Wheeler Terrace is the first affordable housing community in D.C. to simultaneously meet the Enterprise Green Communities standards and obtain a Gold Level LEED Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Wheeler Terrace is a seven-building garden apartment community in Southeast Washington, D.C. (Ward 8). In 2006, the Wheeler Tenant Association (WTA) exercised its right to purchase the property under D.C.’s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) to ensure that it was renovated and preserved as affordable housing. Originally built as Veterans’ Housing in 1947, the property had dramatically declined, becoming one of D.C.’s crime “hot spots.” The property is a seven-building garden apartment community in Southeast Washington, D.C. (Ward 8)

The WTA elected to transfer its ownership and development rights to Enterprise Community Development (formerly Community Preservation and Development Corporation) in late 2006. Enterprise Community Development (ECD) renewed the existing Section 8 contract for an additional 20 years, allowing residents to continue paying only 30 percent of their income on rent, with the remaining balance paid by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).


Financing

The acquisition and predevelopment phase of the project was financed through a $4 million loan from Enterprise Community Partners and City First Bank, which included low-interest funds from the D.C. Site Acquisition Fund Initiative, as well as a $1.4 million loan from the Housing Partnership Fund, Inc. (Boston, Mass.).

In addition, Enterprise Community Partners provided a $50,000 grant to ECD for green design and planning expenses, as well as a $25,000 grant to the WTA for organizational development.

The permanent closing and start of construction for the $33 million project occurred in 2008.
financing includes $8.1 million in tax-exempt bonds issued by the D.C. Housing Finance Agency and purchased by Union Bank of California, along with $12 million in 4 percent Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and $10.2 million in funding from the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development. PNC Bank is the tax credit equity provider.

Additional project resources included in-kind technical support provided by the D.C.-based nonprofit, GreenHOME, and a $1 million HUD Healthy Homes Grant to study the positive impact of creating healthy housing conditions for residents in low-income housing communities. The Federal Home Loan Bank Pittsburgh, Mount Vernon Place, LLC, and the Home Depot Foundation provided additional funding.

Green Renovations

The green redevelopment included the installation of a geothermal heat pump; upgrading the existing flat roofs with energy efficient white roofs; installing bio-retention areas and underground sand filters to improve storm water management; adding new clean air systems for improved air quality; and undergoing extensive interior renovations including upgraded bathrooms and kitchens with new energy-star appliances. Another key component to the redevelopment was the creation of much-needed family units.

The redevelopment also included the creation of new community and classroom space, a community garden, and a Green Opportunities center for educating residents and visitors about the community's green features.

In addition, partnerships with Casey Trees and KABOOM! brought together ECD, residents, and volunteers for several community days to plant new trees and construct a new playground on site.
Resident Profile
100 percent LIHTC eligible (< 60 percent AMI)
97 percent Section 8 (< 50 percent AMI)

Development Profile
Type / # Units / Density
1 BR / 29
2 BR / 83
3 BR / 4
3.14 acres

Amenities
Community Laundry
Community Activity Rooms
Computer Learning Center,
Tot Lot
Community Garden

1217 Valley Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20032
LEASING 202.561.7500

DEVELOPER

Development Type
Substantial “Green” Rehab, Multifamily

Construction Type
Garden Apartments

Development Costs
$33 Million

CONTRACTOR
Turner Construction

ARCHITECT
Wiencek + Associates Architects +
Planners, PC
OWNER
Wheeler Terrace Development, LP
Community Housing, Inc.
Enterprise Community Development

MANAGEMENT COMPANY
Edgewood Management

TOTAL HOMES
116

PROPERTY TYPE
Affordable
Family