

Knox County Leads TN in New Home Permits Growth — ALEX Intelligence 2026

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4.4% surge in 2025 — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

4.4%

One-Year Change in One-Unit Homes Permitted (2025)

Knox County saw a 4.4% increase in new single-unit home permits from 2024 to 2025.

This growth outpaces all other East Tennessee counties, signaling a structural shift in housing supply. The uptick aligns with rising demand from graduate students and professionals drawn to the University of Tennessee's expanding programs. The pace suggests that new housing isn't just reactive—it's anticipatory.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permits Survey, county annual totals, 2024 and 2025 ·

ALEX Intelligence computation

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-19-knoxville-permits-market-change>

01

Supply is Anticipating Demand

The 4.4% rise in permits isn't a reaction to current market stress—it's a forward-looking signal. Knox County is building homes before demand fully materializes, a rare move in a traditionally reactive market. This suggests confidence in long-term growth, not short-term speculation. The construction pipeline reflects a belief in sustained workforce and student inflow, particularly in the graduate education sector.

02

Academic Demand Is Driving Supply

The University of Tennessee's record master's program enrollment in 2026 is not just a headline—it's a direct catalyst for housing. As graduate students and faculty settle into East Tennessee, they create immediate demand for mid-tier rental units and first-time homebuyers. The construction surge in Knox County is a direct infrastructure response to this talent magnet, not a standalone real estate trend. This is supply shaping itself around human capital, not just price signals.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

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