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**EXCELLENCE**  

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BEST OF NAIOP NORTHERN VIRGINIA  

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2015 AWARDS





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# Trendsetter Award

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Vornado/Charles E. Smith  
*Award of Excellence*

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# Crystal City

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The future of the office comes to Crystal City. » Page 4

The Washington Post

MARCH 17 • MARCH 23, 2014 • VOLUME 4, ISSUE 49 • \$3.00

## FROM THE GROUND UP

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

**SOLD:** Woodcrest Towns and Woodcrest Condominiums have bought a 94-unit single family planned subdivision in the District for \$4.2 million at an auction from Congress Heights Affordable Housing Partners. The 99-lot Congress Heights Vista residential development is at the corner of Fourth Street SE and Mississippi Avenue SE.



Photos by Jeffrey MacMillan/Capital Business

## At Vornado building in Crystal City, an exercise in design

Six architecture firms show off their ideas for the office of the future

By JONATHAN O'CONNELL

Stepping off the elevator, you would never know you were in Crystal City. At least not in the year 2014.

The building, at 251 18th St. South, is one of a slew of 1970s-era government office buildings that emptied after Defense Department cutbacks. On the outside, it looked as nondescript as any in Crystal City, but inside displayed top architects' best guesses at the future of office space: small suites with shared work spaces, movable walls, white boards on every surface and virtual receptionists.

Last week, the building's owner, Vornado Realty Trust, held a competition called DesignLab showcasing how architects see the world of office space changing as millennials pour into the workforce, and Internet-based businesses make up a larger portion of the American economy.

Vornado has traditionally focused on attracting law firms, government agencies and associations to its Washington area properties. But the owner of about 20 million square feet in the region is now turning its attention to so-called creative firms and tech companies, one of the few office sectors showing any signs of growth. Vornado has lured TechShop, a manufacturing workshop for creative types of all stripes, to Crystal City, and it is bringing WeWork, the start-up incubator

Crystal City as a place for talented young workers. "What we decided to do was take a typical floor in a typical building and show the community 'Hey, you can do creative space here just like you would in the Wunder Bread building or somewhere else,'" he said.

Scheer argued that unlike in Lower Manhattan, where creative companies poured into neighborhoods already branded as cool by artists and restaurants, the Washington area has no natural hub for growing tech firms. D.C. officials would beg to differ, given the burgeoning start-up community in the District's East End, but Scheer said he sees an opportunity for Crystal City to own a part of that niche.

"I absolutely believe that this is a strong trend in the future of office occupancy. We think at the moment there is relatively abated demand from the creative community, and there aren't any natural locations," he said.

The rules of the competition were simple: Six firms were invited: RTKL, Perkins+Will, OTJ, SmithGroupJJR, VOA and Fox. Each was given a portion of the sixth floor and 565 per square foot to turn their space into whatever they wanted. Other than that there were no rules. Among the biggest

Pablo Quintana of VOA said that for tech companies, even established ones, assigned desks had almost become a thing of the past. His firm designed a 125,000-square-foot space for IBM near Dulles without a single assigned desk. For DesignLab, VOA built a long wooden "power bar" where workers could stop in with tablets and phones. "This is what we

going to be for everyone else."

**2. Supreme flexibility** Most teams pitched their office as something of a blank canvas, with furniture and walls that could be moved overnight. Don't like where these desks are? Roll them over toward the windows — the electrical, heating and cooling can accommodate the switch. Want the color pallet to match your company's? The colors in place can be swapped out or repainted.

Desks in the office designed by OTJ could be pulled apart and reconnected like Legos on wheels. Fox architects designed their entire space in 10-by-



**IN CRYSTAL CITY:** Photos from Vornado Realty Trust's office building at 251 18th St. South show office designers' emphasis on shared spaces, collaborative work areas and less of an emphasis on reception areas. At top left, Mitchell N. Scheer, president of Vornado's Washington division, inspects a graphic while leading a tour of the six spaces designed by various architecture firms

do for Google. This is what we do for IBM," he said.

All the sharing and openness is aimed at an egalitarian, collaborative feel with less emphasis on who is in charge. OTJ called its office "The Hive" because of the capacity for collaborative work and social interac-



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# Real Estate Transaction Building Lease

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Lerner Enterprises  
*Award of Merit*

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# EY Lease | 1775 Tysons Boulevard

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## Team Members

Developer: Lerner Enterprises

Owner: Lerner Enterprises

Broker: Cushman & Wakefield

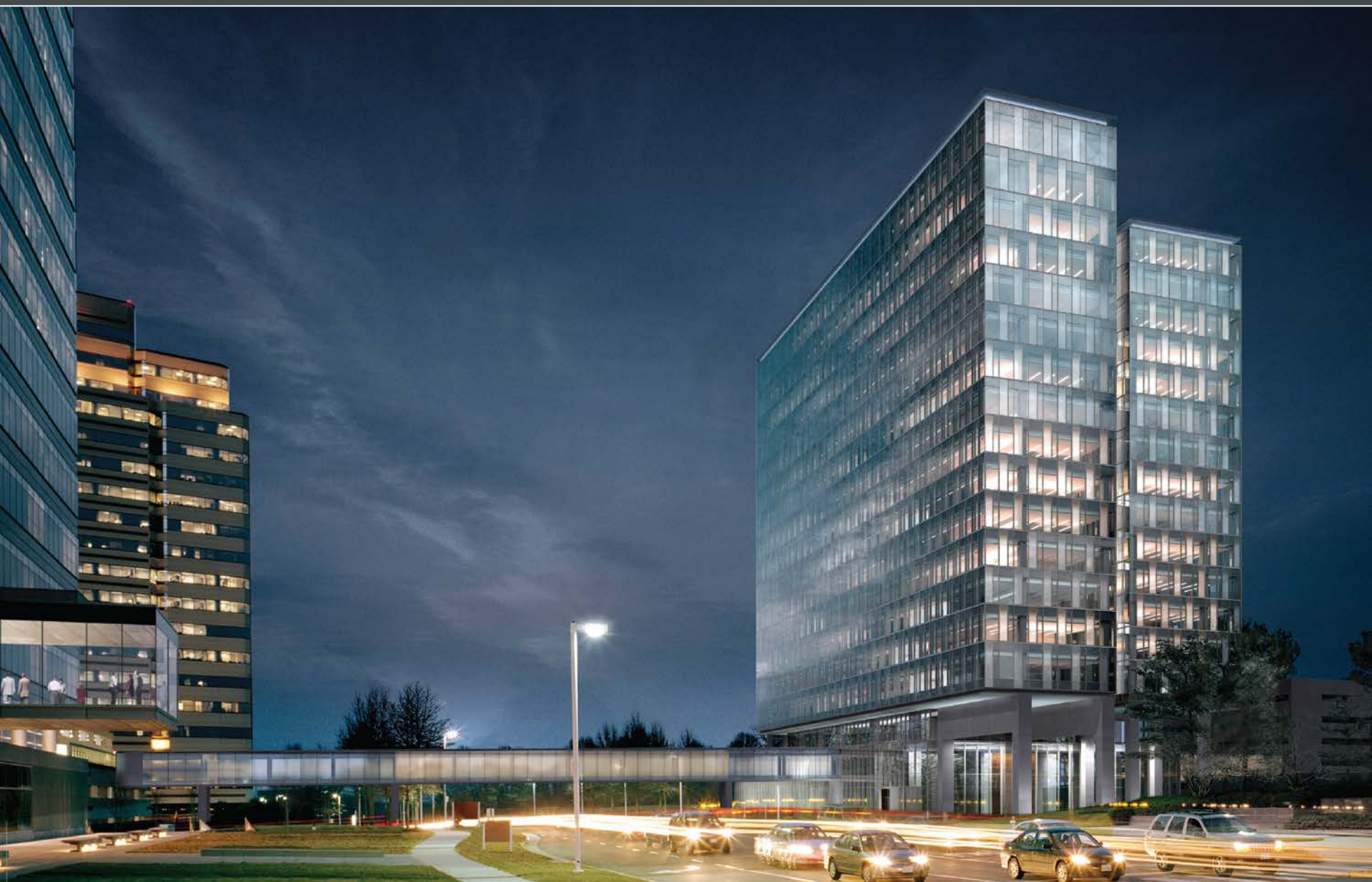
















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# Real Estate Transaction Building Lease

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Trammell Crow Company  
*Award of Excellence*

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# K2M Group Holdings, Inc.

## Global Headquarters

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## Team Members

Developer: Trammell Crow Company  
Keane Enterprises

Owner: Trammell Crow Company  
Keane Enterprises

Broker: CBRE, Inc.



Production Building

Plaza

Office Building

Hope PKWY SE

Oaklawn Drive















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# Real Estate Transaction Building Sale

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Transwestern  
*Award of Merit*

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# Stafford Place I & II

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# Team Members

Owner: Jamestown

Broker: Transwestern Institutional  
Commercial Group



















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