

Chinedum Ndukwe Calls for Community-First Redevelopment

Former NFL safety turned real estate developer urges inclusion, not displacement, in urban projects

Cincinnati, Ohio Aug 4, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [Chinedum Ndukwe](#), former NFL safety and founder of Kingsley + Co., is raising awareness about the urgent need for culturally inclusive and community-first development across America's urban neighborhoods. Drawing from both his time on the football field and in the real estate trenches, Ndukwe is calling on developers, city leaders, and residents to rethink how progress is defined.

"You can't just copy and paste a design from one place to another," Ndukwe said. "People notice. It doesn't feel like home."

Through his firm, Kingsley + Co., Ndukwe has worked on projects like the \$20 million mixed-use redevelopment in Columbus's Near East Side, with the goal of revitalizing without displacing. His approach prioritizes public input, local partnerships, and reflecting the unique culture of each neighborhood.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, nearly **11 million renter households** in the U.S. spend more than 50% of their income on rent. A 2021 report from the Urban Displacement Project found that **cultural erasure and community pushout** are common outcomes when redevelopment happens without inclusive planning.

"If you want to avoid displacement," Ndukwe added, "you have to include the community from day one."

The issue, he explains, isn't just physical—it's social. "I've seen projects look good on paper, but completely miss the mark because they ignored the people already living there."

Ndukwe's solution is simple but powerful: **build with the people, not for the people**. His method centers on "culturally inclusive design," which involves respecting neighborhood traditions, supporting local businesses, and creating spaces that invite connection—not alienation.

As a former athlete, Ndukwe draws parallels between real estate and football. "Every Sunday in the NFL was like running a startup," he said. "You had to show up, perform, and solve problems in real time."

Today, that mindset shapes his development strategy. He works closely with local stakeholders, partners with nonprofits, and even brings in artists and historians to inform design. Through **EB5 of Ohio**, he's also helping bring foreign investment into community-centered projects—like the Marriott Fairfield Inn near the University of Cincinnati.

But Ndukwe is clear that real change can't come from developers alone.

"This is something everyone can be part of," he said. "You don't need a degree in real estate to get involved. Go to community meetings. Ask questions. Support local businesses. Vote on zoning proposals. Speak up when something doesn't feel right."

[Chinedum Ndukwe](#) is encouraging citizens across the country to take action in their own communities:

- **Attend planning meetings** and speak with your city council members.

- **Support developers and businesses** that center local voices.
- **Stay informed** on how new projects may impact long-term residents.
- **Start conversations** about what community means to you.

“The neighborhoods we live in reflect the values we invest in,” Ndukwe said. “Let’s make sure we’re investing in dignity, identity, and inclusion.”

About Kingsley + Co.:

Kingsley + Co. is a minority-owned commercial real estate firm based in Cincinnati, Ohio. The company specializes in redevelopment, investment, and community-focused design.

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