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## D.C. gets look at city plan to grow

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D.C. officials over the past year have boasted of their goal of attracting 100,000 new residents within the next decade, but have given little indication of how they would pull it off, until yesterday.

Inside a shiny new Columbia Heights condominium, the District officially began its "City Living, DC Style" marketing campaign, designed to lure suburbanites back into the District and encourage renters in the city to buy.

The Washington DC Marketing Center and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development want to dispel the belief that housing in the District is too expensive. They plan to promote a host of programs to help make renting and buying a house more affordable. In addition, the District will aggressively market the city's newest homes.

There are about 30,000 units of housing either recently completed, under construction or planned for development in the District. Yesterday, D.C. officials and marketing executives boasted about the 289 apartments and condominiums at the Wardman Court complex off Clifton Street NW in Columbia Heights.

The complex, formerly known as the Clifton Terrace development, had a reputation in the 1980s as ground zero for the city's drug trade and gang wars. But the nonprofit Community Preservation and Development Corporation spearheaded a \$30 million renovation with help from the Michael Development Corp. and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Condominiums at Wardman Court cost between \$107,000 and \$220,000 and apartments rent for between \$665 and \$1,165 per month, making them affordable to people making 60 percent of the area's median income. Units in the Wardman Court, many of which offer views of the U.S. Capitol and Washington Monument, are expected to be fully occupied by the end of the year, when renovations are completed.

"This is the sort of complex that people of limited income will be able to afford," said planning office spokesman Chris Bender, from a second-floor condo at Wardman Court.

The District's push to attract new residents comes after a decade in which more than 30,000 people fled the city. In fact, many large U.S. cities, including Baltimore and Philadelphia experienced a population exodus between 1990 and 2000. New York, Los Angeles and Las Vegas are the only three cities that attracted 100,000 people or more in the past decade.

But D.C. officials remain optimistic they can attract the residents, because the region's suburban population has exploded by nearly 1 million people in the past decade,

according to District estimates.

"We're only looking for 10 percent of that pie, and we think that's reasonable," Mr. Bender said.

The D.C. planning office has been budgeted \$300,000 for the marketing campaign this year, which will include a three-day housing expo at the new Washington Convention Center in October. To cover the full cost of the campaign, an additional \$100,000 to \$200,000 is needed from sponsors. Any surplus money will go back into the District's affordable housing fund, according to DC Marketing Center President Michael Stevens.

More information about the campaign will be on display Wednesday between 5 and 7 p.m. at Farragut Square.

In other news ...

- Columbia-based Corporate Office Properties Trust paid \$71.2 million for 13200 Woodland Park Drive, a 404,665-square-foot office building in Herndon. The property, occupied by Verisign Inc., is one of the few buildings in Herndon that is fully leased.

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