

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: 1

Subject: Opposition to Proposed High-Density Rezoning in Fleetwood (Page 174 chapter 4-24, Comprehensive Plan

To: <cathlin4council@gmail.com>

Hello,

I am writing about the proposed land use changes outlined on page 174, chapter 4-24 of the *Envision Mount Vernon* Comprehensive Plan (Draft), specifically concerning the Fleetwood neighborhood.

According to the plan, the City recommends replacing the existing Commercial Business zoning along McQuesten Parkway with High Density Residential use, citing Fleetwood's proximity to the Metro-North train station as justification. As a resident who works closely with Mount Vernon residents, I strongly oppose this direction and urge the City to reconsider for the following reasons:

1. **Loss of Commercial Vitality and Services**

Fleetwood already lacks essential businesses that make a neighborhood livable, cafés, daycare centers, indoor activity spaces for kids, gyms, restaurants, and small local services. Rezoning commercial areas to high-density residential use risks eliminating future opportunities for business development that could bring jobs and services to the community.

2. **Negative Impact on Quality of Life**

The major talks about "financial empowerment," but increasing residential density without adequate infrastructure, parking, traffic controls, public transit, and local jobs, will only burden residents and lower quality of life. How is financial empowerment achieved when developers get 20+ year tax abatements, but there are no guaranteed jobs or real economic benefits for Mount Vernon residents?

Where are the jobs in Mount Vernon for our residents? Where's the opportunity? For example, that 200+ unit building going up on MacQuesten Parkway by Mount Vernon West is all low-income housing, but no jobs, no new businesses. Just more buildings.

To me, **financial empowerment** means giving people the tools, opportunities, and environment they need to improve their economic situation and achieve financial independence. It's not just about having a residence it's about having access to good jobs, fair wages, affordable housing, education, and support for small businesses. It's about creating a community where people can build wealth, support their families, and feel secure about their financial future.

In practical terms, that could mean:

More local jobs with livable wages.

Access to affordable services like childcare, transportation, and healthcare.

Opportunities to start or grow a business

Safe neighborhoods with amenities that improve daily life.
Fair policies that prevent displacement and protect residents.
Financial empowerment means people aren't just surviving, they're thriving and have a real chance to improve their lives.

3. **No Protection for Single-Family Home Zones**

If zoning changes aren't clearly defined, developers may buy and demolish single-family homes to build multi-unit complexes. There needs to be a written rule that medium- and high-density zoning is limited to certain streets or parcels, and that no rezoning happens in single-family home areas. Also, if apartments are built, each unit should have at least two parking spaces along with a visitor parking area.

4. **Conflict of Interest – Councilman Edward Poteat**

Councilman Edward Poteat owns a development company with a background in low-income housing. I was told he is also co-chair of the Finance & Planning Standing Committee and influences zoning decisions, if it's true then this is a clear conflict of interest. He shouldn't be involved in approving land use policies that could benefit his own business or associates.

5. **Community Needs Are Being Ignored**

I work with residents every day, and their concerns are always the same:

- No affordable housing for working families
- No local jobs
- No late-night public transit
- No street name signage in Mount Vernon
- Heavy traffic congestion, especially on Oak Street and near Sprain Parkway

These basic problems aren't being addressed. Building more apartments without a real plan for infrastructure and services will only make things worse.

6. **Fleetwood's Diverse Residents and Their Needs**

Fleetwood is home to many seniors, families with school-age children, and young single professionals. The plan should address the needs of these groups first. For example:

- What has been done to help seniors age in place?
- What steps have been taken to ensure young professionals want to stay in Fleetwood or Mount Vernon to build their lives and raise families here?
- What is being proposed to prevent young families from moving out once their kids turn five or graduate 8th grade, especially because of concerns about the school district?
- What plans are in place to encourage parents to send their children to Mount Vernon public schools instead of private or neighboring districts?

Additionally, there needs to be a clear written statement that developers are **not allowed** to build multi-family buildings in blocks where single-family and two-family homes exist, due to lack of parking and neighborhood traffic congestion/impact. For

commercial zones, if buildings are constructed, they should include adequate parking for residents and visitors so current parking congestion isn't made worse.

Please take these concerns seriously and reconsider the proposed changes. The community needs real solutions, not more buildings that don't address our biggest problems.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Regards,

Belina Middleton

From: Aileen Memoli
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 10:25 PM
To: cityclerk <CityClerk@mountvernonny.gov>
Subject: Change in Zoning

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Hello-

I am writing as a resident of Hayward Avenue to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning in the Comprehensive Plan for the section of Fleetwood from Devonia to Birch and Gramatan to North MacQuesten Parkway. The proposal to change this area's zoning from R2-4.5 (one- and two-family homes) to medium- and high-density housing would allow developers to demolish existing homes and construct multi-unit buildings in a neighborhood that is already congested and overburdened.

I am particularly concerned about the potential construction of additional apartment buildings along North MacQuesten Parkway. This street, which currently lacks adequate road markings, is already hazardous for drivers and pedestrians. Increasing density in this area would only exacerbate safety issues.

Furthermore, our schools are already overcrowded. Pennington School has recently taken on an additional 120 students, leading to lunch periods with as many as 184 children and a reduction in special classes from two or three per week to just one per subject. The district is facing significant financial distress and is in no position to accommodate an influx of new families.

The infrastructure of our streets, parking, and utilities cannot sustain an increased number of residents. These proposed zoning changes would erode the character of our neighborhood and place additional strain on resources that are already strained.

I urge you to stand with the residents of this community and oppose the rezoning proposal. Please help us preserve the integrity, safety, and livability of our neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aileen Memoli

Mount Vernon, NY 10552

Sent from my iPhone

From:

Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 8:26 AM

To: cityclerk <CityClerk@mountvernonny.gov>

Subject: Opposition to Proposed High-Density Rezoning in Fleetwood (Page174 chapter 4-24, Comprehensive Plan

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Regards,

Belina Middleton

From: Dorothy Domeika >
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 12:51 PM
To: cityclerk <CityClerk@mountvernonny.gov>
Subject: Comprehensive Plan

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I attended the difficult meeting last night after reading much of the plan. I have worked on projects such as the Comprehensive Plan in my past life. Here is my quick assessment:

Start by stating the problem you are trying to solve. In the report's first few pages, there is information covering the past 20 years. Mount Vernon's aging issue and the lack of young families to support the schools must be stated at every presentation. Otherwise, it looks like the status quo to many citizens. It clearly is not after reading the statistics in the plan.

In your next presentations, repeat and re-repeat the problems. Then you will begin to see a shift in attitude about remedies.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

Dorothy Domeika

From: Joshua

Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 1:03 PM

To: Browne, Danielle <DBrowne@mountvernonny.gov>; Poteat, Edward <EPoteat@mountvernonny.gov>; Thompson, Derrick <dthompson@mountvernonny.gov>; Boxhill, Jaevon S <jsboxhill@mountvernonny.gov>; Gleason, Cathlin <CGleason@mountvernonny.gov>; Anderson, Antoinette <AAnderson@mountvernonny.gov>; cityclerk <cityclerk@mountvernonny.gov>; Riullano, Jordan <jriullano@mountvernonny.gov>; Mvlaw <mvlaw@cmvny.com>; Foilnylaw <foilnylaw@ci.mount-vernon.ny.us>

Subject: Re: Comments on the Draft Envision Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan

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Dear Members of the Mount Vernon City Council,

Please find our company's written comments on the Draft Comprehensive Plan, both attached and pasted below, for your convenience and for inclusion in the docket.

Hudson River Labs INC
315 East Third Street
Mount Vernon, New York 10553

October 21, 2025

City Council
City of Mount Vernon
1 Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, NY, 10550

Via Email to: DBrowne@mountvernonny.gov ; EPoteat@mountvernonny.gov ;
dthompson@mountvernonny.gov ; jsboxhill@mountvernonny.gov ;
CGleason@mountvernonny.gov ; AAnderson@mountvernonny.gov ;
cityclerk@mountvernonny.gov ; jriullano@mountvernonny.gov ; mvlaw@cmvny.com ;
foilnylaw@ci.mount-vernon.ny.us

Re: Comments on the Draft Envision Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan

Dear Members of the City Council:

As a New York State licensed cannabis operator investing in Mount Vernon's industrial renewal, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Envision Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan draft. Our facility at 315 East Third Street represents a significant private investment in adaptive reuse, clean manufacturing, and sustainable job creation, precisely the type of revitalization the plan seeks to advance.

Our mission aligns directly with the *Envision Mount Vernon* vision. By converting a dormant industrial site into a clean, efficient, and compliant facility, we are advancing adaptive reuse, sustainability, and workforce development, the same priorities that define the City's strategy for inclusive economic growth. Our team has transformed an underutilized building into a state-of-the-art cultivation and processing facility that operates safely, odor-free, and fully complies with New

York State law. The project is more than a business. It is a case study in how responsible operators can restore Mount Vernon's industrial heritage while creating high-skill jobs for city residents.

Mount Vernon's Moment for Leadership

Mount Vernon stands at a critical juncture. The draft comprehensive plan acknowledges the importance of modern industry, workforce development, and adaptive reuse, yet several proposed zoning concepts could inadvertently undermine these goals. Provisions that reclassify industrial corridors into mixed-use or residential districts risk displacing lawful, job-producing operations that have already invested millions in compliance and infrastructure.

Our operations are environmentally responsible, odor-free, and energy-efficient. We will employ numerous Mount Vernon residents and provide compliance, science, and technology training. These commitments support the City's long-term environmental and economic objectives, ensuring that redevelopment in Mount Vernon benefits the people who live and work here today, while welcoming more businesses to grow here tomorrow.

If these operators are not protected, Mount Vernon could lose precisely the kind of private investment that fuels its industrial comeback. Those who have complied with every regulation and invested early in Mount Vernon deserve stability and recognition as part of the City's future, not uncertainty discouraging others from following their example.

State Preemption and Legal Framework

The **Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA)** established a comprehensive and uniform statewide framework for regulating cannabis enterprises. The law reserves exclusive authority to the State of New York to license, regulate, and oversee the cannabis industry. Municipalities retain certain zoning powers but may not enact or enforce rules that conflict with or unreasonably burden state-licensed operations. See Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act, ch. 92, § 131 (2021).

The **Cannabis Control Board (CCB)** has repeatedly affirmed this principle. In its advisory opinions, the Board clarified that local governments may not impose duplicative, obstructive, or conflicting requirements that frustrate the MRTA's purpose. For ready reference, here are two CCB opinions that preempt localities from implementing unreasonable or impracticable restrictions:

- N.Y. Cannabis Control Bd., Advisory Op. 2025-01, Advisory Opinion for the Town of Riverhead, available at <https://cannabis.ny.gov/advisory-opinion-2025-01>
- N.Y. Cannabis Control Bd., Advisory Op. 2025-02, Advisory Opinion for the Town of Southampton, available at <https://cannabis.ny.gov/advisory-opinion-2025-02>

These opinions confirm that municipalities cannot rezone or regulate in ways that directly or indirectly prohibit a lawful cannabis use once licensed by the State. The CCB's interpretive authority derives from N.Y. Cannabis Law art. 3, § 13, which grants it exclusive jurisdiction over all matters concerning regulating adult-use cannabis in New York.

For these reasons, Mount Vernon should ensure that its final plan and zoning updates reflect compliance with the State's preemption framework. Any ambiguity could expose the City to unnecessary litigation, delay economic growth, and discourage legitimate operators from investing further.

Acknowledge Existing Grandfather Status and Preserve As-of-Right Protections

We respectfully urge the City Council to include explicit language in the final plan affirming that:

1. State-licensed cannabis cultivation and processing facilities are recognized as lawful as-of-right industrial uses consistent with “modern manufacturing” classifications.
2. Existing facilities that have obtained state licenses are grandfathered and protected from future zoning or land use changes that might render them non-conforming.
3. The City will collaborate with compliant operators to align local development goals with state regulatory standards rather than layering additional or conflicting review processes.

To illustrate why this protection is essential, consider the practical realities of coexistence between industrial and residential uses. It would be unfair to new residents moving into a dwelling, whether a single-family home, a multifamily structure, or an apartment building, adjacent to an established industrial business, to expect the same quiet environment found in a residential zone. It would also be unfair to the business, which operates under lawful practices and state oversight, to face new restrictions or enforcement actions because of conditions it did not create. This principle is well-established in New York zoning precedent; lawful industrial uses retain protection from post hoc nuisance claims arising from subsequent residential encroachment.

Industrial operations such as ours often require early deliveries, shift changes, and service vehicles that may begin arriving before 7:00 AM. These are normal aspects of lawful business activity in an industrial district. Introducing residential development into these areas inevitably leads to noise complaints, traffic disputes, and pressure on the City to curtail legitimate business operations.

The City should also ensure that compliant cannabis manufacturers are eligible for any local or regional incentive programs related to green industry, workforce training, or adaptive reuse. Equal access to these opportunities will affirm Mount Vernon’s commitment to economic inclusion and fairness.

For these reasons, we strongly recommend that the City remove or revise any clause in the comprehensive plan that would encourage or permit residential development within existing industrial zones without more consideration for the impact on existing businesses and the tax base. Doing so will limit future conflicts, preserve industrial integrity, and ensure that Mount Vernon continues to attract responsible, job-creating enterprises that contribute to its economic recovery.

Advancing a Collaborative Cannabis Cluster -Infrastructure, Utilities, and Zoning Priorities

To ensure sustainable operations and equitable industrial growth, we respectfully request that the City of Mount Vernon include the following priorities within the Comprehensive Plan:

- Upgrade electrical grid capacity in partnership with Con Edison to support clean industrial operations, including cultivation facilities.
- Conduct microgrid and renewable energy feasibility studies to align with Mount Vernon’s Green Building goals.
- Include industrial retrofit corridors in stormwater and wastewater improvement plans to support closed-loop water systems.
- Assess logistics and delivery traffic flow, particularly along East Third Street, to reduce bottlenecks and improve safety.
- Pilot EV charging infrastructure for commercial fleet use in industrial corridors.
- Establish a Mount Vernon Industrial Overlay Zone to safeguard compliant industrial businesses from displacement through mixed-use rezoning.

These initiatives will position Mount Vernon as a leader in sustainable manufacturing while protecting existing operators who have invested significantly in the City’s industrial recovery.

We further propose that Mount Vernon work directly with our team and other state-licensed operators to establish a Mount Vernon Cannabis Cluster Plan, a coordinated local strategy for integrating cultivation, manufacturing, logistics, and workforce training within the City's industrial districts.

Such a plan would not only align with the Envision Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on sustainable industry, energy efficiency, and green infrastructure but would also allow the City to shape, rather than react to, the growth of the cannabis economy.

By partnering with existing licensed operators who have already invested in Mount Vernon, the City can develop clear guidelines for future sites, improve traffic and infrastructure planning, and establish a unified model for compliance, safety, and community engagement. This collaboration would create a transparent framework for responsible growth while safeguarding the City's interests and the rights of compliant businesses.

Mount Vernon has a rare opportunity to lead New York State in defining a fair, modern, and economically vibrant cannabis industry. The City that helps cannabis blossom responsibly will boom economically.

Protecting the Promise of Mount Vernon's Economic Revival

We commend the City Council and planning team for engaging the public in shaping Mount Vernon's future. We ask only that the final plan safeguard those already fulfilling its promises, those who have turned idle industrial spaces into centers of clean production and employment.

We are not opposing development but defining what responsible, sustainable development looks like in Mount Vernon. The City's industrial revival will not come from speculation but from steady, lawful investment. Protecting compliant cannabis operators under state law and acknowledging their role in the City's redevelopment ensures that progress remains equitable, sustainable, and consistent with the rule of law.

Finally, we respectfully request that the City's Planning Department engage directly with existing licensed operators before adopting any future zoning or land-use amendments. Proactive dialogue will ensure redevelopment efforts protect existing investments, preserve Mount Vernon's industrial workforce, and align with the City's long-term economic goals.

Considerately submitted,

Joshua Fahrenholtz
COO

Thank you for your consideration. Please confirm receipt at your convenience.

Joshua Fahrenholtz
COO @ Hudson River Labs INC

October 21, 2025

James Rausse, Commissioner
Department of Planning and Community Development
City of Mount Vernon
One Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, NY 10550

County Planning Board Referral File MTV 25-010
Envision Mount Vernon – Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mr. Rausse:

The Westchester County Planning Board has received a draft copy of *Envision Mount Vernon: 10 Years forward for the Jewel of Westchester*, intended to serve as Phase 2 of the City's new comprehensive plan. Together with the *Downtown Vision Report* that constitutes Phase 1 of the Plan, this is proposed to replace the City's 1968 Master Plan, which is the oldest municipal comprehensive plan still in use in Westchester County. The County Planning Board provided comment on Phase 1 in a letter dated January 22, 2024. Phase 2 is focused on the rest of the City outside of Downtown.

Envision Mount Vernon is an ambitious and wide-ranging document that seeks to improve not only planning and zoning but infrastructure, utilities, open spaces, and the City government's operations. The Plan consists of six chapters: an introduction, a survey of existing conditions, a description of the public engagement process, chapters on "Placemaking," "Core Concepts," and a final chapter describing the implementation process. The "Core Concepts" described in the plan are: Mount Vernon's Role in the Region; Celebrating & Preserving Mount Vernon's Historic Legacy; Neighborhood Diversity & Inclusion; The Public Realm & Streetscapes; Housing Access for All; Green Space & Connections to the Natural Environment; Healthy, Safe & Active Communities; Resiliency & Sustainability; Economic Development; Reliable & Modern Infrastructure; and Effective Government Service.

We have reviewed the Plan under the provisions of Section 239 L, M and N of the General Municipal Law and Section 277.61 of the County Administrative Code. We applaud the City's efforts to update its comprehensive plan, and appreciate the City's presentation to the County Planning Board at our meeting on October 7, 2025. We offer the following comments for the City to consider as it finalizes this important document and works toward its implementation:

1. Consistency with County Planning Board policies.

We commend the numerous recommendations within the Plan that are consistent with the County Planning Board's long-range planning policies set forth in ***Westchester 2025—Context for County and Municipal Planning and Policies to Guide County Planning***, and its recommended strategies set forth in ***Patterns for Westchester: The Land and the People***. Mount Vernon is the most densely populated municipality in Westchester, and an important urban center in the County and the region. The City's future success is integral to the wellbeing of the County as a whole.

2. Zoning.

Envision Mount Vernon proposes to replace the current zoning code, which regulates housing by the number of the units per acre, with one that relies more heavily on floor area ratios (F.A.R.) to regulate development. We are encouraged that the City is considering a comprehensive rewrite of the zoning code following the adoption of this Plan, as we have consistently recommended in the many use variance appeals that we have reviewed over the past decades. Development proposals in Mount Vernon frequently involve variance requests for reduced setbacks, parking requirements, and dimensional standards, an indication that the standards in the City's zoning require review. The Plan also suggests exploring the use of design guidelines and form-based criteria to improve the streetscape and functionality of specific areas such as Sandford Boulevard and Canal Village, which we strongly support. We continue to urge the City to focus zoning policy toward managing the size and design of buildings rather than the uses. Form based practices may provide a means to manage the character of a neighborhood while allowing for a greater range of businesses and residential uses.

3. Affordable housing.

The acute shortage of affordable housing in Westchester County has been documented in the County's *Housing Needs Assessment* and it is critical for all of Westchester's municipalities to play a role in meeting this need, particularly since the economic and social impacts of the affordable housing shortage are spread throughout the County. The *Housing Needs Assessment* also found that 54% of Mount Vernon renter households pay more than 30% of their income toward housing costs. We applaud the inclusion of the Housing Access for All section of the Plan. We particularly support the Plan's suggestion to work toward the elimination of exclusionary zoning and the pursuit of a "City of Homes v.2.0" campaign built on an expanded definition of "home" that includes apartments, co-ops, townhouses, cottages, tiny homes, modular and panelized structures, dormitories, and senior living. The Plan notes that the City's transit access makes it well equipped to serve a growing population, and includes discussion of strategies such as co-housing and community land trusts to preserve affordability.

We encourage the City to work toward the adoption of the goals and objectives in the Housing Access for All section of the Plan, particularly the many objectives that are consistent with the County's [Model Ordinance Provisions](#), including the provision that all new development over 10 units provide a 10% affordable housing set-aside. The Plan suggests adopting a "sliding scale" set-aside policy similar to that used by New Rochelle, but we would suggest that the City consider a blanket 10% set-aside for its simplicity and consistency with other municipalities throughout the County that have adopted the County's Model Ordinance Provisions. We also support the use of density bonuses for additional affordable housing.

We support the Plan's recommendations to permit higher density housing along MacQuesten Parkway among other locations due to the proximate transit access. The City should further consider the removal of height restrictions around the three major transit hubs. We additionally support reducing parking requirements in these areas to bring down the cost of housing. The Plan recognizes that new housing opportunities should also be created in smaller scale buildings. The Plan references the City's historic segregation and redlining that for decades divided the community by the New Haven Line railroad tracks, underscoring the importance of housing opportunities being incorporated into every neighborhood in the City. The Plan's housing goals and objectives provide a toolkit for doing so in lower density neighborhoods, including the use of "missing middle" development, legalizing residential uses in commercial corridors, and allowing residential uses above existing ground floor retail locations. The

City should consider carefully how to balance the importance of these goals with the Plan's suggestions to maintain the existing land use classifications and densities permitted under current zoning in some areas to preserve neighborhood and historic character.

We support the Plan's recommendations to reform the City government's operation by streamlining the review and processing of building permits. We encourage the City to explore whether Mount Vernon could further encourage transit-oriented development by adopting a Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the future zoning code, in a manner similar to New Rochelle's Downtown Overlay Zone, to spur development and the creation of new housing.

4. Public outreach.

A successful municipal comprehensive planning process should be built on robust community engagement to ensure that the Plan is informed by local knowledge. The process of developing *Envision Mount Vernon* began with public outreach in 2022 and included specific engagement opportunities with local youth, seniors, Spanish-speaking residents, and industrial sector leaders. The City should be commended for conducting engagement events and public workshops tailored to a variety of residents and stakeholders and located in a large number of different locations throughout the City, including the outreach made towards the City's significant Portuguese-speaking community. As the City continues the public engagement process in preparation for adopting a new zoning code, great care should be taken to continue to provide opportunities for everyone in Mount Vernon to participate, including the City's Spanish-speaking residents. As the Plan notes, "there is a need for ongoing and consistent engagement with the Spanish-speaking community to ensure that they are at the table when important decisions are made." The City should continue to prioritize Spanish-language outreach, hold engagement events in predominantly Latino neighborhoods, and engage with Latino organizations and community leaders.

5. Streets and public transportation.

The Plan notes that Mount Vernon is well-connected by mass transit with two stations on Metro-North's Harlem Line and an additional station on the New Haven Line. It is well-served by Bee-Line bus and many South Side residents are within walking distance of the New York City Subway. The Plan highlights the fact that despite this, the City has onerous off-street parking requirements in excess of those found in other cities in Westchester. We support reforming the City's off-street parking requirements. We encourage the City to consider further recommendations in the Plan to manage and reduce parking demand within the City as a whole, including "unbundling" of parking with the cost of rental housing units.

The Plan includes a discussion of Complete Streets, providing a broad toolbox with illustrative photos showing how Mount Vernon's streets, which cover approximately 22% of the City's land area, could better accommodate cyclists and pedestrians. The City should also consider how street space is allocated for bus service, including locations where any potential dedicated bus lanes could improve travel. The Plan notes that residents complain of "unreliable" bus service, but as the Bee-Line bus fleet itself is relatively reliable, the cause of unreliability stems from car traffic blocking the buses. The Plan could benefit from a toolbox of options that includes bus lanes with camera enforcement, protected bus lanes with physical barriers, bus queue jumps, and transit signal priority. The Plan should recommend that when the City replaces traffic signals they should accommodate these traffic management techniques. The Plan should also discuss collaboration with the County to implement the future recommendations that are included in the *County Mobility and Transit Plan*.

The County Planning Board's policies aim to reduce unnecessary driving of single-occupancy vehicles. We recommend that the Plan include reference to the County's *Transportation Demand Management Toolkits*. These toolkits serve to provide guidelines for municipalities to incorporate Transportation Demand Management techniques within their zoning codes in order to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips, lower congestion, and reduce total miles traveled in automobiles. Using parking management incentives can help meet both goals and could potentially allow municipalities to lower parking requirements, which can have positive benefits in reducing land disturbance and stormwater runoff. Developing Transportation Demand Management regulations could also help provide solutions such as shared parking arrangements, ridesharing programs, and other means to help manage parking demand. These toolkits can be provided by the County Planning Department, which also offers a Smart Commute Program that can assist employers to implement TDM strategies.

6. Economic and industrial development.

The Plan frames demographic change in the context of the City's economic fortunes. The City has seen a significant decrease in its youth population and Mount Vernon's seniors now outnumber its youth by more than 3,000 people. The enrollment decline in the City's schools has resulted in significant fiscal distress and the school district is implementing a reorganization plan in response to future projected decline. It is important that the City proactively work to increase both economic and housing opportunities to create an ample supply of trained workers and a larger customer base amidst an increasingly older population. The Plan notes that 92% of Mount Vernon residents commute outside the City for work. The City's zoning should provide more flexibility to promote economic development, including through zoning that formalizes nonconforming uses and buildings that may not be enlarged under current zoning. The Plan mentions the benefits of neighborhood retail in walking distance of homes, but the City should consider whether retail should be permitted in more residential areas.

The City has worked in recent years to craft a new vision for the revitalization of Canal Village, one of Westchester's largest industrial areas. The City should continue to examine whether certain types of light manufacturing uses may be appropriate for more areas where they do not produce nuisances or hazards.

7. Open space and river access.

The Plan calls for strategies to improve the water quality and access of the Hutchinson River, including the creation of a Hutchinson River Greenway and collaboration with the Hutchinson River Restoration Project. The Plan should also consider other organizations such as Groundwork Hudson Valley, who are expanding their scope outside of the Saw Mill River watershed. The Plan could also consider outreach to other successful watershed alliances to understand best practices and consider the establishment of a Hutchinson River Watershed Basin committee that involves adjacent municipalities to coordinate efforts. The City should additionally identify specific entities in the municipality to initiate efforts along with adjacent stakeholders. New York State Department of Transportation owns the land adjacent to Migui Park, who would need to participate in stewardship discussions. The Plan should emphasize the role of regional partnerships that may be outside of the municipality's borders.

8. County sewer impacts.

The Plan references the 2023 consent order the City signed with the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and New York State Department of Environmental Protection to

inspect, repair, and replace sewer lines that are found to be broken, and eliminate illicit discharges through both the sanitary and stormwater systems. As new development occurring within the City would increase sewage flows and add to the volume requiring treatment at a Water Resource Recovery Facility operated by Westchester County, we recommend the Plan includes a reference to the longstanding policy of the County Department of Environmental Facilities (WCDEF) that municipal governments require development applicants to identify mitigation measures that offset projected increase in flow, in order to comply with the *County Environmental Facilities Sewer Act*. The best means to do so is through reductions in inflow/infiltration (I&I) at a ratio of three for one for market rate units and a ratio of one for one for affordable units.

The County Planning Board further recommends that the City implement a program that requires inspection of sewer laterals from private homes for leaks and illegal connections to the sewer system, such as from sump pumps. These private connections to the system have been found to be a significant source of avoidable flows. At a minimum, we encourage the City to enact a requirement that a sewer lateral inspection be conducted at the time property ownership is transferred and any necessary corrective action be enforceable by the municipal building inspector.

9. Universal design.

We encourage the City to consider the principles of Universal Design in all future development, and to reference universal design standards within the Comprehensive Plan. Universal Design standards allow all residents and visitors to fully engage in our public and residential spaces. Universal Design is also an important means of allowing household residents to age in place as well as to provide access for persons with mobility issues.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to review this important action.

Please inform us of the City's decision so that we can make it a part of the record.

Respectfully,

WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD



Bernard Thombs

Chair, Westchester County Planning Board

BT/eal

cc: Blanca Lopez, Commissioner, Westchester County Department of Planning
Vincent Kopicki, Commissioner, Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities
Steve Elie-Pierre, Director of Maintenance, Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities
Craig Lader, Director of Transportation Planning, Westchester County Department of Planning
Theresa Fleischman, Housing Program Director, Westchester County Department of Planning
Leonard Gruenfeld, Housing Program Administrator, Westchester County Department of Planning
Heather Reiners, Smart Commute Program Coordinator, Westchester County DPW&T

From: Michael Templeton <
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 3:22 PM
To: cityclerk <CityClerk@mountvernonny.gov>
Cc: Michael Templeton <
Subject: Opposition to the Draft "Comprehensive Plan"

[You don't often get email from . Learn why this is important at
<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

To: Hon. Nicole Bonilla, City Clerk, City of Mount Vernon, New York

Dear Clerk Bonilla,

The attached PDF is my written submission made in Opposition to the Draft "Comprehensive Plan."

I would be grateful if you could please file my submission and distribute as appropriate. When convenient, I would also appreciate it if you could please email back to me a time-stamped copy showing your receipt of my submission.

Thank you very much for your assistance, and please feel free to contact me if you any questions.

Kind regards,
Michael J. Templeton

Michael J. Templeton

October 21, 2025

Mount Vernon, NY 10552

To: Hon. Nicole Bonilla, City Clerk, City of Mount Vernon, New York

Re: Opposition to Draft "Comprehensive Plan"

My wife and I have resided in our home in the Hunts Woods neighborhood of Mount Vernon for nearly 30 years. We make this written submission in support of our opposition to the Draft "Comprehensive Plan" ("Draft Plan"), and to supplement my statements in opposition to the Draft Plan made at the public hearing before the City Council on October 8, 2025.

Opposition to Elimination of Single-Family Residential Zones and Related Proposals and Statements in the Draft Plan

While there are a number of problems, deficiencies, ungrounded assumptions, and otherwise objectionable sections and statements in the Draft Plan (which other residents have spoken to), - - including the documents over use of jargonistic, vague, and undefined terminology - -, the statements and proposals in the Draft Plan that would effectively eliminate the City's long-standing single-family home zoned residential neighborhoods are particularly objectionable and ill-conceived. We oppose those statements and sections in the Draft Plan concerning proposed zoning changes to our existing single-family residence zoned communities.

Under the City Zoning Code, there are three single-family residence zones: R1-7; R1-4.5; and R1-3.6. The residential permitted principal use for these zones is for "one-family dwellings,"¹ and the maximum Floor Area Ratio ("F.A.R") is 0.35.² Multi-family housing structures, duplexes and triplexes, are not permitted principal uses in these zones. These one-family residence zones comprise well-established decades-old neighborhoods, including communities in Hunts Woods, Pasadena, Chester Hill Park, Chester Heights, and Oakwoods Heights, among others, which have long served as a bedrock of economic support, stability, renewal, and enduring strength for the City.

The Draft Plan proposes to effectively eliminate these long-established single-family home residential zones, and to increase the maximum F.A.R in these neighborhoods,³ to allow for not

¹ Zoning Code §267-17(A)-(C).

² Zoning Code Chapter 267 Attachment 1 (Schedule of Dimensional Regulations, Residential Districts).

³ The Draft Plan proposes to increase the F.A.R for what it terms "Low Density Residential" neighborhoods to 0.5 – 1.0 F.A.R for so-called "LD-1" residential areas (a 50% to over 100% increase from the existing maximum F.A.R for single family zones of 0.35) to 1.5 – 2.0 F.A.R for so-called "LD-3" residential areas. Draft Plan at pg. 4-11.

only single-family homes, but in addition to also allow for multi-family duplexes and triplexes (as stated in the Draft Plan “as-of-right ... in all single-family zones”), and accessory dwelling units (“ADUs”).⁴

These proposed zoning changes would effectively open the door to and invite outside developers and investors to come in to our single-family residence zoned neighborhoods to acquire and “flip” (by tear-down or conversion) houses in these communities to construct multi-family triplexes and duplexes structures in their place for commercial purposes to rent out. The adverse consequences of such zoning changes in our single-family neighborhoods both for the City, and in particular for the residents who live in these neighborhoods (many of whom have resided in these single-family residence communities for decades, with their home being their largest investment and asset), are significant.

The varied potential negative consequences and repercussions include:

- Even more density in what is already one of the densest municipalities in the state, and all that would entail - - including increased police and fire public safety burdens, and more sanitation department garbage, recycling and waste disposal;
- Increased burdens on the City’s overburdened infrastructure (including sanitation sewers, MS-4 stormwater-drainage sewers and related flooding problems, roads (many of which require repair and repaving), and water usage demands;
- More congestion, cars, and traffic exacerbating parking problems and deficiencies in a number of neighborhoods;
- Further burdens and pressures on the City’s school system;
- Disruption to the long-term stability and character of single-family neighborhoods, with the displacement of residents from one-family homeowners (who occupy and are invested in the enhancement, upkeep and maintenance of their homes) to instead have transient renter-tenants and absentee out-of-City landlords;
- Detracting impacts on neighborhood aesthetics, privacy, and open spaces;
- Possible erosions to property values appreciation, and the City’s per-capita tax base; and
- Hinderances or dissuasions for single families who are looking to move to the City and purchase one-family houses here, but may be unable to because of competition from developers (with greater access to capital and tax breaks) who can outbid them;

In sum, the proposals in the Draft Plan to effectively eliminate the City’s single-family residence zones (and to increase the maximum allowable Floor Area Ratios of structures in these single-family neighborhoods) must be rejected and removed from the Draft Plan. Existing single-family residence districts zoning controls and requirements (including all applicable procedures,

⁴ Draft Plan at 5-45; and similar-type statements in the Draft Plan, including at 3-14 (“[a]llow duplexes and triplexes by right in all single-family zones...”); at 5-70 (“[c]onsider the suitability of duplexes and triplexes in certain single-family zones by right”); and at 4-11 (“[t]ypes of allowed uses” in so-called “low density residential” stated in the Draft Plan to include “Duplex – Triplex” and “Accessory Apartments”).

regulations, necessary approvals and variances of the City's land-use Boards) must be maintained and enforced for these single-family neighborhoods, and only those permitted principal uses expressly provided for in the Zoning Code for R1-7, R1-4.5, and R1-3.6 one-family residence districts be allowed. As discussed above, the proposals and related statements in the Draft Plan concerning changes to single-family residential zones are misguided, detrimental to our single-family home communities and residents, not based in real world on the ground data-driven strategic analyses, and are counterproductive to the long-term well-being and productive growth of the City.

Opposition to Certain Statements and Apparent Proposal in the Draft Plan Regarding the Bronxville Field Club

In addition to our overall opposition to the proposals in the Draft Plan concerning the effective elimination of single-family zoned residence districts, we also specifically oppose certain statements and an apparent proposal in the Draft Plan with respect to the Bronxville Field Club ("BFC" or "Club"). The Draft Plan refers to the BFC as a so-called "notable feature" in the Hunts Woods neighborhood, and appears to propose some nebulous undefined "Landmark" designation with respect to the BFC.⁵ We object to such inappropriate and unfounded statements and designation.

The BFC is a nonconforming use located in the Hunts Woods single-family residential neighborhood zoned R1-7. In its marketing materials, its purported "address," the Club's website, and elsewhere (including its name), the BFC asserts or implies a "Bronxville" location, even though all of its property is physically located in Mount Vernon. It is a private members-only club, with limited select membership, high initiating fees and dues, and claims 501(c)(7) tax exempt status as a "private club". The racial demographic of the membership of the BFC is mostly white, and over ninety-percent of the Club's members do not live in Mount Vernon. The small number of residents in Mount Vernon who are members predominantly relocated from Bronxville and carried their Bronxville-based membership with them when they moved.

The BFC's location is surrounded by long-standing single-family homes in a well-established residential neighborhood. Over the years, the BFC has undertaken (or proposed to undertake) a number of expansions and various construction projects, which local area Mount Vernon residents have opposed, and which have been the subject of lengthy disputes, contested land-use Board proceedings, and litigations. Opposition residents have stated and asserted that the BFC has not been a "good neighbor;" that its development projects (and proposed projects) constitute impermissible expansions of the Club's nonconforming use in violation of the Zoning Code;⁶ have caused (or will cause) exacerbated local flooding conditions; increased parking and traffic problems; intrusive noise and light pollution; and other complaints, adversely impacting the neighborhood.

⁵ Draft Plan at 5-9; 4-26; 4-27.

⁶ Zoning Code §267-11(B)(1)-(6).

The statement in the Draft Plan that the Bronxville Field Club is a “notable feature” in the Hunts Woods neighborhood inappropriately indicates or suggests that (notwithstanding the above) the BFC serves or is inclusive of the Hunts Woods community, is somehow Hunts Woods centric, allows the Hunts Woods neighborhood open access to and use of the Club’s facilities, or that the Club openly acknowledges its Hunts Woods Mount Vernon location, none of which is accurate. This characterization and reference regarding the BFC should be removed from the Draft Plan.

Moreover, the Bronxville Field Club should not be referenced or noted in a statement or proposed “map” in the Draft Plan as a so-called “Landmark”. Such a purported designation is lacking in meaningful definition and specifics in the Draft Plan, and furthermore is unsupported and unwarranted with respect to the BFC. Any such “Landmark” designation as to the BFC should be removed from the Draft Plan.

Thank you in advance for your review of our comments and attention to the above points in opposition to the Draft Plan. We believe that meaningful consideration and input of these points and revisions in the plan drafting process will improve and enhance the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan to the benefit of the City, its single-family residential neighborhoods, and residents.

Sincerely,
Michael J. Templeton
Mount Vernon Resident and Homeowner

From: [Bonilla, Nicole](#)
To: [ferrandino](#)
Cc: [Rausse, James](#); [Molina, Marlon](#); [Herbert, Lukas](#); [Zaino, Amelia](#)
Subject: Re: Draft Comp Plan -- Availability of Public Comments on the Record and Inclusion of City Council Lead Agency Resolution/NB
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 3:25:00 PM

Hi,

I will add this email thread as requested.

Regards,

Nicole Bonilla, MBA
City Clerk - City of Mount Vernon, New York

From: ferrandino@aol.com <ferrandino@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 2:04 PM
To: Bonilla, Nicole <nbonilla@mountvernonny.gov>; ferrandino <ferrandino@aol.com>
Cc: Rausse, James <jrausse@mountvernonny.gov>; Molina, Marlon <mmolina@mountvernonny.gov>; Herbert, Lukas <lherbert@mountvernonny.gov>; Zaino, Amelia <azaino@mountvernonny.gov>
Subject: Re: Draft Comp Plan -- Availability of Public Comments on the Record and Inclusion of City Council Lead Agency Resolution/NB

Thank you Nicole. I am not sure how the public would know where to look unless you told them.

Also, there is a key missing document that is part of the *Draft Plan* that has still not been posted, despite several admonitions by me to do so: the City Council Lead Agency resolution which includes language on the *Draft Plan* being a Type One Action under SEQR. Please post this as well for purposes of full disclosure. I have copied the Planning Department on this email as well to facilitate placement.

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS CORRESPONDENCE STRING AS A PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE *DRAFT PLAN*, AND INSERT IT UNDER "ADDITIONAL COMMENTS" ON THE CITY WEB SITE WHERE COMMENTS ARE POSTED.

Thank you.

VJF
<http://www.faplanners.com>

On Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 10:04:44 AM EDT, Bonilla, Nicole <nbonilla@mountvernonny.gov> wrote:

Hi Vince,

The additional comments are located as a separate attachment named "Additional Comments" [TMP-1695](#).

The file has been updated as of 10:00 am today.

Regards,

Nicole Bonilla, MBA

City Clerk - City of Mount Vernon, New York

From: ferrandino@aol.com <ferrandino@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 11:38 PM

To: Bonilla, Nicole <nbonilla@mountvernonny.gov>; ferrandino <ferrandino@aol.com>

Cc: Michael Justino <mjustinocmv@gmail.com>; Ttb1368 <ttb1368@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Draft Comp Plan -- Availability of Public Comments on the Record

Hi Nicole,

I believe you have said that updated written comments are available for public viewing at the end of each business day. If so, where can they be found and can you send me a link? I could only locate comments on line through October 15, 2025.

Many thanks!

VJF

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