



CITY OF NEWPORT
CITY MANAGER
Colin K. Kennedy, MPA

MEMORANDUM

August 25, 2025

Subject: Executive Summary – *Site Investigation Report* (RIDEM File No. SR-22-0587)

Project: Former Harrison Avenue Site, Rogers High School, 15 Wickham Road, Newport, Rhode Island

Executive Summary

The City of Newport retained Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to conduct a Site Investigation for a site located adjacent to the old Rogers High School that had historically been used from the 1940s to the 1980s to deposit fill, demolition debris, and municipal sludge.

In the late 1980s, the area was capped with approximately 24 inches of clean fill and repurposed as athletic fields.

Between September 2024 and April 2025, VHB engineers sought to investigate the presence of contaminants through the use of soil borings, test pits, groundwater monitoring wells, and soil gas sampling.

The investigation confirmed that the Former Harrison Avenue Site contains historic contamination primarily from fill materials and municipal sludge.

Results confirmed the presence of elevated lead, petroleum hydrocarbons, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in soils, as well as lead and arsenic in groundwater at certain locations. Methane was also detected in soil gas but at levels below thresholds of concern and not near occupied structures. No off-site impacts were documented, and the site is served by municipal water rather than wells.

VHB evaluated three remedial alternatives:

- (1) No Action/Natural Attenuation
- (2) Full Excavation and Off-Site Disposal
- (3) Targeted Remediation with Capping and Monitoring.

The recommended option is **Targeted Remediation (Option 3)**, which balances effectiveness and cost. This approach includes the removal or treatment of soils with the highest lead concentrations, capping landscaped areas, maintaining pavement as protective barriers, monitoring groundwater quality, and placing an Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR) on the property to control future disturbance.

Overall, the site contains **historic contamination that is largely contained and manageable**. With targeted cleanup, long-term monitoring, and regulatory controls, the property can continue to provide public use without posing a risk to the health of individuals or the environment.

At present, the Rhode Island Department of Environment Management (RIDEM) is reviewing this Site Investigation Report in preparation for a public comment period that both RIDEM and the City of Newport will provide public notice of once scheduled.