

Rockville Town Square

Rockville, MD

PRACTICE AREA

Planning / Urban Design, Multifamily, Mixed Use

CLIENT

City of Rockville, DANAC, Federal Realty Trust

STATUS

Completed 2007

SERVICES

Architecture, Planning, Interiors

AWARDS

Congress for the New Urbanism Charter Award

NAIOP Award of Excellence, Best Smart Growth Master Plan

NAIOP Award of Excellence, Best Mixed Use Project

Multi-Housing News Design Excellence Award for New Urbanism



PROGRAM

12-acre, 5- to 6-story mixed-use town center with 644 residential units; 180,000-sf retail; and 1,400 parking spaces in five garages, above- and below-grade. Metal frame over concrete structure, construction types 1B and 3B.

DESCRIPTION

An integral component of a broader vision the city Rockville, Rockville Town Square transformed an aging strip-mall into a community focal point. The development followed a comprehensive and carefully deliberated master plan. A true community center, it includes 644 new multifamily units, dozens of national and locally based shops and restaurants, a new county library, and a cultural arts center.

A failed 1970s-era shopping mall and deteriorating strip centers had contributed to a decline in the city's retail economy, which city administrators sought to reverse. The city also wanted to address a shortage of multifamily housing and the lack of an appealing town center environment that could host open-air markets and special events suitable to all ages.

A robust public-private coalition was formed, and the group carefully pursued a planning process that would delineate the arrangement and character of the mixed-use setting in extensive detail. Guidelines emphasized the importance of addressing the character of the surrounding neighborhoods, including many historic civic and residential structures; and underscored the architectural imperatives of hierarchy, organization, rhythm, and accessibility.

The development reflects an extensive phase of research that included a review of architectural precedents in the local area, as well as cities throughout the world that represented thriving urban districts with traditional main-street and town square concepts.

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The diverse yet cohesive architecture includes varying roof lines, fenestration, and façade treatments. Each building offers its own sense of character, yet works comfortably within the neighborhood. The architectural framework was reviewed with the community during the planning phases and thoroughly documented in design guidelines used as a basis for the ongoing development of the neighborhood.