

Downtown Columbia Partnership

2019
Annual
Report



Downtown Columbia Partnership

*The Merriweather District
is dazzling at night.*



The establishment of the Downtown Columbia Partnership (DTCP) was an integral part of Howard County government's adoption of the Downtown Columbia Plan, which was passed unanimously by the Howard County Council in 2010 to guide the redevelopment of Columbia's center.

Created by legislation in 2013 as a non-profit organization, the DTCP is singularly focused on working on behalf of every business and resident in Downtown to support an urban community that is a destination of choice for people to live, work, play and visit.

The functions of the DTCP also include supporting transportation initiatives; initiating and sponsoring cultural arts and sustainability programs; implementing Downtown beautification and maintenance projects; and promoting public safety.

ON THE COVER

*The kinetic sculpture Azlon
reigns over the courtyard at
6100 Merriweather Drive.*

Everything the DTCP does involves partnerships. It partners with other organizations – such as the Columbia Association, the Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission, and the Inner Arbor Trust – and, of course, it partners with Downtown Columbia businesses, especially developer The Howard Hughes Corporation, which has been the primary funder of the Partnership.

This annual report showcases some of the events and activities of the past year, most of which would not have been possible without DTCP's partners.

Letter from Board Chair and Executive Director



Greg Fitchitt



Phillip Dodge

With the development underway in the Merriweather District and the recruitment of giants like Tenable cyber security and the iconic Busboys and Poets restaurant and bookstore, Downtown Columbia is being transformed just as was prophesied in the Downtown Columbia Plan.

Columbia is becoming the “Third City” between the metropolitan areas of Washington, D.C., and Baltimore.

A report, prepared by The Sage Policy Group and commissioned by the Downtown Columbia Partnership, indicates that “cumulative positive fiscal impacts of the redevelopment of Downtown Columbia will total \$389-\$511 million between 2020 and 2048 once one accounts for the cost of local government services and debt service associated with tax increment financing.” By 2048, the net fiscal benefit each year to the county will be in the range of \$25-\$31 million.

As this annual report details, activity in Downtown Columbia has not been restricted to construction, landscaping and leasing. DTCP has helped local businesses grow and thrive and is creating a community where people of all ages gather to shop and enjoy a wide array of arts and entertainment – a lauded book festival, artist-in-residence program, exciting 5K race, social cocktail crawls for the workforce and residents, and activities for families.

All that is done by DTCP is due to its partners, especially the Columbia Association, which provides event supports as well as funding.

We are also grateful for an engaged Board of Directors and want to thank the outgoing directors as we transition to more community representatives in keeping with the regulations governing the Partnership.

President and Board Chair
Downtown Columbia Partnership

Executive Director
Downtown Columbia Partnership



Downtown Development Update



Tenable (l.) has moved its headquarters to the Merriweather District.

Over \$300 million worth of construction is now underway in the Merriweather District, the live-work-play neighborhood that embodies the realization of a more urban Downtown Columbia. Cyber security giant Tenable was getting ready to move into the top six floors of its new 12-story signature building located at 6100 Merriweather Drive at the end of 2019.

Tenable's decision to stake out Downtown Columbia as the place for its headquarters, rapidly growing business and expanding employee base is helping establish Downtown Columbia as an emerging hub in the new economy.

In May, over 250 regional business leaders gathered to discuss the "Future of Howard County: How Cybersecurity and Culture are Fueling a Development Boom" at an event organized by Bisnow. The experts' prediction: Columbia is prepared to be the center of Culture and Commerce for the region.

When fully built out, the Merriweather District will consist of 2.8 million square feet of new development, including 1.1 million square feet of office space, 1,100 residential units, 200,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, 250 hotel rooms, a central library and park. A parking garage for the Merriweather District was completed in 2019 and includes a new fire station, funded with proceeds from the TIF bonds issued in 2017 and paid back with taxes on the new development.



Howard County Executive Calvin Ball spoke at an event focused on the future of Howard County.



Lake Kittamaqundi is picturesque any season of the year.

Meanwhile, plans for the Lakefront District, which is the next neighborhood to be developed, moved through the County's Final Development Plan process. Characterized as the future hub of health and wellness, the Lakefront District will include approximately 442,000 square feet of new office/medical space, 222,400 square feet of new retail and restaurant space, new outdoor gathering spaces around Lake Kittamaqundi and throughout the neighborhood, and 1,284 new residential units.

In June, a dedication ceremony was held on the Lakefront for the Howard County Veterans Monument and the Vivian C. "Millie" Bailey Neighborhood Park. The event drew elected and civic leaders and members of the armed forces and veterans, who turned out to celebrate the long-awaited start of the monument and to honor Bailey, a beloved community leader and military veteran.

"Bailey Park" is being developed by The Howard Hughes Corporation as part of the Downtown Columbia redevelopment, and the land will be donated to the county as a public park. It will include three areas: a community gathering place or "free speech" zone, a play area for children, and the monument being developed by the Howard County Veterans Foundation, Inc.

Local dignitaries gathered for a dedication ceremony at the site of a future park and home of the Howard County Veterans Monument. Bailey Park honors community leader Vivian C. "Millie" Bailey (below).



Downtown Development Update

The Merriweather District's first apartment residence, Juniper, is now leasing.



Greg Fitchitt, The Howard Hughes Corporation President for Columbia, celebrated the opening of the new Merriweather Fire Station.

Housing

In the Merriweather District, an attractive new apartment residence, Juniper, neared completion at the end of 2019, and was readying for leasing of its 382 residences. The Downtown Columbia Plan calls for diverse housing options to support the city's history of inclusion, and Juniper includes 12 units for very low-income households earning 30% of the Area Medium Income and 12 units for middle income households earning less than 80% of AMI.

The apartments for very low-income households will be leased and managed by the Howard County Housing Commission, and, like the units for middle-income households, will be scattered throughout the building. These are the first of an anticipated 900 total affordable units in Downtown Columbia at buildout.

In August, Howard County General Hospital was announced as the first employer to join the "Live Where You Work" program for Downtown Columbia. Low- and moderate-income residents who work for the hospital will receive rental subsidies to live near their workplace. The Columbia Downtown Housing Commission is administering the program and is responsible for its implementation. Funding comes from the hospital and The Howard Hughes Corporation.



Fireworks at New Year's Eve attracted many families.

Entertainment and Dining

Nationally acclaimed **Merriweather Post Pavilion**, the heart of the Merriweather District, is a cultural attraction and economic driver for Columbia, Howard County and the region. It is undergoing a \$55 million renovation to incorporate modern features and amenities required by performers and audiences. Four of the five phases of the project had been completed by the end of 2019, including new stage house and backstage building, new concession, warehouse, offices and box office, doubling the height of the stage to support larger performance set pieces, new seating and other improvements.

During 2019, Merriweather Post Pavilion became the home to Soulful Symphony, a visionary orchestra that celebrates, elevates, and reimagines American music and culture. Darin Atwater is the director of Soulful Symphony and new Artistic Director of the Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission, which owns the pavilion.



Darin Atwater is director of Soulful Symphony.



Merriweather Post Pavilion underwent major renovations in 2019.

Downtown Development Update



THE FOOD MARKET

New places to eat and be entertained proliferated in 2019. Among the latest offerings in Downtown Columbia are the following businesses.

Busboys and Poets Perhaps no new business in Downtown Columbia has met with greater anticipation than that of Busboys and Poets restaurant and bookstore, which held its groundbreaking in September. Located between the Tenable headquarters and Juniper apartments in the Merriweather District, it will be the largest Busboys and Poets to date. Its 10,700 square feet will include indoor and outdoor seating areas on both levels, a curated book collection and space for its legendary community gatherings.

In addition, The Howard Hughes Corporation announced three other new restaurants coming to the Merriweather District in the street-level retail area of Juniper. Washington, D.C.-based **Matchbox Pizza** will add another location to its growing list of restaurants as will **Dok Khoa Thai Eatery**, a Northern Virginia favorite. Satish Gunisetty, owner of Rangoli, an Indian eatery in Hanover, Maryland, will open a new concept called **Clove & Cardamom**, also with Indian cuisine. Additionally, **The Charmery**, an ice cream shop created by an alum of Wilde Lake High School will also be opening.

On Corporate Row on Little Patuxent Parkway, 2019 brought the announcement that **The Food Market** will be coming to 40 Corporate Center. A Baltimore favorite, this will be the restaurant's second location.



Poet Lady Brion was a highlight of the groundbreaking for Busboys and Poets, which featured (from l.) owner Andy Shallal, The Howard Hughes Corporation President for Columbia Greg Fitchitt and Howard County Executive Calvin Ball.





Adding to the already robust list of Downtown Columbia's retailers and services, three new businesses opened in 2019, in the street-level retail area of the new TEN.M and m.flats apartments along The Mall's Ring Road. **The Halal Guys**, the American Halal food favorite, opened along with fitness specialists **Title Boxing** and **The Little Gym of Columbia**. In 2020, **Akira** and **Urban Hot Pot** will open.

The Mall in Columbia announced it will be adding a new grocer to the mix of its stores.

At The Mall, it was announced that **Lidl**, the Germany-based grocer will occupy the former Sears location. The store is expected to open in Spring 2021. Across the street **GrillMarx** will open in Little Patuxent Square in 2020.

The office market flourished in 2019 with many notable technology companies relocating to Downtown Columbia. **Edwards Technology Solutions** moved its headquarters into the One Merriweather Building along with **Prevailion**. Also, **BTS Software Solutions** and **Attila Security** moved into the Two Merriweather Building. Data Canopy moved into 50 Corporate Center, and **Cogent People** and **OssDsign** moved into 10 Corporate Center.

Children enjoyed blowing bubbles at the annual book festival.



Events



José Andrés was the headliner for the 2019 Books in Bloom.

The Downtown Columbia Partnership invests time and effort in providing and supporting arts, entertainment and recreation events that activate the redevelopment area. It has many partners in these efforts. Some activities are hosted by the Partnership, others are sponsored by the Partnership, and all are promoted by the Partnership. Here is a sampling of special events in Downtown Columbia in 2019.

Books in Bloom

Acclaimed chef/restaurateur/philanthropist José Andrés headlined the third annual Books in Bloom book festival, the Downtown Columbia Partnership's most popular signature event. More than 20 of the country's best and brightest authors were included in readings and panel discussions. Black feminism, immigration, hip hop music and graphic memoirs were among the topics. Busboys and Poets operated a pop-up bookstore, and there was a Rosé and Beer Garden, live music and specialty food offerings at the Merriweather Post Pavilion site. Approximately 2,500 attendees enjoyed the family-friendly event: children blew huge bubbles and strolled the grounds with flowers in their hair.

Books in Bloom attendees flocked to the Busboys and Poets pop-up bookstore.





Ram Devineni



Sarah Stefana Smith



Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann

Merriweather District Artist in Residence Program

The second annual Merriweather District Artist in Residence program featured three multi-media and technology-focused artists: augmented reality comic book creator Ram Devineni, painter/muralist/installation artist Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann and Sarah Stefana Smith, who blends photography, sculpture and historical research in her installations. The artists lived in new Downtown Columbia apartments and used some of the new but unfinished Merriweather District office space as their studio during the 6-week residency. The Artist in Residence program was established and funded by The Howard Hughes Corporation in collaboration with the Howard County Arts Council.

The Artist in Residence program showcased each artist's work with a new community exhibition, AIRBORNE, in which the artists and others participated in panel discussions and exhibited their work in progress. The public was invited to the studio for a chance to meet and talk with the artists, and special events for adults and families were held, including a musical program by the Soulful Symphony.

Winter Cocktail Crawl

Despite disappointing weather conditions, the Winter Cocktail Crawl hosted by the Downtown Columbia Partnership was a huge success. Held on the outdoor patio of Two Merriweather, guests were able to enjoy another new amenity space in DTC. Food and drink were supplied by Downtown Columbia restaurants **Clyde's of Columbia, Cured and 18th & 21st, GrillMarx, Seasons 52, and The Soundry.**

The statue of James W. Rouse was festooned with a 2019 Discover Downtown Columbia race medallion.



Events



Food from local restaurants is a feature of the Downtown Columbia Partnership cocktail crawls and other events.

6th Annual Discover Downtown Columbia 5K

The Downtown Columbia Partnership hosted the 6th annual Discover Downtown Columbia 5K in October, attracting 400 participants. The 5K course took runners and walkers on a loop trail that started and ended at the People Tree and wove past The Metropolitan, TEN.M and m.flats apartments and One and Two Merriweather office buildings, through Symphony Woods and into Merriweather Post Pavilion where participants crossed the stage, getting an unique view of the new renovations. The route continued past Toby's Dinner Theatre and the Central Branch of the Howard County Library and around Lake Kittamqundi and back to the People Tree for the finish line. Earlier in the year, Clyde's of Columbia, Rip It Events, and the Downtown Columbia Partnership teamed up for the 2019 Clyde's 10K race. It was the 41st installment of the legendary race which ran through the streets of Downtown Columbia and featured the famous post-race brunch on the Columbia Lakefront.



The 2019 annual Discover Downtown Columbia 5K saw almost 500 participants.



Festive Fridays

The 4th Annual Festive Friday Cocktail Crawl, hosted by the Downtown Columbia Partnership, sold out and was to attract 250 to the Lakefront for a holiday gathering. With freezing rain in the forecast, the event was moved indoors but attendees enjoyed the change in venue to 6100 Merriweather Drive. Although still under construction, the soon-to-be headquarters of Tenable provided spectacular views of the Merriweather District and a birds-eye view of Symphony of Lights. Artisanal cocktails and delicious nibbles were provided by **Cured** and **18th & 21st**, **GrillMarx**, and the **Soundry**. The following week, despite chilly weather, 700 turned out for Festive Family Fun, featuring refreshments, music, holiday arts and crafts, photo booth, live ice sculptor, and strolling characters to the delight of youngsters.

More than 700 turned out for Festive Family Fun at the Lakefront.

Events



Damon Foreman performed at the Chrysalis Cabaret.



Stephane Detchou from Aztec Sun performed at the Columbia Festival of the Arts.

PHOTO BY RON FEDORCZAK

Columbia Festival of the Arts

The 31st Columbia Festival of the Arts in June had nearly 20,000 attendees over three days. LakeFest at the Columbia Lakefront featured eVenti Verticalli from Italy, more than 50 visual artists from up and down the east coast. KidzART provided fun children's art making activities. Bands on the lake stage included mid-Atlantic favorites and home-grown stars the Glenelg Jazz Ensemble, the Columbia Jazz Band, the Centennial Jazz Band, and the Columbia School of Rock. Films, adventuresome theatre, the Stoop Storytelling Series, and the Grammy and Tony Award winning jazz artist Dee Dee Bridgewater were also featured at Howard Community College and the Jim Rouse Theatre.



L'Homme Cirque was a highlight of the 2019 Columbia Festival of the Arts.



The Mini Maker Faire included pottery making.

Inner Arbor Trust

The Inner Arbor Trust, which operates the architecturally distinctive Chrysalis amphitheater in Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods, presented a wide array of arts and entertainment for diverse audiences in 2019. Highlights included concerts by the Columbia Orchestra and Cultura Plenera, which attracted large audiences of all ages and many families. The summer included many children's programs, including Grammy-award winning Sonia de los Santos and local favorites Milkshake and Barry Louis Polisar. Working with ManneqART, the Trust transformed Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods into FantasyWood, with fairies, mermaids, knights, and other magical creatures. Downtown Columbia Mini Maker Faire, part of the Maryland STEM festival, made its second appearance in October, and Ice and Fire: A Winter Wonderland was the holiday offering.

The Chrysalis was the performance venue for many musical performances.



Beautification and Connections

Columbia, we are often reminded, originally aspired to be “a city in a garden,” and much of the city’s open space, lakes and woodlands and 100 miles of pathways are maintained by the Columbia Association. The Downtown Columbia Partnership supports efforts for both enhancing the beauty of Downtown Columbia and increasing its connectivity. During 2019, several initiatives by partners advanced these goals.

Public Art The Howard Hughes Corporation launched its new public art master plan in 2019 with the installation of Azlon, the towering magnum opus by acclaimed artist Anthony Howe, in the Merriweather District. The wind-activated outdoor sculpture soars three-and-a-half stories high. It is named after the “one true king” in the children’s literary classic, *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Installed at the plaza surrounding the Tenable building, Azlon is set in motion by a slight breeze.

On a smaller scale, the Bear and Nursing Cubs sculpture, a sentimental favorite displaced with the takedown of the American Cities Building, was resituated to a planted area in the sidewalk at Whole Foods Market along with the accompanying plaque listing the names of every employee of The Rouse Company on its 30th anniversary.

Natural Canopy Trees are a community benefit for a variety of reasons – environmental as well as aesthetic. The Howard Hughes Corporation in partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation gave away 600 trees to residents of Howard County in an effort to increase the tree canopy and beautify the community, including Downtown Columbia. Eastern Redbud, River Birch, Swamp White Oak and Tulip Poplar were distributed.

In addition, representatives of the Downtown Columbia Partnership, The Howard Hughes Corporation, Inner Arbor Trust, Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission, Merriweather Post Pavilion, EcoWorks, and Blossoms of Hope joined with students of Wilde Lake High School to plant another 100 trees in the Merriweather District, bringing to 1,000 new trees planted in Howard County by The Howard Hughes Corporation. It was a cold April day, but that didn’t deter the students who were participating in a leadership project. Wilde Lake High School is an educational partner with The Howard Hughes Corporation.



Bear and Nursing Cubs was moved to a new home in 2019.



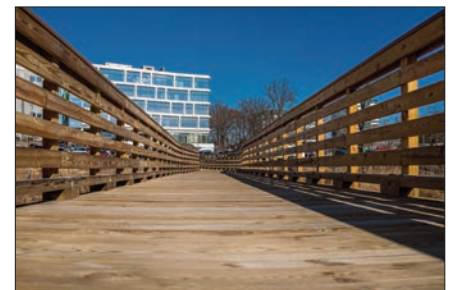
Wilde Lake High School students planted trees in the Merriweather District.



Cycling enthusiasts gathered at the fountain at the Lakefront for the annual Bike to Work day.

TDM Update The Downtown Columbia Master Plan called for the development of a Transportation Demand Management Plan (TDMP) for Downtown Columbia to ensure it will be multi-modal as it grows. TDM helps people use the infrastructure in place for transit, ridesharing, walking, biking and telework. It is cost-effective in guiding the design of our transportation and physical infrastructure so that alternatives to driving are naturally encouraged and our systems are better balanced.

In 2019, the Ball administration called for DTCP and the County to revisit the 2018 plan and strengthen it. DTCP hired Foursquare ITP to write and update the plan and launched an outreach effort to solicit community input on the TDMP. The next step is to finalize the draft recommendations and release them for public comment prior to establishment of a policy that could be considered by the County Council.



The Merriweather District Footbridge, a project by The Howard Hughes Corporation, will connect two commercial areas.

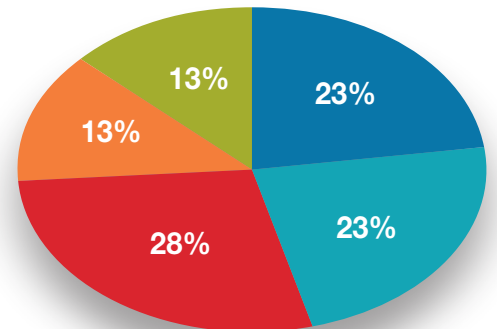


The interactive sculptures by artist Mary Ann Mears grace the Promenade in front of The Metropolitan apartments.

Financial Snapshot FY19

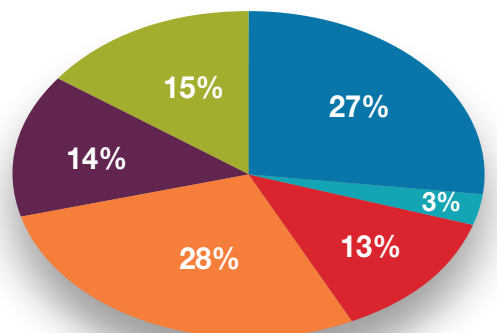
Revenue

The Howard Hughes Corporation	\$	168,500
CEPPA 25 Assessments	\$	167,127
Columbia Association Grant	\$	200,000
Sponsorships & Earned Income	\$	95,626
In-kind Services	\$	94,000
Total	\$	725,253 **



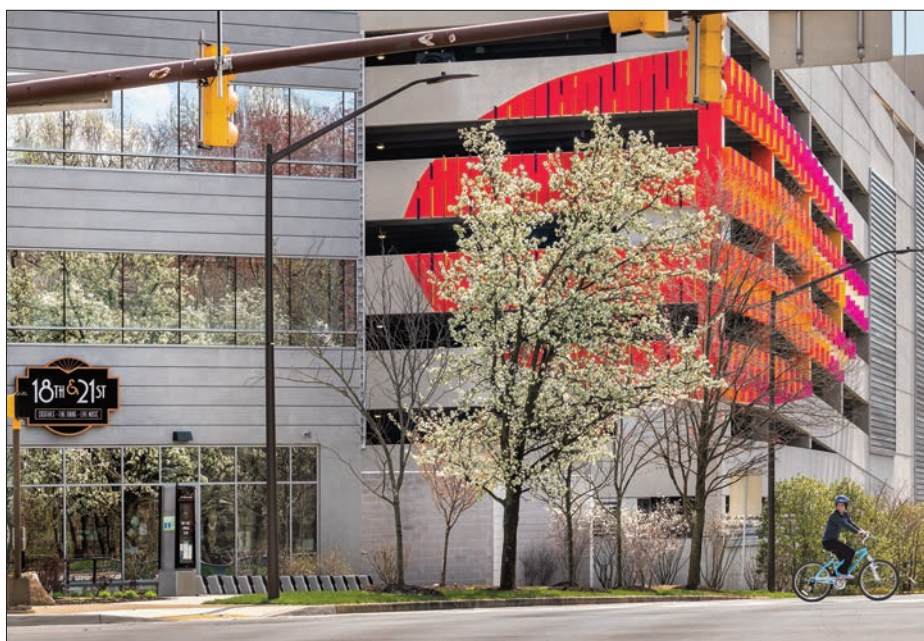
Expenses

Administration	\$	159,613
In-kind Services	\$	20,000
Marketing & Advertising	\$	76,003
Events & Sponsorships	\$	162,446
CEPPA 25 Transportation	\$	83,515
Maintenance & Beautification	\$	86,264 *
Total	\$	587,841



*includes \$74,000 in-kind services

**\$102,463 of CEPPA 25 Transportation restricted funds are not included in these charts and are being carried over from FY19 to FY20.



A cyclist takes advantage of BikeShare for a ride in Downtown Columbia.

Leadership



*Books in Bloom
attracted more
than 2,000
people of
all ages.*

Board of Directors

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The Howard Hughes Corporation

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Kristy Myers
Kettler

Larry Twele
Howard County EDA

Minah Woo
Howard Community College



*The headquarters of Tenable at
6100 Merriweather Drive glows
Ravens Purple during a snowy
evening.*



P A R T N E R S H I P

10960 Grantchester Way | Suite 110 | Columbia, MD 21044 | 410.964.4984
www.downtowncolumbiamd.com

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