

\$1.7 Million Affordable Housing Development in Helena-West Helena Has Opened

»May 2nd, 2007 | Source: [Helena Daily World](#)

HELENA-WEST HELENA Southern Place Apartments, one of the largest multi-family housing developments in Phillips County in several decades, has opened.

Southern Community Development Corporation hosted the opening ceremony yesterday. Representatives from the Arkansas Development Finance Authority; the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Rural Development; Congressman Marion Berry's office; and the offices of Senators Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor spoke at the event.

Southern Place, located at 1201 Highway 49 West in Helena-West Helena, is a \$1.7 million affordable housing development of 20 apartments centered around a large outdoor common area with a gazebo, flower gardens, and picnic areas. The complex also includes a community room with a computer and internet access. Southern Community Development Corporation has already received more than 70 applications from prospective residents. This indicates the urgent need for quality affordable housing in Phillips County, which has a poverty level exceeding 33 percent.

Phillips County residents are currently engaged in the Delta Bridge Project, a comprehensive community and economic development initiative. The Delta Bridge Project began with a strategic planning process, in which the Phillips County community identified a need for affordable housing as one of its primary goals. Now in its implementation phase, the Delta Bridge Project is governed by a steering committee made up of the county residents and chaired by Dr. Steven Murray. Dr. Murray highlighted the significance of Southern Place Apartments.

"When I come home from work at night and walk up to my front door, I take for granted the joy of having quality housing that I can afford in a safe neighborhood," Dr. Murray said. "Southern Place Apartments will extend that joy to 20 families who may never before have experienced it. Southern Place Apartments is about more than housing; it's about providing more opportunities for people to achieve their dreams."

Southern Place is the result of a partnership between USDA Rural Development, Arkansas Development Finance Authority, Southern Community Development Corporation (SCDC), the City of Helena-West Helena and the Delta Bridge Project, which is facilitated by Southern Financial Partners.

"Southern CDC is very pleased that we have arrived at this stage, and we would not have reached it without the support of our financial sponsors and lenders," said John French, President of SCDC. "We believe this is a wonderful facility in a community that needs it greatly. We hope that this is simply the first of many positive things we can do to improve the housing stock of Helena-West Helena and Phillips County."