



Fixing NYC's Affordable Housing Matching Crisis

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The Crisis in Numbers

6M

applications last year

(HPD/amNY)

10K

units available

(HPD)

33K+

**affordable units
sitting vacant**

(NYC Comptroller 2023)

371+

days average lease-up

(CHPC 2021)

**This is not a housing shortage – it's a broken
matching system.**



Why the System Fails

Residents

Blind applying, unclear eligibility, expired documents

Landlords

40–60% ineligible applicants, missing paperwork

Caseworkers

No tracking tools, overwhelmed

City Agencies

No real-time vacancy analytics

Root failure: No pre-screening + no coordination.

Stakeholder Discovery & Strategic Pivot

Methodology & Validation

Interviews
6 Deep-Dives (3 NYC Residents, 3 Landlords/Property Managers)

Document Review
NYC HPD Marketing Handbook & 2023 Comptroller Vacancy Report

Strategy Refinement
Zoey Furguson , Leslie eLab

Key Insights: The "Matching" Gap

Landlord Pain (The Noise)

"Housing Connect is infuriating... 60% don't qualify."


Reality: Vacancy isn't due to lack of demand, but administrative "ghosting" and processing delays.

Resident Pain (The Blind Spot)


"I don't know if I qualify until I get rejected months later."

Reality: Applicants face "document chaos," not a lack of listings.

The Strategic Pivot



Initial Hypothesis: Build a better Listing Portal



Confirmed Pivot: Build a Portal including Pre-Screening & CRM

☐ **Why:** The problem isn't finding the unit; it is verifying eligibility before the lease-up clock runs out.



Why It's a Hair-On-Fire Problem (VAST-UP)



Value Creation

Vacant units + wasted applications



Stakeholders and Power

Misaligned incentives



Urban Resilience

Long vacancies weaken blocks



Policy and Finance

Housing Connect lacks transparency + analytics

Conclusion: The system isn't built for NYC's scale or diversity.


Innovation


HOMELINK: The Solution

A centralized housing portal with AI-powered tools + multilingual onboarding + CRM coordination.

Key Functions:

- AI eligibility engine (income, household, AMI)
- Document vault + expiration alerts
- Caseworker tracking dashboard
- Landlord dashboard (top qualified applicants)
- Vacancy + equity analytics
- Predictive lottery alerts

 **HOMELINK**


Dashboard 

Affordable Housing Listings

AI-Powered Eligibility Matching


Bedrooms

Sort by ▾




123 Main St
2 Beds • 1 Bath
Income: \$43,000 - 60,000

✓ Price match
60% AMI



456 Elm St
1 Beds • 1 Bath
Income: \$35,000 - 45,000

✓ Price match
60% AMI



789 Oak Ave
3 Beds • 2 Baths
Income: \$54,000 - 67,500

X Does not
80% AMI

Predictive Alerts

A new housing lottery is expected to open in 6 days. Start preparing your application now.

Core Features

AI Pre-Screening

Cuts ineligible apps by ~50%

Multilingual onboarding

(25+ languages)

Universal profile + document vault

Caseworker CRM

Fewer drop-offs, better tracking

Landlord dashboard

Faster lease-up

Analytics

Real-time vacancy + equity insights

Market Validation (Competitive Landscape)

Existing tools prove demand — but don't solve the matching gap.

Housing Connect

- **Strengths:** Strong reach, established platform
- **Weaknesses:** No pre-screening, no CRM, no analytics

Description: Reactive lottery portal

Padmission

- **Strengths:** Good document workflows
- **Weaknesses:** Lacks eligibility engine, multilingual onboarding, landlord tools

Description: Document collector

Brokers

- **Strengths:** Effective manual verification
- **Weaknesses:** Expensive, slow, not scalable

Description: Manual pre-screening

- ❑ Each solution operates in a silo and does not connect eligibility, documents, caseworker workflows, and landlord decision-making—leaving the core matching gap unresolved.

- ❑ **HOMELINK is the only NYC-ready platform that unifies eligibility, documents, caseworker coordination, and landlord tools to reduce lease-up times at scale.**

Implementation Path



Phase 1 – Lower East Side Pilot (6–12 months)

Partners: Henry Street Settlement + 3–5 local landlords

Deploy: Pre-screening, doc vault, caseworker CRM



Phase 2 – Evaluation

- 30% faster lease-up
- 50% fewer ineligible applications
- 25% more completed applications



Phase 3 – NYC-Wide Scale

Public-private partnership → language expansion + HPD/HDC integration



Impact (What Success Looks Like)

- Faster lease-up times
- Higher eligibility accuracy
- Reduced vacancy loss
- Better support for residents + caseworkers
- Real-time equity analytics for HPD/HDC

HOMELINK turns NYC's housing lottery into a real matching system.

Predictive • Multilingual • Coordinated • Fair

"When 6 million apply and 33,000 units sit empty, NYC doesn't need more affordable housing — it needs smarter matching."