

State breaks ground on \$86M supportive housing development in the Bronx



Gov. Kathy Hochul on Wednesday announced the beginning of construction on an \$86 million affordable housing development in the Bronx.

Baez Place, located in the Claremont section, is the latest affordable housing complex funded in part by Hochul's five-year, \$25 billion housing plan. The state aims to develop at least 100,000 affordable housing units, including 10,000 with support services, as part of the plan.

Plans call for Baez Place to have 154 affordable units: 105 studios, 21 one-bedrooms, 22 two-bedrooms and six three-bedrooms. Eighty-six units will be permanently affordable housing for homeless New Yorkers, the state said. Fifty-four of those will be dedicated to individuals with mental health concerns, and 32 will be for senior citizens who previously experienced homelessness. New York plans to fund on-site support services and rental subsidies through an Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative award.

The rest of the units will be available to rent for households with an income between 30% and 80% of the area median income, the state said.

The project is being developed by Community Access, a nonprofit in Manhattan that provides supportive housing, training and healing-focused services for people living with mental health concerns. The organization estimates construction will be completed in June 2024.

Community Access said its on-site services at Baez Place will include counseling, self-help groups, skill development and harm-reduction services. The nonprofit also plans to connect residents to mental health providers.

The state said it hopes the community integration model will supplement services for at-risk individuals.

Residents with serious mental health conditions often find themselves and their families facing housing instability, said Daniel Tietz, commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

The development is designed to include shared amenity spaces including a community room, a kitchen, a computer room, an exercise room, a laundry room and a rooftop greenhouse.

The state financed Baez Place with \$17.6 million in permanent tax-exempt bonds. New York State Homes and Community Renewal is to provide a \$12 million subsidy, and the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance will chip in \$7 million. Federal low-income tax credits are to finance \$38.7 million in equity. Other developer loans have not been included yet in the financing, according to Community Access.

The state estimates more than 90,000 men, women and children in New York can be classified as homeless.