



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ, EPA recognizes cleanup efforts at North Boulevard expansion

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality recognized several people responsible for the cleanup activities around the North Boulevard expansion project in Baton Rouge. More than 1,170 cubic yards of soil and 22 underground storage tanks were removed from the area. The cleanup was funded by an EPA USTfields initiative grant. The ceremony was held Tuesday, near the site, at the corner of North Boulevard and 17th Street.

Baton Rouge local government, its planning commission and department of public works received plaques along with Conestoga-Rovers and Associates and Shaw Environmental, Inc.

The North Boulevard corridor had been lined with some of the first gasoline stations and auto repair facilities in Baton Rouge. Based on the age of the properties and historical information, most of the documented underground storage tanks still existed on the site.

The city's plan for the newly cleaned area includes enhancing its surface street grid. The \$11.9 million project includes widening North Boulevard from 10th St. to 19th St. and elevating part of the boulevard so traffic can travel over the railroad tracks. This improvement will help reduce surface street traffic in Mid-City, alleviate interstate congestion and provide travel relief to those who work in and around the downtown.

"DEQ is pleased to partner with EPA and the city of Baton Rouge in the USTfields Initiative. Our goal is to assist in building strong and environmentally safe communities," said DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel. "The project serves as a great model for cleanup at other USTfield sites across the state."

Mayor-President Melvin L. "Kip" Holden was also recognized at the ceremony. DEQ partnered with the city to win one of only 40 competitive USTfields grants issued nationwide.

"Today's event highlights Louisiana's success in embracing the USTfields Initiative, which advances the revitalization of land in order to promote economic development and a better environment," said EPA Regional Administrator Richard Greene. "We congratulate DEQ and all of our public and private partners on the completion of this important project that will benefit the community."

After the clean up and evaluation at the site, DEQ issued a Certificate of Completion/No Further Action. This certificate means the property is now environmentally safe for its intended use and allows this highway redevelopment and expansion to take place.

USTfields are abandoned or underused industrial and commercial properties where revitalization is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination from USTs. In 2000, the EPA's Office of Underground Storage Tanks created the USTfields Initiative to encourage reuse at these types of properties.