



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 19, 2008

J. Tucker Rolls Out Montage-Brand Apartment Projects
“Echo Boomers” Expected to Drive the Market
First Two Atlanta-Area Projects Underway

ATLANTA— With market forces once more at his back and “echo boomers” coming into their own, J. Tucker Development is flying full-speed into apartment development, promoting a sophisticated Montage brand throughout the Southeast. Two Atlanta area projects, and one in Charlotte, N.C., are underway.

Tucker’s first branded foray, the 225-unit Montage Embry Hills complex in Atlanta, located on a five-acre site at the intersection of Chamblee Tucker Road and Henderson Mill Road, broke ground in February. Construction is slated to begin this summer on Montage Springlake, a 220-unit garden apartment complex in Cumming, Ga.

“The forces are aligned and the timing is right,” says Jeff Tucker, president of the Atlanta-based company. “We’ve been tracking the trends, studying the market and establishing our brand. Interest rates, demographics and supply and demand factors are all in our favor.”

“Our goal,” says Tucker, “is to have two to four apartment projects underway at different stages of development at all times.”

Once a major player in the multi-family market with 4,500 units to his credit, Tucker made a strategic retreat from the segment four years ago, focusing on single-family development when interest rates plummeted and demand for rentals dipped.

With competitors expected to take a similar rosy reading of the market, the branding strategy will give J. Tucker a leg up, says Zach Schaumburg, development vice president.

“The Montage brand is being tuned to appeal particularly to the echo-boom generation,” Schaumburg says, referring to the genetic offspring and demographic echo of their Baby Boomer parents.

Born between 1982 and 1995, they number nearly 80 million nationally, spending \$170 billion a year.

With a boost from these echo boomers, the number of renters nationwide is projected to increase by almost four million households over the next 10 years, with half of those likely to rent apartments, according to Mark Obrinsky, chief economist of the National Multi Housing Council, which issued its latest Market Trends report in February.

Says Schaumburg: “As they leave college, they’re not likely to take on a mortgage, but they will be looking for something upscale and sophisticated to fit their lifestyles. We plan to appeal to them with a selection of luxury amenities and high end finishes.

“For a long while, apartments haven’t been all that sexy,” says Schaumburg. “Montage is changing that. We want the brand to have some pizzazz.”

Focusing on brand development will allow J. Tucker to leverage economies of scale with regard to marketing, particularly the web presence, says Tucker.

The new generation’s reliance on the Internet as a shopping tool makes that emphasis imperative, he says.

And, Tucker adds, the lifestyle package must include an “invisible amenity: the renter’s confidence that he or she will be surrounded by compatible neighbors of a like mind and similar interests.”

The decision to pursue this market was based on the sheer size of this generation and a depleted pool of rental units.

This wasn’t the case when Tucker backed away from the multi-family market. With interest rates low, home ownership was the preferred option, driving developers to invest in single-family homes and condominiums, while converting rental units to condos.

“That left us with a situation in which supply is low and demand is growing,” says Tucker. “It gives us and our partners the confidence that the market will continue to remain strong over the next several years.”

Tucker’s confidence in the company’s direction is also buoyed by the eagerness of institutional investors to obtain “cash-flowing properties.”

“There’s a lot of money,” says Tucker, “chasing stabilized apartment assets.”

Montage Embury Hills, with its sophisticated styling and amenities designed to appeal to lifestyle-driven young professionals, will benefit as well from its pedestrian-friendly “in-fill” location as well as its easy access to I-285, says Schaumburg.

“For the residents, that translates into the kind of convenience to amenities that they find attractive.”

“Besides providing the requisite pool, exercise facilities and business center, we’re investing in natural gathering places, a clubhouse, a media room and landscaped open courtyards.”

J. Tucker Development is an Atlanta-based land acquisition and real estate development company specializing in the creation of mixed-use, single-family, multi-family, master-planned and New Urbanist neighborhood communities throughout the Southeast.