

HARVESTER ARTIST LOFTS

Council Bluffs, IA
Assessment and Section 128(a) State & Tribal Grants

Former Warehouse Creates Downtown Art Space

ADDRESS:	1000 S. Main St. Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
PROPERTY SIZE:	1.1 Acres
FORMER USE:	Industrial Warehouse
CURRENT USE:	Residential lofts, artists' studios, and retail space
EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:	PROJECT PARTNERS:
The City of Council Bluffs, Iowa received a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant in 2005 and Pottawattamie County Development Corporation (PCDC) utilized \$23,000 in EPA Brownfields Section 128(a) State & Tribal funding awarded to Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR).	Iowa West Foundation, Iowa Finance Agency, Iowa DNR, Pottawattamie County Development Corporation, City of Council Bluffs



The former International Harvester warehouse

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Council Bluffs, Iowa was once a thriving center of agricultural product sales and distribution for almost one hundred years. As the area fell into decline, many buildings—including the International Harvester warehouse—became vacant and abandoned. The city designated this blighted area as the “South Main Brownfield Project Area” and sought resources to help spur redevelopment. In 2005, the city received two EPA Brownfields Assessment grants to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments of targeted properties. One of the assessed properties was the International Harvester Warehouse – an historic building that the city hoped to preserve. The assessments, completed in 2006 and 2007, revealed Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the warehouse property’s soil due to old railroad spurs crossing the property. Pottawattamie County Development Corporation (PCDC) supported the city’s revitalization effort by purchasing the property, which included the warehouse, in 2003 and marketing it to developers.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Leveraged more than \$7 million in redevelopment funding or tax credits
- Created housing for households with incomes between 40 and 60 percent of the median income of Council Bluffs
- Developed a mixed-use art and residential space
- Catalyzing an area-wide revitalization of downtown

OUTCOME:

Artspace USA, a nonprofit real estate developer dedicated to creating affordable space for artists and arts organizations, expressed interest in purchasing the property, but was concerned about the existence of the PAH soil contamination. To address these concerns, PCDC enrolled the property in the Iowa DNR voluntary cleanup program, known as the Land Recycling Program. Through this program, PCDC was able to access \$23,000 in funding through DNR’s brownfields redevelopment program and complete soil cleanup in the fall of 2008; PCDC received a Certificate of No Further Action in July 2009. That same month, Artspace USA began renovating the building. The renovated warehouse project was completed in July 2010 and includes 36 residential lofts. Each unit has additional square footage for an artist’s studio, and the building has over 5,000 square feet of non-residential space designated for art-related uses, such as working studios, art galleries and showrooms, and office space.