



Beanlandia: Brownfield Site Reused for the Krewe of Red Beans Home and Community Space

The Krewe of Red Beans (KRB) revitalizes a Brownfield site in New Orleans Bywater neighborhood to create a community-driven, family-oriented krewe culture through a grass-roots movement.

Established in 2009 by a group made up of mostly school teachers and recent New Orleans transplants, the KRB developed several innovative initiatives to support the community. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the KRB raised \$3.3 million to help local restaurants and coffee shops stay afloat, connecting them with 15 major hospitals in the New Orleans area to provide meals and coffee for medical workers in the largest “Feed the Front Line” operation in America. They also created several initiatives to nurture culture-bearers and musicians by providing groceries and creating job opportunities, and created a safety net for New Orleans culture through their “Feed the Second Line” non-profit. When hurricane Ida hit, KRB was able to tarp over 150 houses of culture-bearers and deliver ice and food around New Orleans during the 10-day power outage while employing musicians to help with relief efforts.



Devin DeWulf, Krewe of Red Beans founder, in front of the new Beanlandia location. Photo Credit: Krewe of Red Beans webpage.



The former Giordano Furniture Warehouse is the future home of Beanlandia. Redevelopment activities are being conducted in conjunction with environmental assessment activities.



With community, accountability, diversity, creativity, love and respect as their guiding values, KRB began to envision their home base as more than a krewe den for members, but a cultural center for people to gather, have a sense of belonging, and celebrate New Orleans culture.

In September 2021, KRB acquired a 25,000 square-foot historic furniture manufacturing warehouse in the heart of the Bywater to redevelop as Beanlandia: a multi-functional community center and krewe den. Before acquiring the property, KRB partnered with the Regional Planning Commission's (RPC's) Brownfield Program to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) which identified recognized environmental conditions (RECs) based on historical furniture manufacturing operations, historical factory operations on surrounding properties, and remnant railroad tracks, in addition to potential asbestos containing material (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP) within the structures onsite. Following the Phase I ESA, LDEQ provided assistance through our Targeted Brownfield Assessment Program to further assess the soil, groundwater, and building materials to determine if contamination is present at levels which would impact human health or the environment. Environmental investigations were completed at the end of 2022, and findings indicated soil and groundwater evaluated do not pose a risk to human health or the environment. ACM and LBP were identified, but do not pose a risk under current operating conditions.



Equipment from former furniture manufacturing operations.

KRB's renovation plans for Beanlandia include the "Museum of Beans" to highlight New Orleans culture artists; space for the community and Krewe members to gather to make crafts, Mardi Gras throws and costumes; areas for cultural events and film screenings focused on New Orleans culture; performance space with a specific focus on local artists and kid-friendly events; oyster bar; and space for Mardi Gras artists to design floats. Future plans also including adding a restaurant. The \$3.5 million renovation cost is being crowd-funded by KRB, which will be re-invested back into the community by creating jobs and revenue to support New Orleanians. The space also serves as the Krewe's den for their inclusive and kid-friendly Lundi Gras parades.

For more information on KRB and
Beanlandia visit
<https://www.kreweofredbeans.org/>



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Brightfields: Resources for Clean Energy Brownfield Redevelopment

As most people have seen first-hand working in Brownfields, the cleanup and redevelopment of a Brownfield site is transformative for the health and well-being of lands and people around them.

Brightfields take this transformation another step by incorporating clean energy into Brownfield redevelopment to help communities save energy and natural resources, prevent pollution, and build resiliency. A **Brightfield** is a former Brownfield site that is redeveloped with clean energy, including solar, wind, and energy storage. The Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields Program (KSU TAB) is launching a new accelerator for Brightfields in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), a non-profit leader in the clean energy transition. The new program will include free technical assistance, tools, and resources to help communities with sustainable decision-making and clean energy procurement during Brownfield redevelopment planning.



RMI is working with cities to utilize an often overlooked opportunity for Brightfield development: closed landfills. According to an RMI report from October 2021, there are more than 10,000 closed and inactive landfills nationwide that offer an incredible opportunity for solar energy. Redeveloping historic landfills, which have limited reuse opportunities, into solar energy conduits would provide local clean energy solutions and



Soltage brownfield turned brightfield in Billerica, MA. (Photo By: Greg M. Cooper / Soltage LLC)

jobs to surrounding communities while supporting the nation's overall decarbonization and renewable resources. The high amount of underutilized former landfills across the country and their large areas, as well as their high sun exposure due to lack of vegetation make the landfill solar industry a natural path forward to place these lands back into productive reuse.

Find out More About Brightfields:

- To learn more about Brightfields, ask questions, and brainstorm ways to incorporate clean energy into your Brownfield site reuse plans, you can complete a short survey [HERE](#) and someone with the KSU and RMI team will reach out to follow up.
- For more information on clean energy procurement for your community, you can visit the City Renewables Accelerator [HERE](#).
- Access the RMI Report on how state and local governments can leverage landfill solar to bring clean energy and jobs to your community and read about other communities' landfill solar successes [HERE](#).



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Upcoming Events and Trainings

Event: Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation Spring 2023 Ramble

Dates: March 11, 2023

Location: Historic Abbeville, LA

Join the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation and local partners for a day of touring historic sites in Abbeville, in Vermilion Parish. General admission is \$50.00.

Click here to learn more and register or visit www.lthp.org/events.

Event: Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation Annual Conference

Dates: April 19-20, 2023

Location: Lake Charles, LA

This year's annual conference will be focused on resiliency in preservation. Stay tuned for more updates and registration information by visiting the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservations's **Events Page** or sign-up for their newsletter **here**.

Event: National Brownfields Training Conference

Dates: August 8-11, 2023

Location: Huntington Place Convention Center, Detroit, MI

Learn about available financial and technical resources from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to transform your community Brownfield sites into community assets. Learn more **here**.

Interested in a conference scholarship to attend the conference? LDEQ plans to offer a limited number of scholarships to nonprofit and government entities to help defray the cost to attend. If you are interested in a scholarship, please send an email to Brownfields@la.gov to be notified once the scholarship application is available.

