

Plimpton Poorvu Design Prize 2022

BRACING PETER BRACEY

Reclaiming Power & Retaining Roots in New Rochelle

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Bracing Peter Bracey (BPB) proposes a new vision for the last public housing development located in New Rochelle, New York. The site and its residents, in a historic Black neighborhood, is under imminent threat of market-induced displacement. BPB offers innovations in community development at planning and housing scales to deploy what we are calling “strategic bracing” measures. These aim to help residents stay rooted in their community while supporting the development of a neighborhood-sourced, -scaled, and -serving economic engine. The proposal has been developed in conjunction with local residents and the municipal housing authority, as well as outside experts. The result is a strategy that can be utilized by eager smaller scale MHAs and PHAs with HUD-leased land to simultaneously stir the creation of affordable housing and support neighborhood-scale economies.

A CITY OF BLACK ROOTS & RESILIENCE

New Rochelle's history mirrors the highs & lows of the United States. Its founding is tangled in injustice as much as it is in the joy and triumphs of cultural enclaves. Since the settlement by French Huguenots 300 years ago, this quintessential American suburb has been home to a vibrant Black community that in the 20th century has been systematically fractured through redlining, education-based segregation & Urban Renewal initiatives.

In recent years, New Rochelle's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) & Commercial Overlay District (COD) along River Street has brought new businesses and amenities to this historic area. Renewed investment brings positive attributes, but likewise invites a cascade of market forces that threaten to displace longstanding members of the community.

Regional Advantage



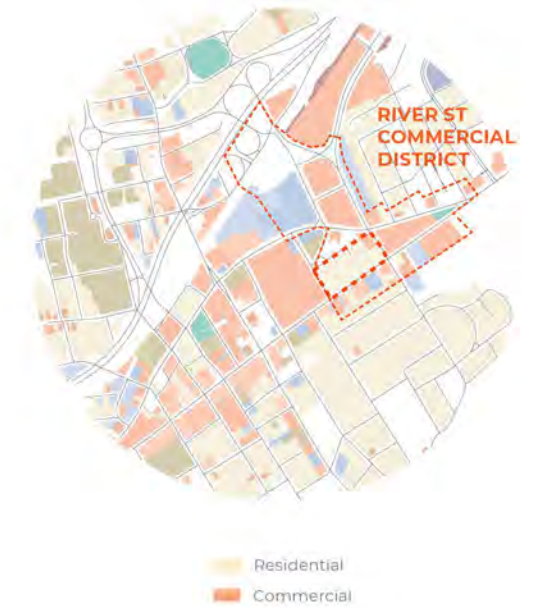
Mobility



Socio-culture



Land-use / Zoning



BLACK POPULATION IN NEW ROCHELLE

BLACK OWNED LAND

1688
Huguenots settle in New Rochelle

1799
Establishment of Pugsley Hollow



In 1799, Hannah Pugsley, an enslaved woman living in New Rochelle, was freed without conditions. The historic Black neighborhood in Downtown is named for her.

AME Zion Church founded
1841

Winyah Ave. Elementary & Trinity School founded
1890s

1901
Founding of a Black City Center



The Great Migration of African Americans from the American South to northern regions sees the establishment of new Black communities across the country including New Rochelle. After decades of founding schools, churches & businesses, a Black cultural and city center takes on new definition.

1938
Pugsley Hollow redlined
New Deal era redlining classifies Pugsley Hollow neighborhood as "declining."

Great Migration

White flight in New Rochelle
1950s

Urban Renewal

1962
Peter Bracey House built



Three municipal housing projects were built to house returning war veterans, among them: Peter Bracey House.

1957
Cedar St. Redevelopment

As a part of urban renewal & the Cedar St. Redevelopment plan, hundreds of Black families are displaced from downtown New Rochelle.

Macy Mall opens
1968

Memorial Highway construction
1964-67

Macy Mall closes to the public
1992

Decrease of Black Owned Homes

2014
Downtown Revitalization
Initiation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) encourages new private development in the downtown area.

2021
River St. Commercial District

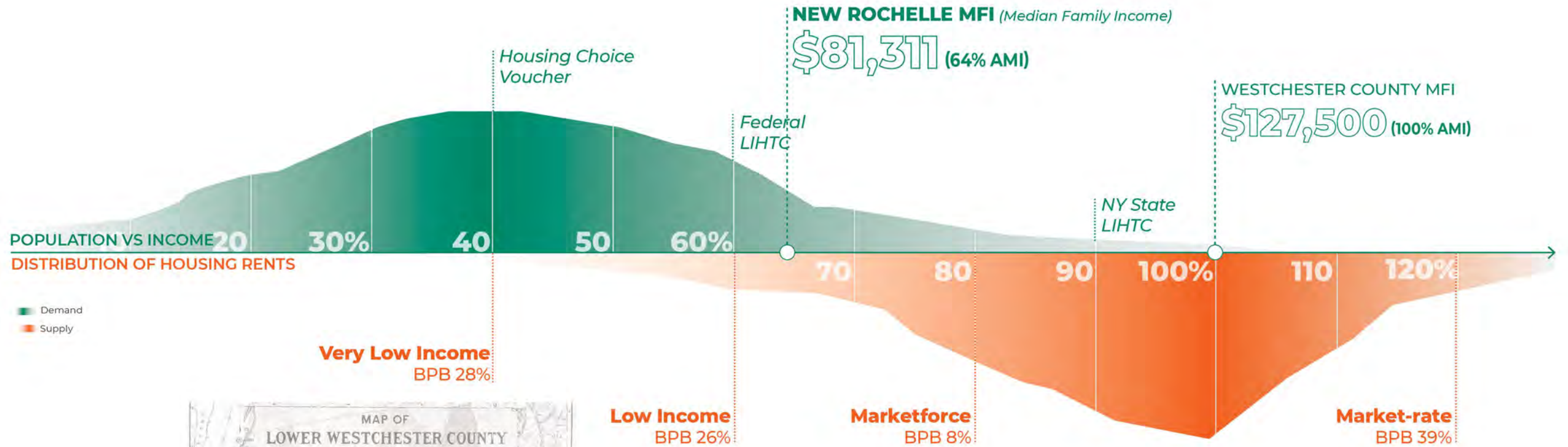
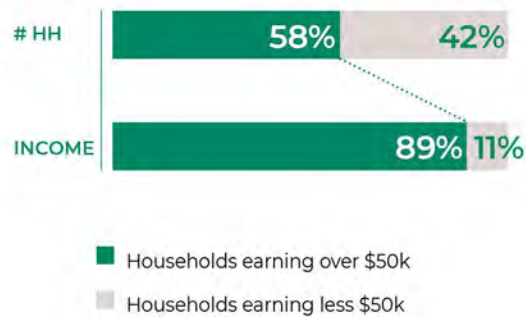


The newly introduced Commercial Overlay Zone further encourages development in the downtown area.

A STORY OF AFFORDABILITY IN NUMBERS

New Rochelle is a majority Black and Brown community nestled into the larger, more affluent county of Westchester which houses some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in New York. As a city growing in potential from nearby transit-oriented development slated to connect the city directly to downtown NYC, New Rochelle is at an inflection point for its existing residents.

New Rochelle's median family income (MFI) of \$81,311 falls around 64% AMI whereas Westchester County's MFI of \$127,500 falls right at 100% AMI. The underlying implication here is residential and commercial displacement due to rising rents and an influx of outside interest laying claim to the city's new resources. An attempt to curtail local exodus entails not only addressing residential affordability for current residents but also generating economic opportunities to promote their stability and resiliency.



[A STORY OF KWAMAINE..]

DISPLACEMENT

CONFLICT

ACCESS

AFFORDABILITY

FOR RENT SECTION 8 WELCOME 732-555-0555

GOOD LOW-COST HOUSING NOT

[A STORY OF NEW ROCHELLE..]

PUBLIC HOUSING	GROUP HOMES	HOMELESSNESS	INCARCERATION	SECTION 8 HOUSING
New Rochelle has only 3 Public Housing Developments. One is privatized, one has been redeveloped, only Peter Bracey remains.	Group homes for adolescents are mostly outside the city. This forces isolation & disconnection from existing support networks.	Westchester County jails, on average, 1,038 people everyday. Nearly 61% of these pretrial detainees are proven legally innocent.	10% of the incarcerated experience homeless before or after jail time. A tenth of them as a result of eviction & a fifth of them due to a subsequent loss of employment.	Only 5% of the eligible tenants receive Section 8 vouchers. Despite eligibility based on AMI, 80% of affordably-branded housing stock is above FMR.

THIS IS THE **LAST** PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECT
IN NEW ROCHELLE
A CHANCE TO **RECLAIM**
A HISTORIC **BLACK CENTER**



In the early 1960s, three municipal housing projects were built for returning war veterans, among them: Peter Bracey House. Today, Peter Bracey Apartments remains the last public housing project in the city & resides on the largest parcel of publicly-owned land that is utilized exclusively in the interest of providing affordable housing to residents of public housing.

The adoption of the DRI and the River Street COD has made development in this historic Black neighborhood the most enticing it has been in decades. While this development is exciting, it is not generating wealth or stability for long-time residents of Pugsley Hollow. Instead this cascade of market-induced pressures are pushing up the cost of housing & flushing out what does not generate profit commensurate with the booming market in downtown New Rochelle. This "flush" includes many residents with historic roots in the area & individuals who rely on public housing to sustain balance in a life made more difficult by steadily increasing costs of housing, medicine & goods as well as general declining access to reliable public transportation & social services.

A PATH TO THE MHA AS SELF-DEVELOPER

WHAT IS A CHT?

A Community Housing Trust (CHT) is a distinct 501(c)3 non-profit that can function as a mirror organization for an MHA.

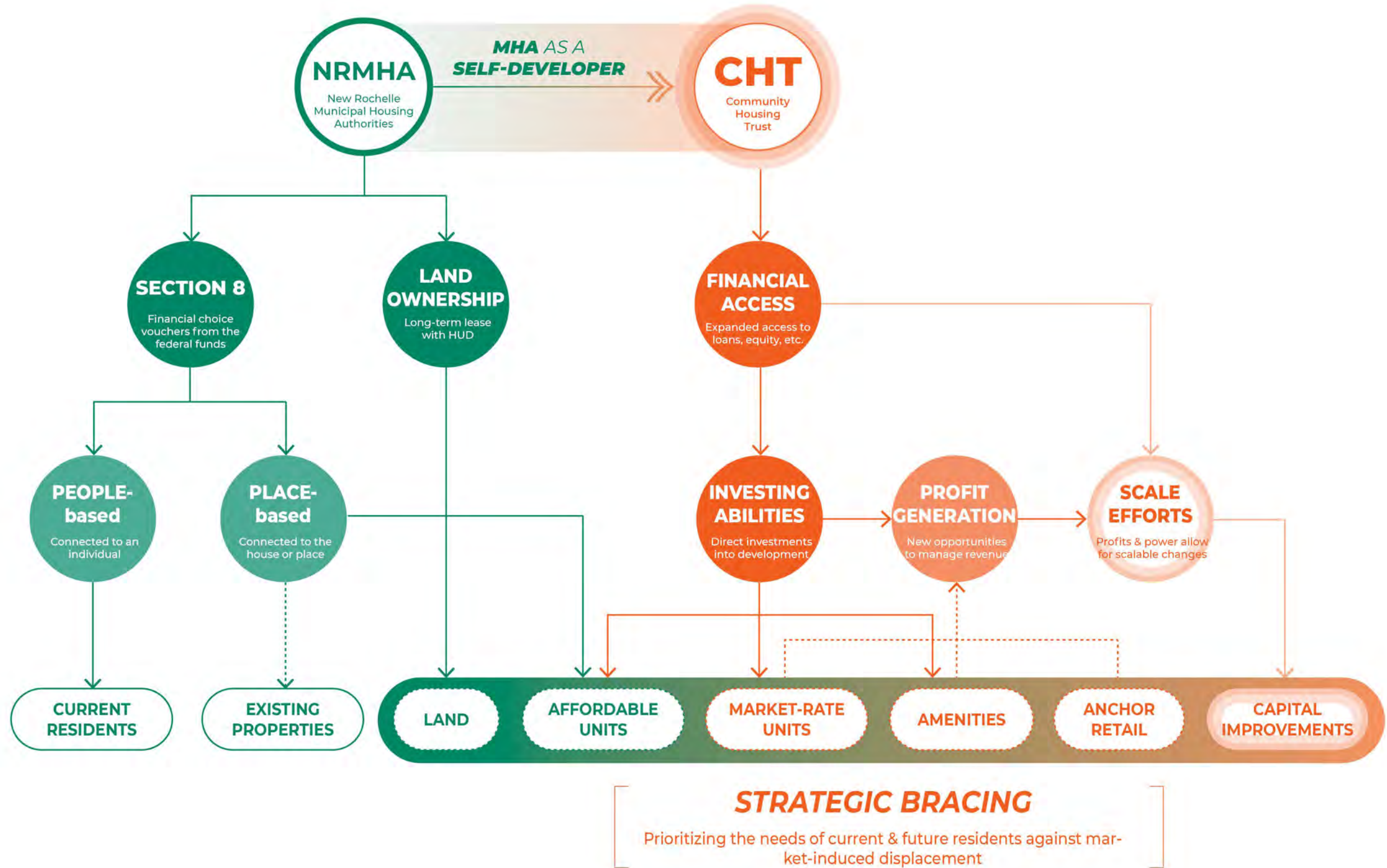
WHY A CHT?

CHTs can gain financial access (debt) & retain returns that allow them to make investments like an independent developer. They can then act in service of public housing residents without being beholden to private developers.

WHY HERE?

CHTs are quasi-public organizations that often share MHA Board Members which allows for expanded collaboration & elaboration on housing initiatives.

Because the NRMHA is a smaller scale housing authority with restricted equity & control, a CHT can open access to new sources of equity & debt. This allows them to functionally act as a developer & in the interest of public housing residents.

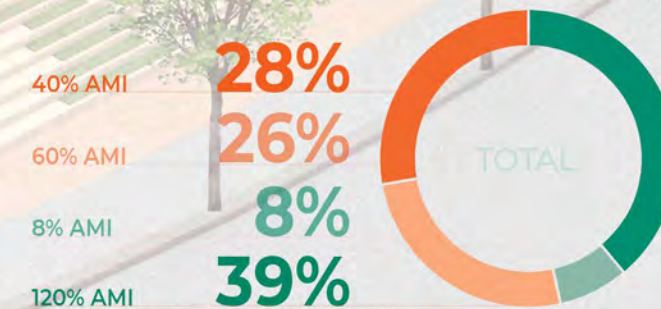


TOTAL PROJECT COST :
\$125,143,159

TOTAL GROSS AREA
289,156 SF

TOTAL AMENITY
36,486 SF

FAR
2.0 (301 DU.)



User Income / Affordability Mix

TDC / UNIT = **\$435K**
9% FEDERAL LIHTC / UNIT = **\$227K**
9% NY STATE LIHTC / UNIT = **\$43K**

[PHASING]

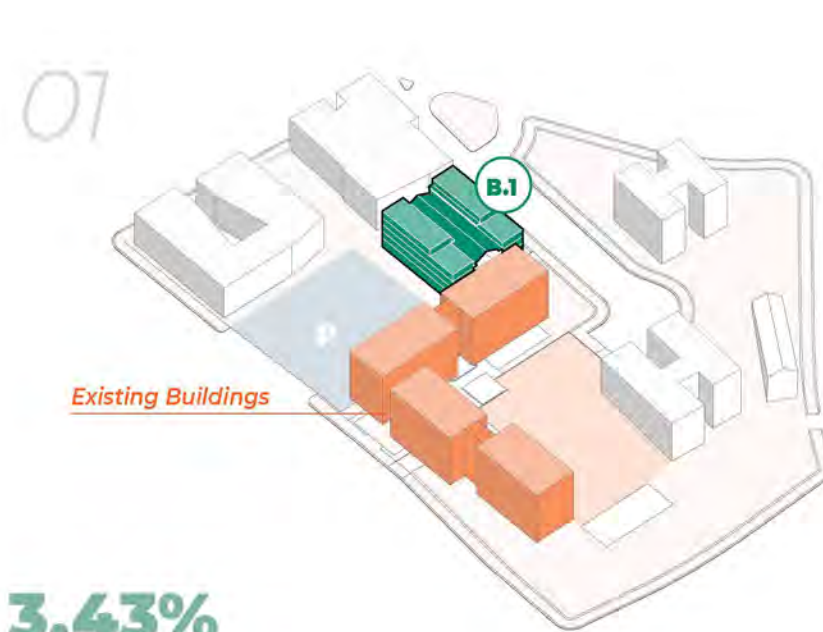
CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

The development is sequenced into three phases to prevent the displacement of existing tenants and ease their transition into the new buildings. The total construction schedule spans five years and incorporates community engagement prior to the start of each phase by providing updated timelines, hosting charrettes, and garnering feedback to improve the development.

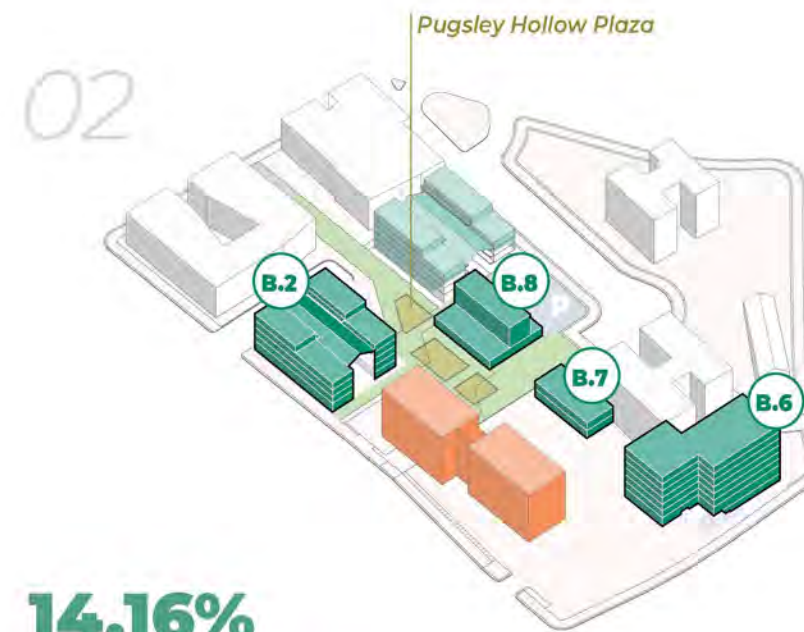
Phase I constructs Building 1 (40% - 80% AMI affordable and workforce housing) with the intent of relocating all the tenants located in Building A which will be demolished first. Only Building 1 can be built during this phase because Building A overlaps with the future building footprint of Building 2.

Phase II constructs Buildings 2, 6, 7, and 8 and demolishes Building B. The remaining existing tenants will be relocated from Building B to affordable Buildings 2 and 8 while this phase also prioritizes the production of amenities to support residents' quality of life.

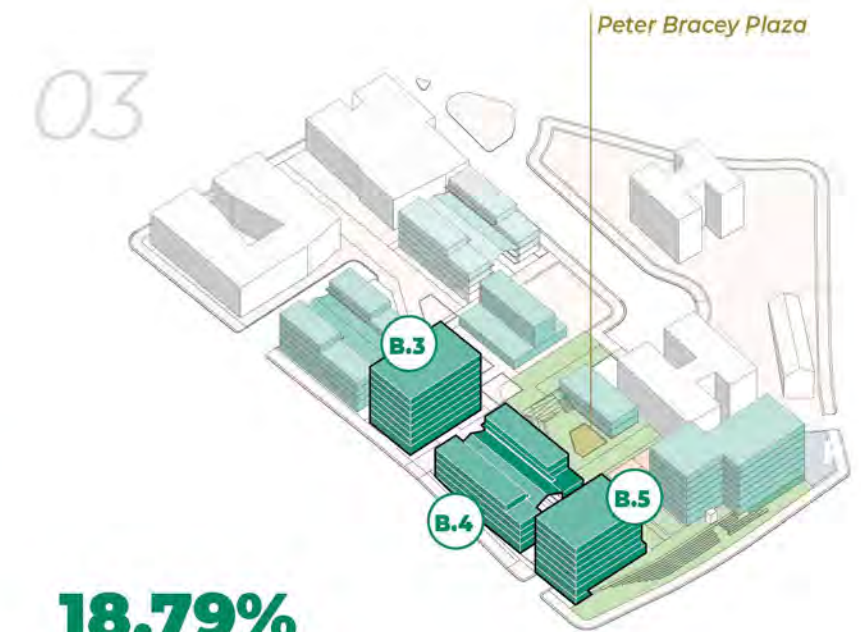
Phase III scales up the balance of the development and maximizes the construction of market-rate units in Buildings 3, 4, and 5 to cross-subsidize the majority of affordable units previously built. Both Pugsley Plaza and Bracey Place will also be completed during this phase.



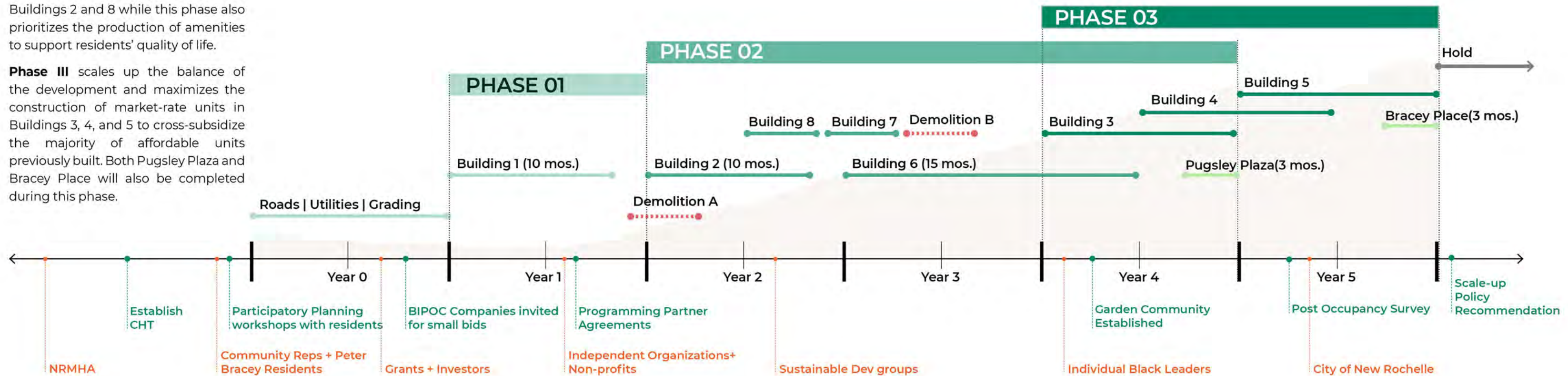
3.43%
Levered BT IRR
TDC: \$11,580,109



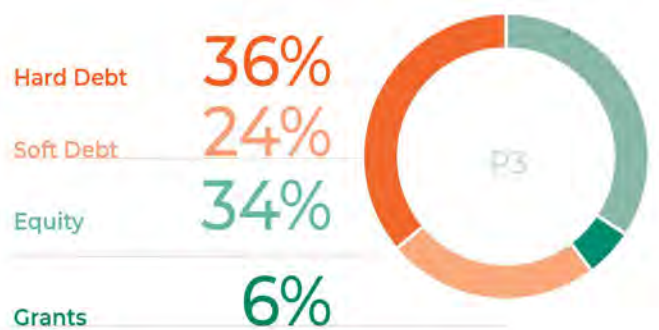
14.16%
Levered BT IRR
TDC: \$52,349,725



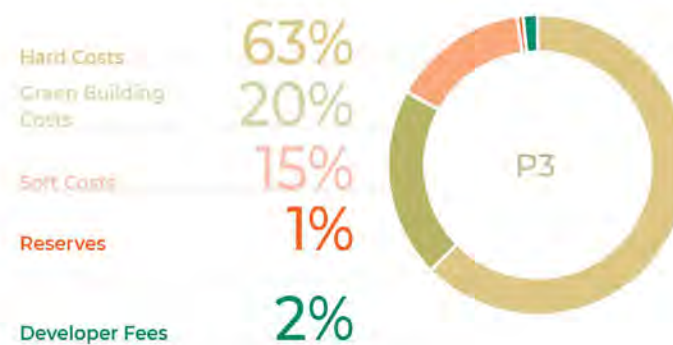
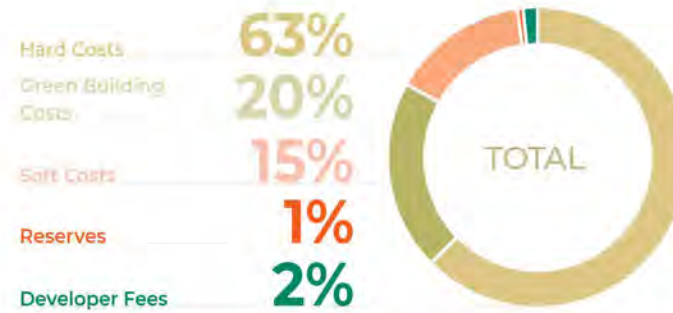
18.79%
Levered BT IRR
TDC: \$52,269,574



SOURCES



USES



MEASURES	Total Project	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Metrics				
Stabilized NOI	\$8,089,027	\$499,063	\$3,443,285	\$4,146,679
Total Hard Construction Costs	\$61,525,902	\$6,205,131	\$25,753,549	\$29,567,221
Total Development Costs	\$120,381,530	\$11,580,109	\$52,347,270	\$56,454,151
Overall Cap Rate	6.72%	4.31%	6.58%	7.35%
Levered Untrended Build Yield	13.15%	8.04%	13.37%	14.02%
Returns				
Equity Required	\$48,114,636	\$9,656,266	\$18,982,973	\$19,475,396
Cash on Cash Return	16.81%	5.17%	18.14%	21.29%
Unlevered IRR	8.17%	3.63%	7.95%	9.95%
Unlevered NPV @ 8%	\$1,409,359	\$4,551,860	\$205,083	\$6,614,986
Levered BT IRR	13.23%	3.44%	13.98%	18.57%
Levered NPV @ 8%	\$21,827,804	\$3,584,291	\$9,873,917	\$15,986,862
MOI	3.49	1.51	3.67	4.36

Bracing Peter Bracey's mixed-use, mixed-income development spans a 15-year horizon with five years dedicated to construction followed by ten years of stabilized operations. Risk management is built into the programming of each phase via higher vacancies to temper returns and mitigate fluctuations in revenue over time. Project measures thus reflect conservative returns (8.51% unleveraged IRR and 13.33% leveraged IRR) and have the capacity to perform more favorably.

New York's Qualified Allocation Plan caps annual LIHTC allocations at \$2,200,000 per project and prohibits collecting parking revenue if parking construction is included in the calculating total development costs. In order to maximize tax credits per residential development costs, parking development is not calculated in the total eligible basis and is programmed separately to collect revenue from monthly fees for all 90 stalls (not including surface parking which is free)

With a residential TDC cost/unit of \$434,525, the project's is able to cover 62% of the funding gap with \$227,028/unit of 9% Federal LIHTC and \$42,609/unit of 9% New York SLIHTC. The remaining 37% is covered by a mixture of grants, soft debt, and construction loans unique to each phase. The project's soft debt, comprised of New York State HCR Housing Trust Fund and HFA Affordable Rental Housing, requires a compliance period 30- and 40-years of affordability, respectively.

In order to keep the project's affordable units permanently affordable, the Community Housing Trust (CHT) will sell the development to themselves at the end of 15 years to refinance and hold indefinitely. Profits generated from cash flow from stabilized operations will be retained and redistributed to the development as well as CHT's future affordable housing projects.

[DESIGN CONCEPT]

HOUSING AS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE

Status quo practices of affordable housing construction typically produces a singular housing type across a given site. In these contexts, housing is framed solely as a commodity or a provision for shelter. This approach fails to marshal the potential of housing as the core of an economic engine for a community. Affordable, accessible, safe & stable housing is fundamental to people reaching their maximum potential as an individual & as a contributing member to a community. Rather than a "one size fits all" approach to housing, we believe that diversifying housing unit types can support a community socially, culturally & economically.

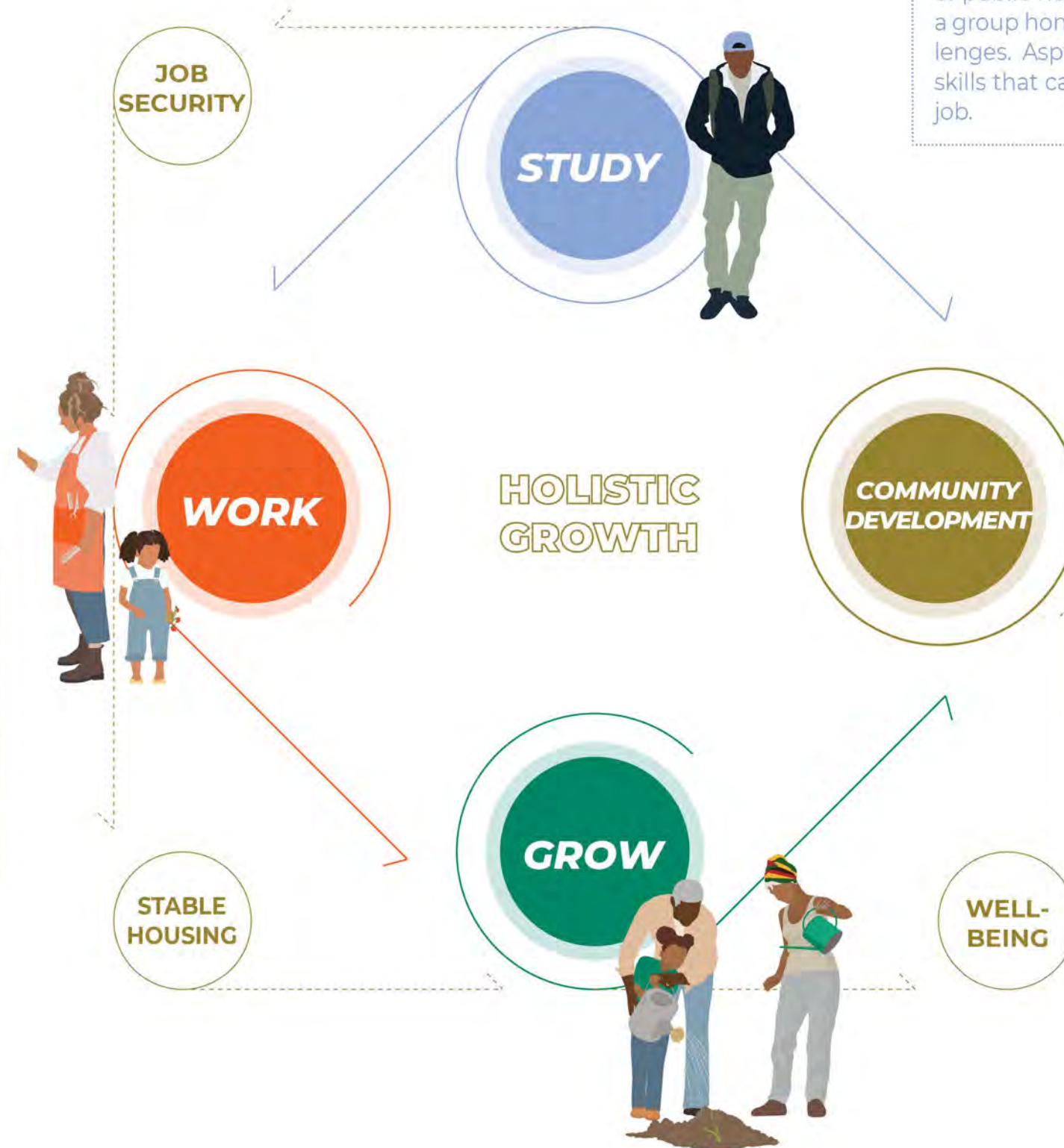
Our proposal is to construct hybrid housing typologies that support people at certain moments within the spectrum of life. Three housing unit types—Live-Study, Live-Work & Live-Grow—correspond with different stages of contemporary living. These hybrid types have the potential to attract newcomers, with the added benefit of supporting those long-rooted in the area with more opportunities to reclaim economic power & resist displacement in the face of rising real estate values.

STORY OF ANGELA BARTEE

Age 34: Single parent of a 3-year old girl who spends her days running a hair braiding salon. She wants to focus on developing her business as a stylist, but doesn't want to move out of the community.

STORY OF KWAMAINE DIXON

Age 25: Previously a resident of public housing, but sent to a group home due to life challenges. Aspires to learn hard skills that can help him find a job.



STORY OF LINDA TERRENT REID

Age 63: Community Advocate that leads the Lincoln Community Garden efforts. She aims to bring back a sense of community through local food production.

A PLACE FOR ALL..

The site features eight buildings & several new shared public spaces, that together, create a more dynamic, finely-grained urban condition. In contrast to the existing, single-use, megalithic urban block structure, each of the buildings are mixed use & take advantage of the new frontage created by new construction.

The design takes advantage of allowable density, building high where possible & reaching the maximum number of allowed dwelling units per acre. Despite a calculated FAR of 2.0, the site is home to over 300 units of mixed types, ranging from dorm-style units to multi-bedroom family housing.

Several new public spaces are also proposed, including two new plazas named for historically significant figures in the area: Hannah Pugsley & Peter Bracey. Each of these new plazas, are punctuated by the planting of a majestic "witness" tree—a gesture that is meant to mark the important occasion of construction, honor the site's history & act as a growing monument to this new stage in the community's life.

Other amenities include community & roof gardens for residents, a full-size basketball court & a highly designed set of entry stairs meant to increase curb appeal along River Street to draw passersby into the new attractions along the Community Corridor.



BLOCK 1

Unit Type	#	SQFT
2B	10	6,555
3B	8	7,865
Live-Grow	16	15,732
Total Residential	28	24,253.5
Parking	18	5,440

Open Space	SQFT
Community Kitchen	6,154
Patio	3,240
Roof Garden	6,943

BLOCK 2

Unit Type	#	SQFT
1B	12	3,933
2B	19	12,454.5
3B	29	28,514.3
Live-Study	6	5,899.5
Total Residential	66	50,801.3
Parking	20	5,672

Open Space	SQFT
Day Care	4,298
Skill Building Facility	12,028
Patio	3,240
Roof Garden	4,770

BLOCK 3

Unit Type	#	SQFT
1B	54	17,698.5
2B	38	24,909
Live-Work	21	20,648.3
Live-Work Hybrid	6	1,966.5
Total Residential	119	65,222
Parking	20	7,004

Open Space	SQFT
Retail	6,014
Patio	3,240
Roof Garden	6,943

BLOCK 4

Unit Type	#	SQFT
1B	60	19,665
2B	30	19,665
Total Residential	90	39,330
Parking	32	11,475

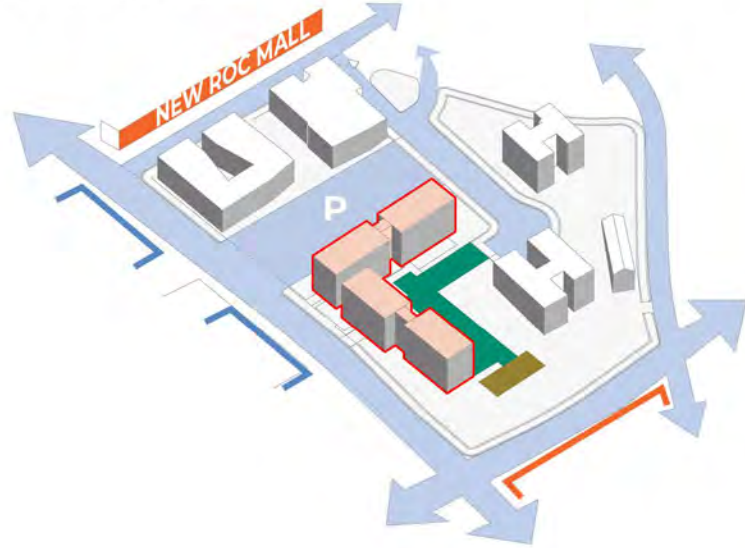
Open Space	SQFT
Wellness Center	5,760
Supermarket	8,246
Small Plaza	1,322.5

PLAZA

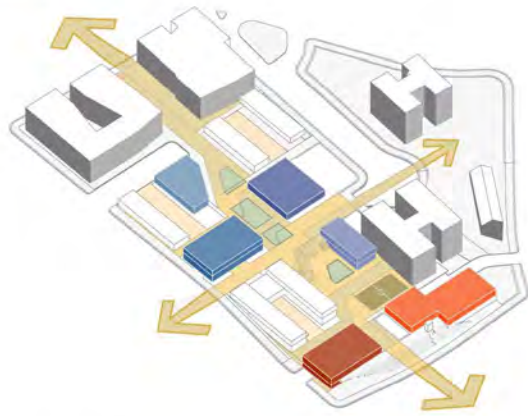
Plaza	SQFT
Community Garden	6,154
Hannah Pugsley Plaza	3,240
Peter Bracey Plaza	6,943
Court @ Bracey Plaza	3,200
Echo Ave Steps	6,500

RE-INSTATING BLACK CENTER

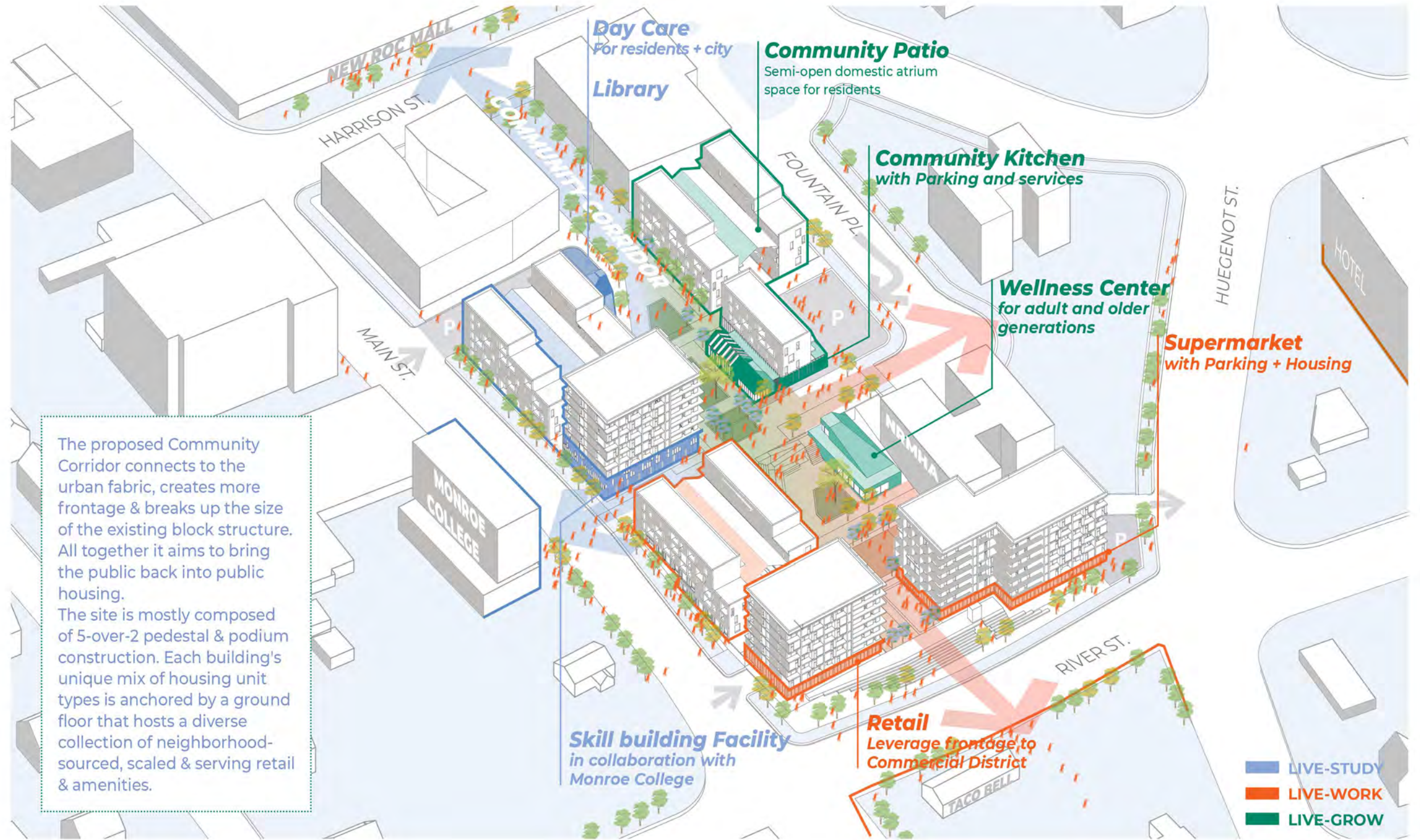
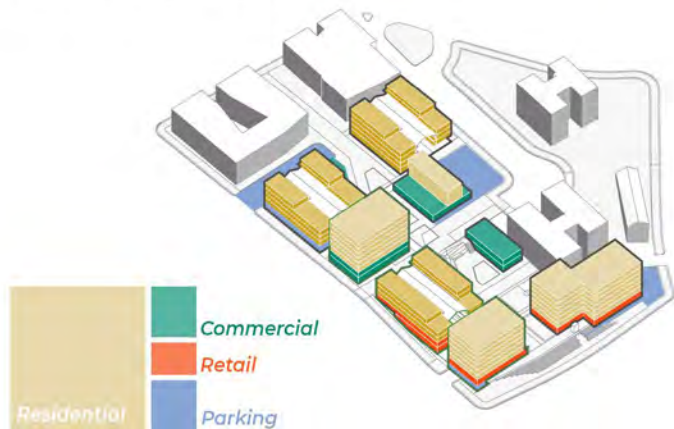
Existing Context



Community Corridor

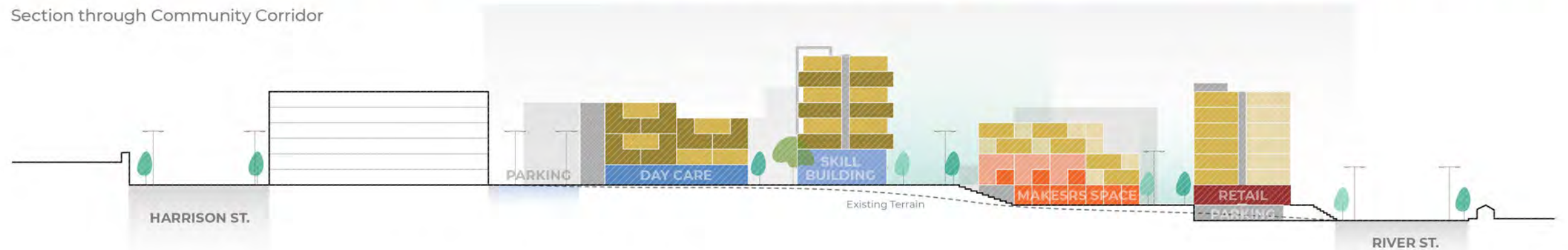


Use Mix Distribution



The proposed Community Corridor connects to the urban fabric, creates more frontage & breaks up the size of the existing block structure. All together it aims to bring the public back into public housing. The site is mostly composed of 5-over-2 pedestal & podium construction. Each building's unique mix of housing unit types is anchored by a ground floor that hosts a diverse collection of neighborhood-sourced, scaled & serving retail & amenities.

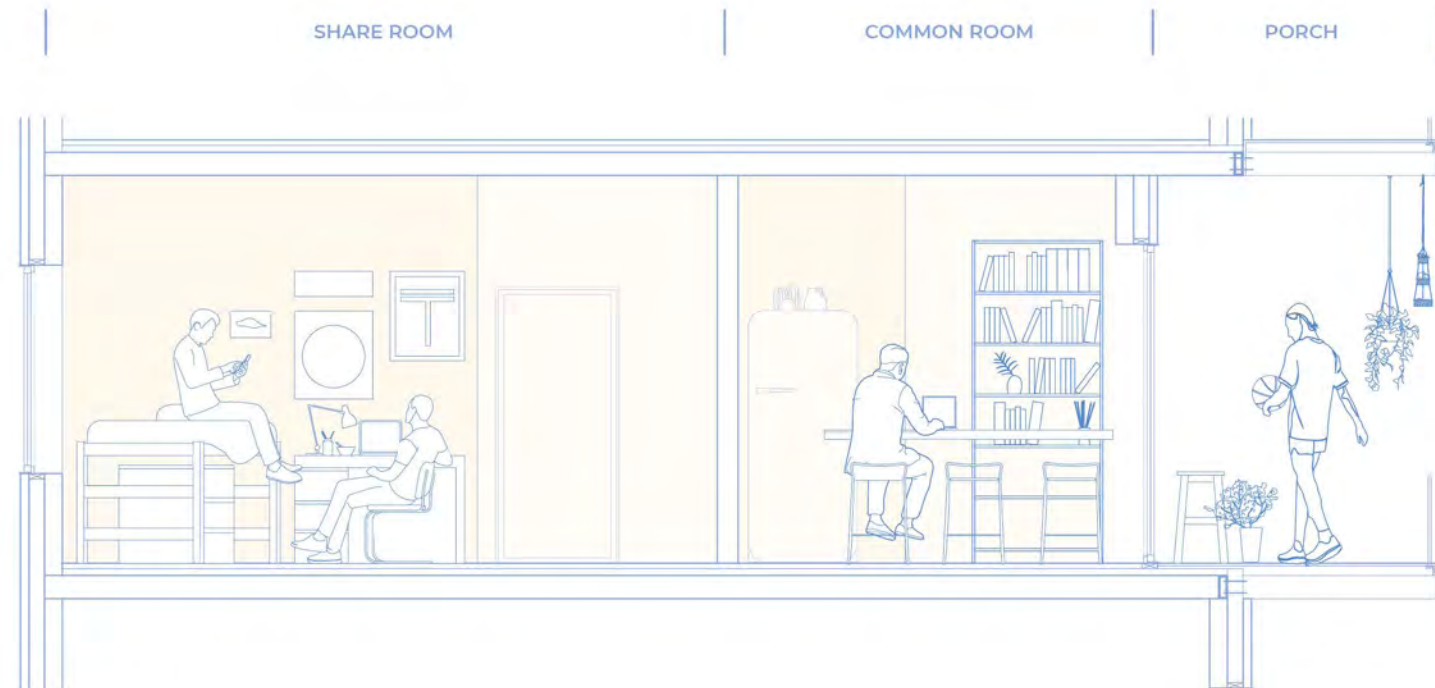
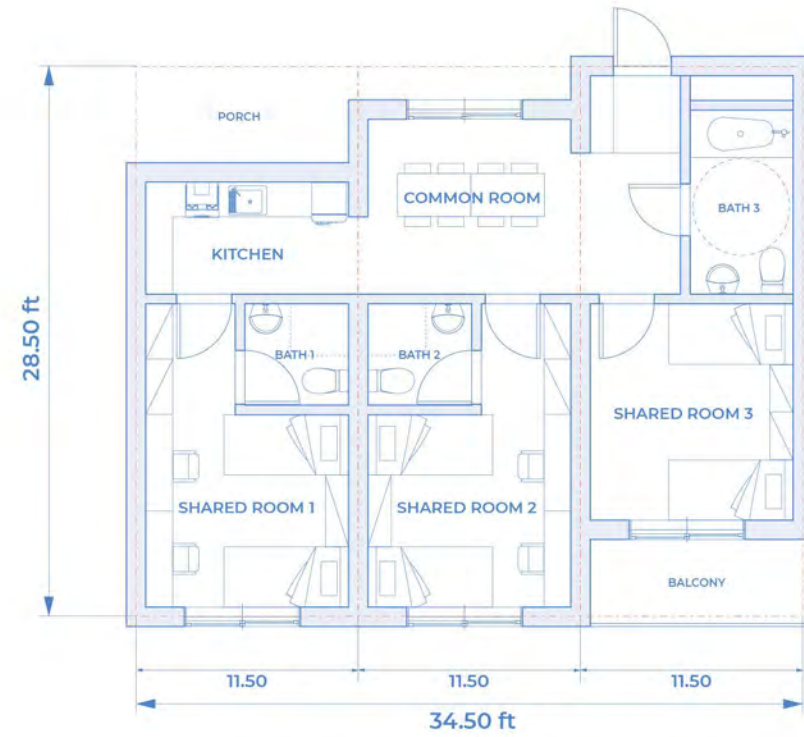
Section through Community Corridor



LIVE-STUDY

Unit SF **985**
 AMI **80%**
 Unit **6**
 Rent/unit **\$691**

Live-Study units are dorm-style units intended to provide added social & housing stability for adolescents & young adults. Each unit contains six bedrooms & includes a shared kitchen & common area for studying & socializing. Close proximity to the Skill Building facility & Monroe College makes learning & studying more convenient, while also hopefully fostering an environment that allows residents to stay rooted in their community while finding enrichment & expanded pathways adulthood.



LIVE-WORK [MAKERS SPACE]

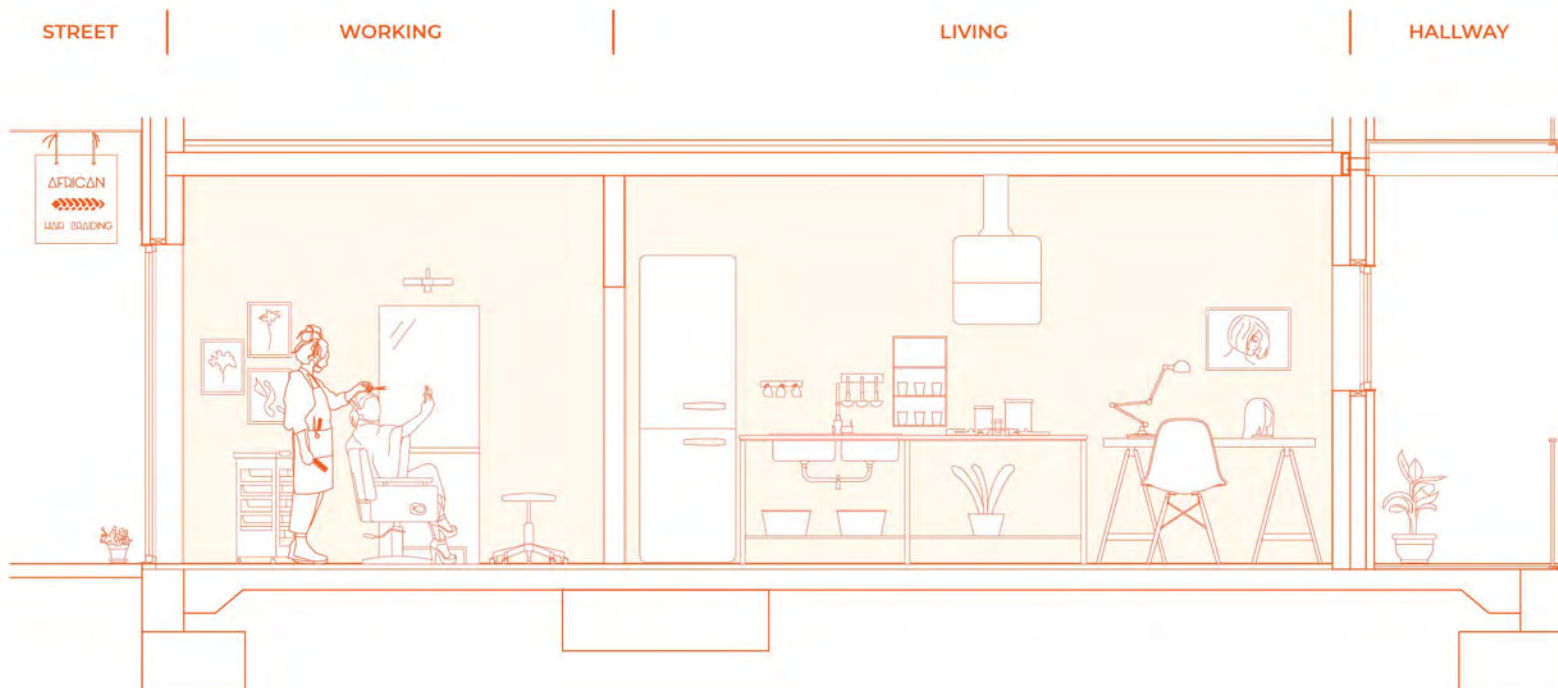
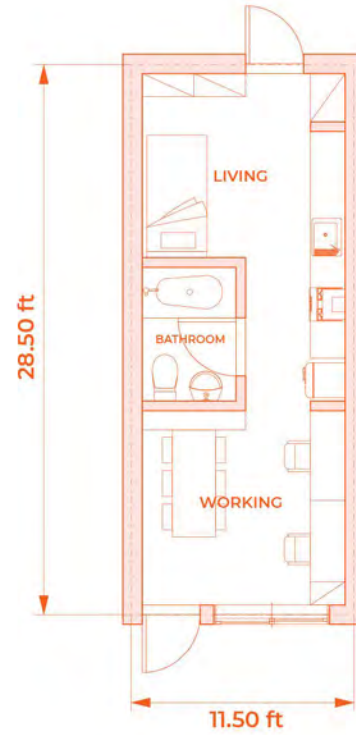
Unit SF **328**

AMI **80%**

Unit **21**

Rent/unit **\$1,785**

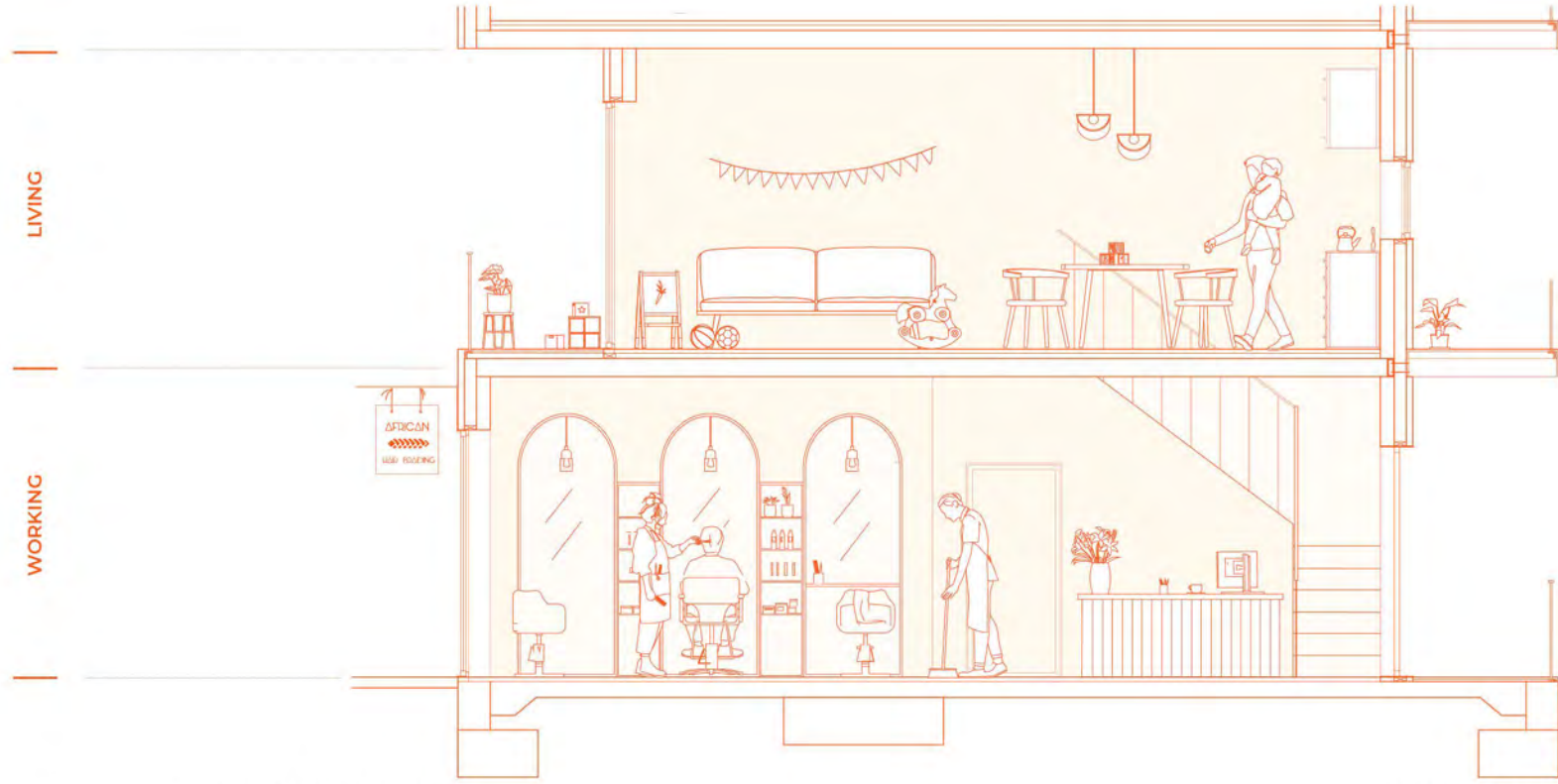
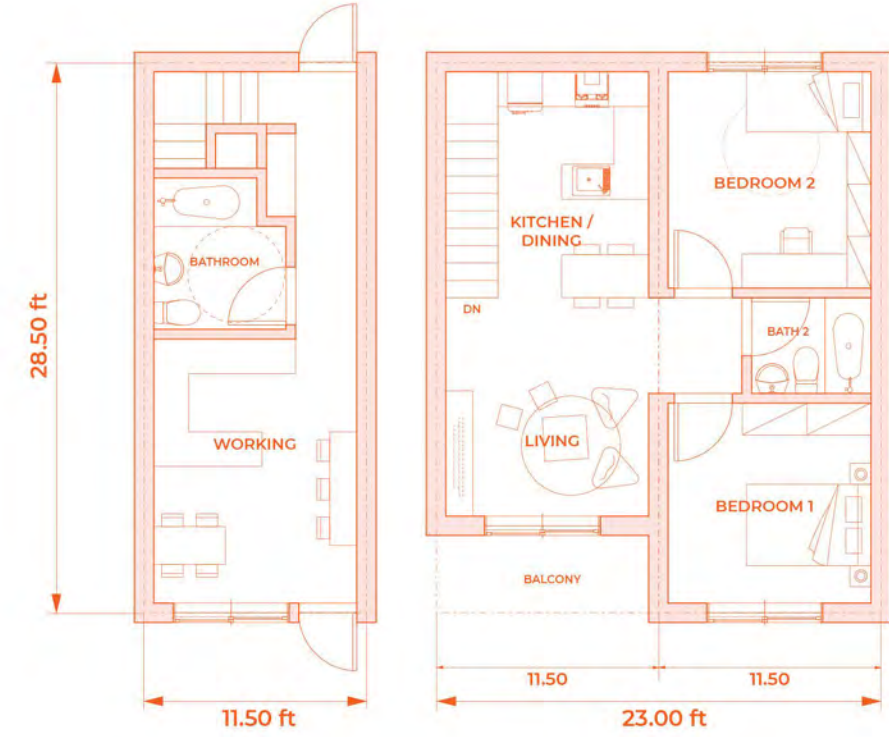
Live-Work Hybrid spaces consist of 2+ bedrooms in which 20% of the unit is allocated for retail or commercial use. These spaces are flexible for families who need an office, studio, or business space to generate additional income. Families can reinvest rent savings and additional income into wealth building and financial advocacy.



LIVE-WORK [HYBRID]

Unit SF **985**
 AMI **80%**
 Unit **6**
 Rent/unit **\$2,400**

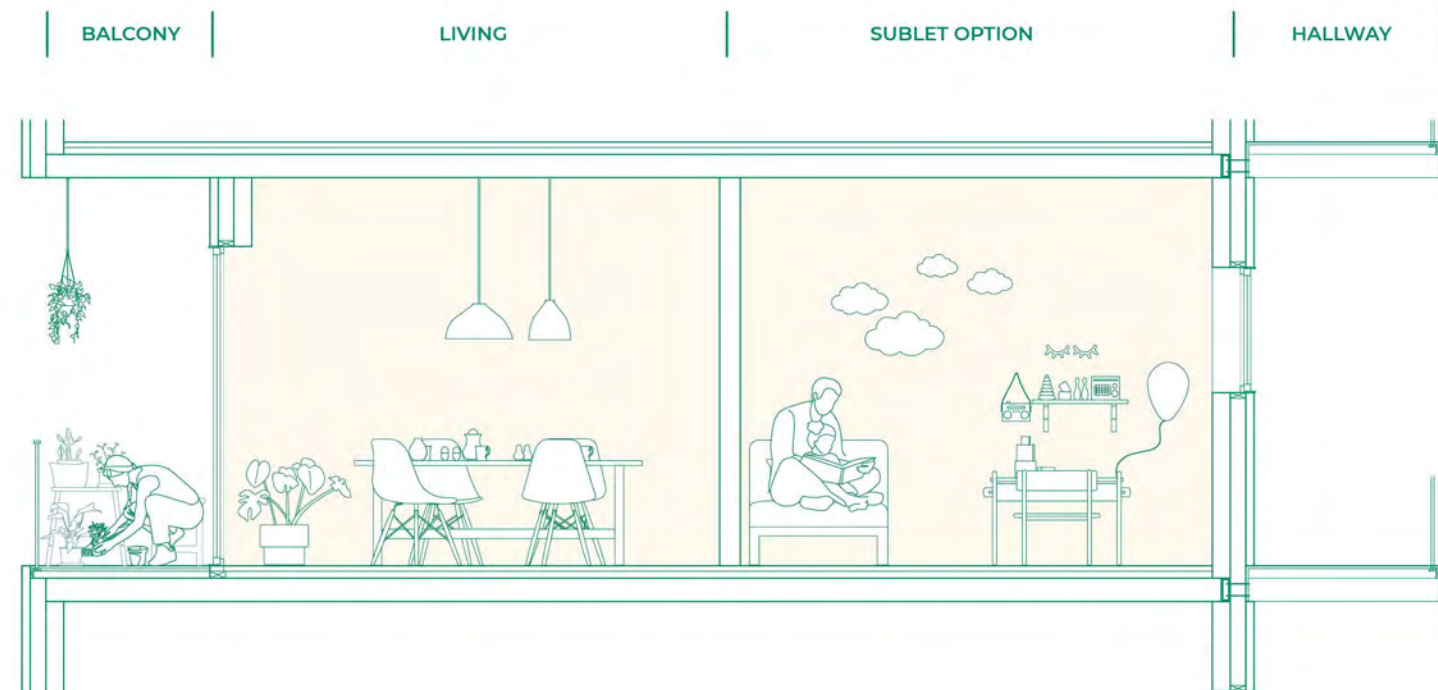
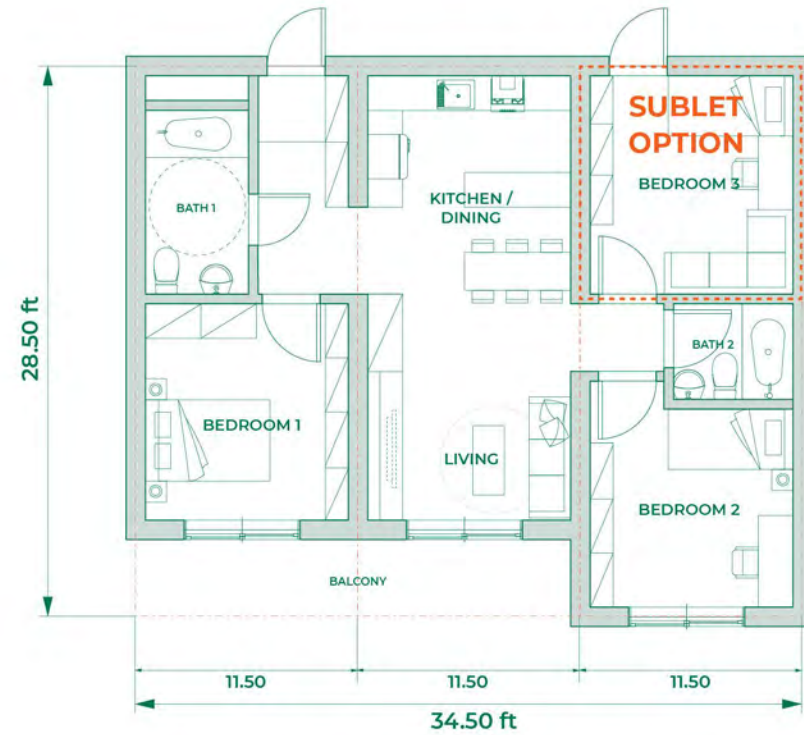
Live-Work (Hybrid) units accommodate tenants whose businesses & families grow as a result of stability & affordability provided by standard Live-Work units. These units include a second floor for housing, which allows more space for family life. The ground floor is dedicated to retail & commercial operations. Compared to market-rate units, tenants can save nearly \$7,600 per year in commercial rents, which can be reinvested into the family in many different ways.



LIVE-GROW

Unit SF **985**
 AMI **80%**
 Unit **16**
 Rent/unit **\$2,672**

Live-Grow units focus on supporting those with growing families & those growing older. These multi-bedroom units allow residents with larger families to scale up their housing, remain within the community & within close proximity to the network of amenities the site provides. Each unit is also outfitted with a bedroom that has a separate entrance which can be subletted as families age & their needs & living composition change.



PARTNERS & PROGRAMS

Day Care

Convenient, community-embedded childcare for families

Social Impact

- Supports Family Life
- Intergenerational Interaction
- Creative Youth Potential

Program Partners



Skill Building

On-site facilities & support for discovering & developing skills necessary to everything from Union trades like construction to management for green

Social Impact

- Vocational Training
- Business Accelerator
- Job/Work Opportunities

Program Partners



Public Programs

Programs in new shared spaces activate the plaza & corridor as a safe, vibrant, central gathering spaces for the neighborhood & larger community.

Social Impact

- Eyes on the street
- Active Vibrant Social Space
- Communal Integrity

Program Partners



Community Kitchen & Garden

Lifelong cooks, food industry entrepreneurs & gardeners of all stages can cross paths at the on-site community & ghost kitchens or community garden to exchange traditions & tips alike.

Social Impact

- Food Bank Local Production
- Ghost Kitchen Infrastructure
- Cold Storage

Program Partners



Holistic Health

Facilities like a wellness center, adult learning facility & library provide for physical & mental health of residents at all stages.

Social Impact

- Mental & Physical Health
- Intellectual Growth
- Wellness Leadership Services

Program Partners



Plaza Events + Sports

Outdoor Space programming to enable a vibrant, active public realm that complements domestic life.

Supermarket

A new market with fresh produce punctuates a food desert.

Social Impact

- Local Job Opportunity
- Commercial Anchor Tenant
- Increased Footfall

Program Partners

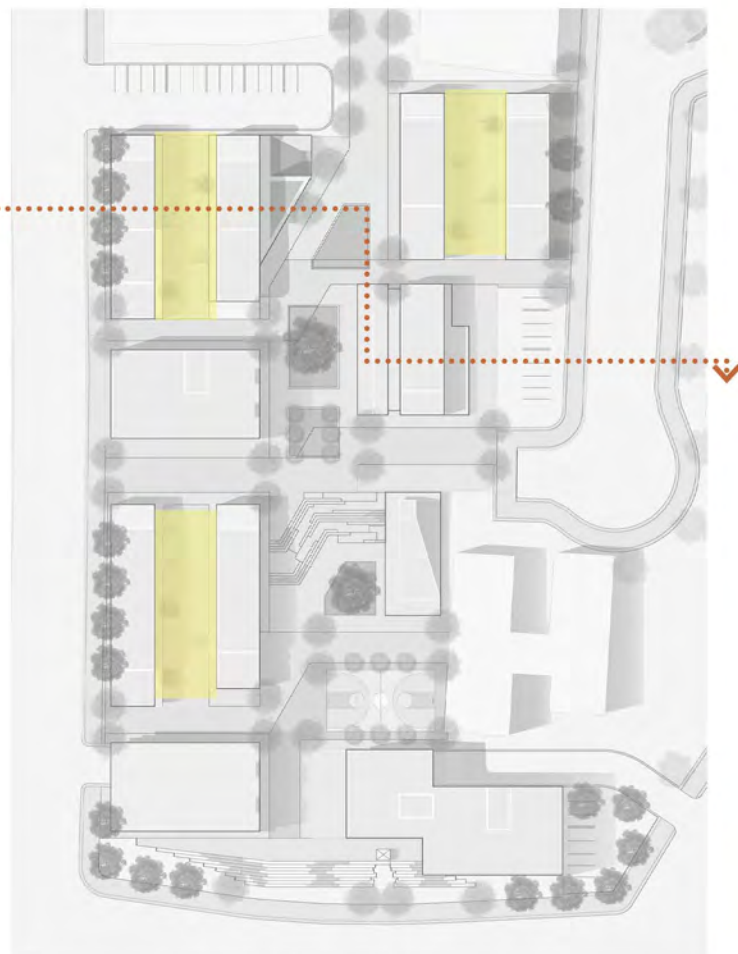


COMMUNITY CORRIDOR



COMMUNITY PATIO

The spaces between housing are rich with detail & opportunities for community connection. Balconies spanning each floor behave like outdoor hallways & extended porches. The Community Patios, shared courtyards for the residents between housing blocks, encourage connection with neighbors, year-round gathering & activity, as well as keeping "eyes on the street." Each patio has a unique identity thanks to polychromed plexiglas shade canopy, colorful native planting & floor murals that can be repainted to reflect current residents.



RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

Rainwater collection 100K

On-site filtration and 100k gallon cistern to collect and recirculate rainwater for landscape irrigation

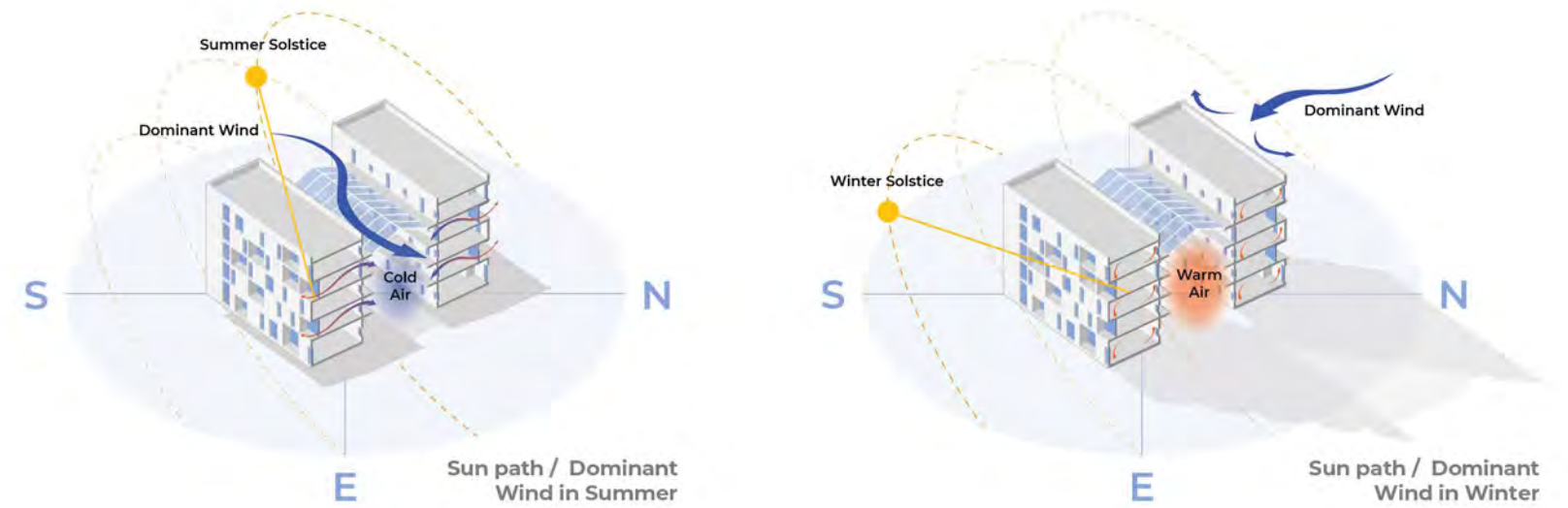
CLT 2MO.

Cross-laminated timber core and slab reduces construction schedule by 2 months at a price of \$75 psf

Passive House 40%

4% construction premium catered to hyper insulation with 40% reduction in utility costs (annual project savings of \$211,104)

Climate resiliency & energy efficiency measures are critical for sound construction & community development. Passive housing design elements utilize hyper insulation, strategic shading & building orientation to provide significant energy savings. The site is oriented to take advantage of summer wind conditions for cooling & winter weather conditions for minimal heat loss. These elements combined accumulate to an approximate 60% savings on utilities, nearly \$1,786 per unit. Green roofs, permeable paving, underground water capture & an urban canopy of 70+ native tree species create a new sense of place while at the same time reduce water usage & impact of reflective urban heat. Together these elements support a site & community that is at once resilient & beautiful.



Photovoltaic
Photovoltaic arrays on each of the housing buildings provide a clean, green source of power for residents.

Rainwater Collection
Community Patio canopies not only shelter residents from storm events, but help to channel rainwater through to an underground rainwater cistern system with a capacity over 100,000 gallons. This graywater will help to irrigate planting & the community garden on site.

CLT
Use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) construction results in fast installation, lowered waste & utilization of renewable base materials. Renewable timber CLT wall assembly utilizes mixed EPS rigid insulation & rockwool batt insulation for temperate control

Passive Housing
Design elements align with the Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) standards & use advanced building technologies resulting in a reduction of energy uses up to 60%. Design elements result in lower overall energy usage, particularly with regard to indoor temperature regulation & air ventilation.

Green Roof
Green roofs top off housing buildings & provide environmental benefit in addition to creating more space for residential recreation. Greening reduces heat transfer on hot days, provides insulation on colder ones & slows rainwater runoff during storm events.

Urban Canopy
70+ new trees, all native to the region, are planted across the site to mitigate reflective urban heat & rainwater runoff.

Permeable Paving

Shading
Building orientation & strategically-placed shading features (eg. shade screens & patio canopies) reduce overall energy usage by helping to mitigate direct heat & associated energy needs.

Natural Ventilation

OUR VOICES OF REASON

The proposal has been shaped by the perspectives & expertise of a community of activists, architects, developers & lawyers. Each have laid a cornerstone for different stages & dimensions of the proposal.



Michael Yellin
New Rochelle Municipal Housing Authority (NRMHA), Commissioner

"Thanks, again, for everything you are doing for Bracey residents and the City of New Rochelle. I'm looking forward to continuing the journey with you..."



Joshua Simon East Bay Asian Development Corporation (EBALDC), Executive Director

"Commercial is an accessory use to the housing... Blend and braid them."



Angela Farrish
New Rochelle Municipal Housing Authority (NRMHA), Executive Director

"The goal is expand housing at the Bracey Houses site, increase on-site services at Bracey, and increase housing within New Rochelle more generally."



Kwamain Dixon
Community Advocate

"My mother, brother and sister all moved over to the other side of... Bracey apartments... the new development came, all of a sudden, they... had to relocate to the Bracey apartment. It was sad, because all we knew was the side that we grew up on.... we interacted and had family members on the other side it's just not the same. You see your area that you grew up in and lived in for so long."



Michael Pyatok, FAIA
Pyatok Architecture

On BPB's Live-Work unit innovation: "retail shops, artisan outlets, and 'makers' workshops function in other countries. What I always enjoy is how little space they use, and how narrow the pedestrian walkways can be. Hopefully this helps inform you."



Anne Zahner
Urbanist and Advocate for Public Spaces, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative

"Unearthing the history of a place, naming the people who's imprint is there just below the surface (or deep below the surface), builds a connection that motivates development."



NEW ROCHELLE MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JASON LABATE, Esq.
GENERAL COUNSEL

April 18, 2022

Dear Plimpton Poorvu Design Prize Committee,

I am writing in support of the Plimpton Poorvu Prize 2022 entry,
"Bracing Peter Bracey: Reclaiming Power and Retaining Roots in New Rochelle".

Naksha Satish, Youngju Kim, Arami Matevosyan and Hana Cohn have done a remarkable job of incorporating the New Rochelle Municipal Housing Authority's (NRMHA) goals as we move forward with our redevelopment plans for Peter Bracey Houses. This team of talented students has corresponded and collaborated closely with the Housing Authority and the community. They clearly understand and appreciate what we are attempting to do in our repositioning of this valuable asset.

The NRMHA is currently in the process of developing plans to maximize and leverage the value of the Bracey property and use the expanded housing as a means of community development. The students' innovative, creative and collaborative approach to development will go a long way in helping us meet the needs of our residents and the larger New Rochelle community.

Their proposal identifies the challenges we face and contributes to the conversations we are having about the future of Peter Bracey. Their thorough research and forward-thinking proposals increase the probability that parts of their plans will be implemented. The NRMHA Commissioners and Bracey residents look forward to continuing to dialogue with the Bracing Peter Bracey team in order to achieve the best outcome for the Authority, our residents and the City of New Rochelle.

To that end, I encourage you to award the Plimpton Poorvu Prize to the Bracing Peter Bracey entry. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Yellin
Commissioner