

Mixed-use leaders broaden focus under new EPC brand



EPC Real Estate Group LLC

EPC Real Estate Group principals, from left, Terry O'Leary, Mike McKeen and Steve Coon are pictured with the new logo for their company, previously known as ePartment Communities.

[Rob Roberts](#)

Reporter- *Kansas City Business Journal*

There's a new acronym in local commercial real estate — EPC

ePartment Communities, which has built a top-of-mind brand for local luxury apartment-over-retail developments, will now be known by the new name of its parent company, EPC Real Estate Group LLC.

[Steve Coon](#), one of three principals in the company, said the new brand was developed to signify the firm's broadening development focus and increased emphasis on property management and construction management.

Coon and partner [Terry O'Leary](#) developed their first apartment project, [Barrewoods](#) in the Northland, in 2003. It was the first complex in the country to offer free wireless Internet access, and the partners decided to name the apartment portion of their business ePartment Communities to emphasize the high-tech amenities they planned to build into projects.

Earlier, in 2000, Coon and O'Leary had also started an industrial venture, Rapid-Built Properties LLC, which developed [MidPoint Corporate Centre](#) in Edwardsville. And to add confusion, Rapid-Built and ePartment Communities have been operating under another brand, Land Development Strategies.

Now, all phases of the business will be known as EPC Real Estate Group LLC, which will bring all of the partners' development capabilities under the same branding umbrella.

Another reason for the change was the recent addition of [Mike McKeen](#) as the [firm's third principal](#). McKeen, who helped broaden the firm's development expertise, came over early this year from [Briarcliff Development](#) Co., where he served as served a director of development and construction.

Before that, McKeen was involved in the development of five sports stadiums, including Sporting Park for [Turner Construction](#) Co.

"Collectively," Coon said of EPC's trio of partners, "we have expertise in everything from arenas to office buildings."

In addition to bringing development expertise, McKeen helped bring in a big equity partner, Woodbury Strategic Partners, to help finance EPC's planned 200-unit [Domain at City Center](#) luxury apartment complex in Lenexa.

Woodbury, which is based in Salt Lake City, was Briarcliff Development's equity partner for the 340-unit [Landing at Briarcliff](#) apartment project.

McKeen left Briarcliff just as construction was gearing up on that project. But EPC was able to land the property management for that project — its first of hopefully several third-party management assignments.

Coon said EPC has an advantage in going after that third-party business: It has a strong record of managing its own upscale apartment projects.

Those include four projects it has developed or is developing with [VanTrust Real Estate](#) as an equity partner: The [Village at Mission Farms](#) and [Highlands Lodge Apartments](#) in Overland Park, [51 Main](#) in Kansas City, and the recently announced [Village at Aspen Place](#) in Flagstaff, Ariz.

In addition, EPC is partnering with Hunt Midwest Real Estate Development on another mixed-use project, called [Mission 106](#), which is located on the Leawood side of Mission Farms development.

The firm also is working on development of a mixed-use project at [80th Street and Metcalf Avenue](#) in Overland Park but has not yet announced an equity partner.

The new mixed-use project in Flagstaff will be the EPC principals' first outside of the Kansas City region. But it probably won't be the last. Coon said he expects EPC and its many Kansas City area real estate connections to involve each other in projects across the country.

That was the case at Village at Aspen Place, which is within a broader development by [RED Development](#), which maintains a Kansas City area corporate office. RED attracted EPC to that project, and EPC brought in VanTrust as a co-developer.