

Philadelphia development firm looks to raise \$1B to revitalize Black neighborhoods

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A Philadelphia real estate development firm is seeking to raise \$1 billion over the next decade to help transform five Black neighborhoods across the country. Its first planned project: the Tioga neighborhood in North Philadelphia.

TPP Capital Management Group hopes to raise its first \$300 million for investment in Tioga, with a focus on improving the health and wellbeing of neighborhood residents. In total, TPP Capital plans to develop 1,400 residential units, 172,000 square feet of retail space and 92,000 square feet of street improvements, including new sidewalks and landscaping.

The proposal also calls for 98,000-square-foot “preventative health tower” that would house 45,000 square feet of primary and specialty care office space, a center for culinary medicine and a community farmers market. TPP Capital plans to start construction on that project in the first quarter of 2021, said [Anthony Miles](#), one of the firm’s principals.

TPP Capital aims to use investments in residential and commercial development to reduce health disparities in Black neighborhoods. Many of the group’s planned projects in Tioga would either directly expand access to medical care or add healthy food options to the neighborhood.



TPP CAPITAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

An artist's rendering of a planned preventative health care tower in Tioga.

“Tioga is going to be the national model for how you integrate health into Black neighborhoods,” Miles said.

The company has not yet identified the other projects across the U.S., Miles said.

Founded in 2015, the group has secured \$10 million and is circling back with investors who previously committed funds two years ago when the project wasn’t ready to launch, Miles said. TPP Capital needs \$23 million to start construction this fall on 40 condo units, aimed at health care workers, and 48 senior housing units at 1708-10 Tioga St.

The group is looking in the Philadelphia region and nationwide for investments from high net worth individuals, foundations, endowments, corporations and social impact investors, among other sources. Miles said TPP has not identified what other cities it would like to take on projects.

Miles has worked in urban real estate development and construction for over 17 years. He was previously involved in apartment development in North Philadelphia’s Francisville neighborhood where he grew up.

Some potential tenants have signed letters of intent, Miles said, including Salus University committing to an optometry, speech therapy and audiology lab in the health tower. Peirce College, a private college focused on adult learners, signed a letter of intent to lease space for a satellite campus, he said. Two Black-owned businesses, a juice bar and bottling facility and an optical boutique and lab, have also expressed interest.

TPP Capital has said it has 26 zoning applications approved for the 44 parcels it has under control, Miles said. The group plans to apply for construction permits in the next two weeks for the 40 condo units before securing permits for the senior housing units.

TPP Capital’s target area for development is within one or two blocks of the Temple University Hospital on North Broad Street in Tioga.

Many community members don’t have access to primary care physicians and instead must go outside Tioga or to emergency rooms at the nearby hospital for medical needs, Miles said. The planned medical office space at North 17th and

Westmoreland streets would prevent the need for residents to leave the neighborhood for specialty care.

TPP Capital's \$1 billion campaign comes as the Covid-19 pandemic highlights long-existing health disparities impacting Black communities in the U.S. In Tioga, 45% of residents have high blood pressure, 77% have high cholesterol and 43.3% are obese, according to TPP Capital.

"Tioga reflects a lot of neighborhoods in the country in that it is a food desert and medical desert," Miles said. "Tioga was a blank canvas. It's easier to integrate our model because it's all vacant land. We can bring in all new buildings and nobody is getting displaced."

Over the past five years, TPP Capital has worked to engage with residents and learn their needs. Plans for a senior housing development, farmers market and condos for middle-income service workers all came from the community, Miles said.

Community members requested that 10% of TPP Capital's real estate developments be affordable for people in the neighborhood. TPP Capital's plans go above that, with 15% affordable units.

TPP Capital's social impact model also places an emphasis on healthy food and nutrition as an investment in Black health. Miles said the group moved up its timeline on building the farmers market because of the community's need for fresh fruits and vegetables during the Covid-19 crisis.

There are also plans for a 32,000-square-foot hub with retail space for healthy food vendors, and a 16,000-square-foot indoor vertical farm.

In part to give community residents the opportunity to work on its construction projects, TPP Capital is slated to develop a 6,800-square-foot center for job training and showcasing smart technology innovation.