

THE ROCKLAND ROUNDTABLE

Your Voice, Your Future



Envision Rockland Public Workshops, photos courtesy of Rockland County Department of Planning

FEATURE



County Seeks Community Engagement for New Comprehensive Plan

Rockland County is updating its Countywide Comprehensive Plan. The last [County Plan](#) was adopted in 2011. While some of the land use challenges facing the County remain the same, many things have changed as the County continues to grow. The planning process kicked off earlier this year and is intended to last approximately 18 months, culminating with an adopted Plan in the Fall of 2026.

A County comprehensive plan is a long-term, strategic document that outlines a county's vision and priorities for land use, zoning, development, and growth, serving as a guide for decision-making on issues like infrastructure, housing, and economic development. A County-wide comprehensive plan provides a broader perspective than a municipal land use plan, providing insight and guidance on issues and opportunities that may cross town or village

➤➤➤ County Seeks Community Engagement for New Comprehensive Plan (continued)

boundaries. The Plan will outline goals, policies, and strategies to guide local decision-making on land use, housing, transportation, community services, environmental protection, etc.

The plan's development is being overseen by the County Planning Department and guided by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a Community Advisory Working Group, ensuring both technical expertise and community input shape this critical undertaking. The County Planning Department has retained a land use consulting firm, BFJ Planning, to provide professional land use planning services to assist in drafting the Plan. The project has been named "[Envision Rockland](http://www.envisionrockland.com)". The County works to create an inclusive process whereby all members of the Rockland County community can engage and participate in the Plan to ensure a stakeholder-driven vision and publicly supported Plan. It is the County's goal to ensure that community priorities are integral to the Plan's vision, goals, and strategies. The project website is www.envisionrockland.com

"How would you like to see Rockland County improved?"



**How would you like to see Rockland County Improved?**

Complete the Visioning Exercise!
Help shape the vision that will be established by Rockland's Comprehensive Plan.

**Post your thoughts and suggestions on the "Ideas Wall"**

**Show us your favorite places or areas that need improvement on the "Interactive Map"**

Visit: www.envisionrockland.com
Access the Visioning Exercise via the homepage or the "Get Involved" tab

In addition to public workshops and stakeholder meetings, there are online interactive visioning exercises that we are encouraging Rockland residents, business owners and others concerned about the future of Rockland County to participate in. Please visit www.envisionrockland.com and help us create a vision for the future of Rockland County, via the "Ideas Wall" and "Interactive Map". Additionally, the project team members are attending various events throughout the County to alert people about the comprehensive plan process and opportunities to get involved.

Once adopted, The County Plan will serve as the basis for all County government planning and development issues for the next 10-20 years, provide guidance for future planning and zoning actions by Rockland's towns and villages, and create a framework for future capital expenditures by the County government.

To submit additional comments or questions, please email RCPlan@co.rockland.ny.us

MEET THE TEAM



Rockland County Department of Planning



Left to Right: Gibson LaRoche, Douglas J Schuetz, , Michael Kezner, Elizabeth Aranguiz, Adam Carsen, Rich Schiafo, Cole Warren, Rachel Gaffney, Wendy Leine, Zhujing Xia, Stephanie Serrano, Scott Lounsbury, and Jake Palant (Not Pictured: Caren Wecera, Janine Farry)

How does your work impact the quality of life for Rockland residents?

*"GIS plays a huge role in helping communities in a variety of ways. GIS mapping can be extremely useful in the following perspectives: Urban Planning & Development, Disaster Preparedness & Response, Environmental Management, Public Health & Safety. In my opinion, GIS can be used anywhere. I am proud to be part of the GIS team." - **Zhujing Xia, GIS Programmer & Administrator***

➤➤➤ Meet the Team: Rockland County Department of Planning (continued)

“The County Planning Department provides information and feedback to local municipalities to guide in the land use and development process. We require local land use boards and developers to consider a variety of potential challenges for proposals, ranging from environmental concerns to pedestrian safety. Through our reviews of site plans, subdivisions, local laws, etc., and update of the County’s Comprehensive Plan, we seek to aid the County in its growth and encourage localities to develop in a manner that reflects the vision of their residents, while preserving the natural, cultural, and other existing features that they cherish.”

- Jake M. Palant, Associate Planner

What do you like most about Rockland?

“One of the best things about Rockland is all the parks and hiking trails it has to offer.” - **Caren Wecera, GIS Technician III**

“I love the nature. Rockland has a really unique natural environment. I didn’t grow up anywhere near mountains, so I’m always a little in awe of the mountains around Rockland. I love going to all the parks in Rockland, especially Kennedy Dells (for its cute little waterfall), Congers Lake (for its scenic boardwalk on the lake), and Rockland Lake (for its gorgeous trail along the Hudson River).”

- Elizabeth Aranguiz, Planner

What do you like to do for fun in Rockland?

“Hiking in Harriman, Bear Mountain Zoo, Movies at Lafayette theater in Suffern”

- Wendy Leine, GIS Technician II

What inspires you?

“I am inspired by members of the Rockland County community that are working hard to protect the natural environment.”

- Rich Schiafo, Deputy Commissioner, Principal Planner

FEATURE



**County Business Survey Spurs
Creation of Small Business
Support Program**

At the end of 2024, Rockland County conducted a survey of businesses to gain an understanding of their challenges and most pressing needs. An overwhelming majority of respondents (74%) were businesses with fewer than 20 employees, and 56% fall into the category defined as “microbusinesses” with less than 10 employees.

The survey revealed that these small businesses are most interested in support in the following areas: Grants and Incentives, Marketing, Networking, and Workforce Development.

WHAT DID BUSINESSES SAY THEY WANT HELP WITH?

GRANTS AND INCENTIVES	MARKETING SUPPORT	NETWORKING	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
52%	39%	28%	21%

WHAT DID BUSINESSES SAY WAS THEIR GREATEST CHALLENGE?

BUSINESS GROWTH	RIISING COSTS	HIRING OR RETAINING WORKKERS	RAISING CAPITAL
28%	27%	18%	14%

➤➤➤ County Business Survey Spurs Creation of Small Business Support Program (continued)

Respondents also noted the following as their greatest challenges: Business Growth, Rising Costs, Hiring or Retaining Workers, and Raising Capital.

As a result of this feedback, the County has partnered with the Women's Enterprise Development Center and Community Capital New York to offer customized training, workshops, and one-on-one technical assistance to Rockland County's small businesses.

Each partner brings a team of knowledgeable experts to the table, and while programming is still being fine-tuned, topics such as accessing capital, branding and marketing, and sales growth will be the focus. Weekly office hours will also be accessible to program participants. All services will be offered FREE of charge to Rockland County businesses.

According to the County's Director of Economic Development & Tourism, Jenna Nazario, "Our goal with these programs is to provide a boost for small businesses so they can build their capacity when they are ready. It's an investment that the County is making to ensure a sustainable economy today and for future generations."

Stay tuned for more details. Updates will be shared at ExploreRocklandNY.com.

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Check out these additional FREE resources for small businesses:



[Lower Hudson Valley Small Business Development Center](#) offers completely confidential business counseling, training, and business research at no cost.



[SCORE's](#) mission is to foster vibrant small business communities through free and accessible mentoring and education.

**PARTNER
HIGHLIGHT**

For nearly 30 years, the **Women's Enterprise Development Center (WEDC)** has empowered entrepreneurs across the region, helping them start, grow, and strengthen their small businesses. WEDC offers a robust suite of services—including business training, one-on-one counseling, mentoring, networking opportunities, certification assistance, and access to capital. Our programs are open to all and offered in both English and Spanish to ensure accessibility for a diverse community of entrepreneurs.

“We’re thrilled to announce the launch of WEDC programming in Rockland County, in partnership with the Rockland County Office of Economic Development,” says Nikki Hahn, Chief Executive Officer of WEDC. “Together, we’re committed to building a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem and supporting the growth and success of Rockland’s small business community.”

To learn more about the Women's Enterprise Development Center:

<https://wedcbiz.org/>



**PARTNER
HIGHLIGHT****COMMUNITY
CAPITAL
NEW YORK**

The mission of **Community Capital New York (CCNY)** is to expand economic opportunity for underserved, historically disadvantaged individuals and communities by providing flexible loans and business support services to low and moderate income (LMI) small business entrepreneurs and by funding the development of affordable housing.

Founded in 1989, CCNY became a certified CDFI in 2001. Since then, CCNY has extended over \$16 million in flexible, low-cost loans and credit-builder products to more than 650 small businesses, leading to the creation or retention of 8,400 jobs across the region.

"Community Capital New York is proud to partner with Rockland County Economic Development to ensure that small business owners have access to capital and business support they need to grow and succeed. Together, we are strengthening the local economy and creating more opportunities for business development." Kate Conlan, Chief Operating Officer, Community Capital New York.

To learn more about Community Capital New York:

<https://communitycapitalny.org/>



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
FORUM****>>> Continuing the Conversation:
What's Next?**

The [April 2025 Special Issue](#) of the *Rockland Roundtable* provided a recap of the Economic Development Forum, which took place on May 14, 2025. The event was billed as an initial effort to jumpstart public discourse about pressing issues surrounding economic development in Rockland County.


Prior to the event, event registrants were asked ***“What topics would you like to discuss at the upcoming Economic Development Forum?”*** Below are some of the comments we received:




“Affordable housing”




“Job opportunities for youth and new graduates”




“Small business support programs”



“Revitalization of waterfront areas”



“Trails and land conservation purchases”



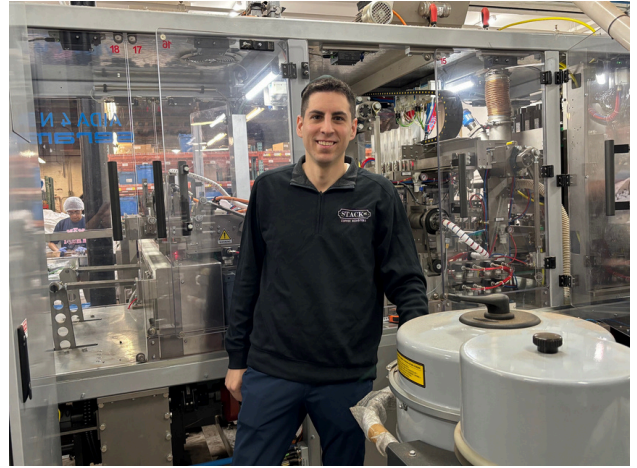
“Mass transit options”

Based on this feedback, the event’s conversations and interactive boards focused on three categories: **Housing, Economic Wellbeing, and Quality of Life.**

The County is preparing to launch its own podcast, also titled *Rockland Roundtable*, that will delve deeper into these and other issues that were first introduced at the Economic Development Forum.

**SUCCESS
STORY****Meet Yehuda Reich: The Challenger
Behind Stack Street Coffee**

Upon meeting **Yehuda Reich**, one quickly senses his forward momentum. He's not someone who sits back and waits for things to happen. His vision for **Stack Street Coffee** has grown rapidly, yet deliberately, since launching nearly a decade ago in a modest office within the Garner Historic District. Today, the company spans nearly 50,000 square feet of manufacturing and distribution across multiple buildings in the landmarked industrial complex in Garnerville, New York as well as other smaller locations in NY and NJ.



Founder Yehuda Reich at Stack Street Coffee in Garnerville, NY

A lifelong Rockland County resident, Reich has kept his roots strong—most of his 30 to 35 employees also live locally.

Before founding Stack Street, Reich built a successful career in e-commerce, gaining deep insights into product marketing, sales, and logistics. This vantage point gave him a unique window into various industries and a clear opportunity in one: coffee. He recognized a gap in the market for high-quality coffee delivered more efficiently and affordably. That insight sparked the creation of Stack Street Coffee, originally launched under the tagline, “Great coffee shouldn’t be reserved for the highest bidder.”

Stack Street’s success didn’t go unnoticed. Other coffee brands began turning to them for help with logistics, product development, and distribution. “They could focus on marketing and sales,” Reich explains, “and we’d handle the product development, manufacturing and fulfillment. That became a great business model for us.”



Meet Yehuda Reich: The Challenger Behind Stack Street Coffee (continued)

Today, Stack Street serves customers across North America and as far afield as Australia and the Middle East, including major national grocery and retail chains. As Reich describes it, Stack Street is a “challenger company” large enough to deliver tailored solutions at scale (organic, kosher, compostable solutions, K-Cups, Rainforest Alliance-certified—you name it), yet small enough to stay nimble and flexible. The biggest competitor, Reich says, isn’t another brand or company, it’s inertia.

When asked what he believes drives lasting business success, Reich shares:

“Constantly thinking about how something can be improved—that’s the hallmark of a strong businessperson. But you can also overanalyze and never act. At some point, you’ve got to just do it.

At the same time, you have to always be questioning your assumptions. You need to be willing to do a complete 180 if you realize something isn’t working. I do this more often than I care to admit—much to the chagrin of my coworkers and family!

Whatever the ‘thing’ is for you—just doing it, and then iterating obsessively, is a massive unlock.

Of course, none of this would be possible without two things.

First, my incredibly supportive wife. I’ve seen firsthand how much it helps to have someone in your corner who understands your mission, your drive, and shows up for you every day (and you for them, of course!). On the flip side, I’ve also seen far too many talented people held back by unsupportive partners. Choose wisely.

And last—but definitely not least—is G-d. All of my success is thanks to Him.”



To learn more about Stack Street Coffee:

<https://stackstcoffee.com/>

**COMMUNITY
CORNER****We Want to Hear from YOU!****Join the Conversation!**

Each issue of the *Rockland Roundtable* will pose a question to readers, and all are invited to submit responses.

Please share your thoughts on this question:

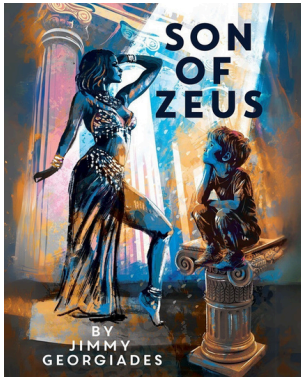
“Are there areas in Rockland County that could benefit from more revitalization? If so, where? And what would you like to see there?”

**CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT
YOUR ANSWER****OR USE THE QR CODE**

Thank you for participating in the Community Corner! We may share your response in future issues of the *Rockland Roundtable* or in the forthcoming podcast, so be sure to stay tuned!

COMING UP

45TH ANNIVERSARY JAZZ MUSIC IN THE GARDEN



Below are a few highlighted events taking place in July. To learn more about events and things to do in Rockland County, please visit

ExploreRocklandNY.com

July 10 - August 28, 2025

Jazz Music in the Garden

Edward Hopper House Museum & Study Center
82 N. Broadway, Nyack

Click [HERE](#) for tickets and more information

July 11 - 27, 2025

Son of Zeus

Penguin Rep Theatre
7 Cricketown Road, Stony Point

Click [HERE](#) for tickets and more information

July 17, 2025

Summer Picnic: Magic Shows

Nanuet Town Centre (on the green)
5101 Fashion Drive, Nanuet

Click [HERE](#) for more information

July 27, 2025

African Extravaganza Dance and Music

Rockland Community College Cultural Arts Theater
145 College Road, Suffern

Click [HERE](#) for tickets and more information