In 1943, the United States government’s Manhattan Project built a secret laboratory at Los Alamos, New Mexico, for a single military purpose—to develop the world’s first atomic weapons. The success of this unprecedented, top-secret government program forever changed the world.

Three locations comprise the park: Project Y at Los Alamos, New Mexico; Site X at Oak Ridge, Tennessee; and Site W at Hanford, Washington. The Manhattan Project National Historical Park legislation identifies 17 sites at Los Alamos National Laboratory, as well as 13 sites in downtown Los Alamos. These structures represent the world-changing history of the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos. Their preservation and interpretation will show visitors the scientific, social, political, and cultural stories of the men and women who ushered in the atomic age, and the time in which they lived.

In Los Alamos, visitors can see the Manhattan Project era properties on this walking tour in the city center, visit the Bradbury Science Museum and Los Alamos History Museum.

In 1946, this building supported criticality research. On May 21, 1946, a criticality accident occurred here during a type of experiment known as “tickling the dragon’s tail.” This accident led to the death of scientist Louis Slotin a few days later.

In 1944 this site supported the first assembly work related to the Fat Man weapon design. In July 1945, V-Site was also used to assemble the high-explosives sphere for the Trinity device, known as “the Gadget.”

From 1943-1945, scientists at Gun Site conducted tests for the gun-assembled weapon designs known as Thin Man and Little Boy. Components of Little Boy were assembled here before shipment to the Pacific. Little Boy was deployed over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.