

SUBGROUP: Environmental Justice

Remediation and Redevelopment External Advisory Group



Meeting Minutes

Remediation and Redevelopment External Advisory Group – Environmental Justice

Wednesday, June 7, 2023 | 5-6:30 p.m. |

Milwaukee DNR Service Center | Harbor Room | 1027 W. St. Paul Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233

Action items/assignments for next meeting

- **ALL:** Seeking external chairperson for the EJ subgroup; the EJ chair will be supported by knowledgeable DNR staff. Email Jodie.Peotter@wisconsin.gov to express interest or for more information.
- **ALL:** Share case studies to discuss at upcoming EJ subgroup meetings with Jody.Irland@wisconsin.gov
- **ALL:** Share potential contacts to that may want to participate in the EJ subgroup with Jody.Irland@wisconsin.gov, who will reach out to invite them to an upcoming EJ meeting.
- **ALL:** Subscribe to the [RR EAG listserv](#) to receive information about future meeting dates, agendas, resources, and other EAG-relevant items. Zoom attendees are automatically added to the listserv; if you would like to opt out, please email Jody.Irland@wisconsin.gov

Introductions

In-person attendees

- Sarah Gruza, U.S. EPA
- Young Kim, Groundwork Milwaukee
- Jodie Thistle, DNR
- Jody Irland, DNR
- Alyssa Sellwood, DNR
- Molly Schmidt, DNR
- Michael Prager, DNR
- Jenna Soyer, DNR
- Rebecca Fedak, DNR
- Judy Fassbender, DNR

Zoom attendees

- Bill Scott, WPS Law
- Nathan Kloczko, DHS
- Mackenzie Thelen, Alliant Energy
- Gena Larson, DNR
- Roy Irving, DHS
- Richard Diaz, Coalition on Lead Emergency (COLE)

Review Purpose and Sideboards

Review Takeaways from Last Meeting

- [Meeting notes and materials from March 2, 2023](#)
- Throughout the last two meetings, the EJ subgroup has been focused on its first task to identify stakeholders and community partners who may be interested in participating or providing input to the EJ subgroup.
- A collaborative process model provides a framework for understanding the three stages of work and each stage works in tandem, not independently of each other.
 - The EJ subgroup is starting conversations towards identifying potential equity-based solutions to existing environmental contamination.

Discuss the Potential Work the RR EAG/EJ Subgroup can do Regarding Disproportionate Burdens of Environmental Contamination

- Case study and small-group discussion
- Identify priorities

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Remediation and Redevelopment External Advisory Group



Discussion summary:

- It's important to acknowledge current and historical practices that may result in a lack of trust.
- Education about site-specific and general environmental contamination, paired with resources and funding, is paramount to helping communities advocate for their needs.
 - Cleaning up and redeveloping a brownfields is typically started by an entity that has an end-goal of profit.
 - *Potential topic for further exploration:* What funding and outreach is needed to encourage entities to cleanup brownfields for public health needs over profit-based motivation.
 - A compensated mediator and/or group members, outside of the DNR, may be helpful in supporting communities and sharing the energy needed to engage in the learning and discussions about environmental contamination.
 - There are many communities who do not have an activist organization or spokesperson. There needs to be continued discussion about this barrier and how to build better community-feedback processes.
- The needs of an environmentally impacted community will stretch beyond the regulatory authority of the RR Program; however, an intentional consortium of programs/agencies could help connect communities to the array of resources needed when dealing with environmental contamination (e.g., regulatory, funding, housing, health, employment, food access).
 - An interconnected approach could build trust by listening to understand the needs of the community; this approach could also de-silo programs/agencies which can amplify the impact of their interconnected actions.
 - Communication needs to focus on what each program/agency can do, how it can respond to community concerns and needs, and how the outcomes of the work of each individual program culminate and improve other aspects of the community. For example, cleaning up brownfields can improve public health but also positively impact economic redevelopment which may affect workforce development and economic prosperity.
- Transparent and proactive communication needs to be on-going. Communication should be shared with those who live and work in the impacted communities with ample time to learn, form coalitions, and respond.
 - *Potential topic for further exploration:* Current code only requires a 30-day notification before closure of a site. This is a short turn-around period for the community to successfully advocate for their needs.

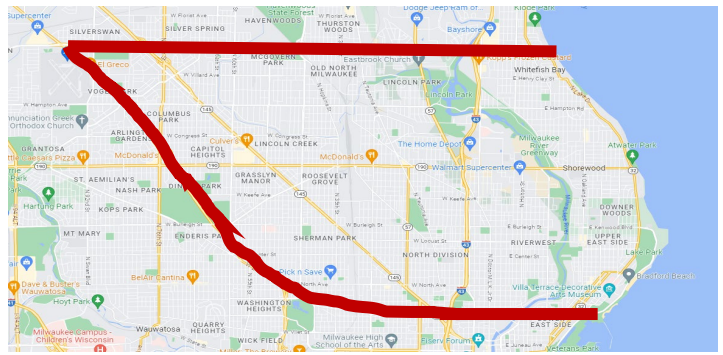
Next meeting date

- Remediation and Redevelopment External Advisory Group (EAG) – July 13, 2023
- EJ Subgroup – quarterly, following next EAG meeting (date to be determined)

Adjourn

Old North Milwaukee: Near North and Fond du Lac & North Neighborhoods

- 249 known contaminated sites
- **2007-2012:** 73 assessments completed; 41 properties removed from tax delinquency



Context:

The area has a deep industrial history, including the 30th St Industrial Corridor, a bisecting rail line, and the former Tower Automotive plant (now Century City redevelopment). About 90% of the Near North area's residents are African-American compared to 40.6% citywide in 2008. This distressed area suffered significant population loss (13,000 from 1990-2008), leading to high rates of vacant and abandoned properties, with 20% of all foreclosed properties in the city within the Near North area. Many are now owned by the city's redevelopment authority via tax foreclosure (Near North Side Area Plan, 2009). Historical industrial use extends into the Fond du Lac & North area (the 30th St Corridor), which has an estimated 97.3% residents of color, has lost about 20% of its population in the past decade, and has a 22% housing vacancy rate and 14% vacant land use rate as of 2021 (Fond du Lac & North Area Plan Draft, 2021).

There are several land use revitalization plans impact Old North Milwaukee, including the *Connecting the Corridor Plan*, the *Near North Area Plan*, the *Fond du Lac and North Area Plan*, and the *30th St Industrial Corridor Master Plan*, with planned outcomes being a commercial-main street and trail project.

Community Considerations:

- Milwaukee is the nation's most segregated metropolitan area (UW-Milwaukee, Levine 2020).
- Milwaukee has the second-lowest Black homeownership rate (27.2%) among the nation's largest metropolitan areas (Levine 2020).
- More than 40% of households in the area spend over 50% of their income on rent (Fond du Lac & North Area Plan, 2021).
- The median Black male worker in Milwaukee makes only 59.7% of a white worker's earnings, the worst racial disparity in the U.S. (Levine 2020).
- The city of Milwaukee leads the state in violent crime with over 8 times the rate of violent crime as the next largest city and over 19 times the rate of murder/negligent manslaughter of any other city in Wisconsin (FBI UCR 2019, Table 8).
 - The victims of homicide and non-fatal shootings in Milwaukee are overwhelmingly Black – 86.6% in 2020.
- Cancer rates in Milwaukee are 496.1 per 100,000. which is higher than the Wisconsin and U.S. rate.
 - Many brownfields in our target areas have known contaminants associated with increased cancer risk, including polyaromatic hydrocarbons and PCE.
- Community groups in this area must triage safety and basic needs over environmental cleanups and lack capacity to apply for grants and manage brownfields projects.

**Identify
and
Discuss**



Past

Reflect.

What factors led to or did not prevent this situation from happening?

Current

Identify.

Are current policies or procedures creating new issues?

Future

Prevent.

What policies or procedures need to be created to prevent this from happening again?

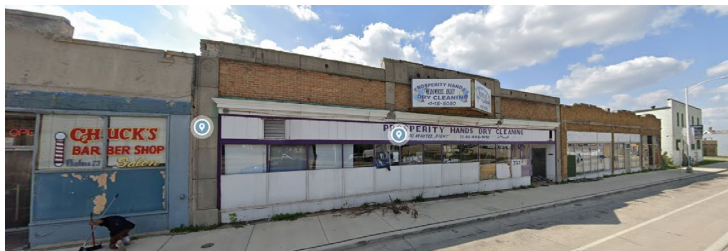
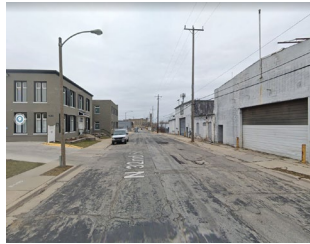
Priority Sites

2828 and 2848 N 32nd St – The DNR is now conducting Phase I ESAs at 2828 and 2848 N 32nd St, a former foundry, machining, and metal finishing operation. This site is prioritized for funding due to its proximity to a planned mixed-use residential redevelopment in an historically industrial area.

Garber One Hour Valet, 3727 N. Teutonia Ave - This former dry cleaner is in a dilapidated, partially vacant strip mall in the heart of a residential area on the east side of Old North Milwaukee. This site is prioritized due to known sub-slab PCE contamination nearing 100 times the state standard, and trichloroethylene (TCE) soil contamination that may travel within utility lines to reach residences. The site needs funds to assess indoor and sub-slab vapor, groundwater, and utility pathways, and to plan cleanup. Limited sampling in 2007 identified extremely high impacts to indoor air and sub-slab vapor from TCE and PCE. Highest source levels seem to be near the water and sewer lines, a major pathway for migration to nearby residences. The site and nearby neighbors needs assessment.

2475 W Hopkins St - This vacant building is a former auto repair and auto part manufacturer. The Redevelopment Authority of the city of Milwaukee (RACM) owns and intends to raze the blighted building, which is next to a former dry cleaner currently used as a church and apartments. This site is prioritized due to PCE and TCE in soil and groundwater, requiring full vapor risk evaluation prior to redevelopment. Phase I ESA will be completed to assess potential vapor risk. DNR will work with city to gain access to the property and other affected surrounding areas to complete an initial vapor screening and perform follow-up assessment, as necessary.

2529 W North Ave – This building was a dry cleaner from 1957-1985 and is now a church with apartments, situated on an otherwise-vacant block owned by the city. City-owned parcels in various stages of cleanup or redevelopment surround the site. Potential PCE and TCE contamination and possible contaminants from the nearby Century City site need to be evaluated as the city redevelops this area. Additional soil vapor and groundwater testing is needed.



Environmental Justice Subgroup



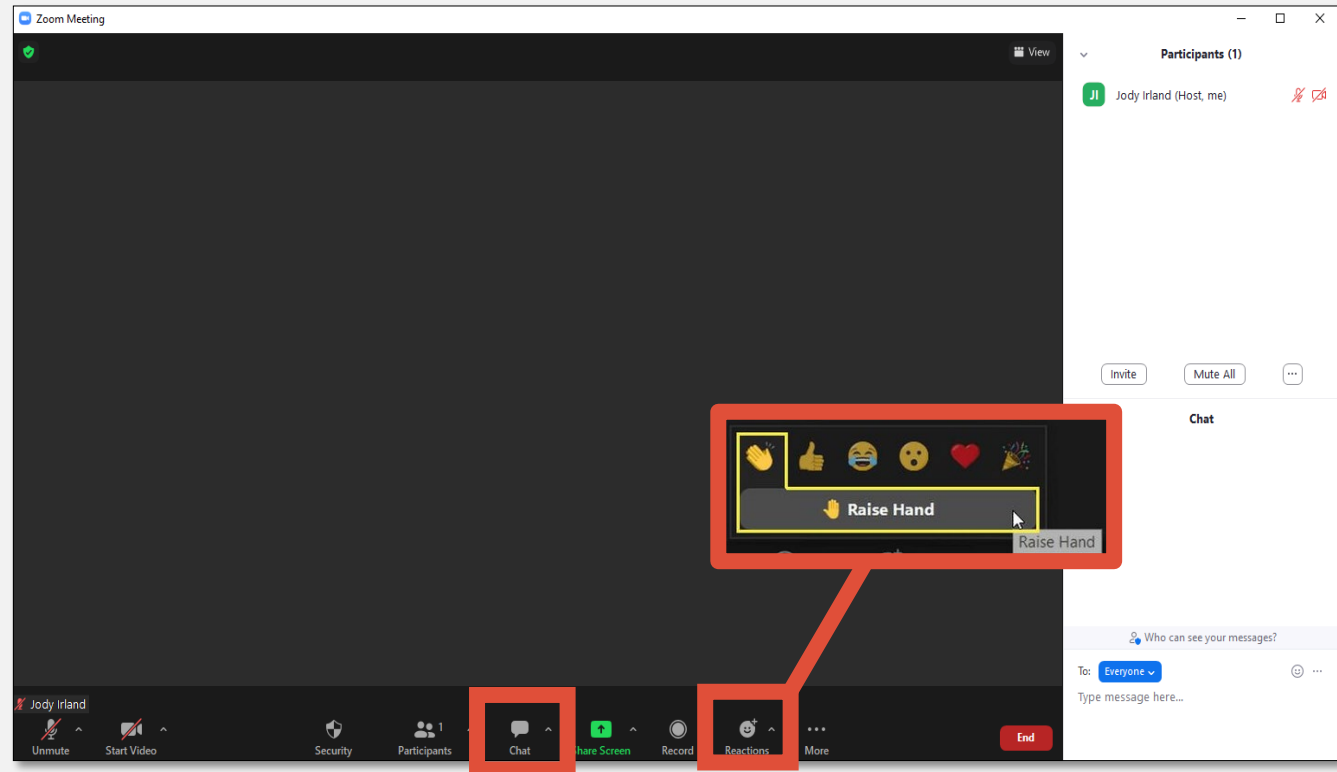
Remediation and Redevelopment External Advisory Group (RR EAG)

June 7, 2023
5 - 6:30 p.m.

Harbor Room
Milwaukee DNR Service Center
1027 W. St. Paul Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Zoom Logistics

- Attendees can unmute themselves
- Speak freely, use chat, or raise hand
 - Zoom host will read chat and respond to raised hands
- Mute when not speaking
- Identify yourself before speaking





Agenda

- Introductions
- Review Purpose and Sideboards
- Review Takeaways from Prior Meetings
- Discuss the Disproportionate Burdens of Environmental Contamination
 - Case study and small-group discussion
 - Share out of ideas for ways the RR Program can repair, reduce and prevent disproportionate burden
- Next Steps and Assignments
- Adjourn

Find agenda and meeting materials at
[dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/
brownfields/rreag](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/brownfields/rreag)
under “meetings”



Future meeting dates

October 12, 2023

- 9 a.m. – noon

January 25, 2024

- 1 – 4 p.m.

April 11, 2024

- 1 – 4 p.m.

July 25, 2024 (tentative)

**Upcoming Meeting:
RR EAG**

Thursday, July 13, 2023

9 a.m. – Noon

Location: La Crosse DNR Office



to receive notifications for RR EAG
and subgroups
dnr.wi.gov/topic/brownfields/rreag

Introductions

- Name and affiliation
- What *is* your superpower?





Purpose and Sideboards

The RR Program addresses contamination that has **already** occurred.

The RR EAG EJ subgroup is focusing on how **existing environmental contamination** can be identified and cleaned up in a more equitable manner.

Cultivate strong partnerships with communities disproportionately burdened by environmental contamination.

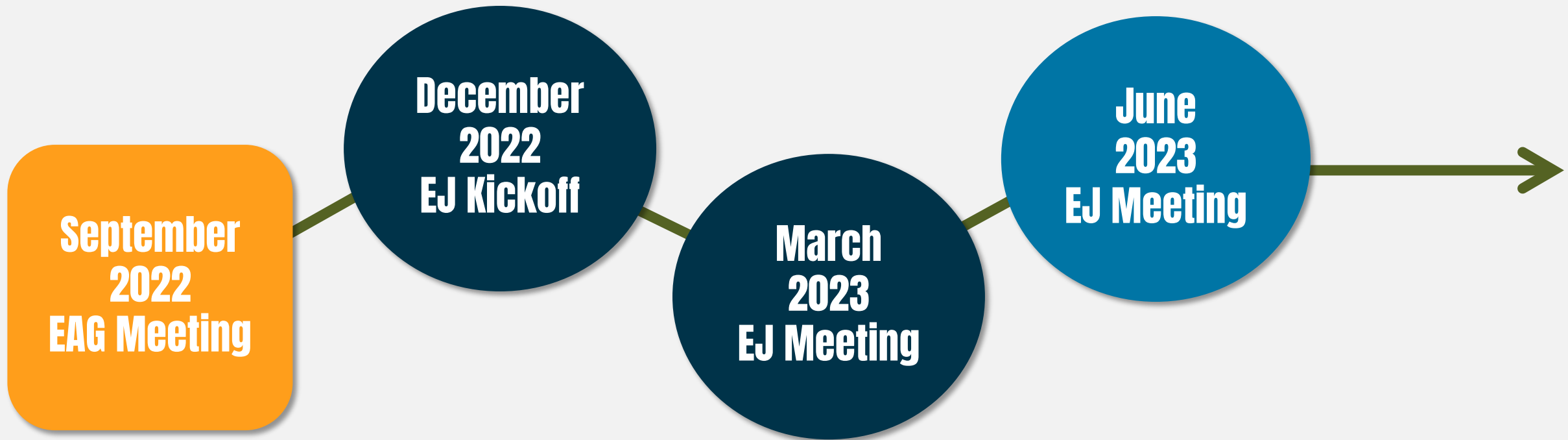
Identify improvements to, and unintended consequences of, DNR policies and initiatives.

Recommend ways the DNR can promote equitable environmental outcomes in the state.

Connect the public with information about environmental contamination, cleanup, and redevelopment.



Review Takeaways from Last Meetings

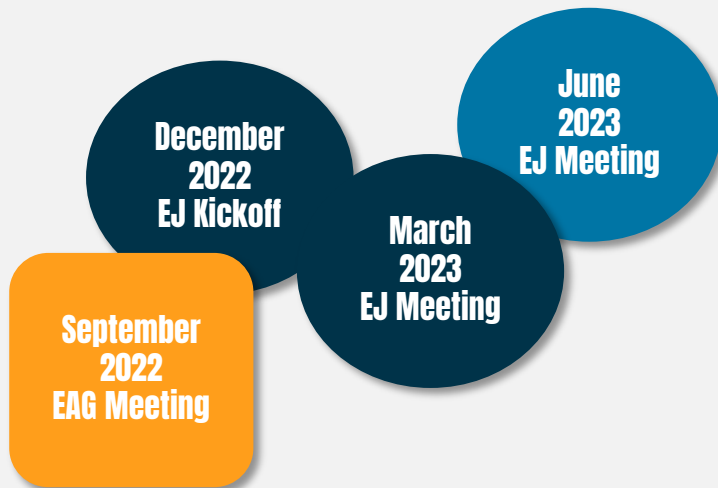




Collaborative Process Model

Preparing for Collaborative Partnership

Identify partners, clarify purpose and goals, practice transparency, listen to learn



Conduct Collaborative Analysis

- Gather data
- Identify impacts
- Cull indicators

Advancing Equity-based Solutions

- Assess local priorities
- Make formal recommendations to address equity gaps and EJ goals
- Maintain consistent and transparent communication
- Work with partners to develop a roadmap for actions

Discuss Disproportionate Burdens of Environmental Contamination

- Case study and small-group discussion
- Share out of ideas for ways the RR Program can repair, reduce and prevent disproportionate burden

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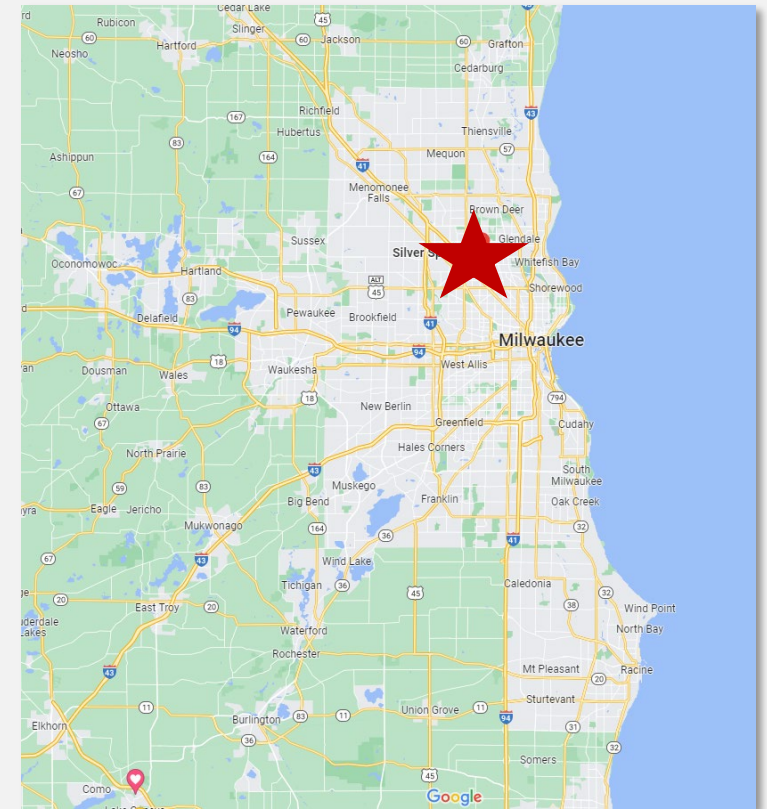
Case Study

Old North Milwaukee: Near North and Fond du Lac & North Neighborhoods

- 249 known contaminated sites
- **2007-2012:** 73 assessments completed; 41 properties removed from tax delinquency

Current priorities

- Garber One Hour Valet
- 2475 W. Hopkins St.
- 2529 W. North Ave



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Case Study

Priority Site Name	Poverty Rate	Med HH Inc
#3 - Garber One Hour Valet	28.1%	\$30,139
#4 - 2475 W Hopkins St	55.3%	\$19,362
#5 - 2529 W North Ave	47.1%	\$31,458
City of Milwaukee	22.4%	\$44,192
Milwaukee County	16.6%	\$67,929
Wisconsin	13.5%	\$64,168
United States	16.8%	\$65,712
U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates		

- Black infant mortality rates, teen pregnancy rates, and low birthweight rates rank among the worst for Black communities in the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas (Levine 2020)
- 5.6% of children in Milwaukee who were tested in 2020 had blood lead levels above the level that the state defines as poisoning
 - Nearly 2/3 of Wisconsin's lead-poisoned children live in Milwaukee County
- Milwaukee is the 4th worst “Asthma Capital” in the country based on asthma prevalence, emergency department visits due to asthma, and asthma-related fatalities (Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America 2021).

Find agenda and meeting materials at dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/brownfields/rreag under “meetings”



Case Study - Small group discussion

Virtual - Breakout Groups

In-person – Turn and Talk
(3-4 people)



Please identify one person to share out when we return to the large group.

Identify and Discuss:

Past
Reflect.

What factors led to or did not prevent this situation from happening?

Current
Identify.

Are current policies or procedures creating new issues?

Future
Prevent.

What policies or procedures need to be created to prevent this from happening again?

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Next Steps and Assignments

Upcoming Meeting: RR EAG

Thursday, July 13, 2023
9 a.m. – Noon
Location: TBD



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and subgroups
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Thank You!

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dnr.wi.gov/topic/Brownfields/Contact.html



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"WILD WISCONSIN:
OFF THE RECORD"