



San Pablo Property Transformed into a Good Neighbor

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, California

The transformation of an industrial lot into affordable housing units is the most recent accomplishment for the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC). The neighborhood around the former Parker Trucking property, located in a former industrial area, included an adjacent elementary school and a residential neighborhood across the street. Recognizing the property's potential, EBALDC bought the property in Fall 2004 with the desire to transform the industrial lot into residential housing.

The 7-acre Parker Trucking site had a history of industrial uses dating back to 1944. The site was once a railroad spur where materials were offloaded from trains and transferred to cargo trucks. In 1955, a truck washing facility was constructed on the site and used until 2003. The property was also eventually used as a trucking dispatch and storage yard. Operations ceased at the property in 2003, at which point EBALDC became interested in the property because of its size (large, developable properties are rare in the San Pablo area). Even as EBALDC investigated purchasing options and contamination concerns at the property, people were illegally dumping on the property, breaking into its vacant buildings, and stealing items. In addition, the extent of the property's contamination was unknown because of the diversity of uses and products brought onto the site. An EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment was conducted on the property in 2003 to help classify contamination and encourage redevelopment. With the assessment completed, EBALDC purchased the property in 2004. In 2005, they demolished six buildings on the site and oversaw the removal of several underground storage tanks (USTs).

EBALDC split the property into two parcels, planning to sell one to a private developer to build market-rate townhouses, and remaining as owner of the second, for development into affordable housing. With this promising redevelopment plan, EBALDC applied for and received two \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Cleanup grants, one in 2004 and the second in 2005. The funding was used to address soil contamination including arsenic, chromium, lead, PCEs, and other contaminants. Additional cleanup funding was leveraged by project partners, including the City of San Pablo and a construction loan

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The former Parker Trucking company before demolition.

JUST THE FACTS:

- EBALDC split the property into two parcels, planning to sell one to a private developer to build market-rate townhouses, and remaining as owner of the second, for development into affordable housing.
- Remediation cost approximately \$850,000 for both parcels and included the removal of 6,800 tons of contaminated soil that was replaced with clean backfill.
- EBALDC sold a 4-acre parcel to Pulte Homes, as planned, for development of 74 market-rate condominiums.

In addition to housing, the affordable rental development will include a child care center and community room available to the public, a playground, and a landscaped courtyard.

from U.S. Bank. Overall, remediation cost approximately \$850,000 for both parcels and included the removal of 6,800 tons of contaminated soil that was replaced with clean backfill. The parcels were entered into the California Regional Water Quality Control Board voluntary cleanup program and received a No Further Action letter from the state in November 2005.

Once cleanup was completed, EBALDC sold a 4-acre parcel to Pulte Homes, as planned, for development of 74 market-rate townhouses. The money from the sale helped to offset EBALDC's costs of the affordable housing development. The two developers coordinated their building designs to ensure that the two projects complimented each other. In addition to housing, the affordable rental development will include a child care center and community room available to the public, a playground, and a landscaped courtyard. The two developers also updated the property's utilities and surrounding roads, to provide improved access. During cleanup and redevelopment, EBALDC ensured that neighborhood residents were informed of activities, which allowed local stakeholders to ask questions or provide feedback on the utility updates in the area.

This \$27 million project received additional support from project partners including the City of San Pablo (in the form of a low interest loan), U.S. Bank (which provided a commercial rate loan), Contra Costa County (another low interest loan), and the National Equity Fund (NEF) (through a tax credit program). Ener Chiu, EBALDC project manager, states, "The significant accomplishment for this project was making the deal happen between three land owners. It was critical to convince everyone that this project would work and would be a benefit to the city." The neighborhood is already benefiting from the new project by no longer having a facility generating hazardous waste next to the elementary school. The improvements to the former industrial site and to surrounding roads and utilities will help increase nearby property values as well.

The EBALDC development will meet a tremendous need for additional rental housing for those who can not afford to purchase a home in the San Pablo area. These are large, well finished, familyfriendly units that incorporate green materials including linoleum floors (which require no stripping or coatings) and low-petroleum containing carpets. These affordable units opened in May 2007. The market-rate housing already has 45 finished units and will complete the remaining units by the end of 2007. The new use of this former industrial property complements surrounding development as well as the adjacent elementary school. It is likely that these new developments will lead to an increased sense of community and enhance the quality of life for surrounding residents.



Housing development and courtyard area under construction.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>