



City of New Rochelle New York

NEWS RELEASE
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“GreeNR” Draft Sustainability Plan Released *Public Feedback Sought on Twenty-Year Blueprint for Economic, Environmental & Social Progress*

April 20, 2010 – The City of New Rochelle has completed a draft of its first Sustainability Plan, “GreeNR.” GreeNR articulates a broad vision for economic, environmental and social progress, while also outlining detailed and specific recommendations to help guide municipal action for the next twenty years.

GreeNR is the product of more than a year of discussion and research. In January of 2009, New Rochelle was selected as one of just three communities nation-wide to pilot a sustainability plan toolkit, developed by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and New York City’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability. Following New Rochelle’s selection, City Manager Charles Strome appointed a volunteer Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) composed of community leaders and policy experts to assist in drafting a plan. In addition, the City sponsored a Sustainability Forum to solicit public input. GreeNR’s contents emerged from this process. Its release date notably coincides with Earth Day.

“This is much more than a philosophical document,” said Mayor Noam Bramson. “It is a practical strategy for improving the quality of life in New Rochelle. I am very grateful to those who applied their talents and expertise to this project, and I look forward to a thoughtful community discussion about GreeNR’s contents and goals.”

GreeNR is divided into six principle action areas: (1) Energy & Climate; (2) Resource Conservation & Waste Reduction; (3) Ecology, Biodiversity & Public Health; (4) Smart Growth & Economic Prosperity; (5) Transportation & Mobility; and (6) Public Participation & Awareness. These action areas are further subdivided into forty-three initiatives on diverse subjects, created by the four SAB working groups chaired by City staff. Every initiative includes short, medium and long-term recommendations, as well as metrics for setting objectives and measuring progress.

“We greatly appreciate the efforts of the volunteer SAB and City staff, who worked closely together to create such a comprehensive document,” said City Manager Charles B. Strome, III.

Highlighted in GreeNR’s introduction are ten major goals for 2030 that illustrate the Plan’s scope. These are:

- Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%.

- Cut non-recycled solid waste generation by 15%.
- Preserve natural spaces and restore inland water bodies.
- Absorb or retain 25 million gallons of flood water per storm.
- Decrease sewage flow by at least 2 million gallons in peak hours.
- Build at least 95% of new housing near mass transit.
- Open at least one additional mile of the Sound shore to the public.
- Plant at least 10,000 new trees on public property.
- Create a comprehensive walking and bicycling system.
- Subscribe at least half of all households to the City website.

GreeNR is also aimed at achieving general efficiency and cost-savings. Many of its recommendations would reduce public and/or private expenses. Initiatives that require a net expenditure of resources are generally phased to limit short-term impacts and to maximize opportunities for grants.

While most of GreeNR's initiatives concern local government, the Sustainability Plan also contains recommendations for individual and community action. "GreeNR addresses both public policy and individual action," said Deborah Newborn, New Rochelle's Sustainability Coordinator. "It's important to empower residents with the knowledge and tools to make the best decisions for themselves." Newborn noted that the private sector accounted for 97.5% of New Rochelle's overall energy consumption.

The City Council is expected to review the Draft Sustainability Plan over the coming weeks and a public hearing is planned for Tuesday, May 11th at 7:30 pm. In order to receive additional public input and feedback, the City has posted the GreeNR draft on its official website at www.newrochelleny.com/greeNR with a feature for on-line comment. Copies are also available for viewing at the office of the City Clerk and at the New Rochelle Public Library.

The adoption of a final GreeNR by City Council would signal support for the plan's principal objectives. However, many legislative and administrative actions would still be necessary to realize GreeNR's goals. These specific steps, together with any potential allocation of funds, would be considered by the City Council and by other decision-makers on a rolling basis, as circumstances and organizational and financial capacity permit.

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