

Brownfields

Success Story

Richmond Creamery

Richmond, VT

An environmentally sustainable development being created on the site of a former dairy factory in Richmond, Vermont, has brought new businesses to the heart of this town of 5,000 people with the help of a Vermont-led program. The development at the former Richmond Creamery site was selected to receive support from the Brownfield Economic Revitalization Alliance (BERA), which joins government agencies and private investors in a team effort to revitalize high-priority brownfield properties. The Richmond Creamery site is also the first project supported by the alliance where the cleanup and redevelopment have been completed.

The new environmentally sustainable development is bringing new housing and businesses to the heart of this town of 5,000 people. It is giving residents a chance to live, work and enjoy village life just minutes away from the city of Burlington, the mountains and Interstate 89. The Creamery, which once employed over 150 people, closed in 1999 after 100 years of operation. The loss of this employer was a blow to the community, but the need for residences and commercial space in the village center has grown over the years. A team of local, state and federal agencies, along with private investors, worked together to allow the multi-phase redevelopment of the Richmond Creamery site, including demolition of the remnants of the old buildings and construction of up to 60,000 square feet of apartments and commercial space.

Priming the Property for Redevelopment

The old creamery sat unused and derelict for two decades. Contaminants on the property included ammonia refrigeration tanks, asbestos and lead paint in the dilapidated buildings, and heavy metals and toxic chemicals in the soil. The buildings were in various stages of disrepair, becoming increasingly dangerous to residents, and posed a threat of materials containing lead and asbestos being released into the environment.

The Town of Richmond in 2014 passed interim zoning in order to ease the way for development and help attract developers. The State of Vermont prioritized the project for Brownfields and other funding based on its designation as a Brownfield Economic Revitalization Alliance site in 2015. This project is a great example of collaboration among a long list of partners including the Alliance, state and federal agencies, regional development corporations, regional planning commissions, nonprofits, municipal representatives and private sector developers.



EPA Grant Recipients:

- Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
- Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
- Northwest Regional Planning Commission
- Rutland Regional Planning Commission

Grant Types:

Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, 128a State/Tribal Funding

Former Use:

Dairy processing facility

Current Uses:

Multi-use and Commercial Space





EPA's total investment of \$110,000 in Brownfields funding helped cover a substantial portion of the \$1.3 million needed to assess and clean-up the contamination at the site. This allowed Vermonters to see a path forward for turning a derelict brownfield in the downtown of a quaint Vermont village into a vibrant, environmentally friendly mixed-use development that could drive the economic viability of the community.

Today

The first building is complete and has 14 apartments and almost 6,000 square feet of commercial space, with 70 percent of the commercial space leased. Tenants include a national environmental testing company, a co-working office and public gym. With a major housing shortage in Vermont - especially for smaller, lower costs units – a long list of residents have expressed interest. Construction is pending for the second building, which will add another 36,000 square feet and up to 30 apartments. The third phase is slated to add two more buildings totaling another 25,000 square feet.

The new building was constructed with environmentally friendly practices and a goal of minimizing its impact on the environment. The first building will be fully net zero through solar arrays on the roof and on a 40-car parking canopy and future solar is planned in conjunction with future buildings. The building was designed to achieve Efficiency Vermont's highest level of building standards for energy efficiency & utilization and to reduce waste. Finally, local sourcing of construction materials reduced travel and shipping impacts and provided revenue and benefits to local businesses.

“The primary reason we are now able to drive economic opportunities in Richmond, Vermont is the Brownfield funding provided to mitigate the high cost of the clean-up. Of course, there were other elements that ensured the success but, without the brownfield funding, no financial institution, private or public investor would have been able to justify the costs of the brownfield clean-up. The economics would have been upside down and the property would continue to be un-used and dangerous for the environment and our community. Brownfields funding is a vital element to ensure that projects like the Creamery are viable and offer economic opportunity to businesses, communities and residents. We, and the community of Richmond, are grateful and honored to have received the support and hope that our success paves the way for other projects and communities.”

Josi Kytle, Partner

Buttermilk LLC

For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact Joe Ferrari at 617 918 1105 or Ferrari.joe.gov.