



Brownfields

EPA Region 7

Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge

Omaha, NE

Background

Omaha's location along the Missouri River provided the city's heavy industries access to a transportation hub. The ports that facilitated the success of these industries were soon abandoned as businesses and residents of the area began to migrate away from the docks. Redevelopment of the area was hindered by the perceived contamination the area held from its previous uses. The City of Omaha formed a plan to help revitalize the area through its "Back to the River" initiative which sought to redevelop the area according to the community's wishes.

Partnerships

- EPA Pilot Assessment Grant: \$200,000
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: \$120,000
- Federal, State, and Local Funding: \$23,000,000

Protection

The Brownfields Pilot was used to assess three riverfront properties: Miller Property, City Dock Board property, and Freedom Park. Miller Property and Freedom Park were cleared for development after the initial assessment. In 2004, the City Dock Board property was cleaned up by Nebraska's Voluntary Cleanup Program after further investigation found lead, asbestos, petroleum, and other contaminants at the site.



Before



After

Redevelopment and Restoration

The community, through the "Back to the River" initiative, expressed its desire to redevelop the riverfront properties with sustainable, long-term uses that would be accessible to the entire community. With this in mind, then Senator Bob Kerrey proposed and sought funding for a 2,222 foot pedestrian bridge that would span the Missouri River. The bridge would make use of one-time brownfields along Omaha's riverfront to connect Omaha, Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Investment and Results

Plans for the pedestrian bridge were sought by the City of Omaha but the city could not find any proposals that coincided with their \$22 million budget cap. To save the project, existing plans were scrapped and new design proposals were elicited without a specified form requirement. Design innovation allowed the bridge to be designed and built within budget and the project was completed and opened to the public on September 28, 2008, two months ahead of schedule. The suspension bridge serves as the first pedestrian bridge to connect the two states, utilizing the Port of Omaha's Miller Landing and Iowa's One Renaissance Center as end points.