, such as earning a spot as a finalist in the National Civic League's 2000 All-American City Award competition.

- **Partnerships Beyond York:** Both York and EPA Region 3 representatives rate the partnership that has grown up over the years between the city and the Agency as highly valuable. When first approached by EPA about the Green Communities Program, York officials already knew from the strategic comprehensive planning process that the time commitments and other resources required for such collaborations are well rewarded by the new ideas and tools that can result. In fact, when interviewed by the local newspaper about the city's Green Community designation, York officials, including the mayor, pointed to opportunities to build these kinds of partnerships as the greatest benefit of CBEP activities. The director of York's Office of Economic Development characterized participation in the Green Communities CBEP Program as "a way to build relationships. . . . Success happens when you build relationships."[14] Although it is perhaps still too soon to tell, York is hoping that future benefits of its CBEP-related activities will include new partnership opportunities similar to those it has experienced with EPA Region 3 and the Green Communities Program thus far.

Another value-added aspect of CBEP-related activities that York has experienced is the potential for greater degrees of policy buy-in resulting from active community involvement in the policy formation process. Demonstrating consensus was the swift city council approval of the strategic comprehensive plan and its detailed policy initiatives and strategies for taking York to the year 2015. Additional proof cited by York is the fact that just over 6 months after the official adoption of the plan, the majority of its action items are already undergoing implementation.

[14] *Menzer, Mike, "EPA Has City Officials Seeing Green,"* York Daily Record*, October 1997.*

Active citizen buy-in also has significant implications for day-to-day, less formal policy implementation matters. In one example, York officials believe that the designation of improving the condition of a local waterway as a city priority within the strategic comprehensive plan—and its ensuing endorsement by the city government and the citizens—has brought into focus water quality concerns associated with a local industrial facility and affected that facility's attitude toward the issue.

Related to this aspect of buy-in is the value-added significance of holistic, integrated policy-making in helping to achieve sustainability improvements. As previously discussed, York's development history and interconnected social, economic, and quality-of-life challenges had naturally pushed the city in the direction of integrated planning and policy formation. York understood, for instance, that key to solving its economic problems was addressing its abandoned, contaminated brownfield sites. York has since learned that this integrated type of approach has additional benefits through collaborations and resource sharing in solving overlapping problems (e.g., environmental and economic development groups working together to address both sets of interests through achieving a cleaner, greener revitalized downtown). Through mechanisms such as requiring all local Keystone Opportunity Zone (i.e., state-sponsored tax-free development projects) applications to follow the development guidelines contained within the strategic comprehensive plan, York's integrated planning approach can prevent future environmental and other quality-of-life problems that might arise from ad hoc or poorly planned development. By codifying its social, economic, environmental, and other quality-of-life priorities and strategies within one plan, York has taken a major step toward addressing current challenges and ensuring a long-term outlook toward overall sustainability.

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The York CBEP project may be unique in its relatively organic development, but the city's experience illustrates some useful themes for CBEP efforts in general, especially regarding successful involvement of EPA and community partners. The following are a few of the most important themes:

- Projects will succeed more readily if local officials and community leaders possess the vision and willingness to try out the new ideas and approaches central to CBEP efforts.
- EPA involvement in CBEP projects can be most valuable when it builds upon ongoing efforts in the community and fills a niche role (e.g., providing specialized information or analysis).
- Active multistakeholder involvement through CBEP efforts can enhance community buy-in of relevant public policy and create enduring partnerships that extend beyond CBEP projects to provide benefits in other policy areas.

ST. LOUIS GATEWAY INITIATIVE: ABANDONED BUILDINGS PROJECT CHAPTER 6

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

Aging infrastructure, urban flight, and a collapsed industrial base have led to extensive environmental and health problems in the St. Louis, Missouri, metropolitan area. High childhood asthma rates, high lead poisoning rates, and low life expectancy all served as indicators of the problems. To help address these issues, EPA Regions 5 and 7 manage several community-based environmental protection projects under the umbrella effort of the St. Louis Gateway Initiative. This initiative joins the cities of St. Louis, Missouri, and East St. Louis, Illinois, to identify environmental concerns, set priorities, and develop comprehensive solutions.

With funding from the EPA's Regional Geographic Initiative, Region 7 conducted a Listening Tour in 1997, which gathered public perspectives on the most pressing environmental concerns around St. Louis. The Listening Tour comprised 12 public meetings held in neighborhoods around St. Louis, allowing residents to identify and discuss those environmental problems they saw as most pressing. Key areas identified included air pollution, vacant and abandoned properties, brownfield redevelopment, lead poisoning, and illegal dumping. The EPA then began working with neighborhoods to implement projects to address these concerns. The Gateway Initiative has grown to include projects covering diverse issues such as childhood lead poisoning, air quality, household hazardous waste management, brownfields, urban ecosystem restoration, and the development of environmentally friendly building codes.

This evaluation focuses on the first project of the overall initiative, the Abandoned Buildings Demolition Project, which was a partnership to address the problem of abandoned structures in the urban core of St. Louis. Like many midwestern cities, the city of St. Louis had experienced an exodus of economic activity and residents over the course of recent decades, leaving many buildings (especially multifamily residential structures) to decay. By Missouri law, all properties that are in arrears in taxes for more than three years convert to municipal ownership, resulting in a huge inventory of city-owned buildings. Many of the abandoned buildings contain asbestos insulation, lead-based paint, and other hazardous materials. Because asbestos removal is regulated under the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAPS), city officials perceived significant cost and enforcement risk associated with demolishing the buildings. They demolished only a few buildings each year, and as a result, the problem of abandoned buildings grew, bringing with it an array of related health, safety, crime, social, and aesthetic issues.

Goals and Objectives

In evaluating how best to approach the multimedia problems of the city of St. Louis, EPA decided on a community-based approach. The Agency established the following general goals for the Gateway Initiative:

- Identify environmental concerns at the neighborhood level;
- Establish priorities among participants and government agencies;
- Assist residents and other partners in resolving environmental issues that will improve the quality of life in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

The initial Listening Tour gave EPA a guidebook to follow to address the first two goals. The third goal is being met by the series of projects within the Initiative, each of which has its own

objectives. The objective of the Abandoned Buildings Project is to assist municipal officials and other involved parties in developing a program for safely and cost-effectively demolishing abandoned buildings. The project accomplishes this objective through a cooperative effort involving EPA, the St. Louis mayor's office, municipal agencies, local politicians, and federal agencies with relevant expertise (e.g., Housing and Urban Development [HUD], the Army Corps of Engineers [the Corps], and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA]). Demolishing the abandoned structures not only will address health and safety concerns but also will facilitate new development and overall economic investment in the urban core of St. Louis.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The EPA and the city of St. Louis have engaged in a series of activities to test and codify methods of effectively demolishing abandoned buildings. These activities reflect the overall goals of the Gateway Initiative, from identifying concerns and priorities among all stakeholders to completing projects that improve the environment and residents' quality of life. During the course of the Abandoned Buildings Project, project activities have proceeded in several key stages in the following order:

- EPA project managers met with city officials, community leaders, and EPA program managers (such as experts in EPA's Air, RCRA, and Toxics Divisions) to better understand the root causes and scope of the abandoned buildings problem in St. Louis.
- The EPA established the partnership of key stakeholders to implement the Abandoned Buildings Project. This partnership included EPA, the St. Louis mayor's office, several city departments, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR), the chamber of commerce, a regional planning organization, a neighborhood organization, and partners at other federal agencies.
- The EPA and its partners implemented a process for selecting the buildings to be demolished in the pilot project. This process began with an inventory of abandoned buildings around St. Louis that would help with the determination of high-priority areas for additional projects beyond the pilot. Based on the inventory, the partnership selected a neighborhood (or ward) to serve as the focus of the Abandoned Buildings Pilot Project.
- The partnership worked with elected neighborhood officials (including an alderman) to select specific buildings to be demolished. The alderman served as a link to the neighborhood association, ensuring that residents' knowledge and preferences were reflected in the buildings selected. Figure 6-1 shows the general location of the selected buildings.
- The EPA worked with the Army Corps of Engineers through an interagency agreement to perform structural inspections of the buildings and determine the amount and location of asbestos or other hazardous materials. The Corps then developed cost estimates for the deconstruction and demolition of the properties and provided these to the city.
- Based on the inspections and input from the neighborhood, the project partners selected a final set of 18 buildings for demolition. City officials contracted with private firms to demolish the buildings. The St. Louis Community Development Corporation is now assembling the properties as part of a sustainable neighborhood plan. As of April 2002, no new construction had begun.

EPA'S ROLE

First, staff from EPA Region 7 initiated and managed the Abandoned Buildings effort, taking a lead role in most stages of the process described above. The EPA's team included staff from Region 7's Superfund Division and the Region's Air, RCRA, and Toxics Division. People contacted for this evaluation, including those inside and outside EPA, discussed how EPA's primary contribution was its leadership in organizing the program and building coalitions to address a large problem. The EPA was involved in the development of the stakeholder partnership and in working with local leadership.

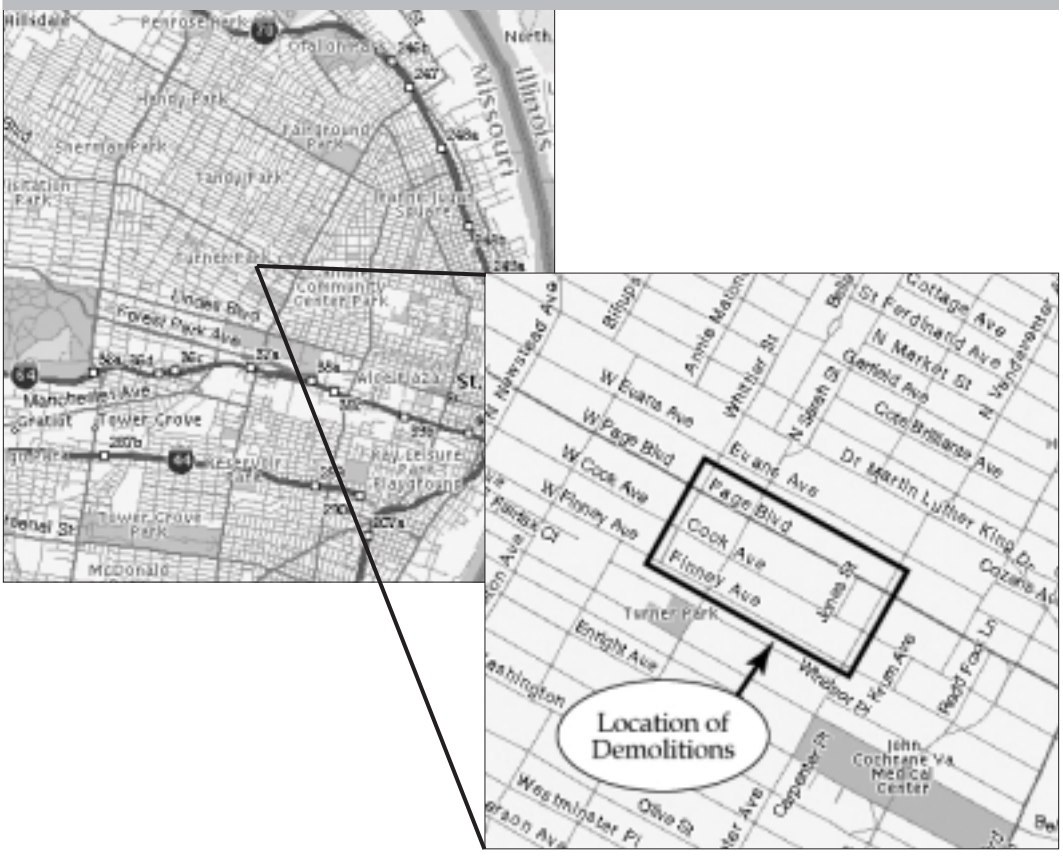
Second, EPA, the Corps, and OSHA provided technical assistance through the identification of cost-effective methods of complying with NESHAPS and OSHA regulations.

Last, EPA staff brought an outside perspective on the problem of abandoned buildings. City departments in charge of building inspection, permitting, and demolition lacked the resources to conduct day-to-day operations and simultaneously evaluate internal procedures.

EPA funding for the Abandoned Buildings Project came both through the RGI and the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER). The money funded various studies, including inspections, improvements of specifications, and improvements to the contracting process. The EPA contributed $170,000 through the RGI to fund the interagency agreement with the Corps to inspect the buildings and develop demolition cost estimates. Over the 3 years the project operated, EPA also devoted roughly one-quarter of a full-time equivalent staff person to managing the effort. As a complement to EPA's investments, the city of St. Louis funded the contracts for the actual demolition work (approximately $120,000), and other organizations such as Missouri DNR, HUD, OSHA, and the city contributed in-kind funding through their work on the project.

Representatives of the St. Louis mayor's office and Missouri DNR offered praise for EPA project managers and the Abandoned Buildings Project overall. They noted that the "federal presence" EPA brought to the project was instrumental in elevating the profile of the abandoned buildings problem and in lending legitimacy and authority to efforts aimed at refining the assessment and demolition process. When asked if there were any downsides to EPA's involvement, however, one city official noted that federal involvement in a local issue was at times awkward. His preference would be for EPA to restrict its role to traditional funding and enforcement activities rather than involve itself directly in municipal affairs.

FIGURE 6-1
LOCATION OF ST. LOUIS ABANDONED BUILDING PILOT DEMOLITIONS



PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTFALLS

The primary accomplishment of the Abandoned Buildings pilot is the demolition of 18 buildings and the refinement of a process for similar assessment and demolition in the future. The success of this initiative is best appreciated in the context of historical efforts to remove abandoned buildings in St. Louis. The city had acquired responsibility for many abandoned buildings as a result of foreclosures on tax-delinquent properties and condemnation of structurally unsound buildings. For many years, city officials chose not to demolish these buildings for fear of the expense and enforcement risk associated with the demolition. Instead, the city took advantage of an exemption in the NESHAPS regulations that allows the demolition of one building per block per year without asbestos inspection, testing, and removal. The number of abandoned buildings far outstripped the pace of these demolitions, causing the problem to grow.

The Abandoned Buildings pilot helped the city remediate and demolish a larger group of buildings in one neighborhood and plan for similar larger-scale demolition projects. In particular, EPA and the Corps of Engineers have demonstrated how more surgical removal of asbestos prior to demolition can reduce the cost of building demolition. If asbestos is removed carefully and shipped to the appropriate hazardous waste management facility, demolition contractors can dispose of high-volume demolition waste at less costly, nonhazardous landfills.

The parties interviewed for this assessment feel that the environmental and public health accomplishments of the Abandoned Buildings pilot are significant. Using approved methods to remove asbestos before demolition reduces exposures to both workers and the general public, thereby ensuring compliance with EPA's asbestos NESHAPS requirements. In addition to satisfying EPA's programmatic goals, the public safety, aesthetic, and economic benefits of the project are also significant. Although no formal benefits assessment has been completed, probable benefits include:

- The reduction of drug use and other criminal activity associated with abandoned buildings;
- Aesthetic improvement from removal of neighborhood eyesores and creation of open space;
- Increased supply of salable land for new public and private development; and
- Removal of derelict properties from city management and potential increases in tax revenue associated with private sale and development of the improved properties.

Although sufficient resources for them do not currently exist, project managers noted that the Abandoned Buildings Project would benefit from more systematic assessments of the health, safety, and economic impacts of the program.

One shortfall in the project has been follow-through on the redevelopment process. The alderman initially supporting the project locally is no longer in office and was not as successful in attracting buyers and developers as he and EPA had hoped. Additionally, EPA involvement in the pilot has ended. The Agency is focusing its limited resources on the other projects in the Gateway Initiative.

An initial objective was the creation of a guidebook for asbestos management and building demolition. During the project, EPA discovered that the city already had a guidebook and gave its information on asbestos management to an Army Corps of Engineers employee who was intending to redesign the existing guidebook materials to make them more appropriate for layperson's use. Although the Corps employee subsequently left the project, the city intends to finish the guidebook.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CBEP PROCESS

The effectiveness of the CBEP process on the Abandoned Buildings Project is best understood by first considering how the asbestos problem was addressed under conventional procedures. As noted, the city pursued few building demolitions because of fears about violating asbestos-removal rules, in turn leaving contaminated buildings in place and increasing health risks. This status quo condition was largely the result of the institutional divisions and misunderstandings that existed between EPA, state regulators, and

city officials. Solving the problem required a more integrated, multidisciplinary vision to recognize the linkages among public works functions (such as building demolitions), environmental policies and enforcement, and public health outcomes. The effectiveness of the CBEP process should be considered in this context.

One of the core CBEP principles calls for a project to forge effective partnerships across a range of stakeholders. The Abandoned Buildings Project satisfies this criterion in three ways, described below.

First, the success of the CBEP process can be assessed based on the number of partners cooperating on the effort. Exhibit 6-1 summarizes the diverse set of organizations participating in the project.

Second, the success is further demonstrated by the ability of the project managers to use existing institutions to involve key parties in the effort. To this end, the staff interviewed for this assessment highlighted the importance of working through the St. Louis mayor's office to engage the support of the many municipal departments responsible for various aspects of the abandoned buildings problem. The EPA recognized that the individual departments may be resistant to procedural changes or skeptical of EPA's role had Region 7 attempted to work directly with them. Instead, the mayor's office helped provide the authority and on-the-ground management needed to implement the pilot project.

EXHIBIT 6-1
PARTICIPANTS IN ST. LOUIS ABANDONED BUILDINGS PROJECT

U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration
EPA Region 7*
St. Louis Mayor's Office*
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Missouri Department of Natural Resources*
St. Louis Municipal Departments:
- St. Louis Building Division
- St. Louis Development Corporation
- St. Louis Community Development Agency
- St. Louis Air Pollution Control Department*
- St. Louis Health Department

St. Louis Association of Community Organizations
East-West Gateway Coordinating Council
Regional Chamber and Growth Association
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

* Interviewed for this assessment.

Third, EPA elicited the input of residents in the affected neighborhoods. Again, rather than perform direct outreach, EPA worked closely with the alderman for the chosen neighborhood as well as the St. Louis Association of Community Organizations to get residents' perspectives on the abandoned buildings problem and which properties should be targeted for demolition. The primary lesson learned was that, while direct outreach may sometimes be appropriate, it may be most effective to utilize established institutions that are trusted within the community and that garner community cooperation.

Project managers stressed the care that must be exercised when working with local people and groups, including elected officials such as the city aldermen. Two key factors contributed to the success of the CBEP process in this area. First, project managers noted that part of working at the local level involves knowing when to move on when receiving insufficient local support. Initially, the partnership identifed a pilot ward but the alderman was not fully convinced of the value of the Abandoned Buildings effort and EPA's involvement. The partnership quickly identified another ward and alderman rather than trying to push the project on uninterested parties, which helped to get the project off the ground. By identifying and working with supportive partners, the partnership developed a useful model for other jurisdictions in the city to consider. Second, project managers emphasized the importance of timing when engaging the support of local participants. CBEP managers should be sure to refine project plans and present local stakeholders with a concrete proposal. At the same time, however, early involvement of local stakeholders will help garner trust and support. For example, presenting the overall Abandoned Buildings Plan to several aldermen earlier in the process may have helped avoid the false start experienced with the initial ward selected.

Discussions with one city department—the Division of Air Pollution Control (DAPC)—highlight the difficulty of communication and coordination on CBEP projects, especially those involving municipal offices. City departments usually work under a set of operating procedures

that have developed over the history of the organization. These procedures usually focus on a particular mission or delivery of a particular city service. The introduction of initiatives such as the Abandoned Buildings Project can, in contrast, require greater interaction and coordination among departments. Although the partnership involved the Air Commissioner during the planning stages of the Abandoned Buildings Project, the Commissioner felt that this communication was not maintained throughout the effort. Specifically, he felt that the mayor's office should have kept the DAPC informed of how the project was progressing.[15] As a result, the DAPC was unable to review the inspection reports for the selected buildings, leading to subsequent concerns over the accuracy of the reports and the safety of the demolitions. This experience demonstrates how CBEP efforts must be sensitive to the culture and operating procedures of local organizations such as city departments. Once an organization is invited to be part of the project team, clear and consistent communication is essential to maintain support for the effort and to avoid creating the impression that EPA and other partners are interfering with local affairs.

The interaction and relationship developed through the CBEP process have led EPA and the city of St. Louis to work more on changing asbestos regulatory compliance. This had long been an enforcement struggle, and it was highlighted during the demolition process on the pilot project, with conflicts between EPA and the city, and within the city, as highlighted by the DAPC problems above. The lack of record-keeping by the city-hired contractors led to uncertainties in potential risk. Now the city and EPA are sharing information, and they have created a joint enforcement effort to encourage increased compliance, including close involvement with the DAPC.

Apart from all these aspects of stakeholder outreach and coordination, the Abandoned Buildings Project satisfies other core CBEP principles. Most notably, it presents an excellent example of how CBEP initiatives can simultaneously integrate environmental, economic, and social objectives in a way that more traditional policy approaches cannot. As noted, beyond the asbestos management benefits, the project also provides social benefits (e.g., crime reduction) and clears the way for community revitalization and economic development in a depressed St. Louis neighborhood. In addition, the project adheres to the basic CBEP principle of focusing on a well-defined geographic area (the pilot phase of the effort targeted a single city ward). The Abandoned Buildings effort by itself is less relevant to the remaining CBEP principles such as holistic ecosystem management and adaptive program management, although the Gateway Initiative as a whole embraces those principles.

CBEP VALUE ADDED

The Abandoned Buildings Project has yielded several benefits that typify the value added that CBEP efforts can produce:

- **Internal Capacity Building:** The abandoned buildings issue cuts across the jurisdiction of numerous municipal departments as well as state and federal regulatory agencies. An important product of the Abandoned Buildings Project has been to assemble these groups and focus them on a targeted problem and geographic area. For instance, until the Abandoned Buildings Project was in place, coordination and communication between the city Building Department (responsible for permitting demolitions) and DAPC (responsible for air quality management) had been limited; the Abandoned Buildings Project helped reveal their common jurisdiction on asbestos exposure and create procedures for collaborating on demolitions that involve asbestos. By establishing these procedures, the pilot project helps build capacity at the city level and create a sustainable system for addressing multidisciplinary problems such as asbestos removal.

- **Refinement of City Functions:** Interviewees also suggested that the effort may help reveal and correct flaws in city operations

[15] *This may be largely attributable to staff turnover in the mayor's office during the latter stages of the Abandoned Buildings Project.*

indirectly related to the Abandoned Buildings Project. Most notably, the city's process for contracting with demolition firms may be reconsidered based on the pilot project experience, since in the final stage of the pilot, many of the buildings were demolished without thorough asbestos removal actions.

- **EPA Legitimacy:** The success of a municipal-level project such as Abandoned Buildings improves EPA's image with key constituencies. Rather than seeing the Agency purely as a regulatory enforcement organization, city officials and the public come to see EPA as a creative problemsolver and partner.

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Abandoned Buildings Project demonstrates several broad themes that may be instructive to future CBEP initiatives:

- The EPA often is uniquely equipped to organize potential partners around multidisciplinary environmental problems to help build coalitions and enlist the help of diverse federal, state, and local interests.
- When collaborating with municipal officials and the general public, it is often best to rely on existing institutions to channel communication. For instance, the Abandoned Buildings managers were able to work with the mayor's office in coordinating among several city departments and with aldermen and the Association of Community Organizations when performing public outreach.
- Municipal departments typically adhere to a set of accepted procedures that are established over years of experience, making the departments skeptical of involvement by other levels of government. Frequently they are reluctant to change procedures without a proven rationale. CBEP projects should be carefully structured to respect these procedural and cultural norms, and to understand why the current procedures are in place even as they seek to refine certain practices.
- Pilot-level municipal initiatives can have the added benefit of helping city governments build capacity to comply with federal regulations and maximize the protection of public health. For example, the Abandoned Buildings Project highlighted the need for coordination between city departments handling aspects of the abandoned buildings problem. Likewise, the project revealed inefficiencies in the process that the city uses to contract with demolition firms and the need to perform greater oversight of demolition contractors.
- The failure to attract redevelopment to the areas where demolitions have been completed highlights possible improvements in the CBEP process. Projects may face some uncertainties in their political support when elected offices change hands. Furthermore, sustained EPA involvement in a project may be critical to ensure that the ultimate objectives of the project are pursued. EPA brownfields expertise might be helpful in attracting development to the cleared areas, but limited resources have forced the Agency to turn its attention to other aspects of the Gateway Initiative.

CROSS-PROJECT EVALUATION

CHAPTER 7

In this final section, we take a broader perspective on the five CBEP projects in an attempt to distill key themes. Consistent with the structure of the overall evaluation, we focus on three questions:

- How does CBEP help or hinder achievement of basic project goals?
- What added benefits do CBEP approaches provide that would not be realized under traditional environmental management programs?
- How can EPA tailor its role to best support CBEP efforts?

Exhibit 7-1 lists significant themes associated with these questions that have emerged in our evaluation. In the sections that follow, we elaborate upon these themes and provide examples from the five CBEP projects.

How Does the CBEP Process Affect Achievement of Project Goals?

The individual project evaluations considered the success of the CBEP process and how this process helps or hinders the environmental and social objectives of the project. Exhibit 7-2 summarizes some of the key findings. Looking across projects, several themes emerge.

EXHIBIT 7-1
CROSS-PROJECT EVALUATION THEMES

How Does the CBEP Process Affect Achievement of Project Goals?

A meaningful geographic boundary can enhance project success.

CBEP projects require carefully designed decisionmaking processes.

Clear roles and leadership responsibilities are essential.

CBEP projects may require special time, resource, and leadership commitments.

Clear performance indicators are essential to project management.

What Value-Added Benefits Does CBEP Create?

CBEP can yield new forms of integration and coordination.

CBEP provides partnership benefits that extend beyond the project.

CBEP promotes capacity building and sustainability.

CBEP efforts create legitimacy and signal community support.

CBEP can influence broader public policy in areas such as community planning, public health, and community spending decisions and priorities by informing public opinion and stimulating public dialogue.

Community-based approaches can help leverage resources and expand community commitment.

How Can EPA Best Support CBEP?

EPA funding, and how it is provided, is of crucial importance.

In its CBEP involvement, EPA should play a niche role (e.g., provide data, technical assistance, or analytic support).

The EPA may be well equipped and positioned to organize diverse interests around multidisciplinary issues.

EXHIBIT 7-2
SUCCESS AND VALUE ADDED OF CBEP PROCESS: OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL CBEP PROJECTS

Project	Project Accomplishments	Effects and Overall Success of the CBEP Process	Value Added of CBEP Approach
San Miguel Watershed Initiative	- Water quality assessments - Survey and mapping of alpine landscapes - Source water assessments for seven communities - Completed Watershed Plan	- Meaningful boundary (watershed) helps in defining stakeholders and encouraging involvement - Participation of diverse organizations critical to development of Watershed Plan - Direct citizen involvement in Watershed Plan development and source water assessments	- Integration of studies and local expertise under one umbrella - Integration of information and pluralistic planning assist in acquiring grant funding - Public education and enhanced appreciation of EPA mission - Community capacity building ensures long-term sustainability of results (e.g., source water assessment tools) - Technical assessments form foundation for newly adopted rules on development in the watershed - Watershed coalition group continues on to independently implement elements of the Watershed Plan
North Charleston/ Charleston CBEP	- Completion of a baseline environmental quality data compilation effort - Training of residents to serve as lead poisoning prevention community educators - Lead poisoning outreach conducted with more than nine hundred community members - Testing of homes for elevated indoor radon levels - Preliminary environmental assessments complete at former fertilizer/phosphate facilities	- Community advisory group includes representation from a variety of community organizations; state, federal, and local agencies; and other groups - Leveraging of resources from different agencies and other groups helped complete the baseline data compilation and other project efforts	- Brings into focus differing viewpoints toward environmental problems and other important issues that tend to be ignored by more conventional policy approaches - Placing residents in project roles can help overcome trust and credibility issues faced by traditional environmental and health risk reduction efforts - Behavior of regulated facilities positively affected by organized, knowledgeable community, creating better dialogue during permitting processes, etc. - EPA program offices oriented toward more integrated under standing of cross-media concerns facing communities - Collaborative process lays groundwork for further partnering and allows stakeholders to develop better relationships with one another and learn about different perspectives
Eastward Ho!	- Numerous brownfield site inventories and assessments - Several major site redevelop-ments - Two brownfield training programs under way; 88 students graduated	- Numerous partnerships with city, state, and federal organizations - Direct citizen involvement in site inventories and design charrettes	- Fostering collaborative efforts between neighboring cities - Impact on local and regional land use planning policies - Deeper understanding of impediments to brownfield development may aid regional and national policymaking - Community capacity building ensures long-term sustainability of results (e.g., Toolbox/Information Guide) - Demonstrates smart growth by integrating land use planning with environmental and socioeconomic decisionmaking

EXHIBIT 7-2 (CONTINUED)
SUCCESS AND VALUE ADDED OF CBEP PROCESS: OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL CBEP PROJECTS

Project	Project Accomplishments	Effects and Overall Success of the CBEP Process	Value Added of CBEP Approach
York, Pennsylvania, Community-Based Strategic Planning and Green Development	- Redevelopment of two Rail Corridor properties (and creation of 250 jobs and a $2 million increase in the tax assessment value of the sites) - Environmental assessment and remediation begun at Columbia Gas site; redevelopment set to begin in the summer of 2000 - Enhancements to recreational bikeways and greenways - Established redevelopment, other milestones within the approved strategic plan (e.g., a Rail Corridor marketing plan to be developed in 2003) - Earned EPA Green Community designation	- Comprehensive, multidisciplinary planning process has produced assessments that guide project implementation - Planning process driven by diverse stakeholder involvement, including that of residents, businesses, nonprofits, and public agencies	- Initial York stakeholder partnerships reach beyond the CBEP project to provide benefits in other policy areas - Community involvement in planning creates legitimacy for policies generated; community buy-in influences behavior of local industrial facilities - Improved capacity of city to address multidisciplinary problems; improved capacity of local developers and other community members to carry out green development aims - Integration of economic, social, environmental, and other quality-of-life priorities within strategic plan adopted by the city council
St. Louis Abandoned Buildings Demolition Project	- Demolition of 18 buildings - Reduction in probability of asbestos exposure - Reduction of crime and aesthetic impacts associated with abandoned buildings - Creation of salable land for new development - Reduction of property management burden on city and potential for increased tax revenue	- Coordination of diverse stakeholders, including several city departments - Effective reliance on established institutions such as mayor's office and ward representatives - Simultaneously addresses environmental, social, and economic concerns	- Improved capacity of city departments to manage asbestos in abandoned buildings; established linkages between departments with shared responsibilities - Assisted city in refining internal functions indirectly related to asbestos management (e.g., demolition contracting practices) - Municipal participants developed more positive image of EPA as a program partner and creative force

A Meaningful Geographic Boundary Can Enhance Project Success

The geographic area chosen for the project has subtle but important implications for project success. First, the geographic area defined for a CBEP project is instrumental for identifying stakeholders that should be included in the efforts. The diverse partnerships formed in CBEP projects are a direct product of clearly defining a meaningful geographic area and securing representation from a variety of interests within that area. As seen by the diversity of projects assessed, communities may not always choose watershed or other environmental boundaries to provide definition for community-based projects but may turn to political, neighborhood, or other types of physical or cultural definitions as the basis of coalescing partnerships. Regardless, active stakeholder participation and commitment is a function of a sense of shared mission or fate. Stakeholders must feel that their quality of life will be directly influenced by a project's outcome.

The sense of place and mission is clear, for example, in the case of the San Miguel watershed, a well-defined geographic area with highly visible issues (e.g., source water protection for towns' water supplies). In contrast, confusion existed among some Charleston CBEP participants when the project's boundaries were set beyond the five or six neighborhoods originally involved in the effort. Some residents of these core neighborhoods stopped participating because they felt the project had been diluted once its boundaries encompassed the entire neck area of the Charleston peninsula. The potential lesson is not that smaller project areas lead to better results but that managers must be careful to set boundaries so that they are both meaningful to participants and well-suited to the project's overall goals.

Eastward Ho! is an example of effective partnering across multiple municipalities for the purpose of regional economic planning. In that case, the partnerships between municipalities helped define the *Eastward Ho!* study area. This approach allows different regions within the study to approach the sustainability and redevelopment goals in different ways, choosing projects and methods that are consistent with the constituents' needs and desires. At the same time, data, expertise, and funding can be shared across the member regions through groups such as SFRPC.

CBEP Projects Require Carefully Designed Decisionmaking Processes

All CBEP projects can benefit from balanced decisionmaking and operational processes designed to fit the collaborative nature of CBEP efforts. CBEP projects should strive for a balanced decisionmaking approach that is simple yet offers enough structure to provide adequate communication and representation. For example, although some Charleston CBEP participants felt that their priority concerns were being lost within an overly structured, bureaucratic process, others credited the CAG structure with enabling dialogue to occur among such a diverse set of stakeholders. In the case of York, the CBEP project also undertook a fairly structured, systematic process. However, York project leaders have stressed establishment of and accountability to a timetable of milestones to assure participants that concerns have not fallen off the agenda. The St. Louis Abandoned Buildings Project also was structured to ensure the satisfaction of key constituencies. Because EPA worked directly with an alderman for the target neighborhood, residents could influence what buildings would be demolished and how the land would be redeveloped.

Clear Roles and Leadership Responsibilities Are Essential

Closely related to the characteristics of an effective CBEP decisionmaking process is the need to determine clear roles and leadership responsibilities for project partners. Three main lessons were learned. First, both the Charleston and *Eastward Ho!* experiences illustrate the importance of trying to clarify differing expectations about project leadership and control among institutional partners before involving the rest of the stakeholders. On these projects, valuable energy appears to have been devoted to overcoming misunderstandings about how different agencies should contribute to the efforts.

Second, it is important to determine how much control is assumed by institutional partners and how much by the community. This is an inevitable issue for CBEP projects because the efforts have a community focus but can be dominated by EPA and other institutional partners because of the specialized information and technical knowledge often required and by the specifics of their regulatory missions and

goals. Furthermore, even after operational issues about community versus institutional leadership are resolved, consensus may not always exist among stakeholders about which local voices actually speak for the community.

Third, technical assessments, data collection and dissemination, and similar work may be best left to professional partner agencies (e.g., SC DHEC assembling the data for the Charleston baseline environmental conditions report), while project facilitation often may be best handled by local groups and residents to the extent possible. At the same time, the diversity existing among the small sample size of five projects also suggests a caveat—EPA's appropriate leadership role on a CBEP project can vary a great deal depending on specific circumstances (e.g., the need for direct versus indirect EPA participation, whether the issues addressed by a project fit within EPA's mandate, etc.). Regardless of the situation, projects should make an attempt to utilize as open and transparent a leadership selection process as possible to work toward acceptance of CBEP leadership within the community at large (also see EPA role section below for discussion of related lessons).

CBEP Projects May Require Special Time, Resource, and Leadership Commitments

To be successful, CBEP projects require time, resource, and leadership commitments beyond those needed for more conventional environmental policy and protection programs. For instance, partners in the York, San Miguel, and Charleston projects all noted the significant amount of time taken for stakeholder meetings and the frustration and resource drain that can result. At the same time, these participants acknowledged that the willingness to meet and discuss issues was a chief determinant of project success.

In some cases, CBEP projects rely heavily on special leadership commitments from city leaders and other local officials who are often accustomed to more streamlined roles or perhaps no involvement at all under traditional environmental policy programs. Observers point to local officials' vision and willingness to test new ideas and CBEP approaches as key to the successes of the San Miguel, York, and St. Louis projects. For instance, EPA relied on the St. Louis mayor's office for communicating with the numerous city departments having jurisdiction over building demolition and asbestos management.

Clear Performance Indicators Are Essential to Project Management

Clear performance measures allow project managers to systematically evaluate the progress being made toward identified objectives and goals. Once indicators are identified, the project progress should be assessed on a regular basis. Particularly in CBEP projects, where the local stakeholders play such an integral role in the project, managers should be sure to select clear, relevant indicators and report results plainly to all interested parties.

This evaluation was made more complex by the absence of clear performance measures on many of the projects. Although some projects (e.g. *Eastward Ho!*) identified simple, quantitative performance measures for tracking future progress, others did not. The lack of discrete, mutually accepted metrics requires that evaluations such as this one rely on more qualitative descriptions and subjective judgment regarding whether the project has achieved its goals. Managers of CBEP projects should seek group consensus on clear performance measures and make tracking these measures an explicit component of the project activities.

What Value-Added Benefits Does CBEP Create?

Beyond facilitating the achievement of basic environmental policy and protection goals, the CBEP process may yield other benefits that would not be realized under traditional regulatory strategies. Below, we discuss key themes that emerge across all five projects.

CBEP Can Yield New Forms of Integration and Coordination

CBEP is uniquely suited to multidisciplinary and multimedia problems. Related to this characteristic, interviewees noted how a CBEP project is often an "umbrella" that merges a variety of disparate environmental, social, and economic policy efforts. Most of the case study projects involved integrated assessments of the CBEP area that informed future environmental management actions. For example, in the case of

Eastward Ho!, the study of alternative development scenarios influenced brownfields cleanup and redevelopment efforts. For York, a planning process characterized by multistakeholder coordination resulted in a strategic comprehensive plan that integrates economic, social, environmental, and other quality-of-life priorities that will take the city into the year 2015. Similarly, addressing the abandoned buildings problem in St. Louis simultaneously yielded environmental benefits, social benefits (e.g., crime reduction), and economic benefits (e.g., redevelopment opportunities). Narrowing the scope of a project to a particular geographic area allows this kind of holistic management and policymaking. A place-based strategy makes it feasible to consider environmental, social, and economic factors in a single project.

CBEP Provides Partnership Benefits That Extend Beyond the Project

Directly related to the theme of enhanced policy integration and coordination is CBEP's key value-added aspect of long-term partnership building. Case study participants reported that CBEP can create enduring partnerships that branch into and provide benefits in other policy areas. In the case of *Eastward Ho!*, the newfound regional collaboration nurtured by the CBEP project inspired five municipalities to join together with Dade County in applying for (and winning) an Empowerment Zone designation.

CBEP Promotes Capacity Building and Sustainability

Perhaps the most noteworthy value-added aspect of CBEP projects pertains to capacity building. By directly involving local entities, such as county planners, developers, public health officials, and average citizens, the projects create a knowledge base and technique toolbox useful after EPA's involvement is complete. Under more traditional approaches, many of these participants would have been on the sidelines or would have made only narrow, specialized contributions. Under CBEP, capacity building encompasses both training local participants and giving them tools to allow better and more independent local decisionmaking. The capacity-building and long-term sustainability benefits of CBEP can be measured in a variety of ways:

- The case study projects have generated tools that can help local participants help themselves. For example, the Brownfields Partnership's Toolbox/Information Guide associated with *Eastward Ho!* offers region-specific guidance to South Florida municipalities about brownfield redevelopment as well as GIS maps showing regional brownfield sites. The San Miguel project has generated a set of widely accepted and publicized sourcewater assessment maps that will help guide the area's watershed management efforts well into the future. Likewise, the Abandoned Buildings effort produced city asbestos management guidelines and a forthcoming instructional video on asbestos removal.
- The case study projects also feature training sessions and other events that provide unique educational opportunities to local participants. For instance, in the case of York, the EPA-sponsored green development workshop and charrette brought in national experts to work with local developers and other community members on redevelopment ideas for brownfield sites. The work started on the Rail Corridor and other properties incorporates concepts from this workshop.
- Capacity building and sustainability are best demonstrated through institutions that live on beyond initial CBEP efforts. For example, the San Miguel Coalition's coordinating council has continued on after the Watershed Plan development activities, independently implementing elements of the Plan.

CBEP Efforts Create Legitimacy and Signal Community Support

In large part the result of the capacity-building and partnership efforts described above, the CBEP approach can be highly effective at creating community buy-in regarding environmental and other policy decisions. The case study projects demonstrate how this buy-in can be helpful to environmental protection objectives:

- Because the approach springs from the community's direct involvement and proceeds with community approval, CBEP enhances the legitimacy of policy decisions. As a result of the legitimacy produced around

their efforts, San Miguel leaders report success in attracting additional grant funding, and York officials point to quick approval and implementation of components from the city's strategic comprehensive plan.

- CBEP can also influence the behavior of the regulated community. In Charleston, EPA representatives report that during the permitting process, facilities are more likely to participate in up-front dialogue with surrounding neighborhoods when the community is involved in CBEP efforts or is otherwise knowledgeable and organized. York and San Miguel participants also offer examples in which local businesses became more attentive to environmental issues and actually altered an initial land use decision in recognition of environmental priorities expressed in the local CBEP projects.

CBEP Can Influence Broader Public Policy in Areas Such as Community Planning, Public Health, and Community Spending Decisions and Priorities by Informing Public Opinion and Stimulating Public Dialogue

Another key value-added aspect of CBEP exists in the extent to which efforts can influence broader public policy decisions. For example, the State of Florida passed brownfield redevelopment regulations that incorporate many recommendations generated by *Eastward Ho!* participants. Protective local land use ordinances and a city strategic plan integrating sustainability principles were approved because of the San Miguel and York CBEP-related efforts, respectively.

Community-Based Approaches Can Help Leverage Resources and Expand Community Commitment

Use of the community-based approach helps leverage resources and expand community commitment through coordination of activities and resource use by community stakeholders and the federal government. For example, in the San Miguel Watershed Initiative, EPA's initial RGI funding was key to the development of a formal Watershed Plan. Development of the plan and subsequent activities were undertaken by the Coalition composed of citizens, municipal and county officials, and other community stakeholders. Initial activities led to grant funding for continued work–grant funding that might not have been awarded had it not been for EPA's original efforts. In Charleston/North Charleston, EPA provided initial funding for and supported the formation of the CAG. In addition to the initial funding, EPA provided specialized information and facilitation support to help community stakeholders carry out the activities of the CAG. Similarly, in the *Eastward Ho!* initiative in South Florida, the participation of community members, businesses, and local governments was key to bringing in greater federal support and participation.

How Can EPA Best Support CBEP?

The CBEP case study projects also offer lessons regarding how EPA can best support community-based efforts that, by definition, address local problems such as land use. Exhibit 7-3 summarizes the role that EPA has played on each of the five projects and briefly reviews observations that interviewees had on the Agency's involvement.

Nearly all local interviewees spoke positively of EPA's involvement (i.e., few had an overall negative view of EPA involvement in community-based environmental protection). Case study participants did, however, have several suggestions for how EPA should structure its support. The following are the key themes that emerged about EPA's role in supporting CBEP projects.

EPA Funding, and How It Is Provided, Is of Crucial Importance

Funding, including EPA funding, is critical to CBEP efforts. Representatives from all five case studies indicated that EPA's role as a funding source was critical to the formation and sustenance of the projects. At the same time, the interviewees noted that it matters how and to whom EPA funding is awarded. Although recognizing the limitations imposed sometimes by statutory mandates, project-specific constraints, and other circumstances, suggestions made about EPA CBEP funding include the following:

- As mentioned, to the extent possible, EPA should consider funding local community groups and representatives to act as organizers and fulfill other roles for CBEP projects.

Participants in the Charleston/North Charleston CBEP project emphasized that funding is equated with trust to many community-based organizations. In the opinion of some, providing resources more directly to CBEP area residents, and creating community organizer and other jobs in the process, is an effective approach for building credibility around a project and encouraging active participation from the community at large. For example, Charleston participants report that the hiring of lead poisoning advisors, or

EXHIBIT 7-3
EPA'S ROLE ON CBEP PROJECTS

Project	EPA's Role	Perspectives on EPA's Role in CBEP Projects
San Miguel Watershed Initiative	EPA Region 8 primarily provides support through technical assessments of alpine ecosystems and source waters; also participates as an equal partner within the Watershed Coalition efforts	- EPA's best niche is often providing assistance with technical analyses that support the activities of a larger CBEP effort - EPA can and should be part of the CBEP effort by sending representatives to community meetings; on-the-ground visibility is important to acceptance - The importance of EPA funding in forming the Watershed Coalition should also not be ignored
North Charleston/ Charleston CBEP	EPA Region 4 served as a founding partner and has since acted as a guiding force through providing funding, facilitation support, and specialized information	- EPA should take into account community perspectives and differences between stakeholder perspectives when determining its role within a CBEP project - EPA funding is critical to CBEP efforts - To the extent possible (e.g., as allowed by statutory mandates, the need for specialized facilitation, and other circumstances), EPA should consider funding local groups or community members to serve as project organizers - EPA should try to fulfill a niche role, such as providing technical assistance or helping with performance tracking and evaluation
Eastward Ho!	EPA Headquarters initially was involved by providing technical support and funding for brownfields; HQ and Region 4 continue to support specific initiatives (e.g., training programs)	- EPA involvement can provide legitimacy and momentum to a project - Disagreement over best model for EPA HQ involvement: (1) provide funding and allow full local control or (2) directly involve contractors and HQ staff to bring national expertise to bear. Highlights desirability of EPA regional involvement
York, Pennsylvania, Community-Based Strategic Planning and Green Development	EPA Region 3 offered technical support and funding for green development through Green Communities program and other activities	- EPA involvement demonstrates how the Agency can tailor its involvement in an ongoing project, providing intermittent assistance as a niche player and building upon efforts already taking place within a community to maximize efficiency - National expertise delivered by EPA and contractors was useful to city officials, local developers, and others interested in brownfield redevelopment
St. Louis Abandoned Buildings Demolition Project	EPA Region 7 has lead role in organizing and managing the partnership	- The EPA is often uniquely equipped to organize partners around a multidisciplinary issue - "Federal presence" can elevate the profile of the project - The EPA should be sensitive to procedural and cultural norms of municipal departments when organizing city-level initiatives

educators, from among residents enabled the effort to overcome trust issues and reach a larger number of families than might have been possible had the project used medical students or others from outside the community.

- Along these lines, EPA should consider providing funding to build upon a community's ongoing efforts (to the extent that these activities are well suited to the larger goals of a CBEP project). Not only does this sort of funding activity generate good will and trust between the community and its government partners but also it is an efficient way of launching CBEP efforts. York provides a good example of how EPA was able to assist the community in building upon its CBEP-relevant brownfield redevelopment efforts through funding a targeted green development workshop.
- To ensure accountability to community members and other partners, EPA should consider providing additional funding for systematically tracking outcomes and programmatic outputs of CBEP efforts. This sort of performance-tracking activity is missing to varying degrees within all the case study projects and is critical to ensuring adaptive management and demonstrating project success.

In Its CBEP Involvement, EPA Should Play a Niche Role

Perhaps the most resounding theme expressed throughout the case studies is the extent to which EPA involvement, beyond funding, is most helpful when it is designed to fill a special need, or project-specific niche. This specialized role may range from providing information to facilitating multistakeholder meetings; combinations of these as well as other functions are possible. Additional suggestions include the following:

- Providing specialized information and technical and professional expertise on topics ranging from environmental risk assessment to facilitation of the CBEP process itself. The key is to determine where this sort of expertise is lacking. York and San Miguel, which both represent small to medium-sized communities, provide examples of projects in which EPA's information resources and professional expertise were critical to meeting the communities' CBEP-related goals. *Eastward Ho!* offers an illustration of how EPA Regional and Headquarters staff could work with a sophisticated local partner to ensure that national expertise is provided in a way that complements preexisting local expertise.
- Providing measurement of project accomplishments. CBEP projects involve gradual environmental and social changes that are difficult to track. Performance assessment data were missing to varying degrees for all of the case study projects. Beyond the need for funding of performance evaluations mentioned above, it would be helpful for EPA to provide additional guidance on outcome measures, how to design CBEP activities to accommodate these measures, and how to ensure tracking of these measures. The information provided in *EPA's Framework for CBEP* provides a valuable starting point on these issues, but most CBEP projects could benefit from more ground-level, customized assistance in this area.

The EPA May Be Uniquely Equipped to Organize Diverse Interests Around Multidisciplinary Issues

Somewhat in contrast to the niche role recommendation above, EPA is sometimes well positioned to plan and lead a multidisciplinary CBEP project. For instance, Region 7 staff recognized how EPA's asbestos management regulations were at the root of the abandoned buildings problem in St. Louis. The staff was able to bring not only the technical expertise needed to guide compliance but also the strategic vision to organize the suite of federal agencies and municipal departments that share jurisdiction over asbestos management and building demolition. A key feature of this leadership role is that it should be temporary. Consistent with the core CBEP objective of capacity building, EPA should lead projects in their pilot stage, handing over control and responsibility to local stakeholders as procedures and roles are established.

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CBEP PROGRAM EVALUATION APPENDIX A

GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (CBEP) PROGRAM EVALUATION: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Project Objectives and Background

1. When did the project begin?
2. Who initiated the project?
3. Why was the project started (e.g., precipitated by a specific event, etc.)?
4. What are the project's overall goals, and how have these goals evolved?
5. What is the geographic scope of the project (i.e., what area is covered? how are the boundaries defined?)?
6. Who is involved (i.e., how many/what kinds of organizations, individuals, etc.)? How do the geographic boundaries or other project characteristics relate to or influence which individuals or groups participate?
7. What is the larger context of the project within the community (e.g., one of a number of programs/groups addressing similar issues, the only multistakeholder community-based partnership, etc.)? To what extent were the community's concerns being addressed before the project began?

B. EPA's Role

1. What is EPA's role on the project? (Select all of the following that apply, and elaborate.)
   - ❑ Project leader?
   - ❑ Project participant or stakeholder?
   - ❑ Information provider?
   - ❑ Provider of technical assistance (e.g., meeting facilitation, data analysis)?
   - ❑ Provider of grants or other funding?
2. Overall, is EPA's role on the project best described as "direct" or "indirect"?
3. Has EPA's role on the project evolved over time? If so, what factors contributed to the evolution (e.g., increased capacity of local groups to run the project, increased need for a central organizer, etc.)?
4. How has EPA's involvement helped the project achieve its goals (i.e., providing unique services or information that could not have come from other sources)?
5. Has EPA received any feedback on its involvement from project participants (e.g., user feedback on Agency tools)? If so, describe. How do you think EPA's involvement has been received thus far?

C. Other Areas of Project Implementation

1. How is the project structured? What organizations or groups of participants are responsible for which major aspects of the project?

2. What are the major sources of funding? (If possible, characterize by approximate dollar figure and source.) What in-kind contributions or other resources are provided to the project (e.g., personnel, equipment, etc.)?

3. Has the project conducted or planned any assessments of the CBEP geographic area?

   - If so, what areas did the assessment(s) cover?

     ❑ Air, water, land quality?

     ❑ Other ecological conditions?

     ❑ Economic, social conditions?

     ❑ Other quality of life conditions?

4. How have results of any of these assessments been used to redirect program implementation?

5. What do you feel to be important factors behind the project's achievements so far? Obstacles?

D. Environmental and Sustainability Results of the Project

1. Are there specific environmental goals and mechanisms for tracking performance against these goals (e.g., number of waste site cleanups completed or soil erosion per acre of cropland)?

2. Are there specific goals and mechanisms for tracking performance for other kinds of objectives (e.g., economic, social: vacancy rate of buildings or employment in local outdoor recreation businesses)?

[More detailed questions to be asked about each specific CBEP project.]

E. Benefits of the CBEP Approach

1. What characteristics of this project define it as a CBEP project?

   ❑ Focus on a geographic area?

   ❑ Collaboration with stakeholders?

   ❑ Integrated consideration of environmental quality across media?

   ❑ Integrated consideration of environmental, economic, and social objectives?

   ❑ Use of diverse tools and approaches?

   ❑ Inclusion of long-term strategies for community sustainability?

   ❑ Other?

2. Overall, what aspects of the CBEP approach made this project more effective in achieving its goals?

3. How has the project affected EPA? Has it helped integrate CBEP into existing EPA programs? How?

   - Has the project's CBEP approach integrated the efforts of offices that don't normally work together?

   - Has the project's CBEP approach allowed EPA to address environmental problems that cut across media or statutory lines or other problems that traditional regulatory approaches don't address well?

4. Has the project helped increase the community's capacity to study and address their own issues? How?

   - Has it helped the community develop organizationally?
   - Has it increased the level of environmental awareness in the community?
   - Has it facilitated participation by residents normally not active in environmental management/civic affairs?
   - Has it increased access to and the use of CBEP tools (e.g., environmental data)?

F. Miscellaneous

1. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to add?
2. Are there other sources of information not mentioned yet that we should review?