

Quarter 3, 2021

Hill District

Updates



Photo courtesy of UPMC

Urban Redevelopment Authority
of Pittsburgh

ura.org

INTRO

Hill District Neighbors,

We've seen a great deal of activity in the Hill District during the third quarter of 2021 and throughout the past year. From major groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings, and the opening of a career center, to the preservation of historic assets and new developments advancing to create a once-again vibrant main street. With all this change and transformation, the URA is focused on centering the vision of the community, so that Hill District residents are not only included in the change, but also driving it – and benefiting from it throughout future decades.



We are experiencing a defining moment for the Hill District. As you read the updates throughout this document, know that these are not just “projects,” but **monuments of hope**. All the developments beginning to take shape mean that there will be job, business, homeownership, educational, and cultural opportunities being created with the vision set forth by the residents as the North Star. It is a moment in time not only for economic mobility, but also to reconnect with the rich culture and history that makes this neighborhood the Hill.

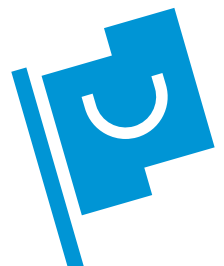
The community is at the forefront of all the accomplishments we are celebrating here. These projects and initiatives would not be happening without your voices and ingenuity guiding the process – from the selection of a new grocer at the Centre Heldman Plaza to catalytic developments like Big Tom's Barbershop.

The URA is committed to listening when the community speaks, so reinvestment happens where it is needed and desired. Please read further for the URA's latest updates on various opportunities happening in the Hill with much more to come.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diamonte Walker".

Dr. Diamonte Walker
URA Deputy Executive Director



CONTENT

Avenues of Hope.....4

Centre Avenue.....5

Development Updates
Centre Heldman Plaza

Upper Hill Housing.....14

Lower Hill.....15

Stay Connected.....17



Avenues of Hope

Business Support

The [Avenues of Hope initiative](#) is a place-based, people-first approach to economic development that promotes Black-owned centers of arts, culture, and business with mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly developments. As part of the initiative, the URA is offering capital for small businesses, contractors, and developers working on projects in Avenues of Hope corridors, including Centre Avenue in the Hill District.



Small Contractor Line of Credit Program

The [Small Contractor Line of Credit Program](#) supports operating construction companies taking on Avenues of Hope projects that require access to working capital. Contractors may be eligible to receive financing of up to 90% of submitted and approved invoices of \$25,000 - \$100,000 on an annual basis.

The URA recently hosted a webinar with the Riverside Center for Innovation to discuss the Small Contractor Line of Credit program and share other resources available for small contractors working within the City of Pittsburgh, centered around the Avenues of Hope initiative. [Watch it here.](#)

Commercial Real Estate Program

The [Avenues of Hope Commercial Real Estate Program](#) provides capital to local and minority small businesses and developers in support of Avenues of Hope projects.

Centre Avenue

What's to Come

Future developments in the Middle Hill that blossomed out of the [Centre Avenue Corridor](#) Request for Qualifications are advancing. Here are the latest updates:

Sankofa Square

At its August 2021 meeting, the URA Board approved Sankofa Group Inc's redevelopment proposal for Sankofa Square, which will transform 15 vacant parcels, approximately 45,000 sq. ft., located on the property fronting Centre Avenue and the corner of Elmore Street into commercial space and a parking lot. Development plans include construction of a new three-story structure with 30,000 sq. ft. of office space and a food hall to be utilized by Smoketown Culinary, which will function as a launching site for local food industry entrepreneurs.



Amani Christian Community Development Corporation

At its September 2021 meeting, the URA Board approved Amani Christian Community Development Corporation's redevelopment proposal. The proposed project will construct an 18,000 sq. ft. mixed-use building that will include first floor commercial space and 12 affordable residential units, four of which will be one-bedroom and eight of which will be two-bedroom apartments.

CURRENT



PROPOSED



Big Tom's Barbershop

TomTom24 Development LLC received final approval from the URA Board on November 16, 2021, for drawings, evidence of financing and authorization to execute a deed for the sale and rehabilitation of the former Hamm's Barber Shop. Thomas Boyd, owner of Big Tom's Barbershop will relocate his business to the first floor of the structure, build four one-bedroom apartments on the second floor, all of which will be affordable, and beautify the vacant lot next door to be used for community gatherings and events.

TomTom24 Development LLC, the URA, City of Pittsburgh, Neighborhood Allies and other key partners will break ground on the project at the end of November 2021.



Thomas Boyd, owner of Big Tom's Barbershop, works on a young client at his current location.



[Follow Big Tom's Barbershop](#)



Hill District Developments Awarded Enterprise Zone Program Funding

The City of Pittsburgh and URA [announced](#) at the beginning of November 2021 that Governor Wolf, PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Davin, and state elected officials awarded \$3.4 million in tax credit funding through Pennsylvania's Enterprise Zone Program for multiple projects in the City of Pittsburgh. The funding will help leverage nearly \$208 million in total project costs and create 4,336 jobs.

Of the various projects awarded, three were neighborhood-serving projects in the Hill District, including:

- 21 Rose Street (2117-2127 Rose Street): \$250,000
- Big Tom's Barbershop (2178 Centre Avenue): \$250,000
- EDD HD (Former Hill House Center - 1835 Centre Avenue): \$250,000

Storefront Suites

There's another new development on Centre Avenue that the URA is proud to be involved in - the [Storefront Suites](#) at 2164-2166 Centre Avenue.

EJ Purpose, LLC is renovating the three-story commercial building, which is believed to have been constructed in 1900. The first floor will be dedicated to two storefronts and the second and third floors will be converted to residential apartments.



The URA and its affiliate Invest PGH both provided funding toward the project, through our Pittsburgh Business Fund, Small Landlord Fund, Facade Improvement Program, and Invest PGH's Accelerating Business Expansion Loan Program.

Centre Avenue Housing

On October 8, 2021, the URA was happy to join ACTION-Housing, elected officials, stakeholders and community members to celebrate the ribbon cutting of Centre Avenue Housing. This project includes the renovation and adaptive reuse of the Centre Avenue YMCA into 74 affordable apartments.

The URA is proud to have provided a \$600,000 Housing Opportunity Fund loan, which will keep 17 units permanently affordable to residents earning 30% of Area Median Income, and facilitated a \$1.5 million RACP grant from the Commonwealth of PA.

This building has been a staple of African-American culture in the Hill District since the early 20th century. Please visit [ACTION-Housing's website](#) to learn more about the Centre Avenue YMCA's history and current impact, and take a virtual tour!





Centre Heldman

Fresh Food Coming to the Hill!

The URA has entered into lease agreement negotiations with Salem's Market & Grill to occupy the former SHOP 'n SAVE space at the Centre Heldman Plaza. Salem's Market & Grill will offer farm-to-table fresh food, groceries, and organic offerings. Salem's has expressed continuation of their commitment to and investment in the Hill District community by leveraging existing partnerships and outreach methods.

Salem's was chosen by the community after a robust feedback process, led by the Hill CDC, URA and Councilman Daniel Lavelle. The Hill CDC asked interested grocers to fill out a questionnaire, which was then posted to their website for residents to view before the grocers presented to the community. On September 20, 2021, the URA and Hill CDC held a community meeting where the four interested grocers gave presentations of their grocery concepts and took questions from the community. Following the community meeting, residents filled out a "scorecard" to rank and provide feedback on all four grocers, with Salem's coming out as the favored choice.



Salem's Market & Grill hosted a MEET & GREET for the community on November 17. Residents were encouraged to grab a bite to eat, ask questions, mingle, and learn about job and vendor opportunities.

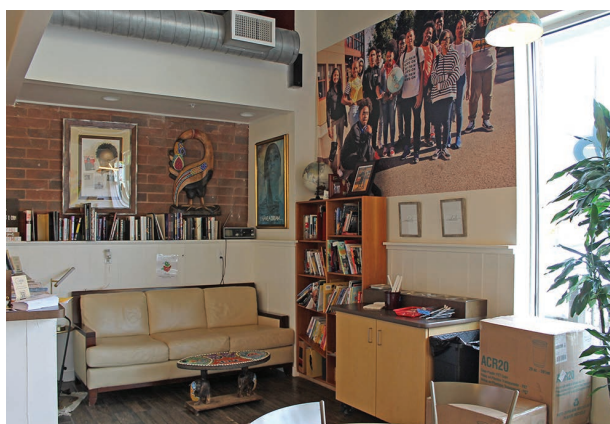
SALEM'S HILL DISTRICT IS COMMITTING TO:

- Stocked fresh produce, meat, seafood, deli, snacks, drinks, international foods, household items, wholesale items, baby and infant care products, pet food and supplies, pharmacy and beauty products, prepared foods and more
- Hosting a career fair to hire a 50-75 person staff, with preference for Hill District residents, including a butcher and opportunities to join a chef training program
- Dedicated retail space for products from local vendors
- Hiring of local trade contractors and minority-owned business enterprises (MBEs) for construction
- Partnerships with local community organizations to develop and promote entrepreneurial programming that helps start, support and grow local businesses

Serving Up Thanksgiving Dinner

The Salem's team is giving back to the Hill District by providing free Thanksgiving meals on the holiday. Salem's has partnered with various Hill District senior residences and additional grocers at Delallo, Coke, Turner's Dairy, Breadworks, Seaway, Pittsburgh Juice, Lipari, and others, so Hill District residents can walk up or drive through to receive a hot Thanksgiving meal and take home grocery items too! The event starts at 12:00 p.m. and will go until all food is gone.

 [Follow Salem's Market & Grill](#)



Need a Coffee Break?

This is your reminder to enjoy the CARES CommuniTEA Cafe! The Cafe serves hot and cold beverages, pastries, and a full breakfast and lunch menu. A part of the [Avenues of Hope](#) initiative, CARES CommuniTEA Cafe also provides entrepreneurship and workforce training to youth and young adults.

Stop by 1836 Centre Avenue anytime Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

 [Follow CARES CommuniTEA Cafe](#)

G's Closet Now Open!

G's Closet, the newest tenant at the Centre Heldman Plaza, is now open. Located two doors over from CARES CommuniTEA Cafe, G's Closet offers resale shoes and apparel, and sneaker cleaning and restoration.

The URA's activation plan for Centre Heldman includes uplifting local businesses and keeping the plaza a community asset. We are so excited G's Closet is here to meet the retail needs of the community! Stop by Tuesday-Saturday, 12:00 - 6:00 p.m., at 1844 Centre Avenue.

 [Follow G's Closet](#)



COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

The URA, UPMC, and the Neighborhood Resilience Project partnered to host a free COVID-19 vaccine clinic at the former SHOP 'n SAVE space on July 23, 2021. Together we were able to offer vaccinations to over 25 residents from Hill District and surrounding Pittsburgh communities. Thanks to everyone who came out, spread the word to neighbors, or helped to staff the clinic!

Letting the Good Times Roll

[Roller SK8 Connection of Pittsburgh, Inc.](#) held two successful roller rink events at the Centre Heldman Plaza - one during a weekend in July and another during a weekend in October 2021.

Roller Sk8 Connection and All Year Sports Galaxy, with support from the URA, Highmark Community Blue, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, and Kohl's Hard Heads Helmet Program, brought pop-up roller rinks to the Hill District so adults and youth alike could roller skate, mingle, and shop at local entrepreneurs' booths. Highmark and Allegheny Health Network offered free COVID-19 shots at the October pop-up. We were ecstatic to see the community come together for these events! Thanks to everyone involved.



THE GREENWOOD PLAN PRESENTS:

THE GALLERIA

ON SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

SAVE THE DATE:
11.27.21

10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
1850 CENTRE AVE



JOIN US AND #SHOPSMALL

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



Upper Hill Housing

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.

Featured Homes



830 Adelaide Street

- 4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by summer 2022



811 Bryn Mawr Road

- 3 Bedroom 1.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion in early summer 2022



748 Anaheim Street

- 4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by summer 2022



818 Shawnee Street

- 2 Bedroom
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by spring 2022

740 Adelaide Street

- 4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by summer 2022

912 Cherokee Street

- 4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by fall 2022

914 Cherokee Street

- 4 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath
- For-Sale Rehab
- Completion by fall 2022

Lower Hill

Blocks G-1 and G-4

Financial Closing and LERTA Monetization

On September 13, 2021, Office Partners XXIII Block G1, LLC (Office Partners) closed on financing for the Block G-1 (FNB Office Tower) and Block G4 (Public Open Space) projects. Office Partners is a joint venture comprised of the Buccini/Pollin Group, Inc; Pittsburgh Arena Real Estate Redevelopment, LP; Clay Cove Capital, LLC; and First National Bank. At the financial closing, the Greater Hill District Neighborhood Reinvestment Fund received an initial capitalized payment of \$7,187,045 from the [Lower Hill Development](#) site partners. This funding will be used to invest in development projects and other community needs in the Greater Hill District as outlined in the “Community Collaboration and Implementation Plan” between the neighborhood and the developers.



The URA Board approved guidelines for the Greater Hill District Neighborhood Reinvestment Fund (GHDNRF) in June. As a condition of the approval process, the developers committed to funding their 10-years' worth of payments all up front, so that the community could receive funding immediately, rather than after construction is completed.

The over \$7 million is generated by the Lower Hill Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) district, which was driven by Councilman Lavelle and the Hill Community Development Corporation in 2015. The LERTA allows property owners on the Lower Hill Development site to receive real estate tax abatements from the three taxing bodies (Pittsburgh Public School District, City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County) on each parcel for 10 years, with half of that funding going into the Greater Hill District Neighborhood Reinvestment Fund.

Greater Hill District Neighborhood Reinvestment Fund

Some of the potential uses for the over \$7 million in funding could include project development initiatives and counseling programs, children and youth education initiatives, rent and mortgage assistance subsidies, other wealth-building initiatives, preservation of Hill District institutions, and investments that generate recurring or matching revenue for the fund.

Applications for funding will be received and reviewed by a community advisory board, who will issue recommendations to the URA Board of Directors, who govern the fund. Current guidelines designate representatives from City Council District 6 and the Hill Community Development Corporation as co-chairs of the advisory board.

Breaking Ground

On September 1, 2021, the URA joined the Lower Hill Redevelopment project team, partners and public officials to celebrate the groundbreaking for the new FNB Financial Center. The groundbreaking of this Center was a defining moment for the transformation of the 28-acre Lower Hill site and spurred the activation of GHNRF funding for all of the Greater Hill District community.



Stay Connected

Important Notice

Want to continue receiving quarterly Hill District updates from the URA via email? Please sign up for our new Avenues of Hope email distribution list [here](#), specifically dedicated to quarterly news for Avenues of Hope communities. We will begin sending from this channel in Q4 2021, so make sure you subscribe.

Never Miss a Resource from the URA!

If you haven't already, [subscribe or update your preferences](#) to also receive housing, business, MWBE, and/or press release email alerts from the URA.



@urapgh



412 Boulevard of the Allies
Suite 901
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

