



IMPACT JONATHAN
AWARD FOR GOUVEIA
PLANNING EVP FOR REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT,
PACT PROGRAM, NYCHA

There are few housing challenges more significant than the sustenance and revitalization of New York City's public housing. As NYCHA's Executive Vice President for Real Estate Development, **Jonathan Gouveia** has taken this challenge on directly, driving billions of dollars of investment through the Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) program. Under Jonathan's leadership, the Real Estate Development Department (REDD) has closed projects representing over \$4.5 billion in investment, directed toward vastly improving quality of life for over 16,000 households across the city.

The accomplishment, however, is more than just the magnitude of investment. Since the start of his work at NYCHA in 2019, Jonathan has prioritized creativity and innovation, scope that is responsive to needs, and an embrace of resident partnership and choice—

as he puts it, “deep engagement” with residents. Jonathan and REDD have been accelerating the delivery of improved living conditions and solidifying new roles for residents in the revitalization of their homes—changes that benefit residents more quickly, and also reshape planning for public housing communities for years to come.

Jonathan's interest in planning began early. His love for cities and neighborhoods—a passion cemented during rides from his home in the outer suburb of Scarborough to the downtown Toronto hospital where his mother worked as a nurse—led him to the University of Toronto for his Master's degree in Urban Planning. There he studied the public-private social housing model in Toronto's Regent Park, a dynamic community that included affordable and market-rate residential units alongside commercial development. In addition, as a child of immigrants from Guyana, the Canadian equal-opportunity policies that ensured his family's equal access to health, recreation, education, and housing shaped Jonathan's personal sense of mission and the values he has retained throughout his career.

After graduate school, Jonathan worked for a year at Brookfield Residential in Toronto before moving to New York in 2004. He was not expecting to build a career in government, but quickly became fascinated by the work of the Economic Development Corporation. For thirteen years, Jonathan worked his way through the ranks in real estate development, strategy, and transactions at EDC, notably launching the Strategic Operations Group and NYC Development Finance Conference, and leading the planning for the Brooklyn Queens Connector (BQX) transit project. This work exposed Jonathan to the power and importance of community engagement.

In 2019, Jonathan brought to NYCHA REDD his real estate knowledge and experience with community and stakeholder engagement. Understanding that every day that passes before renovation is another day residents must live in deteriorating conditions, he embarked on speeding up the pipeline of PACT projects and expanding project scopes to better address needs. He also set out to enhance the focus on social services and non-profit partners, advance innovative approaches that utilize untapped land potential, and embrace elevated roles for residents to create tangible, beneficial, rapid change for NYCHA communities.

Jonathan's embrace of resident-centered planning and choice has helped build a groundbreaking model for inclusive and transparent planning under HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)

program. At Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea Houses, his team launched the first Resident Review Committees, on which residents work in partnership with NYCHA and HDC to select a winning proposal and development team—a watershed moment for treating public housing residents as the valued customer of their landlord and property manager. He established a Resident Planning Fund to provide technical assistance for residents to participate as partners in the planning process, and Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea residents became the first to be surveyed to give them all a say in decisions about project scope.

When done properly, public-private partnerships unite all parties around shared objectives and enable each to contribute effectively to achieving them. The process innovations Jonathan has led have not only delivered improved quality of life more quickly to thousands of NYCHA residents, they have also paved the way for resident partnership on a diverse range of future PACT projects to address deep and widely ranging needs. We are thrilled to award Jonathan the Impact for Planning Award and to celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of the PACT program so far.