



First Creek Phase 3 officially opens

Knoxville’s Community Development Corporation (KCDC) officially opened Sept. 30 the third phase of First Creek at Austin, the final residential component of the redeveloped site and the city’s first mixed-income, affordable housing community.

First Creek at Austin Phase 3 adds 161 new housing units, including 50 supportive housing units for low-income seniors, age 62 and older. The family units are located in large buildings and townhomes with one- to four-bedroom options.

Business and community leaders, stakeholders and residents attended the ceremony to mark the final phase of modern residential housing and complete transformation of the former Austin Homes site, which opened in 1941 on nearly 23 acres east of downtown.

“The opening of the final residential phase of First Creek at Austin represents a promise fulfilled to create a diverse neighborhood providing a sense of community and connecting residents to employment, entertainment and retail opportunities in downtown and East Knoxville,” Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said. “The supportive housing for low-income seniors also addresses a need and offers a vulnerable group that same sense of community.”

The City of Knoxville invested a total of \$14.1 million in sitewide infrastructure support, including utilities, sidewalks and new roads for the neighborhood.



CONTENTS

03

FIRST CREEK AT AUSTIN PHASE 2 EARNS READERS’ CHOICE AWARD

KCDC’S LIBERTY PLACE AND PATHWAYS PROGRAM EARN NATIONAL AWARDS

04

AMERICORPS

05

KCDC IN THE COMMUNITY

NORTHGATE’S FALL BLOCK PARTY ENTERTAINS RESIDENTS

06

HALLOWEEN FUN

PARK(ING) DAY PORCHES OFFERED TO SCHOOLS

07

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THANKSGIVING AT LIBERTY

08

HEALTH & WELLNESS - COPD

NEW HIRES

09

THANK YOU, VETERANS!

KCDC EMPLOYEE RECOGNIZED FOR HARD WORK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

“From the first ribbon cutting in 2022 to officially open the first phase of a new housing community to the final one today in 2025, it’s been a privilege to see this neighborhood take shape and deliver exactly what was promised for the residents,” Indya Kincannon, Knoxville mayor, said. “The City of Knoxville has made affordable housing a priority, and First Creek at Austin took that even further with access to parks, transportation, employment and amenities to create a true sense of community. The supportive housing also is so beneficial and will help keep senior citizens engaged within a neighborhood.”

Senior residents of supportive housing will have access to supportive care such as housekeeping, meals, health-related services and transportation. Amenities and services include:

- Slip-resistant flooring materials, adequate lighting in all units and common areas, elevator access, grab bars in bathrooms and handrails in common areas.
- Multi-purpose community room for elderly residents.
- Fitness room programmed for both elderly and non-elderly residents to promote interaction.
- Access to gardens.
- Telehealth room equipped for virtual health meetings.
- Broadband connectivity.

Architecture for Phase 3 was provided by Southeast Venture and Johnson Architecture; Jenkins & Stiles was the general contractor; Partners Development is owner representative; Regions Bank is equity partner; and the lender is Chase Community Development Banking.

The 50 units of supportive housing for seniors became possible with a \$7.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to a Knoxville nonprofit, the only program grantee in Tennessee in 2021. Southeastern Housing Foundation II, a subsidiary of the nonprofit Knoxville Leadership Foundation, received the grant, and KCDC serves as the developing partner and property manager.

HUD’s Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program grants are awarded through a competitive application process. The grants provide both construction funding and rental assistance to low-income seniors ages 62 and older.

Also in 2021, the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) awarded Southeastern Housing Foundation a \$900,000 grant to help build the family housing units for Phase 3. Southeastern Housing Foundation is a partnership between KCDC and Knoxville Leadership Foundation.

The state grant is made possible through THDA’s National Housing Trust Fund and must be used for affordable rental housing and address the needs of low-income households. The grant supplemented tax credits and debt and focused specifically on developing a portion of units designated for extremely low-income residents.

Phase 3 amenities include a fitness center, community garden, community room, playground and Wi-Fi in common areas. Additional plans for the site include a neighborhood park and greenway connectivity.

Phase 1 opened in 2022 with 105 total units – 57 in one multifamily building and 48 spread across eight smaller townhome-style buildings. The diverse housing styles allow residents to choose from various floorplans and amenities to suit their needs.



Phase 2, which opened in 2024, provided 180 one- to three-bedroom units across five buildings with a fitness center, laundry room, outdoor green space and indoor community spaces.

The development has earned several awards, including:

- Phase 1: Keep Knoxville Beautiful Orchids Award for New Architecture, 2023
- Tennessee Housing Development Agency Tennessee’s Best Award for Neighborhood Stabilization, 2024
- Phase 1: National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) Award of Merit, 2024
- Phase 1: Urban Land Institute (ULI) Nashville Excellence in Development Award, 2025
- Phase 1: Urban Land Institute (ULI) Nashville Rose Faeges-Easton Community Impact Award, 2025
- Phase 2: Affordable Housing Finance Readers’ Choice Award, Best Public Housing Redevelopment Project, 2025

The overall First Creek at Austin redevelopment followed months of dialogue with residents, stakeholders and community members in interviews and public meetings and included options for overall site use, street layouts, residential building types and open spaces.

At the point of redevelopment, former Austin Homes residents living at the site received relocation choices to other KCDC properties, including the revitalized Five Points community and the renovated The Vista at Summit Hill, which are both located nearby and in the same school district. The former residents also had the right to return to the site with the opening of First Creek at Austin, if they chose to do so.

VIDEO: Click [here](#) to see a video of the event.



First Creek at Austin Phase 2 earns readers' choice award

Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) has earned an [Affordable Housing Finance Readers' Choice Award](#) in 2025 for First Creek at Austin Phase 2 in the category of Best Public Housing Redevelopment. The award was presented Nov. 17 at the AHF Live conference in Chicago.

Affordable Housing Finance covers the affordable housing industry online and in print and is read by developers, community development bankers, financiers and housing officials from all levels of government.

Criteria for the Readers' Choice Award included impact on the community; overall community revitalization or social change; use of cost-effective or innovative design and/or construction, including energy efficiency and sustainable development; efficiency in capital costs and/or maintenance/operating costs; provision of social services for residents; and broad community support, including state and local government financial assistance.

"While KCDC always appreciates recognition for our housing communities, receiving the Affordable Housing Finance Readers' Choice Award represents affirmation from our peers," Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said. "First Creek at Austin checked every box and is the result of multiple partners who all understood the vision and were committed to

providing affordable housing that changes lives."

Knoxville's first mixed-income community, First Creek at Austin provides subsidized, workforce and market-rate housing in one neighborhood, connects residents to education, jobs and other resources and transformed an isolated location into a community with access to downtown and walking and transit connectivity.

First Creek at Austin Phase 2 construction funds came primarily through \$19.6 million of low-income housing tax credits from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA), which allowed KCDC to raise tax credit equity to fund development.

Architecture for Phase 2 was provided by Johnson Architecture and Southeast Venture; Partners Development is owner representative; and Pinnacle Financial Partners is equity partner and mortgage lender. Phase 2 opened in 2024 with 180 one- to three-bedroom units.

Phase 1 opened in 2022 with 57 units in one multifamily building and 48 units spread across eight smaller townhome-style buildings.

Phase 3 opens this year and provides 161 new housing units, including 50 supportive housing units for low-income seniors, age 62 and older. The family units are located in large buildings and townhomes and include one- to four-bedroom options.

KCDC's Liberty Place and Pathways Program earn national awards

Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) has earned two prestigious awards from a national housing and community development organization for Liberty Place, a housing community for veterans at risk of homelessness, and the Pathways Program, which breaks down barriers to higher education and careers for youth.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) selected KCDC for a Community Innovation Awards in the categories of affordable housing for Liberty Place and in the resident and client services category for the Pathways Program.

"Both of these awards reflect a commitment to not just providing housing options for residents, but also addressing needs in the community through collaborative partnerships," Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said. "Liberty Place meets an identified need to get veterans into a stable and safe environment with supportive services. The Pathways Program has helped young people learn about options during



and after high school, including college and financial opportunities, trade school and workforce development and service to the community or the military."

Liberty Place, located at 3627 Division St., in West Knoxville, is KCDC's first housing site specifically for veterans and provides 32 one-bedroom units for veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The fully furnished units, which include 16 fully accessible ADA units, provide utilities and conveniences such as walk-in showers and on-site maintenance, along with an on-site Veterans Affairs office.

Pathways was a pilot program open to KCDC and Section 8 housing residents ages 16-24, launched with support from an

Opportunity Youth Engagement Grant from the City of Knoxville's Office of Community Safety to empower and inspire youth. KCDC partnered with the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, where the program now resides, to continue the program past the pilot phase.

KCDC received the awards Sept. 27 during a presentation ceremony at NAHRO's 2025 National Conference and Exhibition in Phoenix, Ariz.

AmeriCorps

Three new AmeriCorps members have now joined the KCDC team. Please welcome Hannah Sutt, Jodie Johnson and Camden Johnson!



Hannah Sutt
AmeriCorps

My name is Hannah Sutt, and I am happy to announce that I am the food access coordinator AmeriCorps for KCDC. I started in late August, and my term will continue until July 2026. The University of Tennessee brought me to Knoxville, where I studied plant sciences with a minor in landscape design. During my bachelor's degree, I focused on blending southeastern native plants and food crops into my designs. That was not my goal going into college but through exploring different classes I found out that I love plants, design and solving complex problems.

I was drawn to this position because I found myself working in retail and I felt like I wasn't helping people or serving my community like I wished that I was. So far, I have become active in the food policy council (FPC) and am on the bylaws review team. I get to talk to KCDC residents, food partners and the FPC distribution working group to identify the gaps and barriers of food distribution at KCDC sites and beyond.

I have already learned so much, and I am so excited to learn and grow as a young professional during my term!



Jodie Johnson
AmeriCorps

I'm Jodie Johnson, and I'm excited to be in the role of partnerships coordinator for my AmeriCorps term from August 2025 to July 2026. In this role, I will be organizing community resource fairs for communities, running monthly Bingo at our elder properties, and working as a direct contact and liaison for partners when needed to make sure that gaps in resources are being filled by partners passionate about serving our community. I am completing my bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies at East Tennessee State University during this term, and hope to go on to become a teacher in Knox County.

I am passionate about our local food system, outdoor education, and community art making! Settling into this role has been fulfilling already, and I have particularly enjoyed going to food distributions at communities and meeting the lovely residents.

I look forward to how this year will challenge me and help me grow as a person, educator, and community member!



Camden Johnson
AmeriCorps

My name is Camden Johnson, and I am excited to complete my first AmeriCorps term with KCDC. I will be working as the environmental and outdoor stewardship coordinator from November 2025 to October 2026, where I will be developing outdoor recreation and educational opportunities, maintaining community gardens and promoting environmental stewardship. In addition, I will work closely with my fellow AmeriCorps team members to promote general food access and work to better serve KCDC residents.

I am a Tennessee native having grown up in the small town of Friendsville, where I developed a passion for our local flora and fauna. I graduated May 2025 with my Bachelor of Science in biology and minors in environmental science and sustainability studies from Maryville College. During my education I gained a real respect for our natural world and realized how we as humans need to become better stewards of the environment. My personal research focused on assessing wildflower populations in the Maryville College Woods as an effort to gather baseline data that future conservation efforts can build upon.

During the post-graduation job search, AmeriCorps really stood out to me as an opportunity to effectuate real change and make a positive difference in people's lives. The purpose of AmeriCorps is to address the needs of the community and partner with local organizations doing just that. I hope to address a variety of environmental and social needs in addition to learning about urban planning and developing interpersonal skills with KCDC. In my short time on the job, I have already participated in multiple food distributions where we get to meet and talk with residents, which I enjoyed. My position in particular also works closely with Beardsley Community Farm to support the various community gardens located at a number of KCDC communities. Current work with Beardsley has consisted of cleaning the spaces and preparing garden plots for winter.

I look forward to everything I am going to learn and accomplish this year with KCDC. My team and I are passionate about our roles and excited to help the community in the months to come!

KCDC in the community

Got a photo of you or a coworker representing KCDC in the community? Email the information to jnash@kcdc.org.



Faith & Blue Neighborhood Resource Fair



LAET 60th Anniversary Celebration



KAUL Equal Opportunity Awards Gala



Childhelp Public Speaking Opportunity

Northgate's Fall Block Party entertains residents

By Grae Potter

On Oct. 14, we held our seventh annual Fall Block Party at Northgate Terrace. This is one of three main fundraisers for the year to support the operating costs of The Manor at Northgate Terrace. Many residents can't afford the full amount of their Manor fee and these events supplement that shortfall. This year's theme was "Life is a Circus" and I believe it was one of our better block parties just based off the number of residents who stopped by to share what a great experience they had this year.

None of this would have been possible without our sponsors, vendors and volunteers. We're close to finalizing the event and it appears we'll have raised close to \$3,600. Pinnacle Financial was our "Ring Leader Sponsor" for this year along with Senior Financial Services, Senior Solutions (BBQ Doctor) and Senior Citizens Home Assistance Service. We had 13 vendors present to share their services with the residents along with our Manor Advisory Committee and volunteers who were boots on the ground helping the event flow seamlessly.

It's such an honor to host an event which brings joy, excitement, games, food and information together in one place. So, whether it's getting your face painted, listening to a live band, watching baton twirlers or reading the information provided by vendors, it all culminates in an increase of the residents' sense of community. It's an amazing experience to step back for a moment and see individuals form new social connections and participate in these events together. If any gathering increases the quality of life for residents and provides them with the opportunity to experience a life well lived, then it's a resounding success.



Halloween fun

KCDC staff shows off costumes

Love Towers & Northgate parties



Park(ing) Day porches offered to schools

Thanks to a recent donation to two Knox County schools, the stage porches we built for Park(ing) Day have found new purpose.

The porches were used in September to complement the “Welcome to Our Backyard” theme, which ultimately helped us win the People’s Choice Award.

“However, afterwards we were left with these two awesome and easy-to-assemble porches,” Jenna Bailey, KCDC partnerships manager, said. “Marisa (Moazen, KCDC chief strategy officer) had the genius idea to see if any schools wanted them for their theater departments!”

After Marisa coordinated with Knox County Schools Music & Performing Arts Specialist Angie Messer, we identified the porches could be put to good use at Powell Middle and Central High schools. The porches were donated – or permanently loaned – Oct. 30.

“Both teachers were so thankful for the porches, and even more

excited to tell us about the productions they will be used in,” Jenna said. “None of the schools I attended growing up had theater departments, so the performing arts have always felt really out of my comfort zone because of that.”

Ethan Hogan, Powell Middle choir director, believes community donations help put less of a burden on the school to find needed resources for student activities.

“It gets community involvement in our programs; it improves the performances,” Ethan said. “Without these things our shows would be less. It shows real support for the arts, it shows real support for the local schools, and it shows a willingness to help out.”

The porch will first be used in the winter play, “Something Rotten! JR.,” at Powell High School, and could be repurposed several times thereafter, Ethan said.

Central High film and theater teacher Robert Heckerl sees the porch used in both his beginning and advanced theater classes.

“It’s great because it’ll allow us to do some set-based activities with my beginning theater class, usually they’re just coming out into empty space,” Robert said. “This will allow them to kind of plan what could we do on this space. It’ll inspire new skits, new things that they can do. For my advanced theater, we actually already have plans to use it in our spring play and maybe even our winter play.”

Central High’s winter play is “Dorothy Meets Alice,” and the spring play will be a student-led satire on Shakespeare’s “Hamilton” called “Hey, Milton,” Robert said.

Like Ethan, Robert sees the porch being used in other departments if needed.

“I hope by having these great theater departments and these great teachers who encourage them, the students will find confidence and self-expression,” Jenna said. “Plus, I’m really excited to return to the schools in December and February to watch the shows they put on with these porches in the background!”



Accomplishments

Got a work accomplishment you want to celebrate that includes you or a coworker? Email the information to jnash@kcdc.org.

Two earn CPA licenses



By Nancy White

KCDC is proud to recognize finance staff members, David McAndrews and Rachel Chisholm, who have recently passed the CPA exam and officially earned their Certified Public Accountant licenses. This achievement reflects their exceptional dedication, professionalism and commitment to advancing their expertise in the accounting field. Please join us in congratulating them on reaching this significant career milestone. Their hard work strengthens our team and reinforces our ongoing commitment to excellence.

Thanksgiving at Liberty



By Jenna Bailey

On Nov. 14, the Knoxville branch of the Women’s Council of Realtors (WCR), led by First Vice President Megan Collins, visited Liberty Place to provide a Thanksgiving lunch for all of the community’s residents. Their wonderful team, made up of Realtors and strategic partners, provided a huge meal with all the trimmings, as well as several desserts, including a fan favorite: blueberry pie! Their crew handled it all – set up, serving and cleanup – and did so with such an open-hearted joy as they connected with and served residents. They had so much extra food, they even walked residents back to their units with an additional plate of leftovers!

Volunteers, staff and residents shared stories of their most special holiday memories and traditions while hopefully making a new special holiday memory together. We are so grateful for the WCR’s commitment to Liberty Place and the residents who live there.

Health & Wellness

November is COPD Awareness Month. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – or COPD – is a condition that causes airflow obstruction and breathing difficulties. COPD refers to two main conditions – emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Most people have a mixture of the two, and the severity differs per person. According to the Mayo Clinic, COPD is most often caused by long-term exposure to smoke, fumes, dust or chemicals. The most common cause is cigarette smoke.

Symptoms may include

- Trouble catching your breath, especially during physical activities.
- Wheezing or whistling sounds when breathing.
- Ongoing cough that may bring up a lot of mucus. The mucus may be clear, white, yellow or greenish.
- Chest tightness or heaviness.
- Lack of energy or feeling very tired.
- Frequent lung infections.
- Losing weight without meaning to. This may happen as the condition worsens.
- Swelling in ankles, feet or legs.

Those affected by COPD are likely to have moments when symptoms become worse than the usual day-to-day variation. This worsening is called an exacerbation, which can last several days to weeks and be triggered by smells, cold air, air pollution, colds or infections.

Speak with your doctor or other health care professional if your symptoms don't get better with treatment or if symptoms worsen. Be sure to also speak with your health care professional if you notice symptoms of an infection, such as a fever or change in the mucus you cough up.

For more information about COPD, visit [here](#).

COPD Prevalence

1. **West Virginia** - 12.6%
2. **Kentucky** - 11.7%
3. **Tennessee** - 10.2%
4. **Arkansas** - 9.6%
5. **Alabama** - 9%
6. **Louisiana** - 8.7%
7. **Maine** - 8.6%
8. **Michigan** - 8.6%
9. **Missouri** - 8.5%
10. **Indiana** - 8.4%

**Numbers taken from the American Lung Association*

New Hires

The following were recently hired through Oct. 31 at Knoxville's Community Development Corporation:



Lisa Meade
Hired: 9/8/25
Title: Accountant II
Place: Main Office



Zac Sides
Hired: 9/29/25
Title: HVAC / Maintenance Tech. III
Place: First Creek at Austin



Denise Williams
Hired: 10/21/25
Title: Maintenance Tech. II
Place: Lonsdale Homes



Olivia Wilson
Hired: 9/10/25
Title: Occupancy Specialist
Place: Section 8



Leah McBee
Hired: 10/6/25
Title: Admin. Support Specialist
Place: Main Office



Adaisha Russell
Hired: 10/21/25
Title: Leasing & Occupancy Specialist
Place: Small Property Group Management Office



Jenna Bailey
Hired: 9/15/25
Title: Project Manager
Place: Main Office



Violet Williams-Anderson
Hired: 10/13/25
Title: Audit & Compliance Specialist
Place: Main Office



Ginger Wildman
Hired: 10/22/25
Title: HR Generalist
Place: Main Office



Jami Wilson
Hired: 9/22/25
Title: Service Coordinator & Activities Specialist
Place: First Creek at Austin



Trea Wright
Hired: 10/20/25
Title: Maintenance Tech. I
Place: Western Heights



Mary Morrow
Hired: 10/27/25
Title: Property Manager
Place: Lonsdale Homes



Evan Rabbitt
Hired: 9/29/25
Title: Maintenance Tech. II
Place: Montgomery Village



Buck Kackert
Hired: 10/20/25
Title: Maintenance Tech. II
Place: Montgomery Village



Trystan Hurst
Hired: 10/27/25
Title: Office Assistant
Place: Section 8

Thank you, veterans!

A heartfelt thank you to all who serve and have served our great country! On Nov. 10, we proudly attended the 41st Annual Veterans Appreciation and Awards Luncheon, hosted by the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council at the Airport Hilton Hotel. In addition to KCDC staff who served, we brought six Liberty Place residents – one not included in the photo – with us and had a blast!



KCDC employee recognized for hard work

Congrats to Beverly Silvano, KCDC occupancy specialist, for being recognized as the B97.5 Employee of the Month with Mountain View Family Dentistry for October! Beverly was nominated by Chrishanda Riffey, KCDC occupancy specialist.

“It means everything to me,” Beverly said. “... I just love all my coworkers. We’ve got a good group; we’ve got a very good group.”

Beverly has spent more than 30 years helping residents and landlords navigate through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.

“Beverly’s been here for quite some time,” Kimberly Trame, KCDC director of rental assistance, said. “She does a great job.”

Announcements

Got an announcement you’d like to put in The Bulletin? Email the information to jnash@kcdc.org. The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.

- **Holiday luncheon**

- KCDC’s holiday luncheon is set for noon-1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 10, at Supportive Maintenance. The luncheon will include a dessert contest. Interested in participating in the contest? Email human resources at kwilson@kcdc.org.

Newsletter Dates

- January-February
- March-April
- May-June
- July-August
- September-October
- November-December

Newsletter Ideas

Got something you think could be in The Bulletin? Email the information to jnash@kcdc.org. The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.