MITCHELL-LAMA RESIDENTS COALITION

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Summer 2026

WEBSITE: www.mitchell-lama.org

City issues new strategies & practices following tenant 'rent ripoff' complaints

A multi-pronged strategy to improve the City's response to a large array of tenant complaints was released in July, barely three months after renters attended and voiced their complaints at the first-ever "rent ripoff" hearings.

In a 68-page Rental Ripoff Heaering Report based on those hearings, the Mamdani Administration announced a set of strategies and actions to strengthen enforcement against such ongoing complaints as insufficient heat and hot water, pests including the presence of rats, lack of elevator access, and mold which, if untreated, can cause a variety of health problems.

The report notes that some actions may require administrative, legislative and court or legal involvement.

Following are some of the key strategies and actions in the report to deal with these issues.

Heat & hot water

Beginning in October at the start of the 2026-2027 "heat season," inspectors will be required to attempt an inspection for all apartments that file non-anonymous complaints. Complaints from multiple apartments in a building will no longer be considered duplicates.

At present, even if numerous renters in a building report a lack of heat or hot water, only the first complaint is "treated as a primary complaint and subsequent complaints are marked as duplicates," which are easily shrugged off.

Pest control

The two agencies responsible for dealing with this issue—the department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Health Department—often have conflicting timelines for uncovering violations and enacting corrections. The report notes that the two agencies will review and "propose changes to better align on-the-ground corrective action with enforcement."

Elevator access

The report notes that "Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers live in buildings without elevator access or with only one elevator, causing major disruptions when that elevator is out. Inconsistent elevator access creates significant challenges for older adults and people with disabilities, who may struggle to leave their apartment at all."

Continued on page 8)

Income limits raised for seniors & disabled receiving rent exemptions

New York State senior and disabled tenants and some co-op owners whose regulated rents or tax abatements are pegged to their household income will no longer have to worry if their income rises, thanks to a bill passed by the legislature in May.

Since 2014, recipients of the exemptions, known as SCRIE [Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemptions] and DRIE [Disabled Rent Increase Exemptions], were not allowed to earn more than $50,000 annually, regardless of the steady rise in the cost of living. Today their upper income limit is $75,000.

As of this writing, the new limits do not apply to residents in New York City, but will apply as soon as the City Council acts to "opt in." That is widely expected to happen shortly.

Application Process

Tenants in the city who wish to apply and/or recertify for the abatement can do so through the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the Department of Finance.

Permission by the landlord is not required. As compensation, owners receive a tax credit.

To receive the status, tenants must:

• For DRIE, be 18 years of age or older- with a certified disablity

• For SCRIE, be 62 years of age or older

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Strengthen MLRC. Join today (use form on page 2)

MLRC

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General Membership Meeting:
Saturday, October 24, 2026
10 a.m. to Noon on Zoom

Members
wll be informed by regular mail and by email.
Contact: Info@mitchell-lama.org

Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition
PO Box 20414
Park West Station
New York, NY 10025

Mayor's housing plan: more dwellings, tenant protections, and affordability

Two hundred thousand new permanently affordable apartments, $5.6 billion for improvements to thousands of public housing authority units, a new focus on tenant protections and curtailing landlord negligence and abuse. These are among the key components of Mayor Zohran Mamdani's housing plan, "Block by Block," issued towards the end of May.

"The housing crisis is driving working class people out of the neighborhoods they built," the Mayor wrote in an introduction, "making it harder to afford daily life, build a future here, or keep up with day-to-day expenses."

"Empowering" tenants

Coupled with the Mayor's first-of-its-kind Rental Ripoff Hearings, and the appointment of a former tenant activist, Cea Weaver, to head the newly established Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants (MOPT), the report reflects what is likely the most pro-tenant administration in the City's history.

In the section on "Empowering Tenants," the plan notes that "Too many people struggle with repeated noncompliance from their landlords for years, without accountability for hazardous code violations. Meanwhile, families also face unlawful and deceptive costs that drive up rents."

To deal with this situation, the plan calls for conduct "roof to cellar inspections, scheduled with tenants through community partners, in targeted buildings, to ensure that City inspections accurately capture distress."

In addition, the plan seeks to "Aggressively use the 7A Program, through which HPD can initiate legal action to remove negligent owners and property managers from day-to-day management."

Expediting the Emergency Repair Program (ERP) by "conducting repairs for immediately hazardous conditions and diligently pursue collections of fees for these repairs through the HPD's Housing Litigation Unit," and coordinating HPD's anti-harassment unit with the Law Department and the Department of Buildings are two additional efforts.

Immigration protection

In the age of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), where the newly created federal police force has encountered massive national opposition to its often brutal and illegal operations, the City's new program reinforces that "It is illegal to discriminate against tenants based on their immigration status."

"Where owners threaten to call ICE or otherwise retaliate against New Yorkers who report housing code violations based on their immigration status, the City will take swift action to hold those landlords accountable."

(Continued on Page 8)

JOIN THE MITCHELL-LAMA RESIDENTS COALITION 2026

INDIVIDUAL: $15 per year; DEVELOPMENT: 25 cents per apt
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President's name ____
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UPCOMING EVENTS

MLRC

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General Membership Meeting
Saturday, October 24, 2026
10 a.m. to Noon

* * *

Meeting will be held on Zoom

Members will be informed by regular mail and by email.
Contact: Info@mitchell-lama.org

Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition, Inc.

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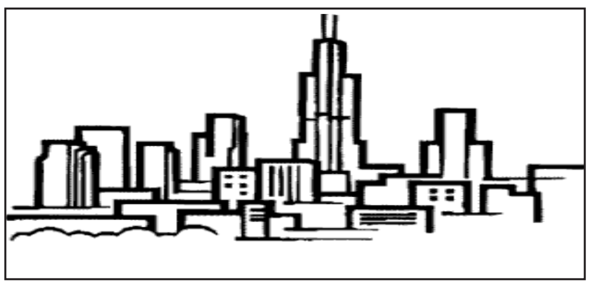

M-L's River Park Towers hits tenants with deluge of eviction notices

Residents of River Park Towers, a two-building (44-story and 38-story) Mitchell-Lama development in the Morris Heights section of the Bronx, have received over five hundred eviction notices in the past two and a half years, allegedly for improper or incomplete submission of paperwork.

A story in The City Reporter noted that around a third of the long time recipients, many of whom are low-income, have been charged with failure to complete annual income and household recertification records. Such records are needed for tax breaks under the federal low-income tax credit program.

But in previous years, the paperwork they had always submitted had been accepted without question.

Tenants remained uninformed

Further, when the tenants attempted to find out what was wrong with the data they had submitted, or what other documents were necessary, many were not answered. Owners often "didn't specify which documents the tenant needs," according to court records.

A lawsuit filed by the Legal Aid Society alleges that the management companies "failed to annually recertify tenant incomes, as required by law," the City Reporter notes.

"If there's an issue, or information missing, tenants receive a 'notice to cure.' But those notices, the suit alleges, contained no details about which documents were required to successfully recertify — sometimes the tenants didn't even know for which year the documents were alleged to be missing."

Defendants in the lawsuit are River Park Bronx Apartments, Inc. and River Park Residences, L.P., who own the complex, and Paths, the manager.

The defendants declined to comment on the specifics.

* * *

Note: A similar situation of a paperwork foul-up affecting tenants occured in numerous NYCHA projects. *See story P. 4*

Village View shareholders demand info on potential sale of parking lot to developers

The fate of a residents-only parking lot at Village View, a 1236-unit Mitchell-Lama co-op south of Tompkins Park in the East Village, is at the heart of a dispute between shareholders and the board of directors.

The dispute centers on one of the M-L's seven lots, which the board has been trying to sell to a private developer.

As reported by the *New York Post*, the board has received a bid of $30 million for the lot, on which the developer plans a luxury building with an unspecified number of affordable apartments.

Some shareholders, who have signed a petition calling for information from the board regarding the sale, are demanding a "halt [to] any redevelopment actions until a shareholder vote."

In the meantime, the shareholders are insisting that the board release all information regarding the proposed sale, and discontinue its practice of negotiating secret agreements without informing them.

The *Post* article quotes an employee of the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development who said that HPD is "supportive of these efforts. The revenue generated from the sale would provide funding for capital improvements and would also provide funds for operational costs, which could mean lower maintenance cost increases for shareholders."

Boro Pres hires activist to create Manhattan-wide tenants union

An effort to organize a first-time, borough-wide, tenants union was begun in June, as Brad Hoylman-Sigal, the borough president of Manhattan, announced the hiring of a tenant organizer to head the endeavor.

The organizer is **Alejandro Coriat**, who has spent almost a decade in tenant organizing, according to *City Limits*.

Coriat was quoted by the publication as saying that the new office will attempt to "nurture tenant unions, whether at the neighborhood level or at the level of particular portfolios, and through the interconnections of all those different bodies try to foster the emergence of something that goes beyond."

Report: City's shelter population soared under former Mayor Adams

The number of New Yorkers who were forced to sleep in shelter during the Eric Adams administration leapt 27 percent over the past three years, according to a new report.

And that number excludes "new arrivals," such as people entering the shelter system seeking political asylum.

The data, presented in a report issued in June by the Coalition for the Homeless, also showed that in 2025, 194,531 "unique individuals" — a term that avoids doubled-counting members of families — had to utilize shelter. That amounted to "the most in the history of the shelter system."

Further, the number of longer-term New Yorkers who had to sleep every night in one of the shelters "increased by 27 percent – or by 12,442 people – during the four years of the Adams administration."

'Doubled-up' children leaps

The data gets worse. "The number of NYC schoolchildren living doubled-up," such as those having to sleep with friends, "increased by 29 percent from 2022 through 2025."

Part of the cause of the soaring use of shelters, other than the paucity of affordable housing, was the propensity of owners to issue eviction orders.

Such filings "increased from a pandemic low of 42,110 in 2021 to 114,832 in 2025" — a growth of over 170 percent.

And in that last year alone, "marshal-executed evictions . . . amounted to 17,821," surpassing the number in the pre-pandemic year of 2019.

Mamdani also criticized

Acknowledging that the Mamdani administration "inherited a difficult fiscal situation – grappling with a deficit left by Mayor Adams amidst decreasing federal funding," the report nevertheless chastises the current Mayor for his refusal to end "encampment sweeps, the expanded use of involuntary hospitalizations, and the criminalization of homelessness."

The report also condemns Mamdani for backtracking on one of his key campaign promises: to expand the local voucher program known as CityFHEPS, [Fighting Homelessness and Eviction Prevention Supplement].

Mamdani has argued that his decision on CityFHEPS was forced because of his legal obligtation to insure that expenditures do not exceed revenues. But at the last minute, Mamdani supported expansion (see story page 4).

Stabilized tenants win zero rent hike for both one- and two-year leases

Fulfilling a promise he made when campaigning for the City's top office, Mayor Zohran Mamdani was able to secure a zero rent increase for around a million rent stabilized tenants for only the second time in NYC's history. The first such ruling was made during the administration of Bill deBlasio (2014 - 2021), but only for one-year leases

The 7 to 1 decision (the owners' representative voted against it), reached on Thursday, June 26th, was met with cheering and rallying by dozens of the city's tenants who attended the Rent Guidelines Board hearings.

Not everybody was pleased. A group of landlords complained that the decision would result in "zombie," or untenanted, apartments, because owners would not be able to afford upkeep. They called the ruling a farce.

Tenants have argued that apartments are often deliberately held vacant in the expectation that owners would eventually be able to charge free-market rents, which soar well above stabilized or any other form of rent regulation in the city.

A report in Stabilizing NYC, a tenant advocacy group, said the real reason for landlords' problem is not rents, but "predatory equity" or irresponsible speculation and borrowing.

City voucher program expands to help more tenants

More tenants in rent stabilized apartments who are facing eviction, more tenants who earn slightly more than poverty wages, and more tenants in shelters, will now qualify for assistance from the City's voucher program, as a conflict between Mayor Zohran Mamdani and the City Council ended at the last minute in June.

CityFHEPS logo

The conflict centered on expanding eligibility under City FHEPS [City Fighting Homelessness and Eviction Prevention Supplement] which the Mayor had supported during his campaign but opposed when in office as being too expensive to include in the 2027 budget, given his legal obligation to balance the budget, which now amounts to $125.8 billion.

The Council, however, insisted on inclusion of the program. But in a much photographed handshake between Mamdani and City Council speaker Julie Menin, the two political leaders agreed to include the expansion, which should help an additional 5600 to 9600 households.

The additional funds amount to $300 million in the next two fiscal years.

All that remains is for the Council to pass a law that would establish a new program to be administered by Housing Preservation & Development.

NYCHA paperwork foul-up results in tenants getting eviction notices

Hundreds of NYC Housing Authority tenants receiving Section 8 rent subsidies were informed by the Authority in June that they were being cut off from the program because they had not filled out their annual recertification forms (showing income and household makeup) as required yearly.

The only problem was that all those tenants in numerous projects had indeed filled out the forms, as NYCHA officials eventually acknowledged.

But before NYCHA recognized its mistake, the private companies managing the NYCHA developments (under the PACT program), who had believed the subsidies were terminated, had demanded that the tenants pay the full rent, rather than the 30% of household income that they could afford.

And because the tenants could not afford the full rent, thousands of them received eviction notices.

Eventually, towards the end of the month, "NYCHA officials admitted that a huge backlog in processing recertifications resulted in wrongful Section 8 terminations," as recounted in The City Reporter.

(See similar story for M-L units, Page 3.)

Pied-a-terre tax does little to dent sales of luxury units

When Zohran Mamdani proposed a tax on ultra-luxury apartments used as occasional residences by the super-rich, some opponents warned that the moguls would abandon New York City, and take their purchases and taxes with them. But since the tax went into effect on July 1, "early market data suggests the measure has done little to deter wealthy buyers from purchasing Manhattan's most expensive properties," as reported in *Newsweek*.

Also, various government officials "have estimated the tax will raise about $500 million annually from roughly 13,000 properties, with the proceeds expected to support housing initiatives," such as affordable units.

MLRC Developments

Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition

Individual Membership: $15 per year
Development Membership: 25 cents per apt
($30 minimum; $125 maximum)
Donations above membership dues are welcome

Adee Towers
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Concerned Tenants of Sea Park East, Inc.
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Dennis Lane Apartments
1199 Housing
Esplanade Gardens
Executive House Apts
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Independence House Tenants Assn
Independence Plaza North
Inwood Towers
Jefferson Towers
Knickerbocker Plaza
Linden Plaza
Lindsay Park
Lindville Housing
Lincoln Amsterdam House
Manhattan Plaza
Marcus Garvey Village
Masaryk Towers Tenants Assn
Meadow Manor
Michangelo Apartments
109th St. Senior Citizens Plaza
158th St & Riverside Dr. Housing
Parkside Development
Phipps Plaza East
Pratt Towers
Promenade Apartments
RNA House
Riverbend Housing
River Terrace
River View Towers
Rosedale Gardens Co-op
Ryerson Towers
Sam Burt Houses
Starrett City Tenants Assn
St. James Towers
St. Martins Towers
Strykers Bay Co-op
Tivoli Towers
Tower West
Trinity House
Village East Towers
Village View
Washington Park SE Apts
Washington Square SE Apts
Westgate Tenants Assn
Westgate
Westview Apartments
West View Neighbors Assn
West Village Houses

Demolition and replacement of NYCHA housing in Chelsea to proceed as planned

The planned demolition of several Housing Authority buildings in Manhattan's Chelsea community has been given a go-ahead by an appellate court, which ruled in July against a group of tenants who opposed the plan.

In its ruling, the court reinforced a previous court's ruling that "denied the motion for a preliminary injunction" to stop the demolition and reconstruction process. That motion had been brought by the tenants and their supporters.

Proposed several years ago, the plan calls for demolishing the aging and often deteriorating Chelsea-Elliot and Fulton Houses, and replacing them with both social and private accommodations for all current tenants.

Under the plan, all affected tenants will be placed in temporary homes during the demolition, and will be allowed to return to new apartments upon completion.

In public statements, NYCHA, which will partner with private developers, has noted that "Every public housing unit will be replaced, and all authorized residents will have a right to a new apartment. All 2,056 existing NYCHA apartments at Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea will be replaced with new, permanently affordable homes."

When completed, the development "will create approximately 3,500 new homes, including approximately 1,000 new, permanently affordable apartments," NYCHA said.

Initially, the tenants were united in their opposition, calling instead for a massive repair program. Eventually, however when the repairs that were made did not hold, more tenants—but not all—began to accept the need for totally new units.

Nevertheless, many residents, especially the very elderly, fear not only the disruption to their lives, but also that they will not live long enough to resettle into permanent homes.

Pro-tenant progressives win hugely in the city's Dem primary for Congress

Brad Lander, the political progressive and the City's former Comptroller, was the first to announce: He won the primary election for Congress in Brooklyn's 10th Congressional district, which covers sections of both Brooklyn and Manhattan, and which had been fiercely fought for by his opponent, **Dan Goldman**.

Goldman, heir to the Levi Strauss & Co. denim fortune, had also presented himself through voluminous TV and print ads as a progressive on domestic issues, such as housing and birth control among others. In fact, he was a founding member of the Congressional Renter's Caucus, fighting against landlords' "junk fees" among other issues.

But his unswerving support of Israel, which has been charged with genocide by the International Court of Justice and many others for its devastating bombing attacks in Gaza, and which has seen its reputation plummet even among the City's Jewish population, was likely his Achilles Heel.

Other pro-tenant victories

Lander's victory was quickly followed by the victories of three other strongly pro-tenant progressives: **Dariliza Avila Chevalier**, a youthful newcomer to electoral politics, and **Claire Valdez**, an assemblywoman.

Chevalier beat **Rep. Adriano Espaillat** in Upper Manhattan and parts of theBronx, and Valdez beat **Antonio Reynoso** in sections of Queens.

But, as noted by The City Reporter and others, the overall winner may well be the person who was not even running: **Mayor Zohran Mamdani**, who had endorsed the three victors.

The Mayor will now be likely seen as a political kingmaker, or at least a "powerhouse," by Congress watchers.

Among other things, his plan to create 200,000 pernanently affordable housing units [see story page 2] may now receive more political support.

Above all, there is no question that his political reputation has grown from that of an upstart novice to "The man to see."

Tracey Towers tenants facing 30% rent hike over next four years

Hundreds of tenants in Tracey Towers, the two-building Mitchell-Lama development in the Bedford Park area of The Bronx, are facing a rent hike upwards of thirty percent.

If passed, the increase would be spread over four years, with an initial jump of fifteen percent, as reported by *The New York Times*.

Only a few years ago, in 2022, the tenants were hit with an increase of thirteen percent—immediately after a five-percent hike the year before, and a three percent jump the year before that.

Leaks and non-working elevators

In the meantime, "the buildings are plagued by leaks and elevators so dysfunctional that the Fire Department had to rescue people trapped in them dozens of times in the last year," the *Times* said, quoting a letter signed by the president of the tenants association.

Rents, however, are still considered affordable (in New York City), not surprising since the complex is a Mitchell-Lama. To hold rents down, the developers, like all those who build M-Ls, received a huge tax break and guaranteed profit.

The *Times* noted that a "two-bedroom apartment rents for about $1,680, and a one-bedroom for about $1,344."

If the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development approves the current request for the increase, about two thirds of the residents will be affected. The remaining third are low income tenants who have Section 8 rent vouchers, or tenants who are covered by rent increase exemptions because of senior age or disability.

Manhattan & Brooklyn rents keep soaring, Corcoran finds

Rents in Manhattan and Brooklyn are constantly rising, according to a new report from The Corcoran Group, a leading realtor in the city.

In Manhattan, the median rent rose to $5,295 a month in June 2026, a three percent rise over the previous month, and an eight percent hike over the year. Studios and one-bedrooms rose to $4,014 and $5,408, respectively.

In Brooklyn, the median rent reached $4,350 per month in June, a slight 0.1 percent over the month but, like Manhattan, eight percent over the year.

National rents decline slightly on average, but cost burdens soar for tenants & owners

In what may seem like science fiction to tenants in New York, Boston, San Francisco and other major cities, median rents nationwide have actually declined in the first quarter of this year, compared with the same period in 2025.

That is a key finding in Harvard University's annual report on the state of the nation's housing issued in June, one month after it issued its national report focusing solely on rental housing.

But compared with *this year's* average decline, median rents over the past *six years* for "professionally managed apartments" — most likely for apartments in multi-unit buildings — were "29 percent higher than in 2020."

And that six-year increase hit every sector of the United States: "During this period, apartment rents rose 23 percent in the West, 28 percent in the South, 38 percent in the Northeast, and 41 percent in the Midwest."

What caused this year's annual decline? Largely new rental units coming onto the market, slowing job markets, declining household growth, and "plummeting immigration."

Cost burdens soar for renters and owners

Notwithstanding the national median decline in rents, tenants and owners throughout the country are being hit hard, as "cost burdens have hit another record high for renters," the report notes, "and worsened for homeowners," all the while that "assistance remains profoundly underfunded."

Lower income residents suffer most from rising costs

Not surprisingly, those most adversely affected by rapidly rising housing costs are those on the lowest levels of the country's economy.

"The most serious and intractable housing shortage involves units affordable to households with low and moderate incomes," the report notes.

Citing data from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, it reports that "eleven million households "with extremely low incomes competed for 3.8 million affordable and available rental units at last measure in 2024."

And the cost burdens afflict homeowners as well as renters. The Harvard report notes that "For many homeowners, increases in non-mortgage expenses, including insurance premiums, energy bills, and property taxes, are straining household budgets."

As with renters, among homeowners, those most adversely affected have the lowest incomes. "Because many of these are older adults in retirement and living on fixed incomes, households headed by someone age 65 and over had the highest cost-burden rates of any age group at 28 percent."

And, again predictably, the color of homeowners is also a factor, with Black owners suffering the worst, followed by Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans.

Mayor's office announces series of city-sponsored tenant organzing

In what is most likely a first in New Yorks long history of tenant organizing, the Mamdani Administration in July announced the start of a City-sponsored schedule of tenant organizing efforts aimed at "empowering renters to turn shared experiences into collective action."

In a statement issued on July 20, the Administration said that "Volunteers will knock on doors in buildings with [a] history of housing violations to connect tenants with organizing resources and inform tenants of their right to organize."

Initial door-knocking outreach will start with tenants in East Harlem, Washington Heights and Inwood and Flatbush, and will eventually expand to neighborhoods in the five boroughs.

The campaign, which will be coordinated by the Mayor's newly established offices of mass engagement (OME) and tenant protection (MOPT).

The statement noted that the campaign derives from the series of Rental Ripoff hearings held months earlier (see story on page 1), and is designed to "turn shared experiences into collective action."

Outreach efforts will begin on August and September, and may then proceed through the summer in other communities.

New 100% affordable housing in East Village to replace former police parking lot

A former police parking lot in Manhattan's East Village will become an affordable housing complex with 131 apartments plus a host of social services and landscaped spaces.

Photo: Mayor's Office

Around a third of the units, at 324 East 5th Street, will be reserved for the formerly homeless.

In a public statement in July, Leila Bozorg, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Planning, said that the project "marks the first city-owned land awarded for development under Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration and the first to include a community land trust as a development partner."

Trump nixes continuation of Covid-era rent vouchers

The five billion-dollar emergency housing voucher program created during the Covid-19 pandemic is running out of money, and Republicans in Congress are refusing to renew it, thereby endangering thousands of low- and moderate-income tenants in the city and country.

As reported in *The Gothamist*, some part of the subsidies, amounting to

$264 million, were to be replaced with a different type of aid called Tenant Protection Vouchers which are renewable on a yearly basis.

But even these vouchers may not see the light of day, because President Trump has decided that the government "will only use the money earmarked by Congress to fund the emergency program for a few months until that money, too, is exhausted."

The emergency program "was initially expected to last until 2030."

Affordable Housing News from Around the Nation

National: Largest US landlord accused of rejecting Sec. 8 holders

The nation's largest real estate owner is being accused of violating laws in several states prohibiting source-of-income discrimination by refusing to accept tenants who hold Section 8 rental vouchers.

To back up the allegations, the human rights group Housing Rights Initiative sent out "testers," or people pretending to seek to rent apartments, in various states where **Greystar**, the firm in question, has offices. When the testers told the firm that they held rental vouchers, they were denied the opportunity to rent.

Greystar has denied the charge, saying that it remains "committed to fair housing practices in everything we do," as reported by *The Guardian*.

Eugene, OR: Tenant groups push for 'right of first refusal'

Pro-tenant activist groups are promoting passage of a bill, or ordnance, that would allow tenants in buildings with at least five units the first option to purchase their building if and when it is placed on the market. Under the proposal, tenants would have 45 days to form an association; then they would have additional months to secure a letter of financing from a bank, and more time to actually close, as reported in *Shelterforce*.

Elsewhere in Oregon: Compensating for displacement: A nonprofit in Portland has begun work on a mixed-use, $163 million development "that will house hundreds of Black Portlanders who were previously displaced by the city's use of eminent domain," according to Next City. Before displacement, the community had been "home to nearly 80% of Portland's Black population."

Austin, TX: Landlords offered height increase for more affordable units

The City Council has approved a plan to offer owners the right to exceed current building height restrictions in exchange for including more affordable apartments, or for paying a fee [fee-in-lieu] to help build affordable units elsewhere. But as reported in *The Real Deal*, "Downtown Austin developers aren't sure the program will change much," as they observe "the flood of people moving to the suburbs, and taking their tax dollars with them."

Massachusetts: New campaign to re-establish state rent controls

Tenants in various areas of the state are leading a new campaign to add a rent control mandate on the November 2026 ballot that would "limit annual rent increases for most units to either 5 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower," as reported in *Shelterforce*. However, the measure would also "exempt rentals in owner-occupied buildings with four or fewer units. . . and any new building . . . for its first 10 years of occupancy."

As of this writing, the petition has gathered over 124,000 signatures.

Maine: Funds for housing diverted for data center

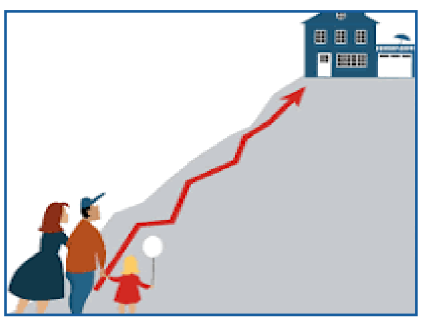
On the coast of Maine, a rural area, federal funds amounting to almost $250,000 that were originally earmarked for housing have been diverted, according to an article in *Shelterforce*.

Instead, the funds will be used for a data center, one of those "Massive structures, with thousands of specialized computer chips running in parallel to perform the complex calculations required by advanced AI models," as described by MIT Technology Review.

Fall River, SD.: Local hospital invests $ millions to house workers

The dearth of affordable housing here has placed enormous pressure on the local hospital, Fall River Health Services, to find workers to serve the local community.

In a highly unconventional move, the nonprofit institution is investing $2.3 million "in a subdivision project to provide housing for its employees," as reported in *The Washington Post*. When completed, the subdivision could generate 48 new affordable homes near the hospital campus.



Housing crisis USA

Local Housing Briefs

Moodys: Zero rent increase no problem for almost all owners

Moody's, the financial debt-ratings and analytic giant, has said that a zero rent increase for rent-regulated apartments would barely affect most NYC owners. Further, 94 percent of owners would barely feel the effects of a five-year zero increase, according to a report in the *New York Times*. Only six percent would be at risk for defaulting on their mortgages.

Mayor proposes one-time rent increase for some vacant apartments

Some small landlords of vacant rent-stabilized apartments that are financed through City agencies may be allowed a one-time rent increase before new tenants move in. But the new tenants would eventually pay no more than stipulated by the Rent Guidelines Board.

The program is designed to help owners of hundreds of stabilized units who are facing significant financial difficulties. However, even in those units, the City's rent regulations would apply.

As reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, the increases would be determined on a case by case basis, and might add hundreds of dollars a month to the rent of affected vacant units.

Council Speaker proposes housing atop libraries

A $60 million dollar proposal to build affordable housing atop three libraries was announced in June by Julie Menin, Speaker of the City Council. The funds, which would also pay to modernize the libraries, would create around 300 affordable units in Parkchester Library in the Bronx, Marcy Library in Brooklyn, and Sunnyside Library in Queens, as reported in *The New York Times.*

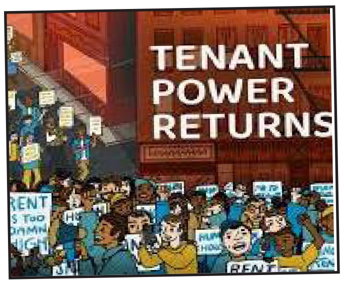
Brooklyn landlords sued for charging market rents in stabilized units

Two Brooklyn landlords are being sued by Attorney General Letitia James for failing to register their apartments under the rent stabilization law, and for allegedly overcharging tenants. The tenants were fooled into paying market rate rents.

As reported in *The Brooklyn Paper*, John Anderson and Claudette Henry, who owned buildings in Crown Heights and Brownsville, never registered the units with the state's Dept. of Homes and Community Renewal.

Mayor's housing plan:more dwellings, tenant protections, and affordability

(Continued from Page 2)



To deal with this issue, the Department of Buildings will "study the use of installing small elevators in walk-up buildings to increase the pool of accessible units" and will explore "the creation of a pilot program to put this research into practice."

At present, small walk-ups are not allowed to have elevators, a policy designed to facilitate the use of stretchers.

In addition, the DOB will attempt to "improve inspection response time for elevators that are persistently out of service."

Mold

At present, the City's program to deal with mold is conducted under an Underlying Conditions Program. Among other things, HPD will "periodically conduct roof-to-cellar inspections and document whether conditions have been addressed, strengthening the support for any litigation that may follow."

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Following is the text of a bare-bones summary of all of the report's goals, as released by the Mayor' office:

Goal 1: Strengthen Enforcement Against the Most Common Housing Quality Complaints

• Investigate Every Heat Complaint

• Tackle Pests Through Interagency Coordination

• Improve New Yorkers' Elevator Access

• Strengthen Our Ability to Eradicate Mold

• Address Residential Fires

wwGoal 2: Expand Holistic Enforcement Actions to Improve Housing Quality

• Launch "Fix the City" [essentially a crackdown on problem landlords]

• Increase Access to Owner Information to Hold Bad Landlords Accountable

• Enable Tenants to Schedule HPD Inspections

• Increase Fees and Accountability for the Self-Certification Watchlist.

• Enhance the City's Litigation and Fine Collection Capacity

• Implement Strategies to Reduce Eviction Cases in Housing Court

• Impose Recurring Penalties for Uncorrected DOB Violations

• Expand DOB's Lien Authority

• Make the Alternative Enforcement Program (AEP) More Effective

Goal 3: Empower Tenants to Take Action Against Negligent Owners

• Legally Recognize Tenant Unions

• Conduct Interagency Enforcement Days with Tenant Unions

• Modify Rent Impairing Violations

• Streamline Public-Facing Information About Tenants' Rights and How to Fight Landlord Harassment

• Combat ICE-Related Harassment

Goal 4: Make the Housing Market Fairer and More Transparent for Tenants as Consumers

• Reconsider the Use of Credit Checks

• Require Disclosure of AI or Digitally Altered Rental Listings

• Enforce Against Collection of Unlawful Renter Fees as "Debt"

• Communicate Transparently About Utility Responsibility

Income limits raised for seniors & disabled receiving rent exemptions

(Continued from Page 1)

• Have their names on the lease

• Have a household income of $50,000 or less ($75,000 in the rest of the state)

• Pay a rent that amounts to more than one-third of their monthly income

In addition to SCRIE and DRIE recipients, the new income limits apply to co-op shareholders through Senior Citizens Homeowner Exemptions (SCHE) and Disabled Homeowner Exemptions (DHE). These qualifying homeowners have their tax assessments lowered.

Applicable residences

Qualifying applicants must reside in one of the following types of dwellings:

• Rent stabilized apartment

• Rent controlled apartment

• Mitchell-Lama development

• Limited Dividend development

• Redevelopment company development

• Housing Development Fund Company (HDFC) Cooperative development

• Section 213 Cooperative unit

• Rent-regulated hotel or single-room occupancy unit

The best way to apply is through the City's Access Portal.

City issues new strategies & practices following 'rent ripoff' complaints

(Continued ofrom page 1)

NYCHA improvements

A full section of the 111-page plan focuses on the City's public housing, including delivering "comprehensive repairs and long-term stability" not only through existing programs, promises, among other methods, to:

• "Conduct roof to cellar inspections, scheduled with tenants through community partners, in targeted buildings;"

• Aggressively use the 7A Program which brings legal action "to remove negligent owners and property managers from day-to-day management;"

• Expedite HPD's Emergency Repair Program to stabilize building conditions, and otherwise speed up litigation against negligent landlords.