



NEWS RELEASE

City of New Rochelle, New York

KATHY GILWIT, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
(914) 654-2117 kgilwit@newrochelleny.com
Facebook: [cityofnewrochelle](https://www.facebook.com/cityofnewrochelle) Twitter [@newrochelleny.com](https://twitter.com/newrochelleny.com)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 21, 2018

New Rochelle Named as Finalist in Bloomberg Philanthropies' 2018 Mayors Challenge

City is among 35 Champion Cities That Will Embark on 6-month Testing Phase in Competition for Grand Prize

As Part of the American Cities Initiative, Challenge Will Invest \$17.5 Million in Grants and Technical Assistance to Discover Innovative Solutions to Urgent Local Issues

New Rochelle Will Explore Use of Virtual-Reality Technology to Visualize Development Plans for Buildings and Public Spaces to Promote Informed Stakeholder Engagement

The City of New Rochelle is one of 35 Champion Cities selected today as finalists in the 2018 U.S. Mayors Challenge, a nationwide competition that encourages city leaders to uncover bold, inventive ideas that confront the toughest problems cities face. These 35 urban innovations rose to the top of a competitive pool of more than 320 applications. The Champion Cities will now begin a 6-month testing phase where they will conduct public prototypes of their ideas with grant funding of up to \$100,000 per city, a new addition to the Competition this year. The Mayors Challenge returns to the U.S. as the first investment in the American Cities Initiative, a \$200 million suite of new and expanded programs that will empower cities to generate innovation and advance policy that moves the nation forward.

New Rochelle now advances to the six-month "Test, Learn, and Adapt" phase of the competition. Cities will refine their ideas during this process with up to \$100,000, as well as personalized support from innovation experts, to test and begin building support for their urban innovations and submit a new application in August 2018. In October, four cities will receive \$1 million awards and one will receive a grand prize of \$5 million to bring their ideas to life.

"We received hundreds of bold and creative ideas from cities around the country in response to the 2018 Mayors Challenge, and these 35 really stood out for their potential to improve people's lives. The next six months are a great opportunity for the cities to test their ideas and make them even more innovative and effective," said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and three-term Mayor of New York City.

The 35 Champion Cities performed the best against four key criteria - vision, potential for impact, implementation plan, and potential to spread to other cities. A prestigious selection committee Co-Chaired by Former Ambassador Caroline Kennedy and Former Xerox Chairman

& CEO Ursula Burns and comprising distinguished policy experts, artists, academics, business executives and social innovation leaders assessed the applications.

New Rochelle's idea came from firsthand experience: in the midst of a major downtown revitalization, the City noted that municipalities and their public stakeholders lack advanced tools to help them efficiently envision and evaluate options for new development. In partnership with the newly-formed IDEA (Interactive Digital Experience Alliance) New Rochelle, the City of New Rochelle will deploy virtual-reality technology to allow city planners and citizens to visualize the development plans for buildings and public spaces, promoting more informed stakeholder engagement.

"We are thrilled that New Rochelle has been named a Champion City and are looking forward now to working with the Bloomberg team to refine an innovative tool that holds the promise of better urban design and more robust public participation in the growth and development of our community," said Mayor Noam Bramson.

The 2018 Mayors Challenge builds on the success of previous Bloomberg-sponsored Challenges in the U.S. (2013), Europe (2014), and Latin America and the Caribbean (2016). For more information, visit mayorchallenge.bloomberg.org and @BloombergCities on Twitter and Instagram.

About the City of New Rochelle

With an unparalleled location, superb quality of life, diverse and talented residents and a focused business climate, New Rochelle is experiencing the transformation of a lifetime. The City's economic development plan will provide a spark for the entire Hudson Valley region, positioning it as "open for business" and embracing smart, transit-oriented development growth patterns. Accelerated by a new, fast-track zoning process, the new Master Development initiative will enhance the downtown area by boosting job creation, property values and private investment – while enhancing sustainability through green and energy-efficient design. Learn more at <http://www.ideallynewrochelle.com/>.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2016, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$600 million. For more information, please visit www.bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Twitter](#).

Media Contact

Bloomberg Philanthropies, Courtney Greenwald, (212) 205-0361, courtney@bloomberg.org
City of New Rochelle: Kathy Gilwit (914) 654-2117 kgilwit@newrochelleny.com

###