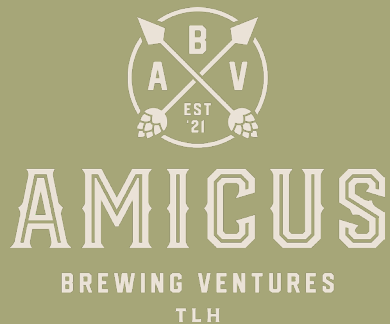


From Cleanup to Community: How Brownfields Redevelopment, Private Investment, and Historic Preservation Shaped Downtown Tallahassee

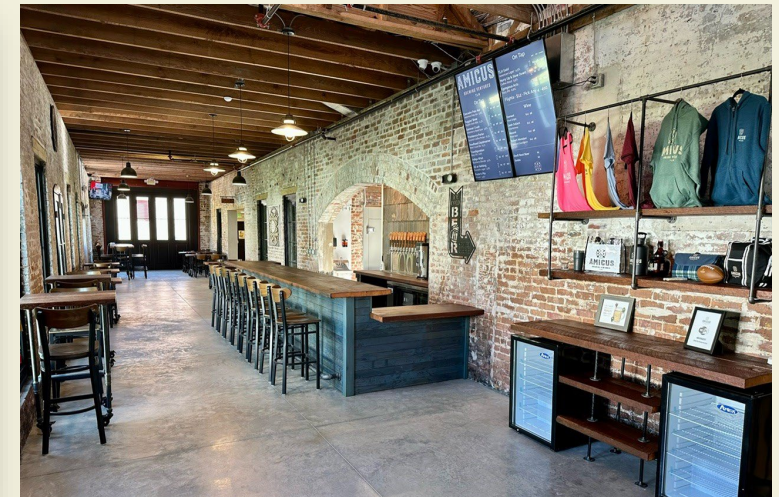
THE NEXT CHAPTER

Adaptive Reuse of the Old City Waterworks

Old City Waterworks |
717 S. Gadsden Street |
Tallahassee, Florida

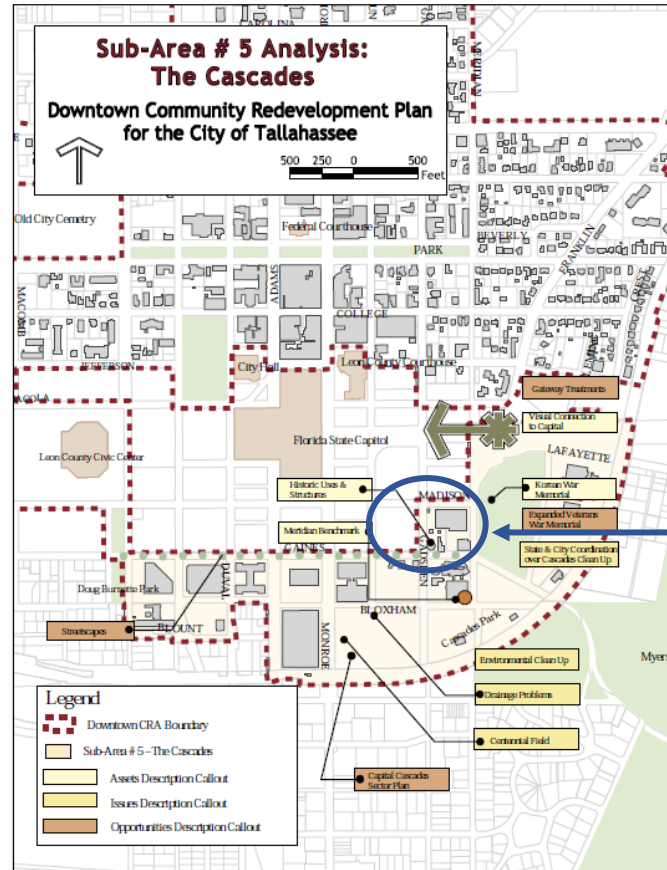


Florida Brownfields Association Conference



The Waterworks was already part of the redevelopment vision

Figure 6: Sub - Area # 5



Tallahassee Downtown Community Redevelopment Plan

32

2004 Downtown Community Redevelopment Plan

Capital Cascades identified as a major environmental and recreational asset for downtown redevelopment.

Cleanup as prerequisite

The plan recognized contamination as an impediment and stated remediation was needed before serious redevelopment could occur.

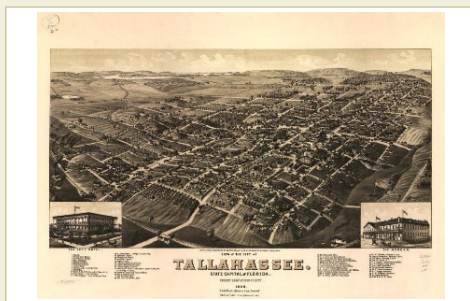
Waterworks opportunity

The historic Waterworks was specifically identified for restoration and adaptive reuse.

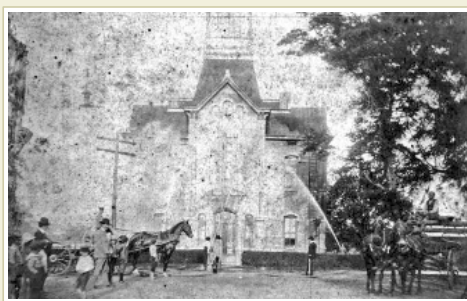
Amicus did not invent the reuse idea — it finally implemented a long-standing public redevelopment objective.

HISTORIC ASSET

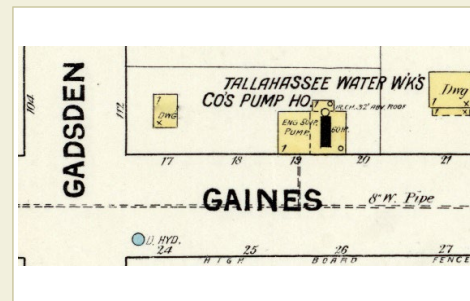
Old City Waterworks: more than a century of civic infrastructure



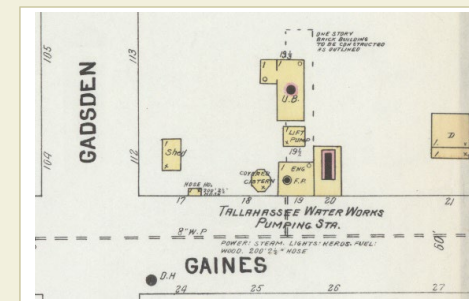
1885 city map



Fire protection need



1890 structures



1903 growth

1888

Private company proposed to build and operate municipal waterworks.

1889

Tallahassee Water Works Company incorporated.

1890

Lot purchased; wooden pump house erected; system operational May 10.

1909

Sanborn shows the building form much like the structure present today.

1916

Concrete-covered reservoir and iconic roof features appear on Sanborn maps.

This was not just an old building — it was an early piece of Tallahassee's public infrastructure.

From main water source to difficult redevelopment candidate

- 1908** City purchased the waterworks, gas and light assets for \$75,000.
- 1958** Waterworks ceased serving as downtown's main water source.
- 1970s** Later storage and maintenance uses ended; portions declined.
- 1979** Old City Waterworks listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- 2006-2007** Phase I & Limited Phase II ESA; City began earmarking funds for stabilization/restoration.
- 2018/2019** City sold the property through a bid process to Waterworks JV/NAP.
- 2022** Amicus/Short Hike acquired the property for adaptive reuse.



Decommissioned interior



Disrepair



Stabilization work



Graffiti

The project was not simply a “renovation” — it involved environmental history, historic-preservation expectations, deteriorated infrastructure and startup economics.

Historic, environmentally complicated — and full of surprises



Prior to adaptive reuse: building exterior

The property carried the kind of complexity that can stall adaptive reuse.

- 2006 Phase I + Limited Phase II; arsenic-impacted soils removed in 2007
- Adjacent former dry cleaner/PCE groundwater condition identified as REC
- 2019 Phase I did not recommend additional assessment
- Property had no connected electric or water service at acquisition

Brownfields lesson

Due diligence turned environmental uncertainty into defined, manageable risk.

Infrastructure surprise

Water had to connect through Gaines Street, requiring a road closure and \$62K in unplanned cost.

Redevelopment lesson

Historic reuse requires contingency for utility, constructability and record-plan surprises — not just contamination.

CRA petition support helped cover the unexpected water-connection cost.

Targeted public investment helped make reuse financeable

~\$1.2M total adaptive reuse project cost

\$297,220 CRA

Public investment did not replace private capital — it helped close the feasibility gap.

CRA Large Redevelopment Grant

\$297,220 approved February 24, 2022. Grant support helped restore and adapt the property for public use.

Private acquisition

Amicus/Short Hike acquired the property in 2022 for \$450,000, in addition to construction and startup capital.

Owner commitment

Eight owners worked without compensation during the first year to support startup viability.

Public investment, private capital and owner sweat equity all had to come together to make the project possible.



Preserve the character. Create a new use.



Historic doors and windows



Repurposed materials into tables and bar



Original brick, tin roof tiles and cedar joists



History wall

Preservation was a design requirement — not a decorative afterthought.

Historic approvals

New versions of historic windows and doors coordinated through local historic-preservation review.

Original fabric

One historic window and one historic door were retained and incorporated into the adaptive reuse.

Salvaged materials

Tin roof tiles became the bar wall; brewhouse joists and floor planks became tables, bar top and facing.

Interpretive history

A history wall and the original “Stop! Dangerous Corner” sign keep the site’s story visible to visitors.

OUTCOMES

From obsolete infrastructure to an economic & community asset

>\$1M

Net sales since opening

29/17

Employees to date / current

>\$120K

State + local sales tax

61.8K

Estimated visits last 12 months

56%

Market value increase

\$68K+

Property taxes since 2022

Placer.ai

Local partner model

Food + agriculture

Rotating food trucks, cottage bakers and oyster farmers; spent grain to farmers; local produce used in beers.

Arts + culture

Musicians, markets, makers and locally themed creative partnerships.

Giving Back

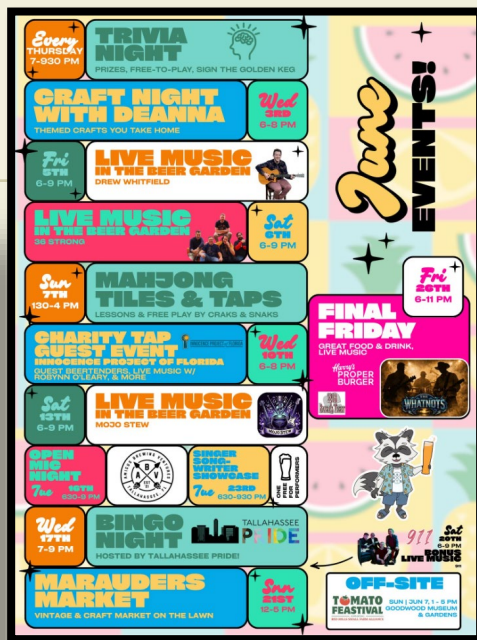
Monthly charity tap plus other nonprofit contributions and fundraising support.



Cleanup creates opportunity; adaptive reuse turns it into place.

ACTIVATING THE DISTRICT

Event Destination



Community Hub



Our Story

Fellowship A welcoming table, good beer, and lively conversation.

Adventure A decade of campgrounds, state parks, beaches, mountains, and breweries.

Place The Old City Waterworks gave the vision a historic home.

The project was not just about opening a brewery — it was about returning a civic landmark to public life.

Contact me for more information

Laura Barrett, PMP
Amicus Brewing Ventures &
Tetra Tech
Tallahassee, FL

Email:
Laura.barrett@tetrattech.com
Phone: 850.536.8120

“A story crafted by four families with a love of fellowship, adventure, and beer.”



All eight owners / four families at Cascades Park