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Somerville Landfill Redevelopment Project Receives BDA Designation from NJ Department of Environmental Protection

By [Mel Fabrikant](#) Monday, October 12 2009, 07:14 AM EDT

Geosyntec/Whitman Team to Provide Key Environmental Consulting Services at Site

Whitman, one of New Jersey's leading environmental and engineering management firms, has announced that the Somerville landfill redevelopment project has been designated a Brownfield Development Area (BDA) by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Whitman is an integral part of the team providing environmental consulting services to aid in the redevelopment of the area that contains the former borough landfill.

The BDA designation initiates a long-term partnership among the Borough of Somerville, the project's steering committee, NJDEP and other involved agencies and private companies to focus available resources to develop and implement a plan for remediation and reuse of the brownfield sites in this area.

"This designation is the direct result of countless hours of work and endless dedication by a number of people within the borough and its environmental consultants," Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher said. "The redevelopment of this brownfield area will result in direct and indirect environmental benefits for the community, including improved water quality and the creation of walking trails and green spaces in the borough. The redevelopment will also bring a number of other non-environmental benefits to the Borough and contribute to improving the quality of life for all in Somerville, while also making a significant economic impact regionally."

The redevelopment area encompasses 160 acres extending from the Somerville Railway Station to the Raritan River. The redevelopment plan envisions green space as well as commercial and residential land use, including the construction of up to 1,200 residential units, 45,000 square feet of retail space, up to 185,000 square feet of commercial and office space and more than 40 acres of green space. The development seeks to convert the former landfill area into a vibrant community resource incorporating open space and development adjacent to the NJ Transit rail station.

"We realize that development on top of and adjacent to a closed landfill presents many engineering and environmental challenges that most developers do not encounter on a regular basis and we are thrilled to be having the backing of the state on this undertaking," said Barry Skoultchi, president and CEO of Whitman. "There are issues of land settlement, maintenance of the landfill's integrity and a host of other considerations that our team is uniquely qualified to handle. Fortunately, we have a lot of experience in this regard. We are eager to start work on this project, which has been dormant since the 1980s." "With this designation the Borough is much closer to realizing their redevelopment plans because it allows not only for assessing environmental conditions at the site, but also any necessary

remediation; as a BDA, this property is much more attractive to developers," said Dr. Mary deFlaun, principal of Geosyntec's Lawrenceville office. "With Geosyntec's track record of providing the key geotechnical expertise for successful development of landfills, including the Fresh Kills Landfill, we are confident that the Somerville development will be a landmark project not only for the Borough, but for the state program supporting it."

Key issues at the site include ensuring that site investigation properly characterizes the extent and types of fill and its suitability for development, securing adequate funding for the project, working with the NJDEP on environmental protection and regulatory compliance issues, as well as partnering with the community and other stakeholders to ensure the long-term success of the project.

"We look forward to using our expertise in environmental remediation and brownfield redevelopment to address the challenges at this site," said Michael Sylvester, vice president of marketing and business development for Whitman. "We have a proven track record of working with municipalities to secure funding and working with NJDEP to ensure compliance at numerous redevelopment sites. This project represents another opportunity for our team to prove our expertise, and we look forward to working closely with the NJDEP to ensure a successful redevelopment project." "The successful characterization of environmental issues on the former landfill parcels and surrounding redevelopment area properties will require varied technical and regulatory skill-sets that Geosyntec-Whitman is uniquely qualified to provide," said Dr. Daniel Elliott, project director for Geosyntec. "We are excited about the value-added provided to Somerville in light of the synergies afforded by our respective strengths and cultures. We are committed to assisting Mayor Gallagher and Borough Council in the realization of Somerville's redevelopment vision for the BDA."

About Whitman

Founded in 1985, Whitman is New Jersey's premier environmental and engineering management firm, comprised of the industry's leading professionals. The East Brunswick, N.J.-based company offers turnkey environmental, engineering, and mechanical, electrical and plumbing services, as well as renewable energy services. Whitman continues to grow into new and diverse markets, providing expertise to the private and public sectors, including all levels of federal, state and local governments, as well as a variety of public authorities.

For more information on Whitman please call 732-390-5858 or visit www.whitmanco.com.

About Geosyntec

Geosyntec provides consulting engineering and science services throughout the United States and internationally. With more than 40 offices in the U.S. and select international locations (Canada, Malaysia, Australia, and the United Kingdom), Geosyntec engineers and scientists are known for their technology leadership and practice innovation in the areas of geotechnical and geoenvironmental engineering, contaminated site assessment and remediation, groundwater assessment and remediation, risk assessment and toxicology, urban stormwater management, water and natural resources management, solid waste disposal facility permitting and design, and environmental biotechnology.

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