Mixed-use affordable housing development marked complete in Johnson City

Image of Homesteads on Grand in Johnson City (WBNG)

By Brandon Kyc

Published: Sep. 9, 2026 at 6:14 PM EDT

JOHNSON CITY, N.Y. (WBNG) — New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner RuthAnne Visnauskas announced the completion of Homesteads on Grand, after years of construction.

The $32 million, 72-unit mixed-use affordable and supportive development in Johnson City was officially marked complete on Wednesday, Sept. 9.

The housing project was part of Governor Kathy Hochul's Downtown Revitalization Initiative and has transformed a vacant site into affordable apartments and commercial space. Under Hochul's administration, New York State Homes and Community Renewal has created or preserved more than 1,200 affordable homes in Broome County. The project is part of the governor's $25 billion five-year Housing Plan, which aims to create or preserve 100,000 affordable homes statewide.

"By turning a long-vacant site into quality, sustainable new homes, we are making it more affordable to live in Broome County while at the same time strengthening the Southern Tier economy," Hochul said. "My administration is committed to making more projects like Homesteads on Grand possible and putting our housing and economic development strategies to work to create vibrant communities that will uplift villages like Johnson City and give residents the opportunities they deserve."

"To invest in affordable housing that brings vacant sites back to life is to invest in a community's future," Visnauskas said. "These 72 new apartments in Johnson City will create affordable, supportive homes with access to employment, education, health care, and everything this community has to offer," she said. "Homesteads on Grand is a terrific example of our Pro-Housing Communities program at work, growing our housing supply and making villages like Johnson City better, more affordable places to live.

The site was previously home to a foundry, then the Philadelphia Sales store, known locally as "Phillies," and was later left vacant. The project transformed it into affordable housing and commercial space.

The development offers 12 supportive apartments for residents who will receive on-site services through the YMCA of Binghamton and Broome County. The supportive apartments are funded by an Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative and administered by the New York State Office of Mental Health.

The all-electric building features on-site solar generation, high-efficiency appliances, Air-Source Heat Pump systems, and centralized Air-Source Heat Pump water heaters designed to reduce operating costs. Residents will benefit from an Energy Recovery Ventilation system that improves indoor air quality and will have access to common spaces, including a community room with a kitchen and a playground.

Units will be affordable for households earning up to 70% of the Area Median Income. Eight units are designed to accommodate residents with mobility disabilities, and three units are designed to accommodate residents with sensory disabilities.

Johnson City was named the Southern Tier winner of the sixth round of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in 2023. Other DRI awardees in the region include Elmira, Watkins Glen, Owego, Hornell, Endicott, Norwich, Binghamton, Ithaca, Roxbury and Grand Gorge. The award is helping Johnson City revitalize its downtown area and generate new opportunities for long-term growth following the local planning process.

Financing for Homesteads on Grand includes a mix of public and private sources, including federal and state Low-Income Housing Tax Credits from Homes and Community Renewal expected to generate more than $18 million in equity, along with more than $6.5 million in HCR subsidy and $1 million through the New York State Department of State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The New York State Office of Mental Health provided a $116,000 program grant.

The project benefits from $396,000 from the Clean Energy Initiative, a partnership between Homes and Community Renewal and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. The project also received $800,000 through Broome County's ARPA program. The site is participating in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Brownfield Cleanup program and may be eligible for $3.7 million in tax credits.

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