

**SITE-SPECIFIC COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN FOR  
RAINIER COURT DEVELOPMENT**

**Washington Coalition Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund**

**1. Overview of the Community Involvement Plan**

This Site-Specific Community Involvement (CI) Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Washington Coalition Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) Program Implementation Manual. The purpose of the CI Plan is to provide background and environmental information on the Rainier Court Project Phase I, and to indicate how the project proponents, including the Washington Coalition, King County and SouthEast Effective Development (SEED) will involve the community and solicit input into the project.

**2. Site Background**

Site Location

The site is located at 3500 - 3700 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, WA, 98118. The site consists of two parcels, which will be Phase 1 of a multi-phase development project.

Site/Facility History

Since the 1940's the project site has been used for commercial purposes. Commercial uses included vehicle storage, welding, office space and a mortuary. There are three structures on the site, two of which are still being used for commercial purposes.

The site is part of a larger, 7-acre site that has been blighted for the past 30 years and has been used for illegal dumping and criminal activity. In 1997, the City assisted neighborhood volunteers in removing tons of garbage, including furniture, cars, baby diapers, tires and drug paraphernalia from the entire site. SEED, a nonprofit community development corporation that has purchased the site for cleanup and redevelopment, secured the site when it purchased the land, but the incidents of illegal dumping continue. Cleanup and redevelopment of the site will result in new housing and jobs and serve as a catalyst for additional investment in the area.

**3. Site Investigation**

Summary of Environmental Risks

EPA has completed sampling on the site under its Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program. This included obtaining soil and groundwater samples on the site (Parcels B and C). Contaminants exceeding screening levels in the soil were not found beneath Parcel C. However, on Parcel B, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), tetrachloroethene (PCE) and metals were detected above screening levels. In general, the magnitude of the contaminant concentrations and number of contaminants decrease with depth beneath the site. Groundwater contaminants detected beneath portions of the site include petroleum hydrocarbons, arsenic, manganese, lead, iron, PCE, trichloroethene (TCE) and vinyl chloride (VC). SEED intends to perform a remedial action that is protective of human health and the environment and meets cleanup standards in compliance with the Washington State Department of Ecology Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) (WAC 173-340) dated February 12, 2001.

Analysis of Cleanup Alternatives for the Site

A Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) have been prepared for this project. The Washington Coalition Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) Program and EPA Region 10 have determined that this RI/FS and CAP meet the requirements of an analysis of cleanup alternatives required

for cleanups performed using BCRLF funds. The RI/FS CAP is available for review at the information repository and administrative record identified later in this document.

The following cleanup action alternatives were evaluated for the site:

- Alternative 1: No action.
- Alternative 2: Isolation of the contaminants and implementation of institutional controls.
- Alternative 3: Design, installation and operation of in-situ remedial stabilization systems.
- Alternative 4: Excavation of contaminated soil with on-site treatment and reuse of the excavated soil.
- Alternative 5: Excavation of contaminated soil with off-site treatment disposal of the excavated soil at a permitted facility.

#### Preferred Remedial Action

The preferred remedial alternative is a combination of excavation of contaminated soil with off-site treatment and disposal of the excavated soil at a permitted facility (Alternative 5), and on-site isolation of the contaminants and implementation of institutional controls (Alternative 2). In addition, a groundwater monitoring plan will be prepared and implemented for monitoring groundwater quality beneath the site after the remedial action.

#### **4. Community Background**

The Rainier Valley in Southeast Seattle has been the city's most diverse neighborhood for the past 40 years, with 60 different ethnic and cultural groups reported in the 2000 census. When compared with the rest of Seattle, the Rainier Valley has the greatest concentrations of low- and moderate-income people in the city, and many pockets of people in poverty. Seattle's two largest public housing projects are located in this neighborhood, and 15%-20% of residents receive food stamps.

The median income for a family of four in the King County Metropolitan region was \$77,900 in 2001, while median income for a family of four in Southeast Seattle was \$40,000 (60% of median). The 2000 Census lists the following demographics for Southeast Seattle: 27% White; 17% Black; 39% Asian/Pacific Islander; and 16% other. Household characteristics show larger families, with 17% of households being headed by a single parent (compared to 6.2% citywide), and 24% of children living in poverty.

The Seattle-King County Public Health Department reports that indicators of community health are weaker for this population than for other areas of the City and County. Key indicators include: unavoidable hospitalizations, which are 2-3 times higher than for the rest of the County; low birth weight; lack of prenatal care and teenage pregnancies, which are significantly higher than in the rest of the County; high early death rates; and lower life expectancy at birth, which is 75 years for Southeast Seattle as compared to 80 for other areas.

In recent years, there has been significant redevelopment in Southeast Seattle. The successful Rainier Valley Square shopping center opened, with 104,000 square feet of new commercial space and successful retail outlets. Since then QFC, Lowe's Hardware and Starbucks have opened successful stores in the area. The two public housing projects are being redeveloped into mixed-income neighborhoods with increased density and quality design, through HUD Hope VI Grants. In addition, the Sound Transit Link light rail project, the largest capital investment in the region, will be located along Martin Luther King Way South, less than a mile from the Rainier Court site.

#### Past Community Involvement with the Site

SEED began planning the overall development project in 1995 and has involved community groups in the project from the beginning. The project was identified in two City of Seattle Department of Neighborhood Plans (Columbia City and I-90), and as such was subject to public review during the neighborhood planning process.

In addition, starting in 2002, SEED has met monthly with local community groups to describe project plans and progress and address concerns. These groups include the Courtland Action Team (comprised of local residents), the Mt. Baker Community Council, the Genesee Merchants Association and neighborhood Block Watch groups.

In 2003, SEED began the process of applying for a City of Seattle Master Use Permit (MUP), which requires SEED to conduct public meetings about this particular phase of the project. To-date, five design review meetings have been held for the general public, and SEED has continued to attend community group meetings as mentioned above.

#### Key Community Issues and Concerns

Concerns identified through a series of community interviews include the following:

- Traffic impacts,
- Adequacy of street and landscaping improvements,
- Owner occupied units in addition to rentals,
- Need for ongoing environmental monitoring,
- Concern that the project be completed,
- That the cleanup be done adequately,
- That the project is too big in scale for the neighborhood.

To address these concerns, SEED is conducting the following activities: the developer of Rainier Court is working with the City of Seattle Department of Transportation on street improvements to reduce the traffic impacts of the project overall. The clean up activity will be done according to a plan that is approved by the State Department of Ecology (DOE) and will be conducted by trained personnel with procedures that meet State and Federal regulatory requirements.

The project has also gone through the City's Design Review process, which includes public comment. The project was scaled-down in this process and specific amenities, including street and landscaping improvements have been developed and will become conditions of the building permit. The Washington State Housing Finance Commission has awarded the Rainier Court project tax credit financing which requires that the project be constructed and occupied by December 2004. SEED is working with the City and the State Department of Ecology to assure that necessary reviews and approvals are done in a timely manner so that the building can be constructed by that deadline.

#### Continued Community Involvement Plans

Throughout the planning and cleanup process, monthly updates will be given in person and in writing to the groups listed in Attachment 2 and will also be placed in the information repository at the SEED offices for interested community members to review. In addition, there will be a 30-day public comment period on the draft RI/FS and CAP and that the comment period will be announced by publishing a notice in the Seattle Times and by notifying the community groups listed in Attachment 2. Comments submitted during the comment period will be considered by the Washington Coalition, Ecology, and the project owners before the final remedial plan is adopted. In addition, an Action Memorandum or equivalent document will be produced that documents the final plan and how any significant comments received were addressed. Final project reports will be placed in the information repository and the administrative record after the remedial action is complete.

The project documents may be reviewed at the information repository located at the SEED offices, at 5117 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, Washington, 98118, or at the administrative record located at the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED), located at 128 – 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Olympia, WA, 98504-2525.

## **5. Schedule and Timeline**

**Rainier Court: Phase 1**

City of Seattle issue grading permits	September - October 2003
Dept. of Ecology approve cleanup plan	September - October 2003
Clean up conducted	October – December 2003
Construction begun	December 2003
Completion and Occupancy	December 2004

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1:                   Locations of Information Repository and Administrative Record.

The Information Repository is located at SouthEast Effective Development (SEED) at 5117 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, Washington, 98118. The Administrative Record is located at the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) at 128 – 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Olympia, WA, 98504-2525.

Attachment 2:                   List of Interested Groups and Contacts

The Rainier Court project has strong, broad-based support from the community, and SEED has involved community groups in the project from the beginning. SEED meets monthly with community groups to describe plans and progress and address concerns. These groups include the Courtland Action Team (comprised of local residents), the Mt. Baker Community Council, the Genesee Merchants Association and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce. Contact information for these groups is listed below.

**Courtland Action Team**

Diana Vibh  
3618 Courtland Place S  
Seattle, WA 98144  
(206) 383-1716

Kevin Dour  
3637 - 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. S  
Seattle, WA 98144  
(206) 725-2753

**Mt. Baker Community Club**

Kim Burroughs  
3450 Cascadia Ave. S  
Seattle, WA 98144  
(206) 722-5078

**Genesee Merchants Assoc.**

Grover Haynes  
5217 S. Alaska  
Seattle, WA 98118  
(206) 722-6947

**Rainier Chamber of Commerce**

Susi Burdick  
Burdick's Security  
4728 Rainier Avenue S.  
Seattle, WA 98118  
(206) 723-0773

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: Site Location Map

Figure 2: Site Diagram