

# GOV. CUOMO, INCREASE THE NONPROFIT INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM

By FREDERICK SHACK



My organization, Urban Pathways, provides supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals. The majority of the people we serve suffer from mental illness, substance abuse, or both; many live with chronic illnesses.

Over the past forty years, our programs have grown to meet the needs of the community but there has been little growth in our infrastructure to keep up with service delivery. For example, since we aren't adequately funded for our technology infrastructure, we're forced to work with outdated computers and systems. This impacts everything we do. It takes case managers longer to input case notes resulting in our case managers having less time for clients. We have computer labs in our supportive housing in order to help residents search

for jobs or do homework, but the equipment is incredibly slow and outdated. We can't afford to add updated software or improved wireless networks to these computers.

Meanwhile, an important part of providing safe and stable housing is making timely health and safety repairs. If we fail to maintain our apartments, residents will be impacted physically and mentally. Our older apartments constantly need repairs such as replacing windows, flooring, appliances and countertops and bathroom renovations.

In order to complete these tasks, we have to find a way to raise capital.

Over the last three years, Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the state Legislature have made an unprecedented investment in nonprofit infrastructure, allocating \$120 million to the Nonprofit Infrastructure Capital Investment Program. The first \$100 million allocated enabled nonprofit human services providers across the state to repair, reinforce, expand and update their physical and technological infrastructure. These funds allow nonprofits to undertake critical projects [not currently supported by their government contracts.](#)

But the need for capital funding far exceeds the initial \$120 million appropriation. More than 600 organizations responded to the NICIP request for applications; 237 were funded.

That is why we are part of the [Strong Nonprofits for a Better New York.](#) We are one of more than 350 nonprofit human services providers from across New York that are calling on the state to make key investments to strengthen the human services sector. While we know this is a difficult budget year given the deficit and uncertainty at the federal level, it is more important than ever that we make sure our nonprofits are strong. In times of challenge and uncertainty, nonprofits are our communities' first line of defense.

We urge the state to increase the NICIP fund and implement a recurring investment of \$100 million to ensure that our nonprofits are strong enough to continue to support communities across New York.