

Chamber Member Spotlight: Breedon Construction | Brian Revere | President

From building some of the latest multi-family homes in Scott's Addition, such as The Ella and The Scout, to developing more affordable housing options and even renovating a site at the gate of the Diamond District, Breedon Construction has certainly been busy elevating our region. While Breedon Construction's parent company, The Breedon Company, has been around for over 60 years, Breedon Construction was formed in 2001, and Brian Revere has been operating the construction side of the company for the past 20 years. We sat down with Brian Revere, President of Breedon Construction, to learn more about his role in the community and the latest development happening here in Richmond.

Brian says Breedon Construction's biggest focus is on multi-family construction. However, that hasn't stopped the company from embarking on other innovative projects. "We have done commercial shopping centers, and one of the projects I am most proud of is our completion of iFly Virginia Beach, an indoor skydiving facility. If we can take on that challenge, we know we can do a lot of things."

When Brian first started at Breedon 19 years ago, there were only six people on the construction side. Today, there are 110 employees. "We were only building for our own projects, and at the time, we were only building partial projects using third-party general contractors to help. So, step one was to get to the point where we could build all our own projects in-house, without relying on a third-party contractor. What 2008 to 2010 taught me was that I was fortunate to be with a strong company. The strong companies can grow through the down times, and I wanted to be able to control our own destiny with the construction company. While it's great that I am supplied projects to build by our deals, I want to be guaranteed to have work even if we aren't securing deals. In order to make our company stronger, I had to help assure employees that we don't have gaps and can build on our own," says Brian.

When asked about what differentiates Breedon Construction from the rest, Brian mentioned "Because we still build from where our roots are based—building for internal demands—we are a long-term holder as a development company and an investor in our real estate. We are not merchant builders. We do not flip deals. In fact, we have never sold a project we built from the ground up. In doing that, we tend to look at the long-term maintenance quality standards. Because we have a development background, our development team and our building team cross over and work with each other a lot. We tend to look at a project as if it's our own and if it will be a long-term hold. So, we try to look out for clients in that way. Additionally, because we are used to working on projects in the very early stages, we can get involved with clients before they ever have full plans. We prefer to get involved with clients at the inception stage to help work with their design teams and help manage expectations throughout the whole process."

A significant portion of our chat was focused on one of the most pressing issues facing our development community: affordable housing. About 40-50% of Breeden Construction's third-party builds are affordable housing developments. Brian stated, "There is an absolute deficit of affordable housing in the Richmond market, so we've focused heavily into that sub-market within multi-family housing. We see good long-term growth opportunities there, and we try to take the bigger multi-family product and drill down into it and specialize in all the markets, including renovations and affordable housing. Some people are a bit reluctant to dive into these specialized markets because there are a lot of requirements associated with this type of work." While Brian admitted it is not easy work, he says their team is not afraid of doing things that are difficult and challenging. "As a result, it has created a lot of excellent opportunities for us that other people might not go after," says Brian.

Breeden Construction has been ahead of the game developing the area surrounding The Diamond District, and Brian shared they are excited about their upcoming project at the former Cobb Lumber site located at the entrance of Hermitage Road. This project will act as the front door to the Diamond District and include 142 apartments with 25,000 square feet of office space. Breeden Construction also plans to relocate its Richmond headquarters to this location which means more time hanging out in Scott's Addition after work.

Being one of our newest ChamberRVA members, Brian shared they are looking forward to exploring all of our upcoming programming, especially the leadership and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Brian says, "A large part of the affordable housing component is providing opportunities for minority contractors and subcontractors to perform the work. We are really hoping that through our membership with ChamberRVA, we can get connected with an even larger pool of potential partners." Brian describes the Richmond region as a "fun, high-energy market with great dining and adult beverage opportunities." He also appreciates Richmond for its geographic location and convenient access to the mountains and the bay. He left us with these final words of wisdom. "Don't be afraid to talk to people these days. Pick the phone up and call somebody. More true business deals get done that way compared to over a text or over an email."