Broussard's in business

The intersection of Albertson Parkway and La. 182 has become a hub of commerce in Broussard. The road was completed six months ago and is now home to many businesses.

Town reaping rewards from La Neuville extension

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BROUSSARD — If you're coming into Lafayette from the south, the La Neuville extension makes a quick shortcut between U.S. Route 90 and Ambassador Gallery Parkway, but the road is also becoming a hub of commerce in Broussard.

Completed six months ago, the road was formally named Albertson Parkway in tribute to the supermarket that marks the road's beginning at U.S. 90 as it grades toward La Neuville Road at the Youngsville Highway.

"The road was built primarily to foster retail development," said Charles Landring, mayor of Broussard.

The plan seems to be working. In addition to Albertson's and its immediate neighbors like GNC and Sisley's Ultimate Italian Buffet, a host of other businesses are planning to move onto the road or near its intersections.

The Home Savings Bank hopes to have a branch ready for business at the intersection by February 2000. Goodwill Industries is planning to open a store in January and the Family Dollar stores will open a location sometime in mid-November, according to representatives from each company. A Wendy's restaurant and a Shell station will be opening at the intersection as well, according to a Wendy's spokesperson.

"There's a lot of growth going on in Broussard right now," said Jennifer Pope, director of marketing and communications for Goodwill Industries of Acadiana.

"Everything is moving out in that direction, and we don't have anything out in that direction," she said, citing the reason for the location.

In exchange for the new business, the town had to shoulder most of the cost of the Youngville extension, built on land that was primarily used to grow sugar cane.

The town of Broussard paid $2.3 million of the road's cost through bonds. The Rural Utility System, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, kicked in $950,000 and Albertson's paid $300,000 for asphalt and widening around the store.

Albertson Parkway is a quicker way to get from Broussard to parts of Lafayette than its traditional Main Street, a portion of La. 182. But even the businesses on Main Street seem to have few complaints.

"This road is for the betterment of our town," said Jim Williams, owner of the Pizza Stop on Main Street.

He said most of his customers live in Broussard, and people who want to patronize his business will do so even if they don't pass by it on their way home.

Brenda Fakler, a co-owner of La Grande Maison Bed and Breakfast on Main Street, likes the improved traffic flow.

"The cars are not stopped in front of the house between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.," Fakler said.

And she likes the road as a resident of Broussard.

"I'm personally happy it's back there because I can just shoot into town," she said.

The traffic apparently hasn't bothered the people who live on Albertson Parkway either.

Judy Billions, who runs a trailer park next to the new road with her husband Jimmie, said they had worried that the traffic might disturb residents. But they haven't had any complaints, and some residents have told them they like having Albertson's nearby.

The extension ends at La. 89, the Youngsville Highway, as it connects to La Neuville Road near a Shell gas station.

"It's helped business a lot," said Catherine Issac, an assistant manager at the Complete Spp. Food Mart and Shell station.