

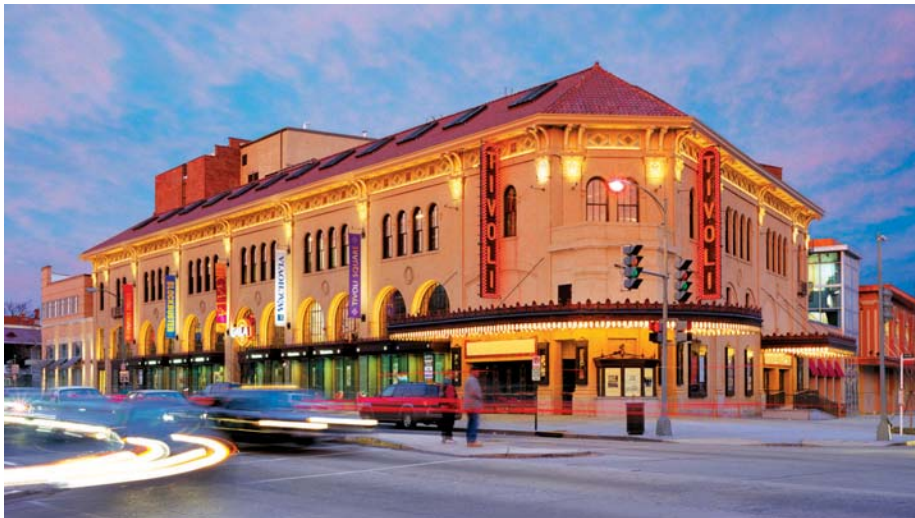


MIXED USE WINNER

Columbia Heights Redevelopment

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Once one of Washington's most desirable neighborhoods, Columbia Heights languished without investment for decades after the riots sparked by the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. For years, buildings remained boarded up, large vacant parcels lay fallow, and efforts to revitalize the neighborhood were unsuccessful. Still, the neighborhood possessed notable buildings and a dense population base. The completion of the Columbia Heights



JURY STATEMENT

Arising from a city-led initiative to revitalize a neighborhood destroyed in the riots following the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Columbia Heights features 1.2 million square feet of new development, including more than 600 housing units, 650,000 square feet of large-format and community retail, and refurbished cultural and public spaces.



DEVELOPMENT TEAM

City Agency

Government of the District of
Columbia, Office of Planning
Washington, D.C.

www.planning.dc.gov/planning



Metrorail Station in 1999 became a watershed event for the community, creating the public infrastructure necessary for private investment. That and other actions by the District of Columbia government spurred much of the regeneration to follow. Today, the community boasts 1.2 million square feet (111,500 m²) of development, including more than 600 housing units, 650,000 square feet (60,400 m²) of retail, 24,000 square feet (2,200 m²) of office space, and a core of cultural and educational institutions.

Because the city government owned several large parcels acquired through eminent domain after the riots, it was able to control the redevelopment of Columbia Heights through the National Capital Revitalization Corporation, a public development company responsible for spurring revitalization in the city's emerging neighborhoods. The city's revitalization initiative hinged on the construction of the Metrorail station in 1999. Within seven years of its opening, Columbia Heights experienced a rapid upswing in fortunes: the average household income had risen from \$50,023 in 1999 to \$66,526 in 2006; median home values increased from \$240,287 to \$374,468 in the same period. Although the neighborhood has seen the development of high-priced residential condominiums and townhomes, it still remains one of the city's most economically and ethnically diverse areas.

DC USA, a 540,000-square-foot (50,168-m²), three-level, large-format retail complex anchored by Washington, D.C.'s first Target, is the focal point of the area's commercial core. The shopping center weaves together both large- and small-format stores housing a strong mix of national, regional, and local tenants. DC USA fronts on 14th Street, the neighborhood's main corridor, diagonally across from the historic Tivoli Theater—now Tivoli Square, recently redeveloped as a commercial and entertainment complex. With its historic, Mediterranean-inspired facade preserved, Tivoli Square now accommodates four floors of office space, street-level retail, and a theater.

The neighborhood has added 670 new residential units, including 572 units housed in a quartet of buildings designed by Torti Gallas and Partners: Park Triangle, Kenyon Square, Victory Heights, and



PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE HALL/HEDRICH BLESSING (48, 49R, 50L, 50R); JEFFREY TOTARO PHOTOGRAPHY (51); [DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, OFFICE OF PLANNING (49L)]



Highland Park. Residential buildings are set back from the street, creating continuous stretches of ground-floor retail and space for patio dining along the major commercial corridors. The revitalization also includes a focus on culture and arts, with the Dance Institute of Washington, the GALA Hispanic Theatre, and a new civic plaza used for a farmers market and community-based events, as well as community service organizations such as the Greater Washington Urban League and the Latin American Youth Center.

The public/private partnership that fueled the resurgence of Columbia Heights also created enormous economic benefits. More than 1,200 jobs have been generated and more than \$12 million in annual tax revenue—up from zero revenue previously—is anticipated. Commercial spaces in the neighborhood are 95 percent leased with a high-quality mix of tenants. Additionally, the land values surrounding the Metro station have more than doubled, even increasing in value during the recent economic downturn. Metrorail ridership is up more than 300 percent at the Columbia Heights station since the opening of DC USA's stores, some of which are among the best-performing locations in their respective chains.

PROJECT DATA

Web Site

www.columbiaheightsnews.org

Site Area

20 acres (8.1 ha)

Facilities

- 24,000 sf (2,200 m²) office
- 650,000 sf (60,400 m²) retail
- 18 single-family units
- 612 multifamily units
- 1,820 parking spaces

Land Use

- retail, residential, office,
- entertainment, education,
- restaurants, open space

Start/Completion Dates

May 2003–February 2008