



Success Stories

Old Post Office Plaza

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Before: Construction begins on the Old Post Office Plaza.
Background left: Board of Education building. Background center: Orpheum Theatre.



Just north of the renovated Old Post Office, a parking lot has been replaced by a 30,000 square foot public plaza. The Old Post Office Plaza will be used for outdoor events such as weekend markets, film series, music, and theater. Prior to being a parking lot, part of the site was home to the St. Nicholas Hotel, built in the 1850s and demolished in 1974. When the building was torn down, the demolition debris was left in place and the parking lot was built on top. Debris included the former elevator, structural steel, and remains of the concrete foundation. Former businesses on the site also include a Lungstras Dyeing and Cleaning and Vane Calvert Company.

Initial subsurface investigations led to the discovery of an underground storage tank, which had leaked and contaminated the soil with petroleum hydrocarbons. Asbestos-containing flooring materials were mixed up with demolition debris buried underground. The St. Louis Brownfields Cleanup Fund (BCF) awarded a subgrant in the amount of \$190,000 to Downtown Now! to help with the cleanup. The BCF is a revolving loan fund which was awarded to the St. Louis Development Corporation and is financed by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Funding for the project totals \$8.16 million; contributors include Downtown Now!, US Bancorp Community Development Corporation, Downtown St. Louis Partnership, Gateway Foundation, and Danforth Foundation. Construction is underway, and the Plaza should be completed in 2009.

After: A rendering of the Old Post Office Plaza during an evening event.

