

# FIELD OF DREAMS COMPLEX REDEVELOPMENT PARKER, SOUTH DAKOTA



## ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACTS A BROWNFIELDS CASE STUDY

### Challenge

Parker is a small agricultural community in Turner County, South Dakota, about 25 miles southwest of Sioux Falls. Sioux Falls is the largest city in South Dakota with a population of about 154,000 people. On the north edge of Parker along Highway 19 lies a former gravel mining site that was once owned and operated by the state of South Dakota. The gravel was used by the state for road projects around Parker and Turner County. The gravel mining operations created concern in the Parker community over the ability of the property to be developed because of potential environmental hazards associated with the operations. That stigma was reinforced by the city's use of the site as an emergency dumping area in 2003 following a tornado that destroyed many trees and buildings in the town. By 2004, the site was scarred by a large mine hole and was littered with concrete rubble from the gravel mining operations, tree stumps, building debris, and other visually unappealing and potentially hazardous waste.

Despite its environmental challenges and negative stigma, the site provided an opportunity for the city of Parker. Small cities like Parker face the challenge of providing amenities for their residents. According to Local Employment Dynamics data from the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 42 percent of Parker's residents commute to Sioux Falls for work. As a result, Parker relies on its quality of life to attract families and businesses to the town. Cleanup and development of the site, referred to as the "Field of Dreams Complex," presented an opportunity for the city to create an important recreational amenity and gateway into the town.

### Initiative

Parker purchased the gravel mining site from the state in 2001. After three years, the Parker Development Corporation (PDC), the economic development arm of the city, applied for and was granted funds to assess and cleanup the Field of Dreams Complex site from the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). DENR employed the services of Geotek Engi-

### Parker, South Dakota\*

- Population (2010): 1,022
- Employment (2008): 281
- Median Household Income (2009): \$47,500 or 92% of U.S. median
- Average Household Size: 2.3

### Setting

Small rural community of Parker, South Dakota

### Site Size

21.6 Acres

### Former Use

Gravel mining and waste storage site

### New Use

Community baseball and soccer fields

### Environmental Issues

- Mining pit
- Soil contamination from the storage of diesel fuel for gravel mining operations
- Scrap metal waste, tree stumps and limbs, concrete rubble, building debris

\*U.S. Census Bureau

neering and Testing to conduct a Phase I environmental site assessment that identified evidence of recognized environmental conditions. This included the subsurface disposal of asphalt products, remnants from road salt storage, petroleum stains, and potential contamination from an adjacent city wastewater lagoon. Soil sampling confirmed the presence of petroleum compounds in a small area of the site.

After the site assessments, the city and DENR started reclamation of the area. Trees, rubble, scrap metal, and building debris were cleared and disposed of off-site. The concrete maintenance pad and other rubble was cleared and buried in the former mining pit. In addition, 25 cubic-yards of petroleum contaminated soil was removed from the site and disposed of in an approved treatment area. The mining pit was filled in and topsoil was imported to the site to complete the process. After cleanup was complete, the city was able to mulch and seed the site and begin construction in May 2005.

### Financing

The cost of assessment and cleanup hindered the development of the Field of Dreams Complex from 2001 when the city purchased the site from South Dakota, to 2004 when the city applied for brownfields cleanup funds from DENR. By 2004, the city had committed \$45,490 to the construction of the site should cleanup funds become available. In 2004, DENR granted \$50,370 towards the assessment and \$101,220 towards the cleanup of the site. With the state's commitment from the brownfields program, the site was cleaned and construction of the complex began in 2005.

### Results

The development of the Field of Dreams Complex has proven to be an invaluable amenity to the city of Parker. Before the complex was built, the city's existing recreational facilities for baseball and soccer were insufficient for the city's expanding youth athletic programs. By meeting the current and future needs for these facilities in the city, the site's development has helped Parker retain and attract residents that are critical to the city's growth.

The Field of Dreams Complex has also helped the city attract new residents to a housing development located on a property adjacent to the complex on the east side of Highway 19. Both the complex and the new housing development have improved the city's image on the road into town. The housing development will accommodate up to 50 new homes at buildout.

### Job Creation

- One-time construction and cleanup impact: 1.5 Jobs (person-years)

### Wages

- One-time construction and cleanup wage impact: \$33,890

### Investment

- Cleanup and construction-related costs (labor, materials, and soft costs): \$146,710
- Estimated local impact of construction activity and cleanup: \$37,800

### Assessment, Cleanup, and Construction

- South Dakota DENR Assessment Cost: \$50,370
- South Dakota DENR Cleanup Grant: \$101,220
- City of Parker Construction Cost: \$45,490

### Fiscal Impacts

- Property is city owned and tax exempt.

*\*All reported impacts are gross impacts.*

### Public/Private Partners

City of Parker  
Parker Development Corporation  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Geotek Engineering and Testing  
Dakota Soil Construction  
Jim Rand Construction

Sources and information provided by: *City of Parker; Parker Development Corporation; Turner County, Department of Equalization; South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources; Dun & Bradstreet Marketplace, Sep. 2009; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Census Bureau.*

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