

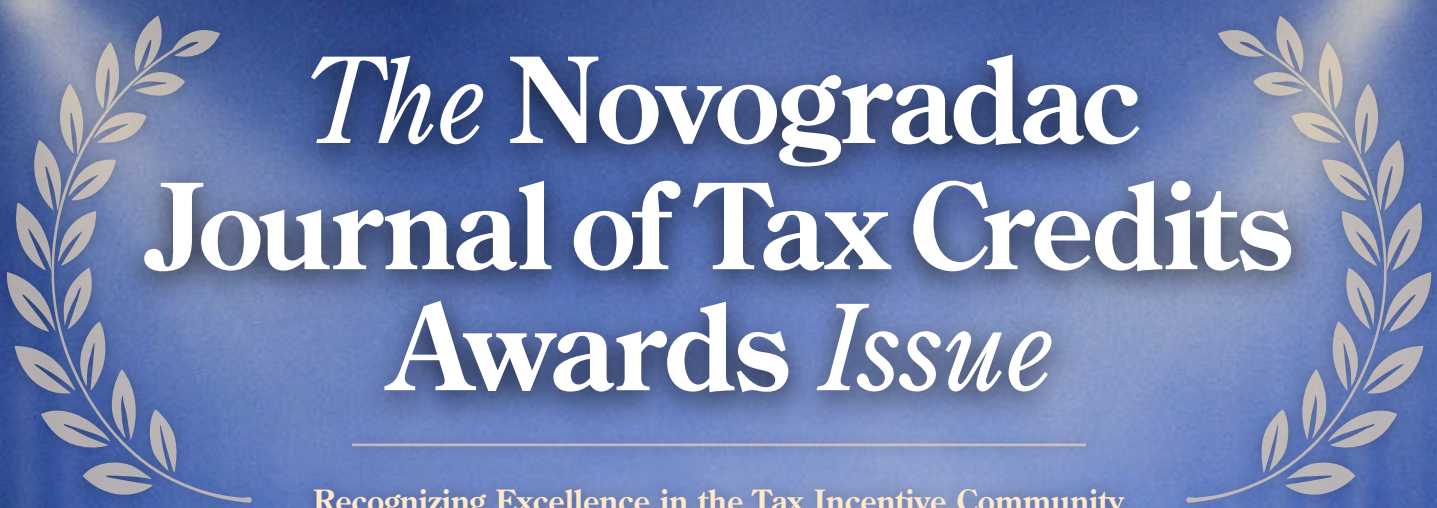


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Affordable Housing Development to Rise in the Bronx with State, Federal Support

CHANNING HAMILTON, STAFF WRITER, NOVOGRADAC

Developers broke ground in March on 1185 River Avenue, a new 20-story affordable housing community in the West Concourse neighborhood of the Bronx in New York City. With support from federal low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) and funds from a state housing program, 1185 River Avenue will deliver 292 affordable rental homes, including 173 homes with on-site support services.

Community Access, a nonprofit developer and supportive services provider based in New York City, is co-developing the community alongside Blue Sky Bronx.

“We oversee the full development process. We are also responsible for the long-term operation of the residential building, including property management and the delivery of supportive services,” said Lorraine Coleman, chief operating officer of Community Access. “The goal is not just to provide quality housing, but to ensure that

Image: Courtesy of ESKW Architects

Community Access and Blue Sky Bronx have started the development of 1185 River Avenue, an affordable housing development with 292 apartments in the West Concourse neighborhood of the Bronx.



Image courtesy of ESKW Architects

1185 River Avenue will include 173 supportive apartments reserved for eligible tenants such as veterans with disabilities, individuals with mental illness and formerly homeless individuals. Community Access will provide on-site supportive services.

residents have the support they need to remain in their homes over the long term.”

Blue Sky Bronx is another developer locally based in New York City.

“The Bronx is a vibrant and diverse community, but many members of that community are being priced out of their homes,” said Samuel Wells, CEO of Blue Sky Bronx. “Developments like this one help ensure that both Bronx natives and newcomers can grow and thrive. The support we have received at every level is encouraging, and we are excited to provide more housing and opportunities for our neighbors in West Concourse.”

A Happy, Healthy Home

1185 River Avenue will feature a mix of studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. The community will be available to households earning up to 80% of the area median income.

Plans for the development call for various outdoor amenities such as green spaces, an urban farm, a children’s play area, and outside exercise equipment and a meditation space. The development team hopes that these outdoor spaces will help to minimize isolation and encourage community connection among residents.

Planned indoor amenities include a community room and teaching kitchen, lounges, gym, laundry rooms throughout the floors and a library/computer room.

“We integrate wellness into all of our buildings,” said Coleman. “And in working with Edelman Sultan Knox Wood (ESKW) Architects on the building designs, we ensured that the residents’ experience was thought of throughout the community.”

The building will also feature an approximately 20,000-square-foot commercial space on the ground floor, which will be occupied by a grocery store, designed to bring fresh food and produce to a neighborhood in need of fresh food options.

1185 River Avenue complements the nearby River Avenue Apartments, which comprises 245 affordable homes, including 148 apartments that feature supportive services for individuals and families who have experienced homelessness. Community Access and Maddr Equities completed River Avenue Apartments in March 2024. The total cost of development was \$120 million.

Community Access is the supportive services provider at River Avenue Apartments, and will also provide supportive services to residents of 1185 River Avenue.

1185 River Avenue will set aside 173 supportive apartments for eligible residents, including veterans with disabilities, individuals with mental health concerns and formerly homeless individuals. Community Access will provide on-site support services such as individual counseling, structured group and recreational activities, harm-reduction services, wellness activities mental health and health care provider referrals, nutrition education and vocational and employment referrals.

“Supportive services are a core component of the development, and are fully integrated into the building’s operations,” said Coleman. “All services are tenant-directed and are tailored to the needs of the person or family. The supportive services also encourage building-wide socialization and bring recreational opportunities to the community.”

Additionally, 15 apartments at 1185 River Avenue are designed to accommodate residents with mobility impairments. Six homes will accommodate residents with sensory disabilities.

ESKW Architects designed the community. Mega Contracting Corp. is serving as the general contractor. Development is slated to complete in 2028.

Housing the Neighborhood

1185 River Avenue is situated along the River Avenue corridor, which runs through the West Concourse

neighborhood in the Bronx. The development is part of an ongoing effort to revitalize the corridor, which launched after Yankee Stadium opened in 2009.

“The need for affordable and supportive housing in the Bronx, particularly in neighborhoods like West Concourse, is significant and well-documented,” said Coleman. “The Bronx has some of the highest rates of rent burden and housing instability in New York City, with many households paying a disproportionate share of their income toward rent.”

Rent in the Bronx consumes a staggering 81.6% of a typical household’s annual income of \$46,074, according to a 2025 report from Realtor.com. This was the highest rent-to-income of the city’s five boroughs by a wide margin, with Brooklyn coming in second place at 60.6%.

“There’s an insatiable need for affordable housing in the Bronx,” Wells said. “The need is especially pronounced in the homeless population. We’re doing what we can to reach as many people as possible with the resources that we have. The importance and impact of developments like this one cannot be understated.”

New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), the state’s affordable housing agency, stated that 1185 River Avenue contributes to Gov. Kathy Hochul’s five-year housing plan, a \$25 billion investment aimed at creating and preserving 100,000 affordable homes in the state of New York. Roughly 10,000 affordable homes have been developed in the Bronx since Hochul launched the plan in 2022.

“This major investment in [1185 River Avenue] is a perfect example of how we’re tackling the housing crisis,” Hochul said in a press release. “The state, the city and our private partners are working hand-in-hand to create new opportunities for individuals and families to find an affordable home. We are strengthening neighborhoods, and we are ensuring

residents have access to transportation, health care and modern amenities.”

State and Local Support

New York State HCR allocated 4% federal and state LIHTCs to support the development of 1185 River Avenue. The tax credits are expected to generate \$90 million in equity, including \$85 million in federal 4% LIHTC equity and \$5 million in state LIHTC equity. Richmond Housing Resources LLC, a subsidiary of Richman Housing Capital, is the equity investor.

The community also received \$9.8 million through the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance’s (OTDA) Homeless Housing and Assistance Program. The program provides capital grants and loans to support the development of housing for special needs populations, including youth, veterans, victims of domestic violence, those in recovery from addiction, households exiting and those with mental health concerns or physical disabilities.

OTDA also provided an Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative award for the community, which will finance rental and operating subsidies for 70 of the supportive housing apartments. The remaining 103 supportive housing apartments are funded through the New York City

Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s NYC 15/15 rental assistance program.

The NYC 15/15 program provides rental assistance to families and individuals who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The program is funded by the New York City government.

“There is a continued and growing need for supportive housing for individuals and families exiting homelessness or living with complex health and social needs, in the Bronx and beyond,” said Coleman. “Developments like 1185 River Avenue are designed to respond directly to these social conditions by providing deeply affordable housing paired with services that promote long-term housing stability. We are proud to be part of the effort to address these unmet needs.” ❖

1185 RIVER AVENUE

FINANCING

- ◆ \$85 million in 4% federal low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) equity from Richman Housing Capital
- ◆ \$9.8 million from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance’s Homeless Housing and Assistance Program
- ◆ \$5 million in state LIHTC equity from Richman Housing Capital

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