



Joplin Bungalows Legacy: A Forever Home for Joplin's Most Vulnerable Citizens

This past April, the City of Joplin, in partnership with the Economic Security Corporation of SW Area's Joplin Bungalow LLC, Vecino Group, Sustainable Properties, Inc., HUD, the VA, Joplin Public Housing Authority and The Homeless Coalition of Jasper and Newton Counties built 20 affordable homes, which were available to Joplin citizens. These homes are located at 2601 S. McCoy Ave, in a Joplin neighborhood blighted since the 2011 tornado.

Joplin needed affordable permanent supportive housing for our most vulnerable populations, seniors and homeless veterans, after affordable housing for thousands was lost to Joplin's F5 tornado in 2011. There was an effort to rebuild in Joplin's most blighted area left from the tornado devastation, directly across from Mercy Park (previously Mercy Hospital). In partnership, this project assisted with the City of Joplin's 2017 Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, we provided nine additional homes.

What makes the Joplin Bungalows so very special? Outdoor socialization is encouraged by including front porches with Adirondack Chairs. For safety, we have included a community center that serves a dual purpose as a storm shelter for the residents. This development is pet-friendly and includes a dog park provided by Ozark Center. Next is location, location, location. The homes are only a half-mile from Area Agency on Aging's Senior Center (which includes meals) and Freeman Hospital. Across the street is a Walmart Neighborhood Grocery Store and two of the Joplin's finest parks, Mercy and Cunningham Park. Aldi's market is located on site, the Elks Lodge and Joplin Trolley stop is about two blocks away, and a Veterinarian service is located across the street. We are part of a neighborhood!



There was a rush to get these units ready, but we had a few issues that slowed us down for a few months. The result was we opened during the COVID-19 outbreak on April 1, 2020. The first three tenants were housed on April 3rd with little fanfare. It was important to protect our tenants from COVID-19 exposure. We are very proud of the Joplin Bungalows and our property management company, Sustainable Properties, who within six months had all 20 homes occupied with tenants — even during a pandemic.

We currently have 17 veterans living in 20 of the homes. Missouri Senator Bill White, Representatives Lane Roberts and Bob Bromley's offices were instrumental in helping the Joplin Bungalows acquire 20 US flags that our veterans can hang on their front porches each day. We are thankful for their service to our country. It was important to provide our homeless veterans with a home, especially during this difficult time.

Special thanks to our community members who made this dream a reality: St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church Overland Park, KS, South Joplin Christian Church, St. Paul's United Methodist Church Lamplighters, Southwest Missouri Bank, Horizon Bank, United Healthcare, John Vaughn, David and Joyce Hair, 100 Women Who Care, Ozark Center, Missouri Senator Bill White, Missouri State Representatives Bob Bromley and Robert Lane, Vecino Group, City of Joplin, Viriya Consulting and Missouri Community Services Block Grant.

