

Brownfields Success Story

Bartlett Station

Boston, Mass.

The historic Nubian Square neighborhood of Roxbury in Boston, Mass., has seen the widespread loss of industry and the concurrent environmental degradation. In recent years, there has been a focus on revitalizing the community: historic buildings have been renovated, brownfields cleaned, and housing constructed. Bartlett Station, a former mass transit maintenance facility operated by the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, is a good example of this trend. Formerly known as Bartlett Yard, this site has been cleaned up and is being redeveloped as an innovative urban mixed-use development. In addition to housing, Bartlett Place will provide space for public art and events, markets, and shops.

Priming the Property for Redevelopment

Bartlett Place was designed to enhance the neighborhood while creating rental and ownership homes for low to moderate-income families in a place once burdened by contamination. The eight-acre site was formerly used by the MBTA to maintain buses and trains, which resulted in poor air quality and other environmental issues for the community. The maintenance buildings at the site contained asbestos and lead paint, and soils were contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls, petroleum, and heavy metals. The presence of this and other brownfields may have contributed to high asthma rates and other public health issues in this densely populated neighborhood, bringing environmental health concerns to the forefront in Nubian Square.

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation created a nonprofit specifically designed to revitalize this site through a truly community-driven process. They acquired Bartlett Yard from the MBTA in 2010 with the vision of working with the community to transform the blighted property into an asset for the neighborhood. In 2011-2013, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded \$1 million in cleanup grants for the five parcels that make up the site. Nuestra CDC is a leading community-based developer, which has a strong relationship with the Boston Local Initiative Support Corporation, and Windale

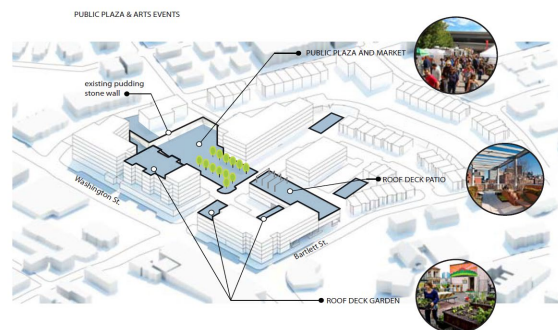


Figure 1: Public Plaza

Credits: Nuestra CDC

EPA Grant Recipient:
Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation

Grant Types:
Cleanup

Former Uses:
Bus and train maintenance facility

Current Use:
Bartlett Place – urban mixed-use development



Figure 2: Bartlett Station Apartments

Credits: Nuestra CDC



Figure 3: Former Bus Yard Credits: Nuestra CDC

“On an 8-acre former brownfield site, Nuestra and our partner Windale Developers are building 166 for-sale homes, 214 apartments and 30,000 square feet of commercial space. The housing will be two-thirds affordable. The new homeowners will gain \$500 million in equity over 20 years. The project will generate 100 permanent jobs and approximately 900 construction jobs.”

David Price, Executive Director
Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation

For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at www.epa.gov/brownfields or contact Frank Gardner, 617-918-1278, Gardner.Frank@epa.gov

Developers, Inc., a local developer with experience in housing.

The developers worked with state and private partners to leverage construction loans, equities, and sponsorships totaling more than \$32 million. The project, expected to be finished in 2022, continues to generate construction and permanent jobs, targeting most of the contract dollars to locally-owned businesses.

Today

Bartlett Station is envisioned as a creative village, with Oasis@Bartlett, a 15,000-square-foot public arts plaza as the centerpiece, along with a grocery store that will provide affordable and healthy organic food. Oasis@Bartlett will include space for art installations, staging for performances, benches, a garden area, and shade trees. The plaza will highlight local history and culture, including the Bartlett Pear and Roxbury Russet Apple trees that originated in the area. Signs and installations will honor the multi-cultural heritage and history of activism in Roxbury.

Building B of the development is already complete and offers 60 residential units, 32 of which are set aside for lower-income residents – those earning 30 to 60 percent of the area’s median income – as well as commercial space on the first floor. Building A, on which started construction in March 2021, will follow a similar design with 60 residential units and 12,000 square feet of commercial space on the first floor – 2/3 of which will be reserved for low to moderate-income individuals. The next phase will include the outdoor park area and Building D, a senior building with 50 residential units. Once complete, the overall development will include 380 housing units designed to meet the community needs.

Bartlett Station will be developed to the LEED-Neighborhood Development standard featuring greenspace, reflective roofs, and other sustainability practices. A village-wide energy production system will make Bartlett Station a net energy producer. The homes will be LEED-certifiable for new housing and new commercial construction, incorporating features such as passive solar heating, geothermal heat pumps, rain and gray water recycling, and renewable finishes and materials. A tree canopy in the plaza area will provide more green space for families in the middle of a dense neighborhood and help counter heat island conditions caused by paved surfaces. They are also partnering with nonprofits to start an electric vehicle ridesharing program that offers a sliding scale of rates for lower-income users and more EV charging stations. In June 2018, Nuestra Comunidad and its Bartlett Station project partners won the “Environmental-Energy Merit Award for Leadership by a Non-Profit Organization” by the Environmental Business Council of New England.