Welcome from UCD’s Executive Director

When you work in a neighborhood with 10 million square feet of new construction, an 11% increase in residential population over three years, and a 33% increase in total jobs over eight years, you’d better move fast.

At University City District, we work to change places and change lives in a 2.4 mile area of West Philadelphia. Given our context of growth and innovation, we’ve accelerated our investments, our programs and our impact to keep pace with both the aspirations of our partners, and the boundless possibilities of our community and city.

As you’ll see in the pages that follow, we strive to continually activate, support and reimagine University City, whether these efforts take four hours or a full 365 days. Working in concert with incredible partners, we build flexible, nimble and creative approaches – large and small – that sustain and shape University City as a great place.

We think of district improvement work as layers of infrastructure, some literal, some figurative. The foundation of our efforts is a clean, safe and attractive neighborhood. Building on this, we collaborate with our partners to help shape the commercial infrastructure that attracts retail and business tenants and fosters vibrancy at the ground level. Now, we’ve imagined and created a new future for our work which fosters
the civic infrastructure that activates dormant public spaces through placemaking efforts; the entrepreneurial infrastructure that draws innovators who transform the intellectual discoveries at our institutions into commercial ventures (and new tenants!); and the opportunity infrastructure which connects talented West Philadelphians to life-altering careers at our partner institutions.

With this broadened sense of mission and program, we’ve not only tried to mirror the pace of our partners, but we’ve also made some big bets alongside their work to continue to move University City forward. A re-designed Porch at 30th Street Station, a major investment in the Market Street Bridge, the growth of the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative and the launch of the Green City Works landscaping social enterprise are among the many endeavors you’ll read about in this report.

We’re thankful for your continued support and partnership to make this work possible, and we look forward to another year of moving ahead at the speed of University City!

Sincerely,

Matt Bergheiser
Executive Director, University City District
UCD Transformed a Street into an Outdoor Festival

IN 4 HOURS

UCD Transformed a Street into an Outdoor Festival
Each year, UCD partners with businesses along Baltimore Avenue and the Baltimore Avenue Business Association (BABA) to present the Dollar Stroll. Now in its sixth year, the Dollar Stroll transforms the stretch of Baltimore Avenue between 43rd and 51st Streets into a lively festival featuring live music and performances, all centered around neighborhood businesses offering wares for only $1.

The Dollar Stroll has become a neighborhood staple, giving residents and visitors alike an opportunity to come out and enjoy the community. It is also representative of a larger portfolio of UCD programming, including Dining Days, the 40th Street Summer Series, and Movies in Clark Park.

10,000+
COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED THE 2015 BALTIMORE AVENUE DOLLAR STROLL

35,000+
VISITORS ATTENDED ALL OF UCD’S EVENTS IN 2015
IN 3 DAYS

UCD Converted Twelve Parking Spaces into Six Pocket Parks
This year, UCD installed six Parklets throughout the district. Of particular interest was our newest Parklet at 125 S. 40th Street, constructed and installed in collaboration with local designers Shift_Design. At 60 feet long, it is Philadelphia’s longest Parklet. Upon installation, it immediately transformed three parking spots into a popular neighborhood gathering space. Before long, we observed people coming to the Parklet to eat lunch, meet for coffee, listen to impromptu musical performances, and conduct work meetings.

In 2015, UCD gained national attention when we published The Case for Parklets: Measuring the Impact on Sidewalk Vitality and Neighborhood Businesses. The study’s data and recommendations describe how Parklets activate public spaces and bring foot traffic to neighborhood businesses. UCD research demonstrates that Parklets are highly social spaces that contribute substantially to sidewalk vitality and increase sales at adjacent businesses by 20%. Our Parklets were open from April through November.
The Market Street Bridge Received a Makeover

IN 1 WEEK

The Market Street Bridge Received a Makeover
In the summer of 2015 we partnered with Center City District and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation to enhance the Market Street Bridge in advance of Pope Francis’ historic visit to Philadelphia. Together, we created a welcoming connection between the eastern edge of University City, Center City, and the banks of the Schuylkill River.

In a week’s time, Groundswell Design Group installed lush greenery in the form of 120 lightweight planters, bleacher seating offering optimal views of the Schuylkill River, and four large gateway pergolas positioned at the main points of entry to the bridge. The new elements softened vehicular traffic noise and created an inviting walkway and seating area for the nearly 6,000 pedestrians who use the bridge each day, and for the surge of visitors coming to Philadelphia for large events like the Pope’s visit and the 2016 Democratic National Convention.
IN 18 DAYS

UCD Refreshed and Revamped The Porch at 30th Street Station
UCD believes high quality public spaces should be built iteratively, with an initially modest capital investment and a feedback loop to inform future improvements. After witnessing increased usage with each added amenity, UCD decided to conduct a major upgrade to The Porch at 30th Street Station. We pursued a combination of new physical amenities and programming to better attract nearby residents, commuters, workers, and visitors in a second iteration of The Porch, dubbed Porch 2.0.

We partnered with Groundswell Design Group, Gehl Studio, and Visit Philly to develop a new plan for the space, which includes brightly colored custom swings, tiered platforms and lounging areas, festoon lighting, a unique XOXO sculpture, custom benches, and new landscaping. We also teamed with restauranteur Michael Schulson to bring in The Rotisserie, an exclusive dining concept serving food and drinks to travelers and visitors. Ongoing data collection at The Porch has revealed that the modifications have successfully attracted additional users and enlivened the space.

130% increase in usage during “off-peak” hours, including Saturdays

14 bright colored custom swings
UCD Jumpstarted the Careers of Unemployed West Philadelphians

IN 4 WEEKS

UCD Jumpstarted the Careers of Unemployed West Philadelphians
UCD’s nationally recognized West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI) connects unemployed Philadelphians seeking opportunity with West Philadelphia employers seeking talent. Since launching the program in 2011, the Skills Initiative has become an unequivocal success: we have partnered with 15 local businesses and institutions to create more than $7,000,000 in wages for previously unemployed residents.

In 2015, WPSI served over 100 participants, including our 500th since the program began, and placed 95% of our program graduates in employment. Among the participants was a group of 13 formerly unemployed Philadelphians training for Inpatient Clerk positions at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), our sixth cohort with this critical partner. In just four weeks, our participants learned invaluable skills, including mastering interviews and resumes, financial planning, workplace dynamics, and goal-setting to prepare them to thrive at CHOP and in the broader job market. After finishing the program, their combined average wages jumped from $16.84/hour at previous jobs to $19.14/hour, an increase of 14%.

95% OF GRADUATES GAINED FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

$13.56 AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE FOR ALL ADULT WPSI GRADUATES
The Dirt Factory Turned Organic Waste & Leaves into a Community Asset

IN 3 MONTHS

The Dirt Factory Turned Organic Waste & Leaves into a Community Asset
The Dirt Factory, UCD’s free community composting facility and education center, sits on the site of a formerly vacant lot. Open year round, we collect organic waste like food scraps and fallen leaves and turn it into compost using an Earth Tub compost system. This nutrient-rich compost is then shared with community gardens from the neighborhood. We also use it in UCD’s own landscaping and beautification projects: Dirt Factory compost was used in planters at The Porch at 30th Street Station and the Market Street Bridge, and our Green City Works landscaping crew uses the compost throughout the district. The Dirt Factory is also a community education center, featuring residential scale facilities where community members can learn more about composting at home and gardening with compost.
Project Rehab Brought a Distressed Property Back to Life

IN 6 MONTHS
Through a partnership of neighborhood groups and City agencies, Project Rehab works to unlock the economic potential of vacant and underutilized properties and to leverage private investment for their redevelopment. Project Rehab supports property owners navigating complicated issues tied to home rehabilitation by offering assistance with financing, contractors, permits, licenses, inspections, sales, and zoning.

In 2015, Project Rehab helped a property owner on Preston Street turn a severely distressed property into a duplex with an ADA compliant apartment for a disabled family member. Project Rehab supported the owner with finding a contractor, securing a construction loan, and signing a mortgage. After several months of debate and appeals, Project Rehab assisted in ensuring that the property was appraised for $475,000. The owner, a longtime West Philadelphia resident, moved into her home on February 15, 2016.
IN 9 MONTHS

UCD Launched Green City Works, Our New Social Venture
Green City Works, UCD’s landscaping venture, is the next step in our work to close the gap between the 81,490 West Philadelphians who live in poverty and University City’s cluster of dynamism and opportunity. Green City Works leverages our experience maintaining the physical vibrancy of the community and WPSI’s nationally-recognized approach to workforce development, while harnessing the tremendous purchasing power of our local institutions.

With substantial financial support from the Job Opportunity Investment Network, we partnered with leading anchor institutions, nature centers, and horticulturalists to create a pilot program for West Philadelphians with the highest barriers to employment. We connected 15 program graduates – including returning citizens – to work in their community, executed fee-for-service landscaping projects with local partners, and developed a three-year roadmap for aggressive growth that will offer career opportunities to 200 unemployed West Philadelphians.

160,000 SQUARE FEET OF SPACE MAINTAINED BY OUR LANDSCAPE CREW

$400,000 IN EXECUTED LANDSCAPING PROJECTS
UCD Helped to Keep University City Clean and Safe

OVER 365 DAYS
Our focus on maintaining clean and safe streets within University City never ceases. Our Public Safety Ambassadors patrol the streets, serving as highly visible deterrents to crime and offering assistance to those in need. Our Public Space Maintenance employees work seven days a week to clean and enhance more than 160 commercial and residential blocks through street cleanings, graffiti removal, trash collection, and more. We share cleaning and safety information directly with members of the community through safety fairs, online communications, and one-on-one interactions between neighbors and members of our Clean and Safe teams.

In addition to the numbers presented to the right, UCD Clean and Safe helped residents with 386 lock outs and 788 jumpstarts, removed 154,736 trash bags and 114 tires, and successfully connected 51 homeless people with Project Home.
UCD will Expand its Community and Regional Impact IN 2016
UCD looks at each new year as a renewed opportunity to improve the vibrancy of our neighborhood. In 2016, we will continue offering signature programming, activating the district through our public space projects, connecting underserved residents to life-changing opportunities, and providing Clean and Safe services throughout the neighborhood. Beyond these critical efforts to change places and change lives, here are just a few of the many anticipated highlights to look forward to in 2016:

- **Groundbreaking on the 40th Street Trolley Portal**
- **Full rollout of our Green City Works venture**
- **Scaling the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative to serve more residents and employers**
- **Major new public space investments in eastern University City**
Thank You to Our Donors!

University City District is grateful to the individuals, businesses, foundations and organizations that made our work in 2015 possible.

**$500,001 & Up**
University of Pennsylvania
Drexel University
University of Pennsylvania Health System

**$101,000 - $500,000**
Brandywine Realty Trust
Campus Apartments
The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
INTECH Construction
Joanna McNeil Trust
Philadelphia LISC
University City Science Center
University City Associates
University of the Sciences
William Penn Foundation

**$25,001 – $100,000**
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Citizens Bank
GlaxoSmithKline
HCP 3535 Market Street, LP
Job Opportunity
Investment Network (JOIN)
National Board of Medical Examiners
Pennoni Associates
Pew Charitable Trusts
United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey

**$5,001 – $25,000**
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City of Philadelphia - Mayor’s Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity
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UC Net
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West Philly Local
Where Magazine
WMGK
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UCD Fiscal Year 2015 Financial Results

**FY15 Sources:**
$8,772,682

- Board Contributions: 50.2%
- Community Contributions and Sponsorships: 2.7%
- Grant Support and Tax Credits: 11.4%
- Fee-for-Service Income: 28.2%
- In-Kind Contributions: 7.4%
- Interest Earned: 0.1%

**FY15 Uses:**
$8,746,769

- Clean and Safe: 43.9%
- Planning and Economic Development: 12.7%
- LUCY® Transit Services: 15.5%
- Administration: 6.4%
- West Philadelphia Skills Initiative: 6.9%
- Events, Marketing and Communications: 12.5%
- Development: 2%

Sources:
- $8,772,682

Uses:
- $8,746,769
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Executive Vice President
University of Pennsylvania

David Adelman, Vice Chairman
President and CEO, Campus Apartments

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Maggie Langdon
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Chris Richman
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Ryan Spak
Project Rehab Manager

Andrew Stober
Vice President of Planning
and Economic Development

Sharon Thompsonowak
Program Manager,
West Philadelphia Skills Initiative

Alissa Weiss
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Daniel Wolf
Planner / Project Manager
University City District (UCD) was founded in 1997 by a partnership of world-renowned anchor institutions, small businesses and residents to improve economic vitality and quality of life in Philadelphia’s University City. Our primary mission is community revitalization. We work within a place-based, data-driven framework to invest in world-class public spaces, address crime and public safety, bring life to commercial corridors, connect low-income residents to careers, and promote job growth and innovation.

To make a secure, online donation to UCD, please visit: www.universitycity.org/donate