



State Grant Helps Shirley Clean Up Brownfield Site

Oct. 17, 2006

By Stacy Cox

General Manager

Shirley Town Council members received news this week that the town has been awarded a grant as part of the Indiana Brownfields Program. Shirley will receive a Petroleum Remediation Grant of \$42,502 to clean up the southwest corner of Main and Center streets where a former gas station was once located.

Council members included the site a five-year comprehensive plan they developed in 2003 with the intention of preparing for the expansion of a fire station. The existing Shirley Volunteer Fire Department adjoins the old gas station.

This recent grant award is the third Shirley has received from the Brownfields program since initiating the project three years ago. In October 2003, the town was awarded a Brownfields Redevelopment Site Assessment Grant of \$16,500 from the Indiana Development Finance Authority (IDFA) which partnered with the Indiana Department of Commerce to assist in community development. Governor Mitch Daniels reworked many state agencies upon taking office in 2005 so Shirley town leaders were excited one of its projects has continued to receive support.

"This is a big accomplishment and a definite positive for our community," said Town Council President Kyle Austin. "It's hard telling how long the building would have sat there if we didn't get grant money. As is, the building is not only an eyesore on our Main Street, but a health hazard and safety issue, and we are looking forward to being able to use the property to expand our fire department."

With the \$16,500 grant it received in 2003, the town was able to hire a company to conduct soil and groundwater sampling at the former gas station location. A year later, in December 2004, Shirley officials received a \$17,642 Brownfields Grant for an additional environmental investigation at the site. This latest grant will move the project to the next phase of clearing out the potentially hazardous tanks buried under the site.

"Not only will this clean up a dangerous area, but this grant will also help create business opportunities for Shirley," said Sen. Beverly Gard. "The community is trying to improve services and pursue economic development opportunities and this will help restore a contaminated site to productive use."

The Indiana Brownfields Program awarded a total of more than \$194,000 to six communities across the state during this latest round of grants.

"Cleaning up blighted areas in our cities and towns leads to new development, which brings in new businesses, and ultimately creates jobs for Hoosiers," said Ryan Kitchell, Public Finance Director for the Daniels administration.

The funds for the Petroleum Remediation Grants come from appropriations approved by the Indiana Legislature. The Indiana Brownfields Program, which oversees several financial incentives for brownfields redevelopment, administers the Petroleum Remediation Grants. The Indiana Brownfields Program is a division of the Indiana Finance Authority, which was created by Governor Mitch Daniels in 2005 to more effectively manage state finances under one entity.

For more information about Petroleum Remediation Grants, contact Sara Westrick Corbin at (317) 234-1688 or swestrick@ifa.in.gov. Information is also available at the Indiana Finance Authority's website at www.in.gov/ifa/brownfields.