

Brownfields

Success Story

Howard Street Apartments *New London, Conn.*

A former 5-acre commercial, residential, and partial solid waste disposal area in New London that remained stagnant for several decades is now an apartment complex. This 197-unit building provides much-needed housing as it helps revitalize New London. The vision for this project was brought to life through support from the city, community, and private partners.

Priming the Property for Redevelopment

The City of New London has been one of Connecticut's most distressed communities for several years. This redevelopment plan envisioned new workforce housing and technology companies to support existing manufacturing businesses. The site is considered a key component of the neighborhood surrounding Fort Trumbull State Park, and it once hosted small businesses including a restaurant, automotive shop, gas station, and dry cleaners. As the economy took a downturn, vacant parcels remained, waiting for the right development opportunity.

Starting in 2011, the city used \$200,000 in EPA funding to assess site conditions and determine the extent of contamination. Coal ash, bottles, urban fill, and bulky waste were found throughout the site. Contaminants included petroleum products, volatile organic compounds, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, and heavy metals. In 2014, the city's redevelopment agency received \$400,000 from EPA to clean up the site. With this funding, they were able to remove a great deal of waste materials, underground storage tanks, and other contamination from the municipal storm drainage "ditch" and close the large solid waste area. Thanks to the EPA funding these actions made the site safer and easier to redevelop.



Photo of Howard Street Apartments mid-construction
(photo credit: US EPA)

EPA Grant Recipient:
City of New London

Grant Types:
Assessment
Cleanup

Current Use:
Housing

Former Uses:
Waste Disposal
Automotive Shop
Dry Cleaners



Photo of Howard Street Apartments mid-construction
(photo credit: US EPA)



Simulated photo of projected project completion
(photo credit: US EPA)

“The result is the repurposing of a parcel that has been vacant and blighted for more than two decades into much needed housing that will help attract the talent necessary to support New London’s burgeoning defense, offshore wind, and healthcare industries. The resulting residential growth will, in turn, support the city’s small businesses. The partnership between EPA and the city will have far reaching benefits across the city for years into the future.”

-New London Mayor
Michael Passero

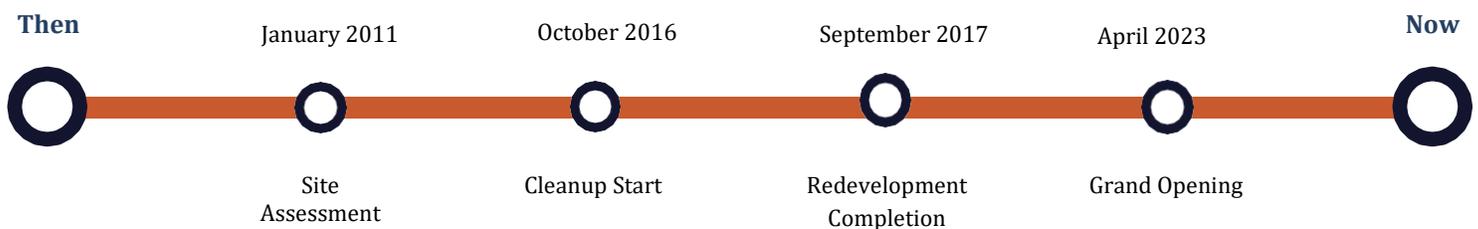
New London has been planning this redevelopment since 2014. After two prior redevelopment plans fell through due to high cleanup costs and poor market conditions, the third time was the charm. After overcoming many hurdles, the city’s redevelopment agency and the private developer worked together to complete the cleanup and move ahead with construction. The overall vision of the site kept the best interests of the local community in mind, and direct federal support from Brownfields grants as well as private investment from Opportunity Zone funding were both important parts of the capital stack.

Located across the Thames River is the US Naval Submarine Base New London. Contributing to the project’s success, a nearby company that makes submarines relocated and expanded its headquarters, causing an increase in market demand for housing. The Howard Street Apartments will now help provide workforce housing for people working at important local businesses.

Today

Engineered with precision, the Howard Street Apartments holds a present market rate value of \$30 to \$40 million and will officially open for lease in the spring of 2023. Some of New London’s favorite attractions, including the historic Fort Trumbull State Park and Ocean Beach Park, are a short walk away from the apartments.

Today, the city is also home to America’s Tall Ship, the US Coast Guard Sail Training Ship Eagle, and Thames River Heritage Park. The Howard Street Apartments will add a breath of fresh air to the seaport city while energizing the local economy and bringing together new faces to experience the pleasures that New London has to offer. The modernness of the building will attract young people in search of safe and affordable spots to live, along with empty nesters with disposable income looking for new and lively housing options. Not only has this project transformed what was once a dangerously contaminated parcel, but it provides hope and reassurance for both small business owners and long-time residents that their city is looking up and growing.



For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact Dorrie Paar at 617-918-1432 or Paar.Dorrie@epa.gov