

## Social Innovation Fund to Nationally Replicate Successful Economic Opportunity Programs

### Program Design Paper for JobsPlus A Program to Transform Public Housing Developments into High-Employment Communities in New York, NY; San Antonio, TX; and Tulsa , OK

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City ("The Mayor's Fund" or MF) and the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) were awarded a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant by the Corporation for National and Community Service in July 2010. This grant provides a unique funding opportunity to develop and replicate innovative anti-poverty programs in selected cities across the country. We are seeking qualified non-profit organizations or state or local government agencies in partner cities to become CEO SIF providers (also referred to as sub-grantees) and operate particular program models that will be evaluated over five years. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be released in late September and October by The Mayor's Fund and CEO to support the replication of five innovative programs in the following geographic areas: Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; New York, NY; Newark, NJ; Northeast Ohio; San Antonio, TX; Savannah, GA; Tulsa, OK. One or more of the program models will be offered in each partner city; not all cities will operate each program. Visit [www.nyc.gov/ceo](http://www.nyc.gov/ceo) for more information.

This design paper describes **Jobs-Plus**, a program to transform Public Housing Developments into high-employment communities.

There are approximately 1.2 million units of public housing nationally, many headed by a working-age, non-disabled adult. Although public housing provides stable and affordable housing to low-income Americans, studies suggest that residing in public housing does not lead to improved employment outcomes and economic stability.

Using a site-based, saturation model, the Jobs-Plus program is designed to raise and sustain the level of employment and earnings among residents of public housing developments. Jobs-Plus program services are tailored to residents' individual needs, and draw from a menu of on-site and referral services. For unemployed residents, Jobs-Plus staff help residents identify their short and long-term employment goals and assist them in accomplishing their stated ambitions. Employed individuals are also able to work with employment counselors to take the necessary steps to advance in the labor market.

Jobs-Plus serves as a platform to help residents build their skills and work histories so they can increase their incomes. While some residents will have immediate income needs, possibly necessitating placement in a "survival" job, Jobs-Plus should not be viewed as a quick fix. Rather, the program seeks to help residents continue to improve their earnings over time, with residents taking the necessary and, at times, difficult steps towards self improvement.

Developed and tested over seven years by MDRC, a leading social policy research organization, the program model incorporates the following components:

*1. Employment-related services and activities to help residents secure and retain employment.*

These services encompass activities such as help with job searches (facilitated by the program's job development efforts), coaching to help residents adjust to the world of work, vocational training (usually short-term), General Educational Development (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, subsidized supported work positions to help especially hard-to-employ residents make a transition to the world of work, and finally, a range of support services such as child care arrangements that make it easier for residents to work. Some services are conveniently provided on site in a job center located within the housing development, while others are provided in the community.

*2. Financial incentives to work aimed at increasing resident awareness of public housing rent rules that help "make work pay".*

Financial incentives help make low-wage work pay by allowing working residents to keep more of their earnings, and to take advantage of a variety of income supports (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit, Food Stamps, Medicaid, etc.) for which they may be eligible. When low-income people look for work, they can face increased expenses — hidden or not so hidden — that impact their new earnings. For example, public housing residents can be subject to rent increases because rent is calculated as a percentage of income. Programs in the Jobs-Plus demonstration offered working residents *rent-based incentives*. These were either a flat rent — one that does not rise as the household's income rises — or an income-based rent set lower than the standard rate of 30 percent of income that is stipulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency responsible for public housing. Other strategies used during the demonstration included safety-net provisions for residents who lost jobs (for instance, the option for residents to revert from a Jobs-Plus flat rent to the normal public housing income-based rent if they could no longer afford the flat rent), and sometimes small program contributions to savings accounts established for working residents.

*3. Community support for work, which means strengthening social ties among residents to help support their job preparation and work efforts.*

Community support for work typically involves recruiting, training, and supervising a small cadre of residents who encourage their neighbors both to use Jobs-Plus services and to generally try to improve their employment situations. Residents who are selected to play this role usually receive stipends as compensation for their contributions. The fundamental purpose of the "Community Support for Work" component of the model is to send the message in public housing that "work pays" and that "employment goals are attainable" thereby creating a social environment where the theme of work is more pervasive than it has been.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blank, Susan and Donna Wharton-Fields, *A How To Guide, Helping Public Housing Residents Find and Keep Jobs: a Guide for Practitioners Based on the Jobs-Plus Demonstration*. MDRC, 2008.

Beyond its three components, what makes the Jobs-Plus model distinctive is its goal to implement services at “saturation” levels.<sup>2</sup> Services are targeted to all working-age residents who live in the development rather than developing strict eligibility criteria that would screen out residents.

Further information on the Jobs-Plus model and evaluation results are available on MDRC’s website at: [http://www.mdrc.org/project\\_publications\\_15\\_13.html](http://www.mdrc.org/project_publications_15_13.html).

### **The Jobs-Plus Model, from Demonstration to SIF**

Jobs-Plus SIF represents an evolution of the program. In 1996, MDRC launched the Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing families in six public housing developments across the country. The initiative was designed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Rockefeller Foundation and MDRC.<sup>3</sup> Jobs-Plus was subject to a rigorous evaluation and concluded in 2004. The program produced positive impacts on residents’ earnings for four years during the operation of the program and these impacts persisted over an additional three years of follow-up, for a total of seven years of positive impacts (which were still evident at the end of that seven years when data collection ended).

Research results show that when all three components of the model were implemented properly, Jobs-Plus made a substantial difference in residents’ earnings outcomes. The large positive earnings effects that were generated in the demonstration were observed for housing developments in very different cities and for diverse racial and ethnic groups.

Based on this evidence, in 2009 New York City established the first replication of Jobs-Plus in the nation. The NYC Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), part of the Mayor’s Office, led a collaborative of City agencies (including the NYC Housing Authority, NYC Human Resources Administration, the City University of New York, and the NYC Department of Small Business Services) to open Job-Plus at one public housing development in East Harlem. MDRC is supporting the replication by providing technical assistance.

Through the Social Innovation Fund, the Jobs-Plus program model will now be replicated in San Antonio, TX, and Tulsa, OK and a second replication site will be developed in New York, NY.

A non-profit organization or state or local government agency will be selected as the provider in each city to operate the program through a competitive bidding process. The provider will operate the complete Jobs-Plus model (all 3 components) within or in close proximity to specified public housing development sites. Providers will be selected in early January 2011 and will have approximately 60 days before the program begins for program planning, securing and outfitting office space and hiring and training staff. CEO, Mayor’s Fund, and MDRC will

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<sup>2</sup> Riccio, James, *Mobilizing Public Housing Communities for Work: Origins and Early Accomplishments of the Jobs-Plus Demonstration*, MDRC, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> The Jobs-Plus funding consortium, which was led by HUD and the Rockefeller Foundation, also included the US Department of Health and Human Services; the US Department of Labor; The Joyce Foundation; The Annie E. Casey Foundation; The James Irvine Foundation; Surdna Foundation, Inc.; Northwest Area Foundation; The Stuart Foundation; BP; and Washington Mutual Foundation.

assist providers with program implementation and technical assistance. Providers will be expected to offer the program for the full SIF period.<sup>4</sup>

## **Program Infrastructure**

Depending on the city, applicants may propose to work with a single public housing development site, or with a “cluster” or group of different development sites. General and city-specific requirements for populations served, targeting housing developments, program office space, and budget is listed below.

### Population Served

To ensure that the program model’s income improvement and advancement goals are achieved, applicants must select developments in each city with high unemployment. In addition, among employed households at a given development, the majority must be low-wage workers.

To adhere to the model’s “saturation” goals, Jobs-Plus will market program services to all residents living within a given development.

Selected applicants will agree to serve only residents of designated developments.

### Targeting Housing Developments

#### *New York, NY*

The selected program provider must serve residents in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments located within one of the four New York City Community Districts (CD) listed below. The selected districts have the highest density of NYCHA households within the respective borough.<sup>5</sup>

- Bronx: CD 01
- Brooklyn: CD 16
- Queens: CD 01
- Staten Island: CD 01

The attached maps (see Attachment 1) identify the NYCHA developments located within each CD; information on the total numbers of households located at each development is also provided on these maps. Applicants should propose to serve a cluster or group of developments with units of at least 1,500 - 2,000 residents for the purpose of marketing the program, in order to build an active case load of approximately 600 residents annually.

#### *San Antonio, TX*

Public housing communities managed by the San Antonio Housing Authority range in size from 100 – 741 units.<sup>6</sup> Applicants should propose to serve a cluster or group of development

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<sup>4</sup> Funding for the project is contingent on funding availability. In addition, on an annual basis, the Mayor’s Fund will assess the performance of grantees in each of the cities to determine its interest in continuing contracts.

<sup>5</sup> New York City currently operates a Jobs-Plus program at Jefferson Houses development in Manhattan’s highest-density Community District (CD11), therefore the SIF-funded Jobs-Plus program will be targeted to one of the other four boroughs.

<sup>6</sup> For a map of housing developments in San Antonio, Texas visit the San Antonio Housing Authority website: <http://www.saha.org/affordable%20hou/html/locations.html>. For information about the size of specific developments and demographic information for these developments, visit the HUD website to access the Resident

sites totaling 600 – 1,200 housing units for the purposes of marketing the program, in order to build an active case load of approximately 300 residents annually.

#### *Tulsa, OK*

Public housing communities managed by the Housing Authority of the City of Tulsa (see Attachment 2 for map) range in size from 90 – 250 housing units.<sup>7</sup> Applicants should propose to serve a cluster or group of development sites totaling 600 – 1,200 housing units for the purposes of marketing the program, in order to build an active case load of approximately 300 residents annually.

#### Program Office Space

The Jobs-Plus model requires that the program office be physically located within or in close proximity to the development(s) the program is serving. If the program office is not located on-site, the office must be within walking distance (approximately .25 miles) of the closest building in the developments it will serve.

To qualify as a suitable space, the Jobs-Plus program office must be operated out of a professional space that is outfitted with standard office equipment, furniture and supplies. The program office must have adequate technology upgrades for reliable internet access and telephone service, staff work stations, and common areas where classes or group meetings can be conducted. The program office must also incorporate space that is suitable for private consultations between staff and residents.

#### *New York, NY*

The selected provider will operate the program out of a site in New York City that meets **one** of the following criteria:

- *within a NYCHA-designated facility*: Applicants may choose to operate out of an available community space in either the Adam or Monroe developments within Bronx CD 01. If either of these spaces is selected by the provider, NYCHA will charge the provider rent for the space. On-site office space is not available at development sites in any of the other listed CDs.

*or*

- *within close proximity to the NYCHA developments the program will serve*: Applicants may propose to operate out of an office space of its choosing. The office must be located within walking distance (approximately .25 miles) of the closest building in the developments it will serve.

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Characteristics Report for developments within the San Antonio, Texas Housing Authority:  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/systems/pic/50058/rcr/index.cfm>.

<sup>7</sup> For information about the size of specific developments and demographic information for these developments, visit the HUD website to access the Resident Characteristics Report for developments within the Tulsa, Oklahoma Housing Authority: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/systems/pic/50058/rcr/index.cfm>.

### *San Antonio, TX*

Given the relatively low density of public housing developments throughout the city of San Antonio, the applicant should propose how it would adapt the place-based Jobs-Plus model to serve a widely dispersed population. For example, applicants might propose to align the Jobs-Plus service location(s) with public transportation routes, or recommend a service delivery strategy featuring flexible staff hours and staff traveling to multiple locations to ensure that residents living the farthest from the program office have easy access to services.

### *Tulsa, OK*

Given the relatively low density of public housing developments throughout the city of Tulsa, the applicant should propose how it would adapt the place-based Jobs-Plus model to serve a widely dispersed population. For example, applicants might propose to align the Jobs-Plus service location(s) with public transportation routes, or recommend a service delivery strategy featuring flexible staff hours and staff traveling to multiple locations to ensure that residents living the farthest from the program office have easy access to services.

### Staffing and Staff Training

The selected provider will employ approximately 5 – 6 full-time staff members in San Antonio, TX and Tulsa, OK, and approximately 10 full-time staff members in New York, NY.

Training will be provided for site staff during the planning, start up and early implementation phases by a combination of technical assistance providers, including MDRC staff and consultants. Among the topics featured in training sessions during the planning and start-up phase are:

- Jobs-Plus philosophy and program model
- Workforce development policy evolution
- Marketing and outreach, customer engagement and re-engagement
- Employment services
- Housing authority-specific rent rules and policies

Ongoing technical assistance and training sessions will be provided to each site by MDRC staff and consultants. Where available, a local consultant may also be engaged to support staff as well.

### Budget

Below, please find the approximate budget for the first year of program operations. The initial contract will be for one year; renewal will be dependent on the availability of additional funding and performance.

*New York, NY* – The annual budget for program operations is approximately \$1,000,000.

*San Antonio, TX* – The annual budget for program operations is approximately \$500,000.

*Tulsa, OK* – The annual budget for program operations is approximately \$500,000.

### Collaboration with Local Partners

The comprehensive nature of the Jobs-Plus model requires that the provider work in cooperation with key city agencies, especially the local housing authority. At minimum, Jobs-Plus staff must collaborate with the housing authority to create a process for offering rent incentives to participants and share certain information for outreach and evaluation purposes. In addition, for the program to be impactful over the long term, it is important that the housing authority be an active partner through the design, start-up, and ongoing operational phases of Jobs-Plus. CEO will facilitate collaboration between the selected provider and the local housing authorities. Other important local partners may include welfare and workforce development agencies, educational institutions, transportation providers, and relevant local service providers.

### Research and Learning Agenda

The learning agenda for Jobs-Plus is informed by the broad goals of the SIF, and its mission to promote proven and innovative projects and develop new knowledge about them. While the Jobs-Plus model has been proven to be effective through a rigorous, seven year evaluation, implementation research will examine several questions related to its replication, and how Jobs-Plus sites respond to challenges and opportunities in the current economic, service, and policy environments. Implementation research will examine the success of local efforts to develop the Jobs-Plus model, how providers innovate as they adapt to local conditions, and costs of implementation.

Active involvement in the learning agenda will be required of local Jobs-Plus providers. Providers will develop management and information systems to track resident participation, services, and outcomes and will provide evaluators access to these systems. Providers will be available for periodic interviews, observations, and focus groups, and where appropriate facilitate researchers' contact with residents for interviews and focus groups. Providers will also assist in describing the research to residents and when necessary in obtaining informed consent to participate in research. Finally, by providing information about cost of program operations, providers will allow research to describe how Jobs-Plus may present a return on public and private investments.

In addition, if feasible, evaluators will also conduct confirmatory impact analyses of Jobs-Plus effects, by comparing the employment and earnings trajectories of residents in targeted buildings with those in comparable developments. (As a saturation initiative, providers should note that the effectiveness of Jobs-Plus replication is measured by the economic trajectories of the entire development.) Public Housing Authorities who are partners in Jobs-Plus will be asked to provide information to evaluators to allow these comparisons of resident employment and earnings to occur, and for implementation research purposes.

### **Attachment 1**

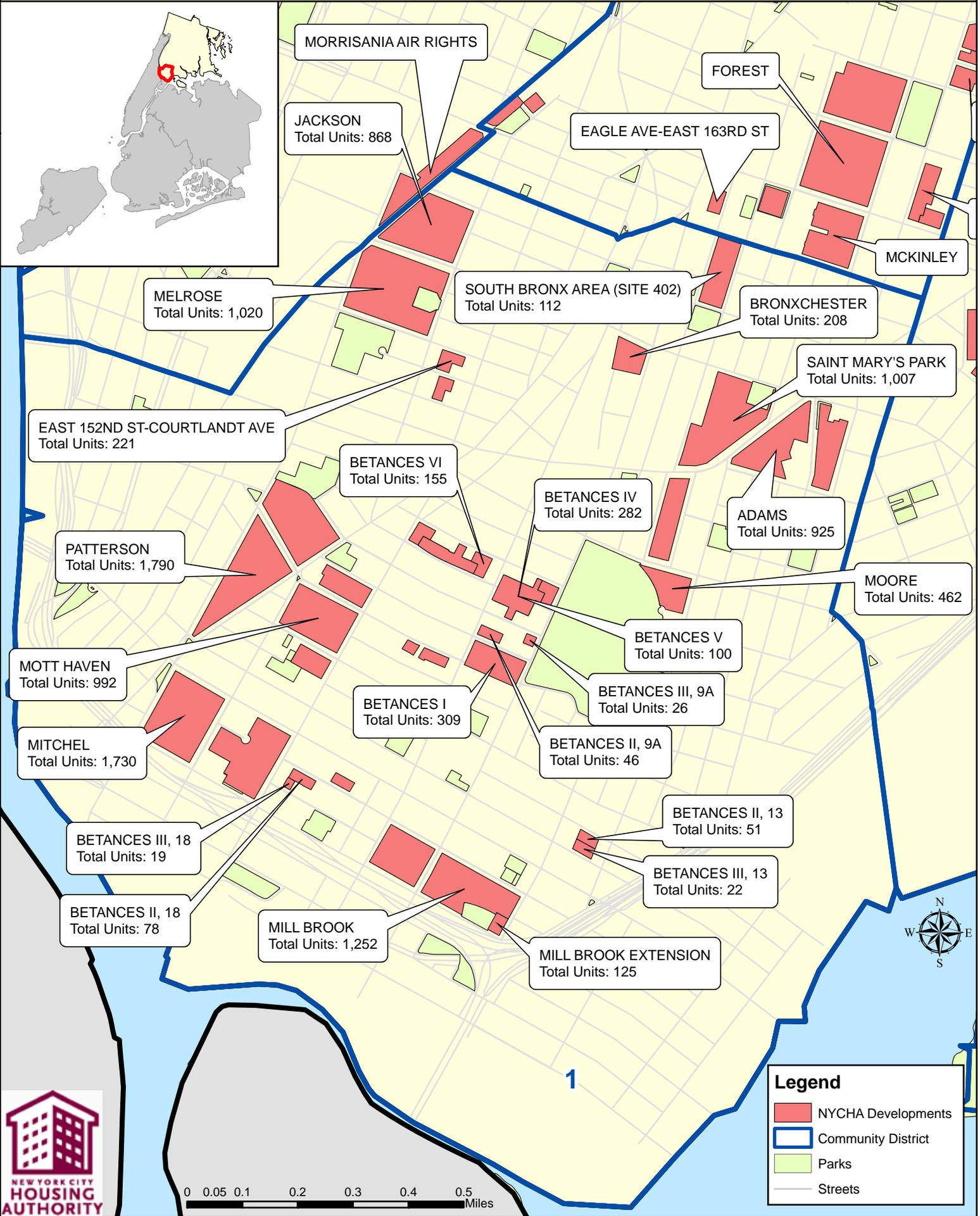
- New York City Housing Development Maps

### **Attachment 2**

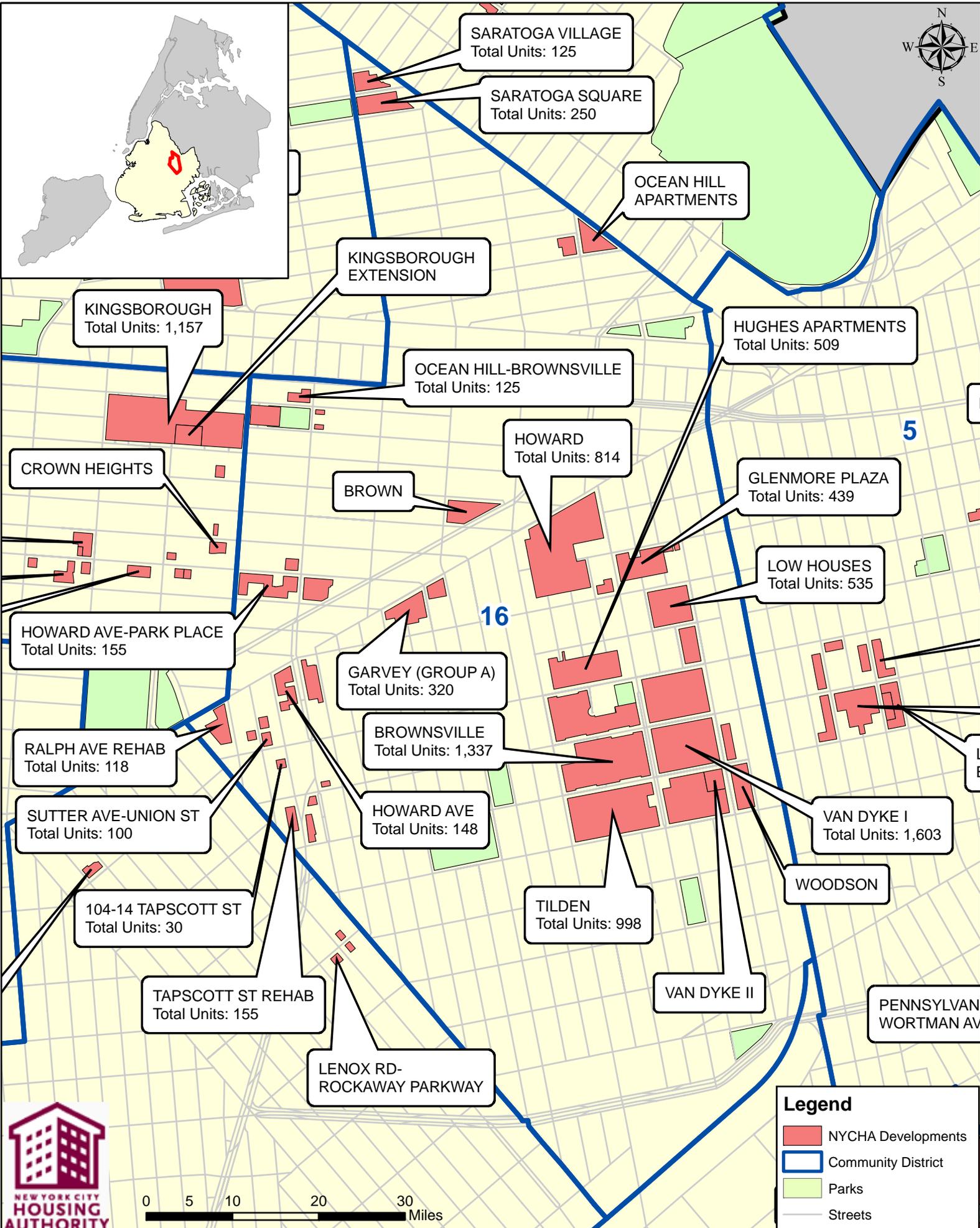
- Tulsa Housing Authority Development Map

For a map of the San Antonio Housing Authority, visit [www.saha.org](http://www.saha.org)

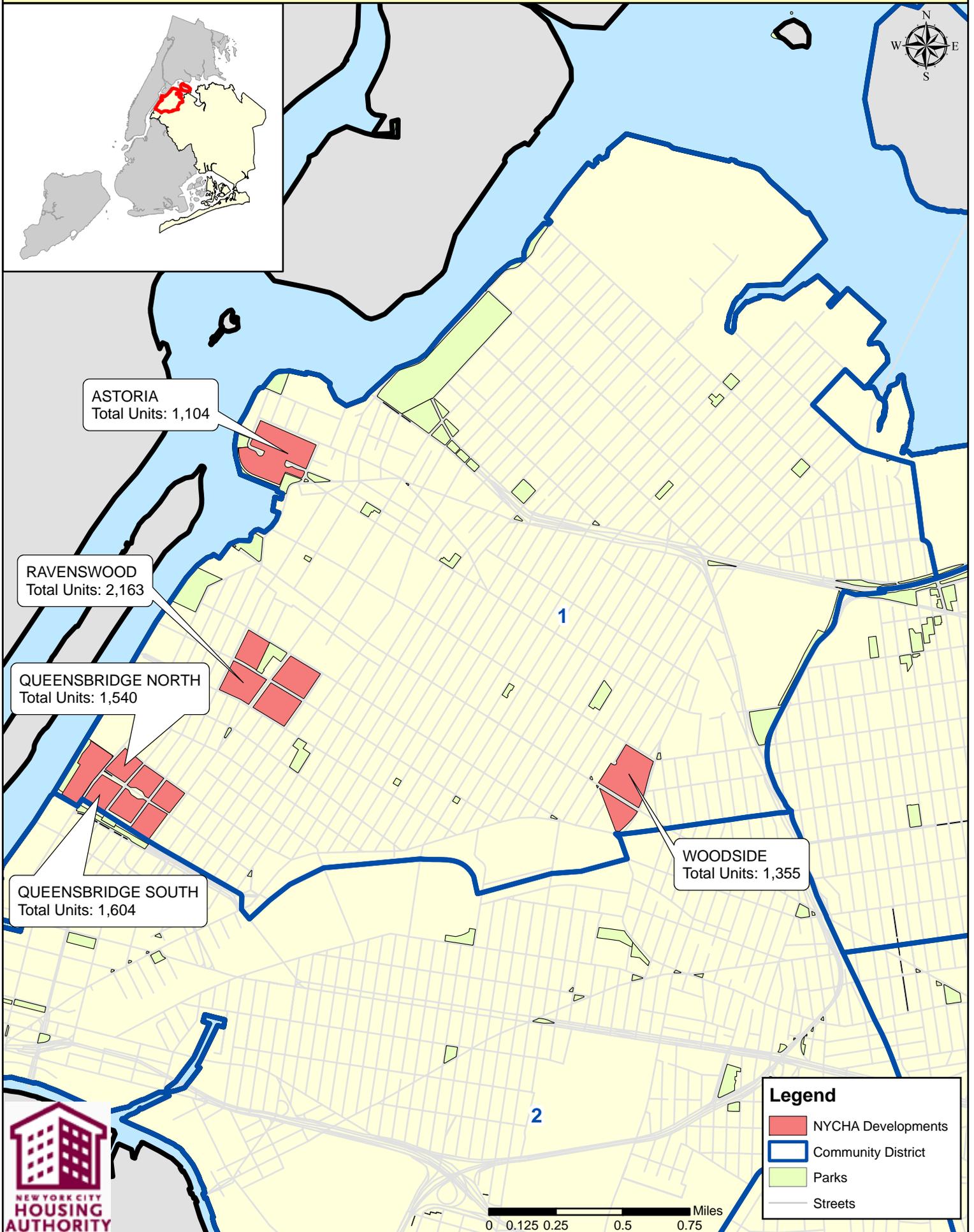
# NYCHA Developments in the Bronx Community District #1



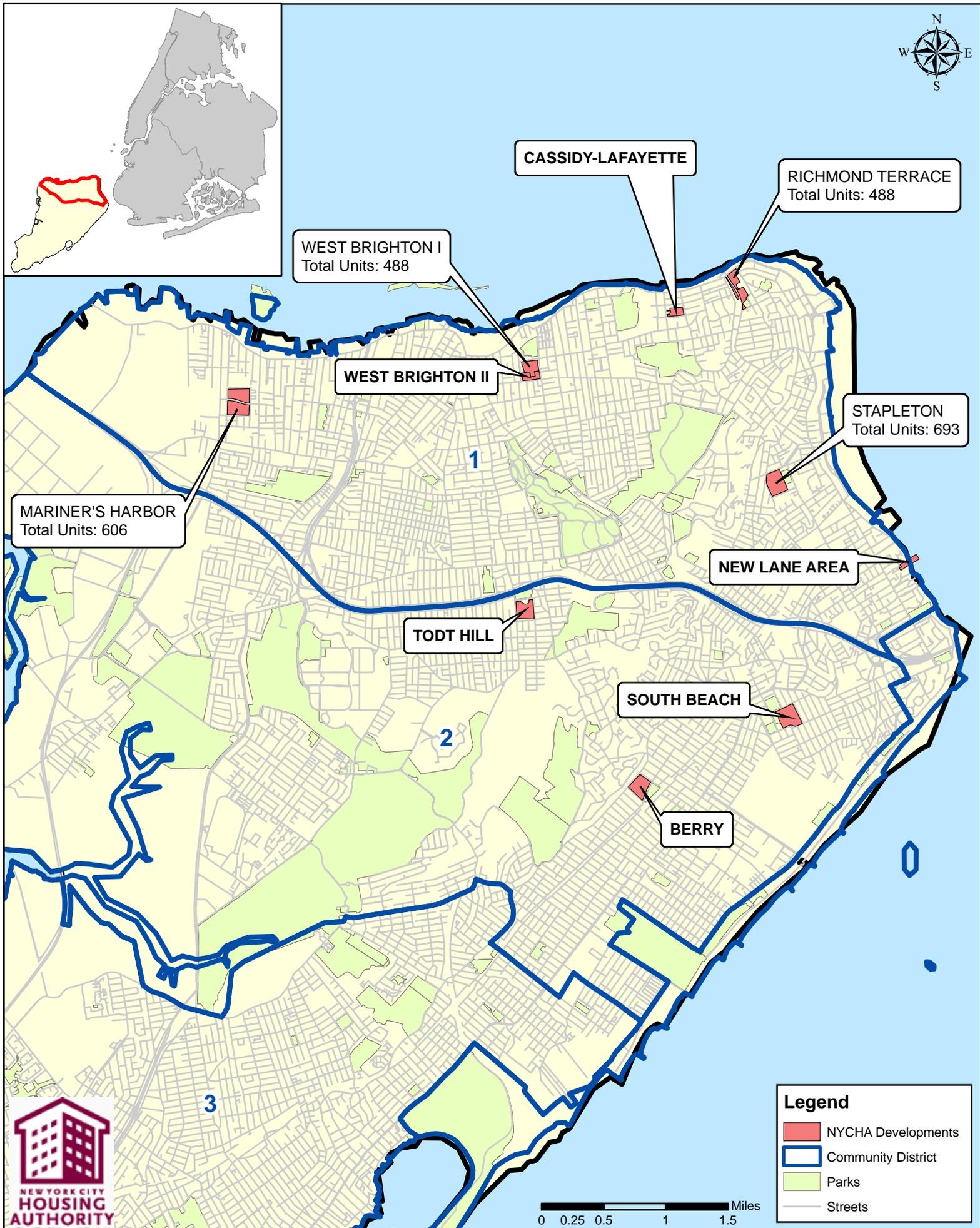
# NYCHA Developments in Brooklyn Community District #16

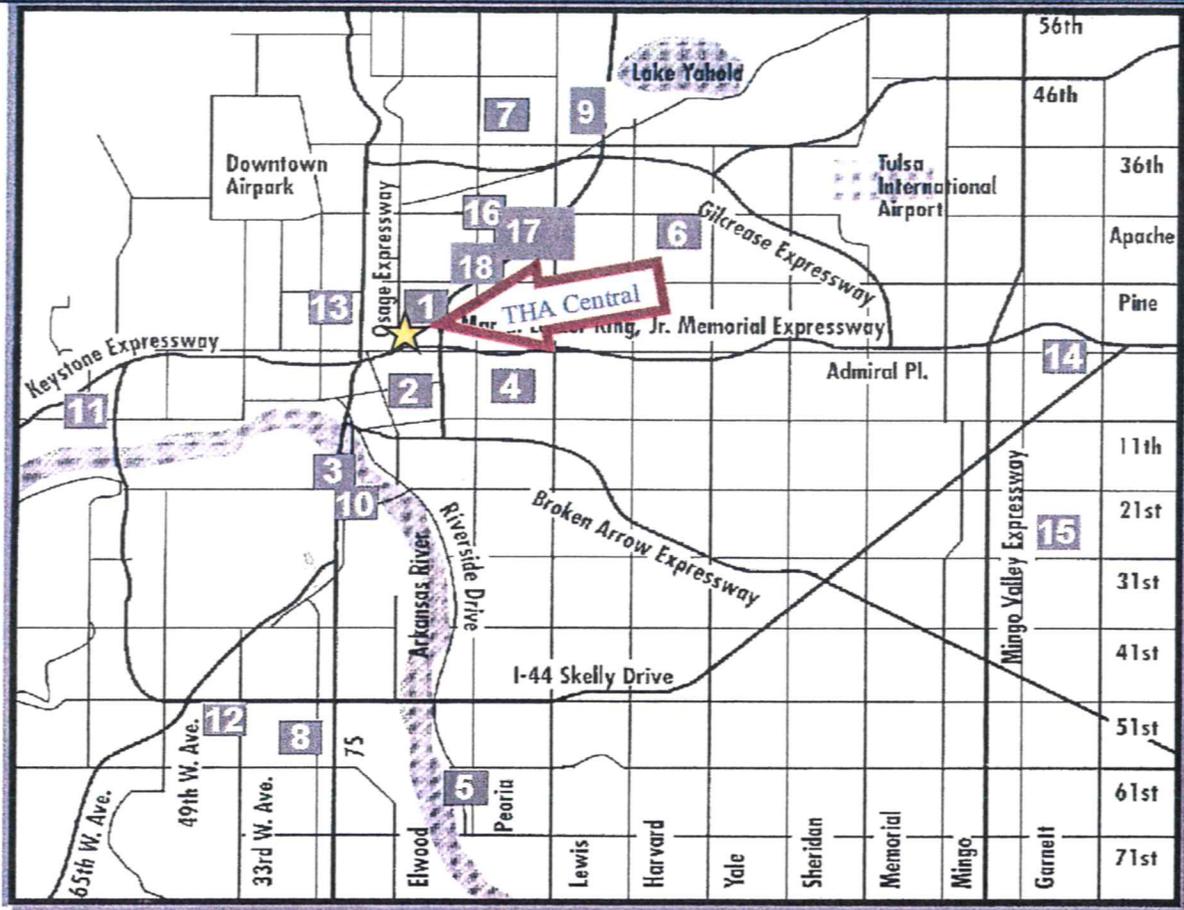


# NYCHA Developments in Queens Community District #1



# NYCHA Developments in Staten Island Community District #1





**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TULSA**  
**415 EAST INDEPENDENCE**  
**TULSA, OK 74106**

**THA COMMUNITIES**  
**LOCATIONAL MAP**

- |                                     |                                              |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| (1) Pioneer Plaza 901 North Elgin   | (11) Sandy Park 6301 W. 11th Pl.             |
| (2) Hewgley Terrace 420 S. Lawton   | (12) South Haven 4012 W. 56th Pl.            |
| (3) LaFortune Tower 1725 SW Blvd.   | (13) Country Club Gardens 650 N. Osage Dr.** |
| (4) Murdock Villa 828 S. Wheeling*  | (14) East Central 12330 E. Archer            |
| (5) Inhofe Plaza 6565 S. Newport*   | (15) The Meadows 2820 S.116th E. Ave.*       |
| (6) Apache Manor 2402 N. Marion     | (16) Towne Square 1607 E. Young Pl.*         |
| (7) Comanche Park 3608 N. Quaker    | (17) Seminole Hills 1624 E. Virgin           |
| (8) Parkview Terrace 1615 W. 59th   | (18) Whitlow 1818-D N. Rockford              |
| (9) Mohawk Manor 3637 N. Birmingham |                                              |
| (10) Riverview Park 2212 S. Jackson |                                              |

Single Family Homes Not Shown

\*\*Country Club Gardens formerly Osage Hills

\* Section 8 - Site Based Communities