



Architecture Studio: Innovating architectural design with City of Yes building codes - by William Gati

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William Gati

Our goal at Architecture Studio has always been to design strong, beautiful, and functional structures. As a result of NYC's City of Yes zoning amendments, urban development potential is being maximized. Licensed in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, we specialize in residential, commercial, and institutional architecture. As a result of adopting NYC's City of Yes zoning amendments, we maximize urban development potential while maintaining sustainability and aesthetic excellence. We are experts in leveraging the City of Yes framework for enhanced project opportunities since our firm has been approved to use these new zoning codes.

In collaborating with the City of Yes initiative, I have aligned my firm's design philosophy with its progressive vision. At Architecture Studio, we seamlessly integrate functionality and aesthetics while embracing the City of Yes initiative to ensure our projects contribute to a more innovative and sustainable built environment.

Addressing NYC's Housing Crisis with the City of Yes

New York City has long struggled with restrictive zoning that limits housing construction, concentrating development in a few areas and driving up costs. The City of Yes for Housing Opportunity zoning amendment aims to change this by allowing a modest increase in housing density across all neighborhoods. By enabling more housing citywide, it seeks to lower costs, expand housing choices, and distribute growth more evenly.

After an extensive public review in 2024 — including community board discussions, borough president feedback, and a City Planning Commission hearing — the City Council approved the amendment in December. Over the next 15 years, the final plan will create 82,000 homes, ensuring the city's housing needs are met while aligning with neighborhood character.

Maximizing Floor Area and Setbacks with the City of Yes

The City of Yes zoning amendments in New York City offer groundbreaking opportunities to expand Floor Area Ratios (FARs) and optimize building setbacks. With these changes, property owners will have more flexibility for expansions, conversions, and mixed-use developments. With these amendments, Architecture Studio creates more spacious, efficient, and adaptable designs that meet the evolving needs of residents, businesses, and communities.

Our latest project in Woodside, NY, exemplifies how we can harness the benefits of new zoning regulations. In this addition to an existing home, the backyard space is utilized strategically, maximizing functionality while maintaining an open, inviting feeling.

Located in an R5B residential zoning district, this project integrates expanded lot coverage and setback adjustments to optimize land use. With the City of Yes provisions in place, we have designed a space that enhances livability and adheres to modern urban planning standards.

Expanding Possibilities for All Project Types

The City of Yes initiative modernizes zoning laws to allow the conversion of underutilized non-residential spaces into housing. Before 1961, buildings outside major office centers or constructed after 1961 were generally not permitted to be used as residential properties. A new set of regulations extends eligibility to buildings built before 1991, allowing for more housing and revitalizing vacant buildings in the city.

The initiative also promotes small and shared housing by reversing restrictive mid-century policies that banned shared living and limited smaller apartments. The new zoning rules encourage more studios, one-bedroom, and shared living arrangements by lowering and standardizing the dwelling unit factor. This expands affordable housing options while freeing up larger apartments for families.

Architecture Studio embraces the City of Yes framework across a broad range of project types, including:

- **Residential Additions & Alterations:** Increased FAR allows larger homes and multi-unit dwellings, enhancing housing availability in high-demand areas.
- **Mixed-Use Developments:** Seamless integration of commercial and residential spaces ensures vibrant, sustainable communities.
- **Commercial Renovations:** Businesses benefit from increased floor space, enabling more functional and attractive retail and office environments.
- **Public and Institutional Projects:** Schools, medical offices, and places of worship can use expanded zoning allowances to serve their communities better.

With our expertise in zoning research, feasibility studies, and construction administration, we ensure that projects maximize potential while meeting city regulations. Property owners and communities benefit from our adaptive solutions, which align with evolving urban needs.

A Future Shaped by Smart Zoning

City of Yes zoning codes reshape urban development as New York City evolves. As a leader in this transformation, Architecture Studio ensures projects maximize space, sustainability, and design excellence. We are experts at navigating every stage of a project to realize each project's full potential within the City of Yes framework, whether it is expanding a residence, renovating a business, or creating a mixed-use development.

Architecture Studio can bring your vision to life using the latest advances in NYC zoning regulations.

The City of Yes ensures that every project contributes to a more inclusive, sustainable, and forward-thinking urban landscape. By creating spaces that enhance communities, drive innovation,

and embrace the City of Yes movement, we can contribute to the success of our cities.

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