



**Positive forecast for New York's pro-housing push? - by Philip Butler**

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New York's housing crisis remains a hot button topic despite growing consensus that varied and affordable housing is desperately needed statewide. Governor Hochul has recently introduced several initiatives to overcome N.Y.'s anti-housing climate that, for years, has withstood change.

In July 2023, governor Hochul signed Executive Order 30 creating the Pro-Housing Community Program. When first established, the program offered priority status to certified Pro-Housing Communities (PHCs) applying to one of eight state funding sources, including the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). Several affordable/workforce housing developers represented by this firm have worked with Long Island communities seeking to increase workforce housing with assistance through the DRI.

The state has since modified the PHC Program such that certification is now required for eligibility for the listed state funding programs. It appears this shift in access to the pot of \$650 million in state funds first offered is having a positive effect on interest in the PHC Program.

There are three options under the PHC Program for certification. A city, town or village can obtain certification by demonstrating 1% housing growth over the past year, or 3% housing growth over the prior three years. Alternatively, a community can adopt the state's PHC Resolution pledging to take certain affirmative steps toward advancing future housing growth. Importantly, a PHC's failure to meet its planned housing goals does not preclude recertification.

There are 62 cities, 933 towns, and 551 incorporated villages across the state. Its major urban centers are already PHC certified. Overall, 202, or 13%, of the state's eligible communities have obtained PHC certification. Another 380 communities, or 24.58%, have filed Letters of Intent indicating that they will seek PHC certification. The prospective participation of so many communities, including many heavily-populated communities in downstate N.Y., is perhaps a promising sign on the horizon.

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