Department of Environment & Conservation

Division of Remediation
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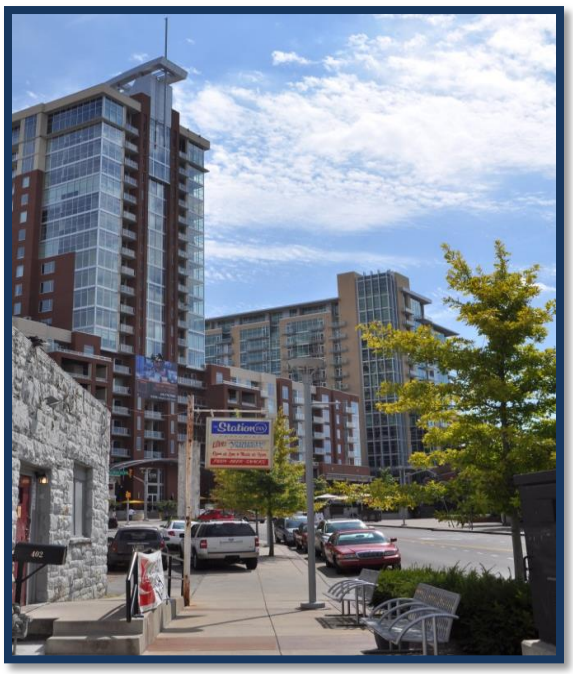
The Gulch, Nashville, Tennessee

The Gulch is currently an urban mixed-use neighborhood in downtown Nashville encompassing over 60 acres. The Gulch got its name from its roots as a bustling railroad yard dating to before the Civil War, which included a roundhouse (where rail cars were repaired), a coal yard and a paint shop in subsequent years. In 1956, commuter rail service was discontinued in Nashville and by 1979, passenger rail ceased entirely. The Gulch was a victim of neglect and became a blighted neighborhood. In 1999, a group of private investors and developers purchased 25 acres and created a master plan for the neighborhood.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Remediation staff worked with several key properties and subsequent property owners to complete Voluntary Brownfields Agreements, assessing and cleaning up any contamination, preparing these properties for revitalization.

Today, The Gulch is a vibrant urban district and a popular local destination for shopping, dining and entertainment. The Gulch is the only neighborhood in Nashville governed by a privately-controlled land use Master Plan and is home to Nashville's only business improvement district outside the downtown Central Business District. In 2007, The Gulch was one of 240 projects worldwide selected to apply for the United States Green Building Council's LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) pilot program. In 2009, The Gulch became the first LEED ND Certified green neighborhood in the southeastern United States and only the fourth Silver Certified neighborhood in the world. With this distinction, The Gulch has earned international recognition for excellence incorporating the principles of smart growth, urbanism and sustainability.



Above (left), the Gulch was home to several railroad lines for decades. Above (right), the revitalization of the Gulch has taken place to include a variety of mixed-use developments.