

Proposed Viet Village Urban Farm in New Orleans, Louisiana, New Orleans, Louisiana

EPA Region 6 is working with the Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation (MQVN CDC) to transform a 20-acre brownfield into an urban farm. The proposed Viet Village Urban Farm will include community gardens, commercial agriculture, a livestock area, and a produce market, as well as community facilities everyone can use. The project will use organic and sustainable farming practices to minimize water and energy use.



Region 6 is helping the MQVN CDC plan for the cleanup of site contamination and obtain a wetlands permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 18 acres of the site. The City of New Orleans conducted Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments at the property. Site cleanup will be conducted under Louisiana's Voluntary Cleanup Program. MQVN CDC is working with a local bank to acquire funding to cover wetland mitigation costs. Assessment and cleanup of site soils are essential to ensure that any produce grown there is safe to eat.

MQVN CDC developed a business plan to ensure the sustainability of the project, which includes selling produce to schools and a local restaurant. Their plan is to start small and expand after meeting wetlands permit requirements and addressing environmental contamination. When completed, the Viet Village Urban Farm will be a model for other communities interested in developing urban gardens and farms on brownfields or other contaminated sites.

In the event that MQVN CDC is unable to address both the wetlands permit *and* cleanup of brownfield property with limited funds, alternative brownfields will be considered for a future urban farm in New Orleans East. Region 6 will work with MQVN CDC to provide resources for assessment and cleanup (if necessary) through the City of New Orleans Brownfields Program and Louisiana's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund for alternative brownfields.