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## Four developers pitch nearly 900 new residential units for Mount Vernon

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Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas announces major housing developments that are starting to be built in Mount Vernon. Ricky Flores/lohud

MOUNT VERNON - Mayor Richard Thomas unveiled a series of projects Friday being pitched by four developers who want to build market-rate [apartments in](#) the city.

The proposals are in varying stages, but all told, nearly 900 new rental [apartments](#) — worth more than \$300 million — are being put forth by the developers.

"These developers have brought forth projects that will [create jobs](#), seize new opportunities, and activate our economy," Thomas said in a statement.

During Friday's [news conference](#), Thomas said Mount Vernon is one of the first municipalities in the state to receive proposals from developers in response to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's \$2.5 billion housing initiative.

- Sam Mermelstein, of Enclave Equities, wants to develop 525 and 645 MacQuesten Parkway. The 179 unit, transit-oriented development would consist of five, 5-story [apartment buildings](#). The project would cost \$48 million.
- Mark Alexander, of The Alexander Group, wants to develop 42 W. Broad St. The transit-oriented development would be a 16-story building that would consist of 249 apartments and some retail. The project would cost \$90 million.
- Carlton Brown, of Direct Investment Development, wants to develop 20 S. Second Ave. The transit-oriented, 320-unit upper middle-income housing project would cost \$125 million.
- Joe Simone, of Simone Development, wants to develop 7 and 11 MacQuesten Parkway into two 18-story buildings, each with 70 units. The project would cost \$60 million.

It was unclear from Friday's news conference at which stage in the approval process each of the projects were in.

Simone said his units would target people who earn 60 to 80 percent of Westchester's area median income and are slated to help working-class people, such as teachers and firefighters.



Joseph Simone, a real estate developer, and Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas during Friday's news conference. (Photo: Ricky Flores/The Journal News)

Brown, who has been known for redeveloping Harlem, said 96 of his units would be set aside for artists, to try to attract creative minds to the city.

Thomas said the proposals are just the beginning of Mount Vernon's resurgence. The city's business districts have been dotted with vacant store fronts, but by bringing in new residents, the downtown area would be revitalized.