



ECF – 321 East 96th Street – COOP Tech Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is ECF?

The New York City Educational Construction Fund (ECF) is a New York State Public Benefit Corporation which works closely with the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to build new public schools at no cost to the City in order to improve school conditions and/or address seat need.

How does ECF determine what/where to build?

Working with the DOE and the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), ECF undertakes an analysis of where public school needs intersect with available properties.

What is the project at East 96th Street?

ECF, along with the developer, AvalonBay, proposes to replace the existing School of Cooperative Technical Education (COOP Tech) with a new facility and build an additional school building on the site to house two other East Harlem schools: the Heritage School and Park East High School. The site consists of an entire city block bounded by First and Second Avenues and 96th and 97th Streets.

Currently, the site houses COOP Tech on the eastern side and the Marx Brothers playground on the western side. The project would include a residential tower with 30% of the units reserved for permanently affordable housing, as well as a small retail component at its base. The project would also reconstruct and revitalize the Marx Brothers playground, which is jointly operated by the DOE and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR).

How was AvalonBay selected as development partner?

ECF began to explore the redevelopment of the COOP Tech site, along with other sites, in 2012 and ultimately received proposals from 12 qualified bidders after a lengthy RFP process. At the conclusion of this process AvalonBay was selected on the merits, factoring in its proposal, experience, capabilities and capacity to meet the needs of the community.

Will COOP Tech have to relocate while construction is taking place?

No, COOP Tech will remain in its current location during the construction, and instruction will not be interrupted. Once the new building for COOP Tech is completed, the school will move. The COOP Tech building will be the first to be constructed, followed by the new building for Heritage and Park East. Both of those schools will remain in their current locations in East Harlem until the new facilities are completed.

Is the new COOP Tech and the revitalized Marx Brothers playground remaining in the same location?

The Marx Brothers playground is proposed to be relocated mid-block between First and Second Avenues — a move that is desired by DPR in order to buffer the playground use from the First Avenue and Second Avenue traffic. COOP Tech would be on the Second Avenue side of the block along 97th street. The Heritage and Park East school building would be on First Avenue.

When will construction begin?

The approval process should take approximately 1-2 years. If approved, we anticipate construction starting in late 2017 or early 2018.

How long will the playground be closed?

We estimate 3-5 years.

When will the schools open?

We anticipate that COOP Tech will open in 2020, and Heritage and Park East will open in 2022.

Who is responsible for construction of the project?

AvalonBay, in consultation with ECF, SCA and DPR.

The MTA estimates that it will be off the playground by the end of 2017. What are the interim usage plans?

We have been consulting with Community Board 11 and DPR on potential concepts for interim uses that will benefit of the community until the start of construction.

What is the role of DPR?

DPR will oversee the design of the playground to ensure it meets appropriate design standards and meets the needs of the schools and broader community. ECF and AvalonBay will continue to seek input from DPR, Community Board 11, the local community and interested stakeholders on the design of the playground.

What is SCA's role?

SCA will consult with ECF and AvalonBay on the design and construction of the schools and ensure that the design of each meets its programmatic requirements and provides a safe and supportive learning environment for all students

What are the details of the affordable housing component?

Permanently affordable housing will be set at 30% of the total number of apartments. The apartments would be affordable to a range of incomes that average to 60% of area median income, with half of the units targeted to the local community.

Is there a job creation component to this project?

Yes, the project is estimated to generate over 700 construction jobs. Once completed, the residential building will have an estimated 40 permanent jobs and 50 jobs in the retail space. AvalonBay will partner with the City's HireNYC program and other local workforce programs to identify employment opportunities. AvalonBay and its contractors will also be offering apprenticeships for COOP Tech students during the construction.

What are the public benefits to the community?

- Construction of a new state-of-the-art school facility for COOP Tech at no cost to the City
- Creation of a new school building to house Heritage High School and Park East High School at no cost to the City
- 300+ units of **Permanent** Affordable Housing at no cost to the City.
- Revitalization and reconstruction of the Marx Brothers playground at no cost to the City
- Apprenticeships for COOP Tech students with AvalonBay and its contractors
- Estimated job creation
 - 700 + construction jobs
 - 40+ jobs in the residential building; 50+ jobs in the retail
 - Focus on employment opportunities within neighborhood through the NYC HireNYC program and local workforce partners