IAAQLI

New Townhomes Bring a Community Vision to Life

NextGen Writer: Kevin Vazquez

The ribbon cutting at Ralston Place celebrated more than seven new townhomes. It marked a community's vision becoming reality: beautiful, affordable homes where families can establish roots and help shape Martindale-Brightwood's future.

Located near 21st Street and Ralston Avenue, the development reflects the Martindale Brightwood Community Development Corporation's commitment to expanding homeownership while helping longtime residents remain in the neighborhood they love. "I've lived in this neighborhood for about 12 years, and it's great that we can put some affordable housing that looks this good in this neighborhood to try and keep our residents here," said board president Lashanda Lang.

The Indianapolis African American Quality of Life Initiative played a pivotal role, providing funding that helped move the development from aspiration to construction. "They are our prime reason we got this development up and running," said DeAnna Woodruff, the CDC's CEO and executive director. "I mean, a huge part of it."

Tony Mason, Indianapolis Urban League president and CEO and IAAQLI co-director, said the project demonstrates what becomes possible when community organizations receive resources to carry out their visions.

"This is what can happen when we work together and when we have the dollars necessary to address the needs in our community," Mason said. The celebration also recognized Congressman André Carson, Mayor Joe Hogsett, Old National Bank and other partners whose support helped make the homes possible.

For Woodruff, the townhomes' appearance carries an important message: affordability can come with quality, beauty and pride. The development includes two-story and three-story homes, offering prospective buyers an opportunity to own an attractive home within the community.

"We're changing the face of affordable housing," she said. For future owners, the significance reaches beyond the front door. A safe, welcoming home can provide stability for children, greater independence for parents and a stronger connection to neighborhood life.

Mason understands that impact personally. Growing up in substandard housing, he experienced how moving into a better home could change a family's outlook.

"I want the same thing for a family and young people in this neighborhood and all across our city," he said.

The CDC pairs housing development with homeownership education, workforce development, small-business support and home repairs. Additional homes are envisioned across the street, extending the promise celebrated at the ribbon cutting.

"We want to keep those residents here," Lang said. "They are assets of this neighborhood."

For Martindale-Brightwood, those words express the investment's purpose: helping neighbors thrive at home.

