

# MULTI-HOUSING NEWS

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## Humphreys Reduces Space Waste in City Woodframes

By Keat Foong, Executive Editor

**Dallas**—Developers struggling over podium products that can barely pencil out can now examine another option. Humphreys & Partners Architects LP, based in Dallas, has begun marketing its newest design concept, the e-Urban Infill, which the company says provides for lower-cost wood-frame, four-story buildings with densities of up to 44 units per acre as a result of greater space efficiencies.

"As apartments have come back in vogue after the condo slowdown, we noticed the big majority of work was shifting to four- to five-story high-density designs," says Mark Humphreys, CEO. Still, notes Humphreys, existing urban mid-rises are "horribly space inefficient, with extremely long corridors that are longer than those of high rises."

Humphreys and Partners' solution involved the e-Urban infill design, which allocates four separate lobbies per building to eliminate those long corridors that typically characterize the urban woodframe mid-rise. Each unit opens onto a lobby, thereby also creating a more luxurious, "private elevator" ambience.

The product is 88 percent space efficient compared to 65 percent space efficient on



the typical four-story project, according to the company. And the e-Urban design can allow for densities of up to 44 units per acre with no structured parking. With structured parking and five stories, density can be as high as 100 units per acre, according to the company.

The design can generate construction cost savings of as much as 35 percent, says Humphreys. And project costs can be equivalent to a typical three-story, 44-unit per acre

breezeway product with elevators. "With one stroke, on the typical 200-unit project, we can save \$4 million in construction costs, enough to make the deal go ahead," says Humphreys.

Since marketing the e-Urban, "We've had 75 phone calls in three weeks. Fifteen projects are underway," says Humphreys. "It is the hottest thing we have done since the Big House [Humphreys' other trademarked design concept]."



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