

EPA ANNOUNCES HALF MILLION FOR PROJECTS HARMONIZING AIR QUALITY, ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN CHICAGO, DALLAS AND BALTIMORE

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EPA today announced \$500,000 in federal funding to enhance air quality and economic vitality in Baltimore, Chicago and Dallas. \$400,000 of the new cooperative initiative, called the Clean Air/Brownfields Partnership Pilot, will come from EPA, while \$100,000 will be provided by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). \$200,000 of this funding (including all of EDA's contribution) will be a grant to the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) to study the relationship between clean air, Brownfields assessment and cleanup, and economic development issues in these three cities. The remaining money will be used to quantify the air quality and other environmental and economic benefits of redeveloping Brownfield sites within a city instead of developing new sites in the suburbs; it will also be used to make it easier for urban developers to offset emissions from new development by reducing it elsewhere in the city. In addition, project officials will look at air quality benefits derived from locating clean power plants on Brownfield properties in urban areas.

To accomplish the overall goals of the Partnership Pilot, three EPA offices, Air and Radiation, Policy, and Solid Waste and Emergency Response, will be working cooperatively with these three cities, USCM, EDA, and relevant states. Once the Pilot objectives are met, the partners will develop plans, specific to each city, that satisfy both EPA Clean Air Act requirements and restoration and reuse needs. These plans may be used as models by other cities to protect the health of their citizens while revitalizing their economies. The cities were chosen for this project by a joint decision of EPA, EDA and the USCM using specified criteria.

Apart from this pilot project, EPA's Brownfields initiative has helped communities since 1993 to reduce the potential health risks and restore the economic viability of abandoned, idled or under-used industrial and commercial properties. EDA also has a long history of funding Brownfields redevelopment, and was the first federal agency to enter into a memorandum of understanding with EPA in support of the Brownfields initiative.

For more information on the cities pilot, contact Leah Yasenchak at 202-260-7854.