

The Mill District Columbus, Georgia

A Success Story:
Local Collaborations and
Leveraging Resources



An aerial photograph of The Mill District in Columbus, Georgia. The image shows a mix of residential houses, commercial buildings, and parking lots. A large, open lot is visible in the upper center. The text 'The Mill District Columbus, Georgia' is overlaid in a large, white, serif font at the top center.

The Mill District Columbus, Georgia

- Collectively houses nearly 5,000 people
- 4 historically distinct neighborhoods
- Approximately 750 acres in size
- Has an average household income of \$19,374
- Roughly 46% of households live at or below the poverty line



MISSION:

Develop and implement creative community-based strategies to enhance economic opportunity, build healthy sustainable neighborhoods, and improve early childhood education in The Mill District.

Mill District, Inc. and Purpose Built Communities

- The Mill District, Inc., a 501(c)3, was formed to help transform the redevelopment area.
- Purpose Built Communities (PBC) helps local leaders make a positive impact in impoverished neighborhoods.
- The model of the PBC program is the development of mixed income housing, community wellness, and a cradle-to-college education pipeline.
- The Mill District received a Purpose Built Communities designation in 2019.
- The Mill District, Inc., a 501(c)3, is the Community Quarterback Organization to facilitate the purpose built model in the Mill District community.



Strategy/Priorities

Partner Organizations

Community
Quarterback
Organization



PURPOSE
BUILT
COMMUNITIES

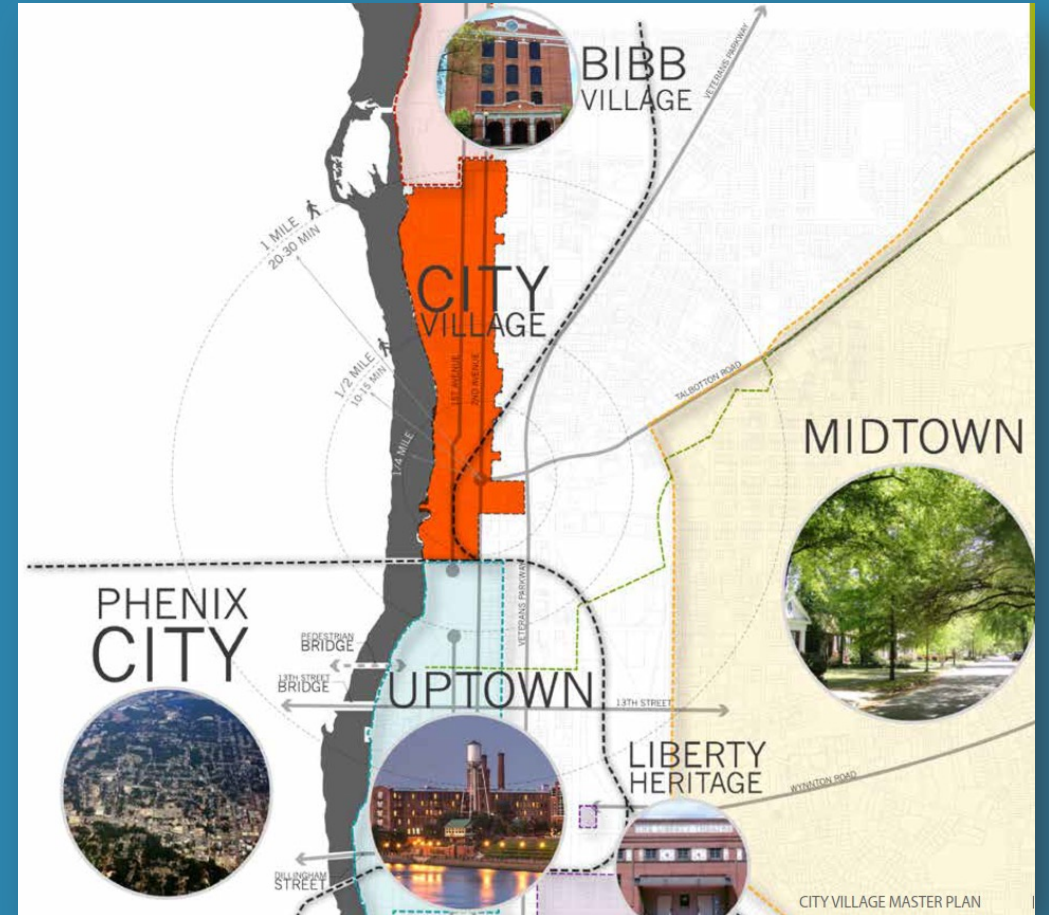
Cradle to Career
Education

Mixed Income
Housing

Community Wellness



Community-Based Revitalization

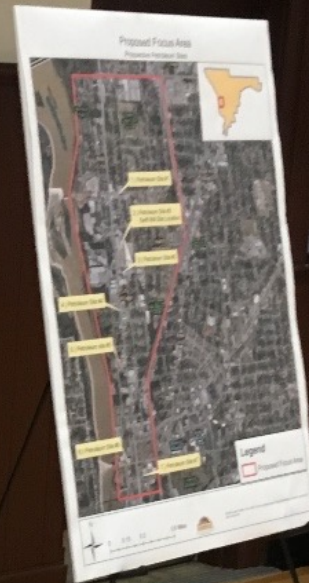


Columbus Brownfield Program

- **Assessment Grant | \$300,000**
- **Cleanup Grant | \$600,000**

Brownfield Assessment Project Scope:

- Property Identification and Inventory
- Site Characterization and Assessment Activities
- Community Involvement Assistance
- Cleanup and Development Planning



EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant



Measurable Outcomes

- Nine (9) Phase I ESAs
- Six (6) Phase II ESAs
- One (1) Site Reuse/Cleanup Plan
- Approximately 42 acres ready for reuse
- Two (2) Properties with new housing opportunities
- Decreased blighted properties – 5 properties ready for reuse

Chase Homes

- 108 units of public housing built in 1952
- Located on the Chattahoochee River
- Was determined obsolete based on the following:
 - Age of the housing
 - Location of buildings in the floodplain/close to floodway
 - Location of buildings located near an active railroad line
 - Location of buildings located near a Georgia Power Transmission Substation
- Demolished in 2020



Chase Homes



Pictures of Chase Homes

Within Floodplain



Adjacent to Power Substation



The Banks at Mill Village



- Former Chase Homes Public housing site
- Located within the Mill District
- Awarded Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in 2019.
- New construction of 102 units of mixed income housing
 - 4 buildings
 - 91 affordable units (60% or below AMI)
 - 11 market rate units
- Amenities include a community room, fitness center, computer center, outdoor gazebo, playground, community garden, and a health center
- Connected public access to the Riverwalk
- Construction and lease-up complete



The Banks at Mill Village

Leasing Office



The Banks at Mill Village



Playground





Leasing Office



Community Room



Business Center



Fitness Center



Example of Collaboration



Mercy Med Health Clinic at The Banks

- Located at The Banks at Mill Village for the residents and the public
- MercyMed of Columbus is a not-for-profit healthcare organization
- MercyMed will manage the health clinic and provide free and low-cost medical services to the residents and community
 - Primary care, preventative dental, behavioral health, health education
- Space is leased at no charge



Mercer University School of Medicine

- Completed in Dec 2021
- 85,000 sq ft structure
- Consists of classroom, research facilities, office space
- Expect full capacity by 2026
- 25 full time faculty, 10 research faculty, 30 staff members, and 240 students
- Located less than ¼ mile from health clinic
- Doctors and interns staff health clinic



EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant: Measuring Success

- Educating/Empowering
- Bringing hope
- Building a sense of community
- Seeing a community take action
- Establishing a purpose

Leveraging Resources



EPA Brownfield Assessment & Cleanup Grants - \$700,000

LIHTC/HUD – Affordable Housing

- The Banks at Mill Village - \$31 million
- Highland Terrace - \$18 million
- Highland Terrace – Phase II – \$33 million

HOME Funds/NMTC/Private Donations– Neighborworks Columbus – Affordable single-family

- 4th Avenue Redevelopment – \$5.6 million

Public/Private Partnership -

Mercer University School of Medicine – \$32.4 million

Private Investments –

City Mills (hotel, restaurant) - \$16 million

1516 High Uptown Apartments - \$18.5 million

CDBG – Property acquisitions and demolitions for future developments

ALL BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENTS

Former GA State Farmers Market/Liberty District

- FY17 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant
- FY19 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant
 - Asbestos Containing Materials Abatement and Petroleum Impacted Soil Cleanup
- Proposed Site Reuse



Questions?

Laura Johnson

Chief Real Estate Officer

Housing Authority of Columbus,
GA

ljohnson@columbushousing.org

