

Housing and Land Use

Housing in CD 3 is increasingly unaffordable for many residents, and the district has become increasingly socially stratified:

- Community District 3 currently has the highest income diversity rate of any community district in New York City with 11.1% of households in the district having an income of less than \$10,000 and 15.3% with an income of over \$200,000.¹³
- 24.8% of residents live below the poverty line and 50% of households have incomes under \$56,550.¹⁴
- Median asking rents in CD 3 went up 8% when comparing the second quarters of 2024 and 2025. The median asking rent for the second quarter 2025 is \$4,425.¹⁵
- 23.9% of renter households in CD 3 are severely rent burdened and spend more than half their monthly income on housing.¹⁶

Affordable Housing Needs in Community District 3

The following statistics and conclusions came from a housing needs analysis completed June 2025.¹⁷

- Affordable housing is needed for local residents with incomes below 70% AMI.
- Existing affordable housing is unevenly distributed. New affordable housing should be prioritized for high-income census tracts with little or no affordable housing.
- Affordable family-sized units for Preservation and new units for households seeking family-sized units for three or more people.
- New affordable housing to target extremely low-income (less than 30% AMI) single-person households, particularly older adults requiring single-occupancy, highly affordable units.

Older Adult needs for Affordable Housing

The following statistics and conclusions came from a housing needs analysis completed June 2025.¹⁸

- 58% of CD 3 older adult households earn less than \$29,000 per year, considered “extremely low-income.”
- 41% of CD 3 households spending more than 30% of income on rent are older adults, making them the most rent-burdened age group.

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). DP03: *Income and benefits (in 2023 inflation-adjusted dollars)*. 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=DP03:+Selected+Economic+Characteristics&g=795XX00US3604103>

¹⁴ NYU Furman Center. (2025, May 8). Lower East Side/Chinatown Neighborhood Profile. Furmancenter.org. <https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>

¹⁵ StreetEasy. (2025). *StreetEasy Data Dashboard*. <https://streeteasy.com/blog/data-dashboard>.

¹⁶ NYU Furman Center. (2025, May 8). Lower East Side/Chinatown Neighborhood Profile. Furmancenter.org. <https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown>

¹⁷ Manhattan CB3 Housing Needs Analysis, June 2025. Prepared by Pratt Center for Community Development. https://www.nyc.gov/assets/manhattancb3/downloads/resources/CB3_Housing_Needs_Analysis.pdf

¹⁸ Ibid.

CD 3 is continuing to experience a crisis of street homelessness. Resolving homelessness requires new affordable and supportive housing targeted at affordability levels appropriate for current neighborhood income.¹⁹ The points below show a need for an increase in affordable housing development in general and specifically targeted at low incomes. In the face of these challenges, CB 3 has identified several housing and land use needs that must be addressed:

Build and Preserve Affordable Housing

Since 2010, city-wide housing development of new units has lagged far behind population growth, largely due to restrictive regulations and high construction costs. At the same time, the share of rent-burdened households paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing has steadily increased, while the number of apartments available at low rents has shrunk, leaving the lowest-income households with few options.²⁰

There is a need for more deeply affordable housing in CD 3 to address the crises of inadequate housing supply, affordability, inequality, and homelessness in the district.

- New opportunities for affordable housing must be found, including senior housing, supportive housing, housing for the formerly homeless, hotel and commercial conversions to residential uses, community opportunities to purchase distressed properties, and long-term preservation of existing affordable housing in the district.
- More family-sized affordable housing is needed, with higher volumes of 2- and 3-bedroom affordable units than the typical affordable unit mix.
- Home ownership rate in 2023 in CD 3 was 15.0%, which is lower than the citywide share of 32.5%.²¹ Along with expanding affordable rental housing, there is a need to expand affordable homeownership opportunities like the kind seen in previous decades with programs like Mitchell-Lama.

Unnecessary administrative and bureaucratic roadblocks in the approval process are some of the largest financial costs in building new affordable homes, which often render desirable projects financially unfeasible. Community-based organizations in CD 3 provide essential services to tenants dealing with the termination of basic services, egregious building code violations, and avoidable evictions. Expanded support for these CBOs is needed to ensure tenants can remain in their homes and that existing affordable housing is protected.

Provide Support for the Expansion of Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

CLTs are proving to be an effective mechanism for permanently preserving affordable housing.

¹⁹ NYC DHS. (2019). *NYC HOPE 2019 Results*. <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/hope-2019-results.pdf>

²⁰ NYU Furman Center. (2025, May 8). Lower East Side/Chinatown Neighborhood Profile. [Furmancenter.org. https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown](https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/lower-east-side-chinatown)

²¹ Ibid.

In CD 3, Cooper Square CLT reports ownership of the land under 23 buildings. There has also been a new Chinatown Community Land Trust established in Chinatown and This Land is Ours CLT in the Lower East Side. This Land is Ours CLT was incorporated in 2020 and is seeking to acquire City-owned land for senior and family housing, accessible and supportive housing.

In CD 3 there is a need for more support for planning and operations of CLTs that are looking to expand and as well as support for emerging CLTs that need technical assistance and education. CLTs also need priority consideration when disposing of City-owned property and need financial incentives to encourage the transition of City-foreclosed properties into CLT ownership.

Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association manages 26 total buildings with 418 housing units and more than two dozen storefronts, ensuring that they are a permanently affordable resource in the area.

Protect HDFCs from Foreclosure and Market-Rate Conversion

Housing Development Fund Cooperatives (HDFCs) are a vital source of affordable homeownership in CD 3, but face two pressing threats. Many are burdened by rising operating costs, aging building systems, and limited access to affordable refinancing, leaving them financially vulnerable and at risk of foreclosure. To stabilize these buildings, expanded support services, financial training, access to low-cost refinancing, and long-term tax abatements, and established safeguards are needed from HPD to prevent disposition to private for-profit management companies in the event of foreclosure.

HDFCs in gentrifying areas such as CD 3 face intense market pressures that incentivize shareholders to convert to market-rate housing, undermining long-term affordability. To prevent this loss, enforceable sales price caps are needed from HPD as well as partnership with local community-based organizations to support boards and preserve affordability. These measures are essential to sustain HDFCs as stable, permanently affordable housing for our community.

Expand Support for Residential Resiliency Upgrades

In CD 3, over 21,000 dwelling units are located within the 2015 FEMA-identified 100-year floodplain and over 27,500 units are located within the 500-year floodplain.²² Current programs that finance residential resiliency upgrades are not being widely used in CD 3, and there is a need for the City to tailor programs to the specific financial needs of low- and moderate-income housing providers, including HDFC co-op boards, so that they can complete critical building infrastructure upgrades and take proactive steps to become environmentally resilient.

²² NYC Department of City Planning. (2024). NYC Flood Hazard Mapper. <https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/data-maps/flood-hazard-mapper.page>

NYCHA and Section 8 Housing

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) owns and manages over 14,900 units of low-income housing in CD 3 and the preservation of these apartments as viable, secure, publicly owned housing is vital to ensure that our community remains diverse and economically integrated. Changes in agency leadership, new federal monitoring, uncertain funding from HUD, and proposals for increasing public- private partnerships underscores the fragile condition of NYCHA funding and operations in CD 3. The latest reports estimate a 20-year capital investment need of \$78.3 billion of capital and repair need, significantly more than the \$31.8 estimated in a 2018 report.²³ CB 3 has identified the following as pressing district needs:

- **Capital improvements and repairs**

To the extent possible, the capital repairs in CD 3 NYCHA buildings need to be funded and construction and repairs expedited.

- **Community Participation in NextGen NYCHA, RAD, and the Trust for Public Housing**

The NYCHA programs, including Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT), the local iteration of the federal Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, as well as the public housing preservation trust, are new models for public housing that may introduce the private sector into NYCHA properties and could dramatically change the way developments are managed and funded. Several developments in CD 3 have already been designated as PACT developments. There must be increased community engagement and transparency from NYCHA regarding these new programs to better understand how they would impact public housing stock and public housing residents in our community district.

²³ NYC Housing Authority. (2023). *July 12, 2023 Press Release*. <https://www.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/press/pr-2023/pr-20230712.page>