

Urban oasis

Amanda Hughes of Hord Coplan Macht discusses turning a 33-acre former corporate campus into The Grandview CCRC

by Tracey Walker

WITH AN EYE on the former Marriott International headquarters in Bethesda, Md., Erickson Senior Living (Catonsville, Md.) saw an opportunity to meet seniors' needs for more urban living options by redeveloping the 33-acre site into a new continuing care retirement community (CCRC). Phase 1 of The Grandview, slated to open in late 2025, includes two 13-story independent living buildings, a parking garage, outdoor activity areas, civic green park, and walking and biking trails. Future phases will add high-rise independent living buildings with below-grade parking and an assisted living building with supporting dining and amenities. Here, Amanda Hughes, associate principal at Hord Coplan Macht (HCM; Baltimore), the architecture firm for the project, discusses converting the site and opportunities for urban infill projects.

What was the first step in this campus site transformation?

HCM began by working with an existing master plan for the site. We recognized an opportunity to work with the urban context, which would allow for new high-rise construction, access to a broader mixed-use residential community, and leveraging of natural site features and proximities to create a unique intergenerational senior living experience.

How did you approach the campus layout?

The Grandview community is organized into nine buildings (six for independent living, one for higher-acuity continuing care, a business operations center, and garage). The site layout and building footprints form distinctive courtyards and "outdoor rooms" that connect physically and visually to the first-floor amenity spaces within each building.

All buildings are also connected by elevated walkways to encourage connection across campus regardless of weather conditions or physical abilities of residents. An important component of the campus is the civic green, a 1.5-acre park for senior residents and employees that is also open to the broader community.

Do you see more opportunities for adaptive reuse in senior living?

Yes, the post-pandemic world has opened up new opportunities for senior living communities. Underperforming office buildings, historic schools, or former manufacturing or storage facilities serve as examples for repositioning or adaptive reuse.

Additionally, as younger generations have shifted toward urban living, empty nesters and older adults have also embraced city life. Buildings that fit the profile for residential conversion also often have access to tax credits and local incentives.

What lessons can the industry learn from this project?

We know that the over-65 population is expected to double in the next 20 years. Urban senior living is a smart trend that promotes social engagement and accessibility while being environmentally conscious.

Converting corporate offices into senior residences repurposes existing infrastructure while reducing waste and suburban sprawl. High-rise communities in urban areas offer proximity to amenities, healthcare, and transit, which foster independence and an intergenerational experience. efa



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