

Crosstown Concourse

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

THE SEARS-ROEBUCK Distribution Center and retail store became a driving economic force in Memphis after its construction in 1927. Ninety years later, the adaptive reuse project known as Crosstown Concourse is making a new impact in the community.



BEFORE The 1.5 million-square-foot building was built in 1927, bringing thousands of jobs and spurring growth in the Crosstown neighborhood two miles outside downtown Memphis. Although the distribution center and retail store were successful for more than 60 years, suburban expansion trends eventually caused the decline of the urban core, and the building sat vacant by 1993. After nearly 20 years, community members came together to create a vision for the massive structure that would put community, culture, and the arts at the forefront.

TRANSFORMED Within a year of Crosstown Concourse's grand opening, it has achieved full occupancy. This LEED Platinum development, which has become known within the community as a "vertical mixed-use village," includes office and retail space, apartment units, a charter high school, a YMCA, a performing arts theater, and artist residency studios. This unique model integrates community, sustainability, social transformation, and inclusivity.



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CROSTOWN CONCOURSE WINS NATIONAL PRESERVATION AWARD



*Memphis’s massive “vertical urban village” receives the
Richard H. Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Award,
the nation’s highest honor in preservation*

WASHINGTON (October 15, 2018)—Today, for its groundbreaking transformation of a 1.5 million square-foot mixed-use facility, the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced **Crosstown Concourse** in Memphis, Tennessee as one of only three winners of the **2018 Richard H. Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards**. Given each year at the end of a juried competition, the Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards, the nation’s most coveted and prestigious, are bestowed on historic preservation efforts that demonstrate excellence in execution and a positive impact on the vitality of their towns and cities.

“Through creative and meticulous restorations that reinvigorate older buildings, elevate the quality of public life, and educate and encourage others, the winning projects are outstanding examples of the power and potential of preservation to improve lives,” said Stephanie Meeks, president and CEO of the National Trust. “We are honored to partner with the Driehaus Foundation to celebrate Memphis’s Crosstown Concourse as one of this year’s awardees and a source of inspiration for the future—remarkable not just for its size, but for the many ways it puts community first.”

Built in 1927 as one of the first Sears, Roebuck and Company facilities, the site brought thousands of jobs and spurred growth in the Crosstown neighborhood two miles outside downtown Memphis. Although the distribution center and retail store were successful for more than 60 years, suburban expansion trends eventually caused the decline of the urban core, and the building sat vacant by 1993. After nearly 20 years, Memphis residents came together to create a vision for the massive structure that would put community, culture, and the arts at the forefront.

“The restoration and repurposing of the Sears Crosstown property into Crosstown Concourse will be seen for decades to come as one of the most important transformations of a historic structure in Memphis and the region,” said June W. West, executive director of Memphis Heritage, Inc. “Not only did it preserve a historically iconic building, it created an urban village, of which its diversity and creativity stand as a benchmark for others to follow.”

Within a year of its grand opening, Crosstown Concourse has achieved full occupancy through a unique model that integrates community, sustainability, and inclusivity. Designed by Looney Ricks Kiss in association with DIALOG, this LEED Platinum development, which has become known within the community as a “vertical urban village,” includes office and retail space, apartment units, a charter high school, a YMCA, a performing arts theater, and artist residency studios.

“Crosstown Concourse is the type of project that happens once in a generation,” said City of Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland. “Countless hours of work from so many dedicated partners brought Crosstown back to life as a thriving hub in Memphis. Receiving this high honor from the National Trust for Historic Preservation will serve as a constant reminder of the building’s unspoken creed—Together, we are better.”

“Once abandoned and listed as one of Tennessee’s most endangered historic places, the exciting transformation of Crosstown Concourse into a vibrant community landmark is one of the most remarkable preservation success stories in our state in years,” said E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr., executive director and state historic preservation officer of the Tennessee Historical Commission. “The large scale and layout of the building makes it possible to serve a wide variety of creative uses. The Tennessee Historical Commission is proud of its role in providing guidance and support for this extraordinary \$200 million Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit project, the largest in Tennessee history, and we heartedly endorse and applaud this well-deserved recognition.”

Established in 2012, the Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards have honored distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and corporations

whose skill and determination have added to the richness of their communities by preserving their architectural and cultural heritage. As the most sought after of all National Trust awards, the initiative recognizes efforts in landmark preservation, historic restoration, skilled craftsmanship, and educational and advocacy activities.

The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards winners, chosen from among 50 nominated projects by a jury led by Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic Paul Goldberger, will be honored as part of [PastForward 2018](#), the nation's largest historic preservation conference, on November 14 at the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre in San Francisco. This year's other awardees are The Douglass at Page Woodson apartment community in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and the Richardson Olmsted Campus architectural masterpiece in Buffalo, New York.

Members of the public are invited to learn more about the award-winning set of projects, individuals, and organizations that have demonstrated excellence in the field of preservation at: www.SavingPlaces.org/awards

Images at top: Crosstown Concourse in Memphis, Tennessee. Photos: Sélavie Photography.

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About the National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America's historic places. www.savingplaces.org

About the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards

The Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards have honored distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to communities by preserving their architectural and cultural heritage. The coveted awards recognize efforts such as citizens saving and maintaining important landmarks, companies and craftsmen restoring the richness of the past, public officials supporting preservation projects and legislation in their communities, and educators and journalists helping Americans understand the value of preservation.

www.savingplaces.org/awards