



Paducah Citizens Advisory Board

"working for the future"

Emerging Technology Center, Room 221
5100 Alben Barkley Dr.
Paducah, Kentucky 42001
(270) 554-3004

CAB Recommendation 26-01: CAB input on Budget and Funding Priorities at the DOE Paducah Site

Background

The Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) was established to provide a structured, public forum for stakeholder input into the environmental cleanup of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Paducah Site in Kentucky. Composed of residents, technical experts, and community leaders, the CAB serves as a bridge between DOE, its contractors, regulators, and the public. Its formation reflects DOE's commitment to transparency, accountability, and meaningful public participation in complex environmental management decisions, particularly those involving legacy contamination from uranium enrichment operations conducted during the Cold War.

The Paducah CAB plays a critical role in the cleanup mission by reviewing technical documents, evaluating proposed remediation strategies, and offering consensus-based recommendations to DOE. These recommendations often address priorities such as risk reduction, groundwater protection, waste disposition, and long-term stewardship. Community values such as protection of public health, environmental sustainability, economic stability, and intergenerational responsibility are central to the CAB's deliberations. By incorporating these values, the CAB ensures local perspectives meaningfully shape cleanup priorities and approaches, which in turn can influence DOE decisions on project sequencing, resource allocation, and risk communication.

Through its advisory function, the Paducah CAB enhances the credibility and responsiveness of the cleanup program by fostering trust and collaboration between DOE and the community it serves. Its input helps DOE better understand local concerns and align technical solutions with community expectations, ultimately contributing to more effective and publicly supported outcomes. The CAB's recommendations can and do inform DOE's decision-making processes, including adjustments to cleanup scope and strategy, demonstrating the tangible impact of community engagement on federal environmental management efforts.

The CAB also provides valuable input to DOE's budget request and formulation processes, helping ensure funding priorities reflect both technical needs and community-driven cleanup objectives.

While economic development and cleanup timelines vary, the CAB has consistently promoted the consideration of community values in the formal decision-making process. To that end, the CAB continues to promote the following community values:

1. Accelerated Environmental Cleanup & Risk Reduction

DOE should continue to place emphasis on environmental remediation, particularly the C-400 groundwater project, while expediting the decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) of legacy facilities and promoting a more robust cleanup, while continuing work to remediate contaminated soil and groundwater. The near- and long-term focus for the CAB remains on reducing long-term environmental and human health risks to stakeholders.

2. Waste Management & On-Site Disposal Solutions

The Board insists that waste disposal decisions be based on efficient, cost-effective waste disposal pathways. The CAB supports on-site disposal to reduce costs and accelerate cleanup timelines, promoting reindustrialization and the best use of the site's future.

3. Workforce Stability, Recruitment & Economic Transition

The CAB is committed to working alongside DOE to improve workforce recruitment and retention. This approach includes but is not limited to STEM programs in schools; union-based certifications offered to high school and college students; and internships, externships, and workforce pipeline development. The strong ties between a trained, stable workforce, the DOE cleanup mission, and regional economic stability make this a high-value item for the CAB.

4. Future Land Use & Reindustrialization

With a priority on creating a Site Master Plan through a grant administered by the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce, the CAB seeks to align cleanup decisions with future industrial or commercial reuse. The integration of cleanup decisions and future use plans with community visioning processes for redevelopment is critical for this project's long-term success and community buy-in.

5. Transparency, Public Engagement & Communication

The decades-long relationship between DOE and the CAB has yielded a continued emphasis on clear, accessible communication. Moving forward, expanding DOE and contractor public outreach tools (videos, education, engagement platforms) will help DOE maintain public trust during the current phase of cleanup decisions and reindustrialization projects.

6. Technology & Innovation in Cleanup

Interest in advanced technologies (e.g., AI, innovative remediation methods) puts Paducah at the forefront of the Nuclear Renaissance. A clear focus on improving efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness puts the Paducah Site in a position to be a hub for innovation, product development and design research. The CAB and surrounding communities look forward to partnering with DOE and private industry to make this possibility a reality.

Paducah Citizens Advisory Board

"working for the future"

Recommendation: Considering the community values and understanding the current timeline where accelerated cleanup and site reindustrialization are meeting head-on, the CAB recommends:

- **Establish and communicate a “cleanup-to-reuse acceleration strategic plan” including:**
 - **Increase funding for continued environmental remediation and D&D activities to accelerate removal of legacy facilities, ensuring environmental remediation is completed in phases, matching private-sector redevelopment timelines**
 - **Align cleanup sequencing with redevelopment-ready parcels**
 - **Continue working with community leaders to develop a Comprehensive Site Master Plan for future land use**
 - **Prioritize funding for waste disposition infrastructure to accelerate cleanup while minimizing lifecycle cost**
- **Expand training, apprenticeships, and internships to build, develop, and improve the workforce**
- **Enhance public engagement and communication efforts through expanded DOE and contractor outreach tools to maintain community trust and transparency.**
- **Emphasize a proactive approach to advanced technologies to advance Paducah as an innovation and research hub for the Nuclear Renaissance.**