

Melnea Residences

BOSTON

New transit-oriented residential building at key crossroads will bring vitality to a long-vacant site and add momentum to the ongoing renewal of Roxbury's Dudley Square.

PROJECT TYPE:

Mixed-income rental apartments and 4,000 sq. ft. of ground floor office and retail space

DEVELOPMENT TYPE:

New construction on vacant parcel in prime location

UNITS:

50 mixed-income rental apartments

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COST:

\$17 million

HNEF INVESTMENT:

\$3.85 million

DEVELOPER:

Urbanica, Inc.

COMPLETION DATE:

June 2019

DECADES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, COLLABORATION, AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT LEAD TO TRANSFORMATIVE, MIXED-USE PROJECT

Melnea Residences was built on the corner of Melnea Cass Boulevard and Washington Street. This site, known as Parcel 9, was razed in the 1960s to make room for a planned extension of I-95 that never happened. Finally, development of the property got a boost in 2012 when Urbanica was designated as the developer by the site's owner, the Boston Planning and Development Agency. Plans for the redevelopment of Parcel 9 then began to take shape.

Melnea Residences is part of a larger \$38 million development that also includes a 135-room Marriot Residence Inn that occupies 70% of this block. These projects are within a 15-minute walk of the MBTA Silver and Orange lines, across the street from a baseball field and park, and adjacent to the South Bay Harbor Trail, a 3½-mile pedestrian and bike route that will connect Boston's neighborhoods to the waterfront. Finally, the development is across the street from the new Tropical Foods grocery store and within walking distance to Boston Medical Center as well as many shops, parks, restaurants, historic and cultural sites and other amenities. The Residences and Hotel adds to the continued development of the area, providing new retail, restaurant, cultural and community resources on this site that are accessible to the entire neighborhood.



CREATING NEW HOUSING, BUSINESSES, AND JOBS AND ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR AREA RESIDENTS

Melnea Residences is located along a busy, highly visible thoroughfare that runs through the heart of the community. As such, the development serves as a gateway to Roxbury and Dudley Square and improves connections to the South End and downtown Boston. Melnea Residences is a 6-story, 50-unit building with 4,000 sq. ft. of retail with spaces for three commercial tenants. Seven apartments are affordable to residents at or below 70% of AMI. The remaining units are reasonably priced market rate apartments. Residents have access to ZipCar and Hubway bike stations within one-quarter mile. The building is designed to meet LEED Silver certification standards and includes rooftop solar panels. Melnea Residences benefited from a \$2 million MassWorks grant that was awarded to the hotel to improve the streets and sidewalks surrounding the project and South Bay Harbor Trail.

This project will yield considerable economic, social and environmental benefits to the community. It will result in 77% improvement in the State of Place index for walkability in the

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immediate area, contributing to safer, more vibrant and active streets. Melnea Residences is a positive 24-hour focal point on the edge of Dudley Square and brings new patrons to the supermarket, other local businesses, restaurants, historic sites and cultural events. It creates much-needed rental housing, a source of new permanent jobs, and it generated construction jobs with strong outreach to the surrounding community for both workers and minority business enterprises.

**AN OPPORTUNITY TO REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES
AND ADVANCE REGIONAL EQUITY**

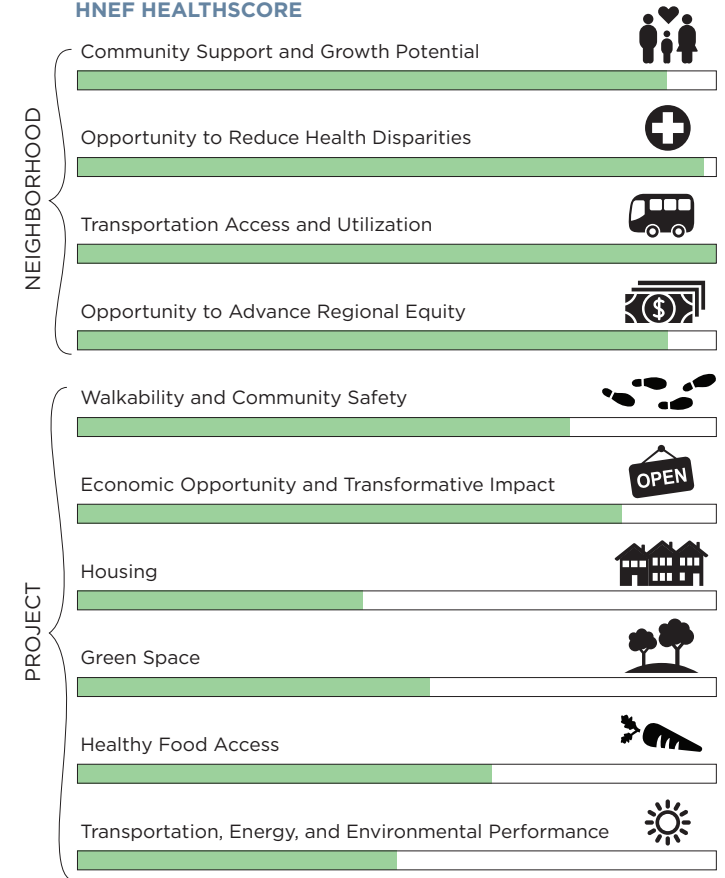
This project is critically important for the Roxbury community, and HNEF financing made it possible for the developer to move forward. When reviewing the project, the HNEF team determined that the potential for improving the health of the community, its environment, and its people was high. Health disparities in this neighborhood are notable and other demographics underscore the need for HNEF investment.

In 2012, life expectancy in Dudley Square was 58.9 years compared to 80.5 years for Massachusetts in 2013–2014, a difference of nearly 25%. The poverty rate in the surrounding area is 34.5%, 3.1 times the state rate, and unemployment is 13%, 2.8 times the state rate. In 2008-2010, the adult obesity rate was about 1.4 times the state rate, adult asthma was approximately 1.3 times the state rate and diabetes was approximately 1.7 times the state rate. Even more alarming, in 2010-2012, Emergency Department visits for mental health were 18.3 times the state rate.

The Melnea Residences (and Hotel) will substantially alter the economic and physical environment of this part of Boston and contribute to a healthier community with stable and affordable housing, safe streets, job opportunities, transportation access, healthy food and green space.

Melnea Residences

HNEF HEALTHSCORE



HEALTH SCORE: 74.5

RATING: High Impact

**INVESTING IN THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES IN MASSACHUSETTS**

The Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund (HNEF) is a \$22 million private equity fund created by the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) and the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) to finance transformative, transit-oriented development in Boston and gateway cities in Massachusetts. See www.hnefund.org.

