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Encore Tampa Breaks Ground On New Tempo

KATHY STEELE | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014

Tempo is the fourth, but possibly not the last apartment building, to have its groundbreaking at Encore, the \$425 million mixed-income housing and retail development being built by the Tampa Housing Authority and Banc of America Community Development Corp.

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The 7-story, 203-unit multifamily apartment community is expected to open in 2015. It joins the Ella, a 160-unit senior apartment building that opened in late 2012 and is fully occupied. The Trio, a 141-unit multifamily apartment building, should open by April. And the Reed, a 158-unit apartment building for seniors, looks to open late this year or early in 2015.

All of the construction activity puts the Housing Authority about one year ahead of a schedule set out nearly three years ago. "We wanted to break ground on one building a year," says Leroy Moore, the housing authority's chief operating officer.

A fifth apartment building is possible but Moore says construction likely will be held off a couple of years while retail is added to the project's mix.

"Hopefully, we'll see demand for retail speed up greatly by the end of the year," says Moore. "We're being very diligent and selective."

By then, the Housing Authority expects to have about 300 leased apartments, nearly double the current number. Once fully completed, more than 2,500 people will live at Encore.

Moore anticipates an announcement on a grocery store for Encore within about 60 days.

The approximately \$43 million Tempo project is a public/private partnership between the Housing Authority and Banc of America Community Development Corp. The architect is Bessolo Design Group and the general contractor is Siltek Group, Inc.

Encore replaces the former Central Park Village public housing complex, which was torn down several years ago as part of the city's revitalization efforts north of downtown. The nearly 40 acres between Cass Street and Nebraska Avenue is in a neighborhood founded by freed slaves after the Civil War. Nearby Central Avenue was a black business and entertainment district that thrived until the 1960s and 70s when highway widening projects and urban renewal wiped out most of the area.

The musically themed Encore honors the heritage of the neighborhood, where legendary artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Cab Calloway and Billie Holiday often performed in night clubs in the Central Avenue district known as "Harlem South."

Writer: [Kathy Steele](#)

Source: LeRoy Moore, Tampa Housing Authority

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Kathy Steele is a feature writer and editor at 83 Degrees Media in the Tampa Bay region of Florida.

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