



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
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JAMES RAUSSE, FAICP, WEDG  
COMMISSIONER

September 15, 2025

VIA EMAIL:

Honorable City Council Members  
City of Mount Vernon  
1 Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, New York 10550

**RE:** Request for the Mount Vernon City Council to formally adopt the Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan – *Envision Mount Vernon*. For consideration on the agenda at the September 24th, 2025, City Council meeting.

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of the Department of Planning and Community Development, I am pleased to submit the draft of the Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, *Envision Mount Vernon*, for your formal consideration and adoption. This represents the City's first full Comprehensive Plan update since 1968, and it comes at a critical moment in Mount Vernon's history as we seek to shape a shared vision for the future.

The Department respectfully requests that the City Council begin the environmental review of this matter pursuant to SEQRA by declaring its intention to serve as the lead agency in accordance with the City Charter, and to schedule the required public hearings prior to voting on the acceptance of the Comprehensive Plan. These hearings will provide the public with a final opportunity to engage in this historic process and ensure that adoption reflects the transparent, participatory principles that have guided the Plan's creation.

The development of *Envision Mount Vernon* reflects a deliberate, methodical, and strategic approach to long-range planning. Produced by professional planning consulting firms, Cleary Consulting, AKRF, Inc., Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, BRS, Inc and Creative Urban Alchemy, LLC, in partnership with the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Plan is grounded in nationally recognized planning standards while remaining flexible and innovative. It is holistic and long-range, addressing all elements of how the City functions—including preservation, land use, housing, transportation, economy, environment, and quality of life—while providing a policy-oriented framework to guide zoning, capital improvements, and public/private investment for the next decade and beyond. The Plan also includes a detailed implementation matrix with 36 goals and 418 objectives, each assigned timeframes, cost considerations, and responsible parties.

Equally important, this Plan is deeply rooted in the voices of Mount Vernon residents. Between Spring 2023 and Summer 2025, the City and its partners conducted a robust engagement process that included over 30 Community Conversations, targeted sessions with seniors, youth, Spanish-speaking residents, and industrial stakeholders, as well as four citywide workshops. In addition, the Department engaged directly with six active neighborhood and tenant associations ensuring that community priorities were incorporated from the outset. These efforts captured the lived experiences, aspirations, and concerns of our community, shaping every chapter of the Plan and embedding inclusivity, equity, and sustainability into its recommendations.





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The results are clear: *Envision Mount Vernon* is a professional and technical planning document that reflects extensive community input and sets forth a shared vision for the City's future. It provides the City Council, administration, and residents with a roadmap for decision-making that is data-driven, action-oriented, and grounded in the values of our community.

We respectfully ask the City Council to advance this process by declaring its intent to serve as lead agency, conducting the required circulation to involved and interested agencies, scheduling and hosting the required public hearings, making the necessary referrals to the City Planning Board, Corporation Counsel, and the County Planning Board, and moving forward toward formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. With your leadership, Mount Vernon can finally modernize its land use framework and pursue a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous future for all.

Thank you for your consideration and your continued commitment to the people of Mount Vernon. To view the full document please [click here](#).

Respectfully submitted,



James Rausse, FAICP, WEDG

cc: Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard  
Comptroller Darren M. Morton  
Malcolm Clark, Chief of Staff

