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CASE HISTORY

Phase I Corridor Environmental Site Assessments, The Harding Street Expansion Project - Raymond Street to I70 Indianapolis, Indiana

Challenge:

To improve the traffic flow and access along the Harding Street Corridor south of I70, the City of Indianapolis undertook a comprehensive reconstruction project to modify the alignment of Harding Street. Part of this project required the environmental assessment of 13 commercial properties between Raymond Street and Interstate I70 near downtown Indianapolis.

Action:

MUNDELL personnel completed an in-depth historical review and corridor drive through to assess the condition of the properties prior to determining which properties would have Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) performed. Phase II activities commenced which included soil and groundwater sampling, geophysical surveys, remedial alternative evaluation, and cost estimating. One of the purposes of the project was to identify any environmentally impaired properties prior to purchase and construction. The use of a prioritization factors ranking system MUNDELL developed was therefore employed to further evaluate each of the properties with reference to weighted consideration of the environmental, infrastructure, economic development and marketability factors for each site. By identifying suspect properties prior to purchase and evaluating comprehensively, a fair market price could be negotiated and environmental liabilities associated with ownership of impaired property avoided.

Results:

The assessments revealed nearly every property had impacts to either soil or groundwater from previous ownership. Through an aggressive investigation and remediation program, MUNDELL's client, the City of Indianapolis, evaluated the appropriate course of cleanup for each site, and negotiated with the owners either reductions in property values, or the use of creative escrow accounts to fund cleanups without delaying the proposed expansion schedule. Site closures were obtained with MUNDELL's consultation through the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Leaking Underground Storage Tank and Voluntary Remediation Programs. Construction of the expansion occurred on schedule, and the City obtained necessary environmental approvals from the State regulatory agency to assure future environmental impacts were minimized. As a result, several industrial and commercial properties were cleaned up, and the properties along the roadway are now available for redevelopment.