Home to over 77,000 residents, New Rochelle is nestled along the northwest coast of Long Island Sound. The City is transected by Metro-North Railroad’s New Haven Line, on which Amtrak also operates. At the heart of its downtown lies the multi-modal New Rochelle Transit Center, the busiest New Haven Line station in Westchester County with more than 4,000 riders daily.

Adopted in 2011, GreeNR, the City of New Rochelle’s sustainability plan, integrates transit-oriented development as a significant component of the community’s movement towards a more economically, environmentally, and socially sound future. It contains an impressive commitment to TOD: one of plan’s principal goals, by 2030, is to “site at least 95% of new housing units within walking distance of mass transit, including at least 65% of new housing units within 1/2 mile of the New Rochelle Transit Center.” This goal builds upon a number of existing TOD projects that have resulted in almost 1,500 new housing units constructed near the Transit Center since 1999.

To augment this significant TOD commitment, GreeNR also strives to achieve other transportation goals that will aid the City’s efforts to increase its livability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These goals include:

- Achieving at least a 50 percent increase in the number of commuters who walk or bike, from 3,300 to 5,000;
- Increasing the miles of local sidewalk in good repair from 136 to at least 195;
- Establishing at least 350 bicycle parking spaces along at least 30 miles of designated bicycle routes;
- Cutting by 25 percent the peak hour travel time from Eastchester Road to Huguenot Street, from 4 minutes to 3 minutes; and
- Reducing the rate of single-vehicle occupancy commutes to City Hall by at least 15 percent, from 96 percent to 81 percent.

The adoption of GreeNR, which serves as a general statement of City policy, has coincided with the initiation of the redraft of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The community’s Mobility and Infrastructure subcommittee is reviewing these goals and, in conjunction with the regional Sustainable Communities Consortium (discussed previously in Issue 1), is working to incorporate them into the official plan for the community. Through this incorporation, New Rochelle will shape and direct its land use regulations and development decisions in the coming years with an even greater emphasis on TOD.

New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson provided the inspired and consistent leadership for GreeNR that led to its adoption. However, he credits the City Council and the dozens of technical advisors and hundreds of citizens who contributed to this blueprint for the future development of the “Queen City on the Sound.” In Mayor Bramson’s words, “GreeNR is far more than an abstract philosophical document. Contained within these pages are scores of specific, achievable recommendations, aimed at improving the environmental, economic, and social health of New Rochelle during the next twenty years and beyond.” With Mayor Bramson’s continued guidance, GreeNR’s TOD and transportation-related goals are likely to become reality and may serve as a model for other communities seeking to encourage TOD.