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The Queen City on the Sound is planning some big changes come 2022, chief among them rezoning to expand multi-billion-dollar investments.

The City of New Rochelle has announced that the City Council (<https://www.newrochelleny.com/90/City-Council>) unanimously approved significant advancements to its historic redevelopment, a transformation for the city six years in the making. Efforts to adopt a form-based zoning code providing certainty for developers have already aided in the enticement of \$2.2 billion in private investment, resulting in the development of 9.2 million square feet of space downtown. To date, New Rochelle has approved 32 development projects, with six projects already completed and 14 under construction.

The adopted amendments further develop the important connection between downtown New Rochelle and the city's waterfront, as well as accessibility to both. These advancements include a new waterfront overlay zone, adding a seventh district to the six zones created in 2015, 3,000 more units of housing, including 700 along the waterfront, and additions to the Community Bonus Benefits Program (CBB) to allow builders additional stories in exchange for providing community benefits such as green infrastructure, sustainability, and climate resiliency improvements, which now have the added benefits of being outside the specific overlay zones. Increased opportunities for local minority- and women-owned business enterprises and more affordable housing for local residents are also aspects of the latest plan.



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“New Rochelle has enjoyed unprecedented economic growth, even through the difficult challenges of the pandemic, and now has an exciting opportunity to build on and expand our prior success,” says New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson. “These forward-looking updates to our downtown plan lean heavily into environmental and social governance, thereby ensuring that growth in our community is sustainable, equitable, and inclusive, while also creating a powerful magnet for ESG investment.”

The zoning overhauls follow an extensive community engagement effort over the last year by the city, partnered with an environmental review, which sought to increase connectivity between downtown – where the bulk of the development has been focused – and the waterfront, in order to increase access to recreational and green spaces. With demand for the city’s residential properties at nearly an

all-time high, the amendments will additionally formalize a shift of some mixed-use spaces to residential use to reflect the current hybrid live/work environment and significant ongoing leasing activity.

This marks a massive win in a long-standing goal for New Rochelle’s urban development plans. In 2015, the City Council approved a game-changing redevelopment that stimulated billions of dollars in economic investment into the city. The form-based zoning code ensured that if developers adhered to specific criteria within each overlay zone, they could expect project approval within 90 days of submission, faster than almost any other municipality in the county. After spending the past six years working with its master developer, the Manhattan-based powerhouse RXR Realty (<https://rxrrealty.com/>), the city has approved 32 projects, bringing 6,865 new residential units, of which 3,600 are completed or under construction.

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“These zoning updates reflect the feedback we’ve heard from residents and stakeholders alike, that as we look to the future, we must increase opportunities to connect all the diverse offerings New Rochelle provides, bolster important environmental improvements such as green and sustainable infrastructure, provide more opportunities for local and minority owned businesses, and create more affordable housing for our residents,” says New Rochelle Department of Development Interim Commissioner Kathleen Gill. “We sincerely thank the City

Council for its close partnership on the redevelopment, along with our residents for their ongoing engagement and perspectives to ensure we captured a range of voices in working toward building a more equitable and sustainable city.”

“The unanimous approval of this zoning update is an example of what can be accomplished when a city works with the community and stakeholders alike to reach a common goal. I look forward to the implementation of this new zoning resulting in the continued unprecedented growth and investment in our downtown area,” says New Rochelle City Manager Charles B. Strome III.

The City of New Rochelle has been working with developers to cultivate additional minority- and women-owned business opportunities throughout the redevelopment and to promote and increase access to affordable housing opportunities for residents. Those efforts include establishing a sliding-scale credit system to increase accessibility to new housing.

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