



TAB  
Technical Assistance  
to Brownfields

KANSAS STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# City of New Orleans, LA Community Visioning Meeting

## Tuesday, January 30, 2024

### Introduction

In October 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded to the City of New Orleans a \$2M Brownfields Cleanup Grant to address hazardous substances at the Naval Support Activities (NSA) East Bank Complex located at 4400 Dauphine St. Successful cleanup will allow for the pursuit of additional federal funding, leading to meaningful reuse of the property, beneficial to the surrounding community. One requirement of the EPA grant is to engage the local community regarding future use of the NSA site.



## Meeting Summary

On the evening of January 30, 2024, the City of New Orleans (City) and Kansas State University - Technical Assistance to Brownfields (KSU TAB) hosted a Community Visioning Meeting at the Stallings St. Claude Recreation Center, located at 4300 St. Claude Avenue. The primary purposes of the meeting were to inform the community of upcoming activities associated with the Cleanup Grant and to solicit public input regarding the reuse of the NSA site.

The meeting began at 6:05 pm, with twenty-four (24) community members present. Kari Godchaux, Brownfields Director for the City of New Orleans, City Planning Commission, spoke about the \$2M Cleanup Grant and the upcoming activities to be conducted with this funding. Jeff Schwartz, Director of Economic Development for the City, described how the cleanup of the asbestos is a first step toward redevelopment of the property. In particular, removal of hazardous substances is one qualifier for a substantial Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to be used for site improvements. Mike Kennedy, with the EPA Region 6 Brownfields Program, provided general information about EPA Grants.

While the City of New Orleans owns the NSA property, a developer holds a 99-year lease on the three large buildings at the site. Joe Jaeger, representing the development company, was present and answered questions from the community members, many of whom expressed frustration regarding the lack of development to this point. Mr. Jaeger was scheduled to speak at the end of the meeting. However, due to overwhelming interest by some residents, Mr. Jaeger addressed the crowd earlier than planned.

Following discussion with Mr. Jaeger, eight community members chose to stay and participate in the “visioning” portion of the meeting. As mentioned above, the City has leased out the three large (each approximately 500,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) NSA buildings. The developer intends to use one building for housing, with a grocery store on the ground floor. Parking is the selected use of the second building.

Scott Nightingale (KSU TAB) led the eight participating community members through an exercise to generate reuse ideas for the third large building (known as Building 601) and the triangle-shaped open area north of the three buildings (known as Parcel 7). Each person wrote a list of desired property reuses. Then, as a group, the eight selected their Top 5 reuse options for both Building 601 and Parcel 7. Finally, each attendee was given 4 votes to cast for his/her favorite reuse idea(s). A photograph of the Top 5 Reuse Ideas may be found below. Please note the “Grocery Store” option was the top priority, but received no votes because it is anticipated this will be included on the ground floor of the housing building.

As a separate product, KSU TAB is providing to the City a series of site renderings prepared by Hitchcock Design Group, based on the property reuses selected by community members.

There were media professionals covering this event. WWL-TV presented the following story about the meeting:

<https://www.wwltv.com/article/news/local/orleans/city-planning-commission-updates-residents-on-abandoned-naval-base/289-ac6d42a2-6b37-4702-adba-7e7321aad1a7>

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Participating community members individually generated property reuse ideas, worked as a group to select their top 5 ideas for both Building 601 and Parcel 7, then individually voted on the favorite ideas.

