

Industrial History of the Naugatuck Valley



At the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, the Naugatuck Valley was at the forefront of manufacturing, rivaling the growth and production of the east coast's largest cities. Mills were built on streams and rivers as soon as the region was settled in the 17th century, with full industrialization burgeoning in the valleys and on the plains in the mid-19th century. For over two hundred years, anything that could be manufactured was made in the factories of the Naugatuck Valley.



The region thrived. Focus spanned from metals and rubber manufacturing; to cars, buttons, bugles, and a myriad of other products. However the slag, ash, plating residues, waste pits, and buried tanks left behind make site redevelopment difficult and costly.

Today, the region has more Brownfields sites than any other area of Connecticut. Along the course of the Naugatuck River alone, there are 553 regulated facilities listed by EPA. Most are abandoned. This number and density of brownfields sites, combined with the severe limits of river valley topography, restrict land available for development and depress economic viability. These brownfields contribute to economic stagnation and deprive the municipalities of desperately needed tax revenue.

Potential and Opportunity

The 25 communities of the Regional Brownfields Partnership (RBP), consist of an area with thousands of acres of Brownfields mainly located along the riverfronts in the heart of infrastructure-rich downtowns. Historically, good paying, steady employment supported families in the modest homes that grew up around the factories and mills. Transportation Systems, Public water, gas & electric service investments made to support these industrial engines still serve these sites today, making them much less expensive for taxpayers to support and maintain as opposed to establishing new services for development sprawling over greenspace.

“Our Challenge is to reduce the cost of cleaning our industrial legacy so that these much more efficient locations become competitive with the site development costs of Greenfields.”
-Rick Dunne, Executive Director

Communities eligible for assistance under the **Regional Brownfields Partnership**: Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Berlin, Bethlehem, Bristol, Burlington, Cheshire, Derby, Middlebury, Naugatuck, New Britain, Newtown, Oxford, Plainville, Plymouth, Prospect, Seymour, Shelton, Southbury, Southington, Thomaston, Waterbury, Watertown, Wolcott & Woodbury.



Valley Council of Governments & Regional Brownfields Partnership
Regional Brownfields Partnership

Rebuilding Brownfields One Stop, Full Shop



VCOG is a one-stop brownfields service center for economic developers who need government assistance.

Merely securing brownfields funding from the government may not guarantee a successful project. Municipalities need to know how to create "deals" and ensure that the money is spent properly. Redeveloping brownfield sites is complicated economic development. VCOG makes that process much simpler for our partners. VCOG provides funding, knowledgeable support staff, financial management, project management, payment inspection and reporting capacity for municipal members.

Redeveloping a brownfield site is never simple, but VCOG staff members have the critically important experience necessary to design & ensure successful outcomes. VCOG has developed more than \$4,000,000 in grant and loan funds to leverage projects. Staff works with the local economic development professionals and elected officials to foster and help structure deals. We also provide assistance and advice to towns that wish to seek & manage their own direct grants from state & federal resources.

Staff of the RBP and VCOG provide a seamless staff resource for our towns, eliminating the necessity & cost of developing an expert in-house staff in each town & city to plan and manage redevelopment of Brownfields sites.



Photo courtesy of the Shelton Economic Development Corporation

At a Glance...

- VCOG is your "in-house" Brownfields redevelopment staff.
- Grants for Municipalities & Non-Profits in our 25-town service area. 0% interest loans for private developments.
- We assist both Public & Private development sites.
- We have the experience necessary to design & ensure successful outcomes for your projects.
- Reclaim lost tax revenue from delinquent and abandoned sites & Protect municipalities from liability.
- Create the deal that makes re-using a brownfield the cost-efficient choice for your economic development project.
- We provide funding, project management, and regulatory compliance.
- A seamless staff resource to member municipalities complementing your existing economic development staff in the planning and management of Brownfields sites.