



Homes and  
Community Renewal

Housing  
Trust Fund  
Corporation

# New York State Neighborhood & Rural Preservation Programs

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2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Kathy Hochul, Governor  
RuthAnne Visnauskas, Commissioner/CEO

# Commissioner's Message

HCR is pleased to submit the 2019-2020 Annual Report for the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs.

Across New York State, HCR supports the construction, preservation, and protection of affordable housing; invests in the development of economically robust and diverse communities; enables sustainable homeownership; and focuses on keeping people safely housed.

It takes many partners, large and small, to achieve these goals. Among these are 197 community-based, grassroots Preservation Companies that work in urban, rural and suburban communities to increase economic opportunity and make the dream of a safe, affordable home a reality for New Yorkers. Since 2011, HCR has awarded Preservation Companies nearly 600 grants totaling more than \$123 million to support these efforts.

During the 2019-20 Program Year, the services provided by Preservation Companies were particularly in demand as communities across the state struggled to curb the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Long Island, for example, Housing Help, Inc. saw a 300 percent increase in clients requesting housing assistance due to financial hardship. The Community League of the Heights, a Preservation Company serving Washington Heights in New York City, added two additional distribution days to its food pantry schedule and went from serving 250 individual food packages per week to serving more than 2,500.

HCR is grateful to the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Companies, the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, and the Rural Housing Coalition for their agility and unflagging dedication to New York's communities. Their constant vigilance, outreach, and ability to develop partnerships and strategies allows the companies to serve existing and new clientele and get the job done.

We look forward to continuing our work with the Preservation Companies as we strive to achieve New York State's vision of strong communities anchored by quality affordable housing and responsive, compassionate community services for all New Yorkers.

Thank you and be well,



**RuthAnne Visnauskas**  
Commissioner / CEO  
New York State Homes & Community Renewal

# Program History

## New York State Preservation Programs

Established in 1977 and 1980, respectively, under Articles XVI and XVII of the Private Housing Finance Law (PHFL), the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program is administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal's (HCR) Office of Community Renewal.

The Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program (N/RPP) promotes and preserves housing for low- and moderate-income individuals by providing administrative funds to community-based not-for-profit corporations known as Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Companies (NPCs and RPCs).

The creation of the Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) was based on the legislative finding that community development organizations rely heavily on voluntary services, short-range funding, and are typically underfinanced and understaffed. These challenges made it difficult for staff members to dedicate time to long-range planning, sustainable solutions for housing preservation, and community renewal in neighborhoods across New York State. Section 902 of Article XVI authorizes Preservation Companies to engage in a wide range of planning and administrative activities designed to preserve and promote housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons in the neighborhood or community they serve.

The Rural Preservation Program (RPP) was established by Article XVII to support community-based not-for-profit corporations in rural preservation activities. Modeled after the NPP, Article XVII differs in that it recognizes the unique needs of rural areas across New York State.

Included in this Annual Report are summaries of activities reported by the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Companies under contract with HCR during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019-20.



# Impact

## Preservation Programs on the Ground

This report reflects the accomplishments of the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs (N/RPP) between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. The first nine months of the 2019-20 N/RPP Program Year were largely unaffected by the reverberations of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, as the virus strengthened its grip in New York State in March, Preservation Companies closed their offices and worked to provide services and assistance to clients remotely. HCR funded a total of 143 Neighborhood Preservation Companies and 58 Rural Preservation Companies during the Program Year.

While downstate bore the initial brunt of the virus, the shutdowns impacted the delivery of services statewide. Many companies were not equipped for remote work and HCR was able to support N/RPCs and adjust workplans and budgets to cover new needs created by a remote workforce. These adjustments helped program participants reallocate N/RPP funds to where they were needed most during the pandemic, while still complying with program requirements.

Despite mounting challenges, Preservation Companies continued to deliver much needed housing assistance during the 2019-2020 Program Year and identified the following accomplishments in the N/RPP annual performance reports:

- ◆ 7,833 home improvement and rehabilitation projects either in progress or completed
- ◆ 3,806 new residential units in progress or completed
- ◆ 324 non-residential construction projects in progress or completed
- ◆ 41,331 tenants assisted (including evictions prevented and subsidy assistance)
- ◆ \$216.2 million brought to low-income communities via the N/RPP



### LEVERAGING FUNDS

The administrative support from the N/RPP allows Preservation Companies to leverage additional resources to further enhance the quality of life in their communities. New York State's NPCs and RPCs administer many of the grant programs awarded through Homes & Community Renewal's Office of Community Renewal. In FY 2019-20, Preservation Companies were awarded \$8.2 million in Affordable Housing Corporation Awards—35% of the funds.

Preservation Companies are also the local program administrators for HCR’s Lake Ontario and the Southern Tier Flood Recovery Programs. The companies working on these programs continued their efforts in FY 2019-20 to distribute funds to eligible homeowners impacted by flooding.

HCR allowed awardees to repurpose existing HOME & CDBG funds to provide emergency rent support in the wake of COVID-19. Several Preservation Companies participated in this effort. To date, approximately \$600,000 has been disbursed / committed to assist over 200 renters.

### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPANIES**

In the 2019-2020 Program Year, HCR, along with its partners the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State, Inc. and the New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc. (collectively known as “the Coalitions”), provided training opportunities and technical assistance under the Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC).

Both HCR and the Coalitions interact with NPCs and RPCs via webinars, workshops, and training at the NPC and RPC annual conferences. Preservation Program staff frequently coordinate with the Coalitions to provide multi-pronged support to the extensive network of NPCs and RPCs.



## Preservation Programs by the Numbers

N/RPP program participants submit a yearly application that contains a proposed work plan and budget. Work plan activities proposed may include housing rehabilitation and development, tenant and homeowner assistance, property management, first-time homebuyer counseling, foreclosure counseling, community planning and development, and other activities aimed at preserving affordable housing in their respective service areas.

Participation in the N/RPP requires every company to submit an Annual Performance Report to account for the activities completed during the program year. In addition to work plan accomplishments, the Annual Performance Report details how the company spent N/RPP funds and includes any match funds received by the organization.

Matching funds are additional funds reported by the N/RPCs as received and expended during the contract period to defray costs associated with organizational administration and may be generated from federal, state, local, and private sources. Articles XVI and XVII of the Private Housing Finance Law requires at least one dollar in match for every three dollars of preservation funds received. In FY 2019-20:

- ◆ NPCs reported \$3,812,853 in match funds
- ◆ RPCs reported \$1,707,230 in match funds

### PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION PROGRAM

In FY 2019-20, \$12.8 million was allocated to the Neighborhood Preservation Program and each NPC received an award of \$88,671. NPP funds leveraged other Federal, State, Local, and Private funding sources at a rate of \$12 for every NPP dollar appropriated. In FY 2019-20, NPCs leveraged capital improvements to 291 non-residential units and new construction of 33 non-residential units.

The tables below detail the preservation activities reported by NPCs during the 2019-2020 Program Year.

PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES: NPCs	
ACTIVITY	UNITS
Home Improvements and Rehabilitation	5,119
Residential New Construction	3,628
Property Management (Number of Units Managed)	9,106
Special Populations Assisted (Individuals)	4,404

SERVICES OFFERED	INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED
Financial Counseling (Pre / Post-Purchase; Reverse Mortgage)	5,645
Mortgage Delinquency Assistance / Prevention	2,121
Subsidy / Relocation / Homelessness Assistance	19,201
Tenant Assistance / Counseling / Associations	18,722
Evictions Prevented	4,853
Entering / Returning to Work Force Assistance	3,852
Assistance to Mobile / Manufactured Homes	755
Mortgages / Loans Obtained	\$53,100,439
Special Populations Assisted by Preservation Services	21,188

NEIGHBORHOOD / MUNICIPALITY ASSISTANCE	
Infrastructure and Community Planning Projects	343
Grant Writing / Administration	504
Businesses Attracted and Retained	1,245
Neighborhood / Block Associations (Individuals Served)	12,586
Youth Programs (Individuals served)	10,856
Weed and Seed Programs (Individuals Served)	422
Partnerships with Local Agencies	381
Partnerships with Private Sector	528
Partnerships with Statewide/National Non-Profits	116

### PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: RURAL PRESERVATION PROGRAM

In FY 2019-20, \$5.3 million was allocated to the Rural Preservation Program and each RPC received an award of \$88,305. RPP funds were leveraged by other Federal, State, Local, and Private funding sources at a rate of \$11 for every RPP dollar appropriated. In FY 2019-20, RPCs reported capital improvements to 33 non-residential units.

The charts below detail the preservation activities reported by the RPCs during the 2019-2020 Program Year.

### PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES: RPCs

ACTIVITY	UNITS
Home Improvements and Rehabilitation	2,714
Residential New Construction	178
Property Management (Number of Units Managed)	3,335
Special Populations Assisted (Individuals)	1,858

SERVICES OFFERED	INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED
Financial Counseling (Pre / Post-purchase; Reverse Mortgage)	2,103
Subsidy / Relocation / Homelessness Assistance	5,815
Tenant Assistance / Counseling / Associations	1,774
Evictions Prevented	439
Entering / Returning to Work Force Assistance	90
Assistance to Mobile / Manufactured Homes	87
Mortgages / Loans Obtained	\$14,011,814
Special Populations Assisted by Preservation Services	4,922

### COMMUNITY / MUNICIPALITY ASSISTANCE

Infrastructure and Community Projects	104
Grant Writing / Administration	345
Businesses Attracted and Retained	107
Neighborhood Associations (Individuals Served)	148
Youth Programs (Youth Served)	171
Partnerships with Local Agencies	181
Partnerships with Private Sector	76
Partnerships with Statewide / National Non-Profits	72