Neighborhood
STAT
Stapleton Houses

MAP
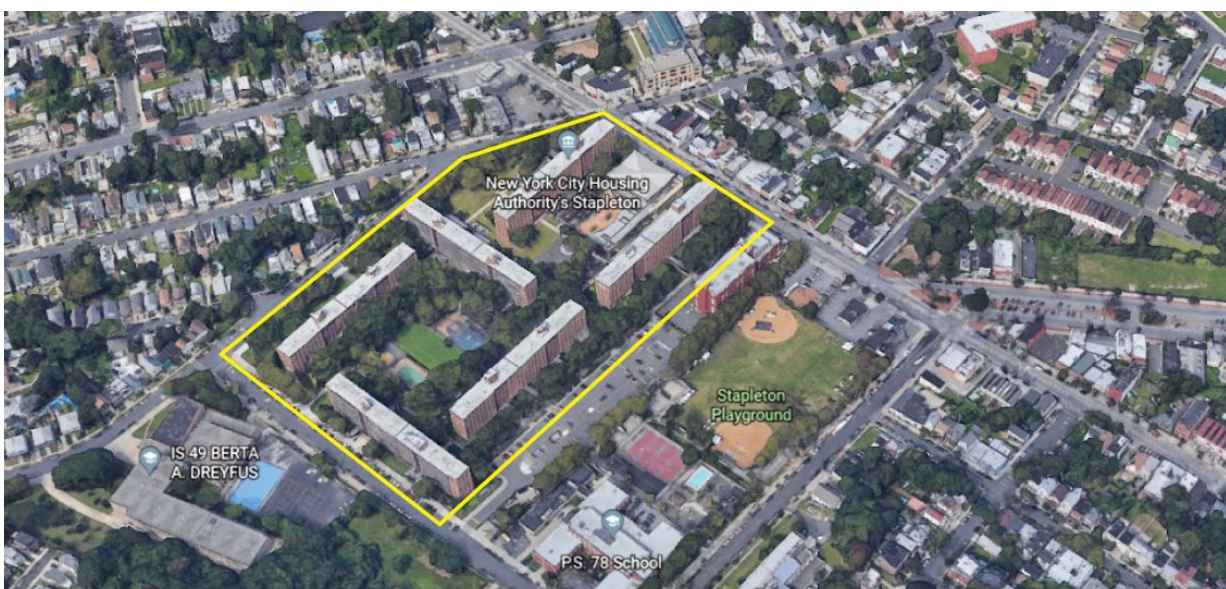The Mayor's Action Plan for
Neighborhood Safety

Connected Communities

A Path to Building Trust and Wellness for Stapleton Residents
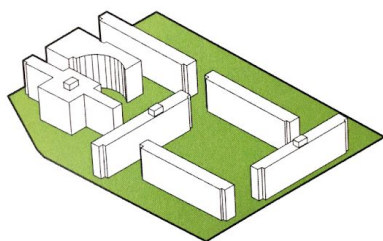

Stapleton Houses

A. Background

Stapleton Houses is located in the North Shore area of Staten Island between Broad Street and Hill Street, minutes away from the St. George historic district. Stapleton Houses carries some history itself, having produced one of Hip-Hop's most legendary groups, The Wu-Tang Clan. In its structural design, Stapleton is small relative to other NYCHA campuses, consisting of only six residential buildings. Built in 1962, Stapleton's 2,131 residents live in 693 units housed within one of the development's eight storey buildings.[1] The median household income is $23,261. In census tract 29 where Stapleton is located, residents identify as Latino (45%), Black/African American (43%), White (7%), and Asian (3%). Most notably, 65 percent of

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[1] (NYC Planning 2018)

Stapleton Residents are under the age of 24 -- making it the youngest of the MAP developments -- and 50 percent of Stapleton's households are either single parent or kinship caregiving households with children under 18. There is also a high percentage of households where one or more members live with a disability (46%) or mental impairment (18%). A substantial portion of residents lived at Stapleton for fewer than 10 years.
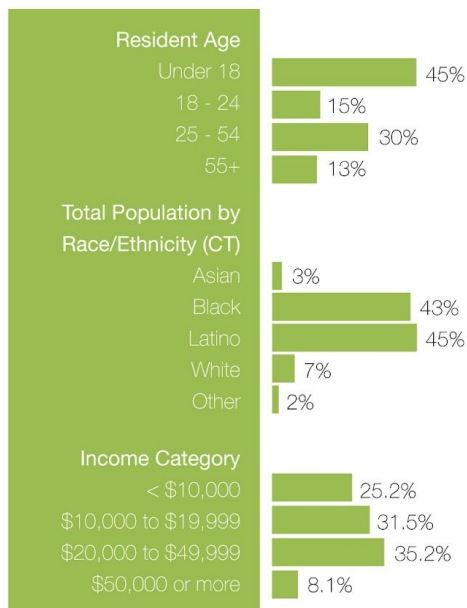

Stapleton Houses

Year Built: 1962
# of Buildings: 6
# of Floors: 8   County: Staten Island
Total Units: 693   Community District: 1
Population: 1,978   Census Tract: 29
                           Neighborhood: Richmond

Illustration: NYCHAPEDIA

Resident Age
Under 18 — 45%
18 - 24 — 15%
25 - 54 — 30%
55+ — 13%

Total Population by Race/Ethnicity (CT)
Asian — 3%
Black — 43%
Latino — 45%
White — 7%
Other — 2%

Income Category
< $10,000 — 25.2%
$10,000 to $19,999 — 31.5%
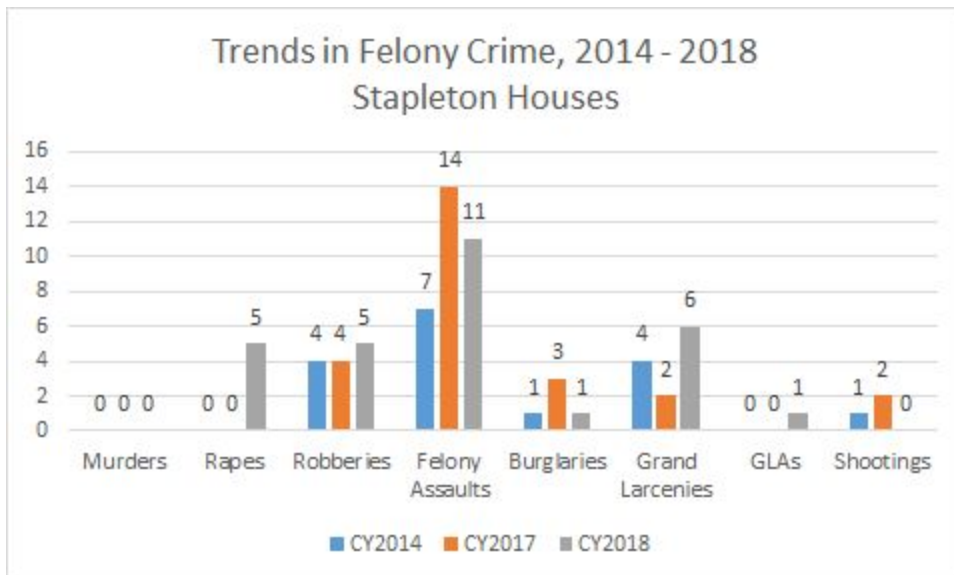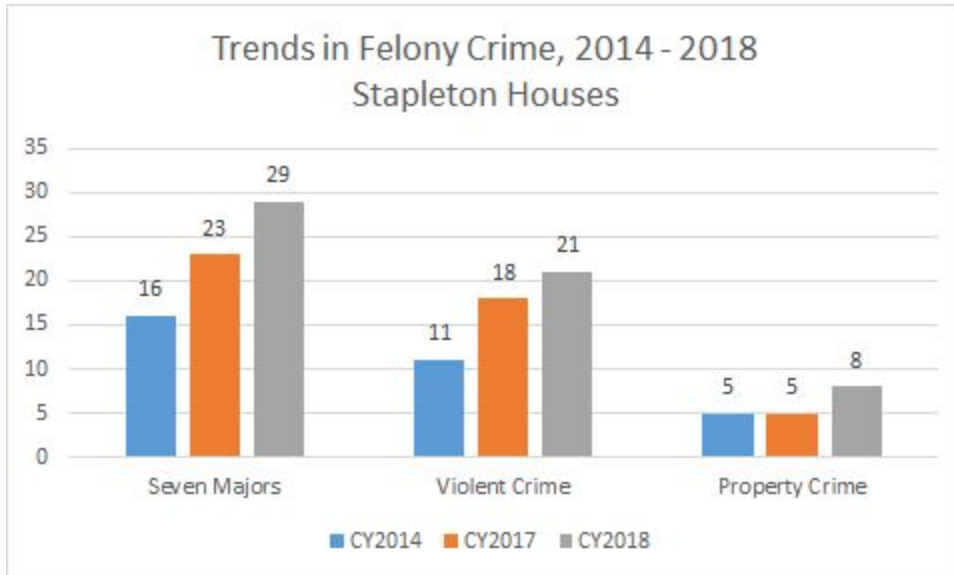$20,000 to $49,999 — 35.2%
$50,000 or more — 8.1%

B. Crime Overview | Trust | Justice

Fortunately, Stapleton Houses had zero murders in CY 2014, 2017, and 2018, though there were high numbers of felony assaults in CY 2017 and 2018 (14 and 11, respectively). As of March 3, 2019, Stapleton Houses had been without a shooting for 97 weeks, which is the second longest period of shooting cessation across the 15 MAP sites.

Major felony crime at Stapleton Houses increased since Calendar Year (CY) 2014, when MAP began.[2] Most alarmingly, CY 2018 saw a drastic increase in the number of reported rapes (+5) while CY 2014 and 2017 had zero. Felony assaults remain near the elevated levels of CY 2017, when felony assault appeared to reach a recent peak. CY 2018 also experienced a spike (+4) from 2017 in grand larcenies.

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[2] Index crime, also known as "major crime" consists of the following crime categories: burglary, felony assault, grand larceny auto, grand larceny, murder, rape, and robbery.

Trends in Felony Crime, 2014 - 2018
Stapleton Houses

	Seven Majors	Violent Crime	Property Crime
CY2014	16	11	5
CY2017	23	18	5
CY2018	29	21	8

Trends in Felony Crime, 2014 - 2018
Stapleton Houses

	Murders	Rapes	Robberies	Felony Assaults	Burglaries	Grand Larcenies	GLAs	Shootings
CY2014	0	0	4	7	1	4	0	1
CY2017	0	0	4	14	3	2	0	2
CY2018	0	5	5	11	1	6	1	0

C. Priority Identification | Opportunity | Youth Development

Stapleton Houses has an exceptionally young population. Nearly 65 percent of residents are under 24 years of age and 25 percent of residents are between the ages of 14 and 24. According to the NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team, many residents between 16 to 24 are out of school and out of work. The US Census Bureau estimates that approximately 17 percent of youth between the ages of 16 and 24 in St. George/Stapleton community district are out of school and out of work.

Youth disengagement is likely associated with several negative educational outcomes. For example, rates of elementary school absenteeism in the Stapleton/St. George Community District (CD 1) were higher than they were in Staten Island and New York City as a whole; 25 percent of students from Staten Island CD 1 in grades K through 5 reported missing 19 or more school days in the 2016-2017 school year. In St. George/Stapleton, 15 percent of residents -- one in seven -- did not complete high school.

Residents of the stakeholder team also believe that youth disconnection is exacerbated by the high number of single and kinship caregivers living in Stapleton Houses -- 32 percent of households with children under 18 are headed by single parents and 18 percent are headed by kinship caregivers. Residents feel that single and kinship caregiving families face greater economic insecurity and additional stress from parenting.

How we can work together to support <u>youth development</u>:

1. **<u>Youth Programming</u>**

Challenge: Stapleton youth are affected by many converging issues on campus that are not addressed by available resources. The remote location of Stapleton Houses creates a pocket of isolated needs that includes inadequate social and educational programming, high levels of economic stress, and prevalent substance use. The notorious impact of the opioid epidemic is pronouncedly felt across the St. George/Stapleton community district. In both 2016 and 2017 -- the most recent periods of data available -- St. George/Stapleton fell within the top 5 community districts for the greatest number of unintentional drug poisoning (overdose) deaths.

Stapleton residents also note that the absence of local programming enhances their sense of geographic isolation. The NeighborhoodStat team spoke to residents who report little to no knowledge of local services, despite the fact that employment and mental health services exist within the vicinity of the Stapleton campus. While most of the services that can benefit Stapleton residents are roughly a 15 minute bus or train ride away, many residents believe that these resources are further away.

Stapleton youth are particularly concerned about what they describe as the lack of consistent, diverse programming. Residents explained during stakeholder team meetings that engaging Stapleton youth is especially challenging. There is limited consistent onsite youth programming. Within Stapleton Houses there are two community centers, each operated by the JCC of Staten Island: the Cornerstone at the Gerald Carter Center and the Stapleton Neighborhood Senior Center. Teens are not able to access the Carter Center before 5:30 pm Monday to Friday because of Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) regulations. Without access to community spaces for programming, it can be difficult to provide programs and services to

young adults during the normal operating hours of many program providers. The Senior Center experiences similar programming restrictions; while they generously accommodated the NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team for regular meetings, they are unable to make the space available for programming after 4 pm due to staffing limitations. Due to this limited access, there are challenges providing valuable resources like workshops and programs.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Develop on-campus satellite spaces for programming.** These spaces will be utilized to foster collaborative engagements between existing providers like the JCC and/or NYCHA and potential providers of programing like NYCID and the Staten Island Justice Center. These forged partnerships can also support community activation events and provide logistical support to family days, as well.

- **Expand work-based learning opportunities within schools or community-based programs.** Work-based learning experiences such as internships, apprenticeships, and mentoring enables adults to provide students with developmentally appropriate and incremental guidance that helps them develop the skills that employers seek in new hires.

- **Improve on-ramps to employment for teens and young adults**, particularly for those without post-secondary credentials. These on-ramps to employment can take many forms, including work-based learning programs referred to above. Programs for young adults not in high school or college typically offer work readiness and technical skills development, often in combination with academics, mentoring, supportive services, and paid internships or stipends. Well-designed programs align training with local employer needs and look for employment opportunities for potential for advancement. They also help lower barriers to accessing programs that provide meaningful sector specific employment (tech) but also address the underlying drivers of disconnection like trauma due to violence.

- **Develop conflict resolution and social support mechanisms to increase community ties.** Programming should aim to address issues like the impacts of trauma and violence and should be skill-based and intergenerational to support healthy communication between young adults, working adults, seniors. Utilize, wherever possible, peer-based mechanisms that allow young men and women address frustrations productively and to create more enduring and meaningful responses to neighborhood conflicts.

2. <u>**Parenting Support**</u>

Challenge: In Stapleton, nearly half of all children under 18 grow up in a single-parent households (32%) or with a kinship caregiver (17%). Single parents are especially vulnerable to

the stress associated with financial insecurity and parenting. Households with inadequate support and resources are stressful for both children and caregivers. Ensuring that Stapleton youth avoid negative influences and participate in positive activities may require that we provide additional support to residents who are parenting under stressful circumstances.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Ensure that parents have access to parenting resources and supportive services.** Connect young mothers, single-parents and kinship caregivers to life skills training that supports intergenerational communication and fosters the individual parent/caregiver's own aspirations through career development, physical and emotional health, and by providing social support.

- **Develop capacity for parenting support through peer-to-peer workshops.** Help provide more capacity building opportunities for residents around issues of child/caregiver communication, mental health and trauma response to develop a team of resident leaders who can lead workshops. This peer network will create an internal, sustainable network of care and support. Similarly, residents could form Welcoming Committees to greet residents, and these teams would be used to introduce new residents to each other and to orient them to the supportive services available on or near the Stapleton campus.

- **Identify and provide supportive services to individuals facing economic challenges.** Agencies like NYCHA property management and HRA can work together to identify and support parents who are facing financial difficulty and link them to effective interventions. Similarly, any agencies or community-based organizations who are able to identify individuals in-need of services can form partnerships to ensure that effective supportive services are provided to them.

D. Priority Identification | Opportunity | Health and Wellbeing

The NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team identified substance use as a significant safety priority for Stapleton Houses. As is well known, the prevalence of opioid use on Staten Island exceeds other boroughs. Staten Island CD 1, where Stapleton Houses is located, has the highest rates of alcohol and drug-related hospitalization in Staten Island. In both 2016 and 2017 -- the most recent periods of data available -- Staten Island CD 1 fell within the top five community districts for unintentional drug poisoning (overdose) deaths. In 2013, Staten Island had the highest rate of opioid prescriptions in the state. A 2009 survey found that Staten Island youth reported higher rates of alcohol and prescription pain reliever use than youth in the rest of New York City. The

Stapleton/St. George community district also has a higher rates of adult psychiatric hospitalizations, non-fatal assault hospitalizations, and avoidable hospitalization than the rest of the borough or city. The average life expectancy in St. George and Stapleton is 2.2 years shorter than New York City overall.

How we can work together to **improve <u>health and wellbeing</u>:**

1. **<u>Substance Use Treatment</u>**

Challenge: The Stapleton NeighborhoodStat team expressed specific concern about adolescent drug use. Additionally, it was noted that substances were commonly consumed in public view in front of building entrances, along pedestrian pathways and within or around recreational spaces. 230 and 214 Broad Street were identified by residents as sites where alcohol is consumed publicly. Marijuana is commonly consumed in public within the inadequately lit area behind 31 Warren Street and by the playground. According to stakeholders, adolescents as young as 13 are observed using substances publicly.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Increase awareness and access to substance abuse treatment services.** Examples of ways to provide access to substance abuse treatment services could include, but are not limited to, lowering barriers to access of detox services for youth and active users in the community; making substance abuse treatment services more readily available; providing information on substance abuse and to Stapleton residents; and connecting substance users to safe spaces where they can access health care and addiction treatment.

- **Facilitate peer services and support groups.** These services can provide critical assistance and support to those affected directly by addiction, as well as family members with loved ones who are struggling with substance abuse issues. Support services might include, but are not limited to identifying on-site locations to provide substance abuse related information and coordinate trainings; ensuring that residents are aware of nearby 12-step fellowships, like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Al-Anon Family Groups; providing residents with training to use and access to naloxone; and offering Mental Health First Aid trainings to help residents recognize signs and symptoms of mental health/substance abuse issues.

- **Identify methods to divert users of drugs to programming that avoids arrests for drug-related offenses.** These diversion services should connect justice-involved substance users to alternative programming by working with NYPD and other relevant agencies to refer detained youth into prosocial programs such as youth court or other programmatic alternatives to detention.

E. Priority Identification | Trust | Connection

Stapleton Houses are currently transitioning into a mixed-finance development,[3] meaning that that Section 8 vouchers, which are typically used to finance market-rate private housing, can be used now at Stapleton to subsidize rent.[4] 17 percent of Stapleton's units are now Section 8 voucher-supported. The change in financing has impacted the population and increased the number of residents moving to Stapleton Houses. Whereas many Staten Island residents lived in the borough for a great portions of their lives, many newer Stapleton residents are transferred to the development from other boroughs. For this reason, more than half of Stapleton's current residents only lived in the development for fewer than 10 years. Although these changes increase the diversity of the development, the more transient nature of the Stapleton Houses creates unfamiliarity between residents, and some residents believe that people are less trusting of one another as a result.

In addition to the more recent transient nature of Stapleton Houses, the NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team identified that there are other existing tensions that adversely impact community cohesion. Residents of the North Shore—and young people in particular—expressed concerns about racial tension and negative interactions with police. Young people suggested there should be more cultural competence training for police officers and greater effort around recruitment so that the police force is representative of the population in the neighborhood.

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[3] New York City Housing Authority's Performance Tracking and Analytics Department. 2018. *NYCHA Development Data Book 2018*. Report, New York: New York City Housing Authority.
[4] https:// listing provides information regarding the larger HUD funding policy more information available: www.hud.gov/sites/documents/9-PUBLIC_HSNG_OPS_FUND.PDF

Some service providers we spoke with argued that racial/ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system were among the most significant risks facing young people on the North Shore. They pointed to black and Latino youth who are arrested at disproportionate rates, and also that they and their caregivers had less financial and social capital to navigate the court process and advocate for better outcomes. Service providers, caregivers, and youth shared strong desires for more free or low cost recreational programming for youth, along with increasing funding to youth employment and juvenile justice diversion programming.

How we can work together to <u>improve connection</u>:

1. <u>Community Space Activation</u>

Challenge: Research indicates that rates of violence are lower in urban neighborhoods characterized by high "collective efficacy", which is defined as mutual trust among neighbors combined with a willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good. Collective efficacy and trust in government actors can be heightened by bringing community groups together in neutral spaces, increasing opportunities for social gathering, and maintaining and beautifying public recreation spaces.[5] [6] However, to minimize the apprehension that prevents residents from connecting with one another, the NeighborhoodStat team seeks to create common ground by improving physical spaces and inviting residents to work together to activate underutilized spaces. By creating shared projects and community objectives, the NeighborhoodStat team intends to create a platform for community building that bridges the gap between neighbors, new and old.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Institute a Stapleton Resource Hub.** The NeighborhoodStat CPTED Subcommittee obtained approval to create a Stapleton Resource Hub, which are temporary wooden kiosks that demarcate program space and host community events and workshops at the currently underutilized tennis court. Painted ground markings would be utilized to guide residents to the Resource Hub, and steps will be taken to collaborate with current service providers so that the Resource Hub program offerings are seamlessly integrated into current program offerings.

- **Expand access to community spaces.** Underutilized spaces on campus should be repurposed with programming and activations that support public gathering and

[5] Sampson, R. "Neighborhood Collective Efficacy Does Help Reduce Violence." National Institute for Justice. 1998

[6] Assembly: Research Brief No. 1". Center for Active Design and John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, November 2016

"Soul of the Community" Dataset. Findings compiled by Gallup Poll. Sponsored by the Knight Foundation.

encourage socialization between neighborhood residents. These spaces can be used for a variety of purposes, including a restoration of the local family day and to host welcoming events for new residents.

● **Provide diverse programming opportunities on-site.** Public spaces can host intergenerational workshops and activities and support environmental stewardship through green environment trainings. In addition, on-site partnerships with city agencies and community-based organizations should be further explored. Examples of potential partnerships might include community clean-up days and waste management training with NYCHA.