

Birmingham BUSINESS JOURNAL

Hollis overseeing projects, including Homewood retail center

BY LORI C. PRUITT / SPECIAL

Mark Hollis specializes in brokering property sales between buyers and sellers for commercial development. Rich Chism's talents lie in coordinating a commercial building project from the ground up.

Hollis started Hollis Real Estate LLC last year, and Chism came on board shortly afterward. Their combined experience in

HOLLIS REAL ESTATE LLC

Business: Commercial real estate brokerage, development

Top executives: Mark Hollis and Rich Chism, principals

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Number of employees: 3

Founded: February 2004

commercial real estate brokerage and development allowed them to offer a complete range of services to clients.

Hollis and Chism recently moved into new office space on Valleydale Road and have projects on the board, and they're committed to their goal of "building success, one story at a time."

"We have different areas of expertise, but I think we have an advantage as a team because we have the unique ability to offer clients brokerage and development services from start to finish," Hollis says. "We also have the same goals of quality and developing the kinds of projects we will be proud of."

Hollis Real Estate provides brokerage services, representing sellers and buyers. It

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Business partners Rich Chism, foreground, and Mark Hollis are working on several real estate projects, including Independence Corner Shopping Center in Homewood.

also offers development services, which include representing owners and coordinating renovation and/or building efforts between architects, engineers, attorneys, accountants and agents.

"The great thing about what we offer is that many of our clients are experts in their own business, but don't have the time or

the knowledge to develop their building project from start to finish," Chism says.

"That's where we come in – we can act as the owner's representative in coordinating the efforts of all the professionals involved in a real estate development."

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HOLLIS: *Retail projects continue*

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The two have plenty of experience.

Diverse backgrounds

Hollis, a 13-year veteran of commercial real estate in Birmingham, closed more than 80 transactions and sold or leased more than \$25 million of property in the U.S. Highway 280/Interstate 459 corridor alone.

His major transactions include sales topping \$17 million in apartment properties.

He has represented CSX Real Property, a Ford Motor Co. dealer, and acted as agent for the Resource Center Development, which includes Logan's Roadhouse, Bahama Breeze, FedEx Kinko's, Shop-A-Snak corporate headquarters and a Wachovia Bank-owned property.

Chism has a degree in engineering management from West Point U.S. Military Academy. He achieved the rank of major in the Army, serving as a leader, project manager and helicopter pilot.

After leaving the military, he earned a master's degree from the Wharton School of Business at University of Pennsylvania, designing his own major in real estate entrepreneurship.

As a development manager, he has coor-

'From a personal standpoint, we intend to continue to be involved in real estate projects with unique characteristics that we will be proud of.'

Rich Chism, principal
Hollis Real Estate LLC

dinated with professionals from such clients as Kroger, TGI Friday's, Red Lobster, Cracker Barrel, Starbucks Coffee and Panera Bread.

His experience includes road and infrastructure construction; outparcel development, retail center development, office park design, and site planning and land sales.

Chism manages the efforts of contractors, engineers, architects, attorneys and consultants during the development process.

Projects under way

"We know that we can handle a lot of what might be considered more cookie-cutter projects that have been done over

and over in the industry, but we are interested in more unique projects that we can be proud of," Hollis says.

One of those projects is the renovation of the newly named Independence Corner Shopping Center, at the intersection of U.S. Highway 31 and 28th Avenue South in Homewood, just two blocks from the new SoHo Square construction site.

Hollis will develop and manage the property as well as attract new tenants.

The firm also recently represented the seller of a 40,000-square-foot warehouse off U.S. 280 at Resource Center Drive. And, it is marketing two large tracts of undeveloped land with U.S. 280 frontage before Double Oak Mountain, near the entrance to Eagle Point.

"There are very few parcels left on U.S. 280 that can accommodate a large development," Hollis says.

The two men are busy but say they aren't losing sight of their goal.

"We expect to showcase our abilities one project at a time and build our reputation one project at a time," Hollis says.

Chism adds: "We want our projects to speak to our success. ... From a personal standpoint, we intend to continue to be involved in real estate projects with unique characteristics that we will be proud of."