

BURNS STREET NUTRITION CENTER

Missoula, MT
Revolving Loan Fund Grant

An Idle, Former Freight Depot Now Serves as a Community Food Center

ADDRESS:	1500 Burns Street, Missoula, Montana 59802
PROPERTY SIZE:	0.30 acres
FORMER USES:	Freight transfer warehouse
CURRENT USE:	Locally operated food co-op; planned expansion of facilities to include a shared-use commercial kitchen and café

EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:

The City of Missoula used its EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant (awarded in 2009 under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) to sub-grant \$23,052 to the North Missoula Community Development Corporation for asbestos abatement

PROJECT PARTNERS:

The City of Missoula, North Missoula Community Development Corporation, and the Sample Foundation



The redevelopment of the former freight depot addresses the community's need for a grocery store

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Built in 1952, the 13,000-square foot industrial building in downtown Missoula served as a freight transfer warehouse for over half a century. In 2005, the North Missoula Community Development Corporation (NMCDC) purchased the former depot as part of an effort to revitalize Missoula's Northside neighborhood. The Northside community had become a "food desert"—an area where healthy and affordable food is difficult to obtain—and based on regular community meetings and public input, NMCDC planned to transform the former depot into a food cooperative, café and bakery. However, redevelopment plans for the property were hindered by the results of an environmental assessment conducted by NMCDC in June 2009, which revealed the likely presence of asbestos in pipe insulation, roof paneling and floor tile.

In August 2009, the City of Missoula drew from a \$900,000 EPA Brownfields RLF grant awarded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to sub-grant \$23,052 to NMCDC for asbestos abatement. As a result, NMCDC completed cleanup of the property in October 2010. Asbestos abatement professionals isolated contaminated areas with plastic barriers to prevent airborne particles from migrating to other areas, removed contaminated materials, disposed of hazardous materials in sealed bags, and conducted air quality testing to ensure the cleanup's success.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- NMCDC completed an environmental assessment of the property that revealed likely asbestos contamination
- Missoula provided an approximately \$23,000 sub-grant from its EPA RLF grant to NMCDC to remove asbestos
- NMCDC completed cleanup in October 2010
- To date, more than \$960,000 has been leveraged towards redevelopment of the property—including \$950,000 from federal sources and a \$10,000 grant from The Sample Foundation, Inc., a philanthropic organization
- Based on input obtained from community meetings, NMCDC redeveloped a portion of the building into the Missoula Community Food Co-op, a member owned and operated cooperative market
- Fourteen jobs were leveraged as a result of this project—six related to cleanup and eight for redevelopment

OUTCOME:

On March 5, 2011, NMCDC celebrated the grand opening of the new Missoula Community Food Co-op at the Burns Street Nutrition Center property. No longer marred by diesel exhaust stains and asbestos contamination, this former freight depot warehouse serves as a model of neighborhood revitalization. The co-op provides low-income residents access to healthy, affordable and local food, and creates a network for local and regional farmers and produce buyers. And in June 2011, in a partnership with the Missoula Food Bank and the Boys and Girls Club, NMCDC launched an afternoon program to serve free meals to low-income kids; the property now offers local youth a safe gathering place with access to nutritious food. In the near future, NMCDC plans to collaborate with local entrepreneurs to open Burns Street Bistro, a shared use commercial kitchen and café, on the property. This project is a key component of an area-wide restoration effort to provide affordable homes, infrastructure for public meeting space, job training and access to locally-grown, wholesome food.