

# Louisville receives All-America City Award

Congratulations, Louisville for being named an All-America City by the National Civic League and the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading!

July 21st was truly a banner day for Louisville. In addition to the grand opening celebration of Beecher Terrace Phase III (see Welcome Home: LMHA, Partners host Beecher Terrace Phase III Grand Opening), the city received word that it was selected as one of ten winners of the 2022 All-America City Award (AAC). Choice Neighborhoods People Lead Urban Strategies Inc. (USI) worked with Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville Metro Government, and Louisville Metro Housing Authority staff to put together a winning application highlighting their efforts to enhance early school success and equitable learning for children whose families are served by the nation’s affordable housing providers.

USI Education Specialist Beth Dunn, who led the application process, stated “It is truly an honor for Louisville to be named as an All-America City, as only ten cities receive the award each year. For me, the real reward is collaborating with our partners (especially those at Metro Government, LMHA, and JCPS) to better the lives of Russell neighborhood and Beecher Terrace residents, young and old.”



Press Conference at Beecher Terrace Announcing the All-America City Award

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## Russell Choice Neighborhood Initiative Newsletter

### Welcome home: LMHA, partners host Beecher Terrace Phase III grand opening

Beecher Terrace has a new look, but the “heart” of the community remains the same.



HUD, LMG, LMHA, and MBS Officials Cutting the Ribbon at Beecher Terrace Phase III.

plementation grant awarded to Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA) in 2016. The transformation of Beecher Terrace is a component of the Vision Russell Transformation Plan, a collaborative process between Russell residents, community stakeholders, LMHA and Louisville Metro Government to transform Russell into a neighborhood of opportunity and choice.

During the planning and implementation processes, Vision Russell team members hosted meetings with Beecher Terrace and Russell residents to gather input on their housing needs. “We listened to those needs and are thrilled to welcome

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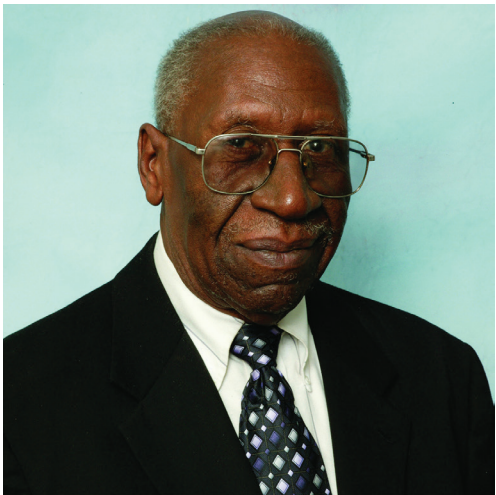
National, state and city officials shared that message on July 21 during the grand opening of Phase III of the Beecher Terrace redevelopment. Leaders including Governor Andy Beshear, Mayor Greg Fischer, Senator Gerald Neal and Jose’ Alvarez, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban’s (HUD) Regional Administrator for the Southeast, called Beecher Terrace residents the “heart” of the neighborhood and applauded residents for their feedback during the redevelopment process.

Phase III offers 185 multi-family units with indoor and outdoor community spaces, as well as on-site management offices and a fitness center. The redevelopment cost about \$49 million to construct and is part of the HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Im-



LMHA Board Chairman Emeritus Manfred Reid, Incoming LMHA Board Chair Gena Harris, and Mayor Greg Fischer at the Beecher Terrace Phase III Grand Opening.

# Passing the gavel: Manfred Reid, Sr. steps down as LMHA Chairman



LMHA Board "Chairman Emeritus" Manfred Reid Sr.

Last May, Manfred Reid Sr. was preparing for a press conference at Baxter Square Park about the Russell public Wi-Fi program when a resident tapped him on the shoulder. "I noticed you from across the street," the young man told Reid. "You know I have to say something to you whenever I see you. I respect you so much!"

As a public housing and civil rights leader in the Russell community and outgoing Chairman for the Louisville Metro Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, friends and strangers often approach Reid in this gracious manner. Reid, however, did not earn this upright reputation overnight.

In 1968, officials wrongly prosecuted Reid and five other Black Louisvillians on conspiracy charges connected to a string of violence in the Parkland neighborhood. While a judge acquitted the group known as the "Black Six" in 1970, Reid faced a long road ahead of repairing his name and career.

Reid moved into Beecher Terrace in 1988 and joined LMHA's Board of Commissioners in 1999 as a public housing representative. Reid's peers

promoted him to Chairman in 2000, earning the responsibility of supervising and controlling the affairs of the Board of Commissioners. During his tenure, Reid provided input into the revitalization of nearly all of Louisville's publicly owned housing developments.

After successfully restoring his reputation and serving on LMHA's Board for 22 years, Reid is now ready to turn in his gavel.

Reid announced his resignation as Chairman in early 2022 and officially passed his gavel to new Chairperson Gena Harris during LMHA's July 2022 annual board meeting.

## Changes at LMHA



Incoming LMHA Board Chair Gena Harris.

is the founder and CEO of By Faith Consulting Services, LLC. Harris is also the Pastor of the Mt. Sinai AOH Church of God and recently retired from Louisville Metro Government as the Director of the Office of Resilience and Community Services. "When Mr. Reid passed me the gavel after 22 years of being Chairman, I felt honored to be found worthy to serve our community in this way," Harris said.

Harris's appointment as Chairperson is not the only change on LMHA's Board of Commissioners. As Reid steps away

from the group, the Mayor appointed Leah Peale to represent LMHA residents on the Board of Commissioners. Considered an inspiration by her family and peers, Peale lived in Beecher Terrace for four years before purchasing a home in Russell in 2018 through LMHA's Homeownership program. She graduated from LMHA's Family Self-Sufficiency program and is also an LMHA scholarship recipient. "Ms. Peale embodies LMHA's mission to create opportunities for residents to achieve self-sufficiency and an enhanced quality of life," LMHA Executive Director Lisa Osanka said. "Ms. Peale's passion for service and uplifting her community makes her a wonderful addition to LMHA's Board of Commissioners."



LMHA's Newest Board Member, Leah Peale.

## The future of LMHA

Harris has not been in the Chairperson role for long, but her vision for LMHA is clear. "My goal is to support LMHA by providing continued board oversight that influences policies critical to meeting the housing needs of this great community," Harris remarked.

Reid continues to advise LMHA's Board of Commissioners as "Chairman Emeritus."

"I may not be able to fill Mr. Reid's shoes," Harris noted, "but I will walk in my shoes to continue the legacy of those before me, one project at a time. My heart desires to see more families stabilized through having safe and affordable housing options, so they too can dream big!"

# Free Wi-Fi service is now available in Russell



Thanks to Louisville Metro Government's (LMG) Smart City initiative, Russell now has access to free Wi-Fi service.

Neighborhood residents and visitors can use Wi-Fi on their phones, tablets, and other devices outside their homes thanks to funding from LMG and HUD's Choice Neighborhoods grant program.

Russell's Smart City initiative, which was led by LMG's Office of Civic Innovation and Technology, is the first in Louisville and was designed to expand Internet access in communities where many households have limited access to high-speed broadband services.

A network of 24 wireless access points has been strategically located throughout the neighborhood near shops, parks, and other high traffic areas in Russell, including Baxter Square Park and Beecher Terrace. The service is also designed to help connect citizens with job opportunities and other timely news.

To use this free service, look for "Louisville\_Metro\_WiFi\_Guest" in the list of available networks on your Wi-Fi enabled device while in the Russell neighborhood.

Please contact LMG at (502) 574-4444 if you have any questions or to let them know how you like the service.

# \$6 Million in American Rescue Plan funding awarded towards Beecher Terrace recreational amenities



Rendering of Planned Improvements for the Baxter Community Center.

the creation of a new 5.7-acre park at the corner of S. 13th Street and W. Muhammad Ali Blvd.

The American Rescue Plan is a federal stimulus program to speed up the country's recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing funding to respond to the negative economic and public health impacts of the pandemic. Initiatives such as the new planned park and rehab of the Baxter Community Center support Louisville Metro Government's goal of creating healthier living environments in communities most critically impacted by the virus.

Construction on the Baxter Community Center is expected to begin in the Fall of 2022, with an estimated completion date in early 2024. Construction on the new park is anticipated to begin in Spring 2023 and be completed by Fall 2023. For more information about Beecher Terrace's recreational amenities, please visit [www.VisionRussell.org](http://www.VisionRussell.org).

# Welcome home:

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residents to their new homes with enhanced amenities," LMHA Chairperson Gena Harris said during the grand opening.

Mayor Fischer also credited Beecher Terrace residents for sharing their vision with city officials and developers. "This project was the critical founding piece to the \$1.4 billion we've invested for the regeneration of west Louisville. Without the new Beecher and the people involved in making it happen, the renaissance that we are experiencing in much of west Louisville may have never happened," Fischer added.

McCormack Baron Salazar provides property management services for the Beecher Terrace development through its subsidiary, McCormack Baron Management. Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI) coordinates supportive services and case management for Beecher Terrace families. According to USI's president, Ester Shin, there is an enhancement in the quality of life for Beecher Terrace residents. 99% of eligible residents have health insurance and 63% of work-able residents are employed.

Beecher Terrace residents Manfred Reid, Sr. and Deneen Christian compared the "old" Beecher Terrace to the "new" development during the event. "We see a future for our people. Residents see hope," Reid said. "I see more people and organizations like USI who are trying to reach, teach, and offer more training services to residents," Christian added. "I thank God that I was blessed to come back here."

Construction on the fourth and final phase of Beecher Terrace's redevelopment, expected to begin in early 2023, includes 210 apartments. When complete, the estimated \$104 million revitalized community will have 620 mixed-income rental units.