

Public and Subsidized Rental Housing in New York City

Families with low, moderate, and even middle incomes have consistently struggled to find affordable housing in New York City. To reduce the burden of living in a high cost market, the city, state, and federal governments have employed a number of programs to create and maintain affordable housing. Much of this is public housing owned and operated by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). But private developers also own and manage many affordable rental housing developments, agreeing to charge below-market rents to low-income tenants in exchange for government subsidies.

Over the past two years, the Furman Center has combined almost 50 datasets from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC), New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), and other partners to create a single database that provides the first comprehensive profile of privately owned, subsidized rental housing in New York City. We call it the Subsidized Housing Information Project (SHIP).

The SHIP primarily catalogues information about rental housing developments subsidized through HUD insurance programs, HUD project-based rental assistance programs, New York City and State Mitchell-Lama programs, and the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. By combining the information in the SHIP with data about public housing, we are able to identify and compare two major types of affordable housing and explore the distribution of such housing throughout the city. There are other subsidy programs, notably tenant-based vouchers that are not included in either stock.

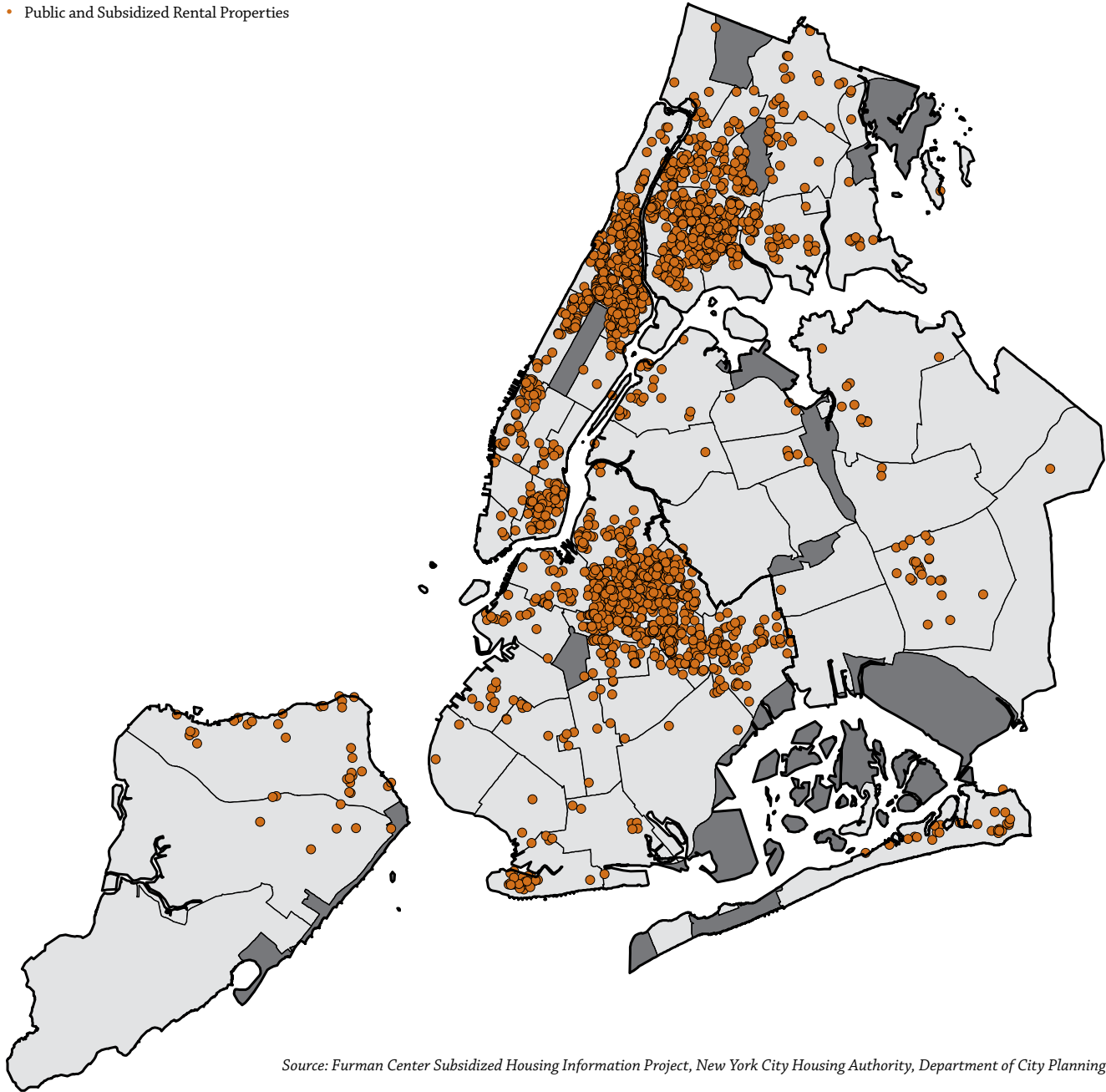
The properties tracked in the SHIP database are privately owned, multi-family rental properties funded with a mix of private capital and public subsidy, which may include below-market interest rate loans, capital subsidies, rental subsidies, tax exemptions, tax abatements, mortgage insurance, low cost land, or other benefits to reduce the cost of housing development or operations. In exchange for these subsidies, the developers or owners of these properties agree to specific rent and/or tenant-income restrictions to ensure that



the properties are affordable to low-, moderate-, or middle-income families. The subsidies and associated rent restrictions for each of the programs expire after a set number of years, varying from just 15 years for the earliest LIHTC projects to 35 years for the first Mitchell-Lama projects. These expiration dates make the programs more attractive to for-profit developers because they allow the developer to gain unrestricted control of their properties down the road. However, for non-profit owners who are interested in long-term affordability, the expiration dates can actually be a hindrance because affordability requirements end once

Figure A: Public and Subsidized Rental Housing

- Public and Subsidized Rental Properties



Source: Furman Center Subsidized Housing Information Project, New York City Housing Authority, Department of City Planning

the subsidies expire. As Figure A shows, as of the end of 2010, there were 192,000 units of rental housing in New York City receiving subsidies through at least one of the programs covered by the SHIP.

NYCHA public housing developments provide an additional 185,000 units of affordable housing for low-income New Yorkers. These units are distinct from properties catalogued by the SHIP in some key respects.

First, they are entirely publicly financed through a mix of federal, state, and city funds. Second, they are managed directly by NYCHA rather than by private developers or public-private partnerships. Finally, existing units remain in the program indefinitely.

There are further differences between subsidized units and market-rate units. For instance, subsidized rental apartments tend to be slightly larger than the

average market-rate multi-family rental housing unit, and their buildings tend to contain more units. As Figure B illustrates, the average unit in a property in the SHIP database is about 960 square feet, slightly larger, on average, than public housing or market rate rental units. The average property in the SHIP database includes 69 rental units, more than twice as many units as in the average multi-family rental building in New York City. By comparison, the average public housing property has about 250 units.

Properties financed by programs covered in the SHIP database tend to be newer than the typical rental stock. The median age of SHIP units is 73 years, while the median age of an unsubsidized multi-family rental unit is 82 years. NYCHA developments were built mostly in the 1940s and 50s, and average just 63 years old.

Together, the privately owned, subsidized developments covered by the SHIP, along with the public housing complexes provide almost 380,000 units of affordable rental housing in New York City. This translates to 18.4 percent of the city's rental housing stock and 11.2 percent of its entire housing stock. As Figure A illustrates, subsidized rental units are located in every borough and nearly every community district. As Figure C shows, 21.5 percent of Manhattan's 561,288 rental units are subsidized. The Bronx has the greatest share of rental housing units in subsidized properties (25.8%), while in Queens just 7.7 percent of rental units are in public housing developments or properties catalogued by the SHIP.

Figure D ranks the 10 community districts with the highest and lowest share of subsidized rental units. In five community districts, over half of rental units are subsidized. In East Harlem, almost 70 percent of rental units are subsidized. Three of the top 10 community districts with the greatest share of rental units that are subsidized are in the South Bronx. Three community districts, all located in Queens, have no subsidized rental units.

In Spring 2011, the Furman Center will release a full report on the state of subsidized properties in New York City. In that report we will present a detailed analysis of the four subsidy programs covered by the SHIP, including their history, purpose, basic program

Figure B: Property Characteristics

	Average Number of Units per Building	Average Square Footage per Unit	Average Age of Units
SHIP Rental Properties	69	960	73
Public Housing	254	900	63
Unsubsidized Rental	24	880	82
All NYC Multi-family Rental Units	29	885	81

Source: Furman Center Subsidized Housing Information Project, New York City Housing Authority, Department of City Planning

Figure C: Subsidized Rental Units by Borough

Borough	Total Number of Rental Units	Share of Rental Units that are in Subsidized Properties
Bronx	379,124	25.8%
Brooklyn	625,261	18.3%
Manhattan	561,288	21.5%
Queens	433,819	7.7%
Staten Island	51,450	20.1%
New York City	2,050,942	18.4%

Source: Furman Center Subsidized Housing Information Project, New York City Housing Authority, Department of City Planning

Figure D: Subsidized Units by Community District

Highest Neighborhoods			
CD	Neighborhood	Share of Rental Units	Rank
MN 11	East Harlem	68.8%	1
BK 05	East New York / Starrett City	66.4%	2
BX 01	Mott Haven / Melrose	59.7%	3
QN 14	Rockaway / Broad Channel	54.0%	4
BX 03	Morrisania / Crotona	51.9%	5
MN 10	Central Harlem	47.2%	6
BK 03	Bedford Stuyvesant	45.8%	7
BK 16	Brownsville	42.2%	8
BX 02	Hunts Point / Longwood	35.4%	9
MN 03	Lower East Side / Chinatown	35.0%	10
Lowest Neighborhoods			
BK 10	Bay Ridge / Dyker Heights	2.2%	50
QN 02	Woodside / Sunnyside	1.8%	51
BK 14	Flatbush / Midwood	1.7%	52
QN 06	Rego Park / Forest Hills	1.6%	53
QN 03	Jackson Heights	1.3%	54
QN 10	South Ozone Park / Howard Beach	1.2%	55
BK 11	Bensonhurst	0.6%	56
QN 05	Ridgewood / Maspeth	0.0%	57
QN 09	Kew Gardens / Woodhaven	0.0%	57
QN 11	Bayside / Little Neck	0.0%	57

Source: Furman Center Subsidized Housing Information Project, New York City Housing Authority, Department of City Planning

structure, property descriptions, and outlook for affordability preservation. At the same time, we will launch an interactive web-based application that will provide detailed information on individual subsidized properties.