



# COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT CASE STUDY

## Westcourt Orlando Orlando, FL

### Owner

Orlando SED Partners, LLC

### Management/Development Company

SED Development, LLC, JMA Ventures, LLC, and Machete Group, Inc.

### Type of Project

Mixed-Use Development

### Size

900,000 square feet on 8.5 acres

### Major Tenants

Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Orlando Magic

### Demographic

Serves a community of 307,000 residents in Orlando, Florida, with a median household income of \$66,292.

### Public Sector Support

Tax Increment recapture plan

### Challenges

Relocation of a parking garage and the Orlando Police Department headquarters

Westcourt Orlando represents a landmark \$500 million mixed-use development that addresses critical gaps in Orlando's downtown infrastructure while catalyzing broader urban revitalization. Through an innovative public-private partnership between the city of Orlando and Orlando SED Partners, the project aims to transform an underutilized 8.5-acre site into a comprehensive live-work-play destination featuring hospitality, residential, office, retail and entertainment components:

- 260-room hotel
- 65,000 sq. ft. event venue
- 270-unit residential tower
- 300,000 sq. ft. office space
- 125,000 sq. ft. retail space
- a festival plaza
- 1,140-stall parking garage

The development's emphasis on mixed-income housing, local business support and community event hosting demonstrates how thoughtful urban planning can deliver both economic returns and meaningful social impact, establishing a new benchmark for downtown development in Central Florida.

Westcourt is strategically located in Orlando's central business district, offering proximity to office spaces, civic institutions and recreational cultural hubs. Adjacent to the Kia Center and Creative Village, this landmark project site is within walking distance of a prominent \$2 billion innovation hub that features the University of Central Florida/Valencia campus, residential towers, open public spaces and flagship businesses like EA Sports. Westcourt reflects the city's dedication to revitalizing both its central business district and the historic Parramore neighborhood.



## Redeveloping a Downtown

Orlando's downtown core faces the challenge of competing with other major metropolitan areas for convention and business travel, particularly with 14.6 percent of the population living below the poverty line and the largest demographic in poverty being females between ages 25 and 34. The city and Visit Orlando identified a critical gap in downtown offerings. Most successful downtowns have convention centers that bring foot traffic and business travel to their core, but Orlando's main convention venues sit outside the downtown area. This \$500 million Westcourt development directly addresses this deficiency by creating an authentic downtown experience that complements rather than competes with existing facilities like the Orange County Convention Center.

## Public-Private Collaboration

The success of the Westcourt project is significantly attributed to the strategic funding and expertise provided by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The CRA's targeted funding and planning expertise ensure the success of this catalytic development that is set to become a pillar in the city's revitalization efforts. The innovative partnership structure allows the development to serve dual purposes: providing much-needed downtown event space while creating a vibrant mixed-use community that supports both residents and visitors.

The city of Orlando has played a significant role in the project to ensure Parramore's small business owners and local entrepreneurs were included in receiving the benefits of the new development. In addition, the city has pursued several initiatives in Parramore to help current residents remain in the neighborhood, including infill and affordable housing development. For example, the CRA has redeveloped





## Key Challenges

The site, while strategically located across from the Kia Center, was significantly underutilized and required extensive preparatory efforts to unlock its potential for redevelopment. Significant challenges included the demolition and relocation of a city parking garage and the Orlando Police Department headquarters, which previously occupied the site. Additionally, the project faced a prolonged development financing stalemate, presenting a significant obstacle to progress.

These hurdles were successfully addressed through strategic collaboration among public and private stakeholders, leveraging innovative partnerships and a shared vision for catalytic redevelopment. This concerted effort transformed a previously underutilized area into a cornerstone for economic growth and urban revitalization.

## Economic Impact

The project will generate more than 5,000 jobs and more than \$860 million of economic output during the construction phase. Once fully developed, Westcourt Orlando is estimated to create 3,000 jobs each year and more than \$360 million of annual economic contribution to the market.

The project includes retail spaces designed specifically for area entrepreneurs, offering percentage-based rent agreements. This structure ensures small business owners can benefit from the increased exposure and opportunities created by the development.

This combination of innovative funding mechanisms, housing diversity and support for small businesses underscores Westcourt's role as a transformative force in the revitalization of Downtown Orlando, delivering sustained economic and social benefits to the region. •

several city-owned vacant lots into affordable single-family homes for sale.

Under an updated developers' agreement, the CRA increased its funding from \$1.7 million to \$2.5 million to facilitate construction of the meeting space and address increased construction costs. In exchange, the joint venture must commence construction of the event space within three years of the agreement's effective date, and the city will be able to host up to 10 government or civic-related events annually with no facility rental fee—seven at the hotel space and three at the 65,000-square-foot venue.

The project benefits from a strategically designed tax increment recapture plan where the city will reimburse SED Partners for property taxes collected on the development site without burdening public general funds. For the first four years, 100 percent of the tax increment revenue generated by the project will be recaptured, transitioning to 80 percent recapture until January 1, 2042, with a total cap of \$40 million. The cap would decrease to \$35 million if the office component is not built, and payments will start after the first project component is completed. Additionally, the project addresses critical diverse housing needs in the Community Redevelopment Area by committing to provide 10 attainable housing units for a minimum of 10 years, meeting standards for families earning 80% or less of the area median income (\$69,500 for a family of three in Orange County).