

PHOENIX COURT APARTMENTS

A NEIGHBORHOOD RISES FROM THE ASHES



Mount Carmel, PA
Photo courtesy of WNEP News

Early one October morning in 2013, a multiple-alarm fire displaced residents and tore through abandoned rowhomes in the Atlas Neighborhood of Mt. Carmel Township. This left the community with a series of blighted and unsafe structures, which had stood vacant for years and now presented an increased hazard to children and others in the community.

Northumberland County's Blight Task Force jumped into action to remediate the site. The Task Force had multiple municipal partners within the county that had benefited from other DCED programs, including the **Keystone Communities, HOME Investment Partnership, and Neighborhood Assistance programs** — as well as other sources — to demolish and rehabilitate housing across Northumberland County.

The municipal jurisdiction of Mt. Carmel Township purchased the properties, and the county's Housing Authority subsequently razed them. A series of apartments for seniors on modest incomes was planned for the site after a Neighborhood Market Analysis showed a demonstrable lack of quality, accessible senior housing in the area. Four years later, five new senior living apartments — one of which was fully ADA-accessible and designed for individuals with disabilities — officially opened on the former blighted site, marking a turning point for the neighborhood. The name for the new structure, Phoenix Court, appropriately captures how the project transformed the neighborhood and helped it rise from the ashes of a blighted site.

CASE STUDY



COMMUNITY

Mount Carmel
Northumberland County

REGION

Central Pennsylvania

POPULATION

5,785

IMPACT

- Transformed a dilapidated, unused site into much-needed affordable housing
- Provided safe, ADA-accessible housing for seniors with disabilities
- Improved the neighborhood's aesthetic and increased the pride of ownership of its residents
- Made the area safer for residents and children

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SPURRING FURTHER EFFORTS TO RESOLVE BLIGHT

Beyond aesthetically improving the neighborhood, the project also has given the residents new hope and pride of ownership. This project represents an ongoing, widespread, proactive effort taking place throughout Northumberland County to address and resolve blight, making its communities safer, more beautiful, and places that residents can be proud to call home. Though it's one of the first such initiatives, it certainly won't be the last.

The **HOME Investment Partnership Program** seeks to expand the supply of decent and affordable housing for low- and very low-income Pennsylvanians. A federally funded program administered by DCED that provides municipalities with grant, loan, and technical assistance, it's currently the largest block grant of its kind intended for affordable housing. Learn more about HOME at dced.pa.gov/home.

"We're seeing that...this project continues to spur growth and development through further private and public investment."

— Michael Carpenter,
DCED HOME
Program Manager