



June 30, 2007

Dr. John Pardue
Civil and Environmental Engineering
Louisiana State University
3418H CEBA Building
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

RE: Letter Progress Report for Technical Assistance to Brownfield Communities Program:
January 2007 – June 2007

Dear Dr. Pardue:

This letter will serve to provide you with the Semiannual Progress Report for the South & Southwest HSRC Technical Assistance to Brownfield Communities (TAB) Program. Following is a summary of our active assistance efforts during the first half of 2007, the conferences and seminars we attended and participated in, and several outreach publications.

Moultrie, Georgia

TAB is working with the University of Georgia's Fanning Institute to assist Moultrie, GA with their brownfield redevelopment efforts. The City is focusing its efforts on redeveloping the northern corridor into the city, and will address several brownfield sites, including a former meat-packing plant site, several gas stations, and a junkyard. TAB participated in a redevelopment kick-off meeting with city officials and interested parties in November, in which participants were asked to provide their input on a vision for the corridor and a redeveloped downtown business district. TAB researched previous studies on Moultrie's redevelopment, and submitted a report to the City on these reports and Phase and Phase II environmental site assessments that had been completed in 1997.

Valley, Alabama and Anniston, Alabama

Valley and Anniston, Alabama were both recipients of an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant for 2008. TAB has been actively involved with these communities for the last several years, and has provided technical assistance to both on issues related to assessing sites and exploring funding options. TAB is currently discussing ways to assist both communities as they move forward with their grants.

Fultondale and Mobile, Alabama

TAB is working with these two Alabama cities as they evaluate whether to resubmit an application for an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant following an unsuccessful bid for this year's funding. TAB has offered to assist Fultondale by reviewing their recent and historic Phase I and Phase II site assessment documents for their former coke oven sites. Fultondale is creating an extensive rails-to-trails/greenbelt/recreation trail/historic site out of their mining and steel mill heritage sites.

Coffee County, Tennessee

TAB has been involved with Coffee County, TN since early February, 2007. Coffee County is currently involved with the Lakewood Park private development outside of Manchester and has become a reluctant landowner as property in Lakewood Park has reverted to the County as owners fail to pay taxes. The development consists of both residential lots and small camping lots. Many of the camping lots have become sites for squatters who have established permanent structures, which is against covenants. Crime and drug use has increased within the development, and many of these squatters have drilled water wells and are pumping sewage and septic system waste directly into the lake in the development. The County is in need of help with the environmental and health implications of these practices, as well as legal assistance (outside of TAB's capabilities) into removing the current homeowner's association and Board of Trustees in order to resolve the problem. This will be a long-term effort, extending beyond the current TAB funding period, so TAB's assistance most likely will end before much is resolved. We will seek special assistance from EPA to assist the County.

West Monroe, LA

The City of West Monroe received a 2003 Brownfields Assessment grant and finished up work with a site in the LA VCP program. EPA also selected the City of West Monroe for a 2005 brownfields assessment grant. Grant funds were used to conduct community outreach, perform a thorough site compliance review, conduct site assessments, and develop cleanup plans for sites throughout the city, with an emphasis on sites in Census Tract 56.

Region 6 TAB has been approached by the Brownfield Coordinator to possibly co-sponsor a workshop with the City and interested owners, developers, and local bankers on the benefits of Brownfield redevelopment and its success in Louisiana.

TAB has also assisted the City with producing brownfields outreach materials, announcements, and other information detailing redevelopment efforts within the City as well as locating site assessment funds for brownfields redevelopment activities. Efforts are on-going to provide support to the city Brownfield Coordinator.

Treme Neighborhood, New Orleans, LA

Building upon TOSC work with the Treme Neighborhood, TAB evaluated a City of New Orleans proposed Phase I Environmental Site Assessment to be performed at the site of the African-American Museum. The Museum was used from the turn of the century as a wood treatment facility and later as a chemical manufacturing site.

In June of 2005, the city and the city environmental contractor put together a work plan for a proposed Phase I. The community requested that TAB present a workshop: “Learning about Phase I Environmental Site Assessments”, to help the community better understand what a site assessment is and the steps taken during a Phase I site assessment. Based on review and comments by the community, TAB, and others, the proposed work plan was revised in July, 2005.

The Treme community experienced flooding and other hurricane related damage due to Hurricane Rita. Many of the residents were displaced and have not been able to return. The

TAB Region 6 team assisted the City of New Orleans with the large issues of contamination and perceived contamination which exists due to the flooding.

In July of 2006, a consultant working with the community applied to have this site added as a beta-test site for SMARTe. TAB is currently serving as a liaison between the EPA and the community by providing assistance and information to the consultant about SMARTe as well as information on ways of increasing public participation in learning about SMARTe and integrating it into revitalization plans. TAB is working with the consultant to arrange a SMARTe demonstration and continues to provide brownfields educational and funding information as requested.

Louisiana Brownfields Association

TAB is working cooperatively with the newly formed Louisiana Brownfields Association (LBA) and is currently active in various volunteer positions such as board member and chair of the outreach and education committee. TAB organized speakers and selected topics for the Brownfields 101 panel during the Brownfields Tract of the Louisiana Solid Waste Association Environmental Conference held in Lafayette, Louisiana in March 2007. TAB also moderated the panel and presented the basics of brownfields. TAB assists the association by hosting, creating, and updating the organization's website.

Thibodeaux, Louisiana

Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing (BISCO) was awarded EPA grant assistance to fund environmental justice issues in hurricane affected communities. TOSC provided a support letter for this organization as well as reviewed draft surveys and outreach plans related to their project. TAB also provided assistance to this community because of their interest in learning about brownfields redevelopment. In November, 2006 TAB presented a workshop: "Brownfields 101" and other brownfields related information to the community. TAB is working on a Brownfields & Your Community fact sheet for this organization that will be developed into an Environmental Update.

SMARTe

TAB is serving as a SMARTe (Sustainable Management Approaches and Revitalization Tool electronic) liaison to educate revitalization and redevelopment stakeholders about SMARTe by providing demonstrations on how to use and access the various tools and resources that are available on the site. TAB has contacted and provided information to many of the Region 6 grantees about SMARTe. TAB is currently providing review of the SMARTe 2008 website and will continue to train communities to use the tool.

Lift Urban & Rural Redevelopment Inc., Lafayette, Louisiana

TAB recently met with Lift Urban & Rural Redevelopment, Inc. to introduce the TAB program and resources available, as well as to give a SMARTe demonstration. TAB is in the process of defining assistance efforts for this organization and developing an LOA.

Meeting Presentations/Workshops/Publications

- Brownfields Tools presented at the Louisiana Brownfields: Community Development Opportunities Meeting sponsored by The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), EPA, and the Regional Brownfields Coalition July 31-August 1, 2006, Thibodeaux, Louisiana
- Technical Resources for Communities presented at the Brownfields and Environmental Cleanup: An Introductory Community Workshop, May 20, 2006, Houma, Louisiana
- TAB recently published its 27th Environmental Update, this one focusing on greyfields – abandoned or declining shopping malls located primarily in inner-ring suburbs, This is becoming a significant problem for these suburbs as malls become larger and are located further from these suburbs.

As you can see, we've had a busy first half of 2007. If you have any questions or comments regarding the information presented here, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Schmitter
TAB Project Director