

# Multifamily TRENDS<sup>®</sup>

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## TrendWatch

### The Next Generation



Post  
Massachusetts  
Avenue

Since the 1970s, Washington, D.C., has experienced a significant exodus of residents from the central city. Indeed, until the late-1990s, when the administration of Mayor Anthony Williams took over, downtown residential development was virtually nonexistent.

The largest residential development to be built in the city proper in more than a decade, the 269-unit Post Massachusetts Avenue was the first major development of its kind to break ground during the Williams Administration. It offers the first of more than 3,000 high-end rental apartments expected to come on the

market in the District over the next two years.

Developing in D.C., even in the best of times, is fraught with challenges. Height restrictions, a densely developed street grid, and ubiquitous underground Metrorail lines combine to make development in the District difficult—and the addition of economic and national security challenges in 2001 and 2002 have not helped.

During construction, the project's developer, Atlanta-based Post Properties, had to excavate land to accommodate three levels of underground parking; clean up contaminated soil and water; and underpin three historic townhouses, an old condominium building, and a new hotel before bringing the project out of the ground. But, according to the developer, the time was right for a new multifamily high rise in D.C.

Architecturally, the building's modernist look differs from much of the traditional designs of government buildings in Washington. The exterior, which features a scalloped facade, stands apart without sticking out, complementing its high-profile location at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and 15th Street. Architect Phillip Esocoff incorporated several other buildings on the block—including the historic townhouses—into the site plan, offering a contrast in scale and architecture that typically lends itself well to a diverse cityscape.

The building's target market is high-income professionals who can pay for the quality location, services, finishes, and amenities offered by Post Massachusetts Avenue. Post developed a diverse unit mix—ranging from 450-square-foot studios to 1,700-square-foot, three-bedroom residences—to reach its entire market.