

**City of Los Angeles
Brownfields
Program**

The goal of Los Angeles' Brownfields Program is to develop effective strategies to enable redevelopment of brownfields throughout Los Angeles, particularly in disadvantaged communities and to incorporate these strategies into the City's normal redevelopment process.

Rockwood Park Brownfield Site Newsletter

NEW PARK OPENS IN HISTORIC FILIPINOTOWN

May 2011

Project Partners



City of Los Angeles
Bureau of Sanitation



City of Los Angeles
Department of Recreation
and Parks



U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency



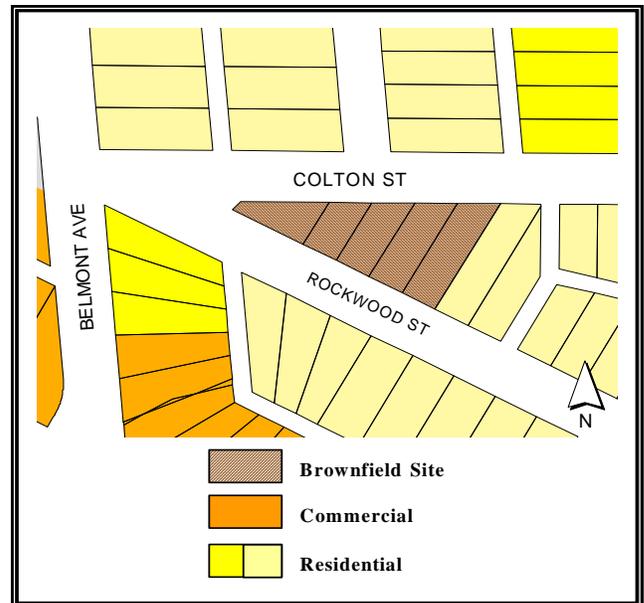
California State Parks

The new park is located in the heart of the Los Angeles Oil Field where the city's first successful oil well was drilled in 1892. The **City of Los Angeles's Brownfields Program** and voter-approved state parks bond funds helped make it possible to transform this formerly contaminated property into a park for community to enjoy.

Residents of apartments located on the site, were forced to move because methane and hydrogen sulfide gases were seeping into the buildings. Councilmember Eric Garcetti felt it was not acceptable for such a valuable property in historic Filipinotown to sit vacant. He talked with neighborhood residents and local organizations who agreed that recreation space would be an excellent use for the site. The City then purchased two nearby vacant properties to create a half acre park site.

During 2009, two community meetings were held at which the City's presented conceptual designs and community members discussed their preferences for various features to be included in the park. The park design was revised accordingly.

Councilmember Garcetti had previously worked with the City of Los Angeles Brownfields Program to obtain grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to pay for engineering investigations to identify the environmental problems at the site and recommend cleanup solutions. The Councilmember also obtained grants from the State of California to purchase the properties and construct a park at the site.



Location of Park

History of the Site

Oil wells existed on the property from approximately 1906 through at least 1970 when apartment houses were built. In 2000, tenant complaints led to the discovery that methane and hydrogen sulfide gases were leaking into the buildings. In order to protect their safety, all occupants of the buildings had to move.

Various government agencies investigated the source of the gasses. Since the site was once part of the Los Angeles oil field, it was thought that the gases might be seeping up from below the ground from old oil wells that were not closed properly. The primary threat was to people living in the structures since gas could accumulate in the buildings. The City fenced the site and the buildings were since been removed.



Rockwood Park, May 2011

Results of the Environmental Investigation

In 2005, the City's Brownfields Program funded a Phase I Environmental Site investigation which identified the historical uses at the site. Next funds from the U.S. EPA were used to conduct a Phase II Environmental Site Investigation. The Phase II investigation found that the soil in specific areas of the site contained petroleum hydrocarbons as high as 35,480 parts per million. This is above California state standards.

The site investigation also found a location where sewage may have been deposited and could be a source of methane gas. A former oil well was also located. The environmental investigation recommended that the former oil well be closed and 1,600 cubic yards of soil be removed and disposed in an appropriate landfill.

No indication was found of a current danger from hydrogen sulfide or methane gas. However, since this property is above a natural petroleum deposit, it could occasionally have natural seeps of crude oil or gasses. Since these will not be trapped in a structure, they will dissipate naturally and will not pose a threat.

Frequently Asked Questions

How was the site made safe?

The work was completed in two phases. The first phase took place on the lower part of the property. A former oil well was located and properly closed. Contaminated soil was then removed and disposed of in an approved landfill.

The second phase located and closed former oil wells on the upper side of the property. Soils contaminated with volatile organic compounds and petroleum was removed. Because the property is located above natural petroleum deposits, methane and hydrosulfide gas may come to the surface from time to time. However, as long as there are no structures to trap these gases, they will naturally disperse and not pose a hazard.

What was the source of the grant money for cleanup?

Over \$200,000 came initially from the U.S. EPA Brownfields Program. Another \$200,000 was granted recently from the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Revolving Loan Fund.

Who do I contact for more information on this site?

Contact Ms. Nuna Tersibashian at the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, 213-485-3791 or nuna.tersibashian@lacity.org.



Backhoe Digging Trench for Site Investigation



Trench Dug for Soil Sampling

