



## Gaining Ground Pilot Project Endorsement Form

New York City is at a breaking point. New Yorkers are losing rent regulated units to the shelter system; the Mayor's housing plan blatantly leaves out housing for homeless and extremely low income folks; shelters are bursting at their seams; and the police arbitrarily harass homeless folks on the street. It is clear that the City has no comprehensive plan to address this housing crisis.

The Gaining Ground Pilot Project is that plan. **Created by homeless people and nonprofit housing developers**, Gaining Ground lays out a framework to preserve and build permanently affordable housing for those with the lowest incomes in New York City using creative models of community controlled land and housing while phasing out wasteful and dangerous shelters. We need you and your organization to sign on to this unique pilot project. Read our one pager and sign your organization's name below to endorse!

### Gaining Ground Endorser

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions or to follow up, please contact Ryan at [ryan@picturethehomeless.org](mailto:ryan@picturethehomeless.org), or call 646-314-6423.



## The Gaining Ground Pilot Project Summary

The Gaining Ground Pilot Project will **utilize various city resources, including city tax levy funds and DHS funding, to develop and preserve permanently affordable and high-quality housing for individuals and families who are currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness.** In so doing, the Project will build a **replicable model through which the city could effectively create and preserve thousands of units of housing by re-investing shelter resources on a wider scale,** ensuring affordability to residents of extremely low income, who currently make up over  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the population of the city,<sup>1</sup> and nearly the entire population of the DHS shelter system.

Conceived in partnership with experienced affordable housing developers, and drawing on the lived experiences and knowledge of Picture the Homeless members, **this pilot project offers three major policy measures through which the city can move away from the socially and financially unsustainable shelter-system model towards a city-wide solution that fulfills the goals of de Blasio's 5-Borough, 10-Year Housing Plan.**

### The pilot project will incorporate three major policy measures to reach this goal:

- First, the project proposes that the city take steps to **convert thousands of current cluster-site shelter units back into rent-regulated housing, giving first right of refusal to shelter residents currently occupying formerly regulated units.** This would automatically create over 3,000<sup>2</sup> new units of low rent housing, and move thousands of families from shelter to housing. In the long term, the city would see significant cost savings from this transition, which should then be reinvested in small subsidies for these families. This conversion would automatically create permanent housing for thousands of homeless New Yorkers, and preserve housing for many more at risk of homelessness.
- Second, drawing on the assumption that the city should commit all available resources under its control to the purpose of ameliorating and preventing the growing crisis of homelessness, the project outlines a plan for the **rehabilitation of thousands of units of city-owned vacant property and development of city-owned vacant land for the specific purpose of housing homeless and extremely low-income populations.**
- Finally, the project is an opportunity for the city to **re-examine existing practices around city-owned and partially vacant properties, particularly struggling buildings in HPD's TIL and ANCP programs, in order to preserve existing low-cost housing for tenants within these programs, and to bring new, low-cost units within the buildings to occupancy.** Additionally, the proposal offers alternative discharge options for buildings in HPD's housing quality enforcement programs (including AEP) which would preserve distressed and tax delinquent property as affordable to current and future tenants. The range of properties owned and/or monitored by HPD, many of which currently offer housing to low-income and extremely-low income tenants and shareholders, are a valuable resource for the city's most vulnerable housing populations.

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<sup>1</sup> NYU Furman Center, "State of New York City's Housing and Neighborhoods in 2013," (New York: NYU Furman Center, 2013), 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Harry Stevens and Greg Smith, "Thousands of New Yorkers living in dangerous 'cluster units' as homeless population tops 59,000, a record high." (New York: New York Daily News, February 1, 2015.)