

Brownfields

Success Story

Forging a New Future in Steel Country

Beech Bottom, West Virginia

Beginning just after the turn of the 20th century and continuing throughout the heyday of American steel manufacturing, the 450,000 square foot Wheeling Corrugating Plant churned out all manner of steel products in Beech Bottom, West Virginia. But after roughly 100 years of production, the historic 600-acre plant ceased operations in 2011, displacing 237 employees.

As a private, non-profit economic development organization, the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) obtained the property in 2012 out of bankruptcy with the intention of securing the asset for future redevelopment and job creation. But environmental concerns—including asbestos and potential soil and groundwater contamination—were standing in the way of that potential.

The Cleanup

In 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) performed Targeted Brownfield Assessments at the site. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment evaluated the property and neighboring areas for contaminants. Phase II assessments consisted of constructing and sampling monitoring wells, soil borings, surface soil samples, sediment samples, surface water samples and one raw well water (process water) sample at the facility. These assessments identified several areas of contamination, which the BDC sought further assistance from USEPA with a 2015 Cleanup Grant. Following cleanup, the BDC was afforded the opportunity to utilize a Coalition Assessment Grant to enroll the entire site in the West Virginia DEP's Voluntary Remediation Program. In 2019, the BDC received a Certificate of Completion and liability release from the program for the site.

The Benefits

In 2020, the BDC executed a \$3,600,000 building renovation project utilizing a US EDA Grant award of \$2,640,000 and private financing of the required grant match. Immediately following that project in 2022, the BDC and the State of WV attracted Pure Watercraft, producer of all-electric pontoon boats and propulsion systems, as a tenant of the newly renovated space. The arrival of Pure Watercraft leveraged an additional \$7,400,000 of State investment into the property along with the \$9,000,000 private investment of the tenant, representing over 120 new jobs. Complementing that investment, is an ongoing expansion by existing tenant, Jupiter Aluminum, which will add another 40 jobs as a result of the liability protection afforded to the BDC as a landlord – giving the tenant comfort to invest in leasehold improvements to the building. Today, the facility is just 20 committed employees short of the 237 employees that were displaced in 2011.

Leveraged Resources

US EDA - \$2,640,000 Building Renovation Grant

Private Lender - \$1,200,000 Financing for US EDA Grant Cash Match

WV WDA - \$3,500,000 Infrastructure/Renovation Grant

WV IJDC - \$1,900,000 Infrastructure/Renovation Loan

WV DED - \$2,000,000 Business Expansion Forgivable Loan

Pure Watercraft Private Investment (Tenant) - \$9,000,000, 120 Jobs

Jupiter Aluminum Private Investment (Tenant) - \$16,000,000, 80 Jobs

TOTAL Leveraged Investment: \$36,240,000+, 210 Jobs



EPA Grant Recipient: Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle

EPA Funds: Targeted Brownfield Assessments (2014, 2015), Cleanup Grant (2015), Coalition Assessment (2019), Revolving Loan Fund (2022), Community-Wide Assessment (2023)

TOTAL EPA Funds: \$530,000

Former Uses: Steel Product Manufacturing Facility.

Current Uses: Multi-Tenant Industrial Business Park



"This town was built by the mill for its employees and the mill was the heart of the community. When the plant closed, the Village of 500 residents struggled to address the impact of the loss. It's been wonderful to have this continued support from our local and national leaders. It's brought a successful new chapter in our Village's history that we are very proud of."

- *Becky Uhly*
Mayor, Village of Beech Bottom



BDC
of the Northern Panhandle

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