

MIXED-USE PROJECT IN GLASSBORO, NEW JERSEY, INCLUDES STUDENT HOUSING COMPONENT

Fourteen years in the making, Rowan Boulevard is nearing completion. The \$425.5 million redevelopment project has resulted in a mixed-use project that serves both the community of Glassboro, New Jersey, and the Rowan University campus, and the final phase will open in August 2018. At completion, Rowan Boulevard will feature 144,000 square feet of retail space, 2,771 student beds, 82,000 square feet of classroom space, 114 market-rate apartments, a 129-room hotel, 28,000 square feet of medical space, a 17,700-square-foot fitness center, a 1.75-acre town square and two parking garages totaling more than 2,300 parking spaces. The project is the result of a “public-public-private” partnership between Rowan University, the Borough of Glassboro and Nexus Properties.

Glassboro initiated the project when it acquired 26 acres of dilapidated real estate in the downtown, demolished the existing structures, including 90 family homes that had been turned into student rentals, and embarked on a multi-phase project with SORA as the master developer. In 2011, Nexus Properties joined efforts with Rowan University and Glassboro to revitalize the area and create a year-around vibrant walkable downtown area that appeals to students and the 19,000 city residents alike.

The project creates a connection between Rowan University and down-town Glassboro, as well as establishing a true downtown area with year-around residents, retailers and restaurants, notes Ronda Abbruzzese, vice president of leasing and marketing for Nexus Properties.

The student housing component is a large piece of the project — and the economic engine for keeping rents low for the commercial space and the market-rate apartments. But the needs and wants of non-student residents are also considered when the partnership decides what tenants to put in the commercial space. Recently opened retailers include a women’s fashion boutique; an Apple-certified IT maintenance shop; Six Pack Training, a personal training facility; Cookie Munchers, a cookie delivery service operated by a Rowan University alum; and Mexican Mariachi Grill. Nexus anticipates signing an Italian restaurant, deli/breakfast/lunch restaurant, Indian restaurant, and coffee shop, as well as additional medical and office space.

The \$74 million first phase, completed in 2009/2010, brought 884 student beds and a two-story, 36,000-square-foot Barnes & Noble, while the second phase, completed in 2012, ushered in the project’s mixed-use components with the \$33 million Whitney Center. The five-story second phase building includes 280 student beds for the University honors college and 20,000 square feet of street-level retail space.

The project’s next three structures, completed in 2013, include a 129-room Marriott hotel, a 1,200-car parking garage and the \$35 million



Image courtesy of Blackney Hayes

The most recent phase of Rowan Boulevard, which opened this year, includes 40,000 square feet of retail space, a 17,000-square-foot fitness center, 557 student beds, approximately 29,500 square feet of classroom space, 37 apartments and parking for 934 vehicles.

Enterprise Center, a 52,000-square-foot classroom building for Rowan’s College of Graduate Education that features 9,600 square feet of street-level retail space.

In August 2015, 220 Rowan Boulevard, the largest mixed-use building and Nexus Properties’ first student housing project, was delivered. Totalling 316,000 square feet, the \$74 million, six-story building features 20,000 square feet of retail space, 28,000 square feet of medical office space, 57 apartments and 456 student beds.

The most recent phase, a \$110 million project that opened this year, is located at 223 High St. and 230 Victoria St. and features 336,000 square feet of mixed-use space across three buildings and a parking structure. Overlooking the 1.75-acre Town Square, the phase offers a mix of 557 student beds, 37 market-rate apartments, 40,000 square feet of retail and office space, 29,500 square feet of classroom space, a 17,000-square-foot fitness center and a 934-vehicle parking garage.

Currently under construction, the final phase of the development features three mixed-use buildings totaling 20,000 square feet of retail space, 604 student beds and 20 apartments overlooking the Town Square. Situated at 57 North Main St. and 114 Victoria St., the \$75 million phase will total 267,000 square feet. — Amy Bigley Works