Seven historic buildings, dating to 1903, make up the Browns Point Light Station in Northeast Tacoma on Puget Sound. The property, owned by USCG which maintains the working aid to navigation (lighthouse), is leased to Metro Parks Tacoma as a public park. Points Northeast Historical Society (PNEHS), an all-volunteer organization, is responsible for restoring and maintaining the buildings and having them open to the public.
Lightkeeper’s Quarters

The former lightkeepers quarters, restored in 1990, now serves as an income producing vacation rental and houses a history museum. Multiple grants and matching money ($100,000) funded the restoration and volunteer labor maintains and manages the rental. (VRBO.com/500782)
The restoration of the 1906 Oil House, where kerosene was stored, reflect a most dramatic transformation. Rusted siding was removed exposing the 114-year old wood shell which was then covered with off-the-shelf corrugated siding. Unique metal trim was fabricated to replicate the original and installed by skilled metal workers. Total cost: $15,000.
The restoration of 1951 Generator Building which housed the back-up generator for the 1933 lighthouse beacon was funded by several state and local grants ($25,000). Cost for all the projects have been kept low because of volunteer labor—typically over 4,000 hours annually. The building will house an exhibit telling the story of the evolution of the light from a kerosene lantern on a pole (1887) to today’s LED light powered by solar panels.
Other Light Station Buildings

Other restored buildings which house history exhibits include: 1906 Pump House adapted to display the historic fog bell from the original 1903 wooden lighthouse, and the original 1951 Crew Quarters, now serving as the Society’s administration center, with archives, library, and work space. Nine new interpretive signs ($20,000 funded by grants) provide information for self-guided tours of the Light Station.
The Boat House was constructed in 1905 and was used by both the US Lighthouse Service and after 1939 by the US Coast Guard. It was restored by volunteers in 1993. In 1994 a master shipwright built a 16-foot replica of a Coast Guard surf boat, which now is on display with other maritime artifacts.
The last major project, projected for completion by 2023, will restore the 1933, Art Deco style Lighthouse. A Historic Structure Report has been produced. Project components will include replicating historic windows and door, abating exterior lead paint and repainting the tower, and replicating the original “lantern” housing surrounding the beacon. Over 70% of the projected cost of $150,000 has been committed through grant awards, Metro Parks, and a $10,000 donation for lantern fabrication by a local company. A community fundraiser will contribute the remainder.

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