ECONOMIC IMPACT

In the summer of 1956, as demolition was underway, the contract to redevelop that 22-acre parcel which had been the New York Streets neighborhood was awarded to two developers, Martin Cerel and J.A. Drucker & Sons. In 1959, the Boston Herald Traveller—the predecessor of the modern-day Boston Herald—became the first business to open in the now-empty area. By 1962, it was home to Graybar Electric, Westinghouse Electric Supply Co, Transit Insurance, First National Bank, Star Sales, Dario Ford Automobile—an estimated $15 million in property development and 1,700 jobs. The Boston Redevelopment Authority announced that the New York Streets project was “proof that renewal can serve as a vehicle of private industrial and commercial development.”

SOCIAL IMPACT

The New York Streets project may have been an economic boon for the city, but it was a hardship for those living in the neighborhood. Plans to relocate about 1,000 residents displaced by the urban renewal foundered. A proposal to house them at the Columbia Parks Projects in Dorchester failed when many chose to stay in South End neighborhoods near the former New York Streets. But as redevelopment continued to reshape the South End, some were forced to move again and again. The Boston Housing Authority reported that by April 1956, six months after demolition began, 72 percent of the New York Streets residents had been relocated, but “other tenants refused repeated offers by the Authority to accept standard housing.”