

### FORMER UNION TEXTILE MILL

Union, SC  
Revolving Loan Fund Grant

### Weaving the Future from the Fabric of the Past

**ADDRESS:** 201 North Enterprise Street, Union, South Carolina, 29379  
**PROPERTY SIZE:** 18.5 acres  
**FORMER USES:** Textile Mill  
**CURRENT USE:** Affordable housing, restored pond and greenspace

**EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:**

The City of Union, South Carolina received a \$370,000 loan from the South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) managed by the Catawba Regional Council of Governments (COG)

**PROJECT PARTNERS:**

South Carolina Department of Commerce, South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control (SC DHEC), City of Union, SC, and Catawba Regional Council of Governments (COG)



Former Union Textile Mill redeveloped as the Union Mill Crossing, a residential community comprising 39 affordable rental properties

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:**

Located in the heart of Union, South Carolina, the former Union Textile Mill operated from the late 1800s to the 1990s, once serving as the community's principal employer. In 1998 the Union Mill caught fire, destroying the main section of the mill's primary structure and many outbuildings. After the Mill sat idle and charred for over ten years and due to concerns raised by city officials and residents about the site's potential contamination and the visual, the Union City Council passed a resolution in 2002 declaring the site a slum and blighted area. A Phase I assessment—conducted in 2003 prior to the city acquiring the property—confirmed the need for a Phase II assessment. In 2003, the City of Union acquired the property for \$350,000, allowing Phase II environmental assessments to move forward. A number of Phase II assessments, partially funded with \$50,000 from Catawba Regional COG's EPA Brownfields Assessment grant, were conducted from 2004 to 2008. These assessments confirmed that polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) were the primary contaminants in the surface soil. Metals were also found in sediment in the fire water pond on the property, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were found in the groundwater and surface water from a former dry cleaner located upgradient of the property. A cleanup plan was developed, which set projected cleanup costs at \$939,000.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Public health concerns regarding contamination at the site were eliminated through cleanup activities
- \$420,000 in EPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup grant funding leveraged over \$1.3 million in local, state and federal dollars for cleanup and redevelopment
- Union Mill Crossing generates approximately \$100,000 per year in property taxes and utility fee revenues for the City of Union, and employs an onsite property manager
- Removal of general blight has positively affected the neighborhood by replacing an unsafe eyesore with attractive waterfront land, greenspace, and affordable and safe living options

**OUTCOME:**

Through a series of community participation opportunities, a redevelopment plan calling for affordable housing and greenspace on the former Union Mill site was finalized in 2006. To facilitate the site's redevelopment, the City of Union used a \$370,000 loan from the SC DHEC EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund to finance a portion of the \$939,000 in cleanup costs. Cleanup activities, such as excavating soil and installing a permeable geotextile barrier in the bottom of the pond to encapsulate contaminated sediment, were conducted from September 2008 to January 2009. The city received a Certificate of Completion, which included deed restrictions for ground water and the site, from the SC DHEC on June 12, 2009. Redevelopment was completed in 2010 and created Union Mill Crossing, a residential community comprising 39 affordable rental properties on 4.7 acres and greenspace on 2.43 acres. The city plans to redevelop an additional 4.53 acres for offices with residential rental properties on the upper floors, as well as an additional 6.87 acres of greenspace. Based on the experiences gained through cleanup and redevelopment of the Union Mill and 16 other mill sites located across the Catawba region, the Catawba Regional COG is preparing a Textile Mill Redevelopment Guide. The guide will serve as a resource for local officials to clean up and redevelop textile-related brownfield sites in the Catawba region and throughout the state to improve economic viability in low and moderate income areas. In addition, other former mill sites in Union County are benefitting from the lessons learned during this project, including the communities of Jonesville and Buffalo.