



Community Involvement Plan Former Chips Service Station Site



October 2024



Prepared by BRS, Inc. for MVEDGE as part of EPA Cooperative Agreement BF96238700
<https://mvedge.org/homepage/brownfields/>

Overview

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) aims to outline strategies and actions for involving community feedback in the demolition and comingled disposal of the ACM Chips Service Station site located at 4360 Acme Road, Frankfort, Herkimer County, NY. The Site will be developed as a parking facility to provide access to the adjacent walking/biking Empire State Trail. The environmental consultant on the project is Thomas Seguljic, PE, PG of HRP Associates, Inc. Sub-grant applicant Herkimer County) manages the project.

Site Description

The Chips Service Station is at 4360 Acme Road in Frankfort, Herkimer County, NY. The Site consists of two parcels totaling .47 acres and includes a 1300 SF single-story former gasoline station attached to an 800 SF two-story residence. The remainder of the Site consists of paved parking, an advertising billboard, and vegetated areas. The structure was built in 1935 and operated as a gas-filling station from 1938 to 1962. It served as an auto service station until circa 2010 and has remained vacant. The remaining USTs will be removed under the NYS Office of Comptroller Abandoned Gasoline Station Program. The Site contains remaining underground storage tanks (USTs), which will be removed under the NYS Office of Comptroller Abandoned Gasoline Station Program. The EPA funding will be used to address the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) at the site.

Community Profile

Herkimer County is a rural area spanning over 1,400 square miles with a population of Herkimer County 60,139 residents. Since the 1970s, the community has been grappling with significant job and population loss, leading to a decline in the local tax base. Despite these economic challenges, Herkimer County boasts several community assets, including the Empire State Trail, various local businesses, and educational institutions.

Diverse stakeholder groups support the community, each playing a vital role in its development and sustainability. Residents are at the heart of Herkimer County, contributing to its social fabric and culture. Environmental advocacy groups work diligently to preserve the area's natural resources and promote sustainable practices. Local government officials are tasked with making decisions that impact the county's future, while business owners strive to invigorate the local economy and provide employment opportunities. Together, these groups form the backbone of Herkimer County, working collaboratively to address the challenges and leverage the community's strengths.

Community Needs and Concerns

The EJScreen Community Report for Herkimer County reveals significant disparities in environmental and socioeconomic factors that affect the community. Residents face

heightened exposure to air pollution, including particulate matter (PM2.5) and ozone, above state and national averages. These pollutants pose serious health risks, particularly to respiratory health. The community is also situated near a higher concentration of hazardous waste sites, raising concerns about soil and water contamination and increasing the risk of exposure to toxic substances.

Socioeconomic challenges compound the community's environmental issues. The median household income is lower than surrounding areas, leading to economic instability, poor housing conditions and restricted resource access. Additionally, the unemployment rate is higher in Herkimer County, which exacerbates economic difficulties and contributes to increased stress and mental health concerns.

Overall, the disparities highlighted in the report suggest an urgent need for targeted interventions to improve environmental conditions, enhance economic opportunities, expand access to education and healthcare, and elevate the overall quality of life for Herkimer County residents.

Action Plan

The EPA funded work will remove a blighted property in a highly visible location among residential properties and along a major recreational trail that can provide significant economic and health benefits to the community. The Site is to be redeveloped as a recreation access parking area for the Empire State Trail, a 750-mile biking and walking trail that connects NYC to Buffalo. The Empire State Trail Plan (June 2018) led to an investment of \$200 million dollars in the fiscal year 2017–2018 state budget—demonstrating the state's commitment to completing the trail and supporting the health and economic wellness of communities along the route. According to the Plan, a \$1 investment in trails will yield \$3 in medical benefits. What's more, tourism generated from the trail will support the region's economic growth; trail users generate \$274 million in annual economic impact, with that number expected to grow.

The top priority of the community involvement plan is to maintain ongoing communication and active engagement with community members about the project. This involves creating opportunities for dialogue and ensuring that the community is informed and involved every step of the way. To achieve this, Herkimer County will conduct public meetings and information sessions. Herkimer County will hold these meetings to provide updates on project developments, answer questions, and gather input from community members. Recognizing the diverse preferences of the community, we will also utilize multiple communication channels, including social media, newsletters, and local media outlets, to disseminate information.

Addressing environmental concerns is a critical component of our plan. We are committed to remediating site contamination and mitigating health risks to create a safer and healthier environment for residents. Our strategy includes implementing a comprehensive site cleanup plan to address the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM). This plan effectively remediates contamination, protects public health, and restores the

Site for safe future use. Transparency is essential to building trust so that we will provide updates on remediation progress and results.

The draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and the overall remediation approach for the ACM abatement will be presented and discussed at the following forums:

Friday, October 11, 2024, 8:30AM at the Site.

By engaging the community, addressing environmental concerns, and promoting active involvement, we aim to create a transparent, inclusive, and collaborative process that leads to the successful revitalization of Herkimer County. Our commitment to these principles will foster trust, build strong partnerships, and ensure that the project meets the needs and aspirations of the community it serves.

Timeline of Activities:

Timing	Tasks	Lead or Forum
October 11, 2024	Initial community meeting	Herkimer County IDA
September 2024	Public release of remediation plan	MVEDGE, Herkimer County
September 2024	Feedback collection and analysis	MVEDGE
November 2024	Implementation of cleanup activities	Herkimer County, Consultants

6. Contact Lists

EPA Project Officer:

Patrick Peck
Brownfields Project Officer & Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Lead
Land Chemicals and Redevelopment Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2
290 Broadway, 25th Floor
New York, New York 10007-1866
(212) 637-4421

MVEDGE:

Christian Mercurio
Vice President Planning and Development

cmercurio@mvedge.org
(315) 338-0393

Laura Cohen
Vice President Planning and Development
lcohen@mvedge.org
(315) 338-0393

Herkimer County:

John J. Piseck, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency
420 E. German Street, Suite 101A
Herkimer, New York 13350
315-866-3000 (office)
315-868-4928 (cell)
315-866-2976 (fax)
jpiseck@herkimercountyida.org
www.herkimercountyida.org