

November 18, 2009 – Real estate developers, environmentalists, and other public and private sector professionals honored 22 revitalization projects at [The Phoenix Awards](#) Ceremony during [Brownfields 2009](#) in New Orleans, Louisiana, held November 16 - 18, 2009. Two years of winners were celebrated for their accomplishments on projects that spanned the country.

One of the 22 revitalization projects was Roberto Clemente Park in Lancaster, Pennsylvania - the 2008 Community Impact Award winner. Environmental Standards, Inc. worked closely with the Lancaster County Planning Commission and other project partners to redevelop a 3.5-acre park as part of a neighborhood revitalization plan.



Roberto Clemente Park, prior to redevelopment.



Roberto Clemente Park today, featuring a community-built playground.

Approximately 40 years ago Roberto Clemente Park was developed as part of an urban renewal project in the City of Lancaster. The project resulted in the demolition of neighborhood homes and businesses to make way for a linear park, a wider thoroughfare, an elementary school, and combination playground/ballfield (Roberto Clemente Park). Years later, the unintended consequences of urban renewal became evident. Neglect, poor management, and an increasing concentration of poverty and blight in the surrounding neighborhood turned this 3.5-acre park into a neighborhood liability rather than an asset.

Several innovative brownfield techniques were employed for the Roberto Clemente Park Project, including:

- Use of public-private partnerships to facilitate and finance redevelopment.
- Use of US EPA Brownfield Assessment Demonstration Pilot grant funds in coordination with Pennsylvania's Act 2 Program for assessment and remediation planning.
- Use of a site-specific Human Health Risk Assessment to address arsenic contamination scattered in soils.
- Use of innovative management approaches to the ongoing maintenance of the park.

There were two primary challenges associated with this project. The first was working with the multi-ethnic community to develop a neighborhood consensus regarding redevelopment, particularly as it pertained to Roberto Clemente Park. The second challenge was of a technical nature. The broad variety of prior property uses, including a dry cleaner, junk yard, and umbrella

handle manufacturer, created the need to cost-effectively evaluate a wide range of potential chemicals of concern, while also focusing sampling efforts to ensure a cost-effective cleanup.

The revitalization of Roberto Clemente Park has enhanced the civic and community pride in the neighborhood and has led to economic growth and an improved quality of life for this multi-ethnic community. There has been over \$5 million of public and private investment in the neighborhood in the form of commercial and residential property improvements, construction of new single-family homes, the relocation of five new businesses to serve the neighborhood (credit union, beauty salon, insurance company, restaurant, retail shoe store), and streetscape enhancements to promote greater pedestrian and vehicular safety.

FEATURED PARTNERS

- Inner City Group
- County of Lancaster/
Lancaster County Planning Commission
- Environmental Standards, Inc.
- South Duke Street/Roberto Clemente Park
Neighborhood Advisory Committee
- School District of Lancaster
- Lancaster Weed & Seed
- Rep. Mike Sturla, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- US Environmental Protection Agency, Region III
- Toole Recreation Planning
- YSM Site Design and Planning
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- High Industries, Inc.
- Wachovia Regional Foundation
- State Farm Insurance Foundation
- M & T Bank
- City of Lancaster

