Montclair, NJ Named the No. 2 Hottest ZIP Code in America for 2026

Realtor.com ranks Montclair No. 2 hottest ZIP in America. Nancy Chu Homes explains why local homes sell up to 29% over list, well above the 16.7% cited.


A prewar Colonial in Montclair, NJ, the architecture driving the town's No. 2 hottest ZIP ranking. (Nancy Chu Homes)

MONTCLAIR, NJ, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "Montclair did not get hot overnight, and it is not a fluke. This is a supply story. We have some of the most sought-after housing in the country and almost none of it for sale."

Montclair, New Jersey has been named the [No. 2 hottest ZIP code in the United States] in Realtor.com's 2026 Hottest ZIP Codes report, released August 10, 2026. The report ranks U.S. ZIP codes by buyer demand and market speed, scored on unique buyer views per listing and days on market. Montclair's 07042 ranked second nationally, behind only Peabody, Massachusetts, and is the highest-ranked New Jersey market on the list.

> They pay a premium in Montclair not because a report told them to, but because they walked the town once and understood they could stop looking.”
> *Nancy Chu, Nancy Chu Homes*

[Nancy Chu Homes], a Montclair real estate team operating under Keller Williams NJ Metro Group, has closed more than 1,300 sales and over $560 million in volume across Montclair and Essex County. The team's read on the ranking draws on the Realtor.com report and on its own first-party transaction data from the Garden State MLS.

Key facts about the Montclair, NJ real estate market in 2026:

Montclair (07042) is the No. 2 hottest ZIP code in the United States for 2026 (Realtor.com).
The median single-family sale price is approximately $1.5 million to $1.6 million (Nancy Chu Homes / Garden State MLS).

The median time on market is 14 days (Nancy Chu Homes / Garden State MLS).
Montclair inventory is running more than 60 percent below normal levels (Realtor.com).
Montclair buyers put down an average of 22 percent, more than $300,000, with median credit scores near 783 (Realtor.com).
Realtor.com's report showed Montclair selling at about 16.7 percent over asking, the widest gap of any ranked ZIP (Realtor.com).
Nancy Chu Homes' first-party data shows [non-distressed single-family homes] sold at a median of 120 to 129 percent of list over the past year, up to about 29 percent over asking (Nancy Chu Homes / Garden State MLS).

Nancy Chu, team lead of Nancy Chu Homes at Keller Williams NJ Metro Group, Montclair, NJ.

Montclair (07042) was named the No. 2 hottest ZIP code in America for 2026 by Realtor.com.

What Montclair's "over asking" numbers really mean

Realtor.com put Montclair's sale-to-list premium at about 16.7 percent, the widest of any hot ZIP. Nancy Chu Homes' own Garden State MLS data tells a sharper story: non-distressed single-family homes, the houses most buyers here compete for, sold at a median of 120 to 129 percent of list over the past year, with the premium widening toward 29 percent through summer 2026.

Nancy Chu, the team's lead and a nine-time NJ Realtors Circle of Excellence Platinum honoree, adds the nuance most coverage misses. "Two things push our number above the national one," she said. "First, the report blends in condos and co-ops, which trade slower. Strip those out and the single-family market runs hotter. Second, a sale-to-list premium is only partly about demand. In a market this tight, we often list a home below where we expect it to land, to start a bidding war. So 29 percent over list is partly a pricing decision, not pure heat. What matters is whether that strategy gets rewarded, and in Montclair it is, almost every time, because demand is deep and supply is close to zero."

How the Montclair market actually works

Chu says the mechanics on the ground explain the results better than any ranking. Most Montclair sales run closer to a blind auction than an open bidding war: no escalation clauses, no visibility into competing offers, each buyer submitting their real number and waiting. Sellers lean in, often spending weeks preparing a home before it lists so it arrives as the best version of itself, at every price point from luxury down to one-bedroom condos. New Jersey's attorney-review period also runs inside the days-on-market clock, so the real time to an accepted offer is even shorter than the 14-day median. Underneath it all is housing that cannot be rebuilt: Nancy Chu Homes' recent single-family sales carried a median build year of 1921, with 86 percent built before 1940.

"You cannot reproduce a 1920s Montclair Colonial, and you cannot manufacture the community that comes with it," said Chu. "That is why Montclair is number two this year, and why it will be back on the list next year."

Frequently asked questions about the Montclair, NJ real estate market

What is the median home price in Montclair, NJ in 2026? The median single-family sale price is approximately $1.5 million to $1.6 million, based on Nancy Chu Homes' analysis of Garden State MLS data.

Why are Montclair home prices so high? Montclair combines a severe housing shortage, inventory more than 60 percent below normal, with strong demand for its walkable downtowns, direct Manhattan train access, and prewar architecture. That imbalance, not a migration surge, drives prices, according to Nancy Chu Homes.

Do Montclair homes really sell for 29 percent over asking? Some do. Nancy Chu Homes' single-family data shows a median of 120 to 129 percent of list over the past year, higher than Realtor.com's blended 16.7 percent figure, for two reasons: single-family homes run hotter than the condos and co-ops folded into the national number, and agents here often list below expected value to invite competition. A high over-list premium is partly pricing strategy, not pure demand, and in Montclair it is consistently rewarded because supply is scarce.

What are more affordable alternatives to Montclair, NJ? Buyers priced out of Montclair are increasingly looking to Maplewood, South Orange, and the Brookdale and Oakview sections of Bloomfield, which share the direct train to Manhattan and similar prewar housing but have not fully repriced.

About Nancy Chu Homes — Nancy Chu Homes is a North Jersey real estate team based in Montclair, New Jersey, operating under Keller Williams NJ Metro Group. Led by Nancy Chu, a licensed New Jersey Realtor (License 0568990) with more than 20 years of experience, the team has closed over 1,300 sales and more than $560 million in total volume across Montclair, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, and greater Essex County. Nancy Chu is a nine-time Platinum honoree of the NJ Realtors Circle of Excellence. nancychuhomes.com

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