

West Des Moines, Iowa: New Bank Constructed on a Vacant Lot at the Gateway to Valley Junction

The rapidly growing Iowa community of West Des Moines recognizes the importance of quality of life which includes improvements in human development, education, health, environmental sustainability, as well as recreational amenities and social infrastructure. The City works closely with the development community to find suitable sites compatible with zoning requirements and their comprehensive plan. During 2012 combined commercial and residential construction valuation was \$310,595,751 in West Des Moines. Even though there is much new construction, the City invests in existing and “infill” construction.

A LUST number was assigned to Former Pete’s Valley Sunoco due to a petroleum release reported to the Iowa DNR July 9, 1990. Following assessment and risk evaluation the site was classified no action required March 22, 1999. The site was subsequently assigned a new LUST number for petroleum contamination identified during UST removal activities in November 2004. The DNR received an Insurance Investigation Report (Report) for the site November 2, 2010, which was dated August 25, 2000. According to the Report, soil and groundwater sampling was performed at the site August 8 - 10, 2000, and the laboratory analytical results exceeded DNR Tier 1 levels; but this information was not provided to the DNR until 10 years later.



The property was an empty lot from 2004 to 2012.

The Report revealed that elevated soil and groundwater BTEX concentrations in 2000 were similar in magnitude to levels in samples collected as part of November 2004 UST closure activities; and similar in magnitude to 2009 soil and groundwater BTEX sample results, which could indicate some contamination that existed in 2004 and 2009 was likely present at the site prior to 2000.

Records show the property was bought by an oil company (First) in 1964, and in 1983 the facility was leased to another oil company (Second). This recipient then assigned a lease to another oil company (Third) also in 1983, who, in April 2002 sold their leasehold estate to yet another oil company (Forth). Review of the 2000 Report, property records, and site assessment results enabled potential Responsible Parties to be identified. The petroleum contamination at the site presented an unreasonable risk to public health and safety, and the environment.



New West bank completed at the site in 2013.

As many as eight USTs storing gasoline and diesel had been installed at this site between 1965 and 1994. In November 2004 remaining UST systems were closed, site buildings razed, and the property was an empty lot. Source removal was conducted during the fall of 2010 and periodic site monitoring has been ongoing since. Site redevelopment was initiated in 2012 and a new bank building was constructed on the empty lot. Other new construction has been completed on adjacent properties east of the site where an inactive strip mall was razed in preparation for “gateway” redevelopment. The assessed value of this property has increased significantly since the initial reported release.

Former Pete’s Valley Sunoco, 211 Grand Avenue, West Des Moines, Iowa
District Parcel – 320/02969-001-000 , Geoparcels – 7825-11-126-009
1992-Assessed value after adjustments – \$131,690
2013-Assessed value after adjustments – \$1,200,000