

---

## 2021 DOWNTOWN OVERLAY ZONE AMENDMENTS OVERVIEW

---

### THE 2015 PROCESS

- In 2015, the City Council led a coordinated review under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) for the creation of a form-based overlay zoning code called the Downtown Overlay Zone (DOZ) and Zoning Map Amendments. The City prepared a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), which considered the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed zoning changes.
- The City Council adopted the 2015 GEIS and SEQRA Finding Statement that:
  - evaluated 6 zones within the DOZ Overlay (DO-1 through DO-6);
  - established a Theoretical Development Scenario (TDS), or mix of potential uses, for the six DO Zones and used the TDS as the baseline for the SEQRA analysis;
    - 2015 TDS analyzed 5,500 residential units, 500 hotel rooms and 5.94 M SF other commercial/institutional development.
  - identified site specific environmental review criteria necessary for future site specific applications during the site plan review process.
- The 2015 environmental review was generic in nature, as no specific development projects were proposed at the time, and the City could not anticipate exactly where and how much development would occur within the Existing DO Zone. Rather, the 2015 TDS set projections for the magnitude and mix of uses that could reasonably occur over a 10-year period.

### THE 2015-2019 PROCESS

- The interest in development in the downtown has been significant, requiring several updates to the TDS to address the market demand (September 2016, December 2017, January 2019, March 2019, July 2019, and September 2019). The City received applications for 9.6 million square feet, a total of 32 development projects, and added a total of 1,500 residential units, increased the amount of retail, restaurant, and hotel uses, and decreased the non-medical office uses during that period.
- Each modified/amended/refined TDS required a reassessment of the potential impacts analyzed in the 2015 GEIS, which determined that all modifications/refinements would not result in any new impacts not previously analyzed.
- In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant financial hardships and a major shift in the way people live, work, travel, and shop. As the City emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are several lessons learned that can help the City improve resiliency in the future.

### THE 2021 AMENDMENT- SUPPLEMENTAL DGEIS

- The Supplemental Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (Supplemental DGEIS), prepared at this time builds upon the information, analyses and findings from the 2015 GEIS and the 2015-2019 amendments and identifies the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.
- The Proposed Action is intended to allow the City to position itself to have a healthier economy and stronger social connectivity within the downtown, bolster the economic resiliency of the City by recognizing the important connection between the development of the waterfront and the development of the transit-oriented downtown development sites as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - amends the DOZ standards and the existing DOZ map by including the seventh overlay zone, Waterfront Overlay Zone (DO-7), that creates an opportunity for redevelopment of brownfield waterfront sites and provides a significant public access to waterfront open spaces.



- reduction in Retail (230,000 SF), Office (200,000 SF), Hotel rooms (500), Student & Supportive Housing (500), Adult Care (192,000SF), Independent units (375) and Institutional (140,000 SF)
  - increase in Medical Office (125,000 SF)
- DO-3
  - reduction in Retail (15,000 SF), Office (179,000 SF), Medical Office (26,000 SF), Hotel rooms (100), Student & Supportive Housing (300), Adult Care (28,000SF), Institutional (120,000 SF)
  - increase in independent units (200)
- DO-4- reduction in Retail (62,000 SF), Office (108,000 SF)
- DO-5- reduction in Office (92,000 SF), Student & Supportive Housing (200), Adult Care (20,000 SF)
- DO-6- reduction in Adult Care (50,000 SF), and Institutional (20,000 SF)

2021 Theoretical Development Scenario Including DO-7

District Overlay	Retail (SF)	Restaurant (SF)	Office Nonmedical (SF)	Medical Office (SF)	Hotel (rooms)	Residential Units (DU)	Student Housing/ Supportive Housing	Adult Care (SF)	Independent Units (DU)	Institutional (SF)
DO-1	100,000 (-275,000)	54,000	300,000 (-500,000)	55,000 (-50,000)	300 (-200)	2,552 (+1,300) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	50,000 (-105,000)
DO-2	200,000 (-230,000)	32,400	100,000 (-200,000)	282,500 (+125,000)	0 (-500)	5,342 (+800) <sup>1</sup>	0 (-500)	0 (-192,000)	0 (-375)	60,000 (-140,000)
DO-3	39,000 (-15,000)	5,400	50,000 (-179,000)	0 (-26,000)	0 (-100)	576	200 (-300)	100,000 (-28,000)	200 (+200)	105,000 (-120,000)
DO-4	100,000 (-62,000)	21,400	100,000 (-108,000)	26,000	-	372 (+200)	-	-	-	-
DO-5	21,500	5,400	100,000 (-92,000)	105,000	100	232	300 (-200)	172,000 (-20,000)	-	140,000
DO-6	21,500	5,400	31,000	21,000	-	226	-	78,000 (-50,000)	-	35,000 (-20,000)
DO-7	60,000	60,000	25,000	25,000	200	700	-	-	-	23,000
Totals	524,000 (-522,000)	184,000 (+60,000)	706,000 (-1,054,000)	514,500 (+74,000)	600 (-600)	10,000 (+3,000)	500 (-1,000)	350,000 (-290,000)	200 (-175)	413,000 (-362,000)

Note: Quantities shown in parenthesis are additions or subtractions from the Amended Theoretical Development Scenario (September 2019) (see Table 2-3). The 2021 TDS would replace the Amended TDS (September 2019); uses/SF is inclusive of all applications that have been submitted and approved to the City since the adoption of the DO2 to date.

1. The City intends to reserve for a period of time, 800 Units in DO-1 and 700 Units in DO-2 for the future development of City-owned properties (see RAP Addendum, Appendix A-1).

## SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

- The Proposed Action has been designed to continue the successful growth of the Existing DO Zone and facilitate revitalization along the waterfront as a result of zoning and development incentives.
- The regulatory actions would not in and of themselves result in any physical changes to the Existing DO Zone or the Proposed DO-7 Zone, and no impacts are anticipated until such time that development or other regulated activities are undertaken.
- The potential impacts following implementation as the growth continues, and the corresponding mitigating strategies/mitigation measures that would eliminate or alleviate each impact to the maximum extent practicable, are analyzed, the summary is provided in the Executive Summary Matrix, and details in the following Sections:
  - 3.1 Land Use, Zoning and Plans
    - 3.1.2.1 Land Use
    - 3.1.2.2 Zoning
    - 3.1.2.3 Plans
  - 3.2 Community Character
    - 3.2.2.1 Visual Character
    - 3.2.2.2 Noise
    - 3.2.2.3 Air Quality
    - 3.2.2.4 Cultural Resources

- 3.2.2.5 Shadows
  - 3.3 Community Facilities and Utilities
    - 3.3.2.1 Educational Services
    - 3.3.2.2 Police Protection
    - 3.3.2.3 Fire Protection
    - 3.3.2.4 Water Supply
    - 3.3.2.5 Wastewater and Stormwater Management
    - 3.3.2.6 Solid Waste Management
    - 3.3.2.7 Open Space
    - 3.3.2.8 Electric and Natural Gas Utilities
    - 3.3.2.9 Municipal Fiscal Impacts
    - 3.3.2.10 Sales Tax Revenues
    - 3.3.2.11 Impacts of Construction and Annual Operations
  - 3.4 Transportation and Parking
    - 3.4 Transportation
    - 3.4.5 Parking
  - 3.5 Water Resources
    - 3.5.2.1 Surface Waters and Wetlands
    - 3.5.2.2 Coastal and Water Resource Protection Plans and Policies
    - 3.5.2.3 Flood and SLOSH Zones
    - 3.5.2.4 Groundwater Resources
  - 3.6 Ecological Resources
    - 3.6.2.1 Vegetation
    - 3.6.2.2 Wildlife
    - 3.6.2.3 Rare and Endangered Species and Unique Habitats
  - 3.7 Geology, Soils and Topography
    - 3.7.2.1 Geology
    - 3.7.2.2 Soils
    - 3.7.2.3 Topography
- Overall, the proposed 2021 TDS increases residential units, but reduces the square footage of several commercial, institutional, adult care and student housing uses that were originally contemplated by the 2015 TDS (as amended). This results in reductions of potential impacts in many of the impact categories from what was previously studied.
- Several impact categories of note include:
  - Traffic Impacts:
    - A Traffic Study was completed in 2015 to evaluate the then proposed DOZ and 2015 TDS. The results of the 2015 study showed decreases in level of service of the majority of intersections within the downtown.
    - An Updated Traffic Study was completed in 2018 that evaluated the 2015 TDS plus the addition of DO-7. Similar to the 2015 Study, this study found decreases in levels of service at the majority of intersections in the downtown. However, it is noted that given the reductions contemplated to higher intensity commercial uses, the proposed 2021 TDS results in total trip generation estimates that are significantly less than the trip estimates in the 2015 Traffic Study, and the Updated Traffic Study. Supplemental, detailed traffic studies and intersection analyses may be required during site plan review to identify site specific impacts and required mitigations.
    - The City has received a grant to upgrade the existing signal system to an actuated-coordinated system, which would enable the intersections to better accommodate traffic by optimizing the amount of green time allocated to each intersection approach and would be expected to improve the level of service in the downtown study area.

- School Impacts:
  - An additional 171 school-aged children are projected to be generated by the proposed 3,000 unit increase. Together with the school-aged children projected from the already-approved projects in the Existing DOZ (331 school-aged children), a total 502 school-aged children are projected across grades K-12.
  - Actual enrollment in New Rochelle School District has been significantly lower than forecasted and is projected to continue to decline.
  - Trinity Elementary, Young Middle School and the High School are projected to have adequate capacity for the additional school-aged children projected from the DOZ. Columbus has the capacity to absorb a portion of the additional school children from DOZ projects, however, Columbus is projected to be over capacity by 104 students (five classrooms). This projection is expected to be conservatively high based on the number of school-aged children residing in the leased DOZ residential units to date.
  - The projected tax revenues to the school district are anticipated to far exceed school expenditures for these new school-aged children. Additionally, Fair Share Mitigation fees would also be provided to the School District to address capital costs associated with new classrooms at Columbus to mitigate impacts on the School District.
- The Supplemental DGEIS provides site specific environmental review criteria necessary for future site specific applications during the site plan review process. This includes site-specific evaluations such as water supply demand, wastewater collection/conveyance infrastructure, traffic and parking analysis, visual analysis, etc. when additional information and site-specific information related to proposed uses, development densities and project locations are known.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

- The No Action Alternative
  - assumes the Proposed Action is not undertaken, and that development would continue to occur under the current provisions of the City Code
  - would not meet the City's overall planning objectives and would not advance the City's goals for the Echo Bay waterfront
  - A full discussion of the alternatives analysis is included in Section 5.0, Alternatives, of the Supplemental DGEIS.
- The Proposed Action
  - helps to advance the implementation of numerous previously established, publicly vetted, long-range planning objectives and the overall vision for the area
  - provides considerable benefits, while at the same time, identifying appropriate means, methods, techniques and strategies to suitably mitigate potential impacts to the maximum extent practicable as required by SEQRA.

## **THE PROCESS: REQUIRED PERMITS, APPROVALS AND REVIEWS**

- The SEQRA process provides the New Rochelle City Council, as Lead Agency in this environmental review, with the information necessary to render an informed decision on the potential for significant environmental impacts from the Proposed Action.
  - Once the Supplemental DGEIS is accepted by the Lead Agency, the document will be made available for public review.
  - A public hearing will be held and interested and involved agencies and the public will have the opportunity to review the document and provide comments.
  - Once the comment period is closed, a Supplemental Final GEIS (Supplemental FGEIS) will be prepared, which will respond in writing to any and all substantive comments received during the designated public and agency comment period.
  - Upon completion of the Supplemental FGEIS, the City Council will be responsible for the preparation and adoption of a SEQRA Findings Statement which will:

- consider the relevant environmental impacts, facts and conclusions disclosed in the Supplemental FGEIS;
- weigh and balance relevant environmental impacts with social, economic and other considerations;
- provide a rationale for the agency's decision;
- certify that the requirements have been met; and
- certify that consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating conditions of mitigative measures that were identified as practicable.
- Once the Findings Statement is adopted, the SEQRA review process for the Proposed Action will be completed, enabling the City Council to render its final decision on the Proposed Action.
- A list of the involved agencies and required reviews, permits and approvals for the Proposed Action, and those necessary for future redevelopment based on the reasonable theoretical buildout scenarios, are included in the Executive Summary.