

\$126M Bronx supportive-housing development gets underway



Construction is underway on a \$126 million affordable- and supportive-housing development in the South Bronx, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Friday.

The building, at 1159 River Ave., will consist of 245 apartments, including 148 reserved for individuals and families who previously have been homeless or are recovering from mental illness, the governor's office said. Of the units set aside, 128 households will have access to on-site services and rental assistance funded through the governor's Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative, administered by the state Office of Mental Health.

Supportive services will include linking residents to and coordinating services with other community resources, such as primary and mental health care. They'll also consist of assistance in areas such as self-advocacy, education and employment, nutrition, harm reduction and social supports.

The nonprofit Community Access, which focuses on housing and social services for New Yorkers, is providing the supportive services. The development team consists of Community Access, which has offices near Battery Park, and an affiliate of Nassau County-based affordable-housing developer Madd Equities.

A spokeswoman for Community Access said the project is expected to be completed in late 2022. The nonprofit also has three additional buildings with more than 400 units currently in development.

In August Community Access said that it had opened a 215-unit residential building on Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx. The \$87 million project houses low-income families and those experiencing chronic homelessness as well as individuals living with mental health concerns. It marked the nonprofit's first project with the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative.

At the time, Cal Hedigan, CEO of Community Access, told Crain's that the need for affordable and supportive housing had only intensified as a result of the pandemic. As of the end of last year, Community Access had developed and owned more than \$300 million in real estate, including 20 buildings in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan.

The River Avenue project is the latest piece of the state's \$20 billion, five-year housing plan, aimed at building or preserving more than 100,000 affordable homes and 6,000 with supportive services, the governor's office noted.

The state Division of Homes and Community Renewal's financing for the building includes \$25 million in permanent tax-exempt bonds, low-income housing tax credits that will generate \$43 million in equity and \$16 million in subsidies, the governor's office said. The Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative award will provide \$3 million annually for services and operations. And the city Department of Housing Preservation and Development is providing an additional \$26 million in subsidies through its supportive-housing loan program. —J.H.