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National Assoc. of Home Builders'
Multifamily Rehabilitation Division
Pillars of the Industry
Award Winner
for Newly Renovated Apartments

Hampton Place apartments win national award

Apartment community wins national development award
by Cheryl Sloan Wray, *The Birmingham News*

Nothing shows the dramatic changes created by a redevelopment project like before and after pictures. You've seen them in home decorating magazines and on television design shows. These images capture dramatic makeovers that create a completely new space out of a dilapidated one.

The Hampton Place apartment community in Hoover is the perfect embodiment of a before and after picture. The changes created by Hampton Residential, a company that specializes in repositioning projects, are drastic and dramatic. The redevelopment was handled so well that Hampton Place was recently recognized by the National Association of Home Builders with the "Best Multi-Family rehabilitation of the Year" award.

The award is a prestigious one, especially since a record number of entries were considered last year.

According to Hampton Residential's Bob Sposito, who works through the company offices in Atlanta, the job at Hampton Place was really a joint venture between several entities. While his company handled the redesign, several Birmingham companies played, and continue to play, important roles in the community's success.

The community was developed in a partnership between its general contractor, Birmingham's **Restoration Consultants (RCI)**, and the investor, Sun America. Lane Companies is its management entity in Birmingham.

"We couldn't have done this job without our partnerships," Sposito said.

Sposito said the rehabilitation of Hampton Place is extraordinary, especially if one has any knowledge of what the property was like before. The old Southbrook apartments, while in excellent location on Lorna Road, had fallen into disrepair.

Hampton Residential viewed the property as a wonderful opportunity. With the high number of new developments already taking place in Hoover, a company couldn't build another new community in the area. Another option was to rehabilitate an existing structure.

"This was an opportunity to create a community in a great location," Sposito explained. "What you have now is a Class A apartment community in a very sought after location, but one that comes with a B+ rental price."

Hampton Residential spent \$2.3 million on total renovation costs, and attention was paid

to every detail. Changes included a new truss system, pitching of all the roofs, a new clubhouse and new mechanical systems.

The interiors were overhauled and the new apartments hardly resemble the former ones. There are new plumbing fixtures, new flooring, countertops with a faux granite look, new appliances and a designer orange peel finish on the walls.

The community has a large one-bedroom unit with 850 square feet; two-bedroom units that range from 950 square feet up to over 1,000 square feet; and some three bedroom units that have as much as 1,475 square feet.

According to Sposito, rehabilitation of already existing communities is an important trend today. There are simply so many areas that already filled with new developments; sometimes the only way to proceed is to over haul existing structures. His company has done new construction, but now it focuses on repositioning older structures and communities.

For years, Sposito mainly worked in Atlanta. However, markets like Birmingham are becoming good places to redevelop.

"Birmingham, and some of the other similar sized markets, are now at an economic point where we can do this kind of work," he said.

Following its success with Hampton Place, Hampton Residential set its sights on another redevelopment in the Hoover area; that community is now available to the public.

The old Green Tree apartment community near the Riverchase Galleria has been redeveloped into The Reserve at Hampton Place. Sposito said the changes there are even more dramatic than at Hampton Place.

"When we received the award for Hampton Place, I joked that we'd be back next year for our work at The Reserve," Sposito said. "It's really a dramatic makeover."

Changes at The Reserve include interior overhauls, a new clubhouse, garages for residents and a state-of-the-art fitness center. "It is a very attractive site now," Sposito said.

A few units are still available at Hampton Place, and numerous units are now available at The Reserve.