

Long Idle Property in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Historic District Blossoms Quickly after Brownfields Assessment



The property at 820 Broad Street in Lake Charles, Louisiana, was a vacant lot used for parking next to an abandoned gas station. Concerns about potential contamination from the former gas station operation and expense of cleanup



Vacant Lot Used for Parking

trumped the potential of the property's location in the Charpentier Historic District. Prospective developers shied away because the risks from environmental contamination were unknown.

The City of Lake Charles used funds from its US EPA Brownfields Community-wide Petroleum Assessment Grant to conduct a Phase II assessment on the 0.4 acre property which alleviated a major risk to devel-

opment. Plans for a new shopping/retail center quickly moved forward. The design of the 4000 square foot building complements the architecture of businesses and homes in the Charpentier Historic District and is a perfect fit in the City's revitalization plans for its downtown area.

The project has leveraged \$550,000 in investment and build-out, increasing the tax revenue from \$422 per year to a projected \$4000. Fifteen jobs were created during the construction phase, and 10-15 permanent full-time jobs are anticipated for the retail sales and restaurant occupants.



820 Broad Street, Lake Charles

The City's Brownfields Program is a major catalyst to its revitalization efforts in the Charpentier Historic District. A second environmental site assessment will characterize contaminants at the adjacent property – 840 Broad Street, site of the old gas station that was demolished 17 years ago but still containing underground storage tanks. For more information on Lake Charles' Brownfields Program, contact Ron Fossett at rfossett@cityoflc.us, telephone 337-491-1542.