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Butler Place to Become New Community Canvas

Housing Authority Selects nationally renowned Master Developer “Artist” for Redeveloping the Butler Place Landscape

FORT WORTH, Texas — The portrait of downtown’s eastern landscape is about to change and an “artist” has been selected. Located in the watercolor shadow of downtown Fort Worth, this will be no simple paint-by-number child’s work, but a new masterpiece slated for the Butler Place community.

Columbia Residential of Atlanta, Georgia has been selected as the master developer to transform Butler Place from Fort Worth’s eastern sheltered, inland-island to a robust and prosperous community with modern amenities and connectivity to downtown. The area will soon be on its way to being a major contributor to the already thriving success of the downtown economy. “After nearly 18 months working with a community advisory group and a national search for a master developer, we are extremely pleased that we will be able to partner with Columbia to transform so many lives as well as the topography of this isolated community” said Naomi W. Byrne, President of Fort Worth Housing Solutions (FWHS). “Now we can begin exploring in earnest the real and tangible possibilities that the future holds for the people and property of Butler. The process will be much like sculptor looking at a block of stone. We are about to start chipping away at something to reveal a beautiful work.”

Outlined not by waves but asphalt, Butler Place currently is framed in by Interstate 35 on the west, Hwy 287 to the east and north, and I-30 to the south. The area has been a standalone shelter for some of Fort Worth’s most financially challenged residents for almost 80 years. Built in the post-World War II era with additions in the early 1960s, the retro style red bricks will not just get a new coat of paint, but instead make way for a new work including contemporary structures and an improved quality of life.

Noel Khalil, CEO and Founder of Columbia Residential said, “Our goal is to provide sustainable high-quality housing for current and future residents within a revitalized, connected neighborhood that is an essential part of the Fort Worth fabric. Our team is thrilled to have this opportunity to help realize a new community vision for this part of Fort Worth.” Part of the improvements will include better access to the area, giving residents and businesses a greater gateway to the commercial centers that lay within walking distance. Columbia Residential already has a familiarity with Fort Worth and local culture, as the developer of the new mixed-income housing at Renaissance Square. Columbia Residential has engaged revered Texas-based design team members with extensive experience in Fort Worth including JHP Architecture & Urban Design, MultaTech Engineering and HB Properties.

Current residents of the aging buildings need not worry about their future living arrangements. Not one person or family will be left without a place to call home. As the grounds begin to experience a phased rebirth, tenants will have the opportunity to move anywhere in the FWHS system. As new units come back online in the revitalized neighborhood, those residents will have the first opportunity to move back to the new dwellings or choose to remain in place.



“The reason that we can convert this former public housing property is because of the acceptance of the Butler property into the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD),” said Ms. Byrne. RAD is a pilot program developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which allows public housing agencies and owners of certain at-risk, federally assisted properties to convert their current assistance to long-term project-based Section 8 contracts and leverage financing to help reduce the severe backlog of capital repair needs. “We are dedicated to rehabilitating the face of public housing and this project will only elevate Fort Worth’s reputation as a national leader in the care for its citizenry as well continued economic opportunity.”

About Fort Worth Housing Solutions

FWHS is changing the face of affordable and attainable housing opportunities by providing mixed-income rental and homeownership possibilities that enable our clients to flourish in the community. FWHS accomplishes this by assisting our clients in elevating themselves to the next level of self-sufficiency and personal responsibility through life-changing programs. Through its real estate development program, FWHS also delivers stable investment opportunities for our development partners. Fort Worth Housing Solutions owns 998 public housing units that are being converted to RAD, 2,675 affordable housing units and 665 market-rate units. FWHS also administers over 6,000 Housing Choice Vouchers and operates a homeownership program. In addition, FWHS has over 1,100 units either under construction or in development. Learn more about Fort Worth Housing Solutions at <http://www.fwhs.org>.

About Columbia Residential

Founded in 1991, [Columbia Residential](#) develops and manages multifamily affordable housing communities in locations that are underserved by the affordable housing industry. Columbia Residential provides quality, safe and affordable housing for moderate to low-income families that not only meet the needs of residents, but also satisfy the aesthetic standards of the community. Since it’s founding, Columbia Residential has won more national awards for architectural excellence than any other housing provider in the Southeast.

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