

September 7, 2023

New York City Public Housing Preservation Trust Names First President

Vlada Kenniff will lead the newly established public entity, serving at the pleasure of the Board



New York – Following an extensive search, the New York City Public Housing Preservation Trust today announced the appointment of Vlada Kenniff as the first-ever President of the newly established public entity. Kenniff joins the role following over six years at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), where she progressively rose to become the Senior Vice President for Sustainability in the Asset and Capital Management Division. In her new capacity, Ms. Kenniff will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Trust, which was signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul in June 2022 following substantial advocacy from NYCHA and Mayor Eric Adams. The approval to name Kenniff as President of the Trust was given by the Board at its September 7 meeting.

“After decades of neglect and disinvestment by the federal government, the NYCHA Trust is the tool we need to unlock billions of dollars for public housing families across the five boroughs,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “Our administration is taking major steps to advance the Trust and deliver much-needed repairs for NYCHA residents. Vlada Kenniff has a proven record of improving quality of life for NYCHA residents, and she is the right leader to work side by side with our resident leaders and ‘Get Stuff Done.’”

“Unlocking billions of dollars to deliver comprehensive renovations to thousands of apartments across NYCHA requires passionate, experienced, and dedicated public servants

like Vlada Kenniff,” said **Deputy Mayor for Housing, Economic Development and Workforce Maria Torres-Springer**. “I am excited to work closely with Vlada, and the team she builds, as they advance the Trust and transform the lives of so many NYCHA residents.”

“For the last over half a decade, I have been focused on working with residents to develop and implement sustainable solutions that can make NYCHA better for the New Yorkers who live and work here,” said **President of the Public Housing Preservation Trust Vlada Kenniff**. “I am committed to bringing this same energy and passion to this new role, having an in-depth understanding about the Authority’s needs and challenges. I thank the Board for providing me with the opportunity to lead the Trust at such a pivotal moment in its history, and I look forward to working collaboratively to ensure its success.”

“As CEO of NYCHA, I have been fortunate to work alongside Vlada for several years and have seen both her dedication to improving public housing firsthand and the creative projects she has piloted across NYCHA to make our campuses more sustainable,” said **NYCHA CEO Lisa Bova-Hiatt**. “I am excited to continue to work with her in my role as ex-officio Chair of the Board for the Public Housing Preservation Trust as we work to bring this latest tool to fruition to improve NYCHA campuses and enhance conditions for residents.”

“As Chair of the NYCHA Board, I am intensely interested in strategies that can help move the Authority forward and bring investment into our developments,” said **NYCHA Chair Jamie Rubin**. “The appointment of Vlada Kenniff as Trust President is another important step forward in standing up this public entity that has the potential to raise billions of dollars for repairs for NYCHA residents.”

“The President of the Trust should be someone who has the right experience and values to do the job,” said **Nostrand Houses Tenants Association President, Citywide Council of Presidents Vice Chair, and Public Housing Preservation Trust Board Member Barbara McFadden**. “I am confident that Vlada will listen to residents and rebuild our developments in a way that is consistent with our needs.”

“Vlada Kenniff’s extensive experience in sustainability and resilience projects positions her perfectly to lead the Trust,” said **Enterprise Community Partners Vice President and New York Market Leader and NYC Public Housing Preservation Trust Board Member Baaba Halm**. “We look forward to her contributions in managing large-scale residential construction and rehabilitation projects while maintaining public housing affordability and a commitment to tenants’ rights.

“If we are going to rebuild Public Housing in New York City, it needs to be led by someone who has a 21st Century vision,” said **Red Hook West Houses Tenant Association President and Public Housing Preservation Trust Board Member Karen Blondel**. “Vlada understands that residents deserve green infrastructure that will better suit our needs and cut down on the City’s overall carbon footprint.”

“The fact that Vlada has previous experience with both operations and capital means that she understands the needs of the Authority and its workers,” said **Public Housing Preservation Trust Board Member and Labor Representative Pamela Campbell**. “I congratulate her on becoming the first President of the Public Housing Preservation Trust and look forward to working with her in her new role.”

“Vlada Kenniff is an effective, creative, and dedicated leader who has served New Yorkers both at DEP and at NYCHA with meaningful strides in sustainability and resilience that have paid off both for residents and the planet,” said **New York City Environmental Protection**

(DEP) Commissioner Rohit Aggarwala. “I’m thrilled to see her bringing that get stuff done approach to the even more basic need of ensuring NYCHA’s long-term renewal through the Trust.”

“I wish to congratulate Vlada Kenniff on her appointment as President of the Housing Preservation Trust,” said **New York State Public Service Commission Chair Rory M. Christian.** “Her experience and background are well suited to address the challenges the Trust seeks to overcome. This new organization will provide needed support to accelerate progress toward meeting State and City goals for housing, energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction efforts.”

“Vlada is an exceptional visionary and innovative leader,” said **Green City Force Executive Director Tonya Gayle.** “She has unique talent, technical skill, and proven ability to implement moonshot sustainability transformation. Vlada has consistently demonstrated a thoughtful and strategic commitment to long-term environmental justice initiatives for public housing residents. I am confident that Vlada will be instrumental in building the Public Housing Preservation Trust as a model conduit for ensuring healthy, modern and sustainable housing aligned with NYCHA resident input and priorities.”

“Vlada Kenniff’s appointment as the President of the Public Housing Preservation Trust is a testament to her unwavering commitment and dedicated service to the NYCHA community,” said **Public Housing Community Fund Executive Director Alex Zablocki.** “Vlada has a wealth of experience working with public housing residents and has a proven track record of leading NYCHA’s Sustainability unit, helping make NYCHA more sustainable while improving the quality of life for residents. Vlada is undoubtedly the right person to lead the Trust, and we look forward to continuing partnering with her and the Trust in this new role.”

“Vlada Kenniff’s appointment as President of the Public Housing Preservation Trust signifies a new era for NYCHA,” said **Clay Avenue Tenant Association President Maria Forbes.** “Her innovative leadership and commitment to sustainability will ensure a brighter future for public housing residents.”

The President of the Trust, as outlined in the [legislation](#), serves at the pleasure of the Board and will be responsible for the discharge of the executive and administrative functions and powers of the Trust. This includes planning and developing the Trust’s core capabilities such as its ability to independently conduct financial operations and manage large-scale residential construction and rehabilitation projects — as well as building and leading the Trust’s communications, engagement strategies, and inter-agency relationships. The appointment of the President who works hand in hand with the Board is consistent with the operating structure of similar organizations across the nation.

Kenniff’s appointment comes on the heels of several other milestones for the Trust, including the organization’s [first board meeting](#) in July. State law outlines a nine-member board for the Trust; the outstanding positions must be filled with two nominees from the Citywide Council of Presidents (CCOP). Remaining members will be seated expeditiously when nominations are received.

Mayor Adams and NYCHA are establishing the Trust at a critical moment for NYCHA, which faces \$78.3 billion in capital needs following decades of federal disinvestment and urgent financial challenges. As a fully public entity, the Trust will bring billions of dollars in federal funding to finance comprehensive renovations for thousands of NYCHA apartments, while

always maintaining residents' rights – including permanently affordable rent and keeping NYCHA properties 100 percent public.

As a hallmark of the legislation signed by the Governor last year, residents of developments must opt-in to the Trust through an official vote. Residents undertaking an official vote will be able to choose from three options: the Trust, Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT), or to remain Section 9. In July, it was [announced that Nostrand Houses](#) will be the first NYCHA development to go through this voting process, with 100 days of public engagement preceding a 30-day voting period.

About Vlada Kenniff

Vlada Kenniff, Ph.D., is the Senior Vice President for Sustainability in NYCHA's Asset and Capital Management Division. In this role, she is responsible for leading NYCHA's comprehensive [Sustainability Agenda](#) for the nation's largest public housing authority, working toward a decarbonized future and healthier homes while leveraging ongoing and future capital work to provide training and hiring opportunities for NYCHA residents.

In the past several years, Ms. Kenniff has focused on transformative waste management programs such as procuring the first [pneumatic system](#) as a retrofit to an existing building, [mechanical waste collection](#), and waste yard redesigns. In the clean energy space, Ms. Kenniff has been leading the work to transform heating and cooling through the [Clean Heat for All Challenge](#), launching the NYCHA Clean Energy Academy and the [ACCESSolar Program](#) which are focused on training and hiring NYCHA residents.

More recently, Ms. Kenniff has focused on raising funds for NYCHA through federal and state sustainability and resilience grants for necessities like tree care of NYCHA's urban forest, micromobility charging infrastructure, cooling and stormwater management on NYCHA's campuses.

Prior to joining NYCHA in 2017, Ms. Kenniff spent over a decade at the New York City Department of Environmental Protection working on a range of water conservation, demand management, rate studies, green infrastructure, and climate resiliency projects. Ms. Kenniff earned her Ph.D. in information studies from LIU Post, an M.S. in city and regional planning from Pratt Institute, and a B.A. in environmental studies from Pace University.