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Baton Rouge General

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*Advocate business writer*

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April 20, 2012

The East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority's board approved a grant Thursday to renovate the facade and parking lot of a shopping center north of Choctaw Drive.

The grant will be for up to \$52,500 with center owner JSale Properties putting in at least \$17,500, said project manager Marcelle Boudreaux.

Boudreaux said the center, located at 2607 N. 38th St., has only three of seven spaces occupied, though other tenants are expected to be signed once the work is done. This will give it a corner store, a seafood market/deli, barber shop, beauty salon and laundry.

Boudreaux said the owner has owned the property for only about a year and is doing some roof work and interior renovations, and that the grant-funded work will include some landscaping.

The center is across from Choctaw Village, which the RDA has also been talking to about possible renovations. The Choctaw corridor is one of the RDA's community improvement plan areas and has been targeted for business improvement initiatives and redevelopment opportunities.

The RDA had already administered eight of its business improvement grants before the one approved Thursday. The funds were awarded to the state following hurricanes Gustav and Ike and are administered by the city-parish.

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