

# Howardville Community Partnership, Missouri

**Partnership:** Howardville serves as a model for Bootheel communities by promoting new medical clinics, improving water quality, securing funding, and planning for redevelopment.

## Goals:

- To honor Howardville as a historic African American community
- To build “Bootheel” coalition to support safe land reuse to improve community health
- To combat community health inequities: environmental pollution, blighted properties, unemployment, and lack of access to healthy foods and recreation
- To plan for clinics, improved water quality, funding, and redevelopment



Missouri map showing the Missouri Bootheel area



## Community and population:

- Located in Bootheel of Missouri in New Madrid County
- Primarily African American (92.4%)
- Lower median income and higher poverty rate (over 30%) than New Madrid County as a whole
- Loss of local employers (closing and down-sizing businesses)
- Decay of Howardville High school—loss of a cultural icon



## Environmental concerns

- The Bootheel area is littered with petroleum brownfields, abandoned cotton gins, and boarded buildings
- Contaminants of concern: petroleum, solvents (e.g. volatile organic compounds), lead, and asbestos



Howardville High School (Lloyd DeGrane, 2019).



Image of an old sharecropper cottage in the Missouri Bootheel (Lloyd DeGrane, 2018).



**U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services**  
Agency for Toxic Substances  
and Disease Registry

## Health concerns

Some of the lowest county health rankings in the state; limited access to healthy food and medical care

- Small grocery stores, but many Howardville and Bootheel residents drive to Sikeston (about 20 miles away) or other, more populated Bootheel towns to access a full range of fresh produce
- Only full healthcare possibility for many Bootheel families: two local hospitals (which have lost hospital status but remain medical care centers), 25 miles north and south of Howardville
- While there is a local health department that provides some basic healthcare in New Madrid, there is no specialty care locally; patients transferred to Memphis (2 hours), Cape Girardeau (about 1 hour), or St. Louis (2.5 hours)



Local Howardville resident John Anderson, trained in lead safe renovation during cleanup of the Howardville School (Lloyd DeGrane, 2018).

## BROWN assistance and collaboration

- Technical assistance to supplement EPA Cleanup Grant to remediate lead and asbestos exposure for 400 residents and workers (including Head Start children). Clean-up jobs for two residents
- National recognition: 2 feature stories; write-up in Bloomberg magazine.
- Connection to resources for historic preservation—registration for state and federal historic preservation in 2017/2018; \$10,400 raised by school restoration committee (2010-2019)
- Assistance with cleanup of abandoned petroleum tanks: lists and maps of locations throughout Bootheel; connection to a state program for assistance with inventory and site assessment
- 2017 community meeting using ATSDR Land Reuse (Healthfield) Toolkit to encourage participation in community revitalization
- \$95,000 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leaders Program Funding awarded over 3 years for Healthfields redevelopment
- Howardville School and Senior Housing Redevelopment concept plan
- Training for 15 community leaders and partners to pursue up to \$500,000 in EPA Coalition Assessment funds for New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Dunklin Counties
- Attendance by 3 community leaders at July 2018 EPA Community Involvement Training in Kansas City, MO.

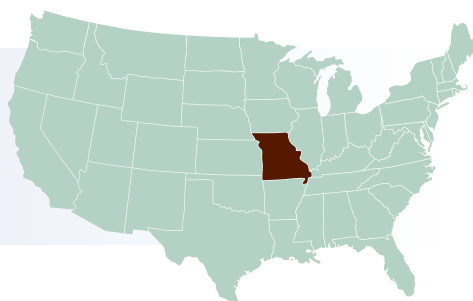


### For more information

visit: [www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/brownfields](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/brownfields)



email: [atsdr.landreuse@cdc.gov](mailto:atsdr.landreuse@cdc.gov)



### References:

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