

Slideshow: Acres of potential in Beaver County

By JUSTINE COYNE, [Pittsburgh Business Times](#)

Feb 28, 2014 PITTSBURGH, PA For this week's edition of the Pittsburgh Business Times, I spoke with representatives of the Ohio River Area-wide Brownfields Planning Project to discuss their proposals to reimagine the brownfields that line Beaver County's river banks.

The Borough of Monaca received a \$150,000 grant from the EPA in 2011 as part of a pilot program promoting an area-wide planning approach to community brownfield challenges. Partnering with the City of Aliquippa, the Borough of Coraopolis, the Borough of Midland and the Ohio River Trail Council, the communities joined together to undertake a grassroots effort to rethink the future of these areas as a way to overcome the loss of a significant portion of the county's manufacturing and industrial base.

What came of this collaboration is a community-led effort to promote the clean-up and redevelopment of 40 miles of former industrial lands along the Ohio River. Connecting Beaver County with Allegheny County, the idea is to promote smart-growth development practices.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines a brownfield as real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence, or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

Mario Leone Jr., borough manager for Monaca, said redevelopment of these brownfield sites is an important step to building up the county's economy.

"We want to see redevelopment; it will bring added tax revenue and the economic stimulus the area needs," he said.

The communities worked with Somerset-based Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates Inc., a planning and design firm that focuses on the revitalization and redevelopment of communities, to craft a reuse plan.

The slideshow on the right shows some of the reuse proposals that resulted from the project. The complete master plan is [available on the Ohio River Brownfields Project's website](#).

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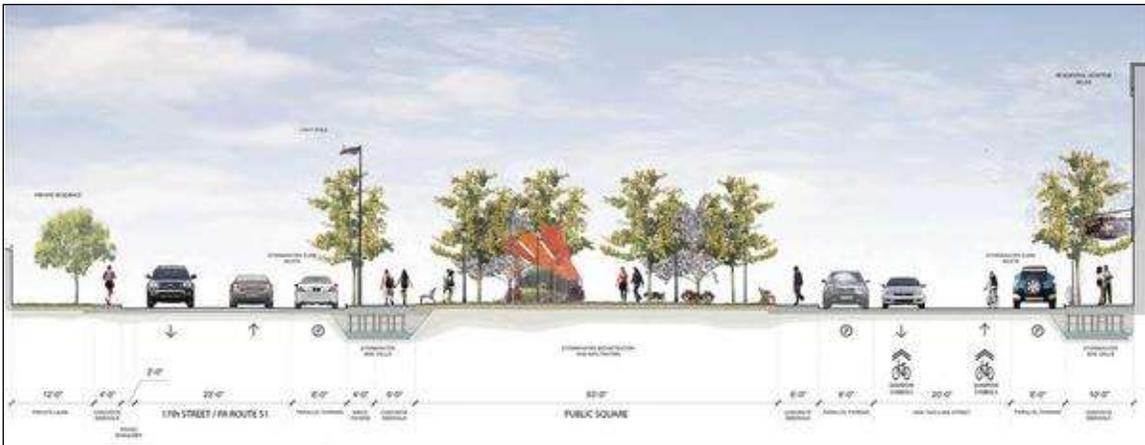
[Acres of potential within Beaver County](#)

[Ambridge site example of possibilities](#)

[The brownfield process: Idea to completion](#)



The Borough of Monaca has 14 potential brownfield sites, accounting for 128 acres. Focusing on a large-scale re-visioning of the former Colonial Steel Complex, an entirely new riverfront neighborhood has been conceived by the community that provides improvements to existing industrial activities while allowing the riverfront to be redeveloped as a mixed-use retail, housing, and regional park. A larger version of this rendering is available on the Ohio River Area-wide Brownfields Planning Project website.



The proposed design for 17th Street/ PA Route 51 looking north after street improvements. Included in the plan is a public square and storm water management technologies. When the Monaca East Rochester Bridge was constructed, its 17th St. approach was awkwardly directed through the middle of residential blocks, leaving many of the existing parcels along the corridor are vacant or in a blighted condition.



The Borough of Midland has 12 potential brownfield sites, accounting for 485 acres. Circulation is an issue, as the town's main steel mill has been subdivided into multiple industrial operations. Through the remediation of an abandoned rail corridor and several adjacent post-industrial parcels, a new "green corridor" can be constructed to support multi-modal transportation, including trucks accessing the steel mills, automobiles serving new mixed-use infill development along Midland Avenue, and bicyclists and pedestrians utilizing the **Ohio River Trail**. A larger version of this rendering is available on the Ohio River Area-wide Brownfields Planning Project website.



Railroad Avenue in Midland after vegetated filter strips and bicycle "sharrow" symbols have been added along with a new shared parking lot to the south. The vegetated filter strip will manage stormwater runoff from both the shared parking lot and Railroad Avenue.



The Borough of Coraopolis, located in Allegheny County, was also included in the Ohio River plan as a way to bridge the two counties together. The borough has 24 potential brownfield sites, accounting for 71 acres. The reuse proposal builds upon the borough's strategic location and proximity to the Ohio River and includes multi-family residential housing and river-oriented recreational facilities. A larger version of this rendering is available on the Ohio River Area-wide Brownfields Planning Project website.



The plan proposes new boathouses (in red) and student housing (in orange) to provide a fresh interface between downtown Coraopolis and Robert Morris University's Island Sports Complex.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/blog/innovation/2014/02/slideshow-acres-of-potential-in.html?page=all>