

insights

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET September 17, 2020 | TTR not mapped yet | Paul T. Sonderegger, Peter Stark Strassner

St. Louis Boys & Girls Club announces plans for youth golf facility at former Superfund site

In the next step for a historic environmental justice project in the St. Louis region, yesterday the [Boys & Girls Club of Greater St. Louis](#) announced it will partner with the [Gateway PGA REACH Foundation](#) to build a youth golf and athletic facility on the site of a former Superfund site.

Thompson Coburn has represented the Boys & Girls Club pro bono in the Club's nearly decade-long effort to clean up a highly contaminated Superfund site adjacent to its headquarters in North St. Louis.

At a festive (and socially distanced) event at Club headquarters on September 16, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced the completion of the site cleanup at the former Carter Carburetor factory and signed an agreement to help facilitate transfer of the ownership of much of the site to the Boys & Girls Club.

"Few imagined a polluted former carburetor plant could be transformed into a golf training center for the youth of St. Louis," Wheeler said. "But with vision and teamwork it happened."



From left, EPA Region 7 Director Jim Gulliford; Flint Fowler of the Boys & Girls Club; EPA head Andrew Wheeler; Congressman Lacy Clay; Ozzie Smith of Gateway PGA Reach



Flint Fowler, President of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater St. Louis, speaks to reporters.



St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson



EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler, Congressman Lacy Clay



EPA Region 7 Director Jim Gulliford, Flint Fowler, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler



Flint Fowler, Andrew Wheeler, Comer, Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources



Thompson Coburn Senior Counsel Mary Bonacorsi and Flint Fowler



Thompson Coburn Real Estate Partner Jim Dillon, Environmental Partner Paul Sonderegger, and Senior Counsel Mary Bonacorsi



Jim Dillon, Paul Sonderegger

As part of its partnership with the Boys & Girls Club, the Gateway PGA REACH Foundation will support the Club's plans to use the former Carter Carburetor site to build a four-hole golf course, driving range, frisbee golf course and a PGA Reach Academy. Parts of the site owned by the St. Louis Land Reutilization Authority will be developed into an urban prairie or community garden.

- It's about education and making sure kids get exposed to that they would otherwise not have the opportunity to be exposed to," said **Ozzie Smith**, St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Famer and President of Gateway PGA REACH.
- **St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson** described the project as a "new beginning" that demonstrates "the power of partnership."
- **Congressman Lacy Clay** said former industrial sites like Carter Carburetor, often located in communities of color, "cast a toxic shadow that threatens the well-being of young people, seniors, and others who live in the neighborhood." Once completed, the project will allow "a new generation of young people to come here to discover new heroes and be inspired to work hard, play hard, and build a new future without limits."
- **Flint Fowler, Ph.D.**, president of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater St. Louis, said since he started with the Club in 1996, they had viewed the site as an unattractive building that had lost its purpose. "For years we've wanted to build out that site and create a space for our young people."

In 2013, EPA entered into a \$35 million settlement agreement with ACF Industries, Inc. to pave the way for the site's cleanup, building demolition, and ultimately productive reuse. From 2013 to 2020, EPA and ACF removed asbestos and hazardous debris, removed dilapidated buildings and buried and capped PCBs.

Thompson Coburn attorneys [Peter Strassner](#), [Jim Dillon](#), [Anne-Marie Kienker](#) and longtime Boys & Girls Club board member [Mary Bonacorsi](#) led environmental and real estate work on the project and negotiated on behalf of the Club the complex transactions behind the cleanup and future land acquisition.

"It's been our honor and pleasure to represent the Boys & Girls Club over the last nine years on this important project for our region," said Peter Strassner. "It took a lot of time, dedication and grit to get to this point, but this collaboration will ultimately result in the creation of significant green space and recreation facilities for the Club and the North St. Louis community. Our goal was always to create a place where children can play, learn, and enjoy the outdoors, and we're so glad this project is moving forward in that direction."

Media Coverage

[St. Louis Public Radio](#)

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