

Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment Act Fuels the Redevelopment of Petroleum-Contaminated Brownfield

Grand Saginaw Plaza – 11501 S. Saginaw Street, Grand Blanc MI

Downtown Grand Blanc

Downtown Grand Blanc is the center of the regional hub of southern Genesee County. Within a five mile radius of downtown is a population of over 73,000 residents. Visitors of the downtown area enjoy a wide variety of dining, shopping and entertainment. Residents value Downtown Grand Blanc because Grand Blanc's economic success is central to the prosperity of the City and the region.



Former Citgo gas station

Background of the property

This prime piece of real estate, in Downtown Grand Blanc, has a long history of operating as a gas station and most recently as Citgo (closed operations in 2009). The use of the gas station location, according to City building records, dates back to 1957 with the construction of a two stall service station. A 540 square foot car wash addition was added to the building in 1979. The most current property became the largest structure as an 11,666 square foot building and it was constructed in 1988.

In September 2013, the demolition and removal of the structure occurred. Shortly after the structure was removed, a contractor removed all petroleum components including the underground storage tanks (UST) and piping. The remediation and property restoration took approximately a month and a half to complete.

The impact the vacant/blighted/dangerous building is having/had on the area

The former Citgo gas station deteriorated to the point that repairs were needed. These blighted buildings with broken windows and doors constituted potentially hazardous conditions and invited trespassers and malicious mischief. This attractive nuisance was especially dangerous to children, as abandoned or broken equipment and neglected machinery could be found inside the structures.

The structure was located in the heart of the City's central business district and downtown development district. It was also near to the Indian Hill subdivision entrance which is home to Grand Blanc Schools' Indian Hill Elementary School. The blighted structures on Saginaw Street were at the three-way junction of Grand Blanc Road at Saginaw Street and this presented a negative gateway into the City's downtown.

The impact demolition would/did have on the site, the immediate area and the community

This new development increases urban density and provides new commercial attractions for Grand Blanc residents and will be transformed into highly desirable retail and commercial space. Completion of this project has brought additional investment and stabilization to the neighborhood. It is also promoting a walkable community in Grand Blanc. The project will integrate various transportation options focusing on walkability, biking and the use of public transit; reducing traffic congestion and encouraging physical activity.

A private investor has made approximately a \$4 million investment on the new commercial/retail structure. This consists of two buildings – one 8,800 square feet and the other 3,200 square feet. Both are single-story buildings. The project started in April and completed August 2014.

Potential for economic development that exists without structure

The redevelopment of the property will have a positive effect on property values in the area. Since the City has made a concerted effort to encourage infill development over the last decade, the central business district has had only one new commercial building construction project completed (prior to the Brownfield Redevelopment Project). Absent the Brownfield Redevelopment Plan (and the State of Michigan's Act 381 Work Plan), the former gas station would have likely continued to lay idle for many more years based on the owner not knowing the extent of the contamination and being unable to sell the property to a redeveloper because of liability concerns.

Now, because of the investment being made, the proposed building project will be a catalyst to encourage other private development to occur on nearby properties in the downtown area.

The need for commercial demolition funding

Without determining this property as a contaminated site (and obtaining available funding for site cleanup), this would likely have remained as a neglected property. Funding made available through the Brownfield Redevelopment and property rehabilitation laws, allowed the conversion of this property and others like this, making it possible to convert abandoned gas stations into a new uses such as restaurants, community gardens, residences and municipal facilities.



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