

Potential Brownfields in the Hollywood District:  
Research on Nine Sites in the Hollywood-Springdale Area,  
Memphis, TN

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## **Introduction**

In metropolitan areas throughout the country, brownfields represent the ongoing challenge for states to restore their inner cities. Brownfields are defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as abandoned properties that are prevented from being redeveloped due to perceived environmental contamination (EPA 2001). In cities, these locations are often dilapidated commercial or industrial sites that pose threats to the health and livelihoods of communities surrounding them. Further, they inhibit cities from pursuing sustainable growth because brownfields prevent social development and economic stimulants from reaching affected areas, creating a barrier between the impacted community and those surrounding it (Wedding and Crawford-Brown 2007). The term 'brownfield' was first used in the 1970s by the U.S. steel industry in terms of modernizing old steel plants. Since its primary use, the term has become the official designation when dealing with underused or abandoned lots in industrialized nations (De Sousa 2008). The term is all encompassing, representing the large majority of former manufacturing, distributing, and recycling sites that at some point used or retained chemicals (EPA 2001).

It has been estimated that there are at least 450,000 brownfields throughout the United States (Sousa 2008). They are often the result of abandonment by the owner when he or she is unable to sell the property due to contamination, the property is too degraded for redevelopment, and/or he or she is unable to pay taxes on the property (Collaton and Bartsch 1996). When these sites are left vacant and unattended, buildings deteriorate, equipment is tampered with, and the property becomes a dumping site for unwanted hazardous substances (Collaton and Bartsch 1996). This makes the property undesirable to developers who do not want to accept the

responsibility of cleaning up the site and the liabilities that come with ownership. As a result, many sites are not considered for redevelopment.

In the 70's and 80's, federal regulations were put into place to deal with these problems, one of the most important being the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 (Suchman 1996). This Act focused only on contaminated sites that were listed on the EPA National Priority List (Suchman 1996). It was amended in 1986, holding current owners of contaminated properties responsible for any contamination on site, giving potential buyers the ability to demand that a site be cleaned up before it is sold (Collaton and Bartsch 1996). This amended Act made brownfields unattractive to buyers and investors because of the potential liabilities and high costs of cleanups. Other Acts also had a considerable effect on brownfield redevelopment, including the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990, which created more severe control requirements for developing on uncontaminated green spaces, as opposed to brownfields (Suchman 1996). These requirements moved investors towards the possibility of brownfield redevelopment. Also, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991) targeted brownfields cleanup by promoting open space preservation and the Clean Water Act rallied for the protection of watersheds untouched by development (Suchman 1996). Thus, these Acts have pointed developers in the direction of reusing already developed areas and have given significant incentives to the remediation of contaminated sites.

Despite this, only around 4,000 out of the 450,000 recognized brownfields have been assessed for environmental degradation in the United States, leaving a large number of communities with the burden of the brownfield sites' potential risks (Sousa 2008). These risks include those to the health, ecology, and welfare of the surrounding public (Sousa 2008). The majority of brownfields are not being cleaned up or redeveloped because of the "barriers to

brownfield redevelopment,” as noted by Collaton and Bartsch (1996). These barriers include the high costs of cleanup operations, which can be upwards of \$10,000 dollars to millions, uncertainty of the sites liabilities, confusion about cleanup procedures, and negative views of the public in regards to these sites (Collaton and Bartsch 1996). Also, buying a brownfield is not attractive to developers because, by law, the owner acquires the liability for all contamination on site (Fitzgerald and Leigh 2002). Also, often when redevelopment does begin, developers do not set suitable benchmarks or take into account factors, such as storm water management, which could prevent a timely cleanup (Wedding and Crawford-Brown 2007). However, redevelopment of brownfields often provides the sole opportunity for revitalization of the communities affected by them (Wedding and Crawford-Brown 2007).

Many steps are necessary in the assessment and redevelopment of brownfield sites. The state or county can apply for federal grant money from the EPA to begin assessing potential hazardous or petroleum sites. Assessment begins with a phase I, in which accredited environmental consultants must first evaluate the property, noting potential reuses of the parcel and the possible constraints associated with these plans (Podgurski 2010). Other requirements in the initial evaluation process include prescreening the property for indicators of contamination. For example, asking questions like, “Is the redevelopment plan plausible or even possible due to the status of the site?” and “What types of industry were once operating on this property?” Once a legitimate plan is in place, the consultant must conduct due diligence (Podgurski 2010). This includes the cataloguing of taxes, titles, and appraisal information, as well as acquiring knowledge of potential environmental issues such as hazardous substances and petroleum (Podgurski 2010). This process leads into a follow up step, characterized by identifying possible obstacles to redevelopment. Once these risks are assessed, they can be managed, controlled, or

transferred to an outside party (Podgurski 2010). If this whole process runs smoothly, a phase I assessment has been done on the property, and that site will either be eligible to for redevelopment or a phase II assessment (Podgurski 2010). A phase II assessment involves testing the property to confirm or reject the presence of contamination on site. The final step of redevelopment cannot be reached until all steps are implemented.

Overall, the results can be very successful. For example, in Commerce, California, the Uniroyal Tire Factory was a brownfield with considerable contamination. Plans were set forth to redevelop the property into a factory outlet mall, office buildings, and a hotel (Suchman 1996). This redevelopment would not have been a possible if the city had not intervened and accepted the responsibility of cleaning up the site. They turned the cleanup over to the Commerce Redevelopment agency, which financed the remediation. The total costs came to \$23 million dollars, \$3 million of which was used for assessment and remediation. While the cost was high, the new development “is expected to generate about \$92 million in lease income for the city over the first 65 years, in addition to \$7.7 million in property taxes” (Suchman 1996). Further, the city received some payback after suing the party responsible for the contamination. These estimates show that when there is a financially attractive reuse strategy, the cleanup and redevelopment can end up paying for itself in the long run, as well as providing the city with additional income for future redevelopments.

Redevelopment of brownfields can provide a plethora of benefits to surrounding areas. These include the increase in aesthetic beauty, promotion of sustainable growth, protection of surrounding green areas, better practices in environmental justice, job growth and income generation, and improved public health (Wedding and Crawford-Brown 2007). Overall, these benefits justify the efforts for cleanup of brownfields, despite the costs. Economically, the

creation of jobs alone supports remediation. For example, in 2003 a survey found that the redevelopment of brownfields in 148 cities could create 576,373 new jobs and generate around \$1.9 billion dollars in taxes (Colorado Brownfields Foundation 2010). This is considerable, especially in the current state of the national economy. Socially, redevelopment relieves communities of financial burdens like underpaid taxes in their area and relieves threats that could worsen community health in the absence of cleanup (Collaton and Bartsch 1996).

Further, brownfield redevelopment has significant direct impacts on the local and regional environment. It removes both surface and subsurface threats to water sources in the area, such as surface waters and aquifers; reduces energy use; improves air quality by lessening the impact of urban sprawl and focusing on a compact inner city (Colorado Brownfields Foundation 2010). In addition, remediation has positive indirect effects on the environment. For example, redevelopment can create jobs closer to residents. Increased walkability in neighborhoods reduces car trips. This equates to less petroleum use and less CO<sub>2</sub> emitted into the atmosphere (Colorado Brownfields Foundation 2010). Thus, remediation of brownfields has significant rewards for local communities. It not only helps to protect our environment, but also restores economic viability to the inner city, which was originally the center of commerce. It allows for city to efficiently use its resources and prevent unrestrained growth.

### *Study Site*

The Hollywood District of Memphis, located in Shelby County, consists of residential, industrial, and natural areas that are all impacted by the juxtaposition to 23 potential brownfields (VECA 2010). The abandonment and lack of redevelopment on these sites has contributed to the movement of jobs outside of the community and into surrounding suburban areas where contamination is less of an issue. This has further discouraged financial investments, leading to

industries closing, job losses, and the creation of more degraded sites. This phenomenon may partly explain why at least 40 percent of the community's families have a low to very low income, with a median household income of \$20,805, which is over \$30,000 dollars less than the national median (DPD 2009). In addition, just less than 60% of the community has graduated from high school, creating the need for local jobs for workers without diplomas (DPD 2009).

Community health is likely to be affected by these brownfields and will not be improved until they are cleaned up. While it cannot be proven that the cause of a community's health problems is directly related to surrounding brownfields, it should be noted that the Hollywood District has the highest infant mortality rates in the city (VECA 2010). In 2005, there were 31 deaths per 1,000 live births in the area; five times that of the national average (DPD 2009). Further, "death attributed to lung cancer, breast cancer, and cardiovascular disease are higher in the Hollywood District than in the rest of Shelby County and the U.S" (VECA 2010). Overall, the community is composed of a high percentage of minorities (75.1%), which are the most susceptible populations to health problem associated with environmental degradation (DPD 2009). These include a large number of African Americans, children under five, women in their childbearing years, and handicapped residents (DPD 2009). Thus, it is apparent that something must be done to prevent further degradation of the community.

The industries that have been located in the Hollywood District include crude oil refineries, fertilizer companies, and auto repair shops, all potential sources of contamination (VECA 2010). Financing is necessary for assessment and cleanup, but in a community affected by poverty, money is scarce. However, the community is not without hope. The EPA recently established a pilot program to provide help to communities. As part of this program, the EPA provides grants to finance the assessment, testing, and cleanup of brownfields. In the spring of



2010, the Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee, Division of Planning and Development (DPD) received \$400,000 dollars to establish the Wolf River Brownfields Assessment Program (DPD 2009). The money received will be used for the petroleum sites, like former gas stations, and hazardous substance sites, like former industries in four target areas in Memphis. These target areas are the Wolf River Harbor, the New Chicago community, the Hollywood community, and the Wolf River Greenway Corridor (DPD 2009).

Funding will help to establish an outreach program to brownfield owners by the Memphis Division of Planning and Development (DPD), a formal phase I assessment of properties, cleanup plans, and a brownfield registry that will supply information on the status of brownfields in the area (DPD 2009). The DPD is confident that the implementation of this grant will help to identify and remove the hazards that plague these communities, and increase the chance to get additional federal funding to return vacant properties to productive uses (DPD 2009). These changes will not only be beneficial to the community, but also to the environment by removing sources of water, soil, and air pollution. Nationally, these projects are estimated to cost \$25 million dollars in city, federal, and private investments, to remove the burden of brownfields and promote revitalization of many affected communities in the United States.

### **Methods**

For this project, I worked on nine potential brownfields from the twenty-three identified in the Hollywood District, while a colleague studied ten additional sites. An initial meeting was held at the Vollintine Evergreen Community Agency (VECA) with Professor Mike Kirby of Rhodes College, Casey Mohan, the project manager at VECA, and Maura Weber, an intern with VECA from Rhodes College. These meetings provided an introduction to collecting web based information on brownfields. Preliminary historical analyses were done for each site using data

provided by the Shelby County Assessor ([assessor.shelby.tn.us](http://assessor.shelby.tn.us)) and the Shelby County Register ([register.shelby.tn.us](http://register.shelby.tn.us)). These websites contain records on what industries used to operate on parcels, property address, property owner, parcel ID, total acres, class, use, zoning, county tax records, city tax records, and property transactions. Other information gathered from various online sources includes what type of contamination could be the result of these industries' operations. Aerial views from 2008, 2004, and 1949 from these sites were also studied to assess the status of lots over time.

After my colleague and I had information on our sites, we met several times with Marion Jones of the Division of Planning and Development (DPD). As project manager of the 2010 EPA grant for the Wolf River Brownfields Assessment Project, she offered advise on where additional information could be found and introduced new ideas for the project. She also facilitated contact with other important members of the DPD, including Richard Stieg, their GIS Coordinator, who supplied the parcel shape files necessary for our GIS map (refer to Appendix L) and additional information on the properties in our area, such as updated tax records. Also, we met Nancy Jane Baker, the landmarks manager at DPD, who granted access to Sanborn maps from year 1927-52. These were viewed in her office at City Hall, as well as at the Shelby Archives office, and were used to further describe the sites history.

Further, Google Earth images from April 9, 2010 were viewed to assess the current status of sites. After all the information was gathered for the sites, GIS shape files from the VECA office and Richard Stieg at DPD were compiled to create a GIS map that included the nine chosen sites, in addition to ten other sites researched by a colleague. The map was used to illustrate brownfield locations, their proximity to water resources, and the presence of buildings

on sites. Brownfield sites were classified as vacant, industrial, commercial, or former gas stations.

A webinar hosted by VECA and led by John Podgurski, Land Revitalization Coordinator for the EPA included a presentation of the prepared workbook on cleanup and revitalization of contaminated properties, providing an explanation of the phase I assessment process and how it would be done by a government entity. In addition, a meeting with Paula Larson of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) provided further insight into the process, answering questions on the barriers to brownfields redevelopment. In the final stages of the project, Geoff Pope, senior engineer at Tetra Tech US, Inc., and Rachael S. Bailey, an environmental scientist with phase I expertise, pointed out additional websites for soil maps ([www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov)) and topography maps ([www.mrsmaps.com](http://www.mrsmaps.com)) indicating groundwater flow and susceptibility to soil pollution.

After completing all analysis on the sites, a visual assessment was conducted to look for any clues that might suggest hazardous contamination on the sites, such as barrels on site, vegetation health, and visible stains on the ground. The GIS map of the properties was also included. Also, a plain language fact sheet was assembled to provide the community and owners with information on the importance of brownfield redevelopment and the funding available for assessment and cleanup of brownfields.

## **Results**

### *Site 1: 1249 Fairfax*

Fairfax at Matthews South is an industrial site that once served as a manufacturing mill. The parcel is 7.64 acres, featuring six large buildings and a sizeable amount of untouched green space. The company initially using the property was Hartwell Brothers MFG Handles. This

company used the buildings on site for the manufacturing of “axe handles, neck yokes, and single-trees” (Holdgreve 2002). This required the use of a steam engine and large amounts of hickory wood, which explains the current presence of a lumber shed, a shaving receiver, and a kiln on site. Other features include a 10,000-gallon reservoir that has been filled with dirt. The buildings have automatic sprinklers and concrete floors, and one has a metal blower system within it. There is also a 60’ Steel Rower and an electric well pump. The site was owned by IXL Manufacturing Company, Inc., that made handles until 2001 when it was sold to Shelby Properties, Inc., a corporation in Delaware. After 2 years it was sold again to its current owner, Willie Beale. The property currently has delinquent county and city taxes, amounting to \$169,268.84 dollars. County taxes have not been paid since 2005, city taxes since 2006.

Possible contaminants on this site include, but are not limited to, heavy metal contamination in the soil, arsenic from compounds used in wood preservatives, epoxy resin, and solvent residues (EHSD). These are all common hazardous materials used in the woodworking industry. Particular to this site, the soil within the 10,000-gallon reservoir may have considerable contamination depending on what was dumped there in the wood making process. Possible soil contamination may also affect the groundwater in the area. This is a valid possibility, since the soil composition on this site is 99% graded (no horizons due to heavy construction), silty material, which provides a good amount of drainage into any present groundwater. A brief visual assessment indicated some contamination, including two empty, rusted barrels at the entrance of the site and huge ash stains on the ground outside the main building. In addition, a large amount of dumping has taken place on the property. Overall, the property has a total appraisal value of \$380,800, \$236,100 representing the land value alone. Testing of this site is necessary, but it could be a very attractive option for large companies looking for real estate in the Memphis area.

(Refer to Appendix A for more information)

*Site 2: 1301 Hollywood*

The former auto transmission shop at 1301 Hollywood consists of 1.12 acres of land. It is zoned for industrial use and features a service garage that was built in 1948. Currently the site serves as a transmission shop, but buildings on site are now vacant and falling down. The site features one frame, metal clad building and at least 50% green space. It not only borders a railroad, but also lies adjacent to at least eleven residential parcels. The parcel has passed through three ownerships and is currently owned by William Payne. There are sizeable back taxes on the property, including \$6,149.25 dollars owed in county taxes since 2007 and \$36,257.99 dollars in city taxes since 2000. The site was appraised in 2010 for \$94,900 dollars. Due to the lack of timely tax payments, the site has been scheduled for tax sale.

As a former service garage, significant contaminants may be present on site. This includes, but is not limited to, acetone, perchloroethylene, xylene, gasoline, diesel fuels, as well as acid and solvents (EPA 2001). The soil composition of the site is 100% silt loam, which provides substantial drainage of materials into the groundwater below. Testing will be needed to identify the contaminants on site and to verify if groundwater has been affected by the site's operations.

(Refer to Appendix B for more information)

*Site 3: 1028 Hollywood*

The pallet warehouse at 1028 Hollywood is a largely hidden site, bordering a railroad and the Cypress Creek. It is 3.80 acres, zoned light industrial, and is currently an operating business. Recent site operations are restricted to the making and storing of pallets, but a large, burn damaged building on site gives evidence that it could have prior industrial uses. The

manufacturing mill on site was built in 1950 and is currently in use, despite fire damage. The site has had two owners, the first, Macon Home, Inc., and the second, Margolin Brothers Supply Company, Inc. The Shelby County Registry lists the current owner as WF Monsarrat. All taxes are paid on the property, but the disrepair of the site makes it a potential brownfield. The site may be a high priority for cleanup, as it borders a waterway. Further, having many pallets stored onsite is a fire hazard and potentially damaging to the surrounding areas if a fire did break out (Airdex 2010).

Despite the conditional risks, pallet making is a generally clean process, though some chemicals may be used to treat the pallets before shipping. This includes “heat treatment, chemical pressure impregnation and fumigation with methyl bromide” (Airdex 2010). The pallet warehouse on site could be using these methods, but that would require a dry kiln on site. The presence of a kiln could not be verified. Thus, possible contaminants on site could be the result of wood preservers. A short visual assessment of the site indicated two black barrels on the front of the site whose contents are unknown. Testing will be necessary to determine if the site poses a threat to inhabitants of the surrounding community. Property soil, which consists of 100% silty materials on graded land, should also be analyzed. Overall, the site is appraised at \$94,500, mostly for its land value.

(Refer to Appendix C for more information)

*Site 4: 2506 Chelsea*

This potential brownfield could have been a former gas station. The parcel is 0.35 acres and zoned for commercial use. The site neighbors a residential area, but no water sources. In the past, it has had three different owners, starting with the Gulf Oil Corporation, then various members of the Trantham family, and a private party by the name Carole J Freeburg. The current

owner listed for the property is Jimmie Blayde, a member of the Trantham clan, who currently runs an auto repair shop on site. There are two buildings on site, a frame building and a private garage that appear to be in fine condition. County taxes of the property have not been paid since 2006 and amount to \$5,759.69 dollars. City taxes have not been paid since 2000 and are considerably higher, at \$21,822.98 dollars.

Possible contaminants for this site include pollutants that are typical of auto repair businesses. This includes “solvents and cleaners, fiberglass, various polymers and epoxy compounds,” as well as, “toluene, acetone, perchloroethylene, xylene, gasoline, and diesel fuels, carbon tetrachloride, and hydrochloric and phosphoric acid” (EPA 2001). Further, vehicles often present on the site, providing a source for soil and groundwater pollution. Another contaminant that may be present is an underground storage tank for petroleum products if this site, in fact, was a gas station previously. Ownership by the Gulf Oil Company until 1983 provides strong evidence to this hypothesis. A short visual assessment of the site showed many indicators of potential contamination, including oils stain, rusted barrels on the cracked concrete and open bottles of oils, solvent, and cleaners on the concrete. If the property testing is done and cleanup is performed on this property, it can provide an attractive real estate investment, appraising at \$68,000 dollars.

(Refer to Appendix D for more information)

*Site 5: 2138 Chelsea*

2138 Chelsea is a former gas station located on a corner lot, bordering residential properties. It is zoned for residential use, but is classified as a commercial parcel. Imperial Refineries Corp and Chekers Imperial Oil Co previously owned the property, providing solid evidence that this site was once a gas station. In addition, the overall layout of the property also

has the characteristics of a service area and garage. The service garage was built in 1956 and appears to be currently operating as QT Tire Shop, owned by Patricia Howard, Espedrone Smith, and Deborah Walker. The owners owe \$7,077.15 dollars in county and city taxes.

Aerial photographs show that vehicles are often left on the property for extended periods of time, which could result in leakage of engine oil, fuel, and other fluids. Possible contamination associated with its former status of a gas station includes the presence of underground storage tanks, petroleum hydrocarbons, benzene, and BTEX compounds (EPA 2001). Further, in areas where services took place, contamination could include hydraulic oil, lubricants, coolants, and cleaners. A visual assessment of the site showed paint spills on the ground, which is covered by concrete, and small visible spills of what could be fuel or motor oil. Testing will be necessary in order to sell the site, which appraises at \$71,500 dollars, mostly attributable to the building on site.

(Refer to Appendix E for more information)

*Site 6: 2181 Chelsea*

This potential former gas station site was originally built in 1928. The land is 0.12 acres and is classified commercial. It is located on a corner lot in the Hyde Park subdivision and appears to be bordering a residential site. It is currently a service garage with a hollow concrete building classified as retail multi-occupation on site. The current business on site is an auto repair shop advertising mufflers and breaks. The parcel has passed through four ownerships and is currently owned by Derrick D. Ross and appears to be an operating business. The parcel is almost up to date on its taxes, owing only \$449.83 dollars in city taxes. The overall appraisal for this site is \$30,600 dollars, \$8,000 for the land and \$22,400 for the concrete building on site.



Possible contaminants for this site, as an auto repair business, include “solvents and cleaners, fiberglass, various polymers and epoxy compounds” (EPA 2001). Also, fuels, cleaners, acids, and other solvents may be present on site. Aerial photos do not provide evidence that there are cars parked on site for prolonged periods. As a corner lot, this may have been a gas station before 1977, which is not accounted for in sale records. This creates the possibility of leaking underground storage tanks for diesel and petroleum fuels. Further, any present environmental conditions may affect the groundwater, as the soil is 100% silt loam, particularly good for drainage of surface liquids. Visual indicators on site include stains. The site should be tested for all contaminants associated with the auto repair business, and the presence of an underground storage tank should be confirmed.

(Refer to Appendix F for more information)

*Site 7: 1718 Jackson*

The former gas station on this site has been shut down. The BP Oil Corporation owns this parcel, which covers 0.51 acres of land. The site is classified as commercial and zoned for light commercial use. It was an operating service station, but now only serves as an eyesore to the community. The site is located down the street from the VECA center. VECA employees have noted activity over the past decade at the station, where companies have come in to pump gas from the underground stage tanks below. On a recent brownfield tour, conducted by Mike Kirby of VECA, remediation was taking place at the station to prevent leaks from the underground tanks. Sales information from the Shelby County Register shows that the parcel was a Union Planter National Bank until 1973, when the Gulf Oil Corporation bought it. After 15 years, ownership was transferred to BP Oil Inc. The total appraisal of this site is \$98,000, mostly in terms of the land the gas station is located on.

As a former gas station, typical contamination includes hydrocarbons from petroleum, benzene, and BTEX compounds (EPA 2001). Also, any chemicals that are used within the service station, such as hydraulic oils, lubricants, coolants, and cleaners may be of concern to environmental professionals (EPA 2001). The site clearly has underground storage tanks that have recently been tested to see if they are leaking, but as the geologist doing this remediation said, it is more than likely that the tank is, in fact, leaking. The soil on site, as with many of the others, is 100% silt loam, so any leaking fuel or diesel may drain into the groundwater at a significant rate. Overall, redevelopment of this area would require much remediation, but could provide a great real estate location for other commercial industries.

(Refer to Appendix G for more information)

*Site 8: 2730 Matthews*

This industrial site is located on Fairfax at Matthews North. The parcel is 4.05 acres and features a manufacturing mill. The assessor website states that this building was constructed in 2001, but corporations were operating on the site before 1978. The sales records for the site show that it was owned by Memphis Goodwill Independent Inc. until 1978, when it was signed over to Charles Cox Corporation. Cox was on this site until 2001. The property was then transferred to 360 Networks USA Inc., which comes up on a Google search as a “wholesale provider of communication products and services.” The site has large back taxes, owing \$106,465.41 dollars in county taxes since 2001 and \$100,810.81 dollars in city taxes since 2004. The site has been scheduled for tax sale due to these delinquent taxes. This may provide the city with considerably profit, as the site appraises for \$690,600 dollars, \$590,300 for the building alone.

While the building is only ten years old, depending on the type of activities that took place on the property, there may be contamination on site. Dumping is visible from the street

entrance, but the property is largely hidden. Further investigation will be necessary to determine if the site is eligible for a phase II assessment. The large parcel should be considered for redevelopment, as it will prevent future dumping of hazardous materials on site and environmental contamination.

(Refer to Appendix H for more information)

*Site 9: 2399 Chelsea*

2399 Chelsea is one of the many properties on this strip of Chelsea Avenue owned by Tommy Franklin, a local businessman. Even though any of these lots can be classified as potential brownfields, 2399 Chelsea was chosen for research because of its potential for redevelopment. The site is 0.33 acres and zoned for commercial use. It currently serves as a storage for household accessories, including refrigerators, washing machines, and other household appliances. The property has had private individual owners since 1992. Aerials from 1949 show that the property had not been developed before this date. Currently there is not an active business on site, and since 2005 the property has delinquent city and county taxes of \$3,323.20 dollars.

Overall, current contamination on the site could include pollution from coolants used in household items, like the refrigerators stored on site. Aerial photos from 2004 show a large number of vehicles being stored on site. Thus, this site could have served as an auto salvage lot during this time. The contamination associated with this operation includes heavy metals, asbestos, PCB oils, hydraulic fluids, and fuels. Therefore, there could be some pollution, though the site is covered by a concrete containment, so soil and groundwater pollution is not a large concern. The appraisal of the site shows it to be worth around \$30,700 dollars. If there is not contamination on site, redevelopment will be a viable option for the property.

(Refer to Appendix I for more information)

### **Discussion**

My research on a nine potential brownfields in the Hollywood District has led me to conclude that there may be a large amount of contamination present in the area. This contamination has the potential to create significant risks to the well being of the general public within and surrounding the area. Three sites are industrial sites, four are former gas stations, and two are commercial sites with viable businesses. Out of the nine brownfields that were analyzed, I found six to be of high priority for a formal phase I assessment and an eventual phase II assessment. These include 1249 Fairfax, 1301 Hollywood, 2506 Chelsea, 2138 Chelsea, 2181 Chelsea, and 1718 Jackson. Those not included, 2730 Matthews, 2399 Chelsea, and 1028 Hollywood, did not indicate significant contamination during past and present operations on the parcels. However, all of the sites would benefit greatly from cleanup and redevelopment.

The industrial sites showed the greatest evidence of contamination, such as heavy metal contamination, as well as petrochemical residues (Greenfootsteps 2006). Heavy metals of the greatest concern on these sites include cadmium, lead, and copper (which is often stored in unsafe amounts). Further, dumping on these large sites can be a significant problem, because many times the property is accessible and unsecure after it has ceased operations. Items dumped are often hazardous materials, such as asbestos, household waste, and vehicle parts (Greenfootsteps 2006). This industrial pollution, whether from the previous business, or dumping, can put both human and wildlife health is at risk around these sites, especially if contaminants enter a water source. These risks include birth defects, respiratory problems like asthma, and skin ailments (Greenfootsteps 2006).

Out of the three industrial sites, 1249 Fairfax is of the greatest concern. An old axe handle factory has operated on the parcel since 1920 and was owned by IXL Manufacturing Company, Inc until 1969. Thus, the factory was in production for almost 50 years, generating a great deal during its operation. Also, the long time production would have allowed for the accumulation of any contaminants produced on site. Further, the parcel is large and mostly hidden from public view, creating an attractive area for dumping. The second industrial site, 1301 Hollywood, indicates significant contamination. The site is a major concern for dumping of hazardous materials because the bordering railroad and residential lots hide it from public view. Not only do the residential lots provide coverage for dumping activities, but they also will also be affected by any hazardous materials that do get dumped on site if they leach onto their property via storm water flow. The final industrial lot in the sites is 2730 Matthews. I did not select this site as a high priority for testing because, while dumping could be an issue, the site is secure and blocked from the public. Contamination is not a serious concern here because the present building has only been on site for nine years and there are no visible signs of pollution.

Former gas stations are also sources of significant environmental degradation. They are known as petroleum brownfields and pose threats to human and wildlife health in the area. The main concern for gas stations is underground storage tanks (EPA 2009). These tanks often leak and contaminate water sources (NHDES 2007). Other petroleum contamination on these properties occurs in the form of larger spills from portable containers, and the previous fueling of vehicles (NHDES 2007). The EPA (2001) notes that there are many other sources of contamination that can be found at gas stations, especially at full service stations. These include “small containers of ethylene glycol, hydraulic oils, lubricants, coolants, and cleaning solvents from service activities.” When these products are spilled, soil beneath the surface can be

contaminated. Other service activities, such as the inappropriate disposal of lubricants, coolants, and cleaning solvents can create pollution (EPA 2001).

All four of the former gas stations, 2181 Chelsea, 1718 Jackson, 2138 Chelsea, and 2506 Chelsea, indicate a high potential for the contamination associated with petroleum service sites. All lots either have, or had, an underground storage tank present at some point, which could have leaked into the soil and affected groundwater supply. In inactive tanks, this is mostly due to the relatively low life expectancy of the tanks. Steel tanks, which were used before the 1990s, are likely to corrode within 30 to 50 years (BASIN). The former gas station that is potentially the most contaminated is 2506 Chelsea, which currently operates as an auto repair business. Auto repair adds extra sources of contamination from solvents, cleaners, fiberglass, polymers, epoxy compounds, and acids used in daily operations (EPA 2001). These items contain hazardous compounds, including “toluene, acetone, perchloroethylene, xylene, gasoline and diesel fuels, carbon tetrachloride, and hydrochloric and phosphoric acid” (EPA 2001). Thus, all these sites are high priority for formal assessment and testing. After cleanup, they could prove to be very good real estate investments, as most of them are highly accessible corner lots.

The two final sites are commercial lots with operating businesses on site. The first, 1028 Hollywood, has potential to be a contaminated brownfield, though its actual operations, pallet making, do not involve many hazardous substances, unless the pallets are treated for exportation. Nevertheless, the site is a priority for cleanup because not only is it an eyesore for the community, but also it is large and mostly concealed, making it attractive to dumpers. Dumping of hazardous substances would be especially degrading in this situation because the local community creek, Cypress Creek, borders the property. The other site, 2399 Chelsea, is not important for cleanup because the property does not host activities that produce hazardous waste.

Current appliance storage on site would only produce low volume coolant waste. There is some risk involved if the site previously served as an auto salvage lot. This would add to the list of possible contaminants, including “heavy metals, asbestos, PCB oils, hydraulic fluids and lubricating oils, fuels, and solvents.” Despite this use, the soil is covered by thick concrete, creating a barrier between any spills and the soil and groundwater below (EPA 2001).

In addition to health concerns, there are also economic issues associated with brownfields. Brownfields represent a large loss in taxes within city of Memphis and Shelby County. In sum, the total amount of money lost in county taxes due to these brownfields is \$177,427 dollars. The total amount owed in city taxes is \$279,957 dollars. This is an overall loss of \$457,385 to date from these sites. Money lost in the form of taxes could be used for improvement with the city. Also, the property value is suffering losses as contamination on the site degrades the environmental and structural features of the site. Currently, the nine brownfields were appraised at \$1,559,600 dollars. This value decrease as the sites become more contaminated and the buildings more dilapidated.

Redevelopment provides the solution to many of these concerns. In cities across the United States, brownfield remediation has proved a great success. For example, in Emeryville, California, “insecticide plant, pigment plant, and a steel drum cleaning” operations were some of the city’s main industries, until a decline in the 1980s. After this time, many sites were left vacant, abandoned and overwhelmed with perceived chemical contamination. (California Redevelopment Association). The costs of cleanups on these sites were too extensive for the prior owners, but the state provided funding for remediation, allowing redevelopment to go forward. Contaminants were removed from the properties and now the once blighted industrial strip is an “attractive urban village,” generating benefits for the city and its residents (California

Redevelopment Association 2010). It boasts 400,000 square feet of shops and entertainment areas. This thriving business has created around 940 jobs for locals, as well as provides 375 residential units. These units will provide economically mixes affordable housing, including housing for those of very-low income (California Redevelopment Association 2010). Thus, redevelopment is an attractive option for cities. Redevelopment can create an economic influx where it is located and provides beneficial results to cities that invest in it.

### **Conclusions**

The contamination on brownfields can cause a serious threat to the livelihoods of people located around it. The Hollywood community must deal with the risks associated with brownfields, especially since a large amount of its degraded sites are located within close proximity to residential areas. All nine brownfields researched have the potential to eventually host thriving businesses, but immediate action is necessary to begin this process of revitalization. In 2010, VECA sent in a proposal for another grant from the EPA. This grant will provide \$100,000 dollars in technical assistance for brownfields planning, as well as \$75,000 dollars in contract support. It will allow stakeholders to “categorize sites based on potential for environmentally safe and sustainable reuses, identify tools, incentives, and resource for redevelopment, and identify an entity to implement the resulting plan” (VECA 2010). If granted, it will provide an important starting point in the eventual redevelopment of these brownfields and the revitalization of the Hollywood District’s local community.

### **Acknowledgments**

This project would not have been possible without the help of many individuals. Thanks to my colleague, Alexander Nord, who helped throughout the whole process while working on other sites. Thanks to everyone at the Vollintine Evergreen Community Agency for providing



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Appendix A

Site Information

Address: 1249 Fairfax

Parcel ID: 042053 00010

Owner: Beale Willie

Address—5127 Valdaz Rd, Memphis, TN 38109-6071

Acres: 7.64

Class: Industrial

Use: Manufacturing Mill (built 1920)

Zoning: I-L

County Taxes: \$52, 295.82 (since 2005)

City Taxes: \$116,973.02 (since 2006)



2010 Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment  
Information

---

Class:	INDUSTRIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 236,100
Building Appraisal:	\$ 144,700
Total Appraisal:	\$ 380,800

Total Assessment: \$ 152,320

Sales Information

02/26/1969

- Inst #: E75620
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: IXL MFG CO INC
- Grantee: City of Memphis

12/27/2001

- Inst #: 01016860
- Inst Code: QC
- Grantor: IXL Manufacturing Company Inc
- Grantee: Shelby Properties Inc

05/28/2003

- Inst #: 03107934
- Inst Code: QC
- Grantor: Shelby Properties Inc
- Grantee: Beale Willie

01/04/2007

- Inst #: 07007714
- Inst Code: QC
- Grantor: Beale Willie
- Grantee: Beale Willie White Robert L

01/30/2009

- Inst #:09011645
- Inst Code: QC
- Grantor: White Robert L
- Grantee: Beale Willie

Rating (0-10)

9; the site indicates significant chemical contamination and has very large delinquent taxes. It could be scheduled for tax sale and then cleaned up by the state\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloging of data

Appendix B

Site Information

Address: 1301 Hollywood  
 Parcel ID: 042029 00042  
 Owner: Payne William E  
 Address—1301 N Hollywood St, Memphis, TN 38108-2317  
 Acres: 1.12  
 Class: Industrial  
 Use: Service Garage (built 1948)  
 Zoning: I-L  
 County Taxes: \$6,149.25(since 2007)  
 City Taxes: \$36,257.99 (since 2000)  
 \*\*Scheduled to be sold for tax sale



2010 Google Earth Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 89,000
Building Appraisal:	\$ 5,500
Total Appraisal:	\$ 94,500
Total Assessment:	\$ 37,800

Sales Information

- 03/03/1973
- Inst #: J34687
  - Inst Code: WD
  - Grantor: Shields James S TR

- Grantee: Lingua Louis P JR

02/08/1974

- Inst #: J41105
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Lingua Louis P JR
- Grantee: Payne William E Etux

10/22/1987

- Inst #: AD3162
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Freeburg—Payne Joan O
- Grantee: Trantham—Payne William E

Rating (0-10)

8; this site is already scheduled for tax sale by Shelby County and will be easy to move through the remediation process with proper funding\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix C

Site Information

Address: 1028 Hollywood  
 Parcel ID: 052026 00001  
 Owner: Monsarrat W F JR  
 Address—3454 Forest Hill Irene Rd, Germantown, TN 38138-8511  
 Acres: 3.80  
 Class: Commercial  
 Use: Manufacturing Mill (built 1950)  
 Zoning: I-L  
 County Taxes: \$0.00  
 City Taxes: \$0.00



2010 Google Earth Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 89,000
Building Appraisal:	\$ 5,500
Total Appraisal:	\$ 94,500
Total Assessment:	\$ 37,800

Sales Information

04/26/1982



- Inst #: T28566
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Macon Homes Inc
- Grantee: Margolin Brothers Supply Company Inc

Rating (0-10)

1; while the site is aesthetically unpleasing and an attractive area for dumping, it does not have delinquent taxes, does not indicate significant contamination, and is an operating business\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloging of data

## Appendix D

Site Information

Address: 2506 Chelsea

Parcel ID: 042061 00025

Owner: Blayde Jimmie

Address—3971 Deer Creek Rd, Memphis, TN 38128-5507

Acres: 0.35

Class: Commercial

Use: Service Garage (built 1956)

Zoning: C-H

County Taxes: \$5,759.69 (since 2006)

City Taxes: \$21,822.98 (since 2000)



2008 Registry Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	INDUSTRIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 23,200
Building Appraisal:	\$ 44,800
Total Appraisal:	\$ 68,000
Total Assessment:	\$ 27,200

Sales Information

06/27/1983

- Inst #: U36892
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Gulf Oil Corporation

- Grantee: Trantham—James L Etux

06/23/1993

- Inst #: DU5811
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Trantham—James L Etux
- Grantee: Trantham—Ervin Donald G

04/16/1997

- Inst #: GM7550
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Freeburg—Carole J S TR
- Grantee: Trantham—James L and Merlene Trantham

11/10/1997

- Inst #: GZ1606
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Trantham—James L Etux
- Grantee: Trantham—Blayde Jimmie

Rating (0-10)

5; while the site is a former gas station, it is not a major priority for cleanup because taxes are not significantly delinquent and there is currently an operating business on site\*\*

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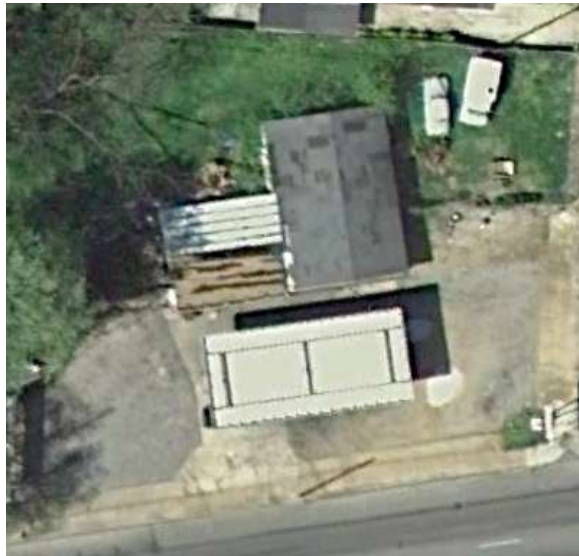
\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix E

Site Information

Address: 2138 Chelsea  
 Parcel ID: 041045 00015  
 Owner: Howard Patricia C, Espedrone      Smith, and Deborah S Walker  
           Address—1858 S Rainbow Dr,      Memphis, TN 38017-3113  
 Acres: 0.36  
 Class: Commercial  
 Use: Service Garage (built 1956)  
 Zoning: R-D  
 County Taxes: \$4,889.05 (since 2006)  
 City Taxes: \$2,188.10 (since 2007)



2010 Google Earth Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 23,500
Building Appraisal:	\$ 48,000
Total Appraisal:	\$ 71,500
Total Assessment:	\$ 28,600

Sales Information

03/21/1980

- Inst #: R355506
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: IRC PROP INC

- Grantee: Imperial Refineries Corp

03/22/1980

- Inst #: R35507
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Imperial Refineries Corp
- Grantee: Cheker Imperial Oil Co

09/24/1984

- Inst #: W17845
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: EMRO Marketing Co
- Grantee: Smith J W Etal

09/09/1994

- Inst #: EW5358
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Smith Etta B
- Grantee: Howard Patricia C, Espedrone Smith, and Deborah S Walker

09/29/1994

- Inst #: ES2860
- Inst Code: MISC
- Grantor: Smith J W
- Grantee: Smith J W

Rating (0-10)

5; while the site is a former gas station, it is not a major priority for cleanup because taxes are not significantly delinquent and there is currently an operating business on site\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix F

Site Information

Address: 2181 Chelsea  
 Parcel ID: 041041 00001  
 Owner: Ross Derrick D SR  
 Address—3553 Partridge Cv,                      Memphis, TN 38128  
 Acres: 0.12  
 Class: Commercial  
 Use: Service Garage (built 1928)  
 Zoning: C-H  
 County Taxes: \$0.00  
 City Taxes: \$449.83 (since 2009)



2008 GIS Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 89,000
Building Appraisal:	\$ 5,500
Total Appraisal:	\$ 94,500
Total Assessment:	\$ 37,800

Sales Information

11/03/1977

- Inst #: M75251
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Harris Edward Etal Harris Edward Etux
- Grantee: Harris Marion

12/01/1988

- Inst #: AU9902
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Harris Marion
- Grantee: Ross Martin L Etux

05/05/2008

- Inst #: 08064005
- Inst Code: QC
- Grantor: Ross Sherry E
- Grantee: Ross Sr Derrick D

Rating (0-10)

3; this site does not have significant delinquent taxes\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix G

Site Information

Address: 1718 Jackson

Parcel ID: 036045 00019C

Owner: BP Oil Inc

Address—PO Box 1548, BP Property Tax Dept, Warrenville, IL 60555-7548

Acres: 0.51

Class: Commercial

Use: Full Service Station

Zoning: C-L

County Taxes: \$0.00

City Taxes: \$0.00



2008 GIS Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 89,000
Building Appraisal:	\$ 5,500
Total Appraisal:	\$ 94,500
Total Assessment:	\$ 37,800

Sales Information

15/18/1973

- Inst #: H87269
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Union Planters National Bank TR Etal
- Grantee: Gulf Oil Corp



12/01/1988

- Inst #: W19824
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Gulf Oil Corp
- Grantee: BP Oil Inc

Rating (0-10)

2; while it is a former gas station, this site is up to date on its taxes and surrounded by fencing, preventing any dumping\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix H

Site Information

Address: 2730 Matthews

Parcel ID: 042054 00004

Owner: Three Hundred Sixty Network (USA), Inc.

Address—143 Union Blvd, Denver, CO 80228-1824

Acres: 4.05

Class: Industrial

Use: Manufacturing Mill (built 2001)

Zoning: I-H

County Taxes: \$106,465.41 (since 2001)

City Taxes: \$100,810.81 (since 2004)

\*\*Scheduled to be sold for tax sale



2010 Google Earth Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	INDUSTRIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 100,300
Building Appraisal:	\$ 590,300
Total Appraisal:	\$ 690,600
Total Assessment:	\$ 276,240

Sales Information

12/28/1978

- Inst #: N91160
- Inst Code: WD
- Grantor: Memphis Goodwill Ind Inc
- Grantee: Cox Charles O Corp

01/12/2001

- Inst #: KU2349
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Cox Charles O Corp
- Grantee: 360 Networks USA Inc

Rating (0-10)

10; this site has been scheduled for tax sale due to delinquent taxes and does not indicate considerable contamination on site. Redevelopment and the clean up process would be less intimidating here\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

Appendix I

Site Information

Address: 2399 Chelsea Avenue  
 Parcel ID: 042018 00031  
 Owner: Franklin Tommy  
 Address—2393 Chelsea Ave, Memphis, TN, 381038-1561  
 Acres: 0.33  
 Class: Commercial  
 Use: Accessory Imp  
 Zoning: C-H  
 County Taxes: \$1,868.05 (since 2005)  
 City Taxes: \$1,455.15 (since 2005)



2010 Google Earth Aerial

2010 Appraisal and Assessment Information	
Class:	COMMERCIAL
Land Appraisal:	\$ 21,600
Building Appraisal:	\$ 9,100
Total Appraisal:	\$ 30,700
Total Assessment:	\$ 12,280

Sales Information

12/02/1992  
 - Inst #: DF4949  
 - Inst Code: Transfer

- Grantor: Harris Willie
- Grantee: Clayton Nonie TR Etal

12/31/1997

- Inst #: HB9546
- Inst Code: Transfer
- Grantor: Clayton Nonie
- Grantee: Franklin Tommy

Rating (0-10)

2; while the site is an eyesore for the community, it is not a priority for cleanup because taxes are not significantly delinquent and there is currently an operating business on site; also perceived contamination is not large\*\*

\*All information courtesy of the Shelby County Register and Shelby County Assessor websites

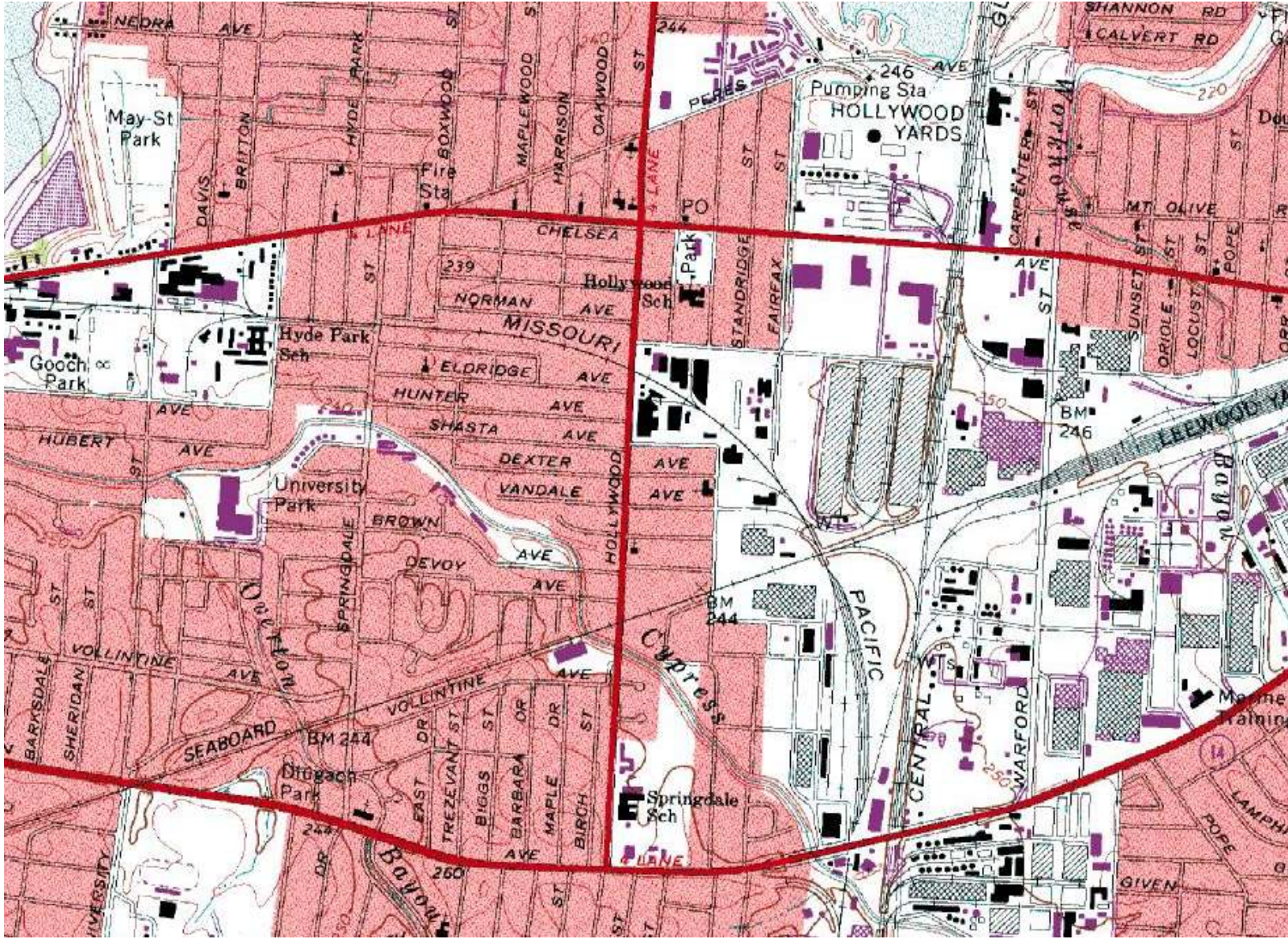
\*\*Recommendation based on visual assessment and cataloguing of data

## Appendix J

Address	Type Brownfield	Acres	Soil Comp.	County Taxes (\$)	City Taxes (\$)	Land Appraisal (\$)
2138 Chelsea	Former Gas	0.36	Silt Loam	4,889.05	2,188.10	23,500
2181 Chelsea	Former Gas	0.12	Graded	0.00	449.83	8,000
2399 Chelsea	Commercial	0.33	Silt Loam	1,868.05	1,455.15	21,600
2506 Chelsea	Former Gas	0.35	Silt Loam	5,759.69	21,822.98	23,200
1249 Fairfax	Industrial	7.64	Graded	52,295.82	116,973.02	236,100
1028 Hollywood	Commercial	3.80	Graded	0.00	0.00	89,000
1301 Hollywood	Industrial	1.12	Silt Loam	6,149.25	36,257.99	46,100
1718 Jackson	Former Gas	0.51	Silt Loam	0.00	0.00	58,300
2730 Matthews	Industrial	4.05	Graded	106,465.41	100,810.81	100,300

Table 1.1: Compiled information on each brownfield, including type, acreage, soil composition, amount owed in county taxes, amount owed in city taxes, 2010 land appraisal value, 2010 building appraisal value, and the potential presence/absence of underground storage tanks on site. All information presented was gathered by the Shelby County Assessor and the Shelby County Register. Soil information was found on the online web soil survey website ([www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov)).

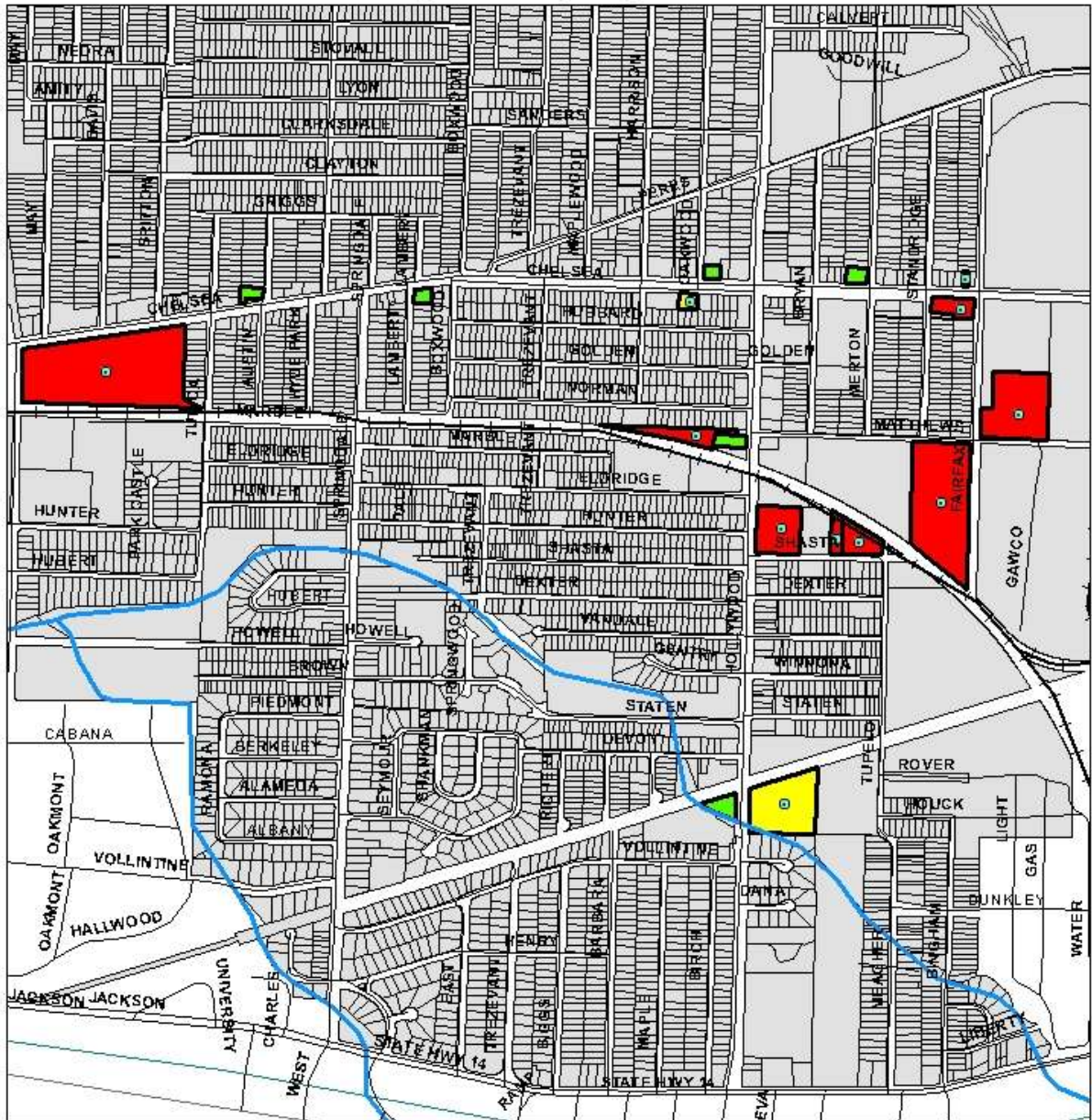
Appendix K



Appendix L



# Potential Brownfields in the Hollywood District Hollywood-Springdale



**Legend**

- Local Surface Water
- Streets
- Railroad
- Parcels

**Brownfields Parcels**

**Type**

- Commercial
- Former gas station
- Industrial
- Building on Site

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

\*Five brownfield sites within the Hollywood target area were not mapped because of missing parcel information.

Map created by Blaire O'Neal and Alex Nord of Rhodes College, on June 28, 2010.

Appendix M

### Brownfields by Code

