

Ahmad Welcomes Mayor's Housing Plan, Calls for Focus on Seniors, LGBTQ+ New Yorkers, Climate Resilience

Retired firefighter & Assembly candidate says Block by Block gets much right; leaves gaps on healthcare, aging in place, & lower Manhattan's coastal resilience

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Furhan Ahmad, candidate for New York State Assembly in District 66, today released the following statement in response to Mayor Mamdani's Block by Block: The Housing Plan for A New Era, the administration's comprehensive housing strategy released this month.



"This plan has real substance, and the Mayor deserves credit for putting it forward. The commitment to 200,000 new affordable homes, the expansion of Right to Counsel, the Fix the City enforcement program targeting the worst landlords, and the SPEED reforms to cut bureaucratic delays are exactly the kind of urgency this crisis demands. As someone who spent 23 years in public service responding to emergencies, I know what it looks like when government moves with purpose. This plan moves with purpose."

Ahmad specifically praised the plan's support for the SAFER Homes Act and the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA), which would give mission-driven organizations and tenants new tools to acquire at-risk buildings. He also welcomed the \$100 million City-backed insurance program for regulated housing, the Construction Justice Act's \$40/hour wage and benefits floor for workers on City-financed projects, and the new Back Home Unit that coordinates services for residents displaced by fires and disasters.

"The Back Home Unit is personal for me," Ahmad said. "I responded to fires and disasters across lower Manhattan as a firefighter. I have seen families standing on a sidewalk at 3 a.m. with nothing, not knowing where to go or who to call. A centralized team that takes that chaos and turns it into a coordinated response is what public service should look like."

Ahmad also noted that the plan explicitly identifies neighborhoods like the West Village as losing housing because wealthy owners are combining apartments faster than new units are built. “That’s not abstract for the people in our district. That is the lived reality of AD66, and I’m glad the administration is naming it.”

Where the Plan Falls Short for AD66

While praising the plan’s ambition, Ahmad identified critical gaps that affect the residents of Assembly District 66, which covers Greenwich Village, the West Village, SoHo, NoHo, TriBeCa, Hudson Square, Battery Park City, and the Meatpacking District.

Seniors aging in place. The plan expands senior housing production by 20% and introduces intergenerational housing pilots, both positive steps. But it does not address the challenge facing tens of thousands of older adults who already live in AD66 and need support staying in their homes. Walkup buildings without elevators, rising utility costs, limited home care access, and social isolation are daily realities for seniors in our district. Ahmad called for a dedicated aging-in-place strategy that includes accessible retrofitting for existing buildings, expanded home care coordination, and community-based services that keep seniors connected to their neighborhoods.

“Our seniors built these neighborhoods,” Ahmad said. “They should not have to choose between the home they have lived in for decades and the support they need to live with dignity. A housing plan that only builds new senior units without addressing the seniors who are already here is leaving people behind.”

LGBTQ+ housing needs. AD66 is the historic center of LGBTQ+ life in New York City. The plan does not mention LGBTQ+ housing vulnerability, the displacement of queer community institutions, or the specific needs of LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness. Organizations like the Ali Forney Center serve LGBTQ+ youth citywide who face disproportionate rates of housing instability, yet this population is invisible in the plan. Ahmad called on the administration to incorporate LGBTQ+ housing security into its planning, including protections for LGBTQ+ elders, targeted resources for trans New Yorkers facing housing discrimination, and support for the community-based organizations that serve this population. “You cannot release a housing plan for New York City that does not mention LGBTQ+ New Yorkers,” Ahmad said. “This community faces disproportionate rates of homelessness, housing instability, and discrimination. In a district that is synonymous with the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, our representative in Albany must insist that these needs are visible in every housing strategy that comes out of City Hall.”

Supportive housing and the displaced. Ahmad welcomed the plan’s expansion of supportive housing production and the new Supportive Housing Preservation Program. He also praised the goal of reducing the vacancy rate in City-funded supportive housing to 5% by the end of 2026. But the plan itself acknowledges that thousands of supportive housing units sit vacant and ready for tenants while over 100,000 New Yorkers sleep in shelters each night. Ahmad called for

stronger state-level coordination to eliminate bottlenecks in the supportive housing placement pipeline, including the lease-up delays and duplicative inspections the plan itself identifies. "Ready-to-occupy apartments sitting empty while 100,000 people are in shelter is not a policy debate. It is a failure of execution," Ahmad said. "The plan identifies the problem. Now we need an Assembly member who will fight in Albany for the funding, the staffing, and the accountability to fix it."

Climate resilience for lower Manhattan. Ahmad called the plan's climate adaptation section its most significant gap for AD66. The plan's neighborhood-level climate work focuses on the Jewel Streets in East New York, with no parallel effort for the lower Manhattan waterfront. Battery Park City, TriBeCa, and the West Village coastline remain among the most flood-vulnerable areas in New York City, as Hurricane Sandy demonstrated. Ahmad, who served as an FDNY firefighter during Sandy, said the district needs a coastal resilience strategy integrated into its housing planning, not treated as a separate issue. "I was on the ground during Sandy. I saw what storm surge does to this district. And I know that every year we wait to integrate climate resilience into housing policy for lower Manhattan, we are gambling with people's lives and homes."

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