

Quarter 1, 2021

Hill District

Updates



Urban Redevelopment Authority
of Pittsburgh

ura.org

INTRO

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) is committed to keeping stakeholders and residents up to date with the current status of projects throughout the Greater Hill District. In the last year, the Hill District community has made great strides in advancing its shared vision and Greater Hill District Master Plan, which will transform the community in a way that will create job opportunities for residents, rebuild a once-thriving main street, build upon the African American cultural legacy, and create homeownership opportunities. Here you will find updates on various projects happening in the community, accomplishments from the past year, and where to find more information.

CONTENT

Crawford Roberts.....	3
Upper Hill.....	4
Centre Avenue.....	5
Big Tom's Barbershop.....	6
Centre Heldman.....	7
CARES CommuniTEA Café.....	8
Catapult.....	9
New Granada Square.....	10
Nafasi on Centre.....	11
Neighborhood Initiatives Fund.....	12
Workforce Development.....	14
Economic Recovery and Growth...	15
Lower Hill.....	16



Crawford Roberts

[Catalyst Communities, LLC](#) is proposing a 46-unit development consisting of the adaptive re-use of the historic former Letsche School and six adjacent URA and City-owned parcels. Of the 46 units, 38 will be affordable and eight will be market rate. At its [December 2020 Meeting](#), the URA Board authorized Exclusive Negotiations for the publicly-owned properties.

At its [March 2021 Meeting](#), the URA Board authorized Exclusive Negotiations with [Bridging the Gap Development](#) for 12 URA-owned parcels to complete the third and final phase of for-sale housing in the Crawford Square Homes Redevelopment Area. Bridging the Gap is proposing six for-sale townhomes. Two are planned to be affordable for households up to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). The developer has met with the Crawford Square Homeowners Association (HOA) several times over the past year. The HOA has a set of construction standards established in the 1990s to keep new development consistent with the same contextual design ideals.

Image Capture: Jul 2019 ©2021 Google



Upper Hill

The [Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation \(PHDC\)](#), an affiliate of the URA, is working with the Schenley Heights Collaborative to rehab homes in the Upper Hill and sell them for homeownership.



802 Bryn Mawr Road
3 Bedroom, 2 Bath For-Sale Rehab
Comer Construction
Status: Completion by March 30



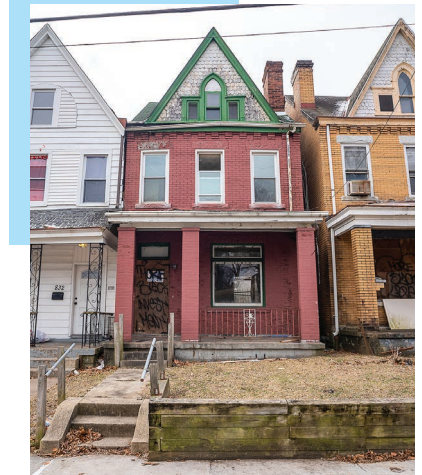
804 Bryn Mawr Road
3 Bedroom, 1.5 Bath For-Sale Rehab
Comer Construction
Status: Completion by April 30



818 Shawnee Street
2 Bedroom For-Sale Rehab
ACE Development
Status: Renovations have begun,
anticipate completion in July



819 Shawnee Street
2 Bedroom, 2 Bath For-Sale Rehab
Comer Construction
Status: Completion by September 1



830 Adelaide Street
4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath For-Sale Rehab
Going out to Bid in April
Status: Completion by September 30

Centre Avenue

In July 2019, the URA released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) seeking local Hill District developers to purchase and redevelop any portion of 170 publicly-owned parcels along the [Centre Avenue Corridor](#) in the Middle Hill neighborhood. The goal of the RFQ was to select developers to work to implement uses and further concepts articulated by the community as described in the 2015 Centre Avenue Corridor Redevelopment and Design Plan and the 2011 Greater Hill District Master Plan.

At its February and June 2020 Regular Meetings, the URA Board authorized a period of Exclusive Negotiations for seven developers including:

- The Sankofa Group
- Salon XO
- TomTom24 Development LLC
- Studio Volcy
- Amani Christian Community Development Corporation
- Communion Place
- R. Kyndall Development Group



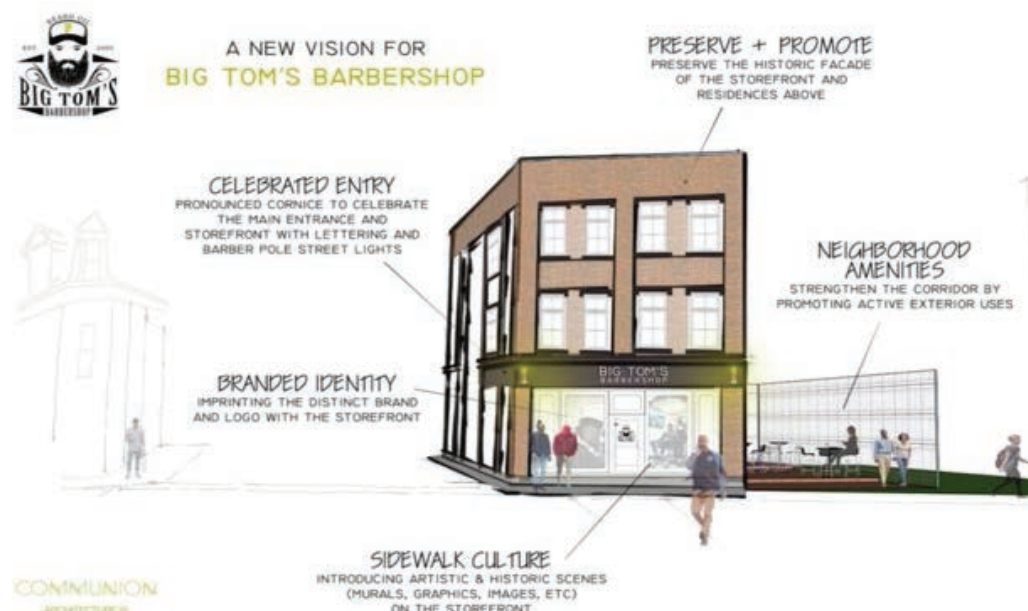
Big Tom's Barbershop

At its March 2021 Regular Meeting, the URA Board approved TomTom24 Development LLC's redevelopment proposal and has entered into a disposition contract for the sale of four publicly-owned parcels.

The project will relocate Big Tom's Barbershop to the first floor of the rehabilitated Hamm's Barber Shop structure, while the second and third floors will be renovated into two 2-bedroom apartments, affordable at 50%-80% AMI. The adjacent lots will be used for outdoor deck space that could be utilized by the community or by neighborhood-based businesses.

In partnership with Council District 6, the URA held a community meeting on September 9, 2020 to present TomTom24 Development LLC proposals for community input. The community gave the proposal an average score of 97%.

The total estimated development cost for this project is \$1,316,283. On April 8, 2021, [Governor Wolf awarded \\$500,000](#) for the rehabilitation as part of the Community Revitalization Fund Program.



Centre Heldman

In November 2019, the URA Board voted to acquire the Centre Heldman Plaza to protect the future of an important community asset in the Hill District. In March 2020, the URA released a Request for Interested Tenants (RFI) seeking information from prospective tenants who would be interested in leasing one or more of the storefronts in the 37,203 sq. ft. plaza. The RFI also helped the URA understand the types of businesses and uses that are interested in leasing available spaces in the plaza.



After completing the Request for Interested Tenants process and engaging the community for input, CARES CommuniTEA Café, run by the Center That CARES, was chosen to lease the former Crazy Mocha retail space.

The retail space next door will house the Catapult: Startup to Storefront Program's Hill District Cohort, with the development of the Gallery on Centre retail incubator and education space. Scheduled to open in 2021, the Gallery on Centre will include retail spaces for Catapult participants, as well as classroom and meeting space.



CARES CommuniTEA Café



Opened on February 1, 2021, the CARES CommuniTEA Café combines the expertise of Hill professionals as a learning lab for work experience for local youth. The coffee house will also offer special events and initiatives that will connect the Hill District community, such as community conversations, book clubs, art displays, and jazz

events. The café offers dine-in and to-go options, free Wi-Fi, as well as online ordering for quick pick-up.

“ We’re incredibly excited about CARES CommuniTEA Café’s grand opening and what it means for the Hill District. This is a perfect example of how a publicly-owned asset - Centre Heldman - can be leveraged to support community driven initiatives which is a core component of Avenues of Hope. ”

- URA Deputy Executive Director Diamonte Walker

Photos courtesy of CARES CommuniTEA Café

 Follow @ carescommunitéacafe



Catapult: Startup to Storefront Program

In early 2021, the Catapult: Startup to Storefront Program launched its [first cohort in the Hill District](#). This cohort is part of the URA's and City's [Avenues of Hope](#) initiative, which aims to invest in and support small businesses.

Administered by [Catapult Greater Pittsburgh](#), Catapult is a 12-month retail business incubation program that supports new and growing minority-led businesses. Participants receive one-on-one mentoring, educational seminars, networking, technical assistance, and opportunities to build strategic partnerships. The URA, City of Pittsburgh, and the PNC Foundation provided funding for this program. Paramount Pursuits provides business consulting.

Meet the Cohort

- Ardelle Vivienne Robinson - designs by viviënne: Photography, afghans and waist beads
- Danya'le Northern - Northern Scents Candle Co: Hand-poured soy candles and more
- Patricia Strothers - PaJunes Divine Designs: Handcrafted jewelry
- Nikkia Ingram - SimpleMEE Collection
- Sheniq Withers - Steel Sisters Automotive
- Phyllis Ghafoor - PDG Crafts and Gifts
- Lakeisha Gray - Business name pending
- Nicole Manns - Nikki's Magic Wand; Cosmetics
- Princess Spencer - Styles At Goodies Go Go
- Dominique Lewis - Natures Crown: Health and beauty products
- Whitney Mims - VantiBling: Fashion boutique and talent agency
- Constance Jones - Switch It Up Boutique
- Eric Walker - Hyght Apparel: Men's fashion apparel
- Geneva White - Unique Boutique
- Dominique Watkins-Wise - Watkins-Wise Wood Work
- Adrienne Holmes - Phoinix Premier Events: Premier event management & design



Nikkia Ingram



Constance Jones



Nicole Manns

New Granada Square



The Hill CDC and CHN Housing Partners are developing the Granada Square Apartments. This project includes the redevelopment of several vacant parcels of land into a five-story, mixed-use commercial and residential building. The URA owns 12 of the parcels and the Hill CDC owns three. The project is a 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) development that will provide a

total of 40 affordable artist-preference housing units. Four units will be rented to households with incomes at or below 20% AMI, 17 units will be rented at or below 50% AMI, 15 units will be rented at or below 60% AMI, and the remaining four units will be rented at or below 80% AMI. The first floor will have 5,000 square feet of leasable commercial space fronting Centre Avenue. The project will close on the financing in mid-April 2021, with construction starting soon after. A groundbreaking will be held in the coming weeks.

The project's total development cost is \$16,098,564. The URA has provided \$2,060,000 in loans and grants for the project.

- URA RHDIP Loan: \$735,230
- HOF RGP Loan: \$ 414,770
- URA CDIF Grant: \$ 300,000
- URA Streetface Renovation Loan: \$60,000
- URA UDAG Commercial Loan: \$550,000

Other partners include Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP), and McAuley Ministries.



Nafasi on Centre

A partnership between the Hill CDC and #ArtsinHD created the Nafasi on Centre, a two-year artist residency program for artist entrepreneurs with ties to the Hill District. Located at 2154 Centre Avenue, the restored building provides work-space for six artists in the basement, a cafe/gallery on the first floor, and six apartments.

In December 2020, the URA Board authorized two grants for the building:

- \$24,500 to the Hill CDC for façade improvements
- Up to \$33,000 to Zephaniah Properties, LLC for construction of a party wall

Learn more about the Nafasi on Centre on the [Hill CDC's project page](#). Read about it in [NEXTpittsburgh](#) and the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#).

Image Capture: Nov 2020 ©2021 Google



Neighborhood Initiatives Fund

The URA's [Neighborhood Initiatives Fund](#) (NIF) Program was created to assist nonprofit and community-based organizations with neighborhood-scale projects that improve quality of life and maintain the neighborhood as a desirable place to live. Current NIF projects underway include the ACH Clear Pathways Arts Center in the former Kaufmann Center building, the Amani Christian Community Development Corporation's architecture and design accelerator development, the Hill CDC's Wylie Avenue Restaurant project, and Hill District Federal Credit Union's facility and services expansion.



Award presentation on September 29, 2020



“ What does it look like for the City of Pittsburgh to have a conversation about economic and racial justice? It looks like what the URA and the City are doing with their Neighborhood Initiatives funding. It looks like government intentionally directing resources to [the Hill community groups to actualize their neighborhood projects and vision.] ”

- Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle

NIF Grantee Spotlight:

ACH Clear Pathways Arts Center



Photos and renderings courtesy of ACH Clear Pathways

ACH Clear Pathways is renovating the Kaufmann Center to create a permanent arts hub in the Hill District. Financing assistance from the Neighborhood Initiatives Fund assisted in the design phase including: programming and schematic design; design development; architectural drawings; and bidding and construction admin. Plans include a composition-writing digital media center, multipurpose cafeteria, ensemble suite, recording studio, art studio and administrative space.

“ACH Clear Pathways acquisition of the Kaufmann Center and Elsie H. Hillman Auditorium, allows us to continue and broaden our mission, ‘to nurture creativity through the visual and performing arts by providing an opportunity to youth and family within the arts.’ This expansion will not only create a safe haven for youth, but will provide opportunities for young adults and the community at large.”

- ACH Clear Pathways Founder & Executive Director Tyian Battle



Workforce Development

The Ebenezer Baptist Church's new [Workforce program](#) creates career pathways that prepare low-income and out-of-work individuals for living wage, family-sustaining jobs. These programs are free and open to anyone 18 years or older. No high school diploma is required.

Programs include:

- EBC Workforce Training
- Culinary and Kitchen Training
- Videography and Filmmaking

The URA is excited to support the Ebenezer Workforce Innovation & Talent Center's efforts by providing additional services, including housing and small business resources to interested Hill District residents, as part of our URA in Your Neighborhood initiative.



A partnership with CVS and Aetna will also bring healthcare training and an on-site community health clinic. Learn more about the Workforce Center [here](#).

Ebenezer's facility also houses a Basic Needs Center, Videography Production Studio, Computer & Technology Lab, and Community Food Pantry.

Job Opportunities

The URA launched a [Job Board](#) at the beginning of March 2021. Community members searching for a job or in need of career programs and development services are encouraged to explore our Job Board and reach out to In'dea Carter at icarter@ura.org for a consultation.

Economic Recovery and Growth

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the URA quickly mobilized to provide immediate relief to businesses that were hit hard and facing the loss of customers, employees, contracts, and the ability to source supplies. Through the URA's COVID-19 Fund, Micro-Loans, Streetface Renovation Program, and the new Minority Business Recovery and Growth Loans, we've provided emergency or business growth financial assistance to the following community businesses:

- Scottie Public Affairs, LLC
- RedTree Web Design LLC
- Grandma Joan's
- Moynihan Law
- Big Tom's Barbershop
- R+R Vendors
- Modo Cleaning, LLC
- Concrete Rose Construction
- E. Holdings, Inc.
- Jacqueline's House of Beauty
- I Dream A World
- Power 59 Construction LLC
- Environmental Planning & Design, LLC
- Young's Laundromat
- Kimberley Ashlee Catering Inc.
- A For the People Insurance, Inc.
- Precise, Inc.
- Khalid & Natalie's Service, Inc.
- Jerry's Pizzeria
- Fat Daddy's Mobile Food Services
- Neighborhood Resilience Project
- Steel City Cleaning Solutions, LLC
- Patina Construction
- Salon XO Pittsburgh, LLC
- The Good People's Group
- Cooks Catering LLC



Concrete Rose Construction



Grandma Joan's



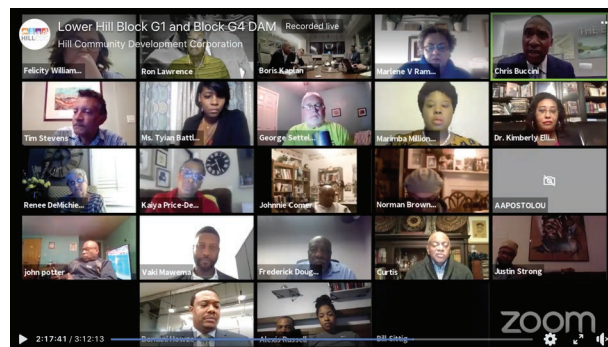
Salon XO

Lower Hill

The Buccini/Pollin Group (BPG) is working to advance Blocks G-1 and G-4 on the [Lower Hill Redevelopment](#). On Block G-1, BPG is proposing a new 26-story office tower that will become the new headquarters of First National Bank. On Block G-4, BPG is proposing public open space.

On March 15, 2021, the Developer presented the project to over 200 attendees at a Development Activities Meeting (DAM). A DAM is a required meeting between the Developer and the applicable Registered Community Organization (RCO) 30 days prior to a Department of City Planning public hearing.

If you missed it, you can watch the Lower Hill Development Activities Meeting [here](#).



Renderings courtesy of the Lower Hill development team



Lower Hill

BPG is required to obtain approval from the Equal Opportunity Relations Commission (EORC). The EORC reviews compliance with the City of Pittsburgh's policies regarding minority and woman business enterprise opportunities.

On March 18, 2021, BPG presented to the EORC and received approval. BPG's participation plan sets goals of 30% minority and 15% women business participation in line with the Community Collaboration Implementation Plan (CCIP) success metrics. To date, BPG has achieved 28.3% minority and 13.4% women business participation in predevelopment commitments.

You can read the latest news coverage on this in the [Pittsburgh Business Times](#) and [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#).

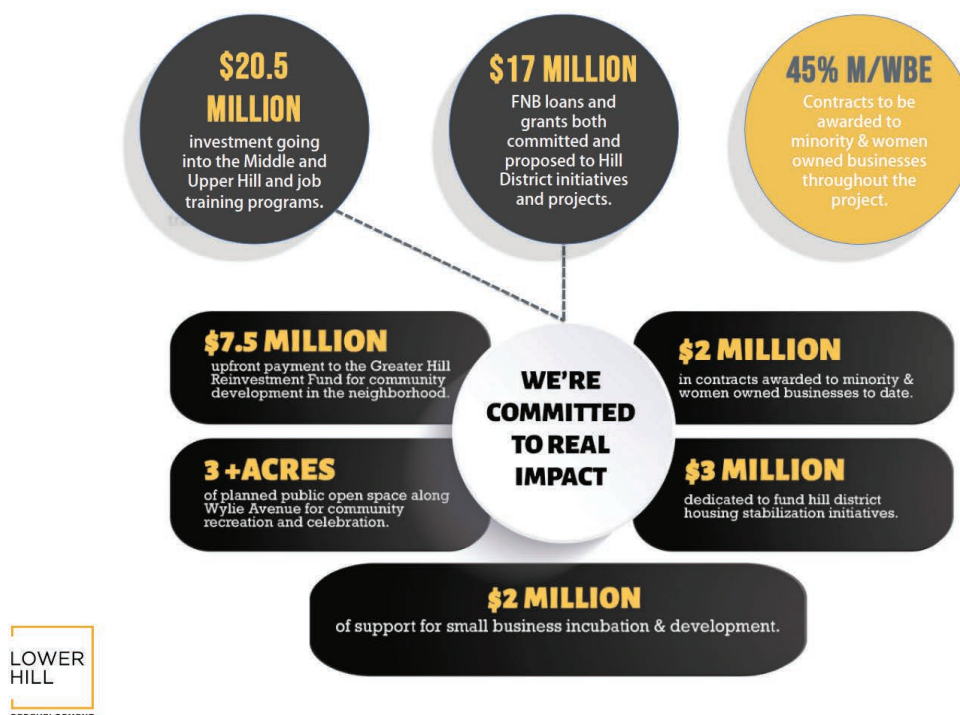
Read [BPG's March 2021 Newsletter](#).





Economic Impact Roundtable Recap

On March 31, 2021, the Lower Hill development team hosted a two-hour panel presentation where [project leaders affirmed](#) that they would get this redevelopment right — and laid out committed investment details to show how they will benefit the community as a whole. The Hill District will see impact in the form of economic reinvestment in job training programs, contracts for MWBEs, housing and wealth building opportunities for residents, opportunities for small and minority- and women-owned businesses to grow, investment in neighborhood initiatives and projects, and more.



Watch a [recording](#), or view the [presentation](#). Small businesses can watch this [video](#) for information about how to get involved, and other business resources.

“ What we’ve been trying to do at the URA is to focus on ensuring that we don’t end up with ‘a tale of two neighborhoods.’ We’ve got to really be focused on how do we prepare and how do we activate development at the neighborhood scale with the neighborhood as the development partner, in order to prepare for what’s going to happen in the Lower Hill. ”

- URA Deputy Executive Director Diamonte Walker

Lower Hill

Meet the Team

In November 2020, BPG announced an expansion of their team to include several local residents. Lakeisha Byrd of Communion LLC is working as a design consultant. Hear from Lakeisha on her work!

Q: What is your role on the Lower Hill Project?

A: Communion is working with the Lower Hill / BPG team to elevate the design capacity, specifically, with the [design of the urban open space](#).

Q: What impact will your work have on the project?

A: The overall intent is to [identify and design opportunities](#) within the landscape and built environment that creates [communal, cultural and economic value](#) at varying scales. A significant impact will be our [focus on elevating Wylie Avenue as a main street, heritage site, and \(re\) connection between Downtown and the Hill District](#).

Q: Why is this work important?

A: Value is relative. We determine what has value. Our design intent and project delivery impacts the value of the project; [spatial opportunities](#) for the end-users; [connectivity](#) to the neighborhood; how value is translated through [local and cultural exchange](#); and how the urban open space and the Lower Hill creates [on-the-ground value for our neighbors and City](#).



Lakeisha Byrd, founder of Communion LLC

Stay Connected!



@urapgh



**Sign up to receive emails
and press releases.**

ura

Urban
Redevelopment
Authority
of Pittsburgh

ura.org