

Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)

Lessons Learned at the Ocean Bay
(Bayside) Apartments
2017-2018



ABOUT ENTERPRISE

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. creates opportunity for low- and moderate-income people through affordable housing in diverse, thriving communities. Over the last 30 years, Enterprise has played a pivotal role in addressing New York City’s changing affordable housing needs. We incubate solutions to some of the City’s most complex housing challenges, scale effective programs, and advocate for policies that increase resources for affordable housing, and healthy, diverse, and stable neighborhoods. Enterprise’s public housing program comprehensively supports the preservation of public housing communities to be green, resilient, healthy and connected to opportunity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the country, public housing authorities (“PHAs”) face a loss of funding that has created a significant backlog in maintenance, repairs, and programming needs. New York City Housing Authority (“NYCHA”), the country’s largest PHA, has unfunded capital repair needs that a July 2018 assessment estimated at \$32 billion. To alleviate the funding crisis and avert future loss of housing stock due to disrepair, NYCHA is using the Rental Assistance Demonstration (“RAD”) and other programs to preserve 62,000 units across New York City. RAD is a national initiative that enables PHAs to preserve public housing developments by converting the federal funding source from the public housing program (Section 9) to the Section 8 program, offering a more secure long-term funding platform; this conversion enables these properties to access sources of financing for capital repairs that have long been used by the affordable housing industry, but which public housing is unable to access.¹ The RAD ownership and management model varies across the country: in some cases, PHAs sell their land and in other cases they lease it; some PHAs partner with private developers to conduct renovations and others do upgrades themselves. In New York City, NYCHA maintains ownership over its developments, but leases land to a public-private entity that oversees day-to-day management.

The Ocean Bay (Bayside) Apartments (“Ocean Bay”), which includes 1,395 units across 24 buildings located in the coastal Arverne, Queens neighborhood,

is the first NYCHA development to undergo the RAD transition. NYCHA facilitated the preservation of Ocean Bay in partnership with a development team which includes: Wavecrest Management, the new property manager who has assumed day to day operations onsite; MDG Design + Construction, the property developer who is conducting the renovations; Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, a service provider; and Ocean Bay Community Development Corporation, the resident liaison.

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. (“Enterprise”), a national community development and affordable housing not-for-profit corporation, partnered with Citizens Housing and Planning Council (CHPC) and Karp Strategies on this assessment of the first RAD project in New York City (collectively, the “study team”).

The goal of this study was to obtain information and a greater understanding about the resident and development team experience of transitioning to RAD in order to:

- 1) Describe the impact of and resident experience in the RAD transition;*
- 2) Provide information on effective strategies in order to inform the program at future sites;*
- 3) Document fears that residents have expressed about the RAD program.*

Enterprise collected data from NYCHA, the RAD development team at Ocean Bay, and Ocean Bay residents over an 18-month period.

¹ Under RAD, public housing authorities convert the funding source that supports a development from public housing subsidy (Section 9) to the Section 8 voucher program. This conversion puts the development on a more solid financial footing because Congress typically funds Section 8 at a higher percentage of need than Section 9. The transition also facilitates capital investment in needed repairs as it eliminates the deed restriction present under public housing that precludes these properties from leveraging financing streams available to affordable housing.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over an 18-month period between Winter 2017 and Summer 2018, the study team collected quarterly reports from and held quarterly debrief calls with the development team and NYCHA and conducted four focus groups with residents, three interviews with resident leaders, and five interviews with members of the development team. From this and other background research, findings and recommendations were synthesized and designed to assist future development teams and other stakeholders to identify opportunities and challenges when expanding RAD to more properties in New York City. The findings and recommendations highlighted throughout the report draw from both effective strategies that the Ocean Bay development team employed as well as from retrospective lessons learned. Findings and recommendations may also inform the national conversation about best practices for implementing this program.

The key findings are as follows:

EARLY RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Communication is vital for supporting a smooth transition process: Clear, thorough, consistent, multifaceted, and culturally appropriate communication is crucial to the effectiveness of the development team's efforts throughout the conversion process. The overarching finding that communication is vital, while most immediately related to resident engagement, is nevertheless a recurring finding that pertains to all facets of the conversion process at Ocean Bay – from resident engagement to construction, property management, social services, and resident stability – and should therefore be viewed as being equally applicable to and supportive of all subsequent recommendations contained in this report.
- Direct participation in resident and community

meetings by the development team with a broad cross-section of the development's demographic is important for ensuring that engagement efforts are responsive to the full range of resident needs throughout the conversion process. Despite a long-term and varied engagement strategy, resident focus group findings indicate that confusion and misinformation about the RAD process and resident protections remained.

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Although residents had a short-term frustration with the conversion process, they are hopeful about the long-term and positive impact of the RAD program. Specifically, the RAD program enabled significant repairs to be made in a relatively short time frame, including unit renovations, interior common space renovations, exterior building work, systems work, and site work, including resiliency upgrades. These repairs would not be possible in this timeframe without the RAD program.
- Residents' experience of the conversion process varied depending on the nature of their interaction with development team members throughout different project phases.
- Residents who experienced construction and communication problems were outspoken about their frustration and fears around a range of issues, from the speed and sequencing of the construction process to concerns around punch list items following the completion of in-unit renovations.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT TRANSITION

- Residents want to better understand what the RAD program entails, and specifically what it means to transition to Section 8. Educating residents about key components of the program and important changes was a continual process that occurred during both the pre- and post-closing period.
- Building resident trust and community buy-in following the development team's designation and throughout the conversion process is important for creating an environment of resident support and program success. Relatedly, establishing a

strong on-site presence, whether through having leadership present at community meetings or having accessible staff present in an on-site office, is an indispensable part of management's broader relationship with residents and in creating a community that residents feel invested in going forward.

RESIDENT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Supporting communication and collaboration between the development team and existing community providers very early on in the process can support a smoother overall transition experience.
- Creating a pool of applicants that are qualified for incoming employment opportunities can help to maximize local hiring efforts.
- As a result of the transition from Public Housing

under Section 9 to the Section 8 program, several services that residents have access to as Public Housing residents in New York City are phased out post-closing, which should be considered in the strategy for the new services that are enabled by the RAD program

- Early communication challenges between on-site service providers and changes in service providers at the community center impeded and delayed Catholic Charities' service delivery.

RESIDENT STABILITY

- Residents expressed fear of widespread displacement despite protections within the RAD program.



The recommendations are as follows:

EARLY RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

NYCHA and development teams should enact an iterative engagement process that is designed based on community demographics and resident needs, can be adjusted based on real-time resident responses, and includes repetition of key information through various methods; this approach could help ensure that information is effectively reaching a broad population and is clearly reflected in project plans throughout the conversion process.

Assess the demographics of the local resident population to create a baseline of information and benchmark engagement participation against demographics to determine who is and is not showing up. Key data points may include the percentage of seniors, people with disabilities, and non-native English speakers. Design a sign in sheet that captures basic information about participants, including age group, preferred language, and building address. After an initial round of engagement, compare meeting sign in sheets to baseline demographics and intentionally adjust the engagement strategy as needed to reach new participants.

Tailor engagement to meet people where they are, both physically and culturally, by designing different meeting types to reach different types of people. For example, if 60% of the resident population is comprised of homebound seniors, consider hosting engagement events at community rooms or lobbies within each building and not at a community center people must travel to. Moreover, employing the same outreach structure and using the same location each time can limit attendance by signaling that meetings also have the same content (even if that is not the case). If someone has a bad experience at one type of meeting or in one location, they are unlikely to return to another of the same sort and in the same place.

Continue to communicate the same information to people many times but through different means.

A concerted effort should be made to ensure that residents are aware of and can easily access information through multiple channels in advance of community meetings. RAD is a significant change, and, in this case, repetition is an asset. As described above, not everyone retains information the same way. Employ varied means to communicate the same message.

Create and use manuals such as the RAD Resident Handbook to reinforce the information provided at resident meetings in an accessible way. The Handbook, or other resources, could be shared as a single document or presented in different sections at different project points in order to present the vast amount of information in more manageable sections.

Trusted community-based organizations and resident leaders should be empowered to be ongoing program partners in educating residents about how the program works and how they can prepare for the transition.

Resident concerns about the RAD program, such as a fear of rent increases, displacement, and loss of tenant protections often stem from a combination of inadequate communication about the conversion process and lack of trust in those delivering the message. In this regard, educating resident leaders and trusted community-based organizations early in the process is important for ensuring that residents understand what the fundamental changes are, what their expectations should be, and what they need to do to prepare for the changes.²

If they have sufficient information, Tenant Association leadership, other resident leaders and trusted community-based organizations can support their communities to be engaged in the process by educating their neighbors on the program, encouraging attendance at community meetings, and through disseminating resources including the RAD Resident

² Enterprise's RAD Curriculum was created to help empower community-based organization and other stakeholders to be able to empower others to learn about the RAD program. See <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/rad-curriculum-facilitators-guide-6364>

Handbook and HUD's RAD Residents Fact Sheets. NYCHA, development teams, and/or community-based organizations may want to more formally engage – and provide stipends for – residents that can be ambassadors to their neighbors to help them understand the program and to encourage them to participate in community meetings.

Development teams should continue to communicate the same information to people many times but through different means. RAD is a significant change, and, in this case, repetition is an asset.

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The development team should continually enhance their customer service delivery model to create a more uniform experience for residents.

Residents' experience of the renovation process relates to the nature of their interaction with members of the development team. Construction is a difficult process for everyone involved and in-home renovations are especially sensitive in low-income communities. Train construction workers to interact respectfully with vulnerable populations.

Development teams, community-based organizations, and resident leaders could give residents tips on how to interact with and help construction workers. For example, moving objects away from the front door can collectively save hours of work time. Reducing nuisances reduces tension on both sides.

Development teams should continually work to set expectations about the true level of disruption during construction.

Development teams should create brief instruction sheets to explain how to maintain or use each new feature, especially locks and floors.³

³ See Enterprise's green Criteria Resident Manual for examples of templates that could be customized for resident guidance on how to use new apartment features, (i.e. slide 45 on recommended maintenance and safety guidance). <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2015-criteria-resident-manual-13383>

Construction sequencing should weigh and articulate the trade-offs between swift implementation and the impact to residents of in-place rehab.

Development team members should clearly articulate the benefits of construction sequencing as envisioned and planned and remind individual tenants of the reasoning when doing unit repairs. Be particularly clear when explaining sequencing that does not appear logical to a layperson, like installing floors before windows. Like with initial engagement, plan to repeat this information many times in different capacities; perhaps also create written materials, such as frequently asked questions, as a leave behind as work is being done in apartments.

Development team members should invite opportunities for resident feedback on the construction process and refine it, as feasible, to address resident concerns.

Construction teams should consider leveraging residents' deep knowledge of their buildings and giving residents a sense of ownership in the renovation process by including them in finalizing the scope of work and the selection of construction materials, wherever possible.

Residents often know their buildings better than anyone and can inform the development team on the property's repair needs and on ways to enhance quality of life. Development teams should create a more robust process to facilitate resident feedback during their site inspections and on the scope of work as it is being finalized and ensure residents know about these opportunities to provide input.

Beyond the one community meeting the development team held at Ocean Bay to inform the scope of work, development teams could include additional strategies such as holding meetings in each building for feedback into the scope of work; surveying residents on the needs in their units and in public areas sitewide; and including interviews of residents during building and unit inspections.

Development teams should consider giving residents a choice between types of features (e.g., dark or light floors; a white or a silver sink) installed in their apartments. A sense of control over one's environment is a key way to establish wellbeing and life satisfaction. Similarly, a feeling of ownership over and investment in one's neighborhood contributes to cleaner and safer environments. Creating a sense of ownership in one space could result in community stewardship and greater upkeep in the long term.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT TRANSITION

NYCHA and the new property manager should overcommunicate the changes in arrangements such as new certification and rent payment processes to limit confusion and support residents throughout the conversion process.

It may take some time for residents, many of whom have been paying rent and reporting maintenance issues to NYCHA for years, to transition. Constant communication in various forms is necessary.⁴ For example, NYCHA and incoming property managers should build off of and maintain their efforts to proactively transition HRA payments to the new property managers to avoid confusion and the potential for eviction notices to be sent to residents erroneously. Additionally, the property manager could offer targeted computer classes to help familiarize residents with online certification procedures.

Future management companies may consider building on Wavecrest's example and establishing a consistent physical presence within the development to be better attuned to community needs while demonstrating their leadership and commitment to the program.

Continue the property management practice of establishing a physical presence at the development. This action demonstrates commitment to residents,

builds relationships, and helps the development team to stay apprised of problems and solve them rapidly. A strong onsite presence enables the management team to connect with and support residents on transition-related concerns in an accessible and direct way.

Develop a flexible and responsive staffing plan for the development team to adequately support the community during the RAD transition given the size of the development and demographics of the resident population.

Similar to Wavecrest's efforts to temporarily ramp up staffing to support the residents in the recertification process, titrate the level of effort and staffing to meet the needs of the community, especially during the engagement and conversion phases where residents form an opinion of RAD and experience its changes for the first time. Level of effort and staffing needs during different transition phases will be determined in the baseline analysis, where the development team should realistically calculate how many residents each staff person can handle.

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⁴ The chart on page 14 of the RAD Resident Handbook shows some of the key changes in arrangements involved in a RAD conversion and may be a helpful handout for residents. See <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569>

RESIDENT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Workforce and job training providers should start working with residents as soon as RAD sites are announced to build a pipeline of ready applicants. Once development teams are chosen, the development team and workforce providers should work together to align training programs with anticipated job opportunities.

NYCHA and community-based partners should promote connections to and an awareness of existing workforce development agencies and organizations with residents in advance of the development team's designation.

In addition to training and certification programs, NYCHA and community-based partners should connect residents with programs that can provide adult education, job readiness skills, wrap around support services, and job retention services to ensure they are prepared to succeed.

Develop an employment plan that takes into consideration resident privacy concerns and how opportunities for these positions can be provided at additional sites.

In addition to providing on-site training and employment opportunities, the development should work with residents who would otherwise be qualified for on-site positions but are precluded from applying due to privacy concerns in identifying opportunities at other sites within the development team's existing portfolio.

Service providers should assess service gaps and prioritize replacement of these services assuming they are aligned with resident needs.

Service providers working with and/or on the development should proactively coordinate with residents, community providers, and the development team to respond to new resident service needs as well as create the infrastructure to support services provided to residents under public housing prior to conversion

to Section 8.

To ensure a coordinated approach, NYCHA and members of the development team should devise a smooth and proactive handoff between social service providers and proactively partner with existing service providers.

NYCHA should set the expectation that the development team proactively work with existing service providers throughout the process. For example, the development team could coordinate a meeting between new and existing service providers to clearly explain RAD and to define the role of each entity during the transition and going forward. Face-to-face interactions can minimize feelings of competition and make future problem solving more efficient.

RESIDENT STABILITY

Management companies should consider developing an eviction prevention plan with dedicated staff that works with tenants, city agencies, and community providers to resolve rent-related issues and mitigate against avoidable evictions.

Designate a dedicated staff member that works with tenants to come up with a payment plan and prevent moving to legal actions.

Work with existing and identify additional community providers and/or city agencies that can assist tenants in developing and maintaining payment plans, as well as potentially provide financial assistance or make referrals to agencies that can assist with rent arrears.

Consider keeping units offline to provide for temporary accommodations and to avoid unnecessary off-site resident relocations.

Although the Ocean Bay RAD conversion is a tenant-in-place renovation, Wavecrest wanted to minimize the extent to which offsite relocations were necessary and purposefully kept units offline throughout the construction process to accommodate relocation requests as opposed to leasing up every vacancy.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS RAD?

RAD NATIONALLY

Overview

Nationally, public housing communities need approximately \$53 billion just to bring their properties to a state of good repair.⁵ In large measure a result of federal underfunding, HUD has estimated that 10,000 to 15,000 units of public housing nationally are lost each year. In 2011, as a way to address these capital needs more quickly, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) launched the RAD program to preserve public housing.⁶ RAD enables public housing authorities (PHAs) to preserve public housing developments by converting the federal funding source from the public housing program (Section 9) to the Section 8 program, offering a more secure long-term funding platform; this conversion enables these properties to access sources of financing that have long been used by the affordable housing industry, but which public housing is unable to access.⁷ Authorized by Congress as a demonstration program and originally limited to 65,000 units, Congress has since expanded the program several times, with the most recent expansion in 2018 increasing the number of eligible units to 455,000. As of March 2019, over 100,000 units have been preserved through RAD, over 75,000 units are being processed for conversion, and almost 150,000 units are on the waitlist.⁸

⁵ Mike Spotts. Public Housing Briefing. Neighborhood Fundamentals, LLC. Oct. 2018.

⁶ Future Prospect for Public Housing in the United States: Lessons from the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program. Alex Schwartz.

⁷ Under RAD, public housing authorities convert the funding source that supports a development from public housing subsidy (Section 9) to the Section 8 voucher program. This conversion puts the development on a more solid financial footing because Congress typically funds Section 8 at a higher percentage of need than Section 9. The transition eliminates the deed restriction present under public housing that precludes these properties from leveraging financing streams available to affordable housing.

⁸ RAD Resource Desk, http://www.radresource.net/pha_data.cfm, March 2019. RAD Program Overview, Nixon Peabody, July 2018.

Key RAD Features

The RAD program has the following key features:

Leverage the Section 8 Program's More Stable Funding Platform

The RAD program builds on the proven Section 8 platform, which has historically had greater funding certainty and an established and broad infrastructure of lenders, owners, and stakeholders that are familiar with and participate in the program.⁹ The two main funding streams that support public housing – the Public Housing Operating Fund and the Public Housing Capital Fund – have long been underfunded by the federal government, providing less funding than the amount needed by PHAs. Persistent underfunding has contributed to the increase in capital needs for agencies nationwide.¹⁰ Shifting the federal funding source from Public Housing funding to the more stable Section 8 platform has thus been one of the primary goals associated with the RAD program and preserving public housing as permanently affordable housing.

Expand Access to Public and Private Resources

The RAD program leverages public and private resources that are unavailable to public housing properties to make needed repairs and ensure long-term physical and financial feasibility of the PHA portfolio. In addition to providing a more stable funding source for a property, the increased programmatic and financial flexibility associated with the Section 8 platform enables PHAs to utilize public and private resources that have long been available to private affordable housing developers, such as low-income housing tax credits and debt. Removing units from the public housing inventory requires releasing

⁹ Overview of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program. June 2014. HUD PPT.

¹⁰ For example, according to a 2018 Citizens Budget Commission report, NYCHA "collected \$306 million in federal capital subsidies in 2017, \$100 million less than it collected in 2002, even though its capital needs grew nearly fivefold in just over a decade. This represents a 66% decline when adjusted for construction cost inflation." See Stabilizing the Foundation: Transforming NYCHA to Address Its Capital Needs.

it from a Declaration of Trust (DOT), which either prohibits or makes it difficult to borrow against a PHA's property. Under RAD, the DOT is replaced with a RAD Use Agreement which requires that the units remain affordable but permits the property to serve as collateral for debt.¹¹ By gaining access to a broader range of resources, agencies can address deferred needs and preserve the physical stock of housing.

Ensure Ongoing Public or Nonprofit Control

The ownership and management models that a PHA can utilize for a RAD conversion vary. A housing authority can choose to self-develop and/or self-manage properties that are designated for a RAD conversion or may choose to partner with a private development team. In any case, HUD requires ownership or control to be maintained by a public or nonprofit entity through a sustained ownership stake or other control mechanisms to ensure building management and quality and resident protections are sustained. If there is a foreclosure, bankruptcy or default of the Section 8 contract, HUD requires that ownership or control be transferred to a public or nonprofit entity.¹²

While provisions in the RAD use agreement are included to ensure that units remain affordable in the event of foreclosure, bankruptcy or default of the Section 8 contract, several concerns have been cited by recent reports and publications, largely related to the fact that some of these provisions have yet to be tested given the newness of the RAD program. For example, according to a 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on the RAD program, while

11 See Status of HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Evaluation and Results to Date. September 2014. The Use Agreement maintains affordability restrictions on the development undergoing conversion. In the event that the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract is removed "due to breach, noncompliance, or insufficiency of appropriations," resident rent contributions for new households are "not tied to individual household income but rather based on a universal area income calculation" and could be as high as 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for an appropriately sized household. For more information regarding the use agreement, see United States Government Accountability Office. Rental Assistance Demonstration: HUD Needs to Take Action to Improve Metrics and Ongoing Oversight. February 2018.

12 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Notice PIH-2012-32 (HA) H-2017-03, REV-3. January 2017.

the use agreement provisions appear to be strong, the strength of those provisions "have not yet been tested in foreclosure proceedings or in courts."¹³ Relatedly, a broader set of concerns have been expressed by advocacy organizations regarding resident rights and with the implementation and oversight of the RAD program.¹⁴ Specifically, in a 2017 letter sent to the HUD secretary, the National Housing Law Project (NHLP) identified eight areas that warranted closer attention and expressed concern that the RAD program has rapidly increased in size without any accompanying evaluation of the impact on residents at converting properties.¹⁵

Enable Long-Term Physical and Financial Health of Converted Properties

One of the primary objectives in designing the RAD program is to ensure that converted properties remain physically and financially viable for the long-term. As a result, project owners of converted properties are required to make significant capital repairs to the property that address the capital needs arising over the next 20 years and to maintain a replacement reserve to support future maintenance and capital needs.¹⁶ Similarly, in order to help maintain the financial feasibility of a project going forward, contract rents can be adjusted annually by HUD's Operating Cost Adjustment Factors ("OCAF") to account for increases in operating costs.

13 United States Government Accountability Office. Rental Assistance Demonstration: HUD Needs to Take Action to Improve Metrics and Ongoing Oversight. February 2018.

14 Among some of the concerns identified were violations of RAD rights and federal laws regarding resident relocations, reasonable accommodation, grievance procedures, and rent-related changes. See Shamus Roller and Jessica Cassella, The Promise and Peril of HUD's RAD Program, <https://shelterforce.org/2018/07/30/the-promise-and-peril-of-huds-rad-program/>, Shelterforce, 2018.

15 Advocates Details Residents' RAD Problems. <https://nlihc.org/resource/advocates-detail-residents-rad-problems>

16 United States Government Accountability Office report on RAD. February 2018.

Safeguard Long-Term Housing Affordability

For public housing conversions under the RAD program, the Section 8 contract associated with a development receiving assistance is statutorily required to be renewed upon expiration in perpetuity. Additionally, any refinancing or restructuring of the permanent debt during the contract term must be approved by HUD to ensure that it is consistent with long-term preservation. Requiring contract renewals and receiving HUD approval for refinancing or debt restructuring helps to ensure that long-term housing affordability is preserved for residents. Additionally, any vacant units are filled from a section 8 waiting list, which is restricted to very low-income residents (those making 50% of area median income or below).¹⁷

Ensure Residents are Protected and Benefit from the Conversion

Under the RAD program, residents are protected by specific rights provided by federal statute, HUD regulations, and HUD notices. The RAD program rights were designed to ensure that residents benefit from the conversion process and that there is a continuance of certain rights in the transition from public housing to the Section 8 program. *Key resident rights include:*

- **Right to Stay, Right to Return:** Current residents – specifically defined as anyone on the existing public housing lease – have a “right to stay” after RAD conversion, meaning that they are not required to ‘rescreen’ for eligibility related to income, criminal background, or credit history.¹⁸ Moreover, residents have a “right to return” to their development if they are temporarily relocated during the construction process accompanying repairs. These provisions are fundamentally meant to prevent unjustified eviction or displacement due to conversion.

¹⁷ Ocean Bay (Bayside) Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) RFP, NYCHA, February 2016, 8.

¹⁸ The RAD program allows residents to remain at a RAD property after conversion even if they are over-income and rent will be set at 30% of household income.

- **Renewal of Lease:** HUD regulations require project owners to renew all leases with tenants upon lease expiration, unless cause exists. Additionally, all residents on the original lease have the “right to stay” after conversion.
- **Continued Affordability for Residents:** Under RAD, residents pay an income-based rent that is calculated at 30% of household income. Residents currently paying 30% of their income on rent will not experience an increase in rent payments because of a RAD conversion.
- **Phase-in of Tenant Rent Increases:** A tenant’s rent may increase if they were previously paying less than 30% of their income on rent. If a tenant’s monthly rent increases by more than the greater of 10 percent or \$25 purely as a result of conversion¹⁹, the rent increase will be phased in over 3 or 5 years. A PHA must create a policy setting the length of the phase-in period at three years, five years, or some combination depending on circumstances. Under NYCHA, if a resident is not already paying 30% of income on rent, there is a five-year phase-in period where rent will be incrementally increased until it hits 30%.²⁰
- **Resident Procedural Rights:** Under RAD, tenants maintain the right to adequate notification in the event of lease termination and to a grievance procedure if disputes arise with the property manager.

Provide Economic Opportunity and Services for Residents

Under the RAD program, all project work associated with the conversion, whether new construction or rehabilitation activities, is subject to Section 3 requirements, which stipulate that recipients of certain forms of HUD or housing and community development funding must provide training,

¹⁹ As opposed to being caused by an increase in income.

²⁰ See Draft PHA Agency Plan: Annual Agency Plan for Fiscal Year 2019. New York City Housing Authority, April 6, 2018.

employment, and contracting opportunities to residents of the developments, as well as other public housing residents, low-income residents, and eligible businesses.²¹ Moreover, the property owner of the RAD site must offer families supportive services.²²

Choice and Mobility

Through RAD, residents have an option to request a tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) that can be used to rent housing in the private market after they have lived at the RAD site for a year. If a tenant decides to move with a HCV, the original RAD unit also maintains its subsidy, keeping it affordable for the next family.

RAD NATIONALLY

Overview

The national public housing funding deficit is particularly salient in New York City. NYCHA, the country's largest PHA, maintains unfunded capital repair needs totaling \$31.8 billion as of 2018.²³ In December 2018, the Mayor's Office and NYCHA released NextGeneration NYCHA 2.0, a 10-year plan to address \$24 billion in vital repairs to the city's public housing. NYCHA 2.0 builds on the authority's preservation efforts by expanding upon NYCHA's 2015 strategic plan, NextGeneration NYCHA. By leveraging funding using HUD Section 8 conversion programs including RAD, NYCHA 2.0 will preserve a total of 62,000 units, addressing an anticipated \$12.8 billion of capital need over ten years.

In New York City, the RAD Roundtable on Resident Rights and Protections – which included residents of NYCHA public housing, advocates, and community-based organizations – developed the RAD Guiding

Principles in partnership with NYCHA to ensure that the rights of tenants are protected as NYCHA preserves properties through RAD. The Guiding Principles enhance the rights and protections guaranteed by the federal program, outlined above. In addition to the rights and protections established in the RAD Guiding Principles, the RAD Request for Proposal (RFP) released by NYCHA also enumerates several requirements that the development team must adhere to throughout the conversion process. These protections and requirements are enforced in the RAD conversion documents that the development team must comply with as a component of the conversion process.²⁴

Some of the key features of the program in New York City, include the following features, requirements, and responsibilities:²⁵

Public Ownership of Land and Participation in Building Ownership

NYCHA retains ownership of the land at the RAD-converted development and enters into a 99-year ground lease with the project owner. At Ocean Bay, NYCHA is a 51% owner in the general partnership entity that owns the building.

Public-Private Partnership

NYCHA will partner with a private development team which includes a development partner, property management partner, and service provider. The private development team will oversee property renovations, take over day-to-day management, and provide on-site services.

21 For more information on Section 3 requirements, reference: https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/RAD_Notice_Rev3_Amended_by_RSN_7-2018.pdf

22 This service requirement applies to properties that are using project-based vouchers, which is the case in New York City. https://www.radresource.net/sources/public/RAD%20PBV%20Conversion%20Guide_revpg1.pdf

23 See <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2018/NYCHA-2.0-Part1.pdf>

24 The 'RAD conversion documents' cited here refer to documents such as the Control Agreement, the Operating Agreement, and the Management Plan, each of which are finalized and executed by the relevant development team parties at the time of closing.

25 It is important to note that some of these requirements and responsibilities pertain specifically to Ocean Bay (Bayside), plans for future sites are subject to change.

NYCHA Oversight of Management and Operations

Through several agreements with the development team, including the Use Agreement, the Closing Memo, and the Management Agreement, NYCHA maintains oversight of important management and operational aspects of the development. The Use Agreement includes affordability requirements regarding unit use restrictions and tenant incomes, fair housing and civil rights requirements, as well as provisions preventing the project owners from executing any other agreements that contradict or are in opposition to the requirements established in the Use Agreement. Additionally, the Closing Memo provides NYCHA with “expanded approval rights over project operations, including the selection of the management agent, budget setting, and other financial decisions.” Relatedly, the Closing Memo provides NYCHA with the right of first refusal, which states that the Project Owner cannot sell or transfer the parcel in question “to a third party without first offering it to NYCHA.”²⁶ Lastly, the Management Agreement provides NYCHA with the authority to determine whether the existing management team is capable of continuing their duties and, if deemed necessary, can terminate the existing agreement with the management team.²⁷

NYCHA Oversight of Filling Vacancies

NYCHA will oversee the Section 8 administration including the oversight of filling vacant units. At Ocean Bay, this will be done through a site-based waiting list that requires residents have incomes under 50% AMI, with a goal of 75% being under 30% AMI.²⁸

26 Ballard Spahr. Ocean Bay (Bayside) – Closing memo, April 2017.

27 As stated in the Control Agreement: “the Authority may determine in its reasonable discretion, that the Management Agent is no longer acceptable because of failure to operate the Development in compliance” with the Agreement. Control Agreement Between New York City Housing Authority Ocean Bay RAD LLC. December 2016.

28 This income restriction does not apply to existing tenants of RAD sites as they are grandfathered in.

Lease Addition Days

The Legal Aid Society assists residents in adding household members to their lease and in registering pets and appliances during “Lease Addition” days in the lead up to RAD conversion at a given site. This process is critical because only household members, pets, and appliances that are on the existing public housing lease will be transferred to the new Section 8 lease and have the right to stay.

Resident Training and Hiring for Construction and Permanent Jobs

In addition to the Section 3 obligations, which require the creation of hiring, training, and contracting opportunities for public housing and low-income residents for “all HUD-funded public and residential construction projects valued at over \$200,000”, NYCHA requires that training and employment opportunities for public housing and low-income residents also apply to permanent jobs.²⁹

Service Plan Based on Resident Input

The development team must create a social service plan based on an assessment of the residents’ needs. The team must consult with residents about their preferences for activities and programming, and if a community center existed at the converted development prior to conversion, the team must maintain the center and its services.

29 See Reforming HUD’s “Section 3” Requirements Can Leverage Federal Investments in Housing to Expand Economic Opportunity. June 2019. Barbard Sard and Micah Kubic. According to the CBPP, “Even if HUD funds account for only a portion of a project’s costs, Section 3 requirements apply to the entire project. Requirements apply to contractors as well as grantees.” <https://www.cbpp.org/research/reforming-huds-section-3-requirements-can-leverage-federal-investments-in-housing-to-expand>

RAD AT OCEAN BAY

Overview

Ocean Bay (Bayside) Apartments is the first New York City development to undergo the transition to RAD. The apartments are home to 3,700 residents within 1,395 units across 24 different buildings. The complex is located in the Arverne, Queens neighborhood, a largely low-income neighborhood with a majority African American and Hispanic/Latino population. Ocean Bay's demographics are similar to the neighborhood as a whole: 94% of residents are either African American or Hispanic/Latino and the average gross income is slightly more than \$24,000 a year. Arverne – and Ocean Bay by extension – is a coastal community on Jamaica Bay that has long been vulnerable to flooding. In 2012, Ocean Bay suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Sandy, for which the complex received approximately \$105 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) grants to fortify the buildings.³⁰ Even before being hit by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the Ocean Bay Apartments needed critical maintenance repairs and confronted a deteriorating infrastructure. Hurricane Sandy contributed to both the flooding of the development as well as the destruction of the central heating plant. Due to the combination of storm destruction and general disrepair at the 56-year old housing development as well as the availability of renovation resources from FEMA, Ocean Bay was chosen by NYCHA to be the first site preserved through RAD.

To date, Ocean Bay is the largest single-site RAD conversion in the U.S. The scope of work for physical improvements throughout the 34.5-acre development included energy conservation and resiliency measures; infrastructural repairs such as roof replacements, new boilers, and heating systems; in unit repairs including new floors, kitchens and bathrooms; CCTV camera system installation; and community center

30 Mark O'Meara. Aging Public Housing Development Gets Complete Overhaul After Superstorm Sandy. *Journal of Tax Credits*, December 2017, Vol. VIII, Issue XII. <https://www.novoco.com/periodicals/articles/aging-public-housing-development-gets-complete-overhaul-after-superstorm-sandy>

renovations. Through the transition, Ocean Bay received approximately \$470 million in federal, state, city, and private investment to finance the preservation project.

The development team at Ocean Bay was chosen through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) selection process which evaluated applications according to the following criteria³¹:

1. **Financial Proposal:** Among the factors that were considered are the development team's demonstrated ability to successfully carry out a quality project of sufficient type, size, and complexity in a timely manner.
2. **Development Experience and Capacity:** Factors considered include the development team's experience with in-place rehabilitation, experience with securing project financing, experience with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program as a source of financing, and inclusion of a not-for-profit entity within the development team.
3. **Property Management Experience:** Factors considered include the property management company's experience with similarly sized affordable housing properties, with LIHTC projects, and with managing community facility space.
4. **Quality of Proposed Rehabilitation:** The proposals were required to include details on the proposed rehabilitation scope, including residential interiors, increased amenities, quality of building materials, sustainability, the promotion of energy conservation, and safety and security improvements.³²
5. **Hiring Plan:** Plans that exceed the Section 3 benchmarks were given preference.

³¹ It should be noted that the RFP threshold requirements must be satisfied as deemed appropriate by NYCHA in order for proposals to be evaluated against the competitive selection criteria. Moreover, in evaluating proposals against the criteria, NYCHA looks at the “combined experience and resources of all Principals of the Applicant and the Development Team.” Ocean Bay RFP. February 2016.

³² Applicants develop a proposed scope of work which gets finalized after team selection after more extensive property inspections and resident input.

Following RFP submission and review, a development team was chosen by NYCHA to undertake the RAD conversion and manage the property. At Ocean Bay, the development team includes:

- MDG Design + Construction (“MDG”), the property developer who is conducting the renovations;
- Wavecrest Management (“Wavecrest”), the new property manager who has assumed day to day operations onsite,
- Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, a service provider; and
- Ocean Bay Community Development Corporation (“Ocean Bay CDC”), the resident liaison.

GOALS OF THIS STUDY

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. (Enterprise), a national community development and affordable housing not-for-profit, coordinated and sponsored a study to obtain information and a greater understanding about the resident and development team experiences of undergoing the initial phases of the RAD transition at the City’s first RAD project at Ocean Bay (Bayside) in the Rockaways, Queens.

Enterprise coordinated this study with Karp Strategies and the Citizens Housing and Planning Commission (CHPC); and the study was also informed by Ocean Bay residents, NYCHA, and the Ocean Bay development team members.

The overall goal of the study was to obtain information and a greater understanding about the resident and development team experience of transitioning to RAD to:

- 1. Describe the impact of and resident experience in the RAD transition;*
- 2. Provide information on effective strategies to inform the program at future sites;*
- 3. And address common fears that residents have expressed about the RAD program.*

As appropriate, findings and recommendations may also inform the national conversation about best practices for implementing this program.

COMPONENTS OF THE STUDY

The research, key findings, and recommendations contained in this report are supported by four main data sources: focus groups, interviews and development team quarterly reports, each of which are briefly described in turn.

Focus Groups and Interviews:

Between Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, Karp Strategies conducted four focus groups with residents, three interviews with resident leaders, and five interviews with members of the development team.

Development Team Quarterly Reports:

Throughout the study period Enterprise received six quarterly reports from the development team that detailed status updates across the six following categories: construction, resident hiring, community building, service connections, relocation, and resident retention.

The main findings in this report are outlined in the following five primary sections and describe the experience of residents and the development team at Ocean Bay:

- Early Resident Engagement
- Physical Improvements
- Property Management Transition
- Resident Economic Opportunity and Community Building
- Resident Stability

For each component, we describe below what happened at Ocean Bay, the resident experience based on resident focus group findings, and recommendations based on the findings and lessons learned for residents, development teams, and RAD-related stakeholders going forward.³³ The recommendations include both an articulation of practices or processes that were done effectively at Ocean Bay as well as areas that could be improved upon going forward.

³³ Direct resident experience regarding resident training and employment opportunities, service connections, and resident stability was not captured through the resident focus groups and interviews. While questions were asked about the experience with the on-site service providers, none of the residents included in the focus groups and interviews had any experiences with the providers that they could speak to directly. As such, the “Resident Stability and Economic Opportunity” section of this report does not include a “Resident Experience” sub-section.

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN OCEAN BAY AND FUTURE CONVERSIONS

In December 2018, NYCHA released the NextGeneration NYCHA 2.0 plan, which greatly expanded its preservation strategy from 15,000 units to 62,000 units under the Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) umbrella, which leverages RAD as well as the Section 18 program and Section 8 conversion of NYCHA’s “unfunded” units to preserve 1/3 of NYCHA’s housing stock.³⁴ They have also changed some critical features of how the preservation strategy will be rolled out in the future, including: partnering with small-scale developers, property management companies, general contractors, and social service providers, in addition to large-scale development teams, to ensure that projects provide opportunities for a full range of non-profit and for-profit entities.

Financing Strategy

The Ocean Bay RAD conversion was financed through two sources which, as currently envisioned, will either not likely be available for transactions going forward or only available for select and/or qualifying RAD transactions. Due to the development’s eligibility for FEMA assistance as a result of the damage sustained from Hurricane Sandy, over more than \$100 million was made available to support the resiliency-related improvements that were made throughout the project site. While there are other NYCHA developments that are eligible for resiliency funding through FEMA, whether or not those developments will be designated

³⁴ Direct resident experience regarding resident training and employment opportunities, service connections, and resident stability was not captured through the resident focus groups and interviews. While questions were asked about the experience with the on-site service providers, none of the residents included in the focus groups and interviews had any experiences with the providers that they could speak to directly. As such, the “Resident Stability and Economic Opportunity” section of this report does not include a “Resident Experience” sub-section.

for Section 8 conversion and if FEMA funds can be used to support³⁵ those conversions is an open question. Similarly, while LIHTC equity was a financing option available to the Ocean Bay development team, the City’s project financing terms for conversions going forward explicitly restricts applicants from including financing proposals that would rely on 4% or 9% LIHTCs.

Section 18

While future sites will not likely have access to FEMA funds or LIHTC, NYCHA is expanding the use of the HUD Section 18 Disposition program, which allows NYCHA to access Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPVs) to secure higher rent subsidies and increase the overall financial feasibility of a project. Section 18 will be used to support Section 8 conversions going forward under NYCHA’s 10-year 2.0 plan. While the Section 18 program is being leveraged in order to enable greater upfront capital investment than could be afforded through RAD alone, concerns about the consistent application of resident rights and protections and permanent affordability have been voiced by advocates and community stakeholders due to different provisions under federal law and HUD regulations between RAD and Section 18.³⁶

Despite the important distinction noted above regarding development typology, FEMA and LIHTC availability, and the utilization of the Section 18 program, all of the recommendations highlighted throughout this report are applicable for future projects.

³⁵ See <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/recovery-resiliency.page>

³⁶ See <http://www.cssny.org/news/entry/testimony-nycha-pact-plan>

EXPERIENCE OF THE PROCESS

Early Resident Engagement

What Happened?

The Ocean Bay RAD transition process has occurred over approximately four years to date, beginning with HUD's RAD application approval in 2015. While resident engagement is critical at all stages and for all aspects of the RAD transition and beyond, there was a long-term early resident engagement period prior to development team selection to inform residents about the RAD program and to let them know what to expect as well as immediately after developer selection. Specifically, NYCHA conducted outreach to let residents know about the RAD program starting in May 2015. From May 2015 to June 2016, NYCHA held seventeen meetings with residents, resident leaders, and community groups on a range of topics related to the planned RAD transition for the Ocean Bay community. Topics ranged from general program overviews to presentations about employment opportunities and planned capital improvements for the development. In addition to NYCHA's engagement efforts, Ocean Bay CDC also worked to notify residents prior to development team designation the RAD transition and potential training and employment opportunities that would be available to residents as a result of the transition by flyering at the development and communicating with the Tenant Association and local community groups.³⁷

The selection of the development team was announced in July 2016 and the first meeting between residents and the development team occurred on July 28th at the local community center. Following the development team's designation, NYCHA's outreach efforts included door-to-door flyering for each phase of the development team selection meetings, the

creation of a dedicated website, and working closely with Ocean Bay CDC to share information about upcoming meetings with residents and the resident association.³⁸ Throughout the pre-closing engagement process (August through December 2016), NYCHA and the development team organized six meetings that included presentations with basic information about the RAD program and which focused on a different topic that had implications for residents at each meeting, ranging from workshops about the lease up process to employment opportunities and services for residents.

During this phase, the development team joined NYCHA in engaging residents by designing and executing a multi-modal engagement, outreach, and communications plan to further educate residents about the RAD program and the development team's plans. For example, Wavecrest created a dedicated hotline that residents could use to contact management directly with RAD-related questions or concerns. Wavecrest also established a permanent on-site management office that enabled residents to interact directly with management staff. Leading up to lease signings, Wavecrest went building-by-building to alert residents and make appointments with them to review paperwork together.

Also during this period, the development team supported The Legal Aid Society in implementing Lease Addition Days in the months leading up to the formal RAD transition, at which point residents needed to sign new leases. Through this process, residents had the opportunity to add new household members to their lease and register pets and appliances. This process is critical because only household members, pets and appliances that are on the existing public housing lease will be transferred to the new Section 8 lease and have the right to stay.

³⁷ In addition to being part of the selected development team, Ocean Bay CDC has been a social service provider onsite since 1999 year.

³⁸ Correspondence with NYCHA Community Development Department, March 2017.

RAD Timeline at Ocean Bay

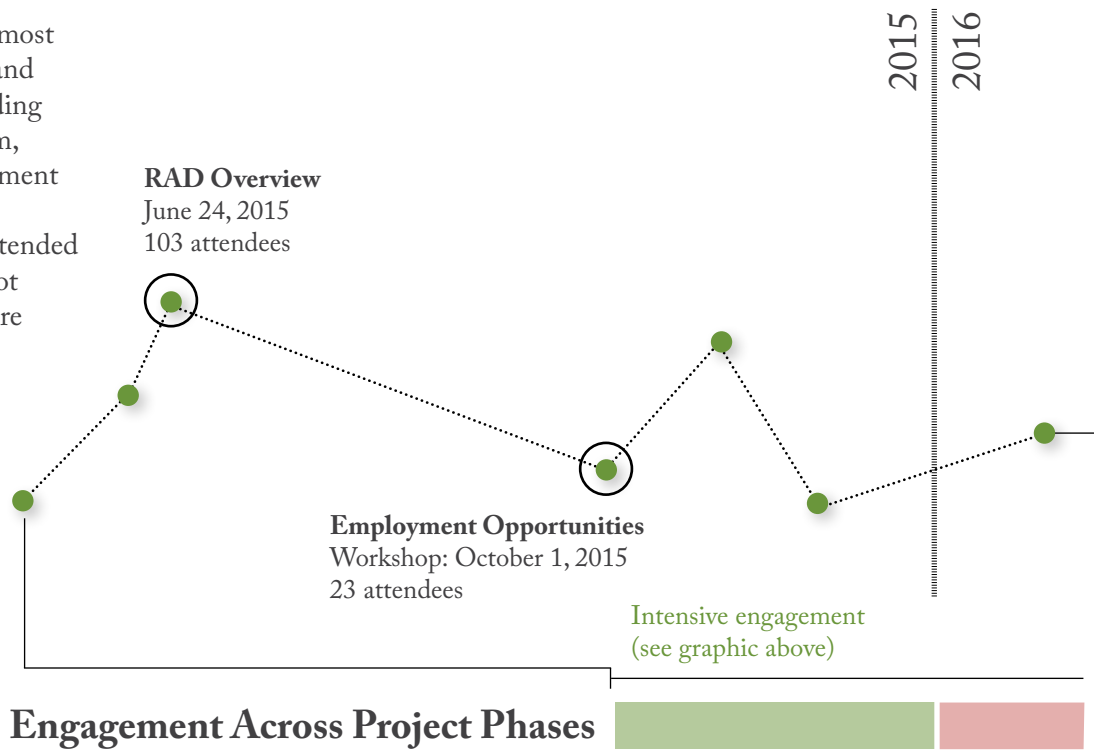
Seven phases across seven years

Intensive Engagement

May 2015 to December 2016

Over the course of almost two years, NYCHA and select partners, including the development team, conducted 21 engagement events.

Over 1,500 people attended events, though it is not known how many were repeat participants.



2013

2014

2015

2016

Resident Consultation & HUD Application

Initial engagement at Ocean Bay

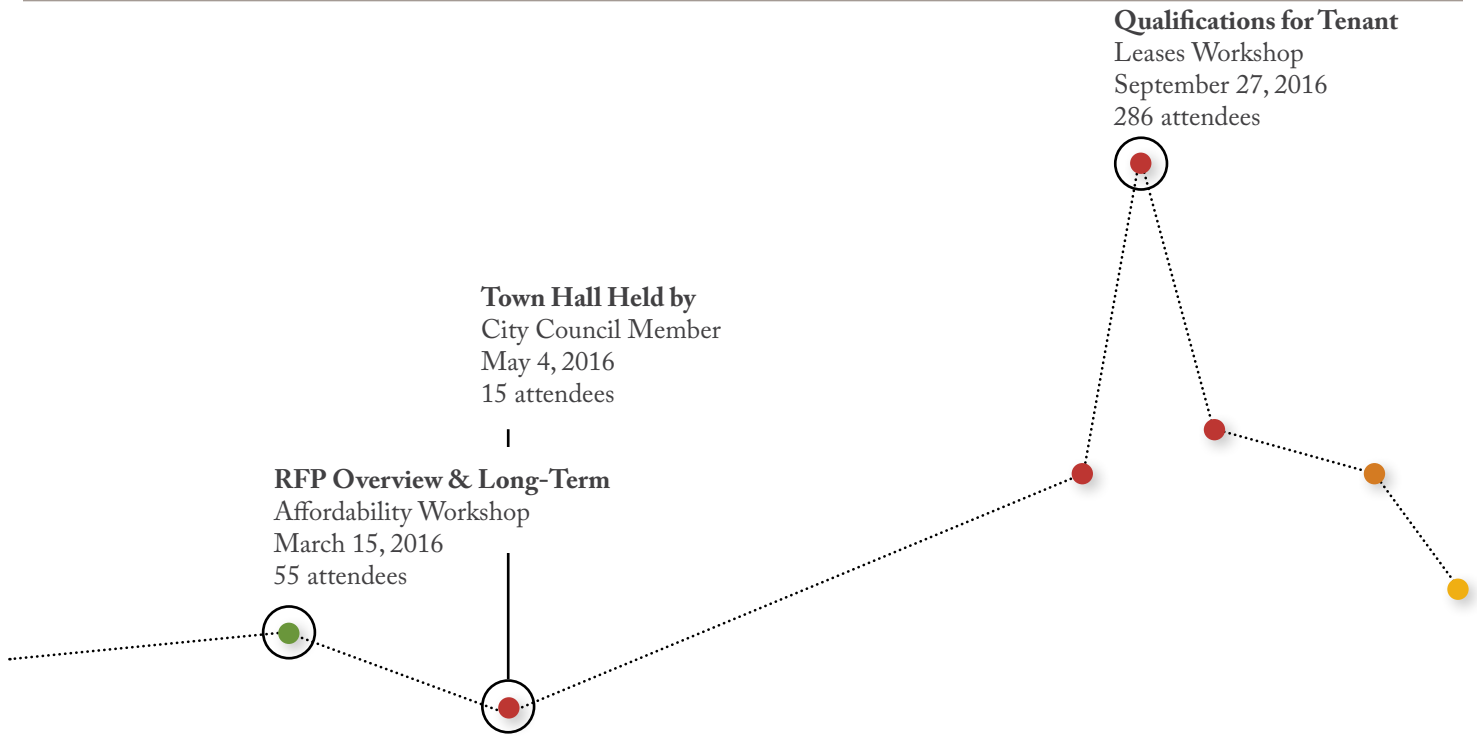
NYCHA RAD application waitlisted due to high demand

Resident Engagement

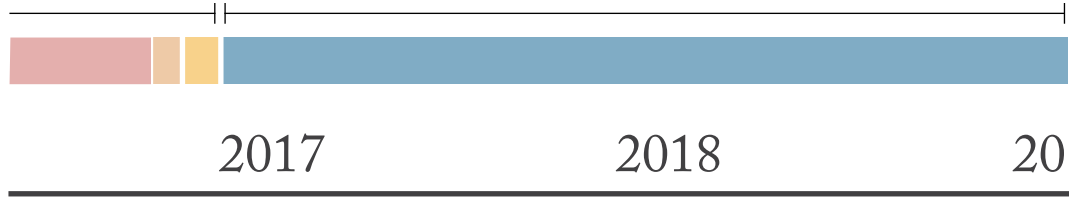
HUD Approval
March 2015

Developer Selection

RFP issued, responses due & team selected

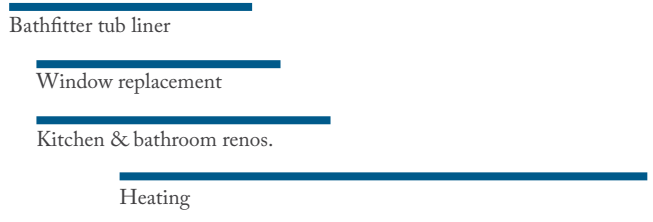


Development team hosts ongoing meetings about RAD progress, goes door-to-door to sign tenants up for leases, and provides contact points for questions and concerns



Renovation

Construction begins and is scheduled in apartments as follows:



Initial scope of work determined

Final Scope of Work

November 2016
Details upgrades to be completed

Conversion

December 2016
Management transitions to Wavecrest

Ocean Bay CDC – as the designated resident liaison on the development team with established relationships in the community – also worked very closely with Wavecrest, MDG and Catholic Charities throughout the pre-closing period in organizing smaller group meetings with residents in between larger community meetings and in more informally speaking with residents and the Tenant Association about the program. For example, MDG participated in resident meetings with Ocean Bay CDC and the Tenant Association to hear resident concerns and questions about the construction process and how MDG planned to sequence construction work and notify tenants throughout that process. Ocean Bay CDC also provided support in terms of notifying residents in advance of meetings and coordinated with the development team to continually inform residents and the community about upcoming meetings throughout the pre-closing transition phase.

In total, from May 2015 to December 2016, NYCHA and the development team conducted 21 community meetings with over 1,500 people attending throughout that period.³⁹ After the transition to new ownership, MDG, Wavecrest, Catholic Charities, and Ocean Bay CDC continued to meet with the Tenant Association to update residents on construction status, address resident concerns about construction and property management, as well as receive input on developing service needs and planning for upcoming community events.

Resident Experience

Despite these efforts by NYCHA and the development team, many residents who participated in the focus groups were not aware of key aspects of RAD, nor about the range of outreach and engagement efforts. This reality is likely due to a combination of factors, including the effectiveness of the outreach strategies, the complexity of the RAD program, and difficulty

³⁹ Over the course of almost two years, NYCHA and select partners, including the development team, conducted 21 community meetings. Over 1,500 people attended events, though it is not known how many were repeat participants. Additionally, the 21 community engagement events do not account for a number of smaller meetings and other forms of engagement that occurred throughout during this time period.

of conducting outreach at a site with 3,700 residents. The findings of this report indicate which engagement efforts seemed to be the most effective at Ocean Bay. According to the resident focus groups and interviews conducted, residents who knew about RAD before construction started primarily learned about the program at community meetings, which they heard about through flyers and monthly tenant association meetings. Despite other outreach methods employed, residents in the focus groups perceived that there were no other outlets used to conduct outreach and education beyond community meetings.

Perceptions of the effectiveness of the meetings were also varied. While community meetings were the primary source of information on the RAD program, residents' frustrations included perceptions that resident questions weren't answered, as well as confusion over who to ask about what was coming next in the transition process. Moreover, the effectiveness of the communication of core program elements – or perhaps the inclination of residents to trust what NYCHA and the development team say – varied. Residents across focus groups expressed an overall fear of displacement, despite the right to stay and continued affordability being core protections within the RAD program. In two of four focus groups, participants expressed the sentiment that RAD would ultimately lead them to have to move or that they would be priced out.

Formally initiated in May 2015, the resident engagement process at Ocean Bay has been an iterative and ongoing experience for NYCHA and the development team. As the conversion process and construction work at Ocean Bay has progressed, so too have the communication strategies and issues of discussion at resident engagement and community meetings. As a result of that experience, several key findings and recommendations have emerged that can lead to a more effective engagement process at Ocean Bay as well as at future RAD developments.

OVERARCHING FINDINGS

Communication is vital for supporting a smooth transition process: Clear, thorough, consistent, multifaceted, and culturally appropriate communication is crucial to the effectiveness of the development team's efforts throughout the conversion process.

The overarching finding that communication is vital, while most immediately related to resident engagement, is nevertheless a recurring finding that pertains to all facets of the conversion process at Ocean Bay – from resident engagement to construction, property management, social services, and resident stability – and should therefore be viewed as being equally applicable to and supportive of all subsequent recommendations contained in this report.

FINDINGS

Direct participation in resident and community meetings by the development team with a broad cross-section of the development's demographic is important for ensuring that engagement efforts are responsive to the full range of resident needs throughout the conversion process. Despite a long-term and varied engagement strategy, resident focus group findings indicate that confusion and misinformation about the RAD process and resident protections remained.

RECOMMENDATION

NYCHA and development teams should enact an iterative engagement process that is designed based on community demographics and resident needs, can be adjusted based on real-time resident responses, and includes repetition of key information through various methods; this approach could help ensure that information is effectively reaching a broad population and is clearly reflected in project plans throughout the conversion process.

- Assess the demographics of the local resident population to create a baseline of information and benchmark engagement participation against demographics to determine who is and is not showing up. Key data points may include the percentage of seniors, people with disabilities, and non-native English speakers. Design a sign in sheet that captures basic information about participants, including age group, preferred language, and building address. After an initial round of engagement, compare meeting sign in sheets to baseline demographics and intentionally adjust the engagement strategy as needed to reach new participants.
- Tailor engagement to meet people where they are, both physically and culturally, by designing different meeting types to reach different types of people. For example, if 60% of the resident population is comprised of homebound seniors, consider hosting engagement events at community rooms or lobbies within each building and not at a community center people must travel to. Moreover, employing the same outreach structure and using the same location each time can limit attendance by signaling that meetings also have the same content (even if that is not the case). If someone has a bad experience at one type of meeting or in one location, they are unlikely to return to another of the same sort and in the same place.

- Continue to communicate the same information to people many times but through different means. A concerted effort should be made to ensure that residents are aware of and can easily access information through multiple channels in advance of community meetings. RAD is a significant change, and, in this case, repetition is an asset. As described above, not everyone retains information the same way. Employ varied means to communicate the same message.
- Create and use manuals such as the RAD Resident Handbook to reinforce the information provided at resident meetings in an accessible way. The Handbook, or other resources, could be shared as a single document or presented in different sections at different project points in order to present the vast amount of information in more manageable sections.

RECOMMENDATION

Trusted community-based organizations and resident leaders should be empowered to be ongoing program partners in educating residents about how the program works and how they can prepare for the transition.

- Resident concerns about the RAD program, such as a fear of rent increases, displacement, and loss of tenant protections often stem from a combination of inadequate communication about the conversion process and lack of trust in those delivering the message. In this regard, educating resident leaders and trusted community-based organizations early in the process is important for ensuring that residents understand what the fundamental changes are, what their expectations should be, and what they need to do to prepare for the changes.¹
- If they have sufficient information, Tenant Association leadership, other resident leaders and trusted community-based organizations can support their communities to be engaged in the process by educating their neighbors on the program, encouraging attendance at community meetings, and through disseminating resources including the RAD Resident Handbook and HUD's RAD Residents Fact Sheets.
- NYCHA, development teams, and/or community-based organizations may want to more formally engage – and provide stipends for – residents that can be ambassadors to their neighbors to help them understand the program and to encourage them to participate in community meetings.
- Development teams should continue to communicate the same information to people many times but through different means. RAD is a significant change, and, in this case, repetition is an asset.

¹ Enterprise's RAD Curriculum was created to help empower community-based organization and other stakeholders to be able to empower others to learn about the RAD program. See <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/rad-curriculum-facilitators-guide-6364>

Physical Improvements: Experience of the Process

What Happened?

Following the development team's selection in late July, the initial scope of work included in the proposal based on NYCHA's physical needs assessment was refined based on more detailed inspections of the site and based on actual cost estimates from the development team's contractor. The development team held a resident meeting in mid-September to receive feedback based on the proposed scope of work, which was finalized in November 2016. The RAD program requires the building's 20-year capital needs to be addressed but allows for the upgrades to be done over time, based on the remaining useful life of building systems. This means that, while much of the scope of work is completed during the upfront renovation work over the first two years following conversion, repairs will continue to be made to the development as needed going forward. In order to be able to address repairs, the development team is required to maintain a replacement reserve that is built up through monthly payments in perpetuity and which is specifically dedicated to future capital needs.⁴⁰ Based on conversations with the development team, the vast majority of the identified substantial renovation scope items were completed within the two-year period.

⁴⁰ Based on data received from the development team, the monthly reserve deposit is \$41,093.62 and as of July 2018 (latest available data), the reserve balance was \$776,919.50. Based on our own calculations, the annual reserve allocation per unit (at \$41,093.62 in monthly deposits) would be approximately \$353 (\$493,123.44 / 1,395 units).

According to MDG, the upfront scope of work for Ocean Bay included upgrades to be completed across eight broad categories:

- **Apartment rehabilitation**, including new bathroom finishes; new kitchen finishes (including new exhaust ductwork and replacement of exhaust fans);⁴¹ new energy efficient windows; new LED energy efficient lighting; new CO/smoke detectors at unit entry foyers and in all bedrooms; new simulated wood flooring; new lever type hardware at all apartment entry doors; new circuit breakers; and new hydronic heating convectors.
- **Building systems**, including roof replacements on twenty buildings; the installation of new energy efficient boilers and hot water heaters on each roof of the twenty-four buildings throughout the development with complete distribution systems and wall mounted heating elements in each unit; full replacements of the development's heating systems; complete upgrades of elevator machinery and equipment; solar panel installation; and the installation of electric service buildings above the flood elevation to protect electric service from flood water.⁴²
- **Public hallways**, including new LED energy efficient lighting and flooring; new public hall windows; and new compactor chute doors.
- **Entrances and lobbies**, including new glazing at entrances; replacing wall and floor tile; new lighting; and new key fob entry system.
- **Flood mitigation and resiliency**, including new flood prevention measures throughout the site; new emergency generators to provide electricity in the event of blackout; and the relocation of individual boilers to the roofs of each of the twenty-four buildings throughout the development.

⁴¹ Replacement of exhaust ductwork and exhaust fans is critical for avoiding mold-related causes.

⁴² According to MDG, other items such as replacement of vertical piping throughout the building and a full electrical upgrade were not needed.

- **Masonry and waterproofing**, including new window sills and steel lintels as needed; brick replacement as needed; and masonry repairs to alleviate water penetration.
- **Security upgrades**, including telephone entry systems linked to tenant phones/cellphones; updated security camera surveillance system throughout each building; and the installation of over 600 cameras across the entire site at strategic locations.
- **Energy conservation**, including energy efficient windows, appliances, faucets and showers heads and lighting throughout the development.

The Ocean Bay RAD conversion was a tenant-in-place rehabilitation project. The goal of the occupied rehab is to ensure that residents are able to remain in their homes while the construction work occurs. According to the development team, the in-unit

construction work was sequenced to ensure that residents were not left without an integral service to the apartment. For example, instead of working on in-unit scope items sequentially, building by building, some of the items were addressed simultaneously (kitchens and bathrooms) across the buildings throughout the development so that residents would not have to be without kitchen or bathroom access for an extended period. In terms of efficiency, performing the renovation work utilizing this process of simultaneously working on different scope items proved effective for the development team, enabling them to complete in-unit work across all 1,395 units within one year. Just as important, the tenant-in-place model approach allowed residents to stay in their unit every night or even while the contractors performed work within the unit. All the in-unit⁴³ apartment renovations occurred in one year, from January 2017 to December 2017.

⁴³ See the Resident Stability section of this report for a discussion on opportunities for residents to temporarily relocate.

Construction Progress, Selected Scope of Work Items: January 2017-June 2018

	2017				2018	
	% of Work Completed (Q1)	% of Work Completed (Q2)	% of Work Completed (Q3)	% of Work Completed (Q4)	% of Work Completed (Q1)	% of Work Completed (Q2)
Apartment Renovations	3%	26%	60%	97%	99.9%	99.9%
Flood Proofing	0%	5%	0%	10%	13%	26%
Electric Service	1%	15%	31%	45%	75%	85%
Hydroponic System Installation	5%	20-25%	41%	56%	75%	86%
Public Space/ Public Halls Completed	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	66%

In May 2018, NYCHA's Leased Housing Department, which is responsible for administering NYCHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8), began Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections at the Ocean Bay development. HQS – the minimum standards established by HUD to ensure that each unit is “decent, safe, and sanitary,” – are an important component of the RAD conversion process; once public housing is transferred to the Section 8 platform, HQS inspections will be completed every two years to ensure ongoing unit quality. HQS inspections include unit interiors, building systems, building common space and exteriors, and focuses on general health and safety conditions including lead-based paint and exposed electrical hazards. HQS inspections occurred over a period of several months as soon as interior and exterior work had been completed at the individual buildings, with the goal of completing all unit inspections by October 2018⁴⁴. As of February 2019, all but 26 units had passed inspections. The remaining 26 inspections are still pending due to the inability of NYCHA to gain access to apartments; it is critical that NYCHA and residents arrange access for inspections as a unit could lose its subsidy if inspections cannot be completed.

Resident Experience

According to the resident focus groups and interviews conducted, resident experience varied throughout the construction process. Residents who experienced construction and communication problems were outspoken about their frustration and fears around a range of issues, from the speed and sequencing of the construction process to concerns around punch list items following the completion of in-unit renovations. For instance, while the development team planned the sequencing described above for efficiency and to minimize disruption of services for residents, residents in focus groups still expressed confusion about the sequence of repairs. For example, residents in one focus

⁴⁴ According to a February 2019 conversation with NYCHA's Leased Housing Department, all but 26 units were inspected by December 31st, 2018. The remaining 26 units will be scheduled for inspection before NYCHA will have to initiate termination action. Going forward, NYCHA will conduct biennial HQS inspection process.

group wondered why windows were installed after floors, as they observed that this sequence resulted in scratching the latter during the installation of the former.

Additionally, although the development team utilized monthly community meetings to explain the realities and disruptions of the construction process, clearly and consistently conveying this information to a broad cross-section of the development's population leading up to and during construction proved challenging at times. For example, some residents expressed frustration with their interactions with construction staff on issues regarding apartment access and timing; some residents expressed their concern that construction work notices were placed on their doors for specific dates and times but that the construction team would not show up, leading some residents to unnecessarily take time off work and lose a day's pay. Residents also explained that it would have been helpful to have more information about the materials used and appliances installed, including how locks worked or how floors and bathrooms should be maintained.⁴⁵

Despite the challenges of in-place renovations, residents across the focus groups think that Ocean Bay will be better in the future because of the RAD program. Residents listed positive quality of life impacts as:

- Beautiful apartments;
- Upgraded elevators with less vandalism; and
- Security camera installation on each floor that has reduced loitering.

⁴⁵ Based on interviews conducted, some residents felt that the construction material quality and new fixtures were cheap and easily breakable.

OVERARCHING FINDING

Although residents had a short-term frustration with the conversion process, they are hopeful about the long-term and positive impact of the RAD program. Specifically, the RAD program enabled significant repairs to be made in a relatively short time frame, including unit renovations, interior common space renovations, exterior building work, systems work, and site work, including resiliency upgrades. These repairs would not be possible in this timeframe without the RAD program.

FINDINGS

Residents' experiences of the conversion process varied depending on the nature of their interaction with development team members throughout different project phases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The development team should continually enhance their customer service delivery model to create a more uniform experience for residents.

- Residents' experience of the renovation process relates to the nature of their interaction with members of the development team. Construction is a difficult process for everyone involved and in-place renovations are especially sensitive in low-income communities. Train construction workers to interact respectfully with vulnerable populations.
- Development teams, community-based organizations, and resident leaders could give residents tips on how to interact with and help construction workers. For example, moving objects away from the front door can collectively save hours of work time. Reducing nuisances reduces tension on both sides.
- Development teams should continually work to set expectations about the true level of disruption during construction.
- Development teams should create brief instruction sheets to explain how to maintain or use each new feature, especially locks and floors.¹

Construction sequencing should weigh and articulate the trade-offs between swift implementation and the impact to residents of in-place rehab.

- Development team members should clearly articulate the benefits of construction sequencing as envisioned and planned and remind individual tenants of the reasoning when doing unit repairs. Be particularly clear when explaining sequencing that does not appear logical to a layperson, like installing floors before windows. Like with initial engagement, plan to repeat this information many times in different capacities; perhaps also create written materials, such as frequently asked questions, as a leave behind as work is being done in apartments.
- Development team members should invite opportunities for resident feedback on the construction process and refine it, as feasible, to address resident concerns.

¹ See Enterprise's green Criteria Resident Manual for examples of templates that could be customized for resident guidance on how to use new apartment features, (i.e. slide 45 on recommended maintenance and safety guidance). <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2015-criteria-resident-manual-13383>

FINDINGS

Residents who experienced construction and communication problems were outspoken about their frustration and fears around a range of issues, from the speed and sequencing of the construction process to concerns around punch list items following the completion of in-unit renovations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Construction teams should consider leveraging residents' deep knowledge of their buildings and giving residents a sense of ownership in the renovation process by including them in finalizing the scope of work and the selection of construction materials, wherever possible.

- Residents often know their buildings better than anyone and can inform the development team on the property's repair needs and on ways to enhance quality of life. Development teams should create a more robust process to facilitate resident feedback during their site inspections and on the scope of work as it is being finalized and ensure residents know about these opportunities to provide input. Beyond the one community meeting the development team held at Ocean Bay to inform the scope of work, development teams could include additional strategies such as holding meetings in each building for feedback into the scope of work; surveying residents on the needs in their units and in public areas sitewide; and including interviews of residents during building and unit inspections.
- Development teams should consider giving residents a choice between types of features (e.g., dark or light floors; a white or a silver sink) installed in their apartments. A sense of control over one's environment is a key way to establish wellbeing and life satisfaction. Similarly, a feeling of ownership over and investment in one's neighborhood contributes to cleaner and safer environments. Creating a sense of ownership in one space could result in community stewardship and greater upkeep in the long term.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT TRANSITION

What Happened?

The transition to a new property management team at Ocean Bay was one of the central changes that occurred and required a period of adjustment for both the new property manager and the residents.

Early Trust Building Efforts

Based on interviews with several members from the Wavecrest management team, one of the primary challenges of the transition was the need to build resident trust and buy-in. Resident concerns about the RAD program – particularly concerns surrounding displacement, rent increases, and relocation – made it necessary for Wavecrest to adopt several approaches to help build resident trust. Although the official management transition did not occur until late December 2016, leadership from Wavecrest began initiating formal contact with Ocean Bay residents soon after NYCHA’s official designation of the development team in late July 2016. From late July to late December a series of meetings, both formal and informal, occurred across a range of topics and issues related to the management team’s transition into the new property management role.⁴⁶ Additionally, Wavecrest set up a phone hotline and a dedicated email address in August 2016 so that residents could have a direct line of communication with management throughout the pre-closing phase.

On-Site Staffing

The Wavecrest management team’s overall on-site staffing consisted of 51 total employees. Confirmed permanent NYCHA resident hires totaled 30, with Wavecrest hiring 26 porters, 1 sanitation worker, and 3 gardeners. The majority of the temporary positions were movers. Prior to Wavecrest taking over

⁴⁶ Some of these meetings involved topics such as signing new RAD leases, providing employment opportunities, collaboration with social service providers, and developing a security plan for the development.

management duties, under NYCHA management there were 31 full-time, permanent positions, with 25 caretakers and 6 maintenance workers.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ NYCHA required Wavecrest to provide opportunities for existing NYCHA management staff to apply for positions and be given the right of first refusal for positions for which they are qualified; no NYCHA staff were ultimately retained onsite at Ocean Bay and were instead redeployed by NYCHA to other sites.

NYCHA Hires at Ocean Bay by Wavecrest Management

2018- Wavecrest On-Site Management

TITLES	HEAD COUNT
Porters	24
Handyman	6
Super/Asst. Super	2
Other Construction	7
Administrative	12
TOTAL	51

Changes in Arrangements

The transition of property management from NYCHA to Wavecrest resulted in many changes that affect residents’ daily lives. For example, after conversion, residents pay rent (including any rental arrears) to Wavecrest instead of NYCHA and annual recertification occurs with both NYCHA and Wavecrest. Additionally, residents will have to contact Wavecrest for any questions related to their lease and general property maintenance issues, though will contact NYCHA for issues related to their Section 8 subsidy.

Two of the significant changes that occurred when preparing for the transition from public housing to Section 8 was the need for residents to sign new leases and for residents to recertify in the Section 8 system which is online, unlike the current public housing recertification system.⁴⁸ The lease up process included

⁴⁸ NYCHA introduced the online Section 8 recertification process in September 2017.

signing a new lease agreement with Wavecrest, the signing of a Tenancy Addendum to the lease agreement, as well as signing the Statement of Family Responsibility.⁴⁹ Through Lease Addition Days, residents had an opportunity to add family members, pets and appliances to their public housing lease so that they could be transferred to the new Section 8 lease. Leases were signed in the several months leading up to the December 2016 conversion. As of May 2017, all but 15 leases were signed; in these cases, tenants either refused to sign the new leases, the tenants of record could not be located, or they had passed away.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher certification process required all residents to do provide information regarding family income, household composition, and assets and to conduct this certification process online with NYCHA. Because Ocean Bay's project financing included the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), any LIHTC-supported units are also subject to an income recertification process, residents were required to go through an additional income certification process directly with the development team. In addition to setting up computers in the management office to assist residents in navigating the recertification procedures, Wavecrest brought 10 staff members onsite during late 2016 to provide the capacity to consult with residents individually about the changes to Section 8 paperwork and income certification documentation.

In addition to these two significant processes that needed to be done upfront, the property management transition also affected routine procedures, including monthly rent payment. The changes in rental payment arrangements took some transition time for both

⁴⁹ The Tenancy Addendum is a HUD-required form that must be signed by both the landlord and the voucher participant in the Section 8 Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program. The document is in addition to the lease agreement between the landlord and the voucher participant and stipulates certain rights and responsibilities as it pertains to the two entities. Relatedly, the Statement of Family Responsibility is a HUD-required form that stipulates certain family rights (to move, to terminate the lease, etc.) while also clarifying certain family obligations related to providing information, allowing Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to inspect units and notifying PHAs about any tenancy changes. The Statement of Family Responsibility is signed by both the household and by the PHA.

residents as well as agencies involved. Some residents continued to pay NYCHA even after the property management transition. For some residents on public assistance, the Human Resource Administration (HRA) makes a portion of their rental payments; these payments have historically been paid directly to NYCHA and they needed to be rerouted to Wavecrest upon the management transition in late December. However, the re-routing of payments continued to be made to NYCHA initially and some residents were sent eviction notices for non-payment. However, NYCHA is aware of this problem and, as of this writing, is taking steps to rectify the situation. To our knowledge, no one has been evicted from Ocean Bay due to this error, but it caused confusion for some tenants.

Resident Experience

For residents, the transition from public housing to Section 8 and to new property management meant interacting with new people onsite, determining who to contact for specific questions, and new paperwork and protocols. Conversations during the focus groups revealed that while some residents expressed no problems with the new procedures, others were confused and/or expressed frustration around program mechanics, including:

- Paperwork requirements under Section 8 that were more extensive than expected and were online, which was challenging for some, particularly the elderly;
- The process for recertification which required income certifying separately with both NYCHA and Wavecrest and for which residents did not understand the rationale;
- And confusion over changes in rent protocols, including the process for where, how and to which entity rent should be paid. This confusion was a major source of concern and distress, especially for residents who have had payment methods declined due to the timing of when rent is taken out of their account and who have had to dispute – or had the prospect of disputing – rent payments in housing court.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ This is based on resident focus group findings that were conducted in winter of 2018.

FINDINGS

Residents want to better understand what the RAD program entails, and specifically what it means to transition to Section 8. Educating residents about key components of the program and important changes was a continual process that occurred during both the pre- and post-closing period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NYCHA and the new property manager should overcommunicate the changes in arrangements such as new certification and rent payment processes to limit confusion and support residents throughout the conversion process.

- It may take some time for residents, many of whom have been paying rent and reporting maintenance issues to NYCHA for years, to transition. Constant communication in various forms is necessary.¹ For example, NYCHA and incoming property managers should build off of and maintain their efforts to proactively transition HRA payments to the new property managers to avoid confusion and the potential for eviction notices to be sent to residents erroneously. Additionally, the property manager could offer targeted computer classes to help familiarize residents with online certification procedures.

FINDINGS

Building resident trust and community buy-in following the development team's designation and throughout the conversion process is important for creating an environment of resident support and program success. Relatedly, establishing a strong on-site presence, whether through having leadership present at community meetings and having accessible staff present in an on-site office, is an indispensable part of management's broader relationship with residents and in creating a community that residents feel invested in going forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future management companies may consider building on Wavecrest's example and establishing a consistent physical presence within the development to be better attuned to community needs while demonstrating their leadership and commitment to the program.

Continue the property management practice of establishing a physical presence at the development. This action demonstrates commitment to residents, builds relationships, and helps the development team to stay apprised of problems and solve them rapidly. A strong onsite presence enables the management team to connect with and support residents on transition-related concerns in an accessible and direct way.

Develop a flexible and responsive staffing plan for the development team to adequately support the community during the RAD transition given the size of the development and demographics of the resident population.

- Similar to Wavecrest's efforts to temporarily ramp up staffing to support the residents in the recertification process, titrate the level of effort and staffing to meet the needs of the community, especially during the engagement and conversion phases where residents form an opinion of RAD and experience its changes for the first time. Level of effort and staffing needs during different transition phases will be determined in the baseline analysis, where the development team should realistically calculate how many residents each staff person can handle.

¹ The chart on page 14 of the RAD Resident Handbook shows some of the key changes in arrangements involved in a RAD conversion and may be a helpful handout for residents. See <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569>

RESIDENT ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

What Happened?

Resident Training and Employment Opportunities

As of June 2018, the development team had hired a total of 88 NYCHA residents for temporary and permanent positions. The process for preparing residents for employment opportunities began with two employment opportunities workshops hosted by NYCHA in the fall of 2015 and the early winter of 2016. Following these initial employment workshop convenings, approximately six months prior to the development team's designation, Ocean Bay CDC (OBCDC) initiated outreach efforts to alert the community and residents about the potential employment opportunities. OBCDC's long-term presence in the Far Rockaway community enabled the organization to get a jumpstart on the process of preparing a pipeline of potential applicants for both construction-track and property management-track positions. To make residents aware of their training and employment referral services, OBCDC aggressively distributed fliers on cars and in heavy pedestrian-trafficked areas throughout the Ocean Bay development and broader community.

Following the development team's selection in July 2016, OBCDC made referrals to the team for employment positions as they became available. Resume referrals to the development team were sent to Wavecrest and MDG using separate email accounts. This sorting strategy allowed for a smoother and more direct hiring process when interviews for positions became available in late 2016. Many of the referrals came from past hard

skills trainings hosted by OBCDC and from walk-ins who had skills in grounds keeping or general labor. OBCDC's previous trainings included Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10, Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER), mold and asbestos, entry-level carpentry, and basic electrical maintenance. MDG and Wavecrest also received referrals through NYCHA REES, NYC Business Solutions, and the Rockaway Workforce1 Career Center. There were not new training courses offered specifically tailored to the positions made available through the RAD conversion. Many of the applicants had previously completed training courses or acquired relevant certifications and the development team looked for prior or applicable experience in the field when hiring residents. At Ocean Bay, resident hires came from both the Ocean Bay site, and from NYCHA developments in other parts of the city.⁵¹ Specifically, 48 resident hires came from Ocean Bay and 40 came from other NYCHA developments.

The Ocean Bay development team worked with NYCHA's Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability ("REES") Office to develop an employment plan to help them and their subcontractors in identifying employment opportunities for qualified NYCHA and local area residents. The development team's initial goal was to hire at least 30 (20 construction and 10 management) NYCHA residents. As of June 2018, the development team had exceeded this goal, having hired 70 NYCHA residents for permanent positions and 18 NYCHA residents for temporary positions.⁵²

Construction jobs comprised 39 of the permanent hires and management jobs accounted for the remaining 31 hires. Residents in a majority of the permanent jobs received an average salary of \$15/hour, while those in prevailing wage construction jobs

⁵¹ Due to issues regarding resident privacy concerns, residents who lived at the Ocean Bay site were unable to apply for jobs that would have required entering residents' apartments or accessing sensitive information.

⁵² The 70 permanent hires represent total cumulative hires achieved throughout the duration of the 18-month study period and do not account for resignations and terminations. When accounting for terminations and resignations, total permanent hires achieved was 59.

made \$41 - \$98/hour. Twenty (65%) of the permanent management jobs provided entry level applicants with employment opportunities for positions such as porter (caretaker) and security guards. Twenty-two (56%) of the permanent construction jobs provided applicants with employment opportunities for positions such as prevailing wage monitors, office administrators and laborers.⁵³ The development team also looked for opportunities to help build career pathways by connecting individuals to activities such as job-shadowing and on-the-job training for several of the positions referenced above. For example, one former Ocean Bay resident was hired as a porter and within 10 months was promoted to lead porter, overseeing a staff of 23 people and leading to a 15% increase in the resident’s wages.

Despite exceeding the initial goal of hiring at least 30 NYCHA residents, the development team still encountered several challenges related to maximizing employment opportunities for residents more

⁵³ Workers (referred to here as “Laborers”) working with certain subcontractors on the development team rotate assignments based on the demand for their trade. As work is completed in phases, some trades may be needed in the early or later phases of work. To accommodate, workers will rotate responsibilities to allow for ongoing employment opportunity, performing various tasks such as inventory management, carpentry, etc., based on their existing trade and/or skill set.

broadly. Specifically, matching the available job opportunities with the skillsets and qualifications of the residents proved challenging for two primary reasons. Firstly, although some of the residents who secured employment with the development either had completed basic workforce development certifications or were referred by workforce service providers operating in the Far Rockaway community, the jobs that became available at the site often required skills and experience beyond the qualifications that residents possessed. For example, although carpentry positions were available and needed to be filled by the development team, many of the local residents did not have the experience or skills to qualify for the available job opportunities. A second challenge in terms of hiring related to the issue of resident privacy concerns. Although many Ocean Bay residents may have had the necessary qualifications for some of the temporary and permanent property management positions (i.e., movers, file clerks, etc.), the issue of resident workers have accessing to sensitive information prevented residents who lived on-site from obtaining those positions.

NYCHA Hires at Ocean Bay by MDG Design + Construction and Wavecrest Management

	Permanent	Temporary	Total Hired
MDG	39	8	47
Wavecrest	31	10	40
Total Hired	70	18	88

Wavecrest hires represent cumulative hires during the first 18 months of the conversion period.

Continuation of Services

In the transition from Public Housing under Section 9 to the Section 8 program, concerns have been expressed regarding the continuation of select services that residents have access to as Public Housing. A clarification of these services is described below, including the following:

- **NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA)**
The NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA), funded by Robin Hood, provides employment-linked training opportunities and job placement assistance to NYCHA residents in the construction, maintenance, and janitorial fields. In December 2018, NYCHA announced HIRENYCHA with the NYCHA 2.0 plan. This is an expanded version of the NRTA that is specifically focused on residents at RAD converted sites. HIRENYCHA will have the same program management from within NYCHA REES.
- **Jobs Plus⁵⁴** Jobs-Plus is a public housing-based employment program designed to increase the level of earnings and employment among residents of public housing. Jobs Plus will continue at RAD sites and NYCHA will assess the need on a case-by-case basis with their interagency partners.⁵⁵
- **Earned Income Disregard (EID)⁵⁶** A temporary income exclusion for qualifying residents. Under this program, a certain amount of a resident's verified gross income is not counted when the
54 Jobs Plus grantees that convert the Jobs Plus target project(s) under RAD will be able to finish out their Jobs Plus period of performance at that site unless significant relocation and/or change in building occupancy is planned.
55 Based on conversations with NYCHA, The Jobs-Plus program is a saturation model and is built on the premise that sites will transition over time once saturation is achieved. Sites that are more mature may already be slated for transition, or expansion to a larger catchment area, whether or not there is a RAD conversion. Additionally, if I RAD development team brings in a quality workforce program, we may look to transition or expand the Jobs Plus catchment area to serve developments without onsite services. At present, we have 10 Jobs Plus sites citywide and the two that overlap with RAD conversions are continuing.
56 Tenants who are employed and receiving the EID exclusion at the time of RAD conversion will continue to receive the EID after conversion.

household's rent is determined. The policy is meant to support public housing residents in achieving their economic goals.⁵⁷ In 2016 the EID was eliminated by the Housing Opportunities Through Modernization Act (HOTMA).⁵⁸

- **Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS-SC)** HUD's ROSS program provides public housing residents with coordinators to connect them to supportive services and empowerment activities. In public housing, PHAs, resident councils, and nonprofit organizations can apply to HUD for three-year grants to fund ROSS service coordinators. Ocean Bay CDC, for example, was a recipient of a ROSS grant. When the grant ran out after conversion, OBCDC lost their funding for an on-site service coordinator for the Ocean Bay (Bayside) site;⁵⁹ however, the development team funded a replacement, so the site has been able to retain a dedicated service coordinator.⁶⁰

57 See https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/FY19%20Draft%20%20Annual%20Plan_04.06.2018.pdf

58 The status of the EID is currently pending a final rule from HUD. Similar to the EID program is the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program. Although not accessible to public housing residents in New York City, the FSS program (a HUD program), which "promotes economic self-sufficiency among participating families by referring them to educational, career counseling, money management, job training, as well as job placement services," is available to qualifying residents following the conversion of a development to the Section 8 program through RAD. When an FSS participant's income increases, the increase is escrowed in a savings account rather than put toward an increase in rent. After completion of the five-year program period, participants are then eligible to receive the accumulated money in the savings account.

59 Based on conversations with NYCHA, if a development is covered by ROSS grant, then it will remain covered until the grant ends. According to HUD, "The PBV and PBRA programs do not have a ROSS program. If you currently participate in the ROSS program and your property converts to PBV or PBRA, you may continue participating until the current three-year grant funding for the ROSS program is spent. Once the funds are spent, your PHA cannot apply for a new grant." See https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/RFS7_FSS_AND_ROSS.PDF [hud.gov]

60 To be clear, what we are intending to highlight here is that service providers currently utilizing ROSS grant funds to serve a public housing development will no longer be eligible to use ROSS funds to serve those same developments if they have converted to the RAD program.

Community Building and Service Connections

The social service provider network that serves the Ocean Bay (Bayside) community operates out of the Ocean Bay Community Center and, post-RAD conversion, is comprised of three organizations: The Department of Youth and Community Development's (DYCD) Cornerstone provider, the Child Center of New York (CCNY), Ocean Bay Community Development Corporation, and Catholic Charities Neighborhood Services (CCNS). At the time of transition in July 2016, the community center was operated by the Action Center for Education and Community Development through an existing DYCD Cornerstone contract but was transitioned to CCNY in the fall of 2017. These organizations often partner with and refer clients to other service providers in the community.

Ocean Bay CDC, a community based organization with roots in the Rockaway Peninsula community since 1999, provides a range of direct services and referral support services for both the Ocean Bay (Bayside) development and the broader Ocean Bay community.⁶¹ Ocean Bay CDC's on-site services for the Bayside residents undergoing the RAD conversion include access to the workforce services program, financial education workshops, senior services facilitation, and community needs assessment and resiliency planning (all of which were already in-house prior to the development team's designation).⁶²

Created in 1899, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens (CCBQ) provides over 160 programs and services at 106 different locations throughout Brooklyn and Queens. CCBQ programs include Early Childhood Services, Family Support, Behavioral Health and Mental Support, Older Adult Services,

⁶¹ Notably, Ocean Bay CDC also focuses its service efforts on the more than 10,000 residents in five NYCHA developments including Ocean Bay (Bayside and Bayside), Hammel, Carleton Manor, Beach 41st Street, and Redfern.

⁶² Some of Ocean Bay CDC's workforce services include the Green Construction Training Program and connecting residents to workshops on entrepreneurship and small business ownership, such as the Workshop in Business Opportunities (WIBO), in which residents can learn about starting and growing their own business, including licensing and certification requirements.

Workforce Development, Parish and Community Outreach, Planning and Evaluation, and Volunteer Services. Currently, CCBQ services provided on the Rockaway Peninsula include Behavioral Health, Family Support, Homeless Prevention, Older Adult Services, and Ocean Bay Community Services.⁶³

Beginning in 1953 as a counseling center for children in Queens, CCNY currently operates citywide, serving more than 35,000 children each year, with the goal of strengthening children and their families by providing skills, opportunities and emotional support for healthy and successful lives.⁶⁴ CCNY operates onsite through the DYCD Cornerstone contract, which was not affected by the RAD conversion. CCNY's services at the community center primarily focus on afterschool programming for youth and adolescents.⁶⁵

Ocean Bay CDC provides services onsite through existing public and private funding sources unrelated to RAD, which were enhanced through a contract with the development team to conduct resident engagement and outreach for the first two years of the RAD conversion. Upon conversion, Ocean Bay CDC lost the ability to renew the portion of their existing ROSS-SC grant which provided a service coordinator for the Ocean Bay site; the development team was able to provide resources to keep the service coordinator. Catholic Charities, as the social service provider on the RAD development team, receives funding for social services through an upfront social service budget as well as a guaranteed ongoing budget for at least 15 years that was built into the property's operating budget. Catholic Charities' total social services budget for Ocean Bay is \$6,607,857 over 15 years.

As the primary service provider on the Ocean Bay development team, Catholic Charities began resident

⁶³ Based on information provided by Catholic Charities' Director of Project Management, Ocean Bay Community Services.

⁶⁴ See <http://childcenterny.org/>

⁶⁵ CCNY's afterschool program averages roughly 60-80 individuals per day and operates Monday-Saturday from 2-6pm for kids under 14. From 6-8pm, CCNY also has afterschool programming for adolescents aged 14 and up. Outside of the hours for youth and adolescents, in the afternoon during the weekdays as well as from 8-11pm, services for adults occur at the community center. Per Department of Health regulations, activities for adults cannot occur in the center when youth are also in the center.

outreach and engagement efforts in late July 2016 in order to inform the design and implementation of the service plan for the community and to assess what services they could provide that would complement what was already available from existing service providers. Initially, Catholic Charities intended to have a series of small and large meetings with residents to establish a dialogue around community needs, service provision, and in designing and implementing a service plan for the development. However, Catholic Charities indicated that their ability to move forward with this plan had to be altered due to an inability to secure permanent working space onsite prior to closing at least in part due to coordination challenges with the initial Cornerstone provider Action Center.

As an alternative solution, Catholic Charities presented at several community meetings during the fall of 2016 and, in partnership with the Wavcrest management team, distributed and collected surveys to solicit feedback on service needs. A survey drop

box was set up at the on-site management office and many residents completed the surveys when they signed their leases. The initial survey efforts continued until closing in late December 2016. Between January and June of 2017, Catholic Charities continued to engage residents and develop the service plan through a number of workshops, community events, and fairs (see *Community Building Table below*). For example, in April, the organization conducted a “Community-wide Service Provider Fair,” which served as a kick-off event to help bring awareness of services available to the Ocean Bay community. The Service Provider Fair served as an important foundation in bringing local service providers together and connecting them with Ocean Bay residents, thereby creating an opportunity to further tailor and enhance the delivery of services for the community going forward.

Utilizing the initial surveys and community building activities, and through their partnership with the development team, Ocean Bay CDC, and other local providers, Catholic Charities implemented an interim

Community Building Activities, April – June 2017

Activities Conducted on Site	Number of Participants	Topic Area Covered	Outreach Strategies
Service Provider Fair April 1st, 2017 (Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queen)	150	Local social service agencies, CCBQ local programming, and NYPD Community Affairs	Flyers Banners Emails
Service Provider Fair May 6th 2017	400	Local social service agencies, programming, and NYPD Community Affairs	Flyers Banners Emails
Leadership Focus* Groups, Partners & TA Board Meetings (Ocean Bay CDC)	5-50 Per Event	Jobs Renovations Gun violence Youth Mentoring	Calls Emails Flyers

* Leadership focus groups were several facilitated conversations that were aimed at cultivating leaderships skills and opportunities for Ocean Bay adolescent-aged youth.

service plan largely based on information collected from the community meetings and workshops highlighted in *(See Service Connection Status Table below)*. The interim plan was created in response to the delayed access to a secure working space and was intended to serve as a temporary service plan until the service providers were able to develop a comprehensive social service plan for 2018. Notably, while Catholic Charities began implementation of the service plan throughout the latter half of 2017, they continued to be impeded due to delayed access to the community center. During this time period, Wavecrest provided a hospitality suite for Catholic Charities to work from as a temporary solution to the community center’s inaccessibility.

One additional service that was offered as a result of the conversion process and the development team partnership was the Rent to Build Credit program. The program offers residents the opportunity to use their on-time rent payments to build and/or improve their credit score and first became available in July 2018.

There are currently 29 residents enrolled. This program is being offered at Ocean Bay through partnerships between Enterprise Community Partners, NYC Comptroller’s Office, Wavecrest, Ocean Bay CDC, Catholic Charities, and MDG Construction.⁶⁶

By early 2018, Catholic Charities had gained access to the community center, sharing space with the Child Center of New York (CCNY), the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)-contracted Cornerstone community provider.⁶⁷ Catholic Charities, Ocean Bay CDC, and the Child Center of New York meet monthly to discuss resident concerns and needs. These meetings often also include Resident Association leaders.

⁶⁶ The Comptroller’s Office will be conducting an impact evaluation to assess the impact on resident’s credit scores.

⁶⁷ The DYCD Cornerstone program is a joint project of NYCHA and DYCD whereby DYCD-funded programs servicing youth and adults are located in NYCHA community centers. DYCD is the main vendor and Cornerstone CBO providers contract with DYCD to provide a range of services for both youth and adults. In November 2017, DYCD replaced the Action Center with the Child Center for New York (CCNY) as the designated community center provider.

Service Connection Status, April 2017 – June 2018*

Top 5 Needs Identified	Service Intervention Description
Youth Employment & Workforce Development Opportunities	Supporting youth internship employment opportunities through the Ocean Youth Internship Program, which consists of a 20-week long internship program that includes workforce skills training and creating short- and long-term goals for education and job placement.
Nutrition and Fitness	Primarily consist of Zumba fitness dance and exercise classes as well as healthy choice lectures at the TA food pantry and general food pantry-related services. Food Pantry services operate space in the management office every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, which officially began in October 2018
Older Adult Services	Includes the Young at Heart program, which is a fitness/health wellness program for those 50+ years of age and/or disabled, discussions regarding older adult program services, and participation of vendors that focused on older adults.
Youth Mentorship	Beginning in Summer 2019, Catholic Charities will also administer the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) for Ocean Bay Youth.

* Leadership focus groups were several facilitated conversations that were aimed at cultivating leaderships skills and opportunities for Ocean Bay adolescent-aged youth.

OVERARCHING FINDING

Supporting communication and collaboration between the development team and existing community providers very early on in the process can support a smoother overall transition experience.

FINDINGS

Creating a pool of applicants that are qualified for incoming employment opportunities can help to maximize local hiring efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Workforce and job training providers should start working with residents as soon as RAD sites are announced to build a pipeline of ready applicants. Once development teams are chosen, the development team and workforce providers should work together to align training programs with anticipated job opportunities.

- NYCHA and community-based partners should promote connections to and an awareness of existing workforce development agencies and organizations with residents in advance of the development team's designation.
- In addition to training and certification programs, NYCHA and community-based partners should connect residents with programs that can provide adult education, job readiness skills, wrap around support services, and job retention services to ensure they are prepared to succeed.

Develop an employment plan that takes into consideration resident privacy concerns and how opportunities for these positions can be provided at additional sites.

- In addition to providing on-site training and employment opportunities, the development should work with residents who would otherwise be qualified for on-site positions but are precluded from applying due to privacy concerns in identifying opportunities at other sites within the development team's existing portfolio.

FINDINGS

As a result of the transition from Public Housing under Section 9 to the Section 8 program, several services that residents have access to as Public Housing residents in New York City are phased out post-closing, which should be considered in the strategy for the new services that are enabled by the RAD program.

RECOMMENDATION

Service providers should assess service gaps and prioritize replacement of these services assuming they are aligned with resident needs.

- Service providers working with and/or on the development should proactively coordinate with residents, community providers, and the development team to respond to new resident service needs as well as create the infrastructure to support services provided to residents under public housing prior to conversion to Section 8.

FINDINGS

Early communication challenges between on-site service providers and changes in service providers at the community center impeded and delayed Catholic Charities' service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure a coordinated approach, NYCHA and members of the development team should devise a smooth and proactive handoff between social service providers and proactively partner with existing service providers.

- NYCHA should set the expectation that the development team proactively work with existing service providers throughout the process. For example, the development team could coordinate a meeting between new and existing service providers to clearly explain RAD and to define the role of each entity during the transition and going forward. Face-to-face interactions can minimize feelings of competition and make future problem solving more efficient.

RESIDENT STABILITY

Some of the primary concerns of many residents regarding the RAD program is the fear of displacement and loss of their tenancy status after transition to private management. RAD includes protections for residents, including the right for existing residents to be grandfathered in without rescreening, which includes not being subject to income eligibility or income targeting provisions. Additionally, under RAD, the project owner must renew all leases annually unless good cause exists for not renewing.⁶⁸

Evictions

In the event that legal action is taken to evict a tenant, the property manager must take a tenant to housing court and get a warrant of eviction.⁶⁹ Housing court eviction cases can be either non-payment cases or holdover cases. In a non-payment case, the landlord alleges that a tenant has not paid rent. Holdover

68 As stated in the Resident Handbook: A Guide to NYCHA RAD Conversion, In New York City, “a landlord must take a tenant to housing court and get a warrant of eviction in order to evict a tenant. Housing court eviction cases can be non-payment cases or holdover cases. In a non-payment case, the landlord alleges that a tenant has not paid rent. In a holdover case, the landlord alleges that the lease has been terminated—examples may include: objectionable conduct or breach of lease, such as loss of your Section 8 rental assistance.” See <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569>

69 Under public housing, NYCHA, as the landlord, brings eviction proceedings against public housing tenants in housing court. After RAD conversion, the new property manager is the party that brings eviction proceedings against tenants in housing court.

cases are instances in which the landlord seeks to evict a tenant for reasons other than nonpayment of rent. For example, the landlord alleges that a tenant has refused to sign a lease or that the lease has been terminated due to conduct or breach of lease. Prior to any initiation of legal action to evict a tenant, in-house notices were sent to residents to alert them of rent-related payment issues or of pending arrears. While eviction proceedings were initiated for holdover and non-payment-related reasons at the Ocean Bay development, the management team actively worked with residents to avoid the actual eviction of a tenant.

At closing in December 2016, Wavecrest inherited approximately \$720,000 in accumulated rental arrears from tenants when the development was under NYCHA management. To resolve the inherited arrears, Wavecrest worked with residents, service providers and city agencies to assist tenants in creating payment plans, in making referrals to financial support services, and in certain instances arranging to have arrears reduced in exchange for an upfront one-time payment of the remaining balance. For example, in certain instances, Wavecrest worked with city agencies such as the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to cover a percentage of a tenant’s arrears (often 70 to 90 percent), with the remaining balance being absolved or a payment plan set up. Additionally, Wavecrest has a dedicated staff member who works with tenants directly to prevent the need to move to legal action by helping them come up with a payment plan. If these measures failed and a tenant could not

Bayside Evictions

Eviction Reason	2017	2018	2019
Non-payment	6	7	5
Holdovers	13	5	8
Abandoned Units	1	3	2
Total	20	15	15

* Reflects 2015 tenant income

commit to a payment plan or consistently exceeded the arrears threshold established by Wavecrest, then Wavecrest initiated legal eviction action.⁷⁰ According to Wavecrest, the minimum time to complete an eviction action is about 4 to 5 months.

Due primarily to a difference in how tenancy actions are tracked, identifying the exact eviction count for this report’s study period (January 2017 – June 2018) has been difficult to definitively determine. One of the primary reasons for this seems to be differences between NYCHA and Wavecrest in how an ‘eviction’ is viewed and in how tracking tenancy eviction actions is informed by NYCHA’s obligations under HUD regulations versus obligations under existing landlord/tenant law for Wavecrest.

For example, according to Wavecrest, total actual evictions for the period of January 2017 – August 2019 was 50 whereas for the same time period NYCHA’s

⁷⁰ The threshold is reached when tenants owe more than \$1,500 in rent over a two-and-a-half-month period.

total eviction count was fifteen. Wavecrest provided the below eviction breakdown of:

- 2017 – 20 evictions
- 2018 – 15 evictions
- 2019 – 15 evictions

Of these 50 evictions, Wavecrest has noted that only 18 were due to non-payment of rent. The other 32 were for illegal occupants or abandonment of units. For the same January 2017 – August 2019 time period, NYCHA provided the below eviction breakdown of:

- 2017 – 0 evictions
- 2018 – 8 evictions
- 2019 – 7 evictions

Of these 15 evictions, NYCHA has noted that 12 were for non-payment of rent and 3 were holdovers. Moreover, Wavecrest has indicated that, in addition to the 50 evictions, there were instances in which eviction proceedings were technically completed against tenants, with the unit becoming subsequently vacant or abandoned until an order to show cause was

Eight of the Units Secured were Located in the Following New York City Neighborhoods:

Borough	NYC Neighborhoods in Which Vouchers Were Used	Poverty Rate	Students Performing at Grade Level ELA	Students Performing at Grade Level Math	# of Vouchers Used
Queens	Far Rockaway	23.3%	24.6%	26.5%	1
	Arverne	25.4%	24.6%	26.5%	1
	Brookville	7.6%	47.9%	40.7%	1
Brooklyn	Bensonhurst	22.7%	58.3%	60.4%	1
	Dyker Heights	13.5%	60.8%	62.6%	1
	Coney Island	27.2%	60.8%	40.4%	1
The Bronx	North Baychester	14.2%	30.6%	21.6%	1
	Bronx Park South	29.9%	37.2%	33.5%	1

Vouchers Used to Secure Units Outside of New York City

Portability Option- Where Portable Vouchers Are Used Most Frequently	# of Vouchers Used
Dekalb County, Georgia	1
Arundal County, Maryland	1
Monroe County, Pennsylvania	1

filed by their attorneys in court or they came up with the back rent owed. While none of these tenants were permanently displaced from the development, they did vacate the unit temporarily, regaining tenancy only after paying the back rent owed. In part because of this tenancy tracking variation, this report does not identify a definitive total eviction count for the period under evaluation but instead has opted to provide the information reported from both Wavecrest and NYCHA, despite this variation in how tenancy eviction actions are tracked.

Temporary Relocations

As a tenant-in-place renovation project, one of the primary goals of the development team was to minimize the extent to which resident relocations had to occur. Under the RAD program, residents have the right to return and will continue to pay the same amount of rent in the event that they are temporarily relocated. At Ocean Bay, the development team kept 16 vacant units offline through construction as hospitality suites (8 fully furnished and 8 unfurnished) to accommodate onsite resident relocations. The two primary reasons residents relocated were related to health and mobility concerns. Fifteen units in which renovation work was being funded through FEMA all required relocation due to scopes of work that presented health hazards. All of the FEMA unit relocations occurred within the first quarter of 2017 and were onsite.

Residents whose units were renovated using FEMA funds were required to relocate per FEMA rules, but residents whose units were being renovated through

RAD financing had the option to relocate. Prior to the modernization work, Wavecrest surveyed residents regarding relocation preferences and subsequently accommodated relocation requests. According to the development team, all of the residents who chose to relocate did so because of mobility concerns related to elevator modernization work; no residents chose to relocate because of work being done in their units. Residents were given the option to temporarily relocate to the hospitality suites or offsite with family or friends. In the latter cases, residents were provided with a stipend of \$1,000 in addition to their portion of monthly rent. No residents were permanently relocated because of the conversion process or the renovation work that occurred at the development.⁷¹ As of June 2018, 59 total households were temporary relocated because of the renovation work; 48 relocations were onsite and 11 were offsite. Relocations, on average, lasted for approximately 75 days and cost \$1,500 (moving expense credit plus the tenant’s portion of monthly rent). The development team covered these costs upfront.

Choice Mobility Option

Under the RAD program, a household can apply for a Choice Mobility Voucher (commonly known as a Section 8 voucher) if they have lived in the converted development for at least one year. The tenant will be prioritized on the waiting list for the Section 8 voucher and, if approved, can use the voucher to rent housing in the private market. If a resident finds a home with

⁷¹ Source: 2017 quarterly debrief reports.

the voucher, the entire household must move out.⁷² As of June 2018, 107 Ocean Bay Residents applied for a Housing Choice Voucher, 85 were issued, and 11 residents secured housing with the voucher. On average, it took these 11 voucher recipients five months to secure a unit.⁷³

⁷² See Resident Handbook: A Guide to NYCHA RAD Conversion. <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569>
⁷³ 2018 quarterly debrief reports. NYCHA Leased Housing Department.

For the 74 families that did receive a voucher but did not secure housing, it is not clear why they were not able to secure housing but, according to NYCHA, many of these vouchers were returned after the 180-day period that voucher holders are allowed to find a unit. Generally, it is difficult in New York City to find a housing unit with rent levels low enough to align with the voucher's payment standards. Moreover, despite legal protections in New York City, barring discrimination against renters who use vouchers, bias against renting to voucher holders is still prevalent.

FINDINGS

Residents expressed fear of widespread displacement despite protections within the RAD program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Management companies should consider developing an eviction prevention plan with dedicated staff that works with tenants, city agencies, and community providers to resolve rent-related issues and mitigate against avoidable evictions.

- Designate a dedicated staff member that works with tenants to come up with a payment plan and prevent moving to legal actions.
- Work with existing and identify additional community providers and/or city agencies that can assist tenants in developing and maintaining payment plans, as well as potentially provide financial assistance or make referrals to agencies that can assist with rent arrears.

Consider keeping units offline to provide for temporary accommodations and to avoid unnecessary off-site resident relocations.

- Although the Ocean Bay RAD conversion is a tenant-in-place renovation, Wavecrest wanted to minimize the extent to which offsite relocations were necessary and purposefully kept units offline throughout the construction process to accommodate relocation requests as opposed to leasing up every vacancy.

CONCLUSION

The Ocean Bay (Bayside) Apartments was the first NYCHA development to undergo the transition to the RAD program. The transition process began in 2013, beginning with initial resident engagement and submission of an application to HUD, with all substantial rehabilitations identified in the final scope of work from 2016 having been completed by March 2019. By combining research methodologies, which utilized a combination of data-informed quarterly reports about the construction, property management, social services, economic opportunities, and resident stability processes, in addition to a series of development team interviews and resident focus groups, this report has led to a greater understanding about the resident and development team experience of transitioning to RAD. As result of this research, the key findings and associated recommendations of this report support the goals established at the outset of the research and evaluation process, which are:

1. To describe the impact of and resident experience in the RAD transition;
2. To provide information on effective strategies to inform the program at future sites;
3. And to address common fears that residents have expressed about the RAD program.

The findings and recommendations highlighted throughout the report draw from both effective strategies that the Ocean Bay development team employed as well as from retrospective lessons learned. The findings and recommendations may also inform the national conversation about best practices for implementing this program. For example, the broad finding that communication is vital for supporting a smooth transition process was consistent across the report's categories and reaffirmed by multiple stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. The importance of communication throughout the RAD transition process at the Ocean Bay (Bayside) apartment is a finding that, while rooted in the particular experience of the Ocean Bay conversion,

may also be equally applicable to RAD projects going forward. As future development teams consider how to improve the RAD transition process, special attention should be paid to the circumstances and populations of each new RAD site, and tailored solutions should be devised so that education, ongoing communication, and construction processes meet residents where they are.

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

This report utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to better understand the impact of the RAD conversion process on the residents and the development team members directly involved in the transition at Ocean Bay. Specifically, information was collected through a combination of quarterly reports from the development team, containing data on construction status, resident hiring, services, resident relocation, resident retention. Property management metrics collected included data on work order completion, response times, rent collection and arrears, evictions completed, apartment turnover, and re-rental time. Additionally, between Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, four focus groups with approximately twenty-two residents, three interviews with resident leaders, and five interviews with members of the development team were conducted. Enterprise also had a number of formal and informal conversations with the development team and staff from NYCHA to provide additional context and information to supplement the qualitative and quantitative data that was received.

LIMITATIONS

While this report of the RAD conversion at Ocean Bay occurred over a period of 18 months, there were nevertheless several important research challenges that were encountered. Clarifying the nature of these challenges can help to provide an important level of

context that can be used to better understand how some of the experiences at Ocean Bay were unique to this particular development and, potentially, which instances at Ocean Bay might warrant further attention and analysis at future RAD sites going forward.

Small Sample Size

Taking into consideration the fact that Ocean Bay's total population is approximately 3,729 residents and that resident participation in the report totaled 34, total residents engaged as a percentage of the development's total population was just under 1 percent. Thus, an attempt to make any type of substantive inferences or conclusions based on the resident observations contained in this report would be premature. Additionally, while efforts to attract participation from the Hispanic population (37.5 percent of the total population) in two of the four focus groups were made by the research team, language barrier issues, timing, and coordination challenges prevented the research team from being able to recruit a sufficient number of residents to warrant a focus group session solely for the Hispanic-speaking population. Therefore, a sizable demographic of the Ocean Bay development is underrepresented in this report.

Distinct Development Typology and Environment

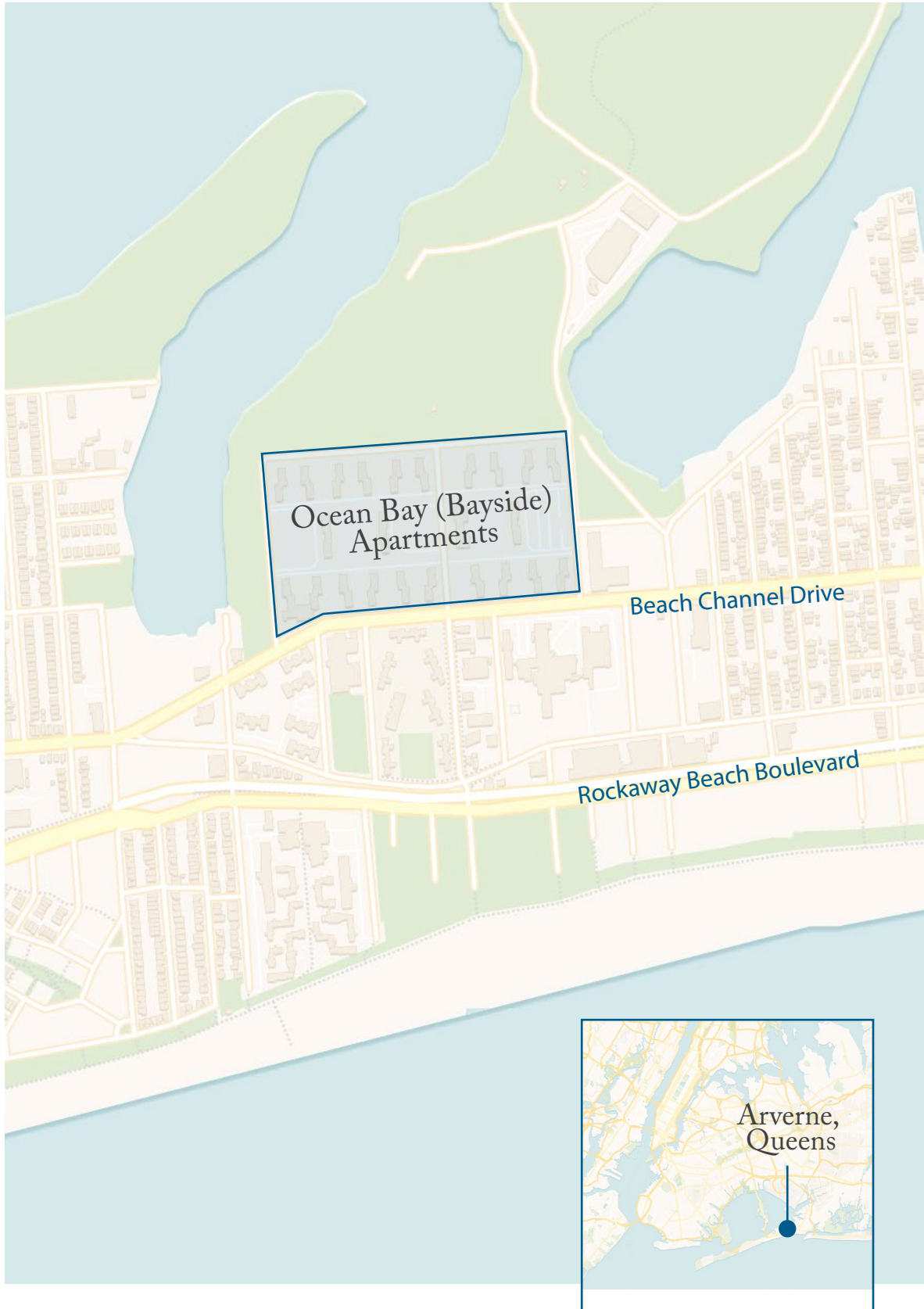
The Ocean Bay (Bayside) Apartments, which consists of twenty-four buildings, 7 and 9-stories tall and spread across a 34.5-acre campus, are comparable to NYCHA's traditional development typology (i.e. buildings surrounded by green space, mid- to high-rise construction with elevators, buildings set back and away from public sidewalks). NYCHA's anticipated RAD pipeline is a mix of these traditional typology and scattered-site developments, which will likely present different challenges, such as the ability to engage residents across sites that have long been distinct and the need to property manage buildings that are, in some instances, miles apart. Because of these important differences in building typology and the surrounding environment, this report's ability to

serve as a representative case for comparative analyses, or to draw generalized conclusions about the outcomes of the RAD process and what that experience may look like at future developments should be limited to those findings or outcomes that are not wholly contingent on typology and environment.

On-Going Construction

Because construction work at the Ocean Bay development was on-going throughout the duration of the 18-month study period, the ability to conduct a property management analysis of key data independent of any effects associated with the construction work significantly impacted the analysis of outcomes related to key management metrics and operating processes.

APPENDIX A: MAP OF OCEAN BAY



APPENDIX B: LINKS

[Enterprise RAD Curriculum:](https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/rad-curriculum-facilitators-guide-6364)

<https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/rad-curriculum-facilitators-guide-6364>

[Enterprise’s Green Criteria Resident Manual:](https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2015-criteria-resident-manual-13383)

<https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2015-criteria-resident-manual-13383>

[RAD Resident Handbook:](https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569)

<https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/resident-handbook-guide-nycha-rad-conversion-6569>

[RAD Resource Desk:](http://www.radresource.net/pha_data.cfm)

http://www.radresource.net/pha_data.cfm,

[The Promise and Peril of HUD’s RAD Program:](https://shelterforce.org/2018/07/30/the-promise-and-peril-of-huds-rad-program/)

<https://shelterforce.org/2018/07/30/the-promise-and-peril-of-huds-rad-program/>, Shelterforce, 2018.

[Advocates Details Residents’ RAD Problems:](https://nlihc.org/resource/advocates-detail-residents-rad-problems)

<https://nlihc.org/resource/advocates-detail-residents-rad-problems>

[Section 3 Requirements:](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/RAD_Notice_Rev3_Amended_by_RSN_7-2018.pdf)

https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/RAD_Notice_Rev3_Amended_by_RSN_7-2018.pdf

[NYCHA 2.0 Plan:](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2018/NYCHA-2.0-Part1.pdf)

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2018/NYCHA-2.0-Part1.pdf>

[“Section 3” Requirements Can Leverage Federal Investments in Housing to Expand Economic Opportunity](https://www.cbpp.org/research/reforming-huds-section-3-requirements-can-leverage-federal-investments-in-housing-to-expand):

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/reforming-huds-section-3-requirements-can-leverage-federal-investments-in-housing-to-expand>

[Aging Public Housing Development Gets Complete Overhaul After Superstorm Sandy:](https://www.novoco.com/periodicals/articles/aging-public-housing-development-gets-complete-overhaul-after-superstorm-sandy)

<https://www.novoco.com/periodicals/articles/aging-public-housing-development-gets-complete-overhaul-after-superstorm-sandy>

[NYCHA Annual Plan](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/FY19%20Draft%20%20Annual%20Plan_04.06.2018.pdf)

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/FY19%20Draft%20%20Annual%20Plan_04.06.2018.pdf

[ROSS](https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/RFS7_FSS_AND_ROSS.PDF)

See https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/RFS7_FSS_AND_ROSS.PDF [hud.gov]

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Protocols and Questions for Resident Leaders

Welcome & Introductions

My name is _____ and I am part of the Karp Strategies team working on an evaluation of the Rental Assistance Demonstration program (known as “RAD”). You may know it better as “PACT” or “Permanent Affordability Commitment Together.” These are simply two names for the same program. Thank you for taking time to speak with me. The purpose of this study is to learn about your experience in the Rental Assistance Demonstration program. Your participation in this interview is important because it can help shape the conversation regarding the expansion of the RAD program in other parts of the city.

RAD is a national program created to preserve and improve public housing. My colleagues and I are conducting a study to better understand the resident experience in the RAD program. We have some questions for you, but first we would like to establish your consent to participate in this interview.

Passive Consent (Verbal)

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may answer as many questions as you would like during this interview. If at any time you feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate in the interview, you can either decline to answer a specific question or questions or may leave at any time throughout the interview. There are no risks to participating – all we will ask for is your name to sign in and sign out; no other identifying information will be used, like your address. All responses will be anonymous, meaning no names will be included in a report we prepare with our findings. You will be compensated for your time with a gift card at the end of the interview. While you may leave/end the call at any time, please note that if you leave prior to the end of the session, you may not receive a gift card for your partial participation.

The interview will last approximately one hour. You must be 19 years old or older to participate, since this session is designed for adults.

Can you confirm that you are 19 years of age or older?

We will be recording our conversation for informational purposes only, to make sure we accurately capture our discussion. We may review the recording later for clarity. We will store the recordings on a hard drive in a locked location until the end of the project, at which point we will delete them. If you have any questions about this project, feel free to contact Rebecca Karp, who is the Principal Investigator. I can provide you with her contact information at the end of the interview.

You understand by participating in this interview and staying in the room/on the call, you consent to everything that has just been said to you. If you do not wish to participate, you may leave the room/the call at this time.

Do you agree to participate in this interview? If you do not wish to participate, please let me know and you can leave the room/the call at this time.

Questions

Background

1. Please tell me about your role as a resident leader and the kind of work that you do for the development.

What is your official title?

How long have you served in this position?

How long have you been a resident of Ocean Bay?

2. Please briefly describe the work of the Resident Association in Ocean Bay.

How are you handling tenant participation funds?

Has anything changed in the function or structure of your resident association?

What advice would you give to other resident associations for making the transition to RAD?

RAD Process at Ocean Bay

3. Talk to us about your experience as a resident leader during the RAD transition.

For example, were you involved in conversations about the roll-out of the RAD program?

- *Were you involved in the RAD Roundtable? In what ways were you able to be involved with NYCHA?*

What outlets were there for residents to find out about the program?

- *How effective were the outreach strategies to inform residents about the program?*

Do you think that residents understood the changes that would come under a transition to RAD?

- *If not, what were some of the barriers?*
- *If so, what worked well?*

Under this new program, the rules and status of residents are changing. For example, residents are now part of a federal housing program called Section 8 and pay rent to the new property manager rather than NYCHA. If there are issues with a resident's lease or property maintenance they contact the new property manager rather than NYCHA. But if their income changes they still contact NYCHA, not the property manager.

- *How do the change in rules affect residents?*

Did access to services change after the RAD program came to the development?

- *If so, what new services has the new service provider brought in?*
- *For example, assistance searching for a job, workshops on health and nutrition, support groups for older adults, disaster preparedness?*
- *Are other services needed other than those offered?*

4. How has RAD affected the quality of life of residents on a daily basis?

What has the construction process throughout the development been like? Probe: on time? As expected?

Have you or anyone you know been relocated? If so, what was that experience like?

Probe: Has it changed anything in terms of how you feel about the neighborhood? (Note: trying to probe feelings of safety or pride in where one lives).

How do you feel regarding safety and policing issues in the development?

5. We just talked about how RAD affects your life NOW. How do you think it will affect your quality of life in the future? Will it make things better, worse, stay the same?

Resident Engagement

6. How do you engage residents in coming to meetings?

What communities have been difficult to reach or get to Tenant Association meetings? For example, has accessibility been a challenge for seniors or language access been a barrier to participation?

7. What is some of the feedback you have heard from residents regarding how they feel about the program? For example, feedback you have heard during resident meetings or generally in the development.

Experience of Working with RAD Partners

8. Tell us about your experience working with the property managers and on-site super.

Describe your relationship with property management and on-site super, specifically as a resident leader?

9. What has been the process for communicating resident concerns with the property managers and NYCHA? How effective have these concerns been addressed?

10. We understand that Ocean Bay CDC has been working with this community for many years. How has the RAD program impacted the way Ocean Bay CDC has been able to work with residents?

11. What kinds of challenges have you seen in working with the different RAD partners, including NYCHA, property management, construction team, and the service providers?

12. As the RAD program scales up across New York City and around the country, what do you hope that residents and resident leaders at future RAD sites know and do at different phases of the RAD process?

What do you hope they don't do?

Interview Protocol and Questions for RAD Transition Team

Welcome & Introductions

My name is _____ and I am part of the Karp Strategies team working on an evaluation of the Rental Assistance Demonstration program (known as "RAD") for Enterprise Community Partners. It was actually [Michelle / Travis / _____] who put us in touch. Thank you for taking time to participate in this interview.

The purpose of this study is to learn about your experience on the [management / construction / service provision / implementation] side of RAD. We're also talking to residents at the Ocean Bay Apartments to understand their experiences transitioning to RAD from public housing. Your participation in this interview is important because it can help shape the conversation regarding the expansion of the RAD program in other parts of the city and the country.

We have some questions we would like to ask all of you, but first we would like to establish your consent to participate in this interview.

Passive Consent (Verbal)

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may answer as many questions as you would like during this interview. If at any time you feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate in the interview, you can either decline to answer a specific question or questions or may leave at any time throughout the interview. There are no risks to participating – all we will ask for is your name to sign in and sign out; no other identifying information will be used, like your address. All responses will be anonymous, meaning no names will be included in a report we prepare with our findings. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. You must be 19 years old or older to participate, since this session is designed for adults.

Can you confirm that you are 19 years of age or older?

We will be recording our conversation for informational purposes only, to make sure we accurately capture our discussion. We may review the recording later for clarity. We will store the recordings on a hard drive in a locked location until the end of the project, at which point we will delete them.

You understand by participating in this interview and staying in the room/on the call, you consent to everything that has just been said to you. If you do not wish to participate, you may leave the room/the call at this time.

Do you agree to participate in this interview? If you do not wish to participate, please let me know and you can leave the room/the call at this time.

Questions for RAD Transition Team

Baseline Questions

- 1. Please describe the kind of work that you do - in general and on the RAD Transition Team. What is your official title, and what does that entail?**
- 2. What is your company/organization's goal for the project? What does success look like?**
- 3. Have you worked in public housing before, either with public housing authorities or with public housing residents? If so, in what capacity?**

RAD Process & Residents at Ocean Bay

- 4. What has the been different about working at a RAD site (instead of other public housing or in private developments)?**
 - Difference in interaction with residents?
 - Difference with interaction with other members of the construction/management/project management team?
 - Difference in working with the government or quasi-governmental agencies (from local to federal)?
 - Difference in how you structure your day to day operations?
 - Difference in managing grievances?
 - Difference in collecting rent arrears?
 - Difference in security systems or policing?

5. Service Provider ONLY: What has the been different about working at a RAD site?

Difference in interactions with people using your services?

Difference in programming they request?

Difference in working with partners on the ground?

Difference in funding, or getting support for your programs?

Any different challenges?

Any different opportunities?

I'd also like to discuss the Service Needs Assessment:

- *How easy was it to get good feedback?*
- *Were there any surprises?*
- *Are you able to address the main needs that arose in the plan (i.e. is there sufficient funding, and are there sufficient partners)?*

6. What have been your interactions with Ocean Bay residents?

When you've hired local residents, tell me about your experience.

- *Can you describe their: ages, genders, language abilities, and roles?*
- *Were there barriers to hiring them? If so, why? If not, why?*

Please tell me about your experience working in a complex with multi-generational residents.

Of the community and engagement meetings you've hosted:

- *Can you describe the purpose of these meetings and their outcomes?*
- *Who attended?*
- *What were their main concerns or topics of interest?*
- *How did you address any fears or concerns they brought up?*
- *Do you know who isn't attending, and why not?*

Have you had any experience enforcing existing NYCHA rules that have lapsed? For example, we have heard that NYCHA may not have strongly enforced [rule on how many people can live in a residence] which may now be enforced. Has this or other examples come up for you? If so, in what ways? How have residents responded?

Please tell me about your experience working in a complex with multi-generational residents.

Do the residents you've interacted with understand they are no longer living under public housing, and that they are now living under Section 8? If so, which new rules and regulations have they had difficulty with? Which have seemed easy to adopt?

7. What have been your interactions with Ocean Bay resident leaders/associations?

[For Wavecrest]

- *How are you handling tenant participation funds?*

Has anything changed in the function and purpose of the resident associations?

What advice would you give to other RAD development teams for working with resident associations?

RAD Program: Bigger Picture

8. Do you feel as if the RAD program set you up for success? If yes, in what way? What worked well? What could work even better?

Do you feel as if the RAD program set you up for a difficult conversion process? If yes, in what way?

9. Would you participate in RAD again? Why?

If not, are there any adjustments to the program that would change your mind?

10. What have been the unexpected opportunities?

What have been the unexpected challenges?

- *What do you wish you knew or did earlier in the process?*

What would you do differently, in hindsight?

Interview Protocol and Questions regarding Service Provision

Welcome & Introductions

My name is _____ and I am part of the Karp Strategies team working on an evaluation of the Rental Assistance Demonstration program (known as “RAD”) for Enterprise Community Partners. It was actually [Michelle / Travis / _____] who put us in touch. Thank you for taking time to participate in this interview.

The purpose of this study is to learn about your experience on the [management / construction / service provision / implementation] side of RAD. We’re also talking to residents at the Ocean Bay Apartments to understand their experiences transitioning to RAD from public housing. Your participation in this interview is important because it can help shape the conversation regarding the expansion of the RAD program in other parts of the city and the country.

We have some questions we would like to ask all of you, but first we would like to establish your consent to participate in this interview.

Passive Consent (Verbal)

Your participation is voluntary and you may answer as many questions as you would like during this interview. There are no risks to participating. All responses will be anonymous, meaning no names will be included in a report we prepare with our findings. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. You must be 19 years old or older to participate. Do you agree to participate in this interview? If you do not wish to participate, please let me know and you can leave the room/the call at this time. We will be recording our conversation for informational purposes only, to make sure we accurately capture our discussion. We may review the recording later for clarity. We will store the recordings on a hard drive in a locked location until the end of the project, at which point we will delete them.

Questions for Service Provider

Baseline Questions

1. Please describe the kind of work that you do. What is your official title, and what does that entail?
2. What is Catholic Charities' goal for the project? What does success look like?

Understanding of Resident Experience with RAD at Ocean Bay

3. We are trying to understand the resident experience with RAD from the perspectives of different stakeholders. Based on your work with residents at Ocean Bay, what do residents know about the RAD program, and how effective were the strategies used to engage and educate them about the program?
4. What has been the impact on residents of transitioning from (A) public housing rules and regulations to the (B) Section 8 program under RAD rules and regulations with a private property manager? Can you share any resident experiences that stand out to you?
(Do the residents you've interacted with understand they are no longer living under public housing, and that they are now living under Section 8? If so, which new rules and regulations?)

Service Provision Experience at Ocean Bay

5. We would like to learn more about your experience with the service provision aspect of the RAD program.

Services Provided: Describe what services you have been providing to residents? (Has anything changed in services before/after RAD?)

- *IF NONE: what have been the challenges in providing services to residents? What is the plan to provide services to residents and how will you determine what services to focus on?*
- *How do residents learn about the services Catholic Charities provides? Where do you physically provide services? (Probe for lack of physical space, and subcontracting out as Ed indicated.)*
- *How has residents' experience in receiving social services changed with the roll out of RAD, if at all?*

We reviewed a preliminary needs assessment for Bayside. How did you determine what services were needed in the community?

- *What stood out to you from the Needs Assessment?*
- *How did you go about designing a service delivery plan under RAD? What, if anything, is different because of the context of RAD?*

Partnerships: Who have you partnered with to implement the service delivery component?

- *Has NYCHA provided guidance or support on how to implement a service provision plan?*
- *Are there other organizations you would like to consider working with?*
- *Funding: Has CC's funding stream/support shifted under RAD, and if so, in what way?*
 - Probe for sufficiency given any challenges or opportunities that you've seen surface already?

The Future of RAD

6. As the RAD program scales up across New York City and around the country, what features and practices should be replicated or changed?

What do you wish you knew or did earlier in the process in regards to service delivery?

What would CC recommend to development teams and social services partnering in other neighborhoods for RAD conversions?

Focus Group Protocol and Question (Focus Groups 1-3)

Welcome & Introductions

My name is _____ and I am part of the Karp Strategies team working on an evaluation of the Rental Assistance Demonstration program (known as “RAD”). You may know it better as “PACT” or “Permanent Affordability Commitment Together.” These are simply two names for the same program. Thank you for taking time to participate in this focus group. The purpose of this study is to learn about your experience in the Rental Assistance Demonstration program. Your participation in this focus group is important because it can help shape the conversation regarding the expansion of the RAD program in other parts of the country.

As you may have heard, RAD is a national program created to preserve and improve public housing. My colleagues and I have some questions we would like to ask all of you, but first we would like to establish your consent to participate in this interview.

Passive Consent (Verbal)

Your participation in this focus group is voluntary and you may answer as many questions as you would like during the focus group. If at any time you feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate in the focus group, you can either decline to answer a specific question or questions or may leave at any time throughout the focus group. There are no risks to participating – all we will ask for is your name to sign in and sign out; no other identifying information will be used, like your address. All responses will be anonymous meaning no names will be included in a report we prepare with our findings. You will be compensated for your time with a gift card when you sign out at the end of the session after your entire participation in the focus group. While you may leave at any time, please note that if you leave prior to the end of the session, you may not receive a gift card for your partial participation. The focus group will last approximately one hour. You must be 19 years old or older to participate, since this session is designed for adults.

Can you confirm that you are 19 years of age or older?

We will be recording our conversation for informational purposes only, to make sure we accurately capture our discussion. We may review the recording later for clarity. We will store the recordings on a hard drive in a locked location until the end of the project, at which point we will delete them. If you have any questions about this project, feel free to contact Rebecca Karp, who is the Principal Investigator. I can provide you with her contact information at the end of the focus group.

You understand by participating in the focus group and staying in the room, you consent to everything that has just been said to you. Does everyone here agree to participate in the focus group? If you do not wish to participate, you may leave the room at this time.

Sub 2: Questions for Residents Wave 1

1. What do you know about the RAD program today?

Elaboration: We know this a really complex program, and all levels of knowledge are welcome here. If you don't know anything about it, that's important for us to know too. There are different levels of familiarity with the program. To what degree was it easy to understand what the program was about?

Probe: For those who've told us a little bit about RAD, what was easy to understand about the program? What was a little bit more challenging or what would you like to learn more about?

Research team to refer to talking points to explain or clarify about RAD.

Research team will test effectiveness of piece of the Resident Handbook by printing out a section and bringing it to focus group for brief discussion.

2. How did you come to learn about RAD initially?

Probe: NYCHA meeting, flyer, email, Resident Association, Resident leader, CBO, neighbor

3. Talk to us about what your experience has been like during the RAD transition.

For example, who reached out to you initially to tell you about the program? Where did you go to learn more? What other outlets were there to find out about the program?

What have been the biggest changes under new management and how did you find out about them?

- *For example, how did you find out that you needed to pay rent to a different place? What has been different about the process for paying rent? How has it gone?*

Have you had to recertify yet? If so, have you used the computers at the management office to do so? If so, how did that go? If not, why not?

Did your access to services change after RAD? For example, assistance searching for a job, workshops on health and nutrition, support groups for older adults, disaster preparedness?

4. If you could describe how RAD has affected your quality of life on a daily basis now, what would you say?

Has your apartment undergone any renovations through RAD? If so, what has that process been like?

Probe: Have they been on time? As expected? Have you received the work orders in a timely manner?

How has the management team been handling regular repairs, maintenance, or emergencies you've had outside of RAD construction?

What was it like when construction started in your building?

Probe: Has it changed anything in terms of how you feel about the neighborhood? (Note: trying to probe feelings of safety or pride in where one lives).

How do you feel about safety and policing in the development since the RAD transition?

5. We just talked about how RAD affects your life now. How do you think it will affect your quality of life in the future? Will it make things better, worse, stay the same?

6. Under this new program, NYCHA is no longer your property manager, so the rules and status of residents are changing. For example, you are now part of a federal housing program called Section 8 and pay rent to the new property manager rather than to NYCHA. If there are issues with your lease or property maintenance you contact the new property manager rather than NYCHA. You now have a new grievance procedure to follow. But if your income changes you still contact NYCHA, not the property manager. How do these changes in rules affect you as a resident?

7. As the RAD program scales up across New York City and around the country, what aspects of the program roll-out should stay the same? Why?

What aspects of the program would you change? Why?

For example, change how the program was communicated, or how construction and relocation was managed.

Questions for Residents Wave 2 (conducted in 2018)

1. How did you come to learn about RAD initially?

Probe: NYCHA meeting, flyer, email, Resident Association, Resident leader, CBO, neighbor

2. Talk to us about what your experience has been like during the RAD transition.

For example, who reached out to you initially to tell you about the program? Where did you go to learn more? What other outlets were there to find out about the program?

What have been the biggest changes under new management and how did you find out about them?

- *For example, how did you find out that you needed to pay rent to a different place? What has been different about the process for paying rent? How has it gone?*

Have you had to recertify yet? If so, have you used the computers at the management office to do so? If so, how did that go? If not, why not?

Did your access to services change after RAD? For example, assistance searching for a job, workshops on health and nutrition, support groups for older adults, disaster preparedness?

3. Have there been any repairs done in the common areas?

What has been the impact of these repairs on your family and the community?

4. If you could describe how RAD has affected your quality of life on a daily basis today, what would you say?

Has your apartment undergone any renovations through RAD? If so, what has that process been like?

Probe: Have they been on time? As expected? Have you received the work orders in a timely manner?

How has the management team been handling regular repairs, maintenance, or emergencies you've had outside of RAD construction?

What was it like when construction started in your building? Have these repairs been completed?

Probe: Has it changed anything in terms of how you feel about the neighborhood? (Note: trying to probe feelings of safety or pride in where one lives).

How do you feel about safety and policing in the development since the RAD transition?

5. Are you familiar with the housing choice voucher?

Research team to refer to talking points to explain or clarify about housing choice voucher

Has anyone considered or is considering moving out of the development?

What contributed to this decision?

6. We just talked about how RAD affects your life now. How do you think it will affect your quality of life in the future? Will it make things better, worse, stay the same?

7. **Under this new program, NYCHA is no longer your property manager, so the rules and status of residents are changing. For example, you are now part of a federal housing program called Section 8 and pay rent to the new property manager rather than to NYCHA. If there are issues with your lease or property maintenance you contact the new property manager rather than NYCHA. You now have a new grievance procedure to follow. But if your income changes you still contact NYCHA, not the property manager. How do these changes in rules affect you as a resident?**

8. **As the RAD program scales up across New York City and around the country, what aspects of the program roll-out should stay the same?**
 - What aspects of the program would you change? Why?
 - For example, change how the program was communicated, or how construction and relocation was managed.

Spanish focus group-only question

Have you been provided information regarding the RAD program in Spanish? Has this information helped you understand the purpose of the program?

Focus Group Protocol and Questions (Focus Group 4)

Welcome & Introductions

My name is _____ and I am part of the Karp Strategies team working on an evaluation of the Rental Assistance Demonstration program (known as “RAD”). You may know it better as “PACT” or “Permanent Affordability Commitment Together.” These are simply two names for the same program. Thank you for taking time to participate in this focus group. The purpose of this study is to learn about your experience in the Rental Assistance Demonstration program. Your participation in this focus group is important because it can help shape the conversation regarding the expansion of the RAD program in other parts of the country.

As you may have heard, RAD is a national program created to preserve and improve public housing. My colleagues and I have some questions we would like to ask all of you, but first we would like to establish your consent to participate in this interview.

Passive Consent (Verbal)

Your participation is voluntary and you may answer as many questions as you would like during the focus group. There are no risks to participating. All responses will be anonymous meaning no names will be included in a report we prepare with our findings. You will be compensated for your time with a gift card when you sign out at the end of the session. The focus group will last approximately one hour. You must be 19 years old or older to participate.

We will be recording our conversation for informational purposes only, to make sure we accurately capture our discussion. We may review the recording later for clarity. We will store the recordings on a hard drive in a locked location until the end of the project, at which point we will delete them. If you have any questions about this project, feel free to contact Rebecca Karp, who is the Principal Investigator. I can provide you with her contact information at the end of the focus group.

Does everyone here agree to participate in the focus group? If you do not wish you participate, you may leave the room at this time.

Questions for Residents Wave 2 (conducted in 2018)

- 1. We’re going to do a quick warm up to get our juices flowing. Using the materials on the table, please take a moment to write your thoughts about what you know about the RAD program. There are no right or wrong answers.**

Let’s share out – what do you think RAD is? What are things that you know about it?

Follow-up: How did you come to learn about RAD initially? Who was the first one to tell you about it?

Did you ever go to a Resident/tenant association meeting to learn about it?

- *Where did you go to learn more?*

Probe: NYCHA meeting, flyer, email, Resident Association, Resident leader, CBO, neighbor

- 2. Talk to us about what your experience has been like during the RAD transition.**

What have been the biggest changes under new management and how did you find out about them?

What has changed in terms of how you pay rent? What has the process been like for you?

- *Probe: what changes, if any, have occurred around your status as a resident of NYCHA vs. Section 8? For example, you are now part of a federal housing program called Section 8 and pay rent to the new property manager rather than to NYCHA. If there are issues with your lease or property maintenance you contact the new property manager rather than NYCHA. You now have a new grievance procedure to follow. But if your income changes you still contact NYCHA, not the property manager. Are you familiar with these changes? How has it been going? Give me an example of what has worked well. Give me an example of what could work better.*

Has anything changed about the process for repairs or fixes in your apartment if you need them? If so, what, and how has it gone?

How does Wavecrest communicate with you to let you know that changes are taking place?

- *Probe: construction notification*
- *Probe: rent/payment/administrative processes notifications*

3. If you could describe how RAD has affected your quality of life on a daily basis today, what would you say?

What has the renovation process been like? Probe: How have you been told/communicated with about renovations? Have they been on time? As expected? Have you received the work orders in a timely manner?

How has the management team been handling regular, day to day repairs, maintenance, or emergencies you've had outside of RAD construction?

What was it like when construction started in your building? Have these repairs been completed? How do you feel about the repairs now that they are finished?

How do you feel about safety and policing in the development since the RAD transition?

4. We just talked about how RAD affects your life now. How do you think it will affect your quality of life in the future? Will it make things better, worse, stay the same?

5. As the RAD program scales up across New York City and around the country, what aspects of the program roll-out should stay the same?

What aspects of the program would you change? Why?

For example, change how the program was communicated, or how construction and relocation was managed.

6. Take a look at this document [RAD Handbook].

What do you think about this?

Would it have been useful to you at any point during the process? Why/why not?

- *If yes, when and in what ways?*
- *If not, why not? What is missing?*

APPENDIX D: IN DEPTH TIMELINE

NYCHA and the development team undertook many complex actions in order to facilitate the transition to RAD. The following is an in-depth timeline of the RAD conversation process at Ocean Bay.

Step 1: Resident Consultation and HUD Application

- 2013: Initial engagement at Ocean Bay
- 2014: NYCHA RAD application waitlisted due to high demand

Step 2: HUD Approval

- March 2015: Approved

Step 3: Resident Engagement

NYCHA conducted outreach to drive meeting attendance through flyering under apartment doors and in building lobbies, door knocking, and leaving materials at the property management office. NYCHA worked with Ocean Bay Community Development Corporation to conduct engagement. At most events, NYCHA distributed informational materials about RAD, including copies of presentations given, and shared both an informational website and a RAD email address for communication about further questions.

Spring to Summer 2015: NYCHA conducts resident engagement

- May 20: Meeting with NYC Councilman Donovan Richards and the Tenant Association
 - » *(Ocean Bay Tenant Association Office – 7 attendees)*
- June 15: Meeting with residents and community groups
 - » *(Community Center – 63 attendees)*
- June 16: Meeting with residents and community groups
 - » *(Community Center – 37 attendees)*
- June 24: Presentation of RAD overview
 - » *(Community Center – 103 attendees)*
- August 31: Presentation of RAD overview
 - » *(Community Center – 52 attendees)*

Fall 2015: NYCHA continues resident engagement

- October 1: Employment Opportunities Workshop
 - » *(Community Center – 23 attendees)*
- October 27: Roundtable Discussions about RAD and Section 8
 - » *(Community Center – 85 attendees)*
- November 10: Capital Improvements and FEMA Update Workshop
 - » *(Community Center – 40 attendees)*
- November 20: Discussion and Introduction to RAD with Tenant Association Leaders
 - » *(Community Center – 7 attendees)*
- December 15: Workshop about RFP Process and Property Management
 - » *(Community Center – 22 attendees)*

Winter 2016: NYCHA continues resident engagement

- January 12: Workshop about Succession and Resident Rights
 - » *(Community Center – 40 attendees)*
- February 9: Workshop about Employment Opportunities and Tenant Participation Funds
 - » *(Community Center – 45 attendees)*
- March 15: Workshop about RFP Overview and Long-Term Affordability
 - » *(Community Center – 55 attendees)*

Step 4: Developer Selection

Engagement continues during this phase of work.

- February 2016: RFP for development team issued
- April 2016: RFP responses due
- May 4: Town Hall held by Councilman Donovan Richards
 - » *(Community Center – 15 attendees)*
- June 9: Workshop about RAD and Transfer Policy hosted by NYCHA
 - » *(Community Center – 43 attendees)*
- July 2016: Development team selected
- July 28: Meeting about Update on Project and New Partner hosted by NYCHA
 - » *(Community Center – 90 attendees)*
- July to September 2016: Initial scope of work developed to determine what works needs to be done
- August 2016: Wavecrest phone hotline and dedicated email address opened
- September 13, 2016: Development team holds a resident meeting to assist with determine final scope of work
 - » *(Community Center – 131 attendees)*
- September 27, 2016: Workshop about Qualifications for Tenants & Leases hosted by NYCHA and the development team
 - » *(Community Center – 286 attendees)*
- October 2016: Wavecrest begins setting up appointments to sign leases with tenants
- October 13, 2016: Workshop about Project Management & Economic Opportunities hosted by NYCHA and the development team
 - » *(Goldie Maple Academy – 152 attendees)*

Step 5: Final Scope of Work

- November 2016: Final scope of work issued, detailing upgrades to be done including:
 - » *Building systems*
 - » *Apartment rehab*
 - » *Public hallways*
 - » *Entrances and lobbies*
 - » *Flood mitigation and resiliency*
 - » *Masonry and waterproofing*
 - » *Security upgrades*
 - » *Energy conservation*
- November 17, 2016: Workshop about the Timeline and Process for Transition hosted by Wavecrest and

NYCHA (Community Center – 131 attendees)

Step 6: Conversion

- December 2016: Management transitions to Wavecrest, and tenants are notified about the transition, contact information to make repairs, and contact information for new rent collection procedures.
- December 8: Workshop about the Rehab Work Plan and Services for Residents hosted by Wavecrest and NYCHA
 - » *(Community Center – 77 attendees)*

Step 7: Renovation

- January 2017: Construction begins and is scheduled to take place as follows:
 - » *Bathfitter tub liner: March 13 to October 27, 2017*
 - » *Window Replacement: April 3 to November 30, 2017*
 - » *Kitchen & Bathroom Renovations: April 17 to December 29*
 - » *Hydronic Convectors (Heaters): May 1, 2017 to August 18, 2018*
- January 2017: Wavecrest begins to hold meetings with the Tenant Association. Meetings are also attended by other members of the development team.
- March 2017: Majority of new leases signed with Wavecrest (one estimate indicates that only 30-40 leases of approximately 1,400 were missing at this point)
- Winter 2019: Construction concludes

Completion!

APPENDIX E: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR RAD CONVERSIONS

Resident Engagement

- Are there multiple, varied mediums/channels for communicating RAD and conversion-related information?
- How will engagement reach and thoroughly connect with a broad cross-section of the development's residents?
- What are the particular cultural and social dynamics of the development that may affect the receptivity and overall level of engagement of residents given existing outreach and communication practices?
- Are there overlapping and/or conflicting cultural dynamics that require individualized outreach and communication strategies?
- Are there different cultural and social groups represented among tenant leadership?
 - » *If not, what are your strategies to ensure communication is occurring throughout the conversion process to underrepresented tenant groups?*

Physical Improvements

- What are resident frustrations and/or concerns regarding physical conversion and repairs?
- Have development team members and construction staff been trained on interacting with residents and been given correct information to transmit about the RAD process?
 - » *Consider whether providing on-going training to front line staff regarding RAD program updates is useful and/or necessary going forward.*
- Is there a system for receiving and responding to resident complaints, concerns, and feedback regarding the rehabilitation/renovation process? How has it been publicized? Is it consistently accessible to all development demographics?

Property Management Transition

- Are there systems in place to support residents' transition from Section 9 to Section 8?
 - » *For example, are there systems to catch, fix, and/or prevent unnecessary and/or avoidable actions or penalties, particularly regarding new payment processes, resident complaint notifications, tenant notification procedures, etc.?*

- Have key changes in arrangements been clarified to residents, the Tenant Association, and front line staff? For example, RAD conversions often entail key changes in arrangements, as depicted in the table below:

CHANGES IN ARRANGEMENTS (after conversion)	HOUSING AUTHORITY	NEW PROPERTY MANAGER
Who do I pay rent to?		
Who do I pay any owed rent to?		
Who do I contact if my income changes?		
Who will I annually recertify with?		
Who do I contact with questions about accommodating a disability or medical condition?		
Who do I contact for issues related to my lease and property maintenance?		
Who do I contact in case of emergencies?		
Who do I call for repairs and work orders?		
Who do I contact if I want to find out more about applying for a portable Section 8 housing voucher?		

- Is there an on-site property management presence?
- What steps is the property management team taking to build relationships and trust with residents?
- What does resident feedback suggest are the sites of concern surrounding property management transition?
- Is there sufficient staffing to support increased need during periods such as initial education efforts, community meetings, and income recertifications?

Resident Economic Opportunity & Community Building

- Are the workforce providers/networks accessible to residents at your site? If not, how are you facilitating/supporting connections to these providers?
- Once the development team has been selected and announced for a RAD site – what are the workforce needs once construction starts?
 - » *Are you informing residents and workforce agencies/partners of conversion needs?*
 - » *Are you systematizing education and application/enrollment processes?*
- How can residents at this development be given workforce opportunity elsewhere if/when privacy concerns restrict their involvement in on-site construction at their own development?
- How will the service provider assess needs on site?
- Is the service provider team sufficiently staffed and resourced to perform pre-conversion assessment and relationship building?
- Where/what are the service providers' gaps and needs?
- Are service providers informed and educated on RAD so as to competently act as educators on the program and conversion?
- Who are the existing service providers on-site? What do they currently provide?

- What will the development team service provider do to collaborate with the existing providers?
 - » *How are roles and responsibilities being divided?*
 - » *When and where can the provider teams meet in person?*
 - » *Will the existing provider remain on-site or otherwise active at the development following conversion?*

Resident Stability

- Who are the staff that will work with tenants to prevent eviction (develop payment plans, clarify new systems pertaining to property management, support connections to resources, etc.)?
- How will this support be maintained following the initial conversion process?
- What is the resident need at this development for payment plan assistance?
 - » *How has this been assessed?*
- What number of residents/unit-conversions may/will require relocation?
 - » *Are residents thoroughly and competently informed of their right-to-return?*
 - » *How will residents be accommodated during temporary relocation?*
 - » *Are there units set aside?*
- Are residents competently informed about new property managements standards for eviction?
- What concerns are residents expressing surrounding questions of displacement, eviction, rent-increases, relocations?