

Sacramento housing agency 'committed to finding a path' to fund River District site

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The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency will search for new funding sources for environmental cleanup at a River District property slated for affordable senior housing, after the organization was passed over for a federal grant.

The agency had applied for \$4 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the 2.4-acre parcel between North 12th and North 16th streets, where the soil and subsurface was contaminated by industrial businesses beginning in the 1930s, according to a draft copy of the grant application.

Structures on the site, at 1451 Sproule Avenue, were demolished in 2005. Since then environmental cleanup has been the "primary barrier to redevelopment," the document says. The

agency found elevated concentrations of lead, arsenic and thallium in the soil. Three 55-gallon drums and other debris were buried underground.

Angela Jones, a public information officer for SHRA, confirmed the decision in an email Tuesday. The EPA said in a statement that the grant program is a "highly competitive" national competition.

An SHRA official said staff were disappointed that their agency wasn't selected.

"However, SHRA is committed to finding a path to feasibility for the creation of new affordable senior housing on the Sproule Avenue residential site, and we will continue to look for alternative funding sources for environmental cleanup," Kecia Boulware, deputy executive director of development said in a statement.