

New York project to use clean energy to fund high-speed broadband - Axios

[Andrew Freedman](#) 3 hours ago - [Energy & Environment](#)

A new type of housing initiative kicking off in New York City seeks to address two major problems facing the U.S. today: The lack of widespread, high-speed broadband access for low-income residents, and the need to more widely deploy clean energy technologies.

Why it matters: The project is a unique marriage between two of the Biden administration's top infrastructure policy goals, except on a local level.

Driving the news: Using funding from the NY Green Bank and New York State Housing Finance Agency, the Workforce Housing Group — a New York-based affordable housing development organization — is set to launch a project involving about two-dozen buildings in New York City.

- These buildings will capitalize on the cost savings of solar power to bring high speed broadband and WiFi access to residents who might not be able to afford it otherwise.
- One goal of the project is to improve low-cost, high-speed internet access to residents of affordable housing units in East New York, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights, according to an announcement set to be made Tuesday.

The details: The project is being funded through a loan to cover the up-front costs of the installation, with loan payments to be offset by the expected energy savings on utility bills.

- Additional savings from generating solar power would go towards providing free wifi and high-speed broadband connections for residents.

What we're watching: Brandon Gibson, co-founder of Flume Internet, a New York-based company that will be providing the broadband access, told Axios the project could be replicated by other communities.

- "We're not aware of anyone else really doing that around the country," Gibson said. "[We're] really excited to set this as a precedent, and we'll use it moving forward while working with other developers and other landlords in and around the country."
- "We expect this innovative structure to serve as a model for further partnerships with housing finance agencies and affordable housing developers as we continue advancing New York State's equitable energy transition," said Andrew Kessler, acting president of the NY Green Bank, in a statement.