The SteelStacks project was undertaken by ArtsQuest, a non-profit organization dedicated to the celebration of arts and culture in the Lehigh Valley region, and the Lehigh Valley Public Telecommunications Corporation. This joint effort resulted in a Performing Arts and Festival Center within the abandoned Bethlehem Plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, the nation’s largest brownfield development located in a severely distressed census tract in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Both organizations recognized the substantial strategic synergies and economies of scale that were available through cooperative effort. Also recognized was the importance of bringing high quality, community-based activity to this historic site.

The development rehabilitation created a Festival Center with 32,000 square feet for concerts, community gatherings, exhibits, festivals, and other events. The development also includes a newly-constructed Performing Arts Center with a studio and 200-seat theatre.

SteelStacks is part of an overall redevelopment of the former Bethlehem Steel plant. Already, businesses have opened on what is to become the $1 billion Bethlehem Commerce Center, and the $743 million Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem. Furthermore, SteelStacks provides job training and job opportunities for Southside Bethlehem residents by creating expanded cultural programs which employ full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees; and by continuing and expanding a job skills program. This redevelopment, Mayor John Callahan said, is important as the city changes from an industrial town to one with a diverse economy.