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FOR COMMUNITY UNION
INVESTMENT ARMORY BFC PARTNERS

The Bedford-Union Armory development is a shining example of how thoughtful investment can transform a void at the center of a neighborhood into a thriving, mixed-use hub that benefits not just its immediate occupants, but the broader community as well.

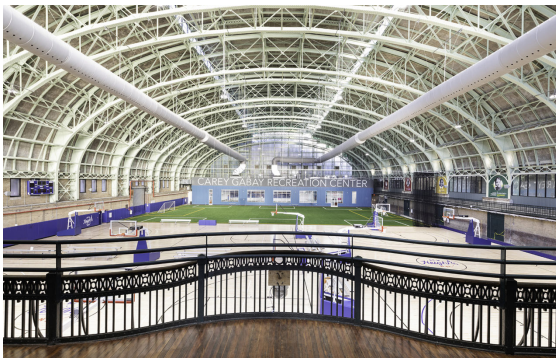
Centrally located in the dynamic neighborhood of Crown Heights, Brooklyn, this development by **BFC Partners** adapted a vast historic building and breathed life into a site comprising nearly an entire city block. The development consists of three main components: the Major R. Owens Health and Wellness Center and a pair of residential buildings at 1089 President Street and 1101 President Street (also known as The Arch). Together, they provide a 60,000-square-foot recreation facility, 25,000 square feet of nonprofit space occupied by 10 local partners, and 415 apartments, 250 of which are affordable for households with annual incomes not exceeding \$58,000. The residential buildings connect

directly to the Major R. Owens Health and Wellness Center, and the broader Crown Heights community shares access to the extraordinary sports, health, education, and community development opportunities that the project has provided.

The Bedford Union Armory was originally constructed in 1903 and first opened in 1908, containing horse stables and military equipment, and used as a training facility for the U.S. Army's Cavalry Troop C. When the cavalry was not training, the Armory hosted sporting events and community gatherings.

Even as the building slid into disuse, Congressman Major R. Owens saw the building's potential prior to his death in 2013. As a professor at Medgar Evers College, he had begun building support for a reuse of the facility that would serve the community. That opportunity arrived after the military decommissioned the building and transferred it to City ownership.

When the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) released a Request for Proposals for the site in 2015, BFC Partners, aware of Owens's vision, immediately mobilized to develop a bold



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— LAURIE CUMBO, FORMER CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 35

plan that also preserved historic artifacts and design details found in the building. BFC engaged in an extensive community engagement process with local elected officials and organizations that touched nearly 10,000 residents. Complex negotiations ultimately yielded agreement on a set of investments that benefit the community and ensure broad access to the new facilities.

The Major R. Owens Health and Wellness Center is New York City’s first and largest comprehensive center with medical, behavioral, and recreational services for the community at affordable rates. The Armory’s iconic Drill Shed was converted into a 50,000-square-foot recreation facility, named the Carey Gabay Recreation Center in honor of the attorney and public servant who was tragically killed three blocks away in 2015. It features three full-size basketball courts, an indoor multi-sport turf field, a gym, and a six-lane, 25-meter swimming pool. Managed by the Boys’ Club of New York, it offers rich and inclusive programming including sports, dance, and computer literacy. The Head House, a preserved 25,000-square-foot space, provides a community event space, support space for recreation programming, and office space for local nonprofits, including Ifetayo, the West Indian Day Carnival Association, Digital Girl, Brooklyn Pride, New Heights, the Carey Gabay Foundation, and the James E. Davis Foundation.

The multipurpose Betty Carter Auditorium for the Arts hosts regular community artistic and cultural events. Memberships to the recreation center are affordable for community residents and free for residents of the on-site affordable units. A true community center visited by 40,000 individuals and families each month, the facility offers something for everyone at any age, all year long, to stimulate athletic, mental, and social skills.

Former Council member Laurie Cumbo, a critical voice in the community engagement and development phase of the project, highlights the facility's significance for residents: "We don't even understand the dynamics of the impact of what having this space here is going to do, particularly for our young people—in terms of the skills they're going to have, the way that they're going to grow up, the friendships that they will make here, and the memories that their families are going to have here. There's so much happening here that it really creates a very special and wonderful place that I feel extraordinarily proud of."

The development's two residential buildings are situated just east of the Major R. Owens Center. Both were designed by Marvel Architects and constructed through HPD and HDC's Extremely Low & Low-Income Affordability (ELLA) program, and under the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program. Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs's Urban Investment Group, and Citi provided financing.

The former stables abutting the Armory at 1089 President Street were replaced by a brand-new 100-percent affordable building, designed in consultation with the Public Design Commission to follow the aesthetics of the Armory. The eight-story, mixed-use building provides 60 apartments affordable to households earning less than 60% of AMI. Apartments are equipped with stainless steel fixtures, energy-efficient appliances, and in-unit washers and dryers. The first two floors will be home to Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center opening in 2024, providing preventive comprehensive family health services with a focus on lower-socioeconomic groups.

Next door, at 1101 President Street, The Arch is a 15-story mixed-income rental building with 355 units, of which 190 are affordable for households earning less than 60% of AMI. Residents have access to a wide array of communal spaces including two landscaped courtyards, an outdoor prep kitchen, bike storage, parking, and a coworking space with private conference rooms.

BFC Partners is a full-service real estate development firm that creates community-first urban development solutions. Since 1984, BFC has been at the forefront of developing high-quality affordable, mixed-income, and market-rate housing. The team is dedicated to revitalizing communities and improving the lives of residents and neighbors.