

NEW YORK – The [NYU Furman Center’s Housing Solutions Lab](#) and [Enterprise Community Partners](#) have selected eight small and midsize communities to join the 2024 New York State Peer Network — an eight-month-long program for housing leaders from jurisdictions across New York State.

With the support of the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), the network will bring together leaders from eight New York jurisdictions — **Albany, Binghamton, Elmira, Ithaca, Kingston, Newburgh, Utica, and Wayne County** — to implement, refine, and strengthen tools to meet rental housing and homeownership needs in their communities. To launch the program, the Network will host an in-person convening on Sept. 20 in Albany, New York that will focus on relationship development, goal setting, and narrowing in on specific policy priorities for the Network.

“We’re thrilled to be partnering with Enterprise Community Partners to host the 2024 New York State Peer Network, our sixth peer city cohort and our first focused on a single state: New York,” said **Martha Galvez, Executive Director of the NYU Furman Center’s Housing Solutions Lab**. “Communities across New York — like communities all across the U.S. — have been grappling with housing affordability and quality challenges for years now. We’re excited to offer an opportunity for housing leaders across New York to share common challenges and promising solutions and build relationships in a consistent legal, political, and policy context.”

Each of the eight communities participating in this year’s Peer Network will bring their own specific housing challenges and priorities, and each of the participants will determine their areas of focus during the length of the program. Following the initial Sept. 20 convening, participants will join monthly virtual meetings to exchange ideas, share progress, and receive expert guidance.

“As New York State confronts a significant affordable housing crisis, many municipal leaders around the state are saying, ‘What can we do to help?’” said **Baaba Halm, Senior Vice President of Programs, Enterprise Community Partners**. “We are proud to be working with eight such communities through this program. Through peer networking, information sharing, and support from experts, this cohort will ultimately be better equipped to meet the housing needs of the people they serve.”

Much of the state is experiencing significant shortages of housing at all levels of the market, which is forcing up rents and home prices and fueling displacement and evictions. At the same time, some communities have seen declining populations and disinvestment, as well as reduced affordable rental stock and severe home repair challenges.

“The communities participating in the New York State Peer Network come to this program from different parts of the state and with different priorities,” said **Jess Wunsch, Director of City Engagement for the Housing Solutions Lab**. “However, they all share a common context, common challenges, and a common purpose. We are excited for the convening on September 20th to serve as both an opportunity for participating communities to develop a shared agenda for the Network and to gain a deeper understanding of each other’s housing strategies and goals.

We look forward to supporting Network participants with resources, guidance, and facilitation to help them reach these goals.”

While many communities have explored strategies to address these challenges at the local level, in recent years the state of New York has attempted to make progress statewide. Cities are navigating several recently enacted pieces of legislation, which gives places authority to opt in to a number of housing policies, including Good Cause eviction protections, a Pro-Housing Community certification to encourage local jurisdictions to pursue their own housing growth strategies, as well as the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act in 2019.

“New York has been engaged in a vital discussion over the last few years on how we can make housing more affordable for everyone in our state,” said **Matthew Murphy, Executive Director of the NYU Furman Center**. “We expect that discussion to continue, at the local, state, and federal levels, over the next few months and years, as our state keeps trying to address this critical issue. We’re proud to have the chance to support and empower this network of communities in their effort, and look forward to seeing how the participating housing leaders can encourage regional and statewide progress.”

Seven of the eight jurisdictions participating in the New York State Peer Network have received Pro-Housing certification through New York State. The Pro-Housing Community program is a certification from New York State Homes and Community Renewal that requires a jurisdiction to have approved building permits up to either 1% of existing housing stock (downstate) or 0.33% (upstate) over the past year or 3% (downstate) or 1% (upstate) over the past three years. Pro-Housing Community certification is required for jurisdictions to be eligible for many discretionary funding programs.

“I’m excited the City of Binghamton was chosen to be part of the 2024 New York State Peer Network led by the NYU Furman Center’s Housing Solutions Lab and Enterprise Community Partners,” said Jared M. Kraham, Mayor of the **City of Binghamton**. “City Hall staff will have the chance to interface with policy experts and municipal leaders from across the state on the latest and most promising practices for addressing the housing crisis, and access cutting-edge technical support and data analysis from the Furman Center. Binghamton’s work around housing has made us a model for municipalities statewide. We look forward to sharing what we’ve learned with colleagues from other cities as New York looks to improve housing opportunities for all residents.”

“Building off the adoption of a new zoning code in 2023, we are committed to improving housing affordability and opportunity in the City of Kingston and continuing to learn from our peers in New York State,” said **Steve Noble, Mayor of the City of Kingston**. “Participation in this network will help us to address our shared challenges and advance evidence-based policies.”

“The City of Newburgh is grateful to be selected for this unique opportunity with the Housing Solutions Lab and Enterprise Community Partners,” said **Ali Church, Director of Planning and Development for the City of Newburgh**. “The program has a proven track record for

providing actionable solutions to complex housing issues. Throughout the course of the Peer Network, we are committed to learning new strategies related to anti-displacement and inclusionary zoning. We are also eager to share our own housing solutions that have been successfully implemented here in Newburgh.”

“Developing housing opportunities is key to Wayne Economic Development Corporation’s mission to advance economic growth in the community,” said **Brian Pincelli, Executive Director of the Wayne Economic Development Corporation**. “The Peer Network is a chance for New York State communities to access cutting-edge technology, establish partnerships, and explore innovative programs.”

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