

# Great Plains Development Authority

August 2011 Newsletter



## Property woes multiply

What happens when a property comes up for sale but the owner doesn't provide the maintenance needed to keep it reasonably sellable? In a nutshell, it falls apart.

Such is the case in the prolonged transfer of Kansas Army Ammunition Plant property.

Now beginning its seventh year of negotiations with the Army – a delay largely due to environmental regulatory disputes – the Great Plains Development Authority finds many problems that didn't exist six years ago.

Understandably, Army resists putting money into maintenance issues on a base that is being closed, but the problems fall back to the local community. In this case, the local community is the most economically distressed of all the BRAC sites, and one of the poorest counties in Kansas. There is no local money to make major repairs and provide for additional demolitions, due to neglect.

Much of the water main has been abandoned; and without

a water main the sewer plant is inoperable.

Six years of storms have destroyed or torn back roofs of otherwise very usable buildings. Each new storm tears away more and the interior walls turn psychedelic colors of mold. Broken windows allow critters and weather inside.

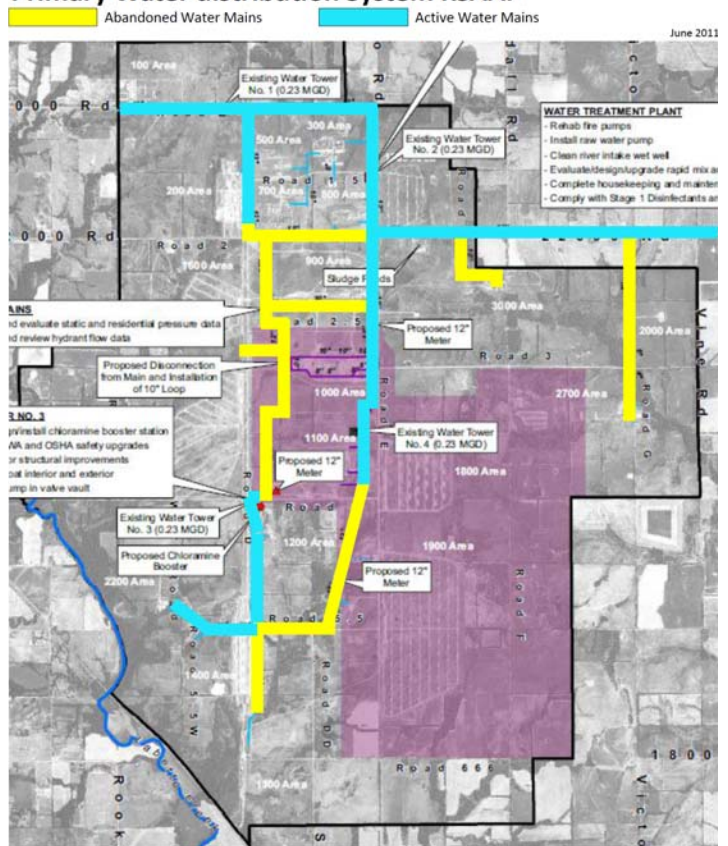
Paved roads crumble with lack of sealing. The list is endless.

With each year of neglect more buildings and infrastructure fall off the list of assets, and are added to the list of unfunded needs.

When BRAC was announced, representatives from Labette County were the very first to appear in the Pentagon to discuss options. This was the first BRAC community to participate in an Army program to sell acreage at a closing base (KSAAP) to provide for conservation easements at a growing base (Ft. Riley) to help prevent future encroachment. It was also to be one of the first transfers.

But battles got in the way.

### Primary Water distribution System KSAAP



The environmental regulatory climate in Kansas is different than in most of the country, so both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Kansas Department of Health and Environment have to be satisfied, since the state doesn't have Resource Conservation and Recovery Act corrective action authority. Army has its own interpretations of regulations, and everyone has a cadre of attorneys.

Once at the front of the transfer line, Kansas found itself becoming too difficult. The BRAC property most similar was the Lone Star Am-

munition Plant in Texas, also operated by Day & Zimmermann. That property transferred last year.

Still, Kansas sits. And crumbles.

The Army's payment requirement of the Redevelopment Authority is the same, but the condition of the property has dramatically deteriorated – deteriorated through no fault of a struggling community that just wants to create jobs.

And the deterioration adds yet one more complicated frustration to the property transfer.



The Great Plains Development Authority (GPDA) is a quasi-municipal organization charged with the redevelopment of the former Kansas Army Ammunition Plant, Parsons, Kansas.

# Shhh...



While we can't share the names of industrial prospects who knock on our door, what they do or when

they come through, it is important that citizens remember that every resident is an ambassador of the community.

Will the stranger at the convenience store or restaurant be judging the community based on the comments of the clerk behind the counter? It's entirely possible.

The rebuilding of lost jobs won't happen overnight, but with everyone's help, it will happen!

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# Decon and demolition

The explosive decontamination of buildings in the 900 Area has nearly been completed and Matrix Environmental Services will immediately begin notifying local companies of their ability to bid on demolition on a number

of the structures.

The size of the buildings coming down will range from the vacuum houses, as small as 71 sf, to melt-pour at 22,664 sf.

Not all of the buildings will come down though. Some,

like 920, are in extremely good condition and will easily accommodate future industry. With more than 27,000 sf of space, 14' sidewalls and offices, Building 920 is one of the rare assets that will remain standing.

If you have a question about the transfer process of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant or concerns about the property itself, please drop us an email or call the office and we'll get you an answer.

Address questions to Ann Charles, [acharles@parsonsksk.com](mailto:acharles@parsonsksk.com) or call 620-421-1228.

# FROM THE PAST...

One of the original dormitories from the Kansas Ordnance Plant popped up in an article forwarded to GPDA by board member Dan Peterson. A Colorado historian was describing the background of South Hall on the campus of Colorado State University.

The article said that during the summer of 1946, arrangements were made with the federal government to acquire the "large two-story temporary wooden building" that had been built at the Kansas Ordnance Plant for housing.

Following the war the dormitories were no longer needed. This particular dorm was dismantled, shipped in pieces to Fort Collins, Col., and reassembled by the end of October that year.

It was said to have housed 320 male students, and quickly nicknamed "Hazard Hall," supposedly because of the H-shape.

Although planned as temporary housing it wasn't demolished until 1973.

**If anyone has knowledge of where other buildings may have gone, or have other interesting tidbits about the plant's past, please contact GPDA and share the information.**



South Hall, pictured here on the campus of Colorado State University in 1963, was originally one of eight dormitories at the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant.

# Administration building closes



The heartbeat of any organization lies in its administration. From that point, edicts come down, people are hired, decisions are made and futures determined. At KSAAP the home for the heartbeat began as a two-story wood behemoth, looking like an “E” from an aerial view.

In 1986 the Army and plant operator Day & Zimmermann (D&Z) packed up boxes and moved their offices into the new stealth-looking modern bunker-style building.

Just recently boxes were once again packed and moved, only this time it was due to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC).

Building 101, as it is officially titled, will be put up for auction by the U.S. Government, along with about 10 acres surrounding it. No date has been set for bidding but there is concern about limited interest in a 67,000 sf office building in Southeast Kansas.

The winning bidder will walk away with an unusually secure facility that once housed a commercial kitchen/dining room, small hospital, secure storage, alarm system, three parking lots and a plethora of offices, conference rooms and bull-pen areas.

The Army Commander’s Representative, Don Dailey, shared some information about the building. It provided space for engineering, quality control, account-

ing, environmental, personnel, property, natural resources, contracting, safety and security.

D&Z was located in one area of the building and the Army in another so the two shared utilities, janitorial services and the general facilities, such as conference rooms.

Dailey said the cafeteria service was discontinued in the early 1990s after the end of the Cold War, when plant employment levels dropped too low to make the service economically feasible.

Dailey and his small staff have relo-

cated their offices to the upstairs living quarters of Fire Station No. 1 (Building 52) until the Army’s presence is no longer required.

D&Z, which is negotiating to purchase 4,000 acres of the site to continue production, has remodeled Building 107 and Building 101A (which it already owns), and moved other personnel to production line offices 1003 and 1102.

The closing of the administration building provides a definitive marker in the history of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant.



The original administration building was constructed in 1941, and sat behind the classic horse-shoe drive with a flag pole centered in the front.

# Light at the end of the tunnel — property transfer or a train?

The transfer of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant (KSAAP) to the Great Plains Development Authority (GPDA) has progressed extremely slowly over the past several years. But, we are finally coming out of the drought and are entering a period of intense activity to get everything in line for a transfer this fall. I hesitate to give a date because we have had so many slips in dates in the past. However, it appears all the major players in the transfer are now on the same sheet of music. Over the next couple months, there are several major items to be accomplished and literally thousands of details.

The environmental documents and agreements the GPDA will have with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) must be finalized and signed. The environmental process has been the biggest roadblock to overcome. In essence, the GPDA was caught in a national policy argument between the EPA and the Army over the treatment of pesticides and PCB-containing paint. With the help of our environmental management contractor, Matrix Environmental Services, and KDHE, the GPDA and KDHE have agreed on a Consent Order for environmental clean-up and an Environmental Use Control Program to protect human health and the environment.

Another major issue for the GPDA is the condition of the water and sewer systems on the KSAAP. With the delay in the transfer coupled with minimal or no maintenance, a large portion of the water system has been shutdown and not used. In its current condition, the system will not be operative on transfer. The GPDA is working with the Army for repair of the system so that on day one of the transfer, water service will be available

for the Great Plains Industrial Park tenants and to operate the waste water treatment plant. The GPDA has stated we just cannot accept a transfer with an inoperative water system.

Of course the transfer cannot happen unless all the paperwork is in order. The 6,100 acres the GPDA will receive are surveyed out in numerous parcels and preparing and reviewing the deed paperwork for accuracy and content is a huge task. The actual transfer documentation is being prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers but the GPDA must complete its due diligence to ensure there are no errors.

The GPDA has already started work to comply with the environmental agreements. We recently hired three part time people to cut brush and trees around buildings (literally hundreds of buildings) on the future GPDA property so they can take GPS coordinates of the building footprints to comply with the environmental requirements and we hired a new full time environmental coordinator to monitor the GPS field activity and ensure compliance with sampling and reporting requirements.

It has been a long road to this point and we all feel we need to get on with the work of developing the Great Plains Industrial Park.

## FROM THE CEO'S DESK



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