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Barnes & Thornburg Represents Wendover Housing Partners In Groundbreaking Deal With Universal Destinations & Experiences

The Deal Forms a Unique Public-Private Partnership to Address Central Florida's Affordable Housing Needs

November 17, 2023

Barnes & Thornburg represented [Wendover Housing Partners](#), a privately held real estate development, investment and management company, in connection with the formation and financing of a unique public-private partnership with Universal Destinations & Experiences, aimed at addressing the Orlando region's critical housing needs.

On Nov. 1, Wendover Housing Partners and Universal Destinations & Experiences [announced](#) the beginning of construction and released renderings for [Catchlight Crossings](#), a first-of-its-kind affordable housing solution that sits on 20 acres of land donated by Universal's not-for-profit [Housing for Tomorrow](#) that will feature 1,000 affordable apartment homes; on-site amenities and services, including an on-site healthcare center, a tuition-free Bezos Academy preschool, and educational opportunities offered in partnership with the University of Central Florida; 16,000-square feet of retail space; community and play areas; and access to transportation and nearby employers.

Financing for Catchlight Crossings includes primary funding from Chase, the construction lender for the community, Silverpeak, and more than a dozen other sources.

[Ryan J. Barncastle](#) led the Barnes & Thornburg team representing

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Wendover Housing Partners, with assistance from [Ashley F. Deweese](#), [Brandy McClary](#) and [Emily S. Pearl](#). The team served as corporate, real estate and real estate finance counsel.

“It was a pleasure to work with Wendover Housing Partners, Universal Destinations & Experiences, Orange County, Florida, and all of the financial partners on this monumental transaction,” said Barncastle. “We stand with Wendover Housing Partners in that it is our hope and belief that this public-private partnership, aimed at providing an affordable housing solution to address the region’s critical workforce housing needs, will lay the groundwork for constituents in other jurisdictions.”

“This is an affordable housing community that is unprecedented in its magnitude and scale,” said Jonathan Wolf, founder and CEO of Wendover Housing Partners. “We appreciate Barnes & Thornburg’s expertise in navigating the complexities of this community and helping turn this vision into reality.”

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