

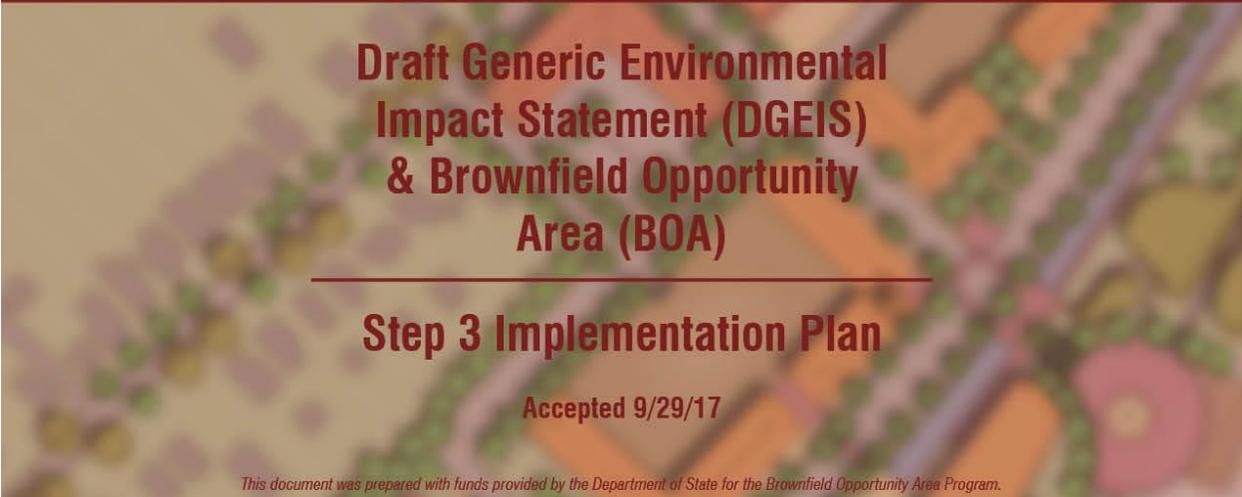


# VACUUM OIL

## BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA



City of Rochester, NY  
*Lovely A. Warren, Mayor*



### **Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) & Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA)**

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### **Step 3 Implementation Plan**

**Accepted 9/29/17**

*This document was prepared with funds provided by the Department of State for the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.*



**BERGMANN  
ASSOCIATES**



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# 1 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

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## 1.1 The Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program

The Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program was developed in 2003 as the planning component of the NYS Superfund/Brownfield Law (GML Article 18-C, Section 970-r), providing municipalities and community-based organizations with financial and technical assistance to complete area-wide revitalization strategies for neighborhoods impacted by the presence of brownfields and environmental hazards. At the completion of the program, communities will be designated a Brownfield Opportunity Area, increasing their competitive position for access to funding and incentives under the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Brownfield Cleanup Program, the Empire State Development Corporation's economic development programs, and many other State and Federal assistance opportunities.

A “brownfield” or “brownfield site” is defined in New York State Environmental Conservation Law Article 27, Title 14, as any real property, the redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a contaminant.

Brownfield sites are typically former industrial or commercial properties where operations may have resulted in environmental impairment. The NYS Department of State (DOS) and DEC recognize the expansive detrimental impacts these sites have on their surrounding neighborhoods, and that brownfield impacts are not limited to individual sites or immediately adjoining property. Through a community supported planning process, the BOA program enables community leaders to establish a clear vision to revitalize and improve areas so they become economically and environmentally sustainable.

The BOA Program includes the following steps:

- Step 1: Pre-Nomination Study includes a preliminary analysis of the area affected by brownfield sites.
- Step 2: Nomination Study provides an in-depth and thorough description and analysis of existing conditions, opportunities, and reuse potential for properties located in the proposed Brownfield Opportunity Area.
- Step 3: Implementation Strategy includes a description of the full range of techniques, actions and projects that are necessary to implement the area-wide plan.

A primary objective of the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area Program is to address communities that have been negatively impacted by the presence, or perceived presence, of environmentally sensitive sites. The presence of these sites often has notable impacts on a community, including depreciation of property values and the discouragement of investment in surrounding properties.

Although redevelopment of brownfield properties may be complicated, community-led revitalization plans can facilitate preparation of such sites for “shovel-ready” redevelopment by identifying steps towards remediation, marketing and recommending future uses that align with the community’s vision for the neighborhood. Active reuse of brownfields recognizes the intrinsic relationship between environmental sustainability and economic prosperity. Brownfield redevelopment benefits both individual property owners and the surrounding community. Brownfield property developers are eligible for tax credits and other financial and technical assistance that help make these redevelopment projects financially feasible. The surrounding community benefits from brownfield site investigation and cleanup, which encourages re-investment.

## 1.2 About the Planning Process

The 3-step BOA planning process began for the City of Rochester Vacuum Oil - South Genesee River Brownfield Opportunity Area (VOBOA) in 2006. Step 1, a Pre-Nomination Study, was completed for a 58-acre VOBOA Study Area that included numerous known and potential brownfields centered on the former Vacuum Oil Rochester Works site along Flint and Exchanges Streets. Completion of Step 1 led to funding from the DOS for Step 2 in 2010. During Step 2, the City of Rochester worked with neighborhood stakeholders to develop a Nomination Study that presented a vision and revitalization strategy for the VOBOA.

The Step 2 Nomination Study expanded the VOBOA to include 148 acres bounded by the Plymouth Avenue commercial corridor on the west, Ford Street to the north, and the Genesee River to the south and east (**Map 1**). The collaboration and vision of the Nomination Study led to further funding in fall of 2014 for Step 3, which involved detailed planning and predevelopment studies and activities that led to the Implementation Plan described in this document. The City engaged the services of Bergmann Associates to assist in the preparation of the Step 3 Implementation Plan.



The BOA Step 3 Implementation Plan includes a collection of several component studies, each with findings and recommendations, which contributed to the analysis and strategies described in this document. Essentially, the vision identified in Step 2 was taken from a conceptual plan to a more detailed and developable plan with information and tools to facilitate development. The component studies are listed below:

- **Building Condition and Structural Assessments:** The condition of specified structures and their suitability for reuse were analyzed to determine the extent of necessary structural repairs, code compliance improvements and associated costs.
- **Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategy:** A resident-driven and market-based strategy for housing was prepared. This in-depth housing analysis identified how the neighborhood can be strengthened as a market and how this market can have a positive impact upon the quality of life for the VOBOA.
- **Land Appraisals:** A professional appraiser completed land appraisals within the footprint of the former Vacuum Oil refinery and portions of properties that may be required for new right-of-way. The appraisals will be utilized for budgeting, cost estimating, financing and legal due diligence aspects to implement all future activities within the VOBOA.
- **Geotechnical Investigations:** The project team compiled existing subsurface data to evaluate the depth to bedrock, the make-up of the soil and the underlying geomorphology within the VOBOA footprint south of Flint Street and along the banks of the Genesee River. Subsurface results from soil borings are currently pending.
- **Phase I Environmental Site Assessments:** Phase 1 assessments, per ASTM standards, were conducted for several properties within the Vacuum Oil site footprint. This due diligence effort is required prior to redevelopment or reuse of these sites.
- **Floodplain Engineering Assessment & Mitigation Studies:** These studies included an assessment of feasible alternatives for development, potential impacts to the floodplain and the identification of potential mitigation efforts.
- **Wetland and Invasive Species Assessment & Mitigation Planning:** The presence and extent of wetlands and invasive species in the VOBOA was assessed and a plan for any necessary mitigation was identified.
- **Traffic Study and Transportation and Infrastructure Feasibility and Enhancement Studies:** Planning and design of several proposed roadway connections that were proposed as part of the Step 2 VOBOA Revitalization Plan was conducted. Planning and design includes the feasible alignment, conceptual design and anticipated function of the roadways. An analysis of anticipated traffic and parking impacts within the neighborhood as a result of the incremental buildout of the VOBOA Master Plan was

also conducted. A complete analysis of existing streetscape and traffic conditions of Exchange Street was conducted to determine appropriate alternatives to enhance accessibility, safety and aesthetics along the corridor and at primary intersections. Lastly, an analysis of the existing utility infrastructure was conducted to determine if the current capacity is sufficient to support proposed development density.

- **Waterfront and Public Realm Concept Plan, including Neighborhood Pocket Park Site Selection & Conceptual Design:** A Waterfront Recreation and Public Realm Master Plan was prepared to identify, program and conceptually design public space improvements and historic/cultural interpretation opportunities within the VOBOA and along the Genesee River waterfront.

### 1.3 BOA Designation

The VOBOA was among the first twelve BOAs from across New York State designated by Governor Cuomo in April of 2015, making some BOA properties eligible to receive additional tax credit incentives to transform dormant and blighted areas into economic development projects. Participation in the BOA Program seeks to help to stimulate further investment in the neighborhood and will provide important information to assist in bringing new businesses, residents and employment as well as improving access to the Genesee River waterfront.

## 1.4 Environmental Review Process

### 1.4.1 General Overview

An important component of the Step 3 Implementation Plan is the incorporation of the requirements for environmental review. As described in the 6NYCRR Part 617 State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regulations promulgated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, a review of environmental impacts and mitigation alternatives of an action is required by any State or local governmental agency that is undertaking, funding, or approving an action. The regulations outline the requirements of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for use in the review and disclosure of impacts and mitigation alternatives associated with an action. According to the regulations, an EIS may be a “generic” EIS when:

- A number of separate actions in a given geographic area which, if considered singly, may have minor impacts, but if considered together may have significant impacts; or
- A sequence of actions, contemplated by a single agency or individual; or
- Separate actions having generic or common impacts; or
- An entire program or plan having wide application or restricting the range of future alternative policies or projects, including new or significant changes to existing land use plans, development plans, zoning regulations or agency comprehensive resource management plans.

A Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) has many potential uses and benefits that are intended to address potential impacts as well as streamline future development applications. A GEIS can:

- Account for cumulative impacts, regional influences, or secondary effects of an overall program or group of actions;
- Enable early consideration of mitigation and alternatives, at a stage in the planning process when there is greater flexibility;
- Provide public disclosure of agency considerations used in environmental decision-making;
- Limit extent of future project reviews by providing early guidance on significance determinations;
- Set forth conditions, criteria or thresholds to guide future site-specific actions that may be undertaken; or
- Establish baseline data for reference and scoping of supplemental site-specific EISs, thus avoiding duplication, reducing costs and paperwork.

According to SEQRA, all Involved Agencies must be coordinated into one review. An Involved Agency is an agency that has an approval authority for the proposed action. For the environmental review of the VOBOA Implementation Plan, Involved Agencies include the Mayor and City Council for the following potential public actions associated with implementation: Funding, Land Disposition, Official Map Amendments, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and Zoning Map and Text Amendments.

Interested Agencies are agencies that have an interest in the proposed action(s), but have no state or local approval authority. For the VOBOA, those agencies include: New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, Historic Preservation, New York State Department of State, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

#### **1.4.2 SEQRA Environmental Review Procedures**

In accordance with SEQRA regulations, several steps must be completed as part of the environmental review process. These steps and how they have been applied to the BOA planning process are described below.

- **Environmental Assessment Form and Involved Agency Coordination:**

The City of Rochester prepared a Long Environmental Assessment Form that generally described the VOBOA planning project and the initial implementation strategies, such as adoption of the plan and zoning amendments. The form was distributed to the Mayor and City Council for the requisite lead agency coordination. Coordination was finalized on December 30, 2013, establishing the Mayor as Lead Agency.

- **Determination of Significance:**

On February 12, 2014, the Lead Agency executed a Determination of Significance in the form of a positive declaration indicating the need for a GEIS.

- **Scoping:**

According to SEQRA, scoping is an optional process whereby you identify issues and topics to be addressed in the GEIS, and

- eliminate non-significant and non-relevant issues.
- identify the extent and quality of information needed.
- identify the range of reasonable alternatives to be discussed.

### 1.4.3 Preparation of the GEIS

This Implementation Plan incorporates the Draft GEIS as described above. SEQRA regulations governing the preparation and review of the GEIS were designed to provide opportunities for involvement by interested agencies and the general public. A required minimum 30-day comment period in which a public hearing will be conducted is an important part of the environmental review process. A public hearing before the Rochester Environmental Commission will be conducted to receive verbal comments. All responses to substantive comments will be included in the final GEIS.

### 1.4.4 Integrating the GEIS into the VOBOA Implementation Plan

The Draft GEIS is incorporated directly into this Implementation Plan document, per the requirements set forth by DOS.

The table below illustrates where each component of the GEIS is located within this BOA document:

BOA Implementation Plan	GEIS Content
<b>Section 1</b> Description of Project and Boundary	Description of Proposed Action
<b>Section 2</b> Community Participation	Description of Public Engagement Component
<b>Section 3</b> Existing Conditions (Environmental Setting)	Description of the Environmental Setting
<b>Section 4</b> Implementation Strategy	Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts Description of Mitigation Measures Description of Alternatives to the Proposed Action
<b>Section 5</b> Compliance with SEQRA	Consistency with NYS CMP Coastal Policies GEIS References Conditions for Future Actions



## 2 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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### 2.1 Project Oversight and Outreach

Involving the community in the BOA planning process has been ongoing and essential. The City's Division of Environmental Quality was charged with ensuring broad community outreach with input from as many stakeholders as possible. When the Step 3 Implementation Plan was initiated, it was immediately recognized that the continuity between Step 2 and Step 3 with regard to ongoing community input was very important. During Step 2, a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) guided the planning process toward a vision and the revitalization strategy. Those PAC participants remained on the committee in Step 3 while additional stakeholders were added. Moreover, outreach to individual stakeholders was conducted to get some one-on-one feedback into the process. Lastly, the public at large was involved through both VOBOA public meetings and through periodic attendance at the Plymouth Exchange Neighborhood Association Executive Committee Meetings and Community Meetings. Ongoing outreach was also accomplished through a project website, maintained throughout the Steps 2 and 3 planning processes by the City of Rochester.

## 2.2 Community Involvement Plan

A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) for the Step 3 BOA was prepared in July 2015, shared with the Project Advisory Committee, and was placed on the project Website for public review (**Appendix 1**). This plan sets forth the various public outreach and input opportunities. The CIP satisfies BOA requirements, attempts to coordinate with other processes to reduce redundancy and meeting fatigue, and, most importantly, encourages the public to be actively engaged and involved throughout the process.

## 2.3 Project Advisory Committee

Over the course of four meetings, the PAC provided important guidance, opinions and recommendations as this Implementation Plan was prepared. The dates of the four meetings are: November 3, 2014, July 22, 2015, March 23, 2016, and November 14, 2016. Meeting Summaries can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Members of the PAC included representation from:

- NYS Department of State
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- City of Rochester Division of Environmental Services
- City of Rochester Bureau of Neighborhood and Business Development
- PLEX Neighborhood Association
- S. Plymouth Avenue Business Association
- Sector 4 Community Development Corporation
- DHD Ventures
- Citizens/Property Owners within the VOBOA

## 2.4 Public Workshops

Public workshops provided the public with the opportunity to engage in the VOBOA planning process. Meeting summaries can be found in **Appendix 3**. During the Step 3 process, the following public workshops were held:

- **Public Informational Open House: October 29, 2015.** This open house provided an opportunity for members of the community to learn more about the project. The meeting was organized into stations that provided information on various topics, such as environmental issues and brownfields, housing, parks, flood protection, and traffic. The format of the meeting was drop-in open house style.
- **PLEX Neighborhood Association Workshop: June 14, 2016.** The purpose of this meeting was to provide an update on specific project activities in the VOBOA that may impact parks and open space planning, define what a Parks and Open Space Master Plan is, and gather feedback from the group to guide the development of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

- **Public Workshop: November 7, 2016.** This meeting was a follow-up to the June meeting, providing another opportunity for the public to learn about and identify projects for the proposed Parks and Open Space master plan, as well as potential options for flood mitigation to be addressed under another study.
- **Public Workshop: December 12, 2016.** The purpose of this meeting was to review the planning process to date, highlight key findings and direction defined by the community for the Vision Plan, discuss the evolution of traffic, transportation and connectivity-focused efforts, and gather feedback on the transportation alternatives explored.
- **Public Hearing: October 18, 2017.** The purpose of this meeting was to provide a public forum for members of the public to share their comments on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact and Implementation Strategy.

#### **2.4.1 PLEX Executive Committee, BOA Committee, and Community Meetings**

City staff attended numerous meetings associated with the PLEX Neighborhood Association when updates were warranted or feedback from the neighborhood was necessary. Meeting dates included:

- July 7, 2015
- September 28, 2015
- October 13, 2015
- February 11, 2016
- August 29, 2016

As part of the Housing Reinvestment Study the consultant also reached out to many stakeholders for input into the issues related to housing, as summarized in that study.

#### **2.4.2 Stakeholder Interviews**

In addition to the formal meetings described above, several individual stakeholder meetings were conducted with property owners and businesses in the VOBOA. These include representatives of the following properties and organizations:

- Turnkey Operations (950 Exchange Street)
- Foodlink (936 Exchange Street)
- 920 Exchange St
- DHD Ventures (5 & 15 Flint St)
- D’Alessandro House Buyers
- 929 S. Plymouth Avenue
- Church of Love (760 Exchange St)
- S. Plymouth Business Association

#### **2.4.3 GEIS Public Hearing**

In accordance with the requirements of SEQR, public hearings are optional when Draft Environmental Impacts Statements are completed. The City of Rochester, however, requires that they be conducted. As described in 1.4.2, a GEIS is incorporated into this Implementation Plan and will be the subject of a public hearing. The public hearing date and time is referenced on the Notice of Completion issued as part of the environmental review process.



## 3 EXISTING SETTING

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This section includes a description of the existing conditions and environmental setting of the VOBOA, which satisfies both the requirements of the DOS BOA Program and SEQRA. This section was originally developed for the Step 2 Nomination Study and has been updated to incorporate new analyses completed since 2013. This section has been augmented and blended, where necessary, with new demographic, economic, and market information.

### 3.1 Demographics

A critical component for a neighborhood revitalization strategy is understanding the current and future projected demographic and economic conditions. The demographic and economic conditions analysis completed for the Step 2 Nomination Study was updated and augmented for the Step 3 Implementation Strategy. This section provides an overview of the basic demographic and economic characteristics of the VOBOA Study Area.

For purposes of demographic updates and analysis, the boundary of the VOBOA Study Area is located south of Ford Street, east of the rear parcel lines along the west side of Plymouth Avenue, and west of the Genesee River. The Census Block Groups within the Study Area extend beyond the VOBOA boundaries into the PLEX and 19th Ward neighborhoods. Capturing the different geographies is necessary to collect available demographic and socio-economic data. The VOBOA is situated within the larger PLEX neighborhood, which provides a background for much of the discussion in this section.

### 3.1.1 Population

Using data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and the Census, population within the VOBOA was estimated to be approximately 1,819 in 2015 (**Figure 1**). The data also shows that between 2000 and 2010, population in the VOBOA declined by about 5 percent. Similarly, the City of Rochester’s population also declined during the same time-period, losing nearly 4 percent of its total population. After decades of decline, however, the city’s population has begun to stabilize. Near term projections (through 2020) indicate the City’s population may see small increases and decreases, but overall will remain relatively stable. Looking at ESRI’s population projections for the VOBOA through 2020, a similar pattern of relative stability is expected, with about one percent growth projected.

**Figure 1: VOBOA Study Area Total Population, 2000 – 2020**

	2000	2010	2015	2020	Population Change: 2010-2020
Population	1,909	1,812	1,819	1,829	+ 1.0%

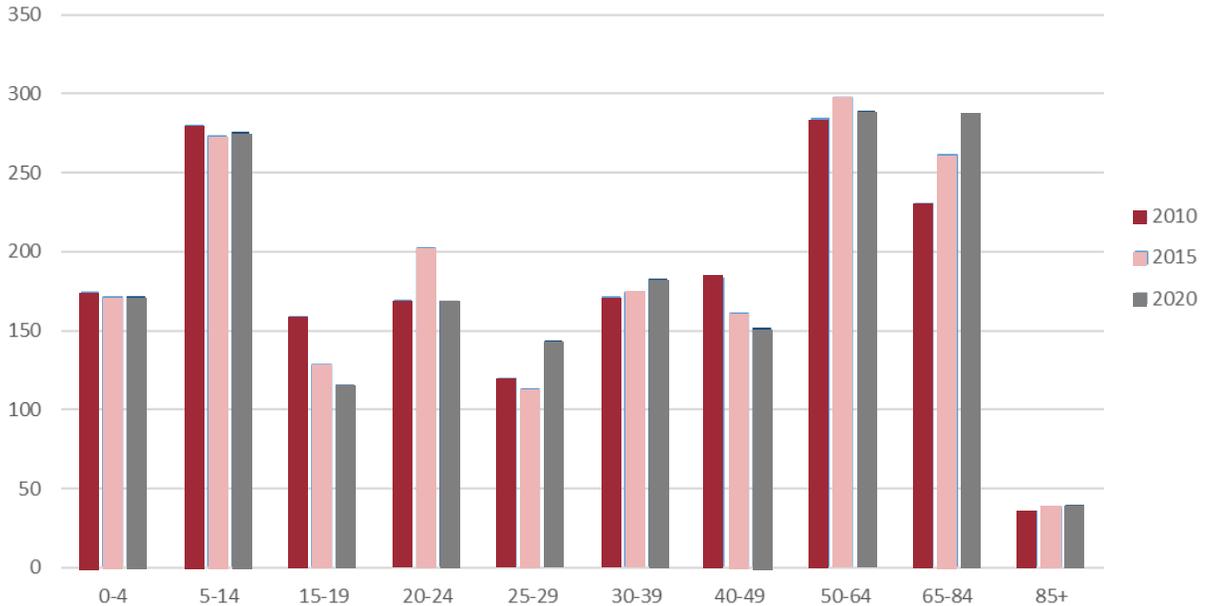
*Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Census 2000 and 2010, Summary File 1, and RKG Associates.*

ESRI’s population projections are derived using a number of different data sources at a variety of geographic levels, looking at past population and household trends, and forecasting what the future population may be. While this traditional way of projecting future population change uses past trends and data, the future of the VOBOA is likely to be determined by a combined set of actions taken by public and private sector entities. The Vacuum Oil refinery footprint offers significant potential to bring new housing, jobs, and open space opportunities to the larger neighborhood, which in turn will result in a population increase. While larger demographic trends are a key consideration, the potential buildout of the Vacuum Oil refinery footprint and other nearby catalyst sites will have a much greater impact on the future of the neighborhood.

### 3.1.2 Age

Population by age is also expected to change in the VOBOA through the year 2020 (**Figure 2**). The age group with the largest projected increase is in the 25-29 year old group.

**Figure 2: Population by Age, 2000 - 2020**



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Census 2000 and 2010, Summary File 1, and RKG Associates.

There are approximately 1,000 graduate and undergraduate students living off campus in private housing citywide. The University provided zip code level data indicating where students reside if they chose to live off campus. According to that data source, approximately 92 students reside in the zip code 14608, which includes much of the VOBOA. Interviews with local residents, developers, and other stakeholders indicate that the prevalence of residents associated with the University who live in the VOBOA has continued to increase. If the anecdotal evidence collected holds true, then it is more likely that the college-aged cohorts (18-24) will remain steady or increase as enrollment at the University grows.

There is a relatively stable middle-aged population that is likely made up of families. This would explain the large amount of children in this area. The 5-15 age group remains a relatively stable population from 2010-2020 which suggest that families are staying in the area. These families are supported by the current housing stock of single-family residential homes. It appears that a large dip occurs with the 25-29 age group which can be explained by children growing up, living independently and moving out of the neighborhood.

There is also a projected growth in the senior population. This increase is not an occurrence unique to the VOBOA or to Rochester as a whole, but one experienced across the country as the baby boomer generation ages. ESRI projections show residents aged sixty-five and older are expected to increase by nearly 25 percent between 2010 and 2020, an approximate increase of fifty-seven residents. By 2020, it is projected that residents over the age of sixty-five in the VOBOA would account for nearly 18 percent of the total population.

### **3.1.3 Households**

The shifts in population over time are also mirrored to some degree by the shifts in households in the VOBOA Study Area. Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of households in the VOBOA dropped by 4 percent. This decline was less than the City as a whole, which lost a little over 8 percent of households during that same ten-year period. Looking ahead to the year 2020, the VOBOA is projected to see an estimated 3.4 percent increase in housing units since 2010. This projected increase is consistent with the reports that vacant housing is being purchased, rehabilitated, and rented. Housing pressures stemming from a lack of housing options available to University of Rochester students, staff, and visiting faculty have created a market for both short- and long-term rentals. In July 2011 Camoin Associates prepared a detailed overview of the prevailing marketing indicators for the VOBOA. The 2011 market study showed a decline in the number of family households<sup>1</sup> in the VOBOA by about 11 percent, which is consistent with the increasing median age of the resident population.

### **3.1.4 Income**

According to ESRI's figures, the 2015 median household income for the VOBOA was just under \$18,000 per year. Estimates from the Census state that Rochester's median household income is just below \$31,000 per year, and Monroe County's is \$52,500 per year. The lower household incomes in the VOBOA have created a number of challenges for local residents when it comes to paying for and maintaining the homes they own. With incomes barely keeping pace with the rate of inflation over time, the ability of residents to maintain a home and continue to pay for any increases in taxes and service costs becomes more difficult. This is reflected in the condition of some of the single-family homes in the neighborhood.

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<sup>1</sup> A Family Household is defined by the U.S. Census as one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

### 3.1.5 Poverty

With a median household income of just under \$18,000, a relatively large proportion of households in the VOBOA study area live below the poverty line. The most recent five-year ACS<sup>2</sup> estimated that 636 households (**Figure 3**) in the VOBOA, or about 47 percent, are below the poverty line.<sup>3</sup> Family households with children have even greater financial challenges with nearly 69 percent falling below the poverty line.

**Figure 3: Households (HH) below the Poverty Threshold**

Poverty Guidelines by Household Size	2014 Income Threshold	Study Area 2014	
		# of HH	% of HH
One person	11,670	540	39.5%
Two person	15,730	304	22.3%
Three person	19,790	245	17.9%
Four person	23,850	129	9.4%
Five person	27,910	67	4.9%
Six person	31,970	52	3.8%
Seven person	36,030	-	0.0%
Eight person	40,090	-	0.0%
<b>Totals</b>		1,366	100.0%
<b>County by HH below Poverty</b>		636	46.6%

Source: 2010-2014 ACS, and RKG Associates.

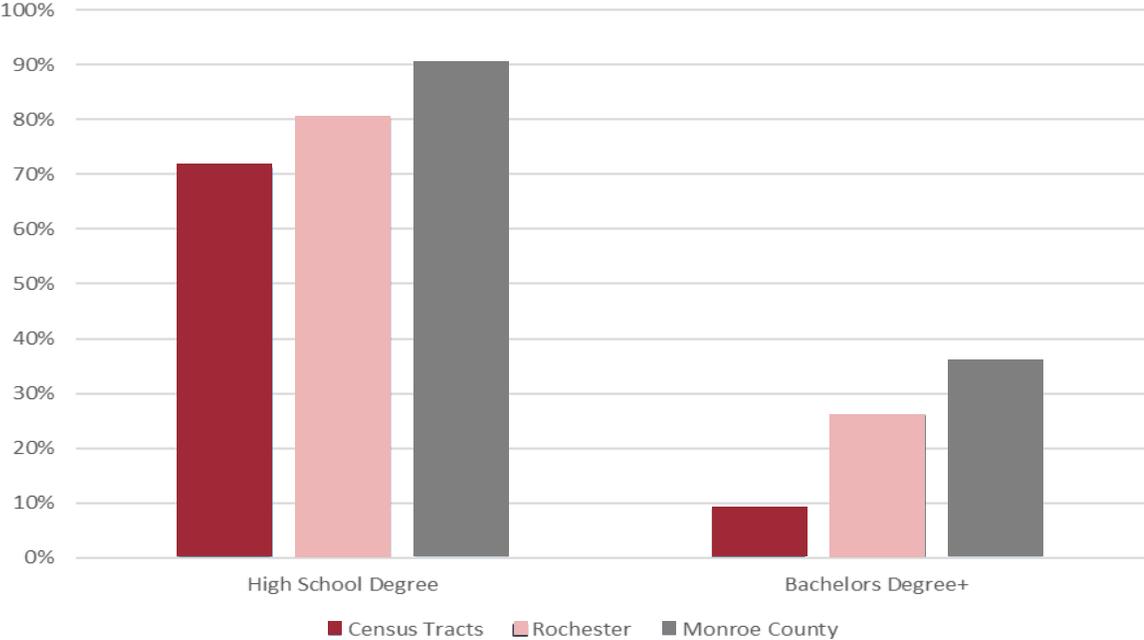
<sup>2</sup> The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing statistical survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. It regularly gathers information previously contained only in the long form of the decennial census, such as income, employment, and housing characteristics.

<sup>3</sup> While nearly 40 percent of the households in the study area include students, who have little to no earned income, student income is not usually reflected in the income statistics of the neighborhood.

### 3.1.6 Educational Attainment

According to the latest five-year ACS estimates, 71 percent of residents in the VOBOA have a high school diploma, compared with 80 percent citywide, and 90 percent county-wide (Figure 4). Nine percent of residents in the VOBOA have a bachelor’s degree. In Rochester, 24 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree and 36% in the County have a bachelor’s degree. The lower educational attainment levels of residents in the VOBOA is also a factor in employment and translate to less annual earnings. Those earning a bachelor’s degree are more likely to find employment in higher wage jobs than those with only a high school diploma.

Figure 4: Educational Attainment, 2014



Source: ACS 2010 – 2014, RKG Associates.

## 3.2 Physical Setting

### 3.2.1 Land Use

There are 517 parcels within the VOBOA Study Area, totaling 125.2 acres of land. The streets and sidewalks account for an additional 23 acres within the VOBOA study area. Land use is predominantly residential, making up 49 percent of the land area. Almost 40 percent of residential units are detached single-family homes and just over 20 percent are two-family homes.

**Map 2** shows the allocation of land uses within the VOBOA Study Area. More than a quarter of the study area acreage is vacant land, the majority of which is in the brownfield footprint south of Flint Street near Exchange Street and along the Genesee River. Other, smaller vacant parcels are interspersed within the neighborhood. Although commercial uses are concentrated primarily along the South Plymouth Avenue, much of the avenue is residential. Commercial uses include small retail stores, a gas station, a funeral home, and offices. Most of the industrial buildings and uses in the VOBOA front on Exchange Street near the intersections with Flint Street, Fenwick Street, and Ford Street. Vacant industrial buildings along Flint/Exchange Streets have had a blighting impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Only one public park, Exchange Playground, is located within the VOBOA. This is an approximately 2 acre wooded City Park containing trails and a small playground. Land use along the Genesee River is largely undeveloped or vacant. An existing multiuse trail stretches the length of the Study Area’s shoreline along the Genesee River and connects the neighborhood to the Center City to the north and Genesee Valley Park to the south.

**Figure 5: Existing Land Use**

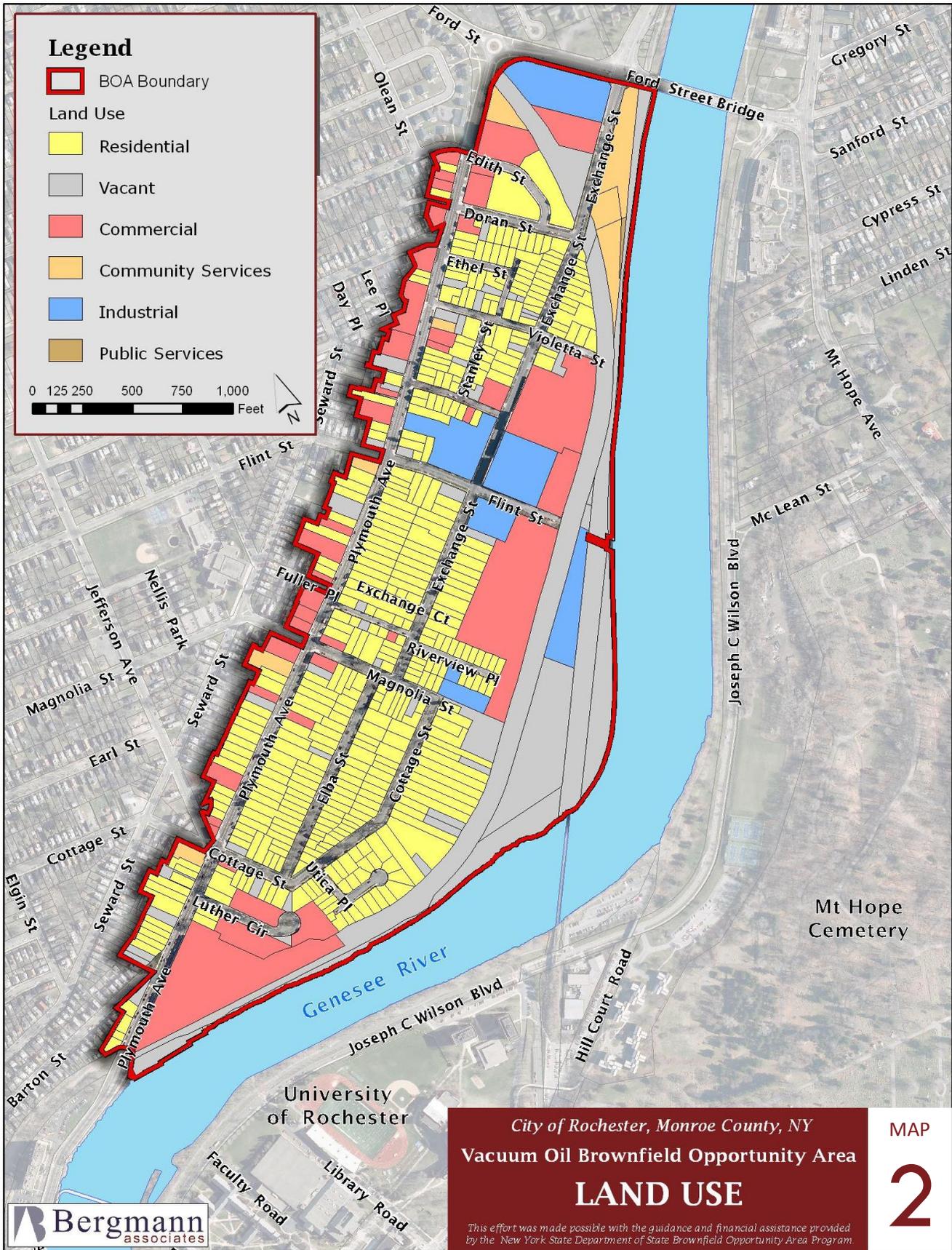
Land Use Category	Parcels		Acres	
	#	%	#	%
Residential*	406	79%	52	41%
Vacant Land	54	10%	33	26%
Commercial	41	8%	27	21%
Community Services**	8	2%	4	4%
Industrial	7	1%	9	7%
Public Services***	1	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: City of Rochester Assessment Bureau

\* Buildings of 4 or more units are classified as commercial properties and are not included as residential uses.

\*\* Community Services include uses such as schools, churches, government buildings and cultural facilities.

\*\*\* Public Services include uses such as public and private utilities, landfills and infrastructure.



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

### 3.2.2 Zoning

**Figure 6** shows the breakdown of zoning districts within the VOBOA Study Area. The area includes five zoning districts, with R-1 Low-Density Residential being the most prevalent (**Map 3**). Permitted uses within R-1 districts are limited to single-family attached and detached dwellings, and limited neighborhood services such as day care centers, parks and residential care facilities, which are permitted with a Special Permit from the City Planning Commission. A small portion of the VOBOA is zoned R-3 High-Density Residential, which permits single, two- and multi-family residences and other specified uses such as day care centers, churches, and live-work spaces. The R-3 district is currently located over the parcels of Kennedy Towers, Edith Street, and Coretta Scott Crossing at the north end of the VOBOA, and Riverview Apartments at the south end of the VOBOA.

*Figure 6: Existing Zoning Districts*

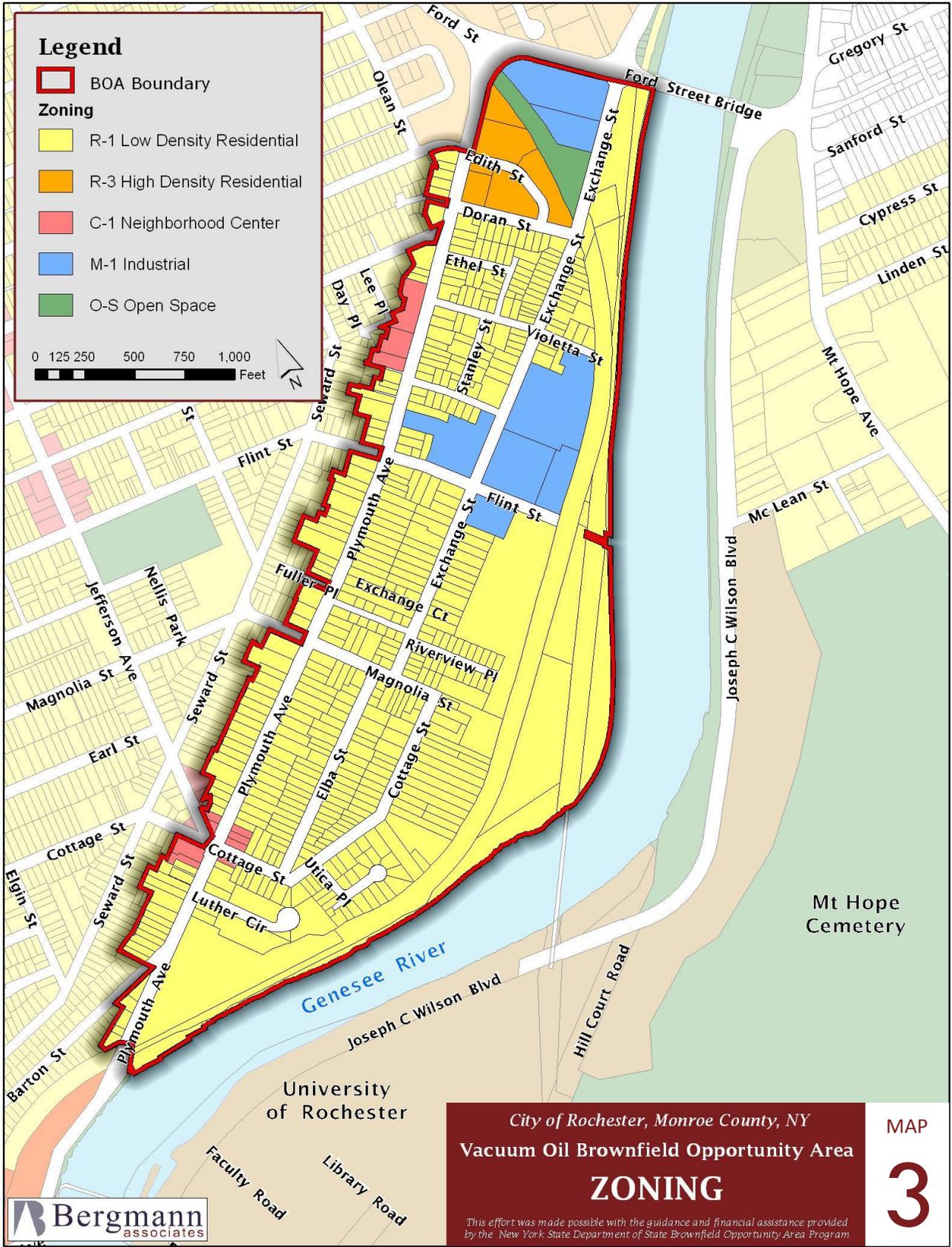
Zoning District	Parcels	Acres
Low Density Residential	492	104
Industrial	7	13
High Density Residential	6	4
Neighborhood Center	11	2
Open Space	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>125</b>

*Source: City of Rochester*

Two small pockets of C-1 Neighborhood Center District occur along the South Plymouth Avenue corridor at Cottage Street and between Violetta Street and Fenwick Street. Within the C-1 district, mixed use development, single family attached dwellings, restaurants, and bars are permitted. The C-1 district requires that uses be in buildings/spaces that are similar in scale, limited to 3,000 sq. ft. or less.

The M-1 Industrial district is the second largest within the VOBOA and permits a wide range of commercial and industrial uses, with some flexibility allowed via the Special Permit process to include other uses such as dwelling units, bars, restaurants and offices under limited circumstances.

The one O-S Open Space district includes the Exchange Playground at the north end of the VOBOA.



**Legend**

- BOA Boundary
- Zoning**
- R-1 Low Density Residential
- R-3 High Density Residential
- C-1 Neighborhood Center
- M-1 Industrial
- O-S Open Space

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet

City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
**Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area**  
**ZONING**

This effort was made possible with the guidance and financial assistance provided by the New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.

MAP  
3



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

### 3.2.3 Brownfield Sites

A primary objective of the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program is to address communities that have been negatively impacted by the presence, or perceived presence, of environmentally sensitive sites. The presence of these sites often has notable impacts on a community, including depreciation of property values and the discouragement of investment in surrounding properties.

Although redevelopment of brownfield properties may be complicated, community-led revitalization plans can help sites move toward being “shovel-ready” for redevelopment by identifying steps towards remediation, marketing and recommending future uses that are in line with the community’s vision for the neighborhood. Brownfield redevelopment benefits both individual property owners and the surrounding community. Brownfield property developers are eligible for tax credits and other financial and technical assistance that help make these redevelopment projects financially feasible. The surrounding community benefits from brownfield site investigation and cleanup. Community benefits become more tangible as projects move forward – properties are cleaned up and returned to beneficial and productive reuse. They are redeveloped to support the local tax base, and new uses serve as a catalyst for redevelopment on surrounding lands.

For the Step 2 Nomination Study planning process, a preliminary Environmental Site Assessment, which includes research of prior uses, was conducted on each of the commercial, industrial and vacant properties located within the VOBOA Study Area. Facility and site information maintained at the local, state and federal level was reviewed to identify preliminary site conditions. During this process, 38 properties were identified as brownfields based on preliminary database research. Collectively, these sites comprise 36 percent of total VOBOA land area. Within the VOBOA property access, control and ownership have directly influenced the timing and pace of brownfield site investigation and cleanup planning. An important function of the VOBOA Implementation Strategy is to identify preferred uses of the brownfield sites that will require remediation, as the proposed reuses of these sites will directly impact the development of viable and sustainable cleanup approaches.

Following the initial identification of brownfields and strategic sites, further investigation of several strategic brownfield sites within the footprint of the former Vacuum Oil Refinery was completed concurrent with the Step 3 Implementation Strategy planning process. Several of these sites are now in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Brownfield Cleanup Program. A summary of investigation work and other information pertinent to the brownfield status of sites in the VOBOA is summarized in **Figure 7**.

**Figure 7: Brownfield Sites Identified for Additional Analysis**

Site Name / Address	Ownership	Status	Notes
91 Violetta Street	Private	Phase I ESA, completed 2015 <b>(Appendix 16)</b>	Subsurface has been impacted by releases of hazardous materials and/or petroleum products. Current and future buildings are suspect for potential soil vapor intrusion. A Phase II is recommended to evaluate soil and groundwater quality.
920 Exchange Street	Private	Phase I ESA, completed 2015 <b>(Appendix 16)</b>	Subsurface has been impacted by releases of hazardous materials and/or petroleum products. Current and future buildings are suspect for potential soil vapor intrusion. A Phase II is recommended to evaluate soil and groundwater quality.
632 S. Plymouth Avenue	Public	Phase I ESA, completed 2014	Subsurface has been impacted by releases of hazardous materials and/or petroleum products. Current and future buildings are suspect for potential soil vapor intrusion.
Former Canal Bed (719- 755 Exchange, 780 Exchange, 1315 S. Plymouth)	Public	Phase I ESA, completed 2015  Portion of Former Canal Bed south of Flint Street is part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Subsurface has been impacted by releases of petroleum products and hazardous materials and future buildings on the subject property are suspect for potential soil vapor intrusion and soil vapor encroachment. The performance of subsurface investigation to evaluate soil and groundwater quality is recommended, including a soil vapor encroachment survey on future buildings.
Flint Street (right-of-way)	Public	Subsurface Investigation	Report generated background subsurface conditions to facilitate roadway improvements.
15 Flint Street	Private	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial Investigative Report (RIR) submitted to DEC. Pursuing Track 1 clean up. Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report completed.
5 Flint Street	Private	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial Investigative Report (RIR) submitted to DEC. Pursuing Track 1 clean up. Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report completed.
1, 31, 69, & 75 Cottage Street	Public	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial investigation fieldwork completed. Remedial Investigation Report and Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed.
Former Canal Bed	Public	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial investigation fieldwork completed. Remedial Investigation Report and Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed.
13 Cottage Street	Public	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial investigation fieldwork completed. Remedial Investigation Report and Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed.
102 Violetta Street	Public	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial investigation fieldwork completed. Remedial Investigation Report and Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed.
100 Riverview Place	Public	Currently part of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)	Remedial investigation fieldwork completed. Remedial Investigation Report and Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report to be completed.

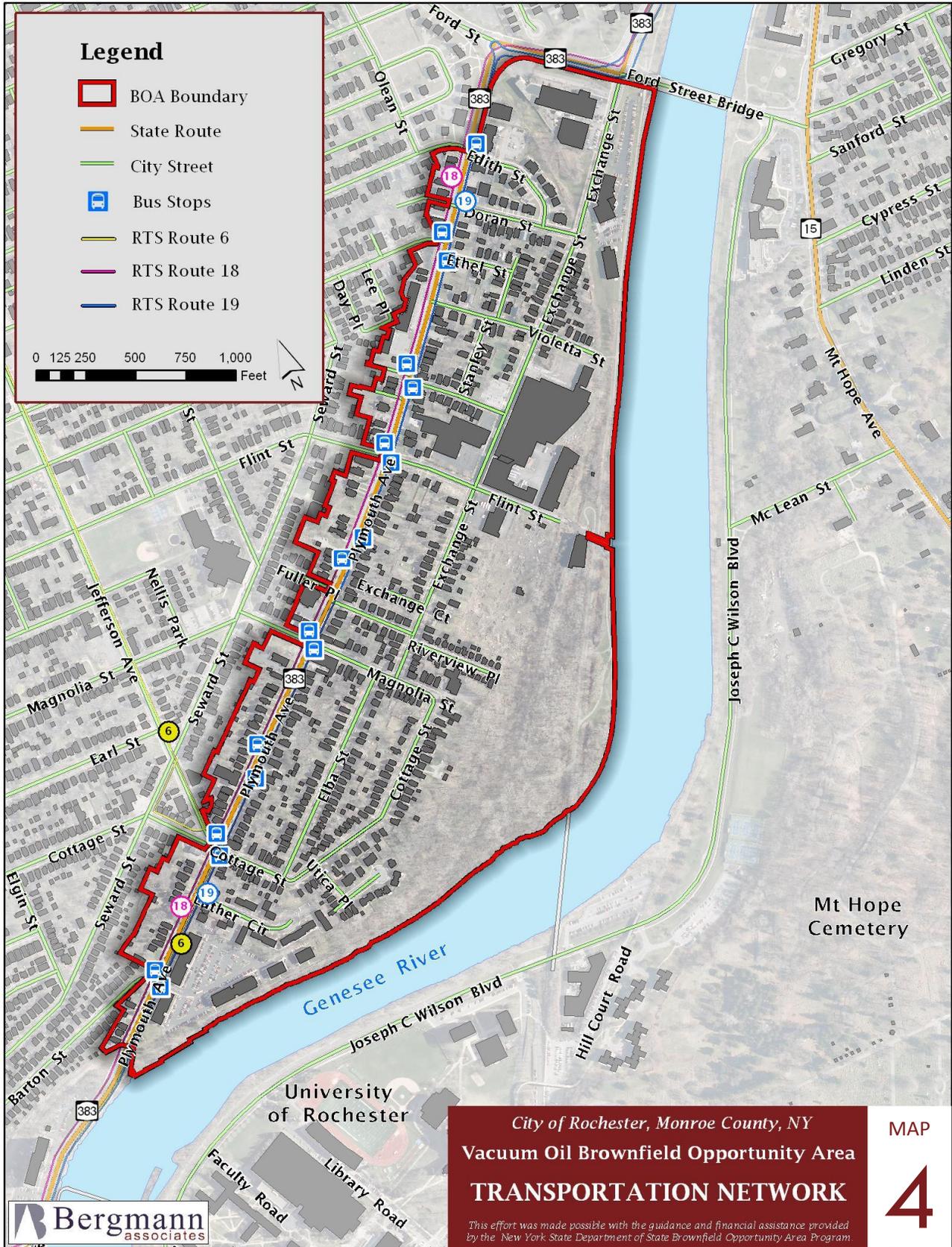
### 3.2.4 Transportation Systems

The VOBOA Study Area's transportation system includes approximately 3.5 miles of roadway, with South Plymouth Avenue (State Route 383) functioning as the central connective corridor between PLEX and adjacent neighborhoods. South Plymouth is a two-way, two lane arterial street that was recently reconstructed within the past decade. Parallel parked cars are protected at the intersections with curb bump outs, which also improve pedestrian safety at street crossings. Sidewalks are generally in good condition and are located on both sides of the street for the entire length of South Plymouth Avenue. The most recent data available from NYSDOT regarding traffic patterns indicated that volumes range from 7,000 cars per day south of Flint Street, to nearly 12,000 cars per day north at Ford Street, with approximately 19 percent of traffic coming from trucks and buses. The level of truck and bus traffic indicates this corridor is heavily used for delivery and through traffic. Additionally, vehicles speeds average below the 30 mile per hour signed limit.

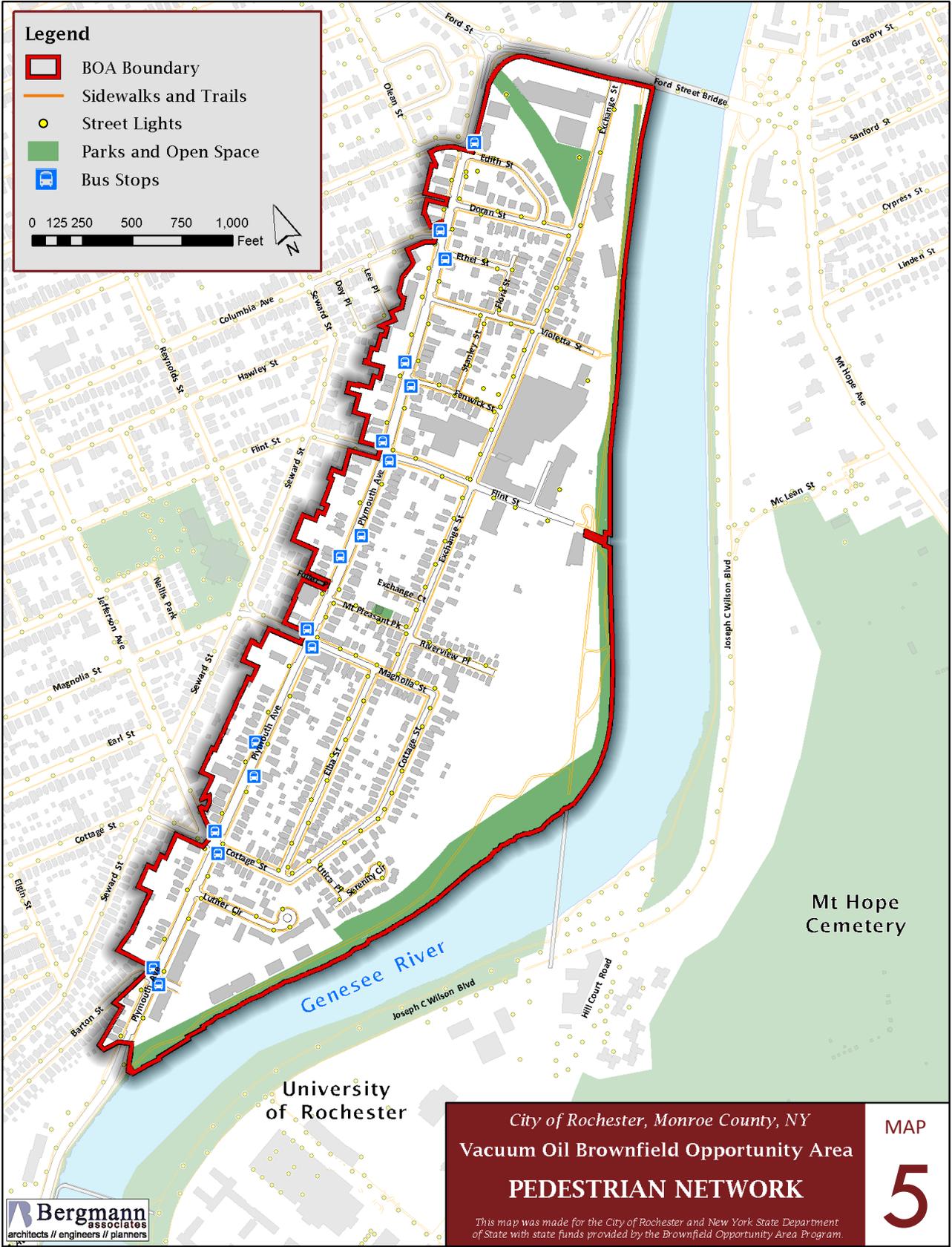
Within the neighborhood, Exchange Street runs parallel to South Plymouth and functions as an internal north-south collector street. Exchange Street terminates to the north at Ford Street, and continues as Exchange Boulevard into Center City Rochester. Because of the proximity to the Genesee River, several streets within the VOBOA Study Area terminate in dead-end streets, including Violetta Street, Flint Street, and Riverview Place, with only Violetta Street having an improved pedestrian connection from the sidewalk system to the Genesee Riverway Trail. Streets internal to the Study Area average 60-foot right-of-ways with 25-foot pavement sections.

**Map 4** indicates that the neighborhood is served by two primary Rochester Transit Service bus lines with 17 stops along South Plymouth Avenue. These routes provide access to numerous destinations within the City, including the University of Rochester, the Memorial Art Gallery and School of the Arts, as well as shopping and services such as the Village Gate and Tops Food Market. All residential units within the VOBOA Study Area are within 1,200 feet of a bus stop, which represents a travel time of 5 minutes or less at average walking speeds. In addition, most residents are less than a 10-minute walk from the Flint Street Recreation Center, a major neighborhood destination.

**Map 5** depicts the pedestrian network and available sidewalks and trails within the Study Area. All streets have sidewalks on both sides, and have adequately spaced street lights for improved pedestrian safety. The largest gap in sidewalk service is located along Flint Street, which lacks formal sidewalk from Exchange Street east to the River. The Genesee Riverway Trail is nearly 2 miles in length and traverses the riverfront from South Plymouth Avenue north to Ford Street. However, this trail lacks adequate connections to the adjacent neighborhood or roadway network.



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.



**Legend**

- BOA Boundary
- Sidewalks and Trails
- Street Lights
- Parks and Open Space
- P Bus Stops

0 125 250 500 750 1,000 Feet ↑

City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
**Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area**  
**PEDESTRIAN NETWORK**

This map was made for the City of Rochester and New York State Department of State with state funds provided by the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.

MAP  
5



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

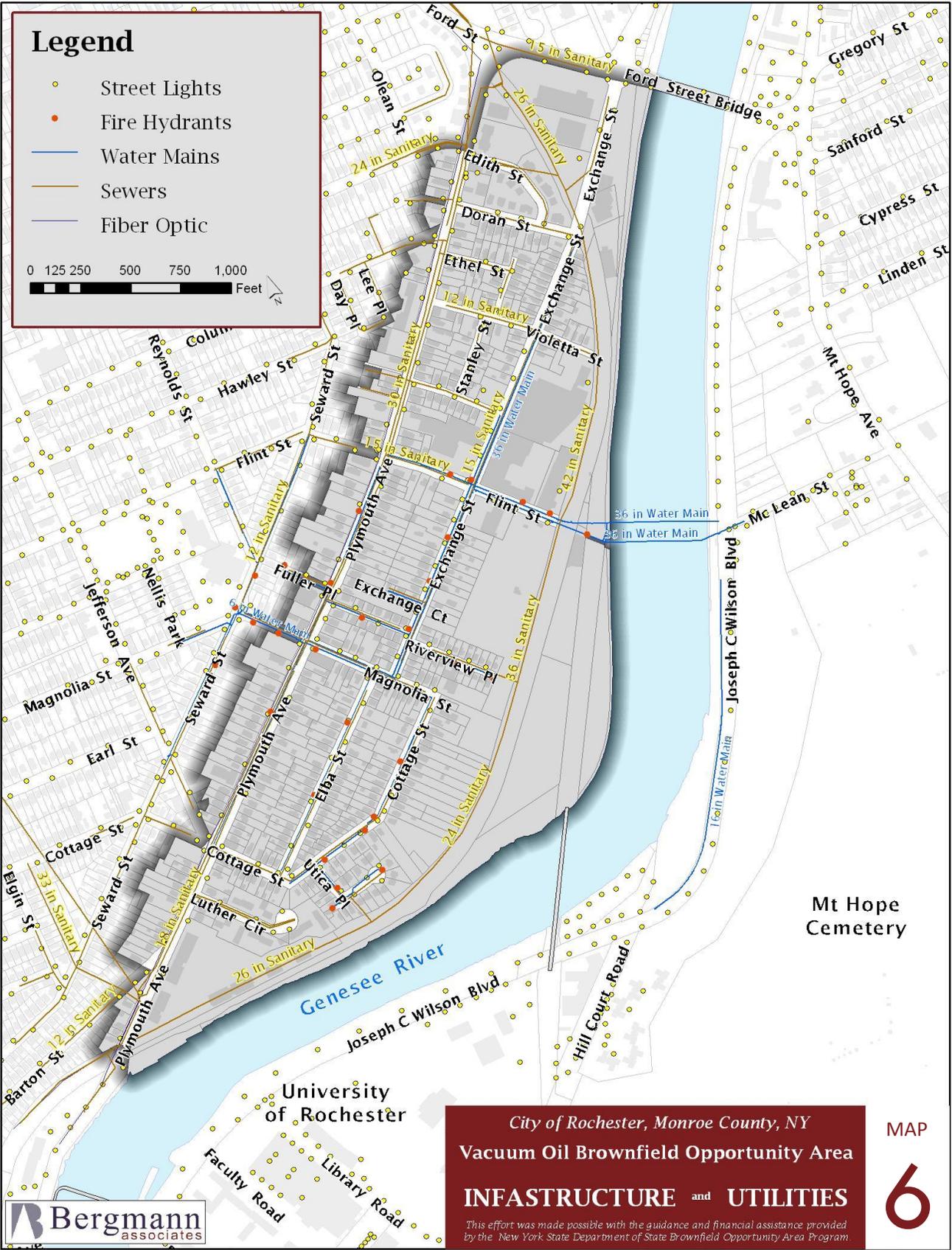
### **3.2.5 Infrastructure and Utilities**

The VOBOA Study Area contains significant utility infrastructure, including major water, sanitary and fiber optic corridors that support portions of the surrounding city (**Map 6**). The largest and most critical of these is a 36-inch diameter water main that crosses underneath the Genesee River from McLean Street to Flint Street, and continues along Exchange Street and Magnolia Street. This water main includes a 36-inch loop system along Flint Street between Exchange Street and the Genesee River.

A major combined sewer flows along the corridor of the former Pennsylvania Railroad and Genesee Valley Canal. Owned and operated by the City's Rochester Pure Waters District, this sewer ranges in size from 26 to 42 inches in diameter and crosses the 36-inch water main at Flint Street. An additional combined sewer, 18 inches by 30 inches in diameter, flows along South Plymouth Avenue. All sanitary and storm sewers in this portion of the City are combined, and flow northward to the West Side Tunnel system developed as part of the City's Combine Sewer Overflow Abatement Program.

A fiber optic duct bank runs along South Plymouth Avenue and parallel to the combined sewer system. This communications corridor is utilized for data collection and transmission and remote operation of gates, valves, and other appurtenances within the larger Monroe County Pure Waters collection system.

The City operates an extensive street lighting system within the VOBOA Study Area consisting of approximately 160 pole-mounted fixtures. These fixtures are utilized exclusively along street rights-of-way to enhance the safety and security of the roadway and sidewalk network. Areas not receiving street/pole-mounted lights are limited to the Genesee Riverway Trail. Trails are considered part of the City's park system. Consistent with City policy, City-owned parks are not lit.



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

### 3.2.6 Flood Hazards

According to mapping prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the majority of the VOBOA Study Area is located in a flood area classified as X, which are areas between the limits of the 100-year and 500-year floods (**Map 7**). Portions of the VOBOA Study Area's eastern boundary are located in an AE classified flood hazard area, which are within the 100-year floodplain. These areas are primarily located along the Genesee River and former Genesee Valley Canal footprint. Any development within the flood area will be subject to the regulations set forth in Chapter 56 of the City Code, "Flood Damage Protection."

Protection from Genesee River flooding in the VOBOA Study Area was historically provided by the floodwall, constructed around 1918 by the New York State Canal Corporation (NYSCC). Overtime, failures and other deterioration in the floodwall have rendered it less effective and the most recent FEMA flood maps indicate that the floodwall is no longer providing complete flood protection. Reconstruction of the floodwall to meet FEMA criteria for levees and floodwalls would relieve the financial burden to property owners in the VOBOA study area, increase protection from flooding in case of a major flood event, and make the riverfront area more desirable for future development.

In addition to these structural flood control measures, the City of Rochester practices floodplain management through its participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This program, run by FEMA, provides for otherwise unavailable flood insurance, in return for the City adopting and enforcing a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. This ordinance requires all new and substantially improved structures in the mapped floodplain to be elevated to or above the 100-year flood elevation (frequently referred to as the Base Flood Elevation, or BFE). In New York State, through the state's requirement of adoption of higher standards, new and substantially improved construction in the mapped floodplain must be 2.0 feet above BFE. An additional provision of the NFIP is a requirement to purchase flood insurance for properties purchased with federally-insured mortgages.

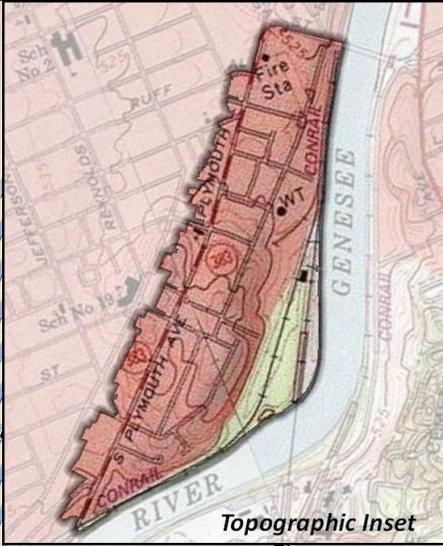
**Legend**

-  Federally Regulated Wetlands

**Flood Zone Hazard Areas**

-  AE - 100-year floodplain
-  X - 100 to 500-year floodplain

0 137.5275 550 825 1,100 Feet

City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
 Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area  
**FLOOD ZONES**  
 This effort was made possible with the guidance and financial assistance provided by the New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.

MAP  
**7**



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

### 3.2.7 Natural Resources and Environmental Features

#### A. WATER QUALITY, WATERSHEDS, AND GROUNDWATER

The quality of all waterbodies within the Genesee River Watershed is an important consideration to determine how to mitigate impacts to these valuable waterways to protect quality of life and advance sustainable practices. The most recent water quality assessment report for the Genesee River Watershed was completed in 2003, and cited urban stormwater and industrial runoff from the City of Rochester into the Genesee River as a major threat to water quality. Identifying ways to mitigate impacts from development on the water quality will be an important consideration to maintain the ecological, aesthetic and cultural value of this resource.

The VOBOA Study Area is located in what is known as the *Genesee River Watershed*. A watershed is a single hydrologic system, or an area of land where all the water drains to the same location. The Genesee River Watershed encompasses 2,373 square miles, covering much of Livingston, Allegany, Monroe, Genesee, and Wyoming counties, and small portions of Ontario, Steuben and Cattaraugus counties. Approximately 5,048 miles of freshwater rivers and streams feed into the Genesee River. In addition, 31 freshwater lakes, ponds and reservoirs are located within the watershed.

Because the VOBOA contained a number of industrial operations, a portion of the Study Area has been impacted by groundwater contamination. These areas generally include areas associated with the Vacuum Oil Site, which exhibit levels of contamination that exceed NYS DEC Cleanup Objectives for brownfield sites. Metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are present at concentrations that exceed cleanup objectives on portions of the site.

All of the City of Rochester is serviced by public water so contamination of ground water is not a concern for drinking water.

#### B. WETLANDS AND WATERBODIES

A wetland delineation and ecology screening was prepared for the VOBOA in November 2015 with the purpose of evaluating potential implementation (buildout) of the VOBOA Vision Plan. The wetland delineation was conducted within an approximate 30-acre portion of the VOBOA, located south of Ford Street, east of S Plymouth Avenue, and adjacent to the Genesee River. The delineation report found that a total of six (6) wetlands investigated within the VOBOA met the three (3) criteria for USACE regulated wetland areas. The cumulative area of wetlands within the VOBOA is 0.82-acre or approximately 2.7 percent of the VOBOA. The wetland areas discussed in this report do not correspond with any mapped NYSFWWs or NWI wetlands. Two (2) of the delineated wetlands met the classification of Palustrine Emergent, one (1) met the classification of Palustrine Scrub-Shrub Deciduous, and three (3) met the classification of Palustrine Forested Deciduous per the wetland habitat classification system developed by Cowardin, et al (1979).

A tributary to the Genesee River was also located, totaling 378 linear feet in length. This is an unnamed tributary and not considered a relatively permanent waterway (RPW). It is an ephemeral channel located near the southern portion of the VOBOA study area. It is connected

to the southernmost wetland by a culvert outflow from the wetland and serves as a connection between the wetland and the Genesee River.

Approved Jurisdictional Determination (JD) was requested from the USACE to distinguish between the jurisdictional and potentially non-jurisdictional resources. Wetlands and waterbodies are considered jurisdictional by the USACE if they are adjacent to a Traditionally Navigable Waterway (TNW) or directly abut an RPW that has a hydrologic nexus to a TNW. During the JD review effort, the USACE concluded that all wetlands and the Unnamed non-RPW Tributary to the Genesee River are all part of a surface water tributary system to a navigable water of the United States and as such are all regulated by the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Further detail about each wetland are included in the Final Wetland Assessment and Delineation, Ecological Screening & Invasive Species Report in **Appendix 4**. The specific permit authorizations will be dependent on the nature of the work at specific wetland locations and the magnitude of impact.

### C. **WILDLIFE HABITATS**

The Genesee River, adjacent to the VOBOA, serves as a habitat for fish and aquatic life. According to the Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat report (DOS), the Genesee River serves as a warm water fisheries habitat supporting species that include smallmouth bass, brown bullhead, northern pike, catfish, walleye, and carp. The Genesee River serves as an important recreational fishery, attracting anglers within the Rochester area and from outside. However, industrial uses along the waterfront have led to water pollution and alteration of the lower channel, which has reduced the environmental quality in these areas.

Some of the forested lands have large trees, shrubs and lawn areas. This creates many opportunities for a wide variety of wildlife to take refuge. While many of the plant species in the ecological setting are native, other nonnative and invasive plant species are established. The value to wildlife, regardless of such status, is qualified in quality of shelter and food sources. This habitat has attracted various species of sparrows, blue jays, black capped chickadees, Canada goose, northern cardinals, downy woodpeckers, hairy woodpeckers, great blue herons, American robins, American crow, various gulls, red-tailed hawk, leopard frogs, gray squirrel, ground hogs and white-tailed deer. Along with these verified species there is also potential for the endangered long eared bat and several migratory birds with in the project area.

An ecology screening was completed as part of an overall natural resources evaluation within the VOBOA Study Area. The ecology screening includes the following findings:

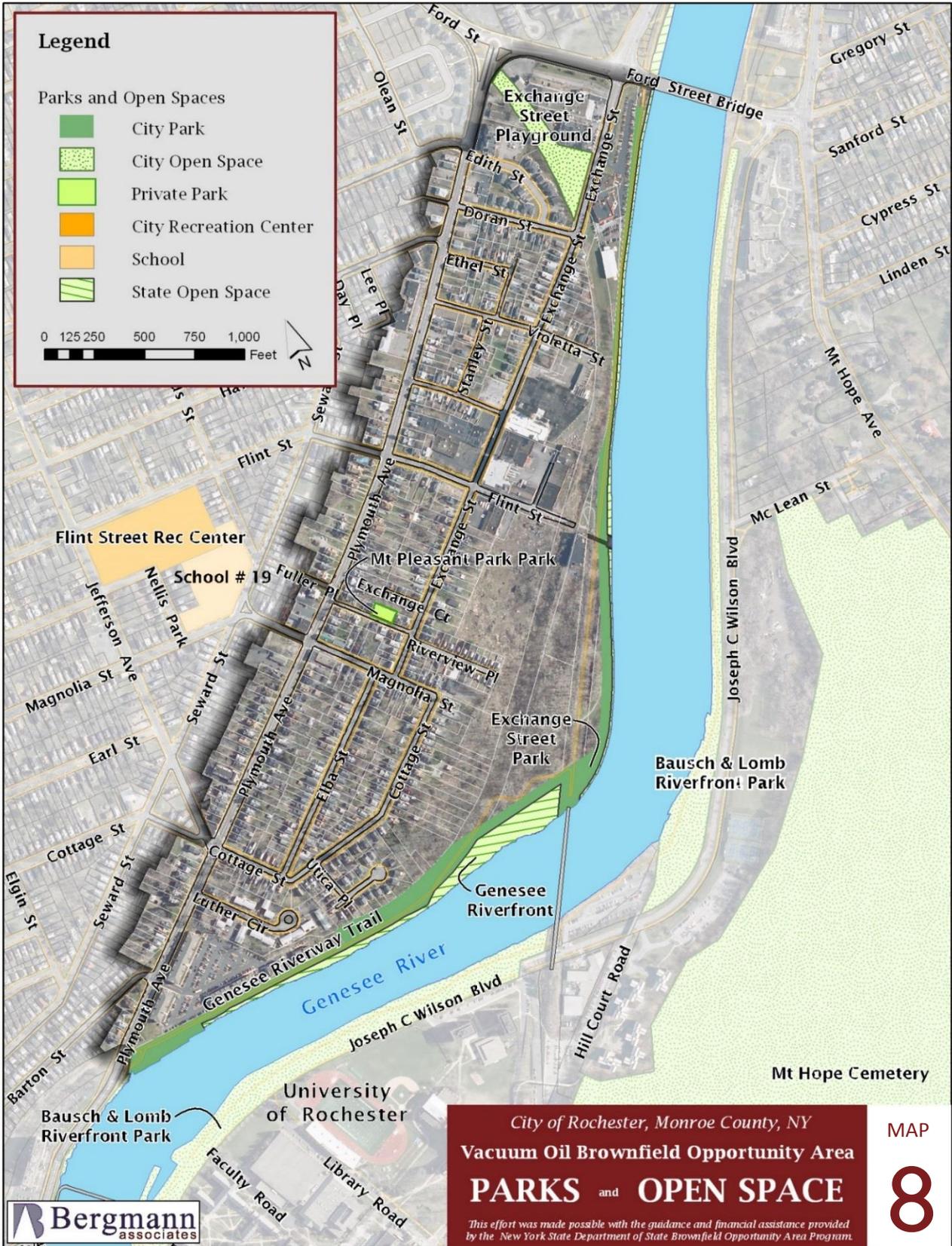
- **Invasive Species:** Invasive species were observed within the VOBOA, including mugwort, garlic mustard, tartarian honeysuckle, Japanese honeysuckle, common buckthorn, black locust, Japanese knotweed, common reed, purple loosestrife and Norway Maple. Specific measures will need to be utilized to minimize the potential spread of invasive species during the construction of proposed improvements. Measures include use of proper erosion and sediment control measures; washing construction equipment before leaving areas of invasive species, and proper removal and disposal of invasive plants. As improvement plans are progressed, recommended plant removal and disposal methods will need to be provided.

- **Habitat:** The USFWS has identified potential for the Northern long-eared bat and several migratory bird species within the VOBOA or within close proximity. The Northern long-eared bat is listed as “threatened” by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service under the federal Endangered Species Act in 2015. The federal listing was the result of a dramatic population decline throughout most of the species’ range. The specific impact on habitat for this species is based on the number of potential roost trees that will be removed. Additionally, clearing should be limited to trees that need to be removed to support improvements, and conducted during the period of time when the bats are in their hibernacula, which is generally October 31 through March 31. Aside from protected species, the area is also used by small mammals and birds typically found in less developed areas bordering urban neighborhoods.

### 3.2.8 Parks and Open Space

There are several parcels of public and private open space in the VOBOA (**Map 8**), including:

- **Genesee Riverway Trail (3.91 acres).** The Genesee Riverway Trail parallels the Genesee River along the entire length of the VOBOA. The trail is accessible from the sidewalk network along Violetta Street and from a switchback trail at the end of Flint Street. The Genesee Riverway Trail between Flint Street and the Riverview Commons student housing is heavily enclosed by vegetation and is disconnected from adjacent development or structures. There are open views of the Genesee River and expansive views north to Center City that are noteworthy and should be highlighted. In some instances, the visual and physical isolation of this trail segment feels unsafe. The trail connects to the University of Rochester campus by means of the Erie-Lackawanna railroad pedestrian bridge.
- **Exchange Street Park (1.97 acres).** This linear park space is located along the northeast boundary of the VOBOA Study Area. The area is a dedicated park and contains a trail connection from Exchange Street to Plymouth Avenue.
- **Mt. Pleasant Park (0.12 acres).** This small privately-owned park on Mt Pleasant Park is enjoyed by area residents. The passive recreation space functions as a large community flower garden, with seating and stone pathways that encircle the lot.
- **Legacy Park Station (0.09 acres).** This site is currently vacant property was recently purchased by a neighborhood group to be redeveloped into a community park.
- **Community Garden on the corner of Exchange and Flint Streets (0.18 acres).** This site contains a community garden. The site is owned by Foodlink, which has provided materials for the garden in the past.
- **School 19 and the Flint Street Recreation Center (6.98 acres).** Located just outside the VOBOA Study Area’s western boundary, the Flint Street Recreation Center provides a full range of year-round recreation activities for area residents, including an outdoor



### **3.2.9 Historic and Cultural Resources**

Prehistorically, the VOBOA Study Area was underneath the Laurentide Ice-sheet followed by Glacial Lake Iroquois up to 11,500 years before 1950 (BP). This glacial lake was the precursor to today's Lake Ontario and was approximately 30 meters above Lake Ontario's current level. Geologically minor fluctuations in the level of the lake would have probably covered the low-lying floodplain and terraces underneath the current elevation of the VOBOA Study Area.

The Ontario Lake Plain region has been occupied by prehistoric people since approximately 11,000 years before present. Pre-contact sites representing all periods of occupations have been documented along the Genesee River in Monroe County. The VOBOA Study Area in particular points to having evidence of prehistoric and historic Native Americans occupations as the proximity of the Genesee River and its tributaries would have made the area highly attractive for hunting, fishing, and agriculture. No specific pre-contact sites have been documented within the study area, however many have been documented within a mile.

Prior to the American Revolution, the VOBOA Study Area fell within a large territory of western New York that was occupied by the Iroquois, specifically the western portion of the Seneca Nation. After the Revolutionary War, a series of treaties resulted in the settling of land claims of Massachusetts and the 1788 purchase by Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham of land formerly controlled by the Senecas. This Genesee Tract consisted of 2.6 million acres, of which the westernmost 1.2 million acres was purchased by a series of investors. One of the last of these was purchased by Colonel Nathan Rochester, the namesake of the city; the VOBOA Study area is located within this original tract.

The history and development of the City of Rochester is tied to the Genesee River, which provided the foundation for its industrial heritage. The Genesee forms the VOBOA Study Area's eastern boundary, and is unique in that it flows north to its terminus in Lake Ontario. Historically, much of the river north of Brooks Landing and south of the VOBOA Study Area was not navigable. These conditions forced river cargo to be off-loaded onto flat-bottomed boats, encouraging early settlement of the western riverbank in this area of the river. Navigational needs associated with area industry prompted the development of man-made waterways including the Feeder Canal, Genesee Valley Canal, and the Erie Canal Extension. The Genesee Valley Canal ran through the VOBOA Study Area, paralleling the Genesee River. As rail transport became more cost-efficient, it became less viable to maintain the full-length of the Genesee Valley canal so it was forced to close in 1878. It was drained and converted into a track bed for the Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad until its cessation in the 1970s. Portions of that rail right-of-way are incorporated into the Genesee Riverway Trail.

As home businesses and factories began to develop in the city, especially along the canals, it became essential to create neighborhoods and to connect industries and producers with the markets to the east and west of the city. To this purpose, Sophia (Plymouth) Street was built parallel to the river along with a grid of smaller streets including Flint, Magnolia and Mansion (Exchange) Streets leading down to the river and along the bluff over the floodplain. The paths of these roads, and many of the former farmsteads which are now house lots, have changed little since. Much of the Study Area was cultivated farmland through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The City's industrial legacy is especially evident within the VOBOA Study Area, where numerous industrial sites are located. The Vacuum Oil Site was established on Flint Street to capitalize on the City's canal and railroad assets. Established by Charles Everest in 1866, the refinery became known for its patented kerosene distillation process, the profitability of which caused the company's purchase by Standard Oil in 1879, and later by Standard Oil Company of New York ("Socony") in 1931. The site became equally well known for one of the largest man-made disasters of the 19th Century, during which 14,000 gallons of naphtha seeped into the City's sewer system resulting in four explosions that killed several people in 1887. The site later became home to Sears, Roebuck and Company following the refinery's closing around 1931.

The City's transportation networks also played a prominent role in shaping its social history. Several Underground Railroad sites were located near the southwest river corridor. Fugitive slaves traveled along Plymouth Avenue to Kelsey's Landing (along the river in the area of Maplewood Park), where they could pick up a Great Lakes ship to cross Lake Ontario to Canada. Some used the Erie Canal to escape west to Cincinnati. The Genesee River additionally served as a location for Camp Fitz-John Porter, a center for training recruits at the onset of the Civil War, which is now denoted by a commemorative marker.

The VOBOA Study Area is linked to the historic Corn Hill district by Exchange Boulevard. The Corn Hill district was home to many of the City's early founders and Erie Canal entrepreneurs. In addition, the Ford Street Bridge connects the VOBOA Study Area to the Mt. Hope/Highland Historic District to the east. Located within the district is the historic Mt. Hope Cemetery, which boasts notable buildings including the Warner Castle, home to the Rochester Garden Center.

A Phase I Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment and Survey (**Appendix 5**) was performed by H.A.Z.Ex. to determine if any of the structures within the VOBOA Study Area are National Register Eligible (NRE) in May 2017. The survey operated under the presumption that, due to the extensive 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial, transportation, and utility development as well as the associated mechanical disturbance from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century development of the New York State Barge Canal within the study area, that the prehistoric and historic Native Americans sensitivity was low in this area. Four structures were found that were associated with the original Vacuum Oil Company yard, as well as rough-cut railroad piers, and partially demolished structural remains of the factories. All of these structures predate the 1933 closing of the Vacuum Oil Company. Shovel tests were performed within the VOBOA Study Area and only recent artifacts were identified during the survey, dating from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century industrial development of the VOBOA Study Area. The survey within the southern and eastern portions of the VOBOA Study Area resulted in negative findings with no NRE cultural resources. However, the pre-1920's warehouse, a former Vacuum Oil security office, an iron girder bridge over the Genesee River, and the piers from a railroad spur bridge are reflective of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial development of the Rochester waterfront and as such are potentially NRE. To confirm eligibility, these structures would need to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation, whose fulfillment is determined by the completion and approval of a nomination study by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). If the City or property owner does not wish to pursue National Register status, the potentially NRE structure can be modified or demolished without approval.



### 3.3 Economic Setting

The following section provides context for discussion of redevelopment scenarios within the VOBOA by illustrating regional trends that shape the commercial real estate market for the City of Rochester and the VOBOA. A comprehensive *Market and Economic Trends Analysis* was prepared in 2013 by Camoin Associates in order to develop market-based recommendations for the VOBOA Study Area. The analysis explored regional and local demographic, economic and market trends and projections to identify ways in which these factors influence redevelopment of the VOBOA. Key findings from that analysis provide a foundation to help identify appropriate and realistic redevelopment opportunities within the VOBOA.

The Camoin analysis was augmented in 2016 with two reports focused on various aspects of the housing market and strategies for reinvestment: (1) *Housing Analysis for the Vacuum Oil BOA*, completed by Camoin Associates and (2) a *Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategies Report completed by RKG Associates*. Findings from both of these reports are incorporated into this section and both reports are located in **Appendix 6 & 7**.

#### 3.3.1 General Economic Outlook

##### A. GEOGRAPHIES STUDIED

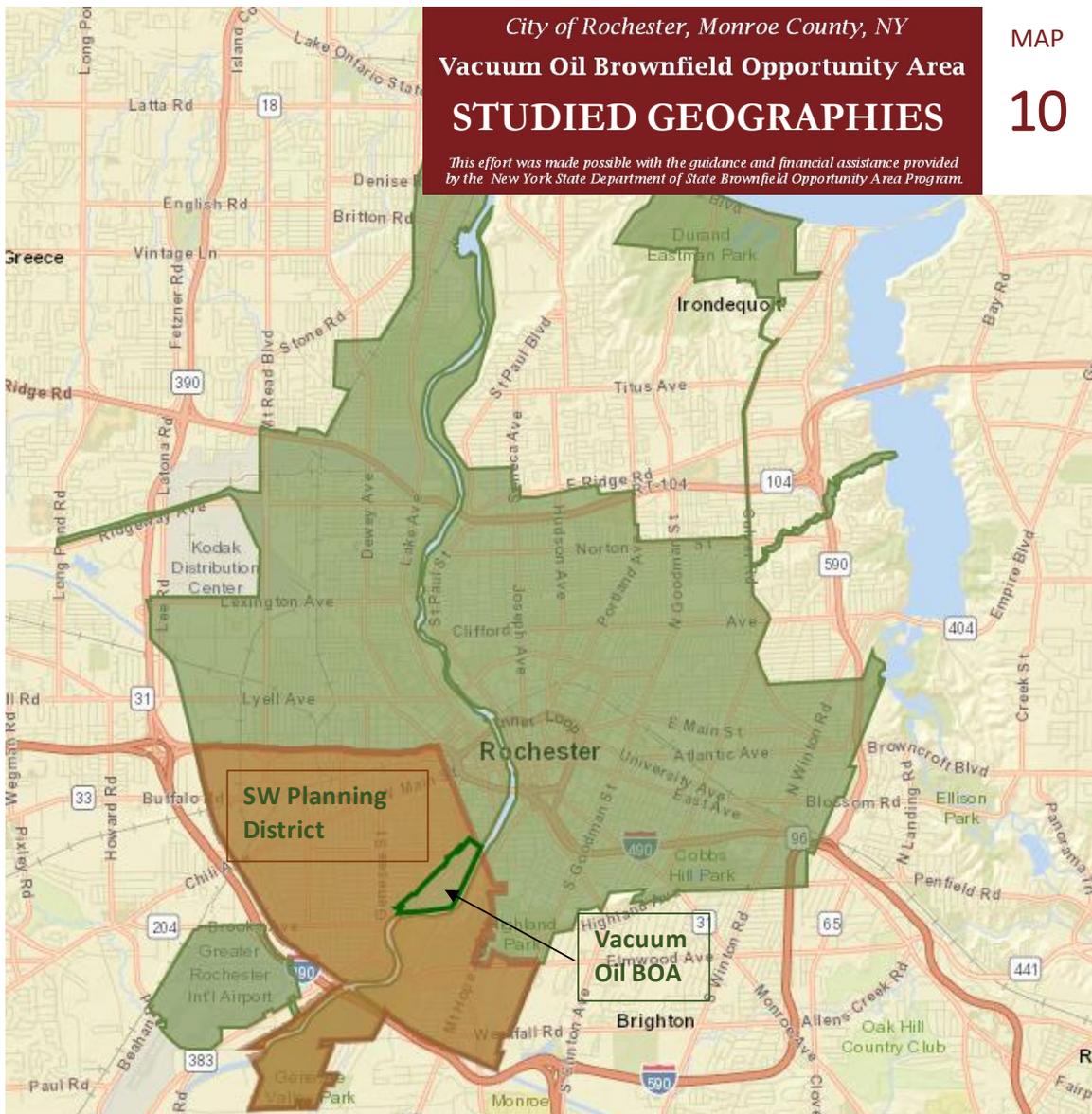
This section of the analysis presents an overview of the regional economy, including industries that contribute to the economy, employment growth expectations, and employment trends within industrial sectors. It begins with an analysis of commuting patterns to provide a context for where residents of the three geographies work, and how they get there.

Data was analyzed for the following geographies (**Map 10**):

- **Vacuum Oil BOA (VOBOA)** – Parcels within an area bounded by Plymouth Avenue on the west, Ford Street to the north, and the Genesee River to the south and east.<sup>4</sup>
- **Southwest (SW) Planning District** – The southwest quadrant of the city.
- **City of Rochester** – City of Rochester’s municipal boundary.
- **The Rochester Region/Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** – The Rochester “region” is also referred to as the metropolitan statistical area (MSA), which is defined by the US Census Bureau as a combined statistical area based on its population and economic integration. It includes the counties of Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Livingston, Orleans and Yates. The MSA has 1,088,881 residents. The city’s 210,312 residents comprise approximately 19% of the MSA.

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<sup>4</sup> Because the map was created by hand in the ESRI mapping interface, an error rate of 1% to 2% may have been introduced by the unintentional exclusion or inclusion of parcels along South Plymouth. This is not expected to affect the statistics or conclusions of the analysis. It creates a slightly smaller geography and population than was presented for the BOA in the 2012 Market Analysis because that analysis delineated the BOA with census blocks that captured dense residential neighborhoods northwest of the BOA. Drawing the BOA boundaries by parcel brings in fewer residential parcels from those neighborhoods.



**Map 10** shows three of the four geographies discussed in this section. These three geographies are layered within each other: the VOBOA is within the SW Planning District, which comprises a large portion of the City of Rochester. The smaller geographies are subsets of the larger areas and their statistics are therefore included in the analysis of the larger areas. For example, the population of the VOBOA is included in the population of the SW Planning District, which is included in the population of the city.

**B. COMMUTING PATTERNS**

Most residents of the City of Rochester leave the city every day to go to their jobs. City residents occupy 23.8% of the jobs located within the city. More than three quarters of the persons employed in the city commute from the surrounding areas, a proportion that has remained fairly stable even over a ten-year period of job losses.

In 2004, 26.9%, or 43,394, of the 161,366 jobs in the city were filled by city residents and 73.1% by commuters. By 2014, the number of jobs in the city dropped to 133,097, and 23.8%, or 31,705, were filled by city residents and 76.2% by commuters (**Figure 8**).

**Figure 8: Commuters and Residents, City of Rochester**

	2014		2004	
	#	%	#	%
Jobs in the City of Rochester	133,097	100.0%	161,366	100.0%
Commuters	101,392	76.2%	117,972	73.1%
City Residents	31,705	23.8%	43,394	26.9%
<u>Age of Commuters Working in City</u>				
Workers Aged 29 or younger	18,987	18.7%	20,192	17.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	56,477	55.7%	80,261	68.0%
Workers Aged 55 or older	25,928	25.6%	17,519	14.9%
<u>Age of City Residents Working in City</u>				
Workers Aged 29 or younger	8,238	26.0%	11,907	27.4%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	17,055	53.8%	25,761	59.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	6,412	20.2%	5,726	13.2%

Source: Census OnTheMap.

With most working city residents employed within the Rochester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the economic analysis focuses on the Rochester MSA as a source of jobs and growth, not just the city.

The first component of the analysis is how city residents get to work, and how long it takes. Proximity to jobs is a major factor in housing choice, but the poorest residents have the least ability to choose proximity over cost. The growth of suburban office/industrial and flex facilities puts further pressure on these households by increasing jobs in communities where housing costs may be out of reach. Transportation options therefore become more important.

**Figure 9** below, “Transportation and Commute Times,” shows how residents of the VOBOA, the SW Planning District, and the city get to work, and how long they travel each way. The public transportation system in the city is buses. There is a bus stop within the VOBOA Study Area that takes riders to the downtown bus station where transfer to other city areas is possible. Other busses traveling along S. Plymouth Avenue take passengers more directly to the areas around the University of Rochester or the Strong Memorial Hospital.

As shown in **Figure 9**, 70.2%, of city residents drive to work and a large proportion (45%) travel between 10 and 19 minutes, by any method. These statistics likely indicate that city residents are driving to a job in the suburbs or the outskirts of the city. Few take public transportation or walk on a regular basis (8.1% and 6.6%, respectively.) It is important to note that while walkability and walking/biking to work is considered a community good in many areas of the U.S., the Rochester area experiences harsh winter weather that makes walking and biking year-round less feasible.

According to the data, VOBOA residents are much more likely to carpool or use public transportation than residents in the SW Planning District or overall city residents. For residents in the VOBOA, 53% drive alone, while 20.1% carpool and another 16.6% use public transportation. Commutes are longer for VOBOA residents, which may be a result of the relative slowness of public transportation, particularly with transfers, compared with driving directly.

**Figure 9: Transportation and Commute Times**

	Vacuum Oil BOA		SW Planning District		City of Rochester	
	Residents	Percent of Residents	Residents	Percent of Residents	Residents	Percent of Residents
<b>Worker Transportation Method</b>						
Drive Alone	284	53.0%	9,959	60.7%	59,289	70.2%
Carpool	108	20.1%	1,818	11.1%	8,803	10.4%
Public Transportation	89	16.6%	1,493	9.1%	6,814	8.1%
Walk	13	2.4%	2,190	13.4%	5,612	6.6%
Other *	38	7.1%	468	2.9%	1,730	2.0%
Work at Home	4	0.7%	476	2.9%	2,208	2.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,404</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>84,456</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Worker Travel Time, Minutes</b>						
0 - 9	88	16.5%	2,675	16.8%	12,628	15.4%
10 - 19	214	40.2%	7,546	47.4%	37,092	45.1%
20 - 29	89	16.7%	3,146	19.7%	18,499	22.5%
30 - 39	80	15.0%	1,303	8.2%	7,257	8.8%
40 +	61	11.5%	1,260	7.9%	6,772	8.2%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,930</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>82,248</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Commute of 20 min +</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>43.2%</b>	<b>5,709</b>	<b>35.8%</b>	<b>32,528</b>	<b>39.5%</b>

Source: Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI)

\*Other includes taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, and undetermined means.

### C. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

Job growth in the City of Rochester and the greater region is expected to lag behind that of the state and nation overall (**Figure 10**). The number of jobs is projected to increase by only 1.1% in the city from 2015 to 2021 while the region's 1.9% job growth is only moderately better compared to the state's projected growth of 5.5% and the nation's growth of 6.5%.

**Figure 10: Projected Employment Growth**

Projected Employment Growth Summary				
Region	2015	2021	Change	% Change
City of Rochester	306,656	310,012	3,357	1.09%
Rochester MSA	537,776	547,766	9,990	1.86%
NYS	9,905,449	10,450,729	545,280	5.50%
US	155,992,069	166,098,861	10,106,792	6.48%

Source: Economic Modeling specialists Inc. (EMSI)

**D. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY INDUSTRY**

**Figure 11** presents employment trends and growth projections. The Rochester region’s Health Care and Social Assistance industry is expected to add the greatest number of jobs over the next five years with nearly 8,900 new positions created through 2021, an increase of 11%. Other growing sectors include Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Accommodation and Food Services; Educational Services; and Other Services<sup>5</sup>. Manufacturing is projected to see a substantial loss of jobs, accelerating a recent trend of decline.

**Figure 11: Rochester MSA Industry Employment and Trends**

Rochester MSA Industry Employment and Trends 2011 - 2021							
NAICS	Description	2011 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2011 - 2015 Change	2011 - 2015 % Change	2015 - 2021 Change	2015 - 2021 % Change
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	78,002	80,613	2,611	3.3%	8,883	11.0%
90	Government	79,588	77,242	(2,346)	-2.9%	(980)	-1.3%
31	Manufacturing	62,161	59,517	(2,644)	-4.3%	(5,205)	-8.7%
44	Retail Trade	57,505	56,520	(985)	-1.7%	(702)	-1.2%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	35,902	38,266	2,364	6.6%	1,391	3.6%
61	Educational Services	31,789	34,356	2,567	8.1%	1,384	4.0%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	25,971	29,166	3,195	12.3%	1,480	5.1%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	27,189	28,569	1,380	5.1%	344	1.2%
23	Construction	21,638	22,743	1,105	5.1%	724	3.2%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	21,254	22,333	1,079	5.1%	1,926	8.6%
42	Wholesale Trade	16,744	15,970	(774)	-4.6%	116	0.7%
52	Finance and Insurance	14,959	15,161	202	1.4%	378	2.5%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	11,989	11,850	(139)	-1.2%	580	4.9%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	9,258	9,220	(38)	-0.4%	702	7.6%
51	Information	9,283	9,149	(134)	-1.4%	(918)	-10.0%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	8,267	8,344	77	0.9%	(133)	-1.6%
11	Crop and Animal Production	7,508	7,791	283	3.8%	152	2.0%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7,492	7,701	209	2.8%	(392)	-5.1%
22	Utilities	1,506	1,667	161	10.7%	184	11.0%
99	Unclassified Industry	581	981	400	68.8%	56	5.7%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	524	618	94	17.9%	17	2.8%
Totals		529,111	537,776	8,667		9,987	

Source: Economic Modeling specialists Inc. (EMSI)

<sup>5</sup> Other Services generally includes activities such as equipment and machinery repairing, promoting or administering religious activities, grant making, advocacy, and providing dry cleaning and laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services. Private households that engage in employing workers on or about the premises in activities primarily concerned with the operation of the household are included in this sector.

The city itself is projected to experience trends similar to the region's, as seen in **Figure 12** below. Health Care and Social Assistance, is expected to grow 11% over 5 years while Manufacturing is projected to undergo a contraction. Manufacturing is a substantial component of the regional economy, but is projected to decline in the future. Between 2015 and 2021, a loss of 4,266 manufacturing jobs in the city is anticipated. Other notable trends include a 4% growth in Educational Services employment (1,238 new jobs) and growth in "Other Services" with 1,000 new jobs representing a 5-year growth rate of 8.1%.

**Figure 12: City of Rochester Industry Employment and Trends**

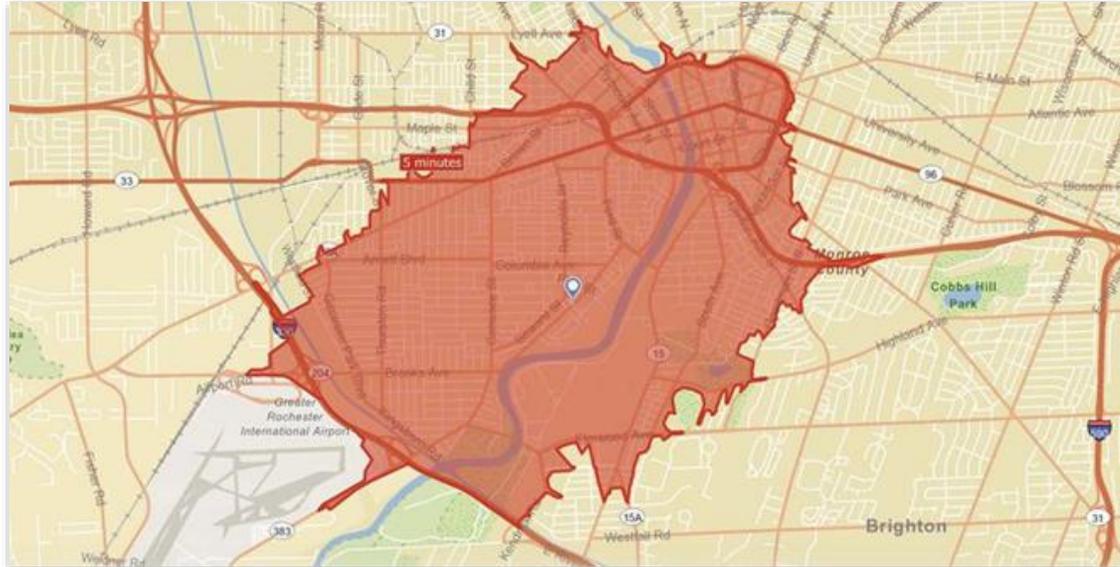
City of Rochester Industry Employment and Trends 2011 - 2021							
NAICS	Description	2011 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2011 - 2015 Change	2011 - 2015 % Change	2015 - 2021 Change	2015 - 2021 % Change
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	52,151	54,140	1,989	3.8%	5,983	11.1%
31	Manufacturing	36,308	34,414	(1,894)	-5.2%	(4,266)	-12.4%
90	Government	34,820	34,261	(559)	-1.6%	(656)	-1.9%
61	Educational Services	28,311	30,360	2,049	7.2%	1,238	4.1%
44	Retail Trade	28,816	28,310	(506)	-1.8%	(920)	-3.2%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	18,723	19,653	930	5.0%	453	2.3%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	15,814	18,218	2,404	15.2%	648	3.6%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	16,055	16,504	449	2.8%	(56)	-0.3%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	12,221	12,554	333	2.7%	1,018	8.1%
42	Wholesale Trade	10,604	10,002	(602)	-5.7%	51	0.5%
23	Construction	9,362	9,875	513	5.5%	331	3.4%
52	Finance and Insurance	9,104	9,056	(48)	-0.5%	98	1.1%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	7,489	7,079	(410)	-5.5%	135	1.9%
51	Information	6,145	5,921	(224)	-3.6%	(859)	-14.5%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5,263	5,180	(83)	-1.6%	334	6.4%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4,719	4,901	182	3.9%	(258)	-5.3%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4,023	4,118	95	2.4%	(17)	-0.4%
22	Utilities	697	841	144	20.7%	48	5.7%
11	Crop and Animal Production	652	714	62	9.5%	21	2.9%
99	Unclassified Industry	286	533	247	86.4%	40	7.5%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	29	22	(7)	-24.1%	(9)	-40.9%
Totals		301,592	306,656	5,064		3,357	

Source: Economic Modeling specialists Inc. (EMSI)

### 3.3.2 Retail Gap Analysis

A retail market analysis was conducted in 2012 which compared the supply and demand for goods and services within The area identified for the VOBOA Study Area. The market analysis outlines consumer spending habits within the region, estimates retail demand, identifies household characteristics of potential consumers, and identifies business opportunities or niche markets not currently being met within the marketplace. The trade areas is defined as the Local trade area, a 5-minute drive time from the center of the VOBOA (**Figure 13**).

**Figure 13: VOBOA Local Trade Area: 5-Minute Drive Time**



Source: ESRI, 2012

#### A. RETAIL LEAKAGE/SURPLUS - LOCAL TRADE AREA

The demand for goods and services that is not being met locally is referred to as sales leakage. Leakage occurs when consumers make purchases at establishments located *outside* of their local trade area. Sales leakage is normally viewed as an opportunity to capture unmet demand in a trade area by opening new or expanding existing businesses. The industry groups experiencing the greatest leakage from the local trade area include:

- Automobile Dealers;
- Grocery Stores;
- Gasoline Stations; and
- Department Store.

Conversely, if the supply of goods sold exceeds trade area demand, it is assumed that non-residents are coming into the trade area to spend money, creating a sales surplus. There are two likely reasons a sales surplus condition would exist. First, a cluster of competing businesses offering a similar good or product may be located within the trade area, creating a specialty cluster that draws in spending by households from outside the trade area. Secondly, a sales surplus may indicate a saturated retail market, where supply exceeds demand.

Industries that have a large sales surplus compared to their total sales include:

- Health and Personal Care Stores;
- Full Service Restaurants;
- Direct Selling Establishments;
- Drinking Places – Alcoholic Beverages;
- Book, Periodical and Music Stores; and
- Office Supplies, Stationary and Gift Stores.

Industry sectors with leakage can be good markets to pursue in that residents are currently going outside of the trade area to make purchases. A new business or an expansion by an existing business could potentially capture some of the spending by those residents. Alternatively, an industry with a surplus could indicate a niche market that the trade area could build on and create an identity around.

**B. RETAIL USE FEASIBILITY - LOCAL TRADE AREA**

While the previous section identifies a number of sectors that are experiencing leakage, it does not necessarily mean that new businesses locating in the area would be successful. Not all retail categories that exhibit leakage within a particular trade area are a good fit for that local area. The following summarizes which of the industries with leakage may have enough sales to warrant opening a new store or expanding existing stores in the local trade area. The analysis assumes that 25 percent of the existing leakage in each category can potentially be recaptured by new businesses. The actual recapture rate for each category will vary based on existing amenities, commuting patterns, and consumer attraction towards certain stores or brands. **Figure 14** identifies industries experiencing sales leakage from the VOBOA local trade area and the number of new businesses that could be theoretically supported in each category.

**Figure 14: Retail Opportunities, Local Trade Area**

Industry Group	Retail Gap	25% Recapture Rate	Average Sales in Upstate NY	Number of Potential Businesses
Automobile Dealers	\$47,140,433	\$11,785,108	\$3,930,036	3.00
Grocery Stores	\$46,847,248	\$11,711,812	\$3,867,700	3.03
Gasoline Stations	\$37,699,794	\$9,424,949	\$3,956,399	2.38
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$11,803,225	\$2,950,806	\$732,580	4.03
Clothing Stores	\$8,068,888	\$2,017,222	\$364,833	5.53
Furniture Stores	\$4,508,348	\$1,127,087	\$886,319	1.27
Building Material and Supplies Dealers	\$4,368,784	\$1,092,196	\$793,556	1.38
Electronics & Appliance	\$3,195,237	\$798,809	\$435,449	1.83
Home Furnishings Stores	\$1,999,110	\$499,778	\$412,221	1.21
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument	\$1,992,634	\$498,159	\$144,367	3.45
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods	\$708,434	\$177,109	\$127,552	1.39

Source: ESRI, Camoin Associates

## 3.4 Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategy

A *Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategies Study* was prepared in 2016 to update and augment the economic and housing analysis previously completed for the Step 2 Nomination Study. The purpose of the study was to analyze the current state of housing in the VOBOA and provide recommendations for strategically investing resources in programs and policies that will positively affect current and future residents. The report includes recommendations for implementation in the short, mid, and long term.

The analysis included data collection and analysis, as well as interviews with residents and key stakeholders. The complete study is located in **Appendix 6**. A summary is below.

### 3.4.1 Residential Market Conditions

The demographic and economic characteristics of the VOBOA help to describe the people and households in the area, while the residential market conditions will provide detail on the make-up and conditions of the housing stock.

#### A. HOUSING TENURE

Renter-occupied housing units make up the majority of housing units in Rochester. The VOBOA is consistent with this citywide housing pattern of occupancy, where the majority of housing units are renter-occupied. In 2015, the VOBOA contained approximately 840 total housing units, of which 80 percent (668 units) were renter-occupied and 20 percent (172) were owner-occupied units. By comparison, the housing stock city-wide is about 60 percent renter-occupied and 40 percent owner-occupied. The higher percentage of rental units in the VOBOA may be attributed to the University of Rochester student population residing in the neighborhood.

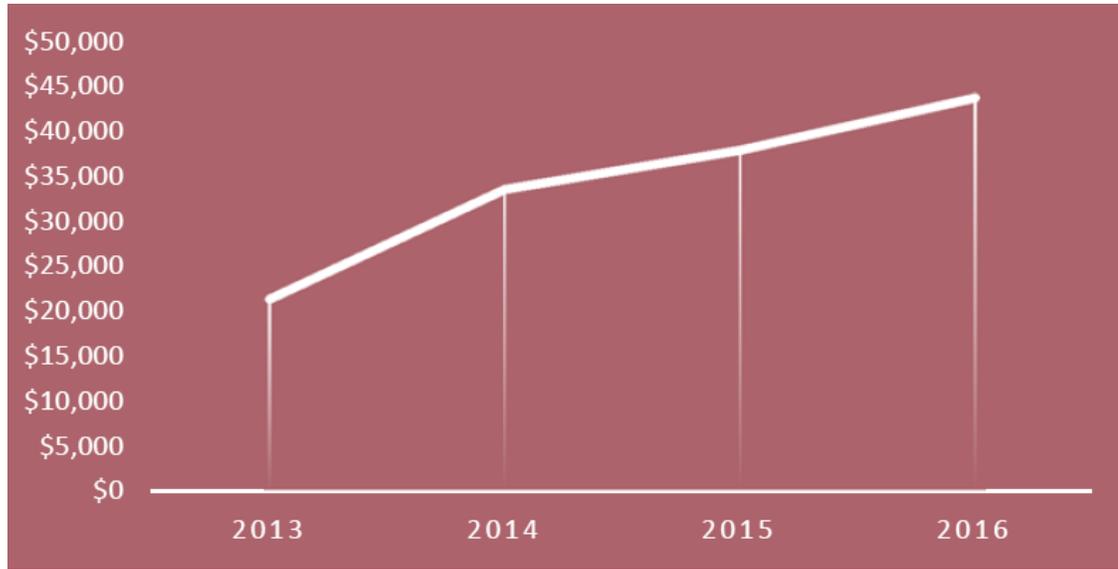
During initial interviews with local stakeholders, it was noted by some members of the community that the transient nature of renters has led to a disconnect between long-term residents and the surrounding neighborhood. It was also noted that the rental properties, particularly those owned and managed by people who do not live in the immediate area, are often not properly maintained.

#### B. HOUSING COSTS AND AFFORDABILITY

In order to understand recent sales trends in the VOBOA Study Area, city assessment data and residential property sales that occurred between March 2013 and February 2016 were reviewed. During that three-year time period the Study Area saw thirty-four residential properties sell, ranging from a single-family homes to larger multi-unit apartment buildings. Of the thirty-four sales that occurred, 82 percent had a sale price of less than \$50,000.

Overall, sales prices for single-family homes in the Study Area have increased, with prices rising 78 percent between 2013 and 2015. Two homes sold in 2016 for an average of \$49,500, continuing the trend of the past two years. **Figure 15** illustrates the increase in single-family home values over the three-year period.

**Figure 15: Single Family Home Values - 2013 through 2016**



Source: RKG Associates, 2016

Data on rental rates was not readily available for the VOBOA. Over the past few years, a number of properties have been purchased by both local and out-of-state investors to be converted into rental housing. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that in some cases, single-family homes, which were once owner-occupied, have been converted into rental properties with multiple units in a single building.

An online search for current rental rates for units in the VOBOA, as well as in the nearby 19th Ward neighborhood was completed to gain a better understanding of market rents for the area. A majority of the available online listings for properties in the VOBOA were found on the D’Alessandro Home Buyers website, and offered units that had been recently renovated with higher-end finishes than some of the other rental units found on other sites. These units were listed at higher monthly rent prices than the units found on Zillow or on the University’s off-campus housing website. A number of properties located in the 19th Ward neighborhood were found on the University of Rochester’s Off Campus Connection website, and offered a bit more variety in terms of price points. **Figure 16** shows the range of rents by bedroom count from units in the VOBOA and 19th Ward neighborhood.

**Figure 16: Rental Rates by Bedroom Count**

Unit Type	Listings	Low Price	High Price	Average Price
Studio	5	\$600	\$750	\$669
One Bed	13	\$350	\$825	\$548
Two Bed	2	\$650	\$750	\$700
Three Bed	5	\$725	\$1,385	\$1,113
Four Bed	18	\$1,200	\$2,510	\$1,795
Five Bed	3	\$1,525	\$2,025	\$1,750

Source: Zillow, Trulia, University of Rochester, D’Alessandro House Buyers, RKG Associates 2016

A rule of thumb for the portion of income that a family could spend on rent or a mortgage and still have enough left over for other necessary spending (e.g., food, medical costs, etc.) is 30 percent. That is how housing affordability is calculated. Housing affordability for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing is a challenge in the VOBOA because of relatively low household incomes. Rising housing costs, particularly rents in the area, are a chief concern of neighborhood residents. Within the VOBOA, there is a mismatch between household income and housing cost for both owners and renters. For ownership units, the average sale price is relatively low, which means households live in housing priced *lower* than what they could afford. In accordance with the rule of thumb for housing affordability, for-sale units are generally affordable for VOBOA residents, which allows households to save money on housing costs. However, some of those owner occupants are occupying housing that might otherwise be available to households earning less. According to the CHAS data (**Figure 17**), there are 50 owner households earning more than 80 percent of area median income (AMI)<sup>6</sup> that are living in housing affordable to those earning less than 80 percent AMI.

**Figure 17: Affordability Mismatch for Owner-occupied Housing**

Owner-occupied Units are Occupied by:	Homeowner Costs Affordable To:		
	Household Income ≤ 50.0% AMI	Household Income 50.1 – 80.0%	Household Income > 80.0%
Household Incomes ≤ 50% AMI	43	4	20
Household Incomes between 50.1 – 80%	90	0	30
Household Incomes ≥ 80.0%	139	0	4
<b>Grant Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>54</b>

Source: HUD CHAS Tables, 2008 – 2012, RKG Associates 2016

At the same time, there are 229 households earning less than 50 percent AMI that are living in homes that are considered affordable to households earning more than 50 percent AMI. These are households that are spending more on a mortgage than they can comfortably afford. This indicates a need for additional homeowner options that are affordable to households earning less than 50 percent AMI.

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<sup>6</sup> The area median income is \$18,000 as discussed in Section 3.1.5.

The situation on the rental side is a bit different. **Figure 18** shows that within the VOBOA, there approximately 454 households earning less than 50 percent AMI are living in units affordable to households earning between 50 and 80 percent of AMI. These are single person householders and families who earn below 50 percent of AMI living in rental units priced higher than they can afford. This has implications on the choices households have to make when it comes to the trade-offs between affording housing, or buying food, clothes, or having reliable transportation to work.

**Figure 18: Affordability Mismatch for Rental Housing**

Rental Units are Occupied by:	Rent Affordable to:		
	Household Income ≤ 50.0% AMI	Household Income 50.1 – 80.0%	Household Income > 80.0%
Household Incomes ≤ 50% AMI	529	454	14
Household Incomes between 50.1 – 80%	180	165	0
Household Incomes ≥ 80.0%	44	110	30
<b>GrandTotal</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>44</b>

Source: HUD CHAS Tables, 2008 – 2012, RKG Associates 2016

**Figure 19** summarizes an evaluation of hypothetical owner and renter costs relative to household income. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the rent or mortgage a household could afford, based on their income and assuming households spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs.

**Figure 19: Affordability Matrix for Owner and Renter Housing**

Gross Income	Ownership [1]		Monthly Rent [2]
	Low Value	High Value	
\$20,000	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$500
\$40,000	\$100,000	\$160,000	\$1,000
\$75,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$1,875
\$100,000	\$275,000	\$375,000	\$2,500
\$125,000	\$360,000	\$500,000	\$3,125
\$150,000	\$425,000	\$600,000	\$3,750
[1] Ownership Assumptions	Low	High	
Interest Rate	5.00%	3.75%	
Term	30	30	
Down payment	5%	20%	
RE TAXES/1000	\$32.19	\$32.19	
	(2016 for City, school, county)		
Embellishment Fee	\$255	\$255	
Insurance /1000	\$272.00	\$272.00	
Cost as % of Income	28%	28%	
[2] Rental Cost factored at 30% of gross income			

Source: RKG Associates, 2016

To summarize the findings shown in **Figure 19**:

- With a 5 percent mortgage interest rate for 30 years and a down payment of 5 percent, a household with gross earnings of \$20,000 could theoretically afford a \$50,000 home, realizing that monthly costs are not to exceed 28 percent of the gross income.
- If the same household, with \$20,000 in gross annual earnings, could offer a 20 percent down payment, thereby receiving an interest rate of 3.75 percent, then the household could theoretically afford a \$75,000 home.
- Assuming rents are limited to 30 percent of gross income, a household earning \$20,000 gross annual income could theoretically afford a monthly rent of \$500.

According to ESRI's figures, the 2015 median household income for the VOBOA was just under \$18,000 per year. Applying this income information to the analysis above, this income makes it difficult for some households to afford homes of \$50,000 and rents at \$500 per month. However, as stated above, 82 percent of home sales in the VOBOA between 2013-2016 had a selling price of less than \$50,000. While building condition data for those sales was not readily available, it is possible that some buildings sold at market price or as part of an auction may need repairs and rehabilitation. If housing prices continue to rise and incomes stay the same, it may become more difficult for neighborhood residents to afford homeownership opportunities. Embellishment fees and refuse collection fees would also add to the cost of the home, dependent upon the type of residence and the linear feet of frontage along the roadway where the house is located.

For renter-occupied units, it is not surprising that current residents in the VOBOA are finding it more difficult to afford monthly rents. Many of the recently renovated properties in the VOBOA have starting rents above \$500 a month. As properties continue to turn over and become rehabilitated, rents will likely continue to rise. If incomes in the VOBOA do not also rise, it will become more difficult for current residents to find affordable rental housing options. Quality housing options are needed for households earning less than 50 percent AMI.

### **C. AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURES**

The condition of the residential structures in the VOBOA is directly related to the age of those structures. According to property records from the City's Assessment Bureau, 77 percent of the residential structures in the VOBOA were constructed prior to 1940 with 40 percent of those properties constructed prior to 1900. Of all the buildings constructed before 1940, 68 percent are listed as single-family residences in the Assessor's database. This means the majority of homes are approaching eighty years of age and a subset of homeowners and property managers who cannot afford to, or are choosing not to, maintain those structures. Homeowners with lower incomes may be unable to pay for home improvements or to secure a loan for home improvements from traditional lending institutions.

**Figure 20** shows the location of structures within the VOBOA categorized by age. The red dots represent structures which have been constructed in the last twenty to twenty-five years. These structures are limited to less than 5 percent of the residential housing stock in the VOBOA and most are located on the north side of the Study Area along Doran Street and Plymouth Avenue.

Figure 20: Year Structure Was Built

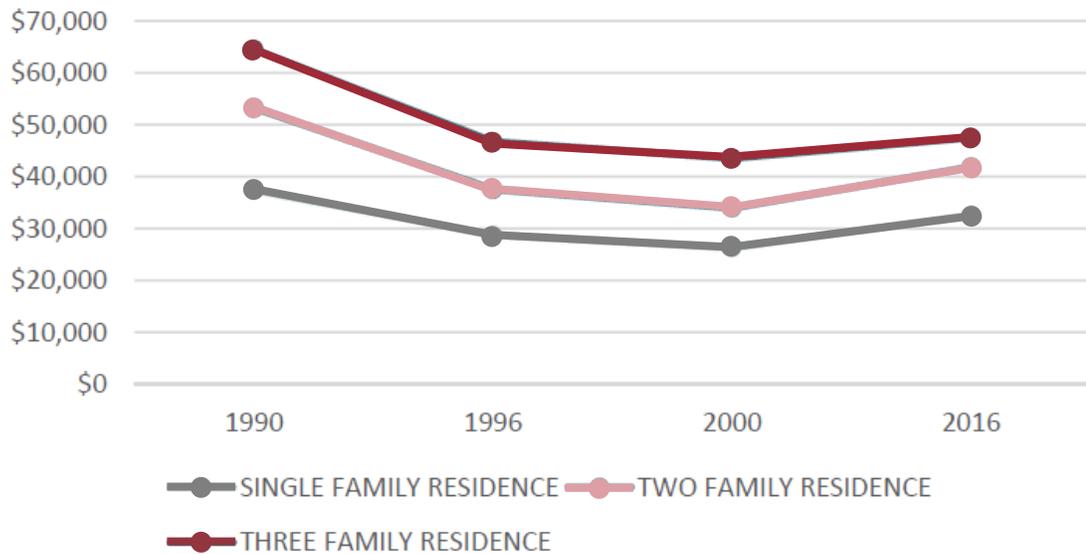


Source: City of Rochester Assessment Bureau, RKG Associates 2016

**D. CHANGES IN ASSESSED VALUE**

Concerns regarding the impact of taxes on housing affordability were expressed by residents during neighborhood meetings and stakeholder interviews. Generally, increases in taxes result from one of three scenarios: 1) the tax rate and associated embellishments increase over time; 2) the assessed value of a property increases over time; or 3) a combination of the two. In Rochester, property is assessed and then taxed at one of two rates: the Homestead Rate and the Non-Homestead Rate. Single-family, two-family, and three-family residential properties in the city are taxed at the Homestead Rate, which is approximately 40 percent lower than the Non-Homestead Rate. A review of historical assessed values of residential parcels in the VOBOA that would qualify for the Homestead Rate indicated that, between 1990 and 2000, assessed values decreased rapidly and have slightly rebounded between 2000 and 2016 (Figure 21).

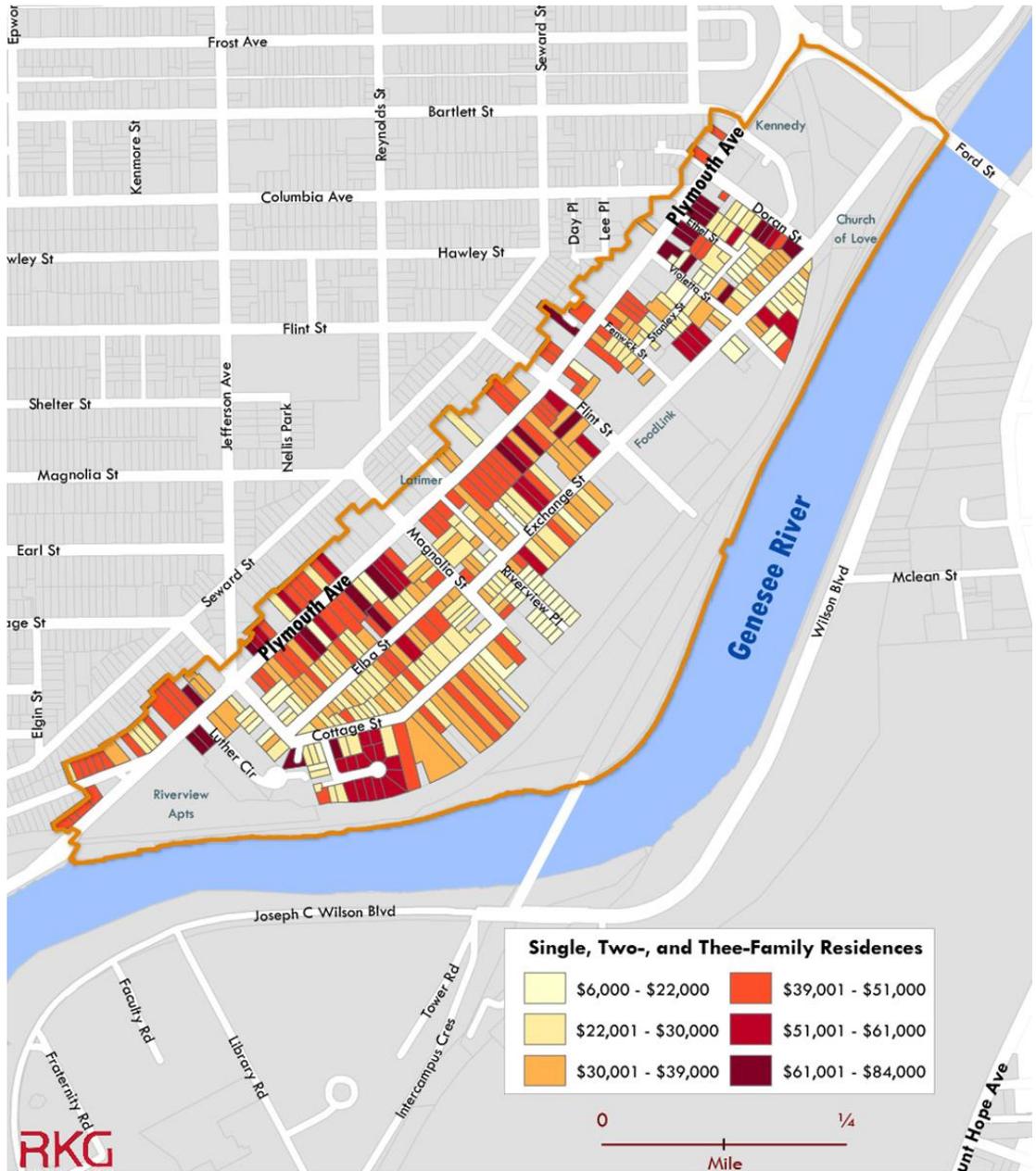
**Figure 21: Changes in Residential Assessed Value, 1990 to 2016**



Source: City of Rochester Assessment Bureau, RKG Associates 2016

The highest assessed values in the VOBOA are properties along S. Plymouth Avenue and along Doran Street where new homes have been constructed or rehabilitation of existing housing has occurred. Outside of that area, assessed values remain generally low with the average single-family home assessed close to \$30,000. Assessed values have decreased over the twenty-six year period and have not rebounded to pre-1990 levels, suggesting that changes in assessed value would not be a likely cause of any residential displacement in the VOBOA. Figure 22 illustrates the most current assessed values for single, two-, and three-family properties in the VOBOA.

**Figure 22: Residential Assessed Value, 2016**



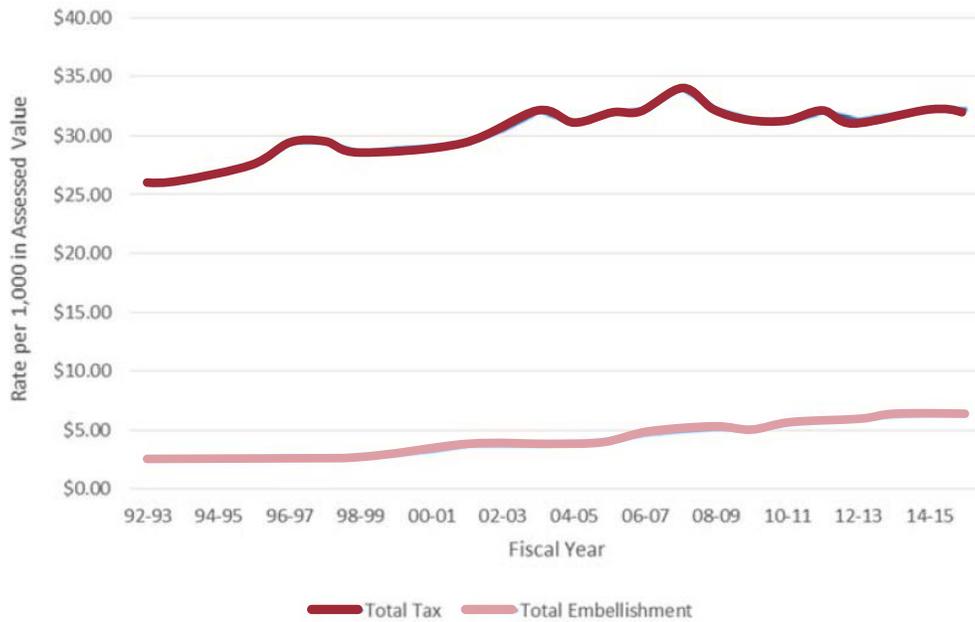
Source: City of Rochester Assessment Bureau, RKG Associates, 2016

**E. CHANGES IN TAXATION**

The Homestead-eligible property tax bill takes into account separate taxes for the city, the school district, the county, a series of five embellishment charges, and a city trash collection fee that varies based on the type of residential property. City, school, and county taxes are levied per \$1,000 in assessed value, meaning if a property is assessed at \$50,000 each tax rate is multiplied by fifty. In addition, the five embellishment charges are based on the amount of frontage a parcel has along a street. For example, if a parcel has fifty feet of frontage each embellishment charge is multiplied by fifty and added to provide the total embellishment charge. Embellishment charges may be levied for snow plowing, street cleaning, partial street cleaning, sidewalk snow clearance, and hazardous sidewalk repairs.

Between 1993 and 2016, the combined city/school/county tax rate increased by 24 percent while the combined embellishment charges increased by 142 percent. **Figure 23** shows the change in the total tax rate and the total embellishment rate over the 23-year timeframe.

**Figure 23: Change in Tax and Embellishment Rates, 1993 - 2016**



Source: City of Rochester Assessment Bureau, RKG Associates, 2016

To provide some relief from the tax burden on owner-occupied residential properties, the State of New York offers tax exemptions for qualified homeowners under the School Tax Relief Program (STAR). Under this program, there are two types of exemptions: the Basic STAR and the Enhanced STAR. The basic STAR program is available to owner-occupied primary residences where the owner’s total income is less than \$500,000 per year. If a homeowner falls under this category, they are eligible to receive a check from the state, which provides a reimbursement on a portion of their city and school taxes. The state currently exempts up to the first \$20,100 in assessed value, which lowers the homeowners overall taxable assessed value. The Enhanced STAR program offers additional relief to homeowners over the age of 65 with a household income of less than \$84,550. This program exempts up to \$43,750 from the homeowners assessed value and can be applied to the city and school taxes.

To ensure low-income senior households are offered additional assistance with their taxes, the state also offers the Senior Citizens Aged Exemption. This exemption is based off a sliding income scale that begins at a 5 percent exemption for senior households earning a maximum of \$37,500 per year and goes up to a 50 percent exemption for households earning less than \$29,000 a year. The interesting piece with the Aged Exemption is it can be combined with the Enhanced STAR exemption to allow for a significant reduction in the base assessed value of the property. RKG tested the STAR, Enhanced STAR, and Aged Exemption programs on three hypothetical properties that are representative of what would be found in the VOBOA to gauge the impact of property taxes on the affordability of owner-occupied housing. The typical tax bill for a single - family property in the VOBOA assessed at \$32,000, inclusive of embellishments and refuse fees, would come in around \$1,700 per year. With a STAR exemption, that tax bill would be lowered by about \$400 to \$1,300 per year.

A property that qualifies for the Enhanced STAR exemption would pay around \$828 per year, and a property with an Aged and Enhanced STAR exemption would only be liable for paying the embellishment and refuse fees, which would come in around \$660 per year. The combined Aged and Enhanced Star exemptions essentially absolve the property owner from any property taxes to the city, school, and county leaving the owner with just the embellishment and refuse charges for the year. While embellishment charges have gone up substantially, the rate is still only \$5.62 per linear foot of frontage, which is much lower than the tax rate. In addition to the income-eligible programs, the City also offers exemption programs for veterans, people with disabilities, residential capital improvements, and solar/wind/farm energy systems.

#### **F. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS AND CODE VIOLATIONS**

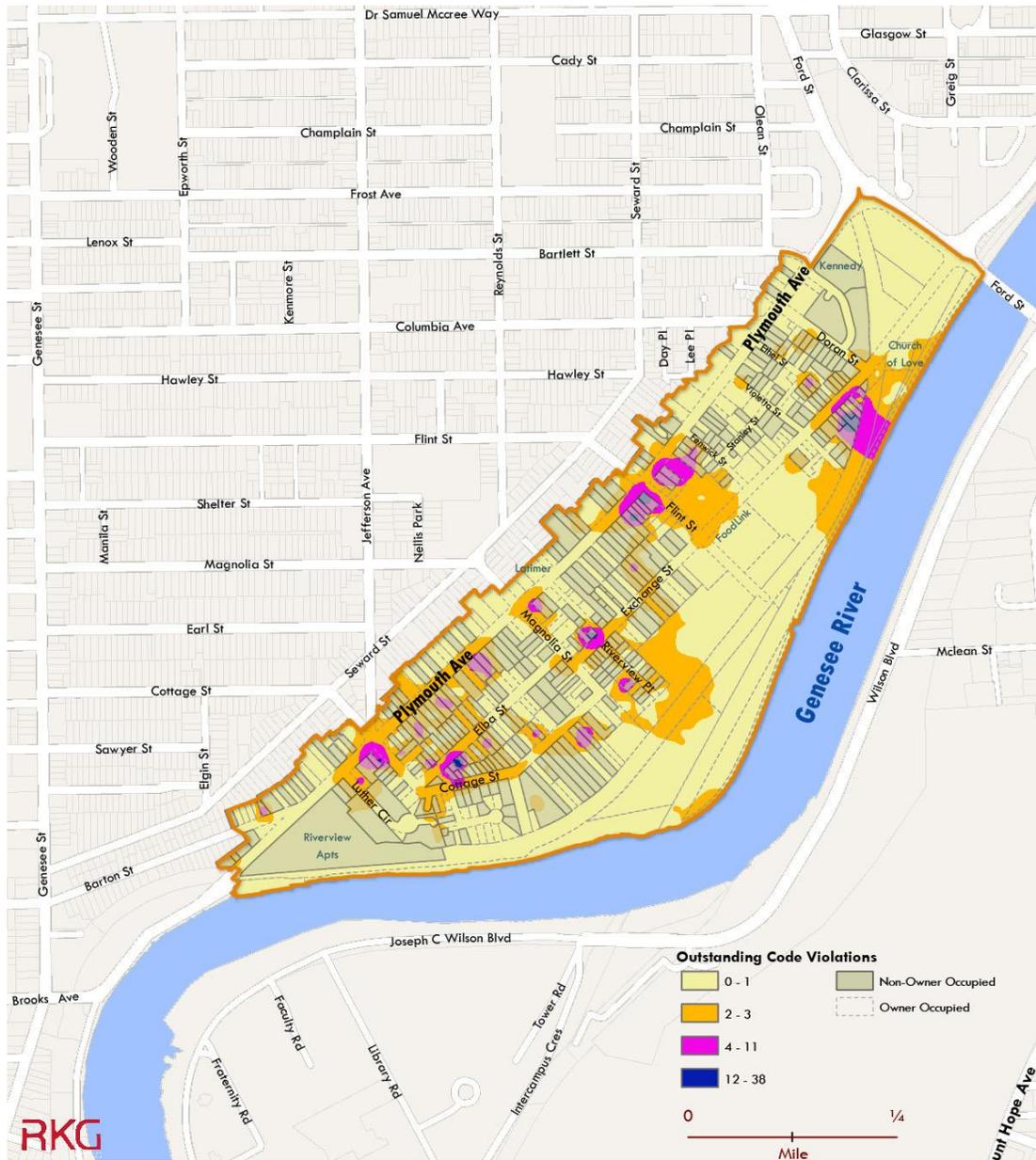
Within the VOBOA, nearly 80 percent of housing units are not occupied by the owner of the property. These properties are owned by landlords who may live in the neighborhood, another part of Rochester, or in some cases may live in another part of the country or the world.

Decades of disinvestment have created conditions where vacant properties have been foreclosed upon, thus creating opportunities for landlords to purchase properties at a low price. With the uptick in the rental market, this practice has affected the VOBOA and is projected to become more prevalent, as demand for housing related to the University and other nearby employment centers grows.

Properties owned by landlords are scattered fairly evenly throughout the VOBOA. While the City's inspection staff may be seeking to correct code violations on a property, communicating with out of town landlords can be a challenging and complicated process. Currently, 375 (73%) of the 517 parcels in the VOBOA are owned by people whose place of residence is outside the VOBOA. Most (78%) of the landlords who own property in the VOBOA reside in Rochester, with an additional 15 percent residing elsewhere in New York. The remaining 7 percent are spread across twelve states and two countries.

**Figure 24** shows the location of parcels that are owned by people whose place of residence is different than the parcel address. The study compared the location of these parcels to current code violation data from the City. The correlation between the two is quite apparent, particularly in the central and southern portions of the VOBOA.

**Figure 24: Code Violations and Occupancy**



Source: RKG Associates, 2016

During the planning process, residents voiced concern about the perceived lack of enforcement and responsiveness of landlords regarding code violations issued by the City. As of April 2016, properties in the VOBOA accumulated 558 individual outstanding code violations with 90 open cases. Not surprisingly, many of these violations could be tied to the prevalence of vacant land and structures in the VOBOA, as well as properties that are managed by long distance landlords. Of the ninety open cases, 90 percent (81 cases) were tied to properties owned by someone who did not reside at that property. Over 52 percent of the outstanding cases (293) were tied to long distance landlords.

### 3.5 Strategic Sites

Step 2 of the VOBOA planning project identified several Strategic Sites that are important to the future revitalization of the Study Area and are essential to achieving the community’s vision (**Map 11**). Through redevelopment, reuse, and improvements to existing infrastructure, it is possible to capture the economic potential of these strategic, yet underutilized, sites. Capitalizing on this potential could eventually result in economic and social benefits to the area’s residents. As catalyst projects, investment at these Strategic Sites could spur investment at nearby sites, increase adjacent land values, and create jobs. In addition, investment in these vacant or underutilized sites could increase access to services and amenities for residents, thus improving quality of life.

Strategic Redevelopment Sites were selected for their suitability based on the following criteria:

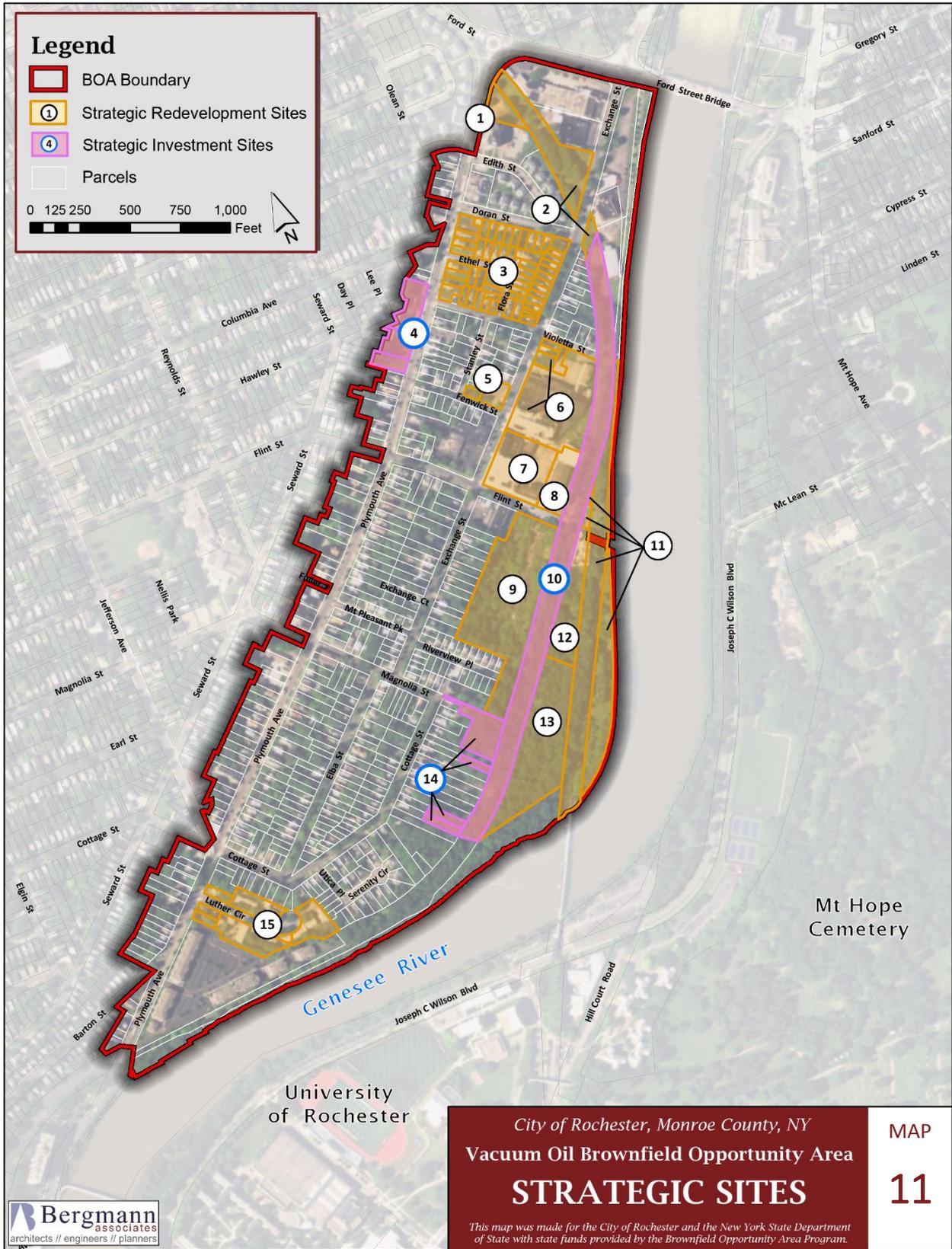
- Strategic location (i.e. proximity to downtown and/or major corridors);
- Ownership status (i.e., vacant vs. occupied, public vs. private);
- Brownfield status;
- Adequacy and availability of infrastructure;
- Potential to improve quality of life;
- Potential to provide amenities to the public;
- Potential to realize the community’s vision;
- Potential to catalyze growth in the vicinity of the site; and
- Accessibility.

In addition, several Strategic Investment Sites were selected based on their potential to contribute to overall revitalization and redevelopment on surrounding properties. It is important to recognize that the ownership of these strategic sites will play an important role in how these properties contribute to the VOBOA revitalization process.

Strategic Site		Site Type	Description
1	632 Plymouth Avenue	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.52 acres</li> <li>• Site of former Fire Station</li> <li>• Currently vacant</li> <li>• Adjacent to PLEX Park (Exchange St Playground)</li> <li>• Gateway into the VOBOA</li> <li>• City owned</li> <li>• Phase I ESA completed in 2015</li> <li>• Zoned R-3</li> </ul>
2	719-775 Exchange Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.97 acres</li> <li>• Currently the Exchange Street Playground</li> <li>• Potential park enhancement and extension to connect to the Genesee River</li> <li>• City owned</li> <li>• Zoned O-S</li> </ul>
3	Doran / Flora / Violetta / Ethel Streets	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 parcels</li> <li>• 5.0 acres</li> <li>• Primarily residential</li> <li>• Privately owned (some vacant parcels owned by City of Rochester)</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoned R-1</li> </ul>
	<b>Strategic Site</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	761 – 793 South Plymouth Ave (MLK Plaza)	Strategic Investment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.67 acres</li> <li>Neighborhood shopping center</li> <li>Privately owned</li> <li>Zoned C-1</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	887 Exchange and 12 Fenwick (Fenwick Site )	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 parcels</li> <li>0.49 acres</li> <li>Vacant parking lot</li> <li>Privately owned</li> <li>Zoned R-1</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	920 Exchange Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.52 acres</li> <li>Part of the former Vacuum Oil Site, former Sears Warehouse</li> <li>Vacant warehouse building (144,000 sq. ft.)</li> <li>Zoned M-1</li> <li>Privately owned</li> <li>Phase I environmental site assessment (ESA) completed, preliminary Phase II finished in '16</li> <li>Land appraisal completed in 2016 (see <b>Appendix 17</b>)</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	936 Exchange Street (Foodlink)	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.96 acres</li> <li>Part of the former Vacuum Oil Site</li> <li>Former Foodlink Distribution Center</li> <li>Vacant industrial warehouse building and water tower (25,500 square feet)</li> <li>Zoned M-1</li> <li>Privately Owned</li> <li>Environmental subsurface investigations completed</li> <li>Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	22 Flint Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0.93 acres</li> <li>Part of the former Vacuum Oil Site</li> <li>Vacant industrial building</li> <li>Privately owned</li> <li>Zoned M-1</li> <li>Environmental subsurface investigations completed</li> <li>Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>9</b>	15 Flint Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.55 acres</li> <li>Former storage facility, part of the former Vacuum Oil site, later used as a scrap metal and auto wrecking yard</li> <li>Vacant</li> <li>Privately owned</li> <li>Zoned R-1</li> <li>Phase I and II ESAs are completed</li> <li>Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	Genesee Valley Canal (former canal bed)	Strategic Investment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9.55 acres (linear parcel)</li> <li>Former canal bed, traverses the VOBOA study area north/south parallel to the Genesee River</li> <li>Economic benefit tied to its contribution to development of surrounding parcels</li> <li>City owned</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental subsurface investigations completed, Phase I ESA completed in 2015</li> <li>• Portions of the canal are part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
	<b>Strategic Site</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>11</b>	Waterfront Lands (102 Violetta, 100 Riverview Place, 940 Exchange)	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 parcels</li> <li>• 8.6 acres</li> <li>• Publicly owned</li> <li>• Part of the former Vacuum Oil site</li> <li>• Zoned R-1</li> <li>• Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>12</b>	5 Flint Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.61 acres</li> <li>• Privately owned</li> <li>• Part of the former Vacuum Oil site</li> <li>• Vacant building</li> <li>• Zoned R-1</li> <li>• Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>13</b>	13 Cottage Street	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.98 acres</li> <li>• Vacant land</li> <li>• City owned</li> <li>• Zoned R-1</li> <li>• Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>14</b>	1 Cottage Street, 31 Cottage Street, 69 & 65 Cottage Street	Strategic Investment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 parcels</li> <li>• 1.39 acres</li> <li>• City owned</li> <li>• Vacant land</li> <li>• Zoned R-1</li> <li>• Part of the Brownfield Clean-up Program</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	Luther Circle	Strategic Redevelopment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 parcels</li> <li>• 2.62 acres</li> <li>• Private and public ownership (Rochester Housing Authority)</li> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Zoned R-1</li> </ul>



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Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.



## 4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

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### 4.1 Introduction

Sections 1 through 3 of this report described the VOBOA planning process, the future vision and desired outcomes of revitalization, and existing conditions that will influence redevelopment. This section translates the community's vision into action. It describes the specific projects that emerged from the analysis of existing conditions and community's vision for revitalization. The VOBOA Plan includes recommended development projects, housing strategies, parks, trails, and infrastructure improvements to be completed over the next 20-years. Implementing the vision is the subject of numerous studies that informed the following subsections. These studies analyzed the feasibility of the overall vision and all of its component parts (e.g., parks, housing, transportation, etc.). The studies led to implementation alternatives and the potential impacts and mitigation of those alternatives.

While adoption of the VOBOA Plan will not directly impact the physical environment, it will provide information for the community and decision makers as implementation actions move through project development and approval processes. The plan presents options to promote revitalization and addresses the potential impacts of implementation. The following subsections “test” the VOBOA Vision Plan by exploring the potential adverse impacts of various development alternatives considered during the planning process, and documenting options to help guide the community during implementation.

The potential adverse impacts and mitigation options are summarized in a table in each subsection. The columns of the summary table are described below:

- **Potential Adverse Impact:** This column describes the negative effects that may be caused by implementation of the subject proposal/alternative.
- **Mitigation Action:** This column describes actions that may be taken to lessen the negative effects described in the first column.
- **Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications:** This column describes how the mitigation action is implemented through project approvals or through implementing contract specifications.

#### 4.1.1 Description of Alternatives

The community-led visioning process of the Step 2 VOBOA planning process led to the three phases of plan implementation listed below. The Step 3 VOBOA Implementation Strategy consolidates Development Phase 1 and Development Phase 2 into the “Partial Buildout” alternative, which can be viewed as an interim step between “No Build” and “Full Buildout” or as the final step of implementation in and of itself, depending on the level of development the City pursues. Development Phase 3, as identified in the Step 2 VOBOA planning process, is considered the “Full Buildout” alternative in this Implementation Strategy, meaning that the VOBOA 2035 Vision Plan is fully executed. The Implementation Strategy also includes an additional “No Build” alternative that reflects no plan implementation, where the current market trends continue as is.

Step 2 VOBOA Planning Process	Step 3 VOBOA Implementation Strategy
	<b>Alternative 1:</b> No Build
<b>Development Phase 1:</b> 0-7 years	<b>Alternative 2:</b> Partial Buildout (0-15 years)
<b>Development Phase 2:</b> 8-15 years	
<b>Development Phase 3:</b> 15+ years	<b>Alternative 3:</b> Full Buildout (15+ years)

Since the completion of the Step 2 VOBOA planning process, a number of sites highlighted in the Vision Plan have advanced to various phases of implementation. As such, project phasing included in the Implementation Actions Matrix in **Section 4.7.1** has been updated to reflect this progress. It is important to recognize that the timing and pace of progress at any individual parcel will be influenced by many factors including complexity and cost of any required environmental cleanup. Sites that have made significant progress or that have plans to begin development include:

- **5 and 15 Flint Street:** The owners of these parcels are in the process of site investigation and cleanup, with plans to advance site development in the short-term. As previously noted, these parcels are currently enrolled in the Brownfield Clean Up Program with the existing owners currently preparing site redevelopment plans.
- **632 Plymouth Avenue (Former Dry Cleaner Site):** The original vision plan identified new commercial development for this parcel. Subsequent to the preparation of the Vision Plan, local community members engaged in a planning process to identify a preferred vision for an expanded PLEX Park. The City worked with the community to submit a grant application to New York State which was not funded. However, the preferred vision continues to support open space and passive recreation amenities on this site in support of neighborhood residents and specifically residents at Kennedy Towers.
- **Northwest Corner of Violetta and Exchange:** The original Vision Plan indicated mixed use development on this parcel, which is currently an underutilized surface parking lot. Based on the desire to retain the existing residential character in place along Exchange Street, as well as subsequent market analysis, the preferred vision for this site has been modified to reflect attached, single family home development.

**A. STEP 2 VOBOA: DEVELOPMENT PHASE 1 (0-7 YEARS)**

As indicated on **Map 12**, the first seven years of plan implementation involve a significant level of public expenditure on environmental investigations, the acquisition of property, the demolition of substandard structures, and the installation of necessary infrastructure to support continued investments by private interests. There remains a level of uncertainty regarding the extent and intensity of any environmental contamination present on sites within the former Vacuum Oil refinery footprint.

However, multiple sites within the refinery footprint, both publicly and privately held, are currently enrolled in the NYS Brownfield Cleanup Program. This action may expedite development on key parcels currently identified in Phase 2 or Phase 3 of the Vision Plan, including 5 and 15 Flint Street.

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**KEY**

- 1. Commercial Redevelopment
- 2. Infill Development
- 3. Commercial Redevelopment
- 4. Flint Street Green Infrastructure Improvements
- 5. Multi-Family Housing and Roadway Connection
- 6. Trail Enhancements
  - Interpretation
  - Safety
  - Vegetation Clearing
- 7. Car Top Launch / Water Access
- 8. Interim Parking
- 9. Parkland and Trail Development
- 10. Site Preparation
  - Demolition
  - Remediation
- 11. New Road Construction
- 12. Exchange Street Gateway and Streetscape
- 13. Enhanced Trail Connection and Playground



SEE ALTERNATIVE CONNECTION TO MAGNOLIA STREET VIGNETTE

**Alternative Connection to Magnolia Street**



Alternative Connection to Magnolia Street Showing No Vehicular Connection.





**B. STEP 2 VOBOA: DEVELOPMENT PHASE 2 (8-15 YEARS)**

After approximately seven years, initial investments in the VOBOA should be well underway and the City will be poised to leverage the infrastructure and pre-development activities taking place in Phase I. **Map 13** depicts development projects which kick-off the building program and are anticipated to attract a critical mass of new residents to the neighborhood. Proposed development should include high-quality public realm improvements that will enhance the quality of life for existing residents, while also attracting on-going investment in complementary services to meet the needs of the expanded population such as retail, office, personal services and cultural facilities.

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**KEY**

1. Commercial Redevelopment
2. Infill Development
3. Commercial Redevelopment
4. Flint Street Green Infrastructure Improvements
5. Multi-Family Housing and Roadway Connection
6. Trail Enhancements
  - Interpretation
  - Safety
  - Vegetation Clearing
7. Car Top Launch / Water Access
8. *Interim Parking Removed in 8-15 Year Plan*
9. Parkland and Trail Development
10. *Site Preparation Completed in 0-7 Year Plan*
11. New Road Construction
12. Exchange Street Gateway and Streetscape
13. Enhanced Trail Connection and Playground
14. Housing Redevelopment
15. Mixed Use Development
16. Foodlink Redevelopment
17. Mixed Use Development
18. Waterfront Mixed Use
  - Adaptive Reuse of 5 Flint Street
19. Waterfront Mixed Use with Structured Parking
20. Waterfront Amphitheater
21. Public Gathering / Event Space
22. Canal Interpretation / Water Feature
23. Wetland Interpretation and Nature Trail



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City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
**Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area**  
**2035 VISION PLAN | 8-15 YEARS**

MAP  
**13**

This effort was made possible with the guidance and financial assistance provided by the New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.



**C. STEP 2 VOBOA: DEVELOPMENT PHASE 3 (15+ YEARS)**

After fifteen years of development, revitalization and investment in the VOBOA should have established a critical mass of new residents and businesses capable of supporting a sustainable neighborhood economy. **Map 14** depicts Phase 3 development projects which bring the VOBOA to Full Buildout and concentrate development within the former Vacuum Oil refinery footprint. By the beginning of Phase 3, the neighborhood will be a desirable location for 'Living by the River' in Rochester, and a neighborhood of choice with a diversity of housing alternatives and convenient access to employment opportunities, recreation options, and retail and personal services establishments.

Development character should be similar and complementary to Phase 2, with buildings ranging from two to four stories, a minimal amount of surface parking, a significant emphasis placed upon the quality and definition of public realm improvements, and the provision of ample open space for the use and enjoyment of the neighborhood.

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**KEY**

1. Commercial Redevelopment
2. Infill Development
3. Commercial Redevelopment
4. Flint Street Green Infrastructure Improvements
5. Multi-Family Housing and Roadway Connection
6. Trail Enhancements
  - Interpretation
  - Safety
  - Vegetation Clearing
7. Car Top Launch / Water Access
8. *Interim Parking Removed in 8-15 Year Plan*
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10. *Site Preparation Completed in 0-7 Year Plan*
11. New Road Construction
12. Exchange Street Gateway and Streetscape
13. Enhanced Trail Connection and Playground
14. Housing Redevelopment
15. Mixed Use Development
16. Foodlink Redevelopment
17. Mixed Use Development
18. Waterfront Mixed Use
  - Adaptive Reuse of 5 Flint Street
19. Waterfront Mixed Use with Structured Parking
20. Waterfront Amphitheater
21. Public Gathering / Event Space
22. Canal Interpretation / Water Feature
23. Wetland Interpretation and Nature Trail
24. Mixed Use Development with Structured Parking
25. Mixed Use Development



SEE ALTERNATIVE EXCHANGE STREET REDEVELOPMENT VIGNETTE

**Alternative Exchange Street Redevelopment**



Alternative Shows Example Redevelopment of Existing Canfield and Tack Site if Company Were to Relocate From Site.





## 4.2 Impacts, Alternatives, and Mitigation

### 4.2.1 Land Use

#### A. EXISTING LAND USE

A complete analysis of existing land use can be found in **Section 3.2.1**. Key takeaways from this analysis are as follows:

- Nearly half of the VOBOA Study Area is devoted to housing.
- The South Plymouth corridor is largely residential with limited pockets of mixed-use development.
- Vacant land and vacant buildings at Flint/Exchange Streets negatively impacts the neighborhood today, but presents an opportunity for new development.

#### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

This alternative does not implement any portion of the plan, thereby retaining existing land use as mentioned above. Under this alternative, land use in the VOBOA will remain largely residential and existing vacant land may not be developed.

**C. ALTERNATIVE 2: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS)**

New land uses, as well as the associated number of new residents and employees, from the Partial Buildout are described and quantified in **Figure 25** below. It should be noted that this is the maximum potential build-out and does not imply the planned or proposed build out in place today. These numbers are provided for planning and mitigation purposes only.

- **Residential.** The VOBOA Plan envisions up to 314 new residential units over a 15-year timeframe, averaging 21 new units per year.
- **Office.** Partial Buildout envisions over 80,000 square feet of new office space that could equate to up to 500 new employees.
- **Restaurant and retail.** Partial Buildout envisions about 24,000 square feet of new restaurant space and 38,000 square feet of retail space, resulting in approximately 120 restaurant and 75 retail jobs.
- **Manufacturing.** An additional 52,000 square feet of manufacturing space would be created during the Partial Buildout, which equate to 26 new jobs.
- **Parks and open space.** Open space improvements undertaken during the Partial Buildout would include improvements to the existing Genesee Riverway Trail.
- **Other uses.** The addition of over 4,000 square feet of cultural space during the Partial Buildout would result in the creation of 1 additional job.

**Figure 25: Partial Buildout Analysis**

Use*	Total		Coefficient (per job or resident)**	Employees	Residents
Office (sf)	81,192	square feet	300	271	0
Restaurant (sf)	24,417	square feet	200	122	0
Manufacturing (sf)	52,250	square feet	2,000	26	0
Retail (sf)	37,812	square feet	500	76	0
Parking Garage (Spaces)	624	spaces	200	3	0
Meeting/Conference Space (sf)	0	square feet	2,500	0	0
Museums/Cultural Space (sf)	4,463	square feet	3,000	1	0
Hotel (Rooms)	0	rooms	0.44	0	0
Townhomes	21	units	2.09		44
Apartment/Condo	293	units	2.54		743
<b>Total</b>				<b>499</b>	<b>787</b>

Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition.

\*Additional parks and open space square footage is not included in this Buildout Analysis because its creation does not generate any new employees or residents.

\*\*A coefficient is used to convert or translate the addition of new developments to the number of new employees or residents occupying these developments. The coefficients in the above table can be interpreted as “number of [square feet, spaces, rooms, or units] per number of [employees or residents].” The additional square footage (or spaces, rooms, or units) of the new development is divided by its respective coefficient to determine the number of employees or residents that the new development will produce. For example, the coefficient for office space is 300 square feet per 1 employee and, when 144,645 square feet is divided by this coefficient, the result is 482 additional employees working in this new office space.

**D. ALTERNATIVE 3: FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)**

This alternative implements the complete VOBOA 2035 Vision Plan, as described below. **Figure 26** quantifies new land uses, including the total potential new residents and employees that may be expected based on new development.

- **Residential.** The VOBOA Plan envisions up to 415 new residential units over the plan implementation timeframe. Phased over a 20-year buildout timeframe, potential growth would average about 21 units per year.
- **Office.** The total amount of office space envisioned in the Full Buildout is 144,645 square feet, which would equate to roughly 482 employees.
- **Restaurant and retail.** The VOBOA Plan envisions about 32,067 square feet of new restaurant space and 50,095 square feet of retail space after Full Buildout is complete. This equates to about 160 restaurant jobs and 100 retail jobs.
- **Manufacturing.** The VOBOA Plan envisions 86,250 square feet of new manufacturing space, which equate to 43 new jobs.
- **Parks and open space.** Additional open space improvements in the VOBOA Plan include: a small pond in the southeast corner of the Study Area, Genesee Riverway Trail enhancements, and the possibility for a park at the former firehouse building.
- **Other uses.** Other uses, such as hotels, cultural space, and conference space will account for an additional 52 jobs upon Full Buildout of the VOBOA Plan.

**Figure 26: Full Buildout Analysis**

Use*	Total		Coefficient (per job or resident)**	Employees	Residents
Office (sf)	144,645	square feet	300	482	0
Restaurant (sf)	32,067	square feet	200	160	0
Manufacturing (sf)	86,250	square feet	2,000	43	0
Retail (sf)	50,095	square feet	500	100	0
Parking Garage (Spaces)	1,102	spaces	200	6	0
Meeting/Conference Space (sf)	5,006	square feet	2,500	2	0
Museums/Cultural Space (sf)	4,463	square feet	3,000	1	0
Hotel (Rooms)	97	rooms	0.44	43	0
Townhomes	47	units	2.09		98
Apartment/Condo	369	units	2.54		937
<b>Total</b>				<b>838</b>	<b>1,035</b>

Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition.

\*Additional parks and open space square footage is not included in this Buildout Analysis because its creation does not generate any new employees or residents.

\*\*A coefficient is used to convert or translate the addition of new developments to the number of new employees or residents occupying these developments. The coefficients in the above table can be interpreted as “number of [square feet, spaces, rooms, or units] per number of [employees or residents].” The additional square footage (or spaces, rooms, or units) of the new development is divided by its respective coefficient to determine the number of employees or residents that the new development will produce. For example, the coefficient for office space is 300 square feet per 1 employee and, when 144,645 square feet is divided by this coefficient, the result is 482 additional employees working in this new office space.

## E. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Implementation of the VOBOA Plan will result in changes to existing land uses as a result of new development. This may impact the neighborhood's demographic and economic character. The VOBOA Plan illustrates numerous opportunities for redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites for commercial, residential, light industrial, and recreation uses. A major objective of the revitalization process is to create jobs and demand for commercial services by attracting residents and business, as well as public and private investment. This demand may result in increased activity, opportunity, enhanced safety, and neighborhood vitality. The *PLEX Redevelopment and Community Health Toolkit (Appendix 8)* also identified multiple health-related benefits that would result from implementation including:

- **Economic Security.** By increasing employment opportunities, enhancing social support services, and reducing residents' cost of living, implementation of the VOBOA Plan could enhance economic security for residents. Economic security is important to health as it affords easier access to housing, food, medical care, and other expenses, while reducing stress and improving quality of life.
- **Housing Diversity.** The VOBOA Plan strives to ensure housing options for all incomes and ages, an important factor for mitigating certain social, physiological, and physical health risks. Housing that is accessible and affordable can limit the need for budget trade-offs, prevent income segregation and concentrated poverty, and provide safe and empowering options for aging residents.

While there are numerous benefits associated with implementation of the VOBOA Plan, the process of revitalization also carries inherent risks. Local experience suggests that these risks include changes to the neighborhood that may lead to displacement of current residents, both renters and owners. Other potential adverse impacts resulting from the land use changes envisioned in the VOBOA Plan include construction impacts and possibly conflicting land uses that impact quality of life. Mitigation actions are recommended to address the potential long-term impacts of gentrification, land use conflicts, and quality of life.

Inherent to the revitalization process in areas with concentration of brownfield sites are potential impacts and risk associates with the cleanup of contaminated properties. Such cleanup projects are very closely regulated and monitored. Mitigation of these impacts and risks are completed through the development of and compliance with health and safety plans, community air monitoring plans, quality assurance project plans and remediation action work plans and post-cleanup sampling.

## CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action(s)</i>	<i>Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications</i>
<b>Safety impacts to pedestrians, drivers, and workers due to use of construction vehicles and equipment.</b>	Prior to project approval, construction management objectives must be identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Work Zone Traffic Management Plan must describe how heavy equipment will be transported in and out of the site, location, staging and how it will be used during construction activities.</li> <li>• Project sponsors and/or Contractors will prepare a Protection and Maintenance of Traffic Plan.</li> <li>• Staging areas for construction vehicles must be designated in the plan. Staging areas for heavy equipment must not encroach on surrounding properties. Damage to vegetation or pavement caused by heavy equipment staging must be repaired upon completion of construction activities.</li> <li>• Trucks and other vehicles must enter and exit the site at a controlled gate and a preferred construction route will be identified.</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts to water quality due to soil erosion, loss of topsoil, excess nutrient and sedimentation, and stormwater runoff (as a result of grading activity during construction).</b>	For projects involving ground disturbance, an erosion and sediment control plan will be required. The erosion and sediment control plan must identify stormwater runoff prevention controls used to divert, infiltrate, reuse, contain or otherwise reduce stormwater runoff. The plan must also identify pollution prevention measures, such as maximizing infiltration to reduce runoff, using existing vegetated areas and buffering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parameters of an erosion control plan must be specified as conditions of approval.</li> <li>• Site work must be phased in order to limit impacted areas and work must be scheduled during periods of low rainfall.</li> <li>• Provisions will be made to protect against tracking dirt onto the rights-of-way.</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts to wildlife habitat due soil erosion, stormwater runoff.</b>	An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan must be developed that addresses impacts to wildlife habitat, including wetlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parameters of an erosion control plan must be specified as conditions of approval.</li> </ul>

## CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action(s)</i>	<i>Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications</i>
<b>Damage/removal of existing, non-invasive trees and vegetation.</b>	A tree and vegetation removal and replanting plan will be required upon final design. The tree planting and revegetation plan should identify trees and vegetation that will be removed, disturbed, or protected during construction. The plan will establish any invasive species and weed control program for revegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees larger than 3 inches in diameter must be protected from damage during construction.</li> <li>• Existing invasive species must be identified and removed during construction. Replacement species must be approved by the City of Rochester prior to planting.</li> </ul>
<b>Noise related to construction.</b>	A construction noise mitigation plan will be required during preliminary design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction activity shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 am to 10:00 pm, as allowed by City Code.</li> <li>• Trucks and other vehicles will enter and exit the site at a single entrance controlled gate to reduce residential disturbance.</li> <li>• A preferred construction route that minimizes impacts on residential properties will be identified.</li> </ul>

## POST-CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action(s)</i>	<i>Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications</i>
<b>Light pollution (ongoing and long-term).</b>	Design of street lighting should ensure that fixtures do not shine into adjacent properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To limit long-term light pollution, all new or replacement street light fixtures must be full cutoff.</li> </ul>
<b>Stormwater runoff (ongoing and long-term).</b>	To ensure that stormwater runoff resulting from increased impervious surfaces does not negatively impact the City's storm sewer system, private property, or the Genesee River, ongoing inspection will be required post construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parameters of an erosion control plan must be specified as conditions of approval.</li> <li>Site work must be phased in order to limit impacted areas and work must be scheduled during periods of low rainfall.</li> <li>Provisions will be made to protect against tracking dirt onto the rights-of-way.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat island effects.</b>	To ensure that additional impervious surfaces do not significantly contribute to heat island effects within the Study Area, the plan should include a detailed plan for replacing and planting new vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landscape and planting plan must note that trees larger than 3 inches in diameter will be protected from damage during construction.</li> <li>All trees and vegetation removed during construction must be replaced.</li> <li>Existing invasive species must be identified and removed during construction.</li> <li>Replacement species must be approved by the City of Rochester prior to planting.</li> <li>All new parking lots must include interior landscape islands with trees.</li> <li>New trees shall be planted along the perimeter of new surface parking areas.</li> </ul>

## POST-CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action(s)</i>	<i>Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications</i>
<p><b>While building equity for homeowners will be an economic benefit in the VOBOA study area, implementation of the Vision plan may contribute to increases in rent, increases in home prices, and increases in taxes, potentially causing involuntary displacement of current residents.</b></p>	<p><i>Phased Implementation</i> can help mitigate the scale and pace of change, avoiding any potential for sudden increases in housing costs. Phased implementation would also increase employment opportunities in the neighborhood.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
	<p>If the VOBOA was identified as a location for a <i>Focused Investment Strategy (FIS)</i> it could effectively stabilize the VOBOA and help support housing for a greater mix of incomes, while still retaining affordability for low- and middle-income residents. Encouraging both affordable and high-end housing would allow some of the higher rents in the VOBOA to cross-subsidize lower-income residents.</p>	
	<p><i>Property and building maintenance</i> are important to achieving the VOBOA Vision Plan, but increased investment in properties can make rent unaffordable to existing residents. To that end, the City can provide incentives or subsidies to landlords and homeowners for maintenance services such as lead-paint removal or roof replacements (i.e. Targeted Housing Rehabilitation Program, Community Housing Development Organization Program, Owner Occupant Roofing Program).</p>	
	<p>Another important component of the VOBOA Vision Plan is the <i>redevelopment of vacant properties</i>. If the City acquires privately-owned vacant parcels through the demolition or tax-foreclosure processes, it can then sell them to developers for little to no cost in return for the production of affordable housing units.</p>	
	<p><i>Encouraging and supporting homeownership</i>, rather than renting, will mitigate some of the impacts of potential increases in rent throughout the VOBOA. The HOME Rochester program enables homeownership for those with low- and moderate-incomes by taking on some or all of the costs associated with acquisition and rehabilitation of the home. Program participants are required to reside in the home for at least fifteen years, which would ensure steady homeownership in the VOBOA.</p>	
<p>To ensure availability of low- and moderate-income housing options regardless of possible increases in rent, the City could also adopt an <i>inclusionary zoning</i> ordinance requiring a specified number of units in a new housing project be available for low- and moderate-income residents.</p>		

## POST-CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action(s)</i>	<i>Potential Conditions of Approval/Contract Specifications</i>
<p><b>(Continued.) While building equity for homeowners will be an economic benefit in the VOBOA study area, implementation of the Vision plan may contribute to increases in rent, increases in home prices, and increases in taxes, potentially causing involuntary displacement of current residents.</b></p>	<p>To <i>prevent involuntary displacement</i>, the City also offers a Foreclosure Prevention program which helps households avoid foreclosure due to mortgage or tax default. A similar program exists for tenants who face eviction. Housing developers could also consider rent-to-own programs, whereby renters gradually transition to homeowners by using a portion of their monthly rent payment as a mortgage.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
	<p><i>Education and job training programs</i> are also important for enabling existing residents to retain their homes despite increases in rent. Such programs help residents move toward generating a steady income.</p>	
<p><b>Conflicting land uses or design that negatively impacts quality of life.</b></p>	<p>Implementation of the City Zoning Code will ensure that adjacent land uses do not conflict or otherwise negatively impact quality of life of adjacent or nearby residents.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

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## 4.2.2 Housing

This section describes the potential impacts of development within the VOBOA Study Area on housing, as well as the impacts and mitigation measures of construction of new housing. The purpose of the implementation of the VOBOA Vision Plan is to create a stable housing market of diverse housing types that encourages investment and engages residents. Home ownership was identified by the neighborhood as key to stabilizing the neighborhood. The goals below were also identified during the Step 2 BOA process:

- Empower residents to remain invested and engaged in the neighborhood.
- Maintain the continuity of neighborhood character.
- Strive to ensure housing options for all incomes and ages.

### A. EXISTING HOUSING CONDITIONS

In 2015 there were approximately 1,819 residents and 832 households in the VOBOA Study Area. This accounts for approximately 832 housing units, of which 80 percent are renter-occupied. The housing stock is aging, with 77 percent of homes in the Study Area built before 1940. Approximately 40 percent of homes in the Study Area are valued at less than \$50,000 (the median value citywide is \$80,762).

Approximately 64 percent of households in the VOBOA pay more than 50 percent of their income in rent, which exceeds the HUD standard of a “cost burdened” household (which is a household that is paying more than 30% of income in rent).

### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

Using current housing trends in the VOBOA, renting is expected to remain (and increase) as a housing choice in the future, compared with owning. Housing will continue to age and deterioration will continue if homeowners remain cost-burdened. Future housing demand will most likely be driven by the need for replacement housing, rather than by population growth. Demand for affordability and repair assistance programs will continue to be high, as median income is not expected to grow in the VOBOA.

### C. ALTERNATIVE 2: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS)

Partial Buildout of the VOBOA Vision Plan envisions the potential development of approximately 314 new residential units, the majority of which will be apartments.

In addition to new construction of residential units on vacant properties, the Vision Plan portrays redevelopment of existing housing in some locations, including Luther Circle and the area bounded by Doran Street, Violetta Street and Exchange Street.

The redevelopment of Luther Circle would include construction of new affordable housing options to support seniors who wish to age-in-place within the PLEX neighborhood yet are unable to do so in their current residence. The development would include a mixture of approximately 25 to 30 structures to meet the needs of the intended population.

The area bounded by Doran Street, Violetta Street and Exchange Street would be redeveloped, following the successful precedent set in the Olean Street and Edith Street revitalization projects to the north and west. Housing of a similar style and scale would include single-family and two-family units with garages. The proposed redevelopment would extend Stanley Street through the block to Doran Street, and realign Ethel Street with Columbia Avenue. These improvements would reconnect the block to the larger neighborhood. In addition, redevelopment would create a residential density of approximately seven units per acre within the 5-acre area.

**D. ALTERNATIVE 3: FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)**

Full Buildout adds an additional 101 residential units to that created in the Partial Buildout, for a total of 415 new residential units. The vast majority of these units (369) will be apartments or condos while the rest (47) will be townhomes.

Most of these units will be upper-floor residences located in the mixed-use complex bounded by Flint and Violetta Streets.

**E. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

In order to explore a variety of potential adverse impacts and mitigation actions within the Study Area, a *Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategy* was prepared in 2016. The housing strategy presents a variety of options to assist the City and the neighborhood in creating a diversity of housing types, developing affordable housing, increasing home ownership, improving design of new construction, and applying strategic anti-displacement strategies to ensure current residents can remain in their homes or neighborhood.

The VOBOA Plan does not recommend demolition or displacement of any existing residential structures, and it is not expected that the plan will have negative impacts on the existing housing stock within the Study Area. It will be critical to ensure that the addition of new housing units will serve to provide additional housing options for current neighborhood residents. If existing residents and homeowners are able to stay in their homes while the neighborhood is revitalized, they can benefit significantly from the sale of their asset when the time comes. This underscores the importance of preserving the affordability of some of the housing stock and mitigate the potential for displacement.

The major objective of the VOBOA Plan is to revitalize the neighborhood through public and private investment, and redevelop vacant and underutilized sites. The community considered different housing strategies to meet this objective, ultimately including the options presented in the *Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategy*. These options include methods to prevent or minimize the potential adverse impacts of housing redevelopment and can be considered mitigation techniques in their own right. These options include:

- Preserving and expanding affordable housing options through encouraging rent-to-own programs with property owners of rental homes, creating a one-to-one replacement ordinance that requires the replacement of subsidized units removed through redevelopment or other public action, or adopting an inclusionary zoning ordinance.

- Preventing involuntary displacement of low-income residents through increased education efforts, foreclosure prevention assistance, financial assistance for home repairs and refinancing, a senior/elderly tax work-off program. The creation of a condo conversion ordinance is also suggested to allow residents the right of first refusal to purchase the unit from the building owner, as well as establish time frames for how quickly an owner can sell a building with existing residents and require a tenant relocation plan.
- Discouraging displacement by building income and wealth through job training, encouragement of hiring within the community, and identifying skilled laborers in the community to perform the necessary property maintenance tasks associated with development.

More information on the recommendations to mitigate adverse impacts along with the development of the VOBOA Study Area can be found in the *Housing and Reinvestment Strategy* (**Appendix 6**).

Potential adverse impacts resulting from and mitigation actions to address housing changes are the same as those for land use changes. Please refer to the *Construction and Post-Construction Related Impacts and Mitigation Tables* in **Section 4.2.1-E**.

### 4.2.3 Traffic Operations

As part of this Step 3 planning process, a Traffic Analysis Report was completed to determine the impacts on future traffic operations resulting from potential development planned for the VOBOA Study Area. The purpose of the vehicular traffic analysis was to document the existing traffic conditions, the estimated future traffic conditions, and the expected impacts of development envisioned in the 2035 Vision Plan. The analysis evaluated the impact to 12 intersections within the VOBOA Study Area along Plymouth Avenue and Exchange Street, as identified in the *Traffic Analysis Report* in **Appendix 9**.

#### A. EXISTING TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

Existing traffic operations data were gathered on November 10, 2014 and included intersection turn counts at 12 intersections (**Figure 27**). The counts recorded the number of vehicles making turning maneuvers from each intersection approach during peak weekday periods. The turning movement counts were collected in 15-minute increments to determine peaking characteristics within the peak hours to be included in the analysis. The counts included pedestrians, bikes, and vehicles (classified as passenger cars and heavy trucks).

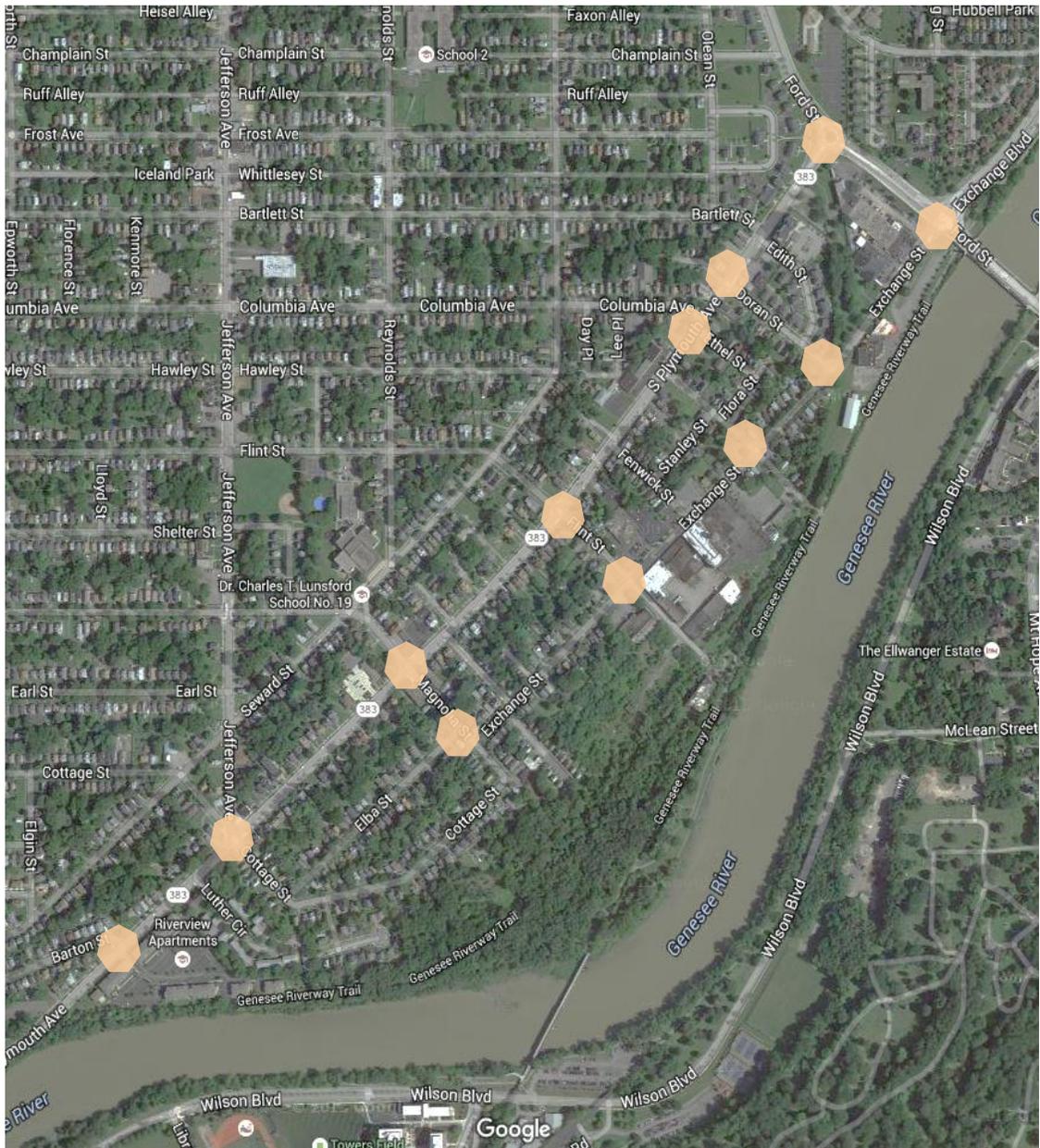
The existing traffic operations during the peak hours at the subject intersections range from level of service (LOS)<sup>7</sup> A to D for all traffic movements, except the following movements:

- The southbound left turn movement at Exchange Street and Ford Street during the AM peak exhibits LOS F (breakdown of traffic flow). The left turn movement LOS is poor due to the amount of green time allocated for the volume of traffic and the heavy traffic on other movements during the same time-period.
- The northbound through/right lane at Exchange Street and Ford Street during the AM and PM peak hours exhibits LOS E. The LOS of the shared through/right lane is poor due to the amount of green time allocated for the volume of traffic and the heavy traffic on other movements during the same time-period.

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<sup>7</sup> Level of service (LOS) is a measure of the quality of traffic service, based on performance. LOS ranges from A through F, with A being the best and F being the worst, similar to academic grading. For signalized intersections, LOS A through D are considered acceptable. For unsignalized intersections, LOS A through E are considered acceptable.

**Figure 27: Traffic Study Intersections**



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

**B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD**

The No Build alternative assumes that improvements and redevelopment projects portrayed in the 2035 Vision Plan will not be implemented. For this alternative, peak hour traffic volumes were projected by increasing the existing peak hour volumes by one percent per year (not compounded) to account for normal traffic growth and any development outside the area of study. The projections were based on a review of the historic traffic volume trends and Monroe County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) recommendations.

The projected No Build traffic operations during the peak hours at the 12 intersections range from level of service (LOS) A to D for all traffic movements except for the following intersections noted below. Impacts under the No Build alternative are the same as they would be under existing conditions:

- The southbound left turn movement at Exchange Street and Ford Street during the AM peak exhibits LOS F. The LOS of the left turn movement is poor due to the amount of green time allocated for the volume of traffic and the heavy traffic on other movements during the same time-period.
- The northbound through/right lane at Exchange Street and Ford Street during the AM and PM peak hours exhibits LOS E. The LOS of the shared through/right lane is poor due to the amount of green time allocated for the volume of traffic and the heavy traffic on other movements during the same time-period.

Potential actions to mitigate the existing LOS issues at the Exchange and Ford intersection include:

- Modifying the southbound Exchange Boulevard approach to Ford Street from one left turn lane and two through lanes to two left turn lanes and one through lane;
- Modifying the Exchange/Ford traffic signal to protected only phasing for the double southbound left turn lanes, rather than permissive phasing;
- Add a northbound right turn lane on the Exchange Street approach to Ford Street;
- Optimize the phase split times at the intersection to address the current green time allocation problem.

Alterations to the existing locations where LOS is undesirable, primarily at the Ford Street and Exchange Street intersection, could be performed to improve traffic patterns in the study area regardless of the level of development pursued.

**C. ALTERNATIVE 2: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS)**

The vehicle traffic volumes for both the Partial Buildout and Full Buildout alternatives were determined by adding the existing No Build traffic to the additional traffic expected from the respective levels of development for each alternative. Projections for trip generation for each site within the VOBOA Study Area were determined using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. The projected trips were superimposed on top of the existing traffic to determine the new level of traffic. These trips were then assigned to the roadway system based on current and expected travel patterns, including potential new street connection alternatives, both inside and outside the Study Area to determine traffic volumes and LOS at particular intersections. In general, the results of the traffic study indicate minor congestion only (similar to No Build conditions) for both Partial and Full Buildout, with significant degradation of LOS only at the Exchange/Ford intersection.

For the Partial Buildout alternative, new traffic produced by additional developments would degrade existing conditions at the Exchange/Ford intersection from LOS D to LOS E during the peak morning hour and from LOS C to LOS F during the peak evening hour, making traffic operating conditions unacceptable during both time periods. All other intersections will experience acceptable service levels for all three time periods.

**D. ALTERNATIVE 3: FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)**

The projected Full Buildout traffic operations during peak hours are expected to range from LOS A to F, with acceptable intersection service levels everywhere except at the intersection of Exchange Street and Ford Street. The existing roadway system with no mitigating measures implemented is expected to exhibit overall service levels of E and F for this intersection during the morning and evening peak hours respectively (the same impacts expected under the Partial Buildout alternative).

The following three unsignalized intersections also show approaches operating at LOS E. However, according to industry standards espoused by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), LOS E is acceptable for unsignalized intersections:

- Westbound Ford Street at Plymouth Avenue
- Eastbound Columbia Avenue at Plymouth Avenue
- Both Barton Street approaches to Plymouth Avenue

**E. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

This section describes the impacts to traffic operations within the VOBOA Study area resulting from implementation of either the No Buildout, Partial Buildout, or Full Buildout alternative, as well as mitigation efforts. The purpose of the table is to address any potential impacts and subsequent mitigation that will be needed as site-specific development applications are submitted or new street construction projects are considered/constructed.

Parameters for future development were established by the 2035 Vision Plan, and future potential traffic impacts and mitigation measures were determined based on development of the public improvements and development projects depicted in the plan. Thresholds and conditions for future review have been established as part of this GEIS to help ensure that public and private development proceeds in accordance with the VOBOA Plan. This may include conditions for supplemental EIS's to reflect site-specific impacts that cannot adequately be addressed at this time.

Mitigation measures included in either the No Build Alternative or the Full Build Alternative should be considered as part of any future studies for development. Proposed mitigation measures may have impacts outside the VOBOA Study Area to the east on Ford Street and Mt. Hope Avenue where the two eastbound lanes on the Ford Street Bridge transition to one lane for the heavy right turn to go south on Mt. Hope Avenue. Based on the LOS results, the delayed movements at the intersection of Exchange Street at Ford Street with the greatest potential for causing rerouted traffic are: the southbound left, westbound right and westbound through movements. This commuter traffic may choose to reroute to streets to the east such as Mt. Hope Avenue, South Avenue and Clinton Avenue.

Construction-related potential adverse impacts resulting from and mitigation actions to address traffic changes are the same as those for land use changes. Please refer to the *Construction-Related Impacts and Mitigation Table* in **Section 4.2.1-E**. Post-construction related impacts and mitigation actions are described in the table below.

## POST-CONSTRUCTION RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action</i>	<i>Project Mitigation*</i>	<i>Applicable Alternative</i>		
			<b>1 (No Build)</b>	<b>2 (Partial Buildout)</b>	<b>3 (Full Buildout)</b>
<b>The southbound left turn movement at Exchange Boulevard and Ford Street during the AM peak exhibits LOS F.</b>	Intersection geometry and signalization alterations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify the southbound Exchange Boulevard approach to Ford Street to two left turn lanes and one through lane.</li> <li>• Modify the Exchange/Ford traffic signal to a “protected only” left-turn phasing.</li> <li>• Optimize the phase split times at Exchange Street and Ford Street.</li> </ul>	x	x	x
<b>The northbound through/right lane at Exchange street and Ford Street during the AM and PM peak hours exhibits LOS E.</b>	Intersection geometry and signalization alterations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a northbound right turn lane on the Exchange Street approach to Ford Street.</li> <li>• Optimize the phase split times at Exchange Street and Ford Street.</li> <li>• Prohibit parking in the following locations:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exchange Street between Magnolia Street and Doran Street</li> <li>○ Magnolia Street between Plymouth Street and Cottage Street</li> <li>○ Flint Street between Plymouth Street and Exchange Street</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	x	x	x

\*The projects listed above can either be implemented in whole or in part and can still improve LOS.

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#### 4.2.4 Street Configuration Alternatives

The existing street network within the Study Area, for the most part, functions successfully in the movement of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The Genesee River runs along the Study Area causing several streets to terminate at dead ends, limiting access to developable sites between 5 Flint Street and the southern portion of the Vacuum Oil site. The Step 2 planning process identified the need for new street connections that would provide pedestrian access, bicycle connectivity, and vehicle access to strategic development sites within the Study Area, as well as access to an improved open space/waterfront area that extends the entire length of the Study Area.

Through the planning process, a series of alternatives for new street connections that would provide stronger connections to the waterfront and the development parcels were suggested. The alternatives described below would extend transportation access and reestablish connectivity throughout the neighborhood.

##### A. **ALTERNATIVE 1: RETAIN EXISTING STREET CONFIGURATION WITH IMPROVEMENTS TO FLINT STREET**

This alternative includes only the existing streets with no construction of new streets or street extensions, but includes substantial improvements to Flint Street between Exchange Street and its eastern terminus toward the River (refer to **Figure 28**). Upgrading Flint Street will have several positive outcomes, including improved access to the waterfront, to existing and proposed park amenities, and to private parcels. Improvements to the dead-end will make it easier to turn a vehicle around and will improve vehicular circulation within the Study Area. In addition, the design of the Flint Street dead-end includes amenities (signage and trail connections) which will improve access to the waterfront. Keeping the dead-end on Flint Street, however, limits vehicular circulation through potentially developable portions of the Study Area.

*Figure 28: Alternative 1 - Retain Existing Street Configuration*



**B. ALTERNATIVE 2: CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WATERFRONT STREET ENDING IN A CUL-DE-SAC**

This alternative provides a new street extension from Flint Street south and along the waterfront (refer to **Figure 29**). The new street extension would terminate in a cul-de-sac southwest of Flint Street. This alternative would provide new vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access to the waterfront as well as potential new development sites.

**Figure 29: Alternative 2 - Construction of a Cul-de-Sac**



**C. ALTERNATIVE 3: CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WATERFRONT ROAD IN THE ALIGNMENT PROPOSED IN THE MASTER PLAN**

This alternative, seen below in **Figure 30**, provides a new street connection for vehicles and pedestrians via a street extension from the existing terminus of Magnolia Street to Flint Street (along the former Genesee Canal right-of-way). This is the street alignment shown in the proposed Master Plan. The street extension would bisect three strategic development sites, creating development parcels directly on the waterfront park area. The new street turns north and connects to the terminus of Magnolia Street. This alternative would provide a new street connection with two vehicle travel lanes (one in each direction) and a pedestrian friendly streetscape that features sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and decorative light fixtures.

The positive outcomes of this alternative include: (1) improved access to parcels within the VOBOA for vehicles and pedestrians, (2) a connection between Flint and Magnolia streets. The new street would provide a new route between Flint and Magnolia Streets and convenient access to future residential and commercial uses that will be constructed over the next several years on key redevelopment sites within the VOBOA. Further, the street design features sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and decorative light fixtures that together create a safe and welcoming pedestrian environment with direct access to the waterfront.

Potentially adverse, short-term impacts include those resulting from construction of the street itself including necessary acquisition of privately-owned parcels at the terminus of Magnolia Street and Riverview Place, grading/earth movement, and staging of equipment and materials. Potentially adverse long-term impacts include increased traffic, noise, and emissions on Magnolia Street and in an area where there was vacant space for many years. These impacts are further detailed below, along with potential mitigation measures.

This alternative could be implemented using a two-phase approach. The initial phase could include a roadway ending in a cul-de-sac along the canalbed right-of-way, without a formalized connection to Magnolia Street. The connection to the neighborhood could be completed in a second phase after further analysis and coordination with property owners.

**Figure30: Alternative 3 - Construction of a new road in the alignment proposed in the Master Plan**



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

**D. ALTERNATIVE 4: CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ROAD ALONG THE WATERFRONT, SOUTH OF FLINT STREET**

This alternative provides a new street connection for vehicles and pedestrians, via a street extension from the existing terminus of Magnolia Street to the existing terminus of Flint Street (refer to **Figure 31**). This alternative differs from Alternative #3 in that the extension of Magnolia Street is longer, extending to the waterfront then turning north towards Flint Street. In particular, this alternative provides access to the waterfront and future redevelopment sites within the VOBOA. Positive outcomes of this alternative include (1) improved access to areas within the VOBOA that are not currently accessible to vehicles and pedestrians, (2) improved connectivity between Flint and Magnolia streets and (3) an enhanced pedestrian environment. The street design features sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and decorative light fixtures that together create a safe and welcoming pedestrian environment. **Figure 33** portrays cross-sections of the roadway, illustrating the type and location of potential pedestrian friendly features.

**Figure 31: Alternative 4 – South Riverfront Drive (with waterfront access)**



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

**E. ALTERNATIVE 5: CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ROAD ALONG THE WATERFRONT, NORTH OF FLINT STREET**

This alternative (seen in **Figure 32** and **Figure 33**) proposes a new street connection for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles via a new street extension from the existing terminus of Violetta Street to Flint Street. The northern extension could be constructed separately from the other street connections described above. Similar to Alternatives #3 and #4, this alternative provides access to the waterfront and future redevelopment sites within the VOBOA. Positive outcomes of this alternative are similar to Alternative #4 and include (1) improved access to areas within the VOBOA that are not currently accessible to vehicles and pedestrians, (2) improved connectivity between streets and (3) an enhanced pedestrian environment, including safety and convenience. The new street connection would provide access to future residential and commercial uses that will be constructed over the next several years on key redevelopment sites within the VOBOA. The street design features sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and decorative light fixtures that together create a safe and welcoming pedestrian environment. **Figure 34** portrays cross-sections of the roadway, illustrating the type and location of potential pedestrian friendly features.

**Figure 32: Alternative 4 and 5**



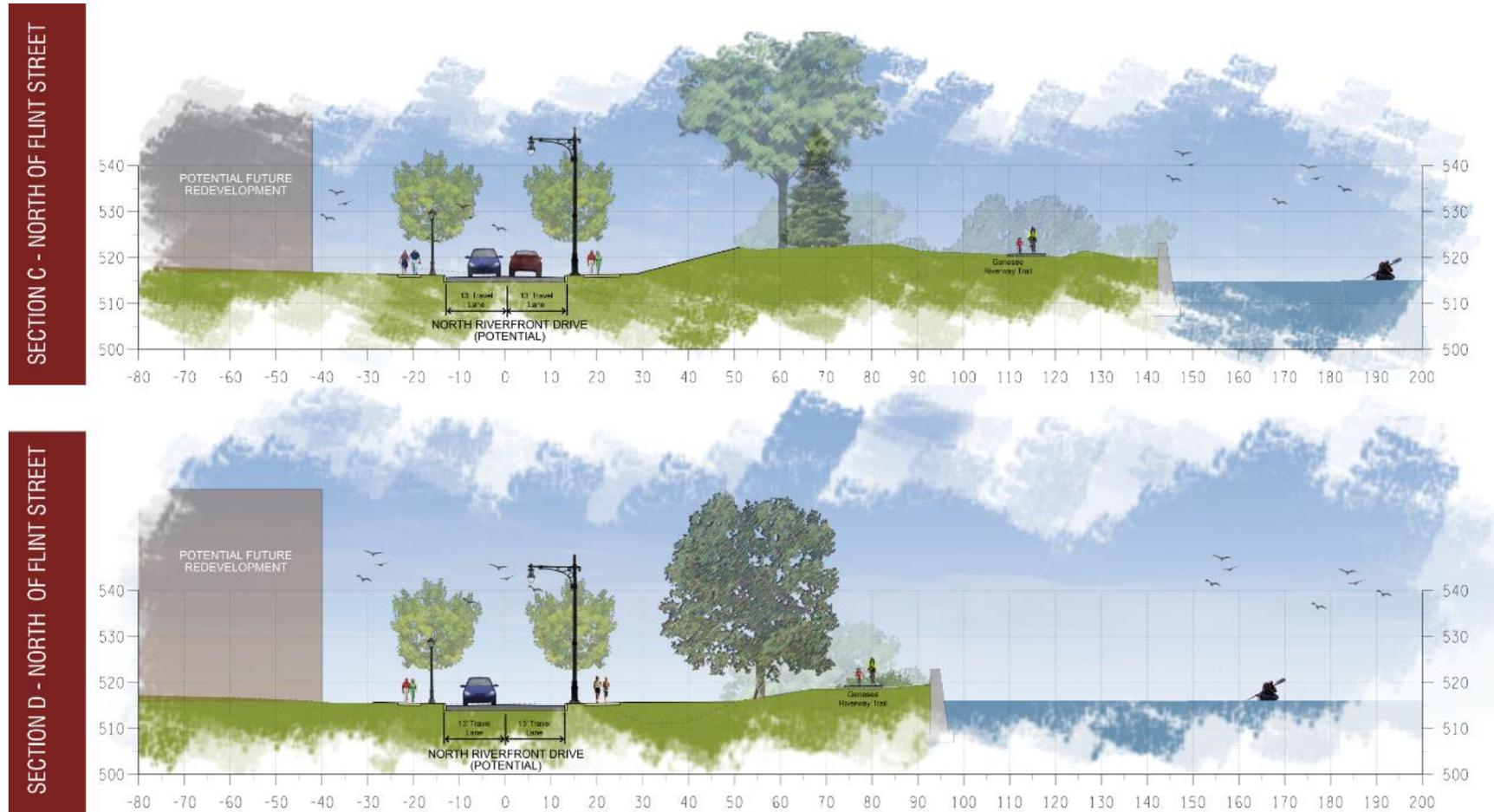
Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

Figure 33: Alternative 4 - Cross Sections A & B



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

Figure 34: Alternative 4 - South Riverfront Drive Cross Sections C & D



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

F. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION FOR NEW STREETS							
Potential Adverse Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Project-specific Mitigation (if applicable)	Applicable Alternative				
			1	2	3	4	5
<b>Emissions and noise due to increased vehicle traffic (ongoing and long-term).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The street design should feature landscaping, street trees, green infrastructure facilities, and traffic calming devices (to lower speeds).</li> <li>To minimize vehicle traffic on local residential streets, the final street design should feature strategic placement of physical traffic deterrents (i.e. speed hump) and signage (i.e. such as “No through traffic”).</li> <li>Official Street Map amendments for new streets would be subject to City Planning Commission and City Council Approval.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any new streets being considered for development must be subject to further public review.</li> <li>Specific street designs must be subject to further public review.</li> <li>Designs of new streets must include the mitigation measures listed in this table.</li> </ul>			x	x	x
<b>Light pollution (ongoing and long-term).</b>	Design of street lighting should ensure that fixtures do not shine into adjacent properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To limit long-term light pollution, all new or replacement street light fixtures must be full cutoff.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x
<b>Stormwater runoff (ongoing and long-term).</b>	To ensure that stormwater runoff resulting from increased impervious surfaces does not negatively impact the City’s storm sewer system, private property, or the Genesee River, ongoing inspection will be required post construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined upon submittal of erosion and sediment control plans,</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x

## IMPACTS AND MITIGATION FOR NEW STREETS

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation (if applicable)</i>	<i>Applicable Alternative</i>				
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Heat island effects.</b>	To ensure that additional impervious surfaces to not significantly contribute to heat island effects within the Study Area, the street design should include a detailed plan for replacing and planting new vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landscape and planting plan must note that trees larger than 3 inches in diameter will be protected from damage during construction.</li> <li>Installation of street trees will be required.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x
<b>Construction of the street connection will require City acquisition of privately owned parcels.</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal requirements for acquisition of private property shall be adhered to.</li> </ul>			x	x	x
<b>Soil contamination conditions.</b>	To ensure that contamination encountered during the construction of new roadways and subsurface utilities does not harm anyone, plans to regulate and monitor subsurface work should be created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and safety plans, community air monitoring, quality assurance project plans and remedial action work plans should be developed and compliance should be monitored.</li> <li>Post-cleanup sampling should be done on adjacent properties.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x

## CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation</i>	<i>Applicable Alternative</i>				
			1	2	3	4	5
<p><b>Safety impacts to pedestrians, drivers, and workers due to use of construction vehicles and equipment.</b></p>	<p>A Work Zone Traffic Management Plan developed in conformance with the New York State DOT Work Zone Traffic Control manual will be required during final design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Work Zone Traffic Management Plan must describe how heavy equipment will be transported in and out of the site, location, staging and how it will be used during construction activities.</li> <li>• Staging areas for construction vehicles must be designated in the plan. Staging areas for heavy equipment must not encroach on surrounding properties. Damage to vegetation or pavement caused by heavy equipment staging must be repaired upon completion of construction activities.</li> <li>• Trucks and other vehicles must enter and exit the site at a controlled gate and a preferred construction route will be identified.</li> <li>• To prevent audio and visual disturbances and preserve the residential character of streets throughout the study area, truck traffic should be limited to Exchange and Flint Streets.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x
<p><b>Impacts to water quality due to soil erosion, loss of topsoil, excess nutrient and sedimentation, and stormwater runoff (as a result of grading activity during construction).</b></p>	<p>An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and a Stormwater Management Plan will be required for all ground disturbing street construction and reconstruction. These plans identify stormwater runoff prevention controls used to divert, infiltrate, reuse, contain or otherwise reduce stormwater runoff. The plans also identify pollution prevention measures, such as maximizing infiltration to reduce runoff, using existing vegetated areas and buffering.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific parameters must be determined upon submittal and approval of a street design.</li> <li>• Site work must be phased in order to limit impacted areas and work must be scheduled during periods of low rainfall.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x

## CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Potential Adverse Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Project-specific Mitigation	Applicable Alternative				
			1	2	3	4	5
<b>Impacts to wildlife habitat due soil erosion, stormwater runoff.</b>	An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan must be developed that addresses impacts to wildlife habitat, including wetlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific parameters must be determined upon submittal and approval of an erosion and sediment control plan.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x
<b>Damage/removal of existing, non-invasive trees and vegetation.</b>	A tree and vegetation removal and replanting plan will be required upon final design. The tree planting and revegetation plan should identify trees and vegetation that will be removed, disturbed, or protected during construction. The plan will establish an invasive species and weed control program for revegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees larger than 3 inches in diameter must be protected from damage during construction.</li> <li>Existing invasive species must be identified and removed during construction. Replacement species must be approved by the City of Rochester prior to planting.</li> </ul>					
<b>Noise related to construction.</b>	A construction noise mitigation plan will be required during preliminary design demonstrating how noise from construction vehicles and equipment will be minimized during construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction activity shall be limited to the hours of 7:00 am to 10:00 pm, as allowed by City Code.</li> <li>Trucks and other vehicles will enter and exit the site at a controlled gate.</li> <li>A preferred construction route will be identified.</li> </ul>		x	x	x	x

#### 4.2.5 Public Transit

Public transit service in the City of Rochester and the six surrounding counties is provided by the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority Regional Transit Service (RTS). Given the role that transit plays in the Study Area, it is important to understand how implementation of the VOBOA Plan will impact the existing routes and how the proposed changes in event parking will impact the ability of RTS to provide services.

##### A. EXISTING SERVICES

The VOBOA is served by RTS Route 19/19x, which provides service to Downtown Rochester and the University of Rochester on weekdays and weekends. Weekday frequencies range from every 20 minutes during commuting hours to every hour during the middle of the day and in the evenings. Weekend frequencies range from every hour to every 85 minutes. There are approximately 17 stops along Plymouth Avenue within the VOBOA boundary. All residential units within the VOBOA Study Area are within 1,200 feet of a bus stop, which represents a travel time of 5 minutes or less at average walking speeds.

##### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

Under the no build alternative, current trends in the VOBOA Study Area will continue and no portion of the 2035 Vision Plan will be implemented. As such, population in the Study Area will remain relatively stable (as shown in [Section 3.1.1](#)) and demand for public transit services will not significantly increase.

##### C. ALTERNATIVE 2: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS)

The Partial Buildout entails construction of a new road between Magnolia and Violetta to serve new mixed use developments along the waterfront. The increase in residents, employees, and visitors to the area caused by these developments may result in a subsequent increase in demand for public transit services. Increases in demand might also warrant additional bus stops along the new street extension.

##### D. ALTERNATIVE 3: FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)

Like the Partial Buildout alternative, the Full Buildout alternative also includes the construction of a new road along the Genesee River in addition to multiple mixed use residential, commercial, and office developments. In the Full Buildout alternative, these developments will be more established than in the Partial Buildout alternative, meaning that they could attract more residents, employees, and visitors. If the Study Area begins to attract University of Rochester students, additional bus stops and bus routes to the University may be necessary.

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E. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<b>TRANSIT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION</b>		
<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation</i>
<b>Increased demand for transit service.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased frequency of bus service</li> <li>• Expansion of bus route to include Exchange Street, the potential future extension of Magnolia Street, and the new waterfront road(s).</li> <li>• Improvements to new and existing bus stops, including shelters, bike racks, and seating areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future development applications must identify the potential quantity and type of new demand for transit service resulting from construction of the development. Applications must also identify pedestrian and transit accommodations to meet expected needs, including bicycle parking, pedestrian routes to transit stops, and sheltered waiting areas.</li> </ul>

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## 4.2.6 Pedestrian/Bicycle

### A. EXISTING SETTING

The VOBOA Study Area offers bicycle and pedestrian oriented features, such as sidewalks, shared bike lanes, and the Genesee Riverway Trail. All streets have sidewalks on both sides, and have adequately spaced streetlights for improved pedestrian safety. The largest gap in sidewalk service is located along Flint Street, which lacks a formal sidewalk from Exchange Street east to the River. The Genesee Riverway Trail is nearly two miles in length and traverses the riverfront from South Plymouth Avenue north to Ford Street. The trail lacks convenient and accessible pedestrian connections to the adjacent neighborhood or roadway network.

### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity would stay as it is today under the no build alternative, meaning that most streets would have sidewalks on both sides and the Genesee Riverway Trail would remain in its current alignment.

### C. ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: ADDITION OF NEW STREETS DURING PARTIAL AND FULL BUILDOUT

The addition of new streets during both the Partial and Full Buildout alternatives would provide increased pedestrian connection throughout the VOBOA area, including to the waterfront. These alternatives would also include enhancements along the Genesee Riverway Trail such as safety improvements, landscaping, and interpretive features. Additional streetscaping and pedestrian improvements will be undertaken along Flint and Exchange to enhance walkability in the VOBOA Study Area.

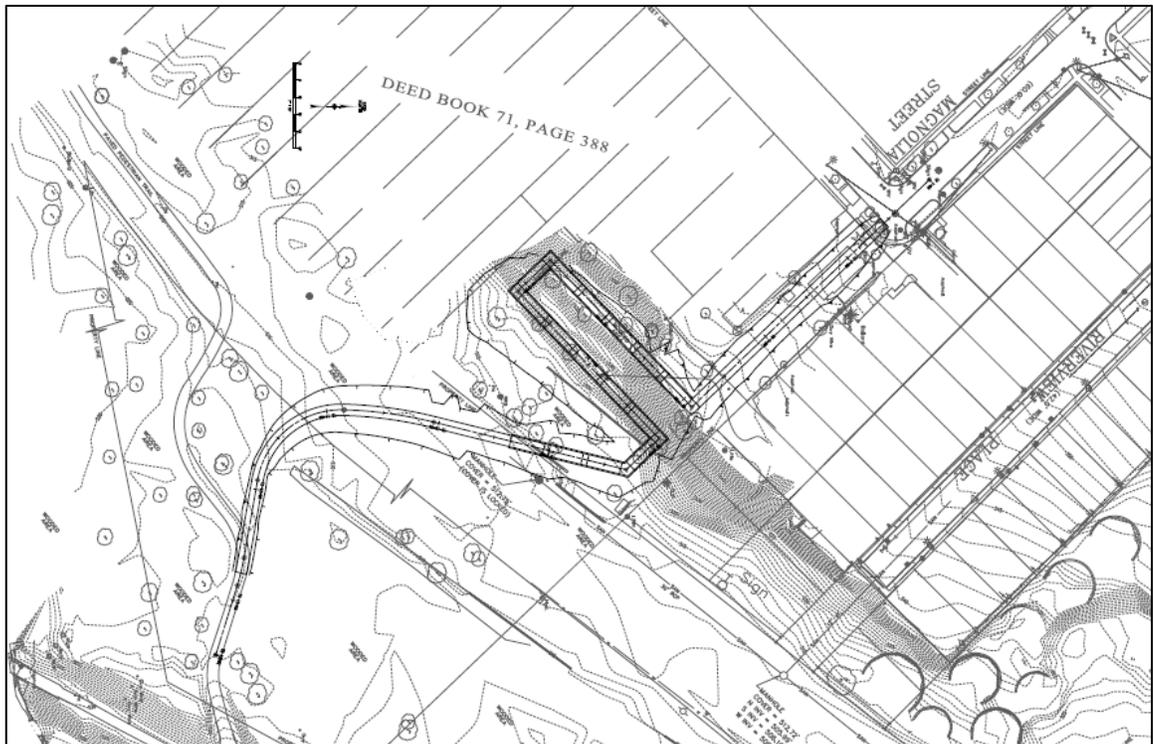
The area between the end of Magnolia Street and the River is presently characterized by steep slopes. Therefore, the proposed connection between Magnolia and the waterfront must be designed to reduce the grade change enough to accommodate persons with disabilities. The connection, shown in **Figure 35**, is designed at a continuous 4-percent grade in order to manage the elevation change.

**Figure 35: Alternative 2 - Pedestrian Connection Alignment with 4% grade**



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

**Figure 36: Alternative 2 with Mitigation - Pedestrian Connection Alignment with Variable Grades**



Source: Bergmann Associates, 2016

D. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<b>PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION</b>		
<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation (if applicable)</i>
<b>Light pollution (ongoing and long-term)</b>	Design of street lighting should ensure that fixtures do not shine into adjacent properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To limit long-term light pollution, all new or replacement street light fixtures must be full cutoff.</li> </ul>
<b>Stormwater runoff (ongoing and long-term)</b>	To ensure that stormwater runoff resulting from increased impervious surfaces does not negatively impact the City’s storm sewer system, private property, or the Genesee River, ongoing inspection will be required post construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All projects involving new streets or new pedestrian connections must include the preparation of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat island effects</b>	To ensure that additional impervious surfaces do not significantly contribute to heat island effects within the Study Area, the plan should include a detailed plan for replacing and planting new vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A landscape and planting plan must be included in any design for new streets or pedestrian connections</li> <li>Trees larger than 3 inches in diameter will be protected from damage during construction.</li> </ul>
<b>Construction of the pedestrian connection between Magnolia and the waterfront will require City acquisition of privately owned parcels.</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All legal requirements for property acquisition will be adhered to.</li> </ul>

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## 4.2.7 Infrastructure and Utilities

This section addresses the existing function and condition of existing utilities in the VOBOA. Potential adverse impacts on existing utilities resulting from implementation of the 2035 Vision Plan are described and any capacity issues are analyzed.

### A. EXISTING SETTING

The VOBOA Study Area is served by storm sewer, sanitary sewer, public water, natural gas, electric, street lighting, fiber optics, and telecommunications utilities. The location of water mains, sewers, fire hydrants, streetlights, and fiber optic are depicted on **Map 15**.

#### *Water*

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The City of Rochester Department of Environmental Services Bureau of Water owns and maintains water mains within the VOBOA Study Area. The water systems consists of a series of underground pipes, and fire hydrants that serve the surrounding area. The water mains range in diameter from 6-inch to 36-inch. The largest pipe is a 36 inch diameter water main that crosses underneath the Genesee River from McLean Street to Flint Street, and continues along Exchange Street (north to Violetta Street and south to Magnolia and Cottage Streets). There are closed valves on Flint Street just west of Exchange Street, which prevent water migration to the west. Within Exchange Street, south of Flint Street, there is a 12-inch diameter bypass and check valve. This has the capability to move water south if the pressure drops below about 34 psi (pounds per square inch).

The Bureau of Water has performed several hydrant flow tests within the VOBOA Study Area. Pumps and tanks networked throughout the system pressurize the water mains. The available pressures depend on local demand and tank levels. Based on the average of the six-hydrant flow tests provided, the available static and residual pressures are summarized below. The hydrants tested are fed from either 6-inch or 8-inch diameter mains.

Average Water Pressure in Study Area:	42 psi Static
	27 psi @1,486 gpm (gallons per minute)
	20 psi @ 2,054 gpm

#### *Sanitary Sewer*

---

Monroe County Pure Waters (MCPW) maintains a network of combined sanitary sewers within the VOBOA Study Area. Sewers within the Study Area range in size from 12-inch diameter to 42 inches (**Map 15**). The sanitary and storm sewers (combined sewers) within the Study Area flow north to the Pure Waters tunnel system. Based on the MCPW base mapping the sewers in the area have no known capacity issues at this time. The average flow capacity of the wastewater system is 4 to 36 cfs (cubic feet per second).

### *Electric and Natural Gas*

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Rochester Gas and Electric currently provides electric and gas to the area via overhead wires and underground piping. The existing unground piping and overhead wires have no known capacity issues.

### *Telephone/Communications/Fiber Optics/Cable*

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Underground telephone and fiber optics serve the site from conduits in Exchange Street and Plymouth Avenue. The fiber optic cable is owned by the City of Rochester and Monroe County and telephone lines are owned by Frontier Communications. Verizon currently provides telephone service to the area.

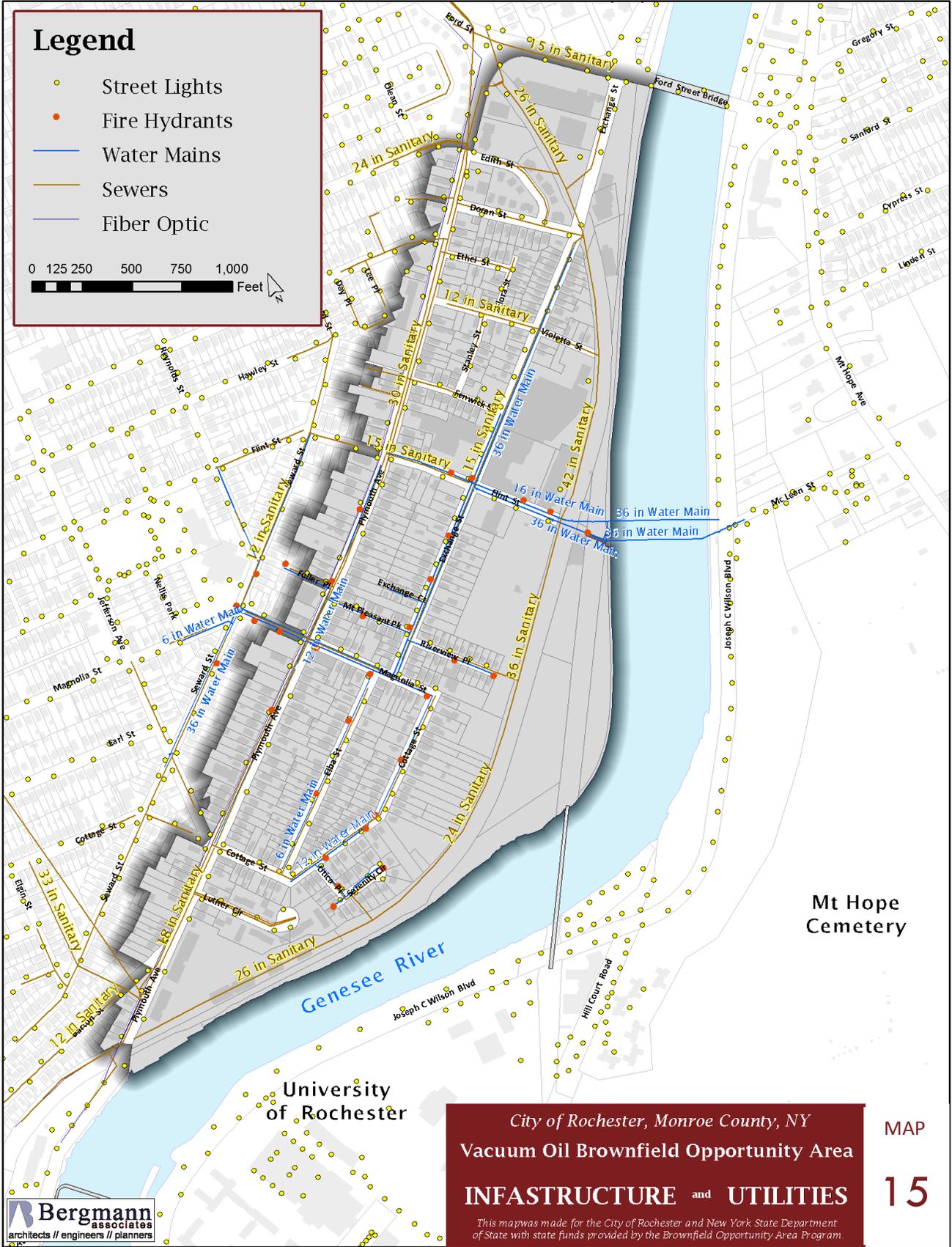
### *Street Lighting*

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The City of Rochester operates an extensive street lighting system within the VOBOA Study Area, consisting of approximately 160 pole-mounted fixtures. These fixtures are utilized exclusively along street rights-of-way to enhance the safety and security of the roadway and sidewalk network. Areas not receiving street/pole-mounted lights are limited to the Genesee Riverway Trail. Trails are considered part of the City's park system and, consistent with City policy, City-owned parks are not lit.

# Legend

- Street Lights
- Fire Hydrants
- Water Mains
- Sewers
- Fiber Optic



Map designed by Bergmann Associates, Inc.

City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
**Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE and UTILITIES**  
This map was made for the City of Rochester and New York State Department of State with state funds provided by the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.

MAP  
**15**

**B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD**

The No Build alternative assumes that improvements and redevelopment projects portrayed in the 2035 Vision Plan will not be implemented. The VOBOA Study Area is fully served by municipal infrastructure and utilities, as described above, with no identified capacity issues.

**C. ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: PARTIAL AND FULL BUILDOUTS**

Both Partial and Full Buildout of the 2035 Vision Plan will not require relocation of the water mains. The majority of the combined sewer system will not require relocation. The main trunk lines and most of the larger sewer mains are located outside of the proposed building footprint areas. The sewers near the proposed housing redevelopment area between Flora and Ethel Streets, however, may require limited relocation. The realignment of Flora and Ethel streets will require approximately 600 feet of existing sewer pipe that currently runs beneath the streets to be relocated away from proposed buildings. Record maps indicate those sewers to be 12-inch diameter.

The anticipated loads and demands on the water system and combined sewer system for the Full Buildout are summarized below. Storm water flows will be mitigated as necessary to meet the MCPW standards for discharge rates. Each development project will require a Storm Water Management Plan to provide storm water quantity mitigation as necessary to maintain peak flows at or below the existing levels. Peak flows for the sanitary sewer are shown in **Figure 37**.

*Figure 37: Full Buildout Anticipated Peak Flows*

Use	Total	Unit	Rate GPD/Unit	Total GPD
Office	482	employees	12	7,230
Restaurant	2000	seats	28	70,000
Manufacturing	43	employees	12	645
Retail	50,095	square feet	0.08	5,010
Meeting/Conference Space	300	seats	8	3,000
Museums/Cultural Space	4,463	square feet	0.08	4,46.3
Hotel	97	rooms	110	10,670
Townhomes	47	units	110	5,170
Apartment/Condo	369	units	110	40,590
<b>Total</b>				<b>125,495</b>

To determine the peak flow rate that sewers in the VOBOA Study Area must be able to handle under the Full Buildout, the above total was multiplied by a factor of 4 to account for maximum possible flows. Converting this result from gallons per day (gpd) to gallons per minute (gpm) yields a peak flow rate of 349 gpm.

The smallest sewers in the area have peak capacity of about 1,795 gpm and the trunk sewer capacity is about 16,157 gpm. Maximum possible flows (349 gpm) from the sanitary system

after development associated with the Full Buildout fall well within the range of the full flow capacity of the existing sewer system. Because development associated with the Full Buildout is more impactful than that associated with the Partial Buildout, it is assumed that the existing sewer system would also have sufficient capacity to handle the additional flows created by the Partial Buildout.

Through the application of mitigation measures for project development, the storm runoff entering the system will be limited to the existing flows and will not increase the flow to the wastewater system. In fact, the anticipated peak flow (349 gpm) is only 2-percent of the full flow capacity of the 16,157 gpm trunk sewer. Downstream sewers are also projected to have adequate capacity for the proposed increase in peak flow rates.

Although existing wastewater and sewer capacity is expected to support additional flows, the Partial and Full Buildouts of the 2035 VOBOA Vision Plan may require the relocation of existing gas mains. The realignment of Flora and Ethel streets will require approximately 700 feet of existing gas main to be moved in order to parallel the alignment of the new streets. Additionally, the proposed changes to the road connections at Magnolia Street and Luther Circle may require the movement of some existing mains so that they are not located under pavement. Further analysis will be necessary to determine which mains must be relocated, as well as to determine if the current system can serve new developments.

#### **D. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

Given the existing capacity and condition of utilities and infrastructure in the VOBOA (described above), no adverse impacts are expected as a result of implementation of the VOBOA 2035 Vision Plan. No existing water, sewer, or electric/fiber optic systems will be negatively impacted by additional demand generated by expected future development. Existing utilities may, however, be impacted by construction activities, including potential construction of a new road connection and streetscape improvements along Flint Street and the proposed Riverfront Drive.

Utility permits and approvals required to complete implementation of the 2035 Vision Plan include approvals from local and state regulatory agencies, including Monroe County Pure Waters, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Monroe County Health Department. The City and all development applicants will continue to coordinate with all utility agencies during implementation of the plan.

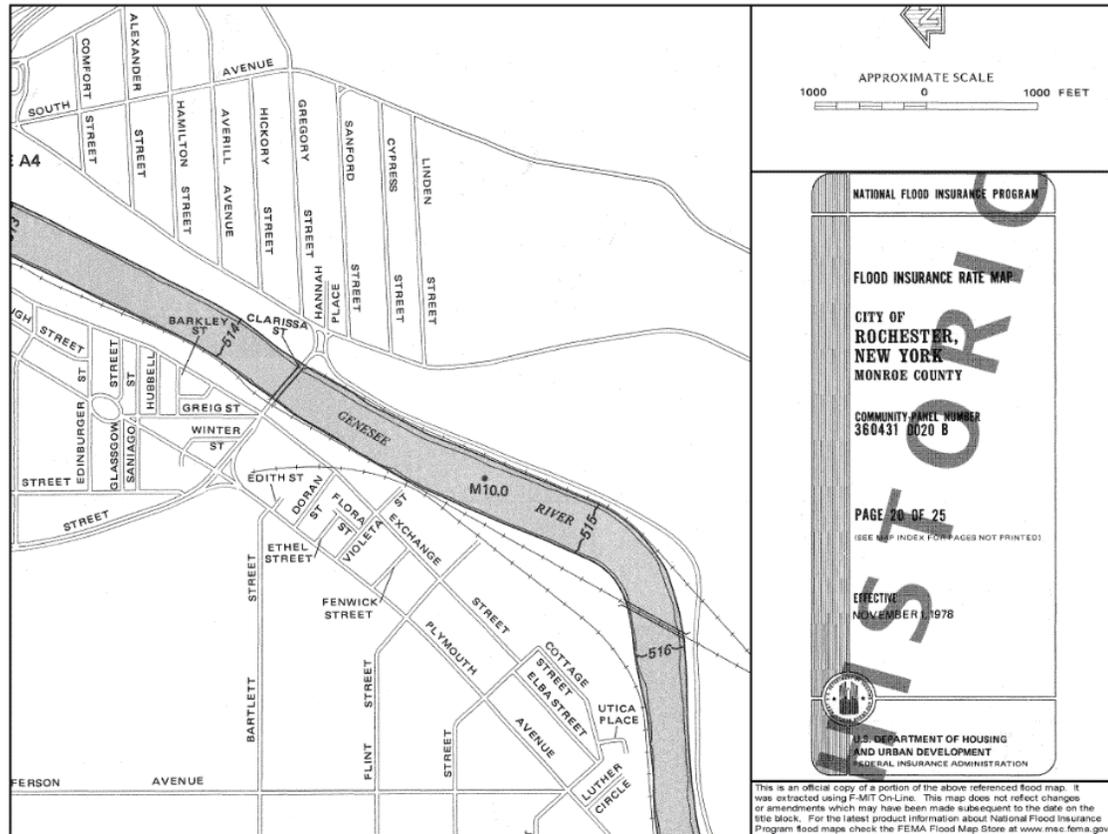
## 4.2.8 Flood Hazard

This section describes the current threat of flood hazards in the VOBOA Study Area, as well as the potential impacts that development in the area will have on flooding (**Appendix 10**).

### A. EXISTING SETTING

The historic FEMA floodplain maps issued in 1977, seen below in **Figure 38**, showed the floodwall providing flood protection and the Vacuum Oil area as being located outside of the floodplain.

**Figure 38: Historic FEMA Floodplain Map**



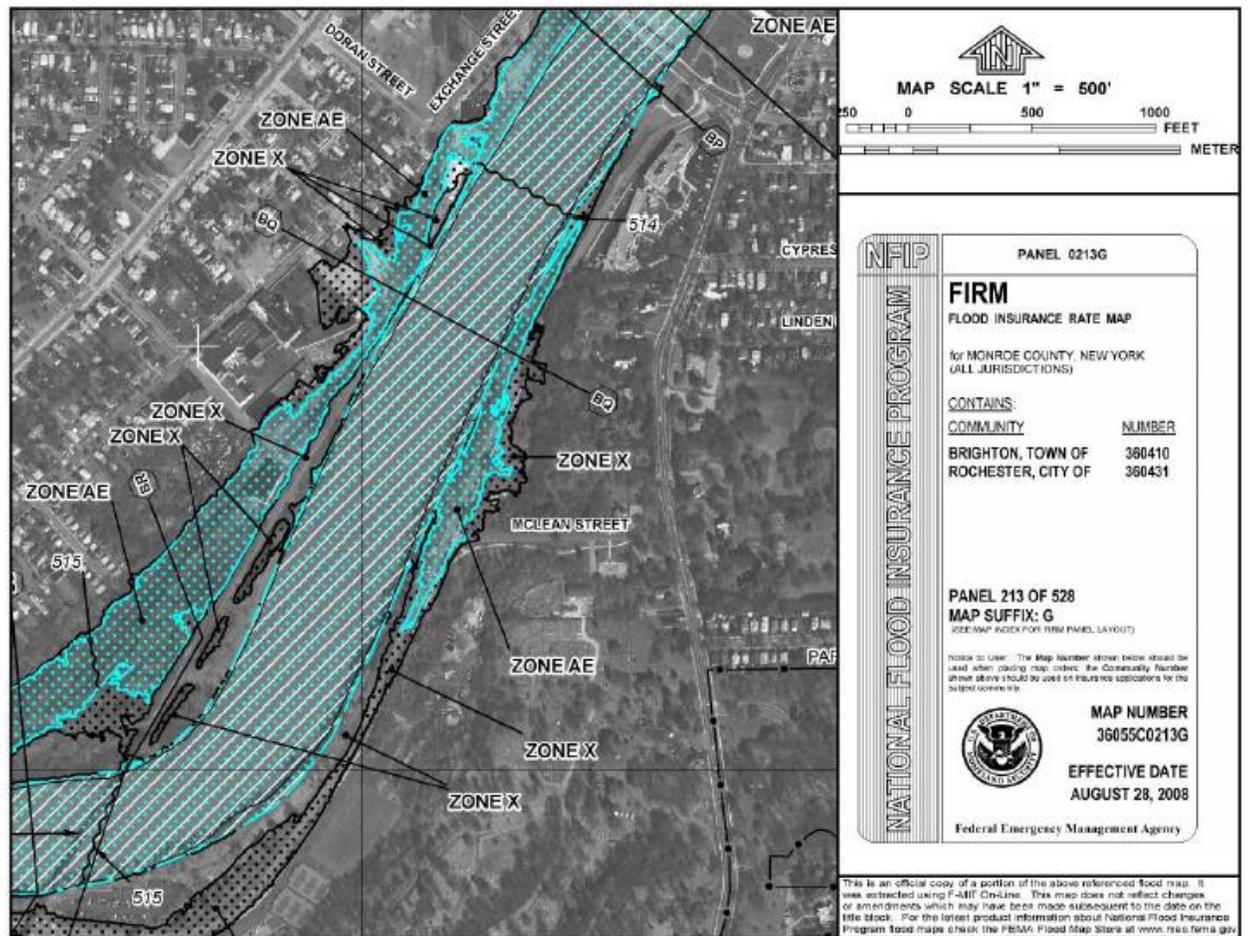
Source: FEMA (Elevations are according to National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929)

However, since 1977, the condition of the wall has significantly degraded to the point that it is no longer providing complete flood protection for the entire Study Area (**Figure 39**). An assessment of the present wall indicates that it is in poor condition, with deep erosion at the waterline and persistent cracking. This deterioration has lowered the original height of the wall in some sections, and the existing waterline erosion increases the risk of a potential failure at the mid-height of the wall. The remaining concrete is also at significant risk for further deterioration as it was not built to protect against the freezing and thawing of water.

Considering the deteriorating condition of the floodwall, FEMA produced a new map for Monroe County in 2008 (refer to **Figure 39**) which used hydraulic analyses from the historic maps and updated topographic information to map the new floodplain. Failures in the floodwall, as stated above, mean that it is no longer providing complete flood protection. Areas within the Study Area now fall within the floodplain (see dotted area on map below), meaning that some property owners in the VOBOA Study Area are now required to carry flood insurance.

Reconstruction of the floodwall to meet FEMA criteria for levees and floodwalls would relieve the financial burden to property owners in the VOBOA study area, increase protection from flooding in the event of a major flood event, and make the riverfront area more desirable for future development.

**Figure 39: Flood Insurance Rate Map**



Source: FEMA (Elevations are according to the NAVD88 Datum. The conversion from NAVD88 to City of Rochester is +1.56' for the project site.)

In October of 2015, a limited hydraulic and structural evaluation was conducted within the VOBOA Study Area to further study the existing flood hazard conditions. This included review of historical documents related to the floodwall and hydraulic and hydrologic modeling according to FEMA criteria. Key findings from this study include:

- Updated modelling suggested that the FEMA 100-year elevations in the Study Area could be lowered between 1.5 and 2.0 feet.
- Lowering the floodplain elevation by 1.5 to 2.0 feet would allow the wall to be rebuilt between 4.0 and 4.5 feet lower than the original height throughout most of the Study Area.
- However, considering the effects of sedimentation, which essentially raise the surface level of the River, the FEMA 100-year elevations must account for an additional 0.5-foot increase in the next 20 years. It follows that the rebuilt wall height could be reduced by 3.5 to 4.0 feet.
- Measures to comply with FEMA's requirements for floodwall accreditation would be minimal, and could include backflow valves that prevent floodwater from draining into the Study Area.

Additional data would be required to determine the action of the next phase of development, including the Lowest Adjacent Grade (LAG), First Floor Elevations (FFE), and other key site-specific elevation data for all structures in or near the current 100-year floodplain. Further recommendation from the hydraulic analysis include filing for a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) to FEMA to revise the current 100-year flood elevation, using the FEMA levee criteria as a guide to design the reconstructed floodwall, and pursuing accreditation and a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) when the wall design proceeds to the next phase.

**B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD**

The No Build alternative will not address or mitigate any floodplain issues in the Study Area, nor will it construct developments in the floodplain. As such, properties located in the floodplain will need to retain flood insurance.

**C. ALTERNATIVE 2: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS)**

Some of the projects to be implemented during the Partial Buildout fall within the 100-year floodplain, most notably the Waterfront Mixed Use Redevelopment sites along the newly constructed road. Owners of these sites must therefore retain flood insurance and follow floodplain construction requirements as issued by New York State.

**D. ALTERNATIVE 3: FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)**

In addition to the abovementioned redevelopment sites included in the Partial Buildout, the Full Buildout includes mixed use redevelopment at the former Vacuum Oil refinery site, a small portion of which is included in the 100-year floodplain. Property owners in this area must also adhere to the mitigation actions described below.

**E. ALTERNATIVE 4: POTENTIAL FLOODWALL RECONSTRUCTION**

The current condition of the floodwall could also be repaired or reconstructed, potentially eliminating the risk of a 100-year flood in the Study Area altogether. This alternative can be combined with either the No Build, Partial Buildout, or Full Buildout alternatives in which case the below impact and mitigation actions would no longer be applicable.

It is anticipated that renovation of the wall would involve concrete repair and stability improvements. Development projects might also be integrated into the wall renovation design.

Five conceptual alternatives were developed for renovation of the floodwall. The alternatives include:

- Placement of stone on the river side of the wall
- Installation of vertical post-tensioned rock anchors through the wall
- Installation of tie-backs and a deadman system
- Lowering of the wall and providing a land side flood protection berm
- Excavation behind a backfill with lightweight or self-supporting materials

Further discussion of these alternatives can be found in *Wall Evaluation Report* in **Appendix 10**. Once a more detailed evaluation of the wall and site is conducted, it is recommended that each of these alternatives be considered further for their appropriateness in satisfying flood protection criteria, stability issues, concrete deterioration, and integration with future landside development. It is possible that a combination of alternatives (hybrid option) will be found to be most desirable in satisfying these considerations. Potential actions identified in the VOBOA Plan to improve the wall would enhance flood protection while lowering or eliminating flood insurance costs for local homeowners and potential new developments in the area.

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F. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<b>FLOOD HAZARD IMPROVEMENT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION</b>		
<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation (if applicable)</i>
<b>Some areas of the Study Area remain within the 100-year floodplain.</b>	Property owners and developers must retain flood insurance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
	Redevelopments in the 100-year floodplain must follow NYS Floodplain Construction Requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lowest floor of buildings must be at least 2 feet above the base flood elevation.</li> <li>• Residential structures must be elevated by means of compacted fill, a solid slab foundation, a crawl-space foundation, or pilings.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If buildings must be elevated above streetlevel, ADA ramping must be installed to provide convenient access.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non-residential buildings do not need to be elevated if they are flood proofed.</li> </ul>

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## 4.2.9 Parks and Open Space

This section discusses the potential impacts of the VOBOA Plan on the parks and open spaces in the VOBOA Study area, as well as highlights the planned development options for parks and open spaces in the area.

### A. EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

There are several parcels of land within the VOBOA dedicated to public and private parkland and open space, including Exchange Street Park and the Genesee Riverfront. However, no programmed activities or sports courts exist within the VOBOA. Likewise, existing park space is largely unformalized and some portions of the trail network are overgrown, contributing to a perceived lack of safety and limiting use of the existing spaces. In addition, the VOBOA Study Area does not have sufficient park and open space to meet national standards. According to the National Park and Recreation Association, 9.6 acres of parkland are recommended per 1,000 residents in order to optimally serve the community. This standard would require the VOBOA Study Area to have 17.5 acres of parkland but, at present, only 6.1 acres of parkland exist within the Study Area, and 13.25 acres of parkland exist within or nearby the Study Area if the Flint Street Recreation Center's and School #19's facilities are included.

### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

The No Build alternative will retain existing but will not create additional park space. No adverse alternatives are expected from this alternative, as no modifications to existing open spaces will be made.

### C. ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: PARTIAL BUILDOUT (0-15 YEARS) AND FULL BUILDOUT (15+ YEARS)

The VOBOA Vision Plan recommends implementation measures that will increase the amount of protected open space, parks, trails, shoreline access, and scenic resources, providing approximately 8.0 acres of a combination of formalized park spaces, passive open spaces, and trail enhancements. Several recommendations for increased or improved public spaces are made within the VOBOA plan, as summarized below:

- Improving visibility of and access to the Genesee River
- Clearing and emphasizing the Genesee Riverway Trail
- Providing access to waterfront amenities such as kayak launches
- Creation of a commemorative location of Camp John-Fitz Porter
- Addition of event spaces, such as a waterfront amphitheater
- Designating more area for parklands
- Encouraging community gardens
- Augmenting existing trails and adding new trail connections

These options, as well as others, can be seen in greater detail in the VOBOA Open Space Master Plan in **Appendix 11** and in **Map 14**.

**D. ALTERNATIVE 4: POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO 2035 VISION PLAN**

Another alternative specific to parks and open space was identified to provide an additional option for the former firehouse on S. Plymouth Avenue. This alternative redevelops the firehouse parcel as a park rather than as a commercial development (as shown in the Partial and Full Buildouts). In addition to the improvements noted in Alternatives 2 and 3, this alternative would add roughly 0.5 acres of parkland (see site of Project #1 in **Map 14**).

**E. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

Implementation of the VOBOA will result in a net increase in parkland and waterfront access, enabling the Study Area to better meet National Recreation and Park Association standards. As such, no adverse impacts on the open space, parks and recreation, and scenic resources of the VOBOA are foreseen.

#### 4.2.10 Water Quality, Wetlands, and Use of Groundwater

This section addresses the potential impacts of the VOBOA Plan on water quality, wetlands and waterbodies, and groundwater. Implementation of the VOBOA Plan may result in land use or other changes that would alter surface and/or groundwater resources, including wetlands, streams, floodplains, watersheds, and groundwater resources.

##### A. **EXISTING SETTING**

The Study Area is located within an urbanized city, and in an area where most of the major sites are located on former industrial sites/potential brownfields. The types of proposed development within the VOBOA area have fewer environmental impacts, and in many cases will improve the overall quality of water resources in the area by hastening environmental remediation, applying high quality zoning and design standards that support riparian vegetation, and encouraging the use of green infrastructure techniques. In addition, the creation of new parks and green space as well as ecologically-sensitive landscaping will aid in restoration of the natural environment within the VOBOA.

A wetland assessment and delineation was performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in October 2015 and a final report of the findings was issued in June of 2017 (**Appendix 4**). The report detailed the state of wetlands and waterbodies in the Study Area and found that six (6) wetlands were present in the area, as well as one unnamed tributary to the Genesee River. The USACE has claimed to have jurisdiction over all of the wetlands and waterbodies in the Study Area, and as such will need to be consulted during the planning and construction of projects with the potential to impact said wetland and waterbodies.

##### B. **ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD**

With the 2035 No Build alternative, none of the improvements and redevelopment projects portrayed in the 2035 Vision Plan will be implemented and existing waterways, wetlands, and groundwater will not be affected. As such, no potential impacts to water quality in the study area are expected.

##### C. **ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: PARTIAL AND FULL BUILDOUTS**

Redevelopment associated with the Partial and Full Buildouts may result in adverse impacts to stormwater runoff and existing wetlands in the VOBOA Study Area, as described below. In general, adverse impacts of the Full Buildout alternative will be more impactful than those of the Partial Buildout since increased development occurs during the Full Buildout.

##### *Water Quality*

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**Genesee River.** Commercial and residential uses implemented during the Partial and Full Buildouts will likely have no direct point source connections to the Genesee River. All discharges of water will be to the public sewer system.

**Stormwater.** Ground disturbance associated with future construction of Partial and Full Buildout projects has the potential to increase the amount of sediment in stormwater run-off generated within the Study Area. It is likely that future mixed use development on sites in the

Study Area will primarily occur on land that is already covered with impervious surfaces. That said, future development would still be subject to a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges by NYSDEC, pursuant to Section 402 of the Clean Water Act.

### *Wetlands and Waterbodies*

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Two of the six wetlands in the Study Area will remain undisturbed by projects included in the VOBOA Plan. During the Partial Buildout, it is possible for other wetlands to be impacted by improvements to the Genesee Riverway Trail, construction of the new roadway, and implementation of the Waterfront Mixed Use Development project. Any additional redevelopment set to occur during the Full Buildout alternative is not predicated to impact existing wetlands, other than those already impacted during the Partial Buildout.

For projects impacting wetlands, permits will need to be obtained to complete any work. The specific permit authorizations will be dependent on the nature of the work at specific wetland locations and the magnitude of impact. Mitigation efforts can be used to preserve the total area of wetlands by moving the wetland habitats to a new designated location.

### *Groundwater*

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Because the VOBOA Study Area previously contained industrial operations, some sites have been impacted by groundwater contamination. These areas generally include areas associated with the Vacuum Oil Site, which exhibit levels of VOC and SVOC contamination that exceed NYS DEC Cleanup Objectives for brownfield sites. Metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are also present at concentrations which exceed cleanup objectives on portions of the site.

However, since the entire Study Area is serviced by public water, contaminated drinking water from past industrial uses is not a concern.

## **D. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

This section describes potential adverse impacts to the surface and groundwater resources within the VOBOA Study Area that could result from implementation of the VOBOA Plan. Implementation of the VOBOA plan will involve substantial environmental cleanup that will reduce sources and migration of contamination that is or may be impacting groundwater, stormwater, the Genesee River and wetland areas.

## WATER QUALITY IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Measures</i>	<i>Project-specific Mitigation (if applicable)</i>
<b>Increase in amount of sediment in stormwater run-off due to development.</b>	Erosion control measures include: silt fences, stabilized construction entrances, and dust control measures. Silt fence collects sediment that would otherwise run off the site and discharge into the Genesee River. Fences are generally placed on the downhill side of disturbed areas and assists with the prevention of wind erosion from the site as well. A stabilized construction entrance allows for sediment and soil to dislodge from vehicles that are exiting the site.	As part of the granting of any permit, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be required, which includes the design of erosion and sediment controls to be used during all phases of construction as well as permanent site stormwater management practices.
<b>Altered wetland location.</b>	If development may impact an existing wetland, the total area of wetlands can be retained by moving or creating new wetland areas.	Development occurring in a wetland will need to obtain permit authorizations.

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#### **4.2.11 Wildlife Habitats**

This section discusses the current habitats that have been observed in the VOBOA Study Area, as well as the potential impacts and mitigation measures that will be implemented should development occur on this site.

##### **A. EXISTING SETTING**

Community members and stakeholders have noted that some areas within the VOBOA provide a natural habitat environment where they have observed a variety of plant and animal species. An ecology screening was prepared for the VOBOA in November 2015 with the purpose of evaluating potential implementation (buildout) of the VOBOA Vision Plan. Several vegetative communities were identified during this screening and indicated that a wide variety of species are present in this area. These communities include Mowed Lawn, Mowed Lawn with Trees, Paved Path, Urban Vacant Lot, Brushy Cleared Land, Successional Shrubland, Successional Forest, and Floodplain Forest. Each community is dominated by a wide variety of species, and many invasive species were also observed in each community.

Although a response from the NYSDEC indicates that there are no records of rare or state listed animals or plants, or significant natural communities within the Study Area, the USFWS has identified the potential for the Northern long eared bat and several migratory birds to be present in the area. Trees greater than 3 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh), especially those with cavities and crevices, are prime roosting location for the Northern long eared bat. Many of these trees were found in the ecological communities identified as Floodplain Forest, Successional Forest, and Mowed Lawn with Trees. Wildlife observed during the ecological screening included various bird species, leopard frogs, gray squirrels, groundhogs and white-tailed deer. The full report from the ecological screening can be found in the Final Wetland Assessment and Delineation, Ecological Screening & Invasive Species Report in **Appendix 4**.

##### **B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD**

This alternative assumes that no changes to the VOBOA Study Area will be implemented, meaning that wildlife habitats will not be disturbed, and therefore no adverse impacts to wildlife habitats are expected to occur.

##### **C. ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: PARTIAL AND FULL BUILDOUTS**

As a result of the development projects proposed in both the Partial and Full Buildouts, adverse impacts to existing sensitive habitats may occur, as well the potential for the spread of invasive species. Mitigation approaches to preventing these adverse impacts are detailed below.

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D. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<b>CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION</b>		
<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action</i>	<i>Project Mitigation</i>
<b>Potential to spread invasive species during construction.</b>	Use of proper erosion and sediment control measures, washing construction equipment prior to leaving areas of invasive species, and proper removal and disposal of invasive plants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As improvement plans are progressed, recommended plant removal and disposal methods shall be determined.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential to disturb Northern Long-eared bat and migratory bird habitats during construction.</b>	Limitation of the number of potential roost trees as well as the timing of removal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing should be limited to trees that need to be removed to support improvements.</li> <li>Trees larger than 3 inches dbh should be protected from damage during construction.</li> <li>Trees shall only be removed between October 31 and March 31.</li> </ul>

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## 4.2.12 Historic and Cultural Resources

### A. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SETTING

The VOBOA Study Area has a rich history, which is described in detail in **Section 3.2.9**. Key findings from this section include:

- The Study Area was home to the Vacuum Oil Refinery for 65 years, which gained notoriety for its patented kerosene distillation process.
- The Genesee River has played an integral role in the Study Area's history, spurring development, contributing to the Underground Railroad system, and providing a training camp for Civil War recruits.
- Many of the streets and house lots originally settled in the mid-19th century have remain largely unchanged since.
- An archaeological survey determined that six structures within the VOBOA Study Area could potentially be eligible to be listed on the National Register (as shown on **Map 8**). Most of these structures are deteriorating accessory buildings located on the former Vacuum Oil site. The building at 5 Flint Street may also be National Register Eligible (NRE). These structures can either be demolished (without any additional approval required) or may be nominated by the property owner for National Register status. If 5 Flint Street was to proceed with adaptive reuse, National Register status would prove beneficial in gaining access to certain tax provisions and Federal grants.

### B. ALTERNATIVE 1: NO BUILD

The No Build alternative does not implement any of the development projects proposed in the 2035 Vision Plan, thereby keeping existing historic and cultural assets intact. As such, no adverse impacts to the historic and cultural resources are expected to occur.

### C. ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3: PARTIAL AND FULL BUILDOUT

Implementation of the VOBOA Plan may result in changes to existing land uses as a result of new development and redevelopment. This may, in turn, impact the neighborhood's historic character. The VOBOA Plan illustrates numerous opportunities for redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites for commercial, residential, and mixed uses, recognizing the existing historic character of the Study Area, as well as its relationship to nearby Historic Districts in the City of Rochester. To that end, redevelopment opportunities portrayed in the VOBOA Plan are envisioned to be consistent with (and enhance) the historic residential and industrial character of the neighborhood. In addition, a major objective of the revitalization process is to improve the public realm and the waterfront, recognizing the historic and symbolic importance of the Genesee River waterfront and the former Genesee Valley Canal. The VOBOA Plan recommends wayfinding and historic interpretive signage that will help promote the neighborhood's historic significance within Rochester. For these reasons, adverse impacts are not expected as a result of implementation of the VOBOA Plan. Rather, it is anticipated that implementation of the VOBOA Plan will improve the community's access to, and understanding of, historic and cultural resources.

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D. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

<b>CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS AND MITIGATION</b>		
<i>Potential Adverse Impacts</i>	<i>Mitigation Action</i>	<i>Project Mitigation</i>
<b>Demolition of National Register Eligible structures.</b>	If a Phase II Site Evaluation confirms that a structure is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, any proposed development for the site may need to be redesigned for avoidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid impacting NRE structures, developments can be redesigned such that the structures are preserved outside the impact zone.</li> </ul>
	If a development cannot be redesigned for avoidance, mitigation can be accomplished through a Phase III Data Recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to the start of development, a Phase III Data Recovery analysis can be undertaken to retrieve data or artifacts that are slated for demolition. Recovered data must then be analyzed by professional archaeologists.</li> <li>• If a structure that was determined to be NRE in the Phase II Site Evaluation is slated for demolition, a professional architectural historian must first document the interior and exterior structure.</li> <li>• Professional archaeologists can also be present during the initial phases of construction to analyze any subsurface artifacts.</li> <li>• Projects that undertake Phase III mitigation must first complete a Data Recovery Plan, which is reviewed by the lead agency and the State prior to execution.</li> <li>• Results of Phase III Data Recovery should be shared with the public.</li> </ul>
	Preservation without adverse impacts is the preferred outcome, but the preservation process is not intended to stop development. As such, development can move forward without any requirement for mitigation or avoidance if the property owner does not wish to pursue this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action required.</li> </ul>

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## 4.3 Other Impacts

### 4.3.1 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are considered those that result from the incremental or increased impact of actions when the impacts of that action are added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Cumulative impacts can result from a single action or a number of individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

The analysis in previous sections describes potential impacts of the Partial and Full Buildout alternatives. By virtue of this approach, the potential cumulative impacts have been considered as part of this. Potential cumulative impacts created by other development not envisioned in the VOBOA Plan have not been identified.

### 4.3.2 Adverse Impacts that Cannot Be Avoided

The VOBOA Plan was developed as a means to guide redevelopment of Strategic Sites in such a way that limits the potential negative impacts resulting from land use and development activities. The majority of the adverse impacts foreseen through the implementation of the recommended VOBOA redevelopment projects will be minimal and mitigated where possible. Therefore, it is not foreseen that VOBOA Plan will result in significant and unavoidable adverse impacts.

Development that takes place after the adoption of this VOBOA Plan and GEIS will still be subject to the SEQRA process on a site-specific basis. Environmental review of future actions may be necessary. This VOBOA Plan and GEIS is intended to be a resource to facilitate the review under SEQRA of future development actions.

### 4.3.3 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The implementation of the VOBOA Plan will entail the use of human, material, energy, natural, and financial resources, many of which cannot be retrieved once used. However, the potential benefits will outweigh the cost of such resources. Said irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources are described below.

#### A. HUMAN RESOURCES

Human labor will be necessary to implement the recommended projects within the VOBOA Plan. This entails design and engineering, permitting, financial analysis, construction, operation, and many other forms of labor. This use of resources is irreversible, however it can be seen as an overall benefit, as creates or supports jobs within the community.

#### B. MATERIAL CONSUMPTION

Physical building materials such as gravel, concrete, and lumber will be required for construction of new buildings, enhancements to streetscapes, development of new parks, and other recommended projects. These materials will be irretrievable once used, but play an integral role in the revitalization of the VOBOA.

**C. NATURAL RESOURCES**

A minimal amount of natural space may be compromised with the development of parking lots for new structures. The majority of the VOBOA, including the identified Strategic Sites have been developed in the past and are no longer in a natural state—thus not creating a loss of natural resources. Similarly, some sites identified in the VOBOA Plan that were previously developed are proposed to be redeveloped as vegetated parks and open space, thus provided a net addition of natural resources. It is not anticipated that implementation of the VOBOA Plan will result in significant negative environmental impacts to the existing natural resources within the VOBOA.

**D. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Financial assets from the State of New York, the City of Rochester, private landowners, and other entities will be used in the implementation of the VOBOA plan. Expenditures will be necessary for the acquisition of land, professional services such as engineering and architectural services, construction labor, finance services, environmental remediation, and many other goods and services. This initial use of financial resources will be irreversible, but will leverage additional economic opportunities that may surpass the initial investment.

**4.3.4 Growth Induced Impacts to Infrastructure**

Implementation of the VOBOA Plan is intended to catalyze redevelopment of mixed use, commercial, residential, and light industrial uses, thus inducing growth. The purpose of the VOBOA program is to identify and facilitate redevelopment on brownfields, vacant, abandoned, or underutilized sites. This plan includes strategic sites on which development would be a catalyst for future revitalization efforts. The direct and secondary growth impacts of the proposed VOBOA Plan will have numerous benefits, including job growth and indirect spending at local businesses, increased tax revenues, new business generation, and improvements in public safety.

## 4.4 The VOBOA Vision Plan

The VOBOA Vision Plan was developed through technical analysis and extensive engagement with local community members, City representatives and the Project Advisory Committee. The Master Plan (**Map 16**) reflects the vision and goals of the local community, while also recognizing the realities of the site and economic conditions. The Master Plan balances the community's goals of neighborhood stabilization, waterfront access, safety and quality-of-life improvements with redevelopment projects that can help to enhance the overall character and aesthetic of the PLEX neighborhood. Development projects identified in the Plan will support the objectives of expanded job opportunities and improved access to goods and services that are needed in this neighborhood. The Plan will build a critical mass of residents and business activity that will promote a unique urban waterfront resource while stabilizing and improving the surrounding community.

The Master Plan is based on a framework of "Design Principles" developed in collaboration with the community, described below.

- Enhanced waterfront trail system;
- Programmed waterfront spaces;
- Direct waterfront access;
- Residential neighborhood stabilization;
- Reuse of vacant properties in residential areas;
- Streetscape enhancements and traffic calming; and
- Visual and physical connectivity within neighborhood.

### 4.4.1 Overview of Future Land Uses and Capital Improvements

The Master Plan recommends changes to land use patterns within the Study Area, including a transition away from industrial uses, improved access to the waterfront, and the addition of water-dependent and water-enhanced uses along the Genesee River waterfront. The following section describes the proposed land use character within the Study Area, including key elements which support the Design Principles described above.

#### A. RESIDENTIAL

The Master Plan maintains and strengthens existing residential neighborhoods south of Violetta Street through programs designed to increase home ownership and improve property maintenance within these PLEX neighborhoods. Community gardens, pocket parks and infill development will improve conditions while reducing vandalism on vacant lots interspersed throughout the neighborhoods.

The proposed Master Plan includes primary residential-focused revitalization areas at both the northern and southern ends of the Study Area. The northern area is focused on addressing disinvestment and distress between Doran and Violetta Streets. The plan recommends this area remain a single-family and two-family residential neighborhood, with proposed redevelopment that is consistent with the architectural pattern along other neighborhood streets, such as Elba and Cottage. The plan proposes the redevelopment of Luther Circle, with a roadway extension to Serenity Circle, which will better meet the needs of the neighborhood's aging population by connecting currently isolated blocks to the expanded street and pedestrian network.

**B. COMMERCIAL**

South Plymouth Avenue will remain a predominantly residential corridor, with pockets of commercial uses located at key intersections. The largest contiguous commercial segment of South Plymouth is located between Ethel and Fenwick Streets. The Master Plan recommends that the existing Martin Luther King Plaza is redeveloped and expanded to include multiple storefronts with direct access to the sidewalk and associated parking to the south of the new building. The design of proposed commercial buildings will be consistent with the existing character of commercial nodes at Cottage and Magnolia Streets. Other opportunities for commercial infill development exist at key corridor intersections, including Flint Street, Cottage Street, and Barton Street. These areas should be a focus for convenience retail, personal services, and small office uses.

**C. MIXED USE**

The Master Plan proposes mixed use development at the former Vacuum Oil refinery site. Street level space is intended for retail, restaurants and cultural facilities that generate foot traffic, outdoor dining, and help to create an active and vibrant public realm. Upper stories are intended for office space and residential uses, with the possibility for live-work and creative spaces. The architectural character of new buildings will complement the scale and design of the existing neighborhood, while creating a unique sense of place that is pedestrian friendly. The adaptive reuse of signature buildings and structures, such as the former Foodlink building and the iconic water tower, will help preserve the neighborhood's former industrial identity.

**D. WATERFRONT**

The waterfront area includes all land east of the proposed north-south roadway linking Violetta Street and Magnolia Street. The Master Plan proposes residential uses and recreational opportunities, including public gathering spaces and canoe and kayak docks, and moorings for VOBOAts. Building development along the waterfront is focused on an area roughly equivalent to the boundaries of 5 Flint Street, with a slight expansion south towards Riverview Place. An analysis of the existing structure on 5 Flint Street suggests it is suitable for adaptive reuse as a mixed use building that holds cultural and restaurant space on the ground floor, and residential uses on upper stories. This structure will be a natural focal point for interpretive features and public realm improvements along the waterfront (such as re-watering a portion of the historic Genesee Valley Canal bed).

A primary focus of the Master Plan is providing better access to the Genesee Riverfront. Several new points of access are proposed from streets adjacent to the waterfront, including: Fenwick Street; Doran Street, Violetta Street; Flint Street; Riverview Place; Magnolia Street; and Luther Circle. An area adjacent to the river is devoted to public access, park and open space, creating a greenway that extends along the entire shoreline within the VOBOA. This greenway follows the general alignment of the existing Genesee Riverway Trail system, and includes a spur trail that follows the former Genesee Valley Canal from Violetta Street north to the enhanced Exchange Street Park and playground area. In addition to providing access to the waterfront, the Master Plan proposes two points of direct access to the waterway via docks or kayak launches at the terminus of Violetta Street and Flint Street.

**E. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION**

The Master Plan will transform the former Vacuum Oil refinery site into a local and regional destination. The Master Plan calls for public gathering spaces along the waterfront, including play areas, a signature gathering space, and a canal interpretive feature. The master plan proposes the (re)construction of a portion of the Genesee Valley Canal as an interpretive water feature, terminating at 5 Flint Street where a cultural facility and waterfront plaza are proposed.

The Master Plan includes a three-acre park between Riverview Place and Flint Street on a portion of 15 Flint Street. The park will include picnic areas, a playground, passive recreation space and community gardens. The park will be connected to the neighborhood by trail extensions from Riverview Place and the Genesee Riverway Trail. A large area south of Magnolia Street is also envisioned to remain undeveloped, yet improved as a public park and waterfront recreation destination for Southwest neighborhood residents. It is proposed that significant portions of this area would be cleared of understory brush and invasive scrub growth and replaced with a mown lawn sufficient for active or passive uses. The existing Exchange Street Playground will be rehabilitated and expanded to include a section of the former Genesee Valley Canal and a connection to the Genesee River waterfront. Additional opportunities for pocket parks on vacant lots within the neighborhood are proposed throughout the Study Area.

**F. TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Master Plan portrays options for construction of a new street connection linking Violetta Street with an extension of Magnolia Street. The new connection will provide new access to the Genesee River waterfront. Vehicle traffic would be diverted to South Plymouth Avenue and Exchange Street via the extension of Flint, Fenwick and Magnolia Streets, significantly improving accessibility to the waterfront for Southwest neighborhoods. Existing streets will be maintained at a pedestrian-scale, and the new roadway will provide on-street parking to service adjacent development and promote traffic calming. The new roadway corridor will include the existing route of the existing large sanitary sewer, and would largely follow the City-owned corridor of the former Genesee Valley Canal. This alignment would facilitate the rapid construction of the roadway pending any necessary environmental remediation activities.

**G. GATEWAYS AND WAYFINDING**

The establishment of a unique brand identity will advance positive perceptions of the PLEX neighborhood for residents and visitors. In addition, extensive wayfinding improvements will assist in guiding pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles to the new mixed use neighborhood center on the waterfront. Primary wayfinding nodes will coexist with primary gateways at the periphery and within the VOBOA. Several key gateways are identified at primary transportation intersections along South Plymouth Avenue, including: Magnolia Street; Cottage Street; Flint Street and Edith Street. These areas are proposed to include enhanced pavement treatments and crosswalks to improve visibility of pedestrians and calm traffic. In addition, the Exchange Street/Flint Street intersection is envisioned to become the focal point of the revitalized neighborhood.

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**KEY**

1. Commercial Redevelopment
2. Infill Development
3. Commercial Redevelopment
4. Flint Street Green Infrastructure Improvements
5. Multi-Family Housing and Roadway Connection
6. Trail Enhancements
  - Interpretation
  - Safety
  - Vegetation Clearing
7. Car Top Launch / Water Access
8. *Interim Parking Removed in 8-15 Year Plan*
9. Parkland and Trail Development
10. *Site Preparation Completed in 0-7 Year Plan*
11. New Road Construction
12. Exchange Street Gateway and Streetscape
13. Enhanced Trail Connection and Playground
14. Housing Redevelopment
15. Mixed Use Development
16. Foodlink Redevelopment
17. Mixed Use Development
18. Waterfront Mixed Use
  - Adaptive Reuse of 5 Flint Street
19. Waterfront Mixed Use with Structured Parking
20. Waterfront Amphitheater
21. Public Gathering / Event Space
22. Canal Interpretation / Water Feature
23. Wetland Interpretation and Nature Trail
24. Mixed Use Development with Structured Parking
25. Mixed Use Development



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City of Rochester, Monroe County, NY  
Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area

**2035 VISION PLAN**

*This effort was made possible with the guidance and financial assistance provided by the New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.*

MAP

**16**



## 4.4.2 Summary of Master Plan Projects (as shown in Map 16)

### A. **COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT OR PLEX PARK (PROJECT #1)**

Two alternatives were identified for the former firehouse site. The initial alternative considered a commercial development that would further strengthen retail and service offerings along Plymouth Avenue. However, after further study by neighborhood residents, the preferred re-use option for this site has evolved to incorporate an expansion of the Exchange Street Park. The parcel associated with the former fire station is envisioned as a public gathering space to serve the passive recreation needs of all residents, particularly those residing in the adjacent Kennedy Towers development. The park would also be more visible and welcoming from Plymouth Avenue, improving park sightlines and accessibility while offering a variety of programming options not currently available to residents in the PLEX neighborhood.

### B. **NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL (PROJECT #2)**

The 2035 Vision Plan depicts small-scale infill development on existing vacant lots that are distributed along South Plymouth Avenue. Appropriate uses for these sites includes housing and service businesses that support PLEX neighborhood residents. Redevelopment of these sites should preserve the existing residential scale and character of the corridor. Building form, massing, and setbacks should be consistent with the fabric of the streetscape and complement adjacent uses, avoiding deep setbacks or parking between the building and the street.

### C. **SOUTH PLYMOUTH AVENUE COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #3)**

The existing Martin Luther King Plaza located south of Columbia Street is, in the long-term, envisioned as a redevelopment site with a larger, more prominent structure containing multiple storefronts and direct sidewalk access. This site has been identified as a preferred location for a local market or small-scale grocery. In order to accommodate this type of use, the existing site to the south would also need to be acquired to accommodate off-street surface parking. Additional consideration should also be given to acquisition of residential properties to the rear of this site for additional parking and truck/delivery access. A new building should be reconstructed up to the streetline to enhance the commercial presence of South Plymouth.

Conceptual plans indicate sufficient off-street parking for 25 to 30 in addition to available on-street parking, when considering the acquisition of the adjacent parcel to the south. Based on the available land area, the proposed building could be 10,000 square feet or more of first floor commercial, with 4 to 6 dwelling units or an additional 10,000 square feet of office space on upper floors.

In order to facilitate redevelopment, the City should consider property acquisition and assembly and then request proposals from developers and investors to construct the desired project. Additionally, the development of an incentive zoning law may provide additional regulatory flexibility for challenging infill development sites such as the Martin Luther King Plaza.

As depicted in the rendering below, a short-term project may include façade enhancements to the existing structure to improve its presence as an anchor along Plymouth Avenue. Investments could include landscaping, signage and storefront improvements.



*Proposed façade improvements at Martin Luther King Plaza.*

**D. FLINT STREET GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS (PROJECT #4)**

The Flint Street Waterfront Connector will provide Green Street and pedestrian connectivity improvements between the Plymouth-Exchange / Southwest Area neighborhoods and the Genesee River waterfront. The project seeks to improve neighborhood accessibility with local, City and regional recreational destinations. The Connector begins at the Flint Street Community Center - the neighborhood hub for safe recreation and afterschool programming - and continues along Flint Street through the VOBOA to the Genesee Riverway Trail. The Waterfront Connector will enhance the ability of area residents and regional trail users to better access the Genesee River waterfront, the Genesee Riverway Trail, and the Flint Street Community Center.

The implementation of this project will be an additional revitalization initiative seeking to sustain and improve the quality of the residential experience within the PLEX neighborhood, as well as improve access to a regionally significant trail and open space network. The City of Rochester has programmed capital funding for the design and construction of improvements to Flint Street between Exchange Street and the eastern terminus of Flint Street. The City should pursue additional funding for this regionally significant project through the Consolidated Funding Application process.

**E. MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING AND ROADWAY CONNECTION (PROJECT #5)**

The redevelopment of Luther Circle would likely be a public-private partnership towards the construction of new affordable housing options to support seniors who wish to age-in-place within the PLEX neighborhood yet are unable to do so in their current residence. As part of any housing redevelopment, the City of Rochester should assist with the extension of Luther Circle to Serenity Circle.

Housing character, density and massing are intended to be similar to the surrounding neighborhood, with a mixture of approximately 25 to 30 structures to meet the needs of the intended population. The design, redevelopment and extension of Luther Circle should meet requirements for ADA accessibility, while improving connectivity between the housing units and the adjacent pocket parks and the Genesee Riverway Trail system.

This will require additional investigation regarding alternatives to navigating the steep slope to the south, as well as potential City acquisition of property to facilitate redevelopment. See **Appendix 12** for additional information.

**F. WATERFRONT PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENTS (PROJECT #6)**

Significant public realm improvements are proposed, including the development of a new park and several waterside access improvements via the construction of docks at the termini of Flint Street and Violetta Street and associated trail head parking.

As part of the overall waterfront public realm enhancements specific projects associated with the Riverway Trail and adjacent lands are also recommended in order to enhance safety, usability and access to the riverfront. Recommended improvements include the clearing and grubbing of several acres of overgrowth and invasive species removal along the Genesee Riverway Trail, the replanting of this area to a park-like character, and the establishment of enhanced historic and cultural interpretive stations. The clearing of the trail corridor should include a narrow, level shoulder of mown grass to one side of the trail to support its use during winter for cross-country skiing. In addition, the refurbishment of the riverwall will improve the aesthetic environment along the riverfront and visual access to the Genesee River. The provision of enhanced lighting and emergency call boxes should be included to increase safety and the utilization of the waterfront during the early evenings and throughout the year.

In order to support increased activity and access to the waterfront, a small surface parking lot, constructed on pervious pavers or grass materials, should be installed at the extended foot of Magnolia Street.

**G. CAR TOP LAUNCH / WATER ACCESS (PROJECT #7)**

The development of water access locations for kayaks and canoes will provide the existing neighborhood with expanded opportunities to experience and enjoy the Genesee River waterfront. The installation of two sets of removable docks would allow for their preservation and protection from river ice flows, and would facilitate future expansions as demand arises. These docks would also provide opportunities for fishing, and the general enjoyment of being at the water's edge. Access to the Genesee River at the proposed locations would require modifications to the riverwall that allow physical access to the water while maintaining needed flood protection. The accessible ramp system installed at the Cornhill Landing development may be a viable example to provide access and portage routes over the riverwall system.

**H. INTERIM PARKING (PROJECT #8)**

A small interim parking lot is proposed at the terminus of Flint Street to service the expanded use of the Genesee River waterfront trail and park areas. Consisting of approximately 20 spaces, this lot will function as a temporary trailhead during the redevelopment process. In addition, this lot will also provide a short portage route to the nearby kayak launch. Depending upon the timing of the lot's construction and the anticipated redevelopment schedule of 15 Flint Street, this facility may be constructed of gravel or asphalt, and should provide sufficient lighting to ensure safety. Redevelopment of any sites within the Vacuum Oil footprint will require environmental investigation and close coordination with required remediation activities.

**I. PARKLAND AND TRAIL DEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #9)**

Following required environmental investigations and through close coordination with the anticipated remediation of parcels south of Flint Street, the development of a neighborhood park is a short-term priority project for the Study Area. The PLEX neighborhood is currently underserved with respect to formal, dedicated parkland. Residents of all ages would immediately benefit from a designated park that offers a range of amenities. As depicted on the Master Plan, the southern end of 15 Flint Street has been identified as one possible location for a park, though this site is currently privately owned.

Regardless of location, the neighborhood park is envisioned to include approximately 2 acres of passive recreation space, with picnic, playground and open lawn areas. The park should include expansive areas of shade, covered shelters, and be easily accessible from the surrounding neighborhood via sidewalk and trail connections. Parking is proposed along the new waterfront road, with a temporary lot also located at the terminus of Flint Street. The new park location should have parking accessibility and should afford a direct linkage to the Riverway Trail system.

**J. SITE CLEARING AND REDEVELOPMENT PREPARATIONS (PROJECT #10)**

The plan envisions that the structures at 920 and 936 Exchange Street and 22 Flint Street would be demolished to create a cleared site for future redevelopment. The redevelopment of these sites will be the focal point for investment in future phases. This effort will likely require extensive environmental investigations for each site to determine requirements for abatement prior to demolition activities. The property owners may choose to retain these structures, which will affect the manner and technique used to perform environmental cleanup.

The former Foodlink Building and the existing water tower recommended to be retained given their historic presence in the neighborhood. The water tower is proposed to be maintained, painted and up-lit for integration into future development as an iconic historical element. The Foodlink building is proposed to undergo adaptive reuse for a mixed use development pending feasibility and structural integrity assessments. Upon the identification of a master developer, a detailed development master plan should be formulated and the subdivision of the site completed to facilitate private investment. The Foodlink site has recently been enrolled in the Brownfield Cleanup Program.

The plan also identifies similar remediation, clearing and grubbing for 5 and 15 Flint Streets and areas to the south in preparation for future redevelopment. Until final site development plans for these parcels are approved by the City of Rochester, the sites should be remediated and cleared. 5 and 15 Flint Street, as well as City owned parcels south of Flint Street, are all enrolled in the NYS Brownfield Cleanup Program.

Remediation of 5 and 15 Flint Street as well as 920 Exchange Street, 936 Exchange Street and 22 Flint Street will need to be closely coordinated with actual redevelopment plans. For logistical reasons some cleanup activities may need to be performed concurrent with initial site development work. If remedial activities are completed prior to redevelopment, appropriate site grading, stormwater management, seeding and planting of remediated areas will be necessary.

**K. NEW ROAD CONSTRUCTION (PROJECT #11)**

The most extensive public infrastructure component proposed for the Partial Buildout is the construction of a new roadway connecting Violetta Street and Magnolia Street. The proposed new road begins at the present terminus of Violetta Street and parallels the City-owned former Genesee Valley Canal corridor south to a connection with a proposed extension of Magnolia Street. This roadway will serve as the primary north-south linkage for all future development adjacent to the Genesee River.

The roadway will be relatively narrow to limit visual and physical impacts to the River shoreline; yet will be generous enough to support two-way traffic, sidewalks and tree lawns on both sides of the street, and on-street parking spaces on the southbound side. The roadway, on-street parking and sidewalks will be designed to permit the construction of additional intersecting roadway connections for Fenwick Street and private access drives during future development phases. In tandem with the construction of the new road, necessary utility infrastructure for public water and storm sewers will be included. An alternative for consideration may be the termination of the roadway at a cul-de-sac just west of proposed structures on 5 Flint Street. The roadway terminus would allow for access to structured parking, while also providing significant trail connectivity to surrounding parkland.

The construction of the new road as depicted in the Master Plan may require additional lands west of the former Genesee Valley Canal corridor. Depending upon the timing of construction and ownership of adjacent lands, takings or permanent easements may be required, and these conditions should be factored into funding and approval timelines.

New roadway construction will likely be phased to coordinate with the pace and progress of redevelopment as well as the availability of funding. The initial roadway improvements will likely be the reconstruction of the existing Flint Street right of way east of Exchange Street.

**L. EXCHANGE STREET GATEWAY AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS (PROJECT #12)**

Throughout the public involvement process, residents have consistently noted that traffic speeds on Exchange Street and South Plymouth Avenue are excessive and that traffic calming is needed to improve pedestrian safety. Improvements to Exchange Street are proposed that would significantly deter speeding, such as speed humps, raised table intersections or raised crosswalks, and curb bump outs to narrow the roadway. Improvements to the Ford Street gateway are necessary to provide a welcoming entrance into the neighborhood which mitigates the negative visual impacts of the adjacent industrial activity. Improvements to South Plymouth include aesthetic enhancements to paving surfaces at primary intersections that seek to slow traffic and highlight pedestrian crossings for added safety.

**M. ENHANCED TRAIL CONNECTION AND PLAYGROUND (PROJECT #13)**

This project includes the redevelopment of the Exchange Street playground and its expansion along the former railroad corridor east of Exchange Street to the Genesee River. The Exchange Street Playground is currently underutilized, lacks a sense of safety due to topography and vegetation, and is under programmed for use by the surrounding neighborhood. The playground and adjacent former railroad corridor present a straight forward linear connection to the waterfront along City-owned open space that is underutilized, yet full of opportunity. Similar to the terminus of Flint Street, the convergence of Violetta and the new linear park is envisioned to create a waterfront destination programmed for use by the neighborhood. The City should begin this effort through the identification of alternative design concepts for both the redevelopment of the playground and the expansion of the park as a linear element, including a multiuse trail, to the terminus of Violetta Streets.

**N. HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #14)**

The area bounded by Doran Street, Violetta Street and Exchange Street is negatively impacted by declining property maintenance, high crime levels and poor connectivity, resulting in a continued lack of reinvestment that must be addressed as part of a larger neighborhood revitalization strategy. It is proposed that the future redevelopment of this area follow the successful precedent set in the Olean Street and Edith Street revitalization projects to the north and west. Housing of a similar style and scale would include single-family and two-family units with garages. The proposed redevelopment should seek to extend Stanley Street through the block to Doran Street, and realign Ethel Street with Columbia Avenue. These improvements will reconnect the block to the larger neighborhood and will rationalize the circulation pattern. In addition, redevelopment should seek to create a residential density of roughly 7 units per acre.

The complete redevelopment of the neighborhood may be unnecessary, and the City should seek to identify properties that can positively contribute to revitalization efforts through focused rehabilitation and reinvestment. As part of the VOBOA Step 3 process, the City conducted a Housing Reinvestment Strategy that also recommended a series of land assembly

tools for use by the City, such as tax liens, outright purchases, land swaps, and takings. See **Appendix 13** for additional information.

**O. NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL DEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #15)**

The northwest corner of Fenwick Street and Exchange Street is currently a vacant, unused parking lot that is proposed for future redevelopment with residential development, consistent with surrounding residential development patterns. Attached single family homes are proposed with similar square footages as exist today. The market study for the site indicates that new housing units with updated amenities but similar price points are desired in the neighborhood. A pro forma analysis (**Appendix 7**) suggested that some form of tax abatement would be necessary to ensure the feasibility of attached, single-family housing at this site.



*Proposed development at the corner of Fenwick and Exchange Streets.*

**P. FOODLINK REDEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #16)**

The former Foodlink Building at 936 Exchange Street is a large concrete and masonry structure located at the Flint Street/Exchange Street intersection. The original portions of the massive building are proposed to be adaptively reused as a mixed use structure. An addition off the southeast corner of the structure is envisioned to be demolished to improve the development potential of adjacent 22 Flint Street.

The adaptive reuse and revitalization of this structure has been consistently supported in neighborhood outreach sessions, with proposals for future uses including a food co-operative, artist live-work spaces, loft apartments and a 'green jobs' business incubator. A requirement of any future reuse will be the addition of windows, and this is anticipated to be one of the largest renovation expenses.

**Q. MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH STRUCTURED PARKING (PROJECT #17)**

Flint Street is proposed to become a central node of activity as future development is brought to the street line to improve the definition of vertical space adjacent to the prominent former Foodlink building. The southwest corner of Flint Street and Exchange Street is currently a vacant

lot that is proposed for future redevelopment with a modest mixed use structure. The Master Plan suggests a larger building for 950 Exchange Street, potentially consisting of an L-shaped, three-story mixed use structure with first floor flex-space to spur job creation and attract workforce training activities or a business/industrial incubator with shop and office space. Upper story development may include additional office space or residential uses and associated parking in the rear.

The Master Plan envisions a three-story, 90,000 square foot U-shaped structure on 15 Flint Street similar in character to the redevelopment of the adjacent 950 Exchange Street. The proposed structure could include approximately 25 to 30 unit upper story, market-rate residential units and 25,000 square feet of ground floor mixed commercial, retail and office space. The Plan contemplates support parking for approximately 150 to 175 vehicles contained in a multi-level structure screened from the adjacent neighborhood within the core of the site. The structure's northeast corner at the intersection of Flint Street and the new roadway should include a prominent vertical element, such as a tower, to anchor the adjacent public gathering space. Initial development on Flint Street will likely set the standard for quality and architectural character within the neighborhood, and should include the use of high quality materials and provision of refined public realm enhancements.

**R. WATERFRONT MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT (PROJECT #18)**

The redevelopment of 5 Flint Street will create a riverfront destination with a mixed-use development and significant public realm improvements. This project proposes the adaptive reuse of the potentially National Register Eligible (NRE) structure at 5 Flint Street, recognizing existing structural issues (see **Appendix 15**). The Building Assessment found that the building's roofing system has mostly blown off, debris has accumulated throughout the first and second levels, mold and moss have grown throughout the structure, structural beams are reinforced inconsistently, and asbestos may be present at the site. To ensure structural stability, a specialized structural investigation would need to be conducted. The adaptive reuse of this structure is envisioned to include 11,000 square feet of ground floor civic use space, such as a museum or visitor center, that will serve as the focal point for historic interpretation opportunities in the adjacent public realm improvements. Upper stories could be redeveloped for a moderately sized restaurant and/or 12 to 15 residential units. A particularly unique opportunity is the utilization of the structure's roof for public or quasi-public space to leverage the outstanding views downstream to the downtown Rochester skyline.

**S. MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH STRUCTURED PARKING (PROJECT #19)**

The Master Plan proposes additional development with structured parking on 5 Flint Street south of the current building. These structures are to include market-rate townhouses, condominiums and apartments on the upper floors and restaurant/eatery space at the ground level. Parking for these structures would be included in a multi-story garage beneath to limit the development footprint on site and to maximize open space for the enjoyment of the public along the Genesee River. Several breaks between structures are planned to retain visual and physical connectivity between the neighborhood and the waterfront.

**T. WATERFRONT AMPHITHEATER (PROJECT #20)**

A large outdoor amphitheater is identified in the Master Plan along the Genesee River waterfront that would become a significant public gathering space in the PLEX neighborhood to complement the larger urban plaza at the terminus of Flint Street. The amphitheater would support programmed events, concerts and festivals along the Genesee River in a more natural setting when compared to the urbanized space envisioned to the north.

**U. SIGNATURE WATERFRONT PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE (PROJECT #21)**

Public realm improvements surrounding the redevelopment of 5 Flint Street identified in the Master Plan include abundant space for plazas, lawn and park areas, and an expansion or widening of the Genesee Riverway Trail along the river frontage of these structures. The centerpiece of these improvements would be a large urban plaza at the terminus of Flint Street. It is envisioned that the design and construction materials used would make this the premiere public gathering space in the PLEX neighborhood with sufficient space, utilities and amenities for programmed events, concerts and festivals among the dramatic backdrop of the Genesee River and downtown Rochester skyline. The redevelopment of 5 Flint Street and the surrounding public lands will create a distinctive sense of place and a hub of activity along the Genesee River.

**V. CANAL INTERPRETATION AND WATER FEATURE (PROJECT #22)**

The potential re-construction of a section of the former Genesee Valley Canal as a signature water feature would add an additional destination attraction for both residents and visitors. It is envisioned that the water feature could also allow residents to interact with the water through wading or dangling their feet in the feature to provide a cooling respite during hot summer months. Water features are significant 'people attraction devices' and become the focal point for pedestrian activity. Additional kiosks, public art installations and interpretive elements could be added to the water feature to portray and explain the historic significance of the site. Canal interpretive improvements could also be combined with green infrastructure techniques to enhance educational interest and access to additional sources of funding for implementation.

**W. WETLAND INTERPRETATION AND NATURE TRAIL (PROJECT #23)**

Historic development patterns along the riverfront have created pockets of wetlands in low-lying areas between the former elevated railroad and upland areas at Cottage Street. The most significant of these areas should be restored and preserved through the removal of invasive species and the establishment and management of native vegetation. A trail connecting the

residential neighborhood to the west across the wetland area via a VOBOArdwalk would increase connectivity to the Genesee Riverway Trail and riverfront while also providing recreational and educational opportunities seldom found within a dense urban setting and unique to the PLEX neighborhood. The VOBOArdwalk could be enhanced with educational and interpretive signage highlighting the active ecological processes taking place in the adjacent wetland and woodland areas. These improvements could be coordinated with the City of Rochester School District's environmental science programming, affording opportunities for City students to obtain field experience within their own neighborhoods, while potentially fostering a greater appreciation for the natural environment.

**X. MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH STRUCTURED PARKING (PROJECT #24)**

This site occupies a key location along the new roadway and Genesee River waterfront adjacent to 15 Flint Street and 5 Flint Street. Assumed in the Master Plan to be cleared and remediated as necessary during Partial Buildout activities to prepare for redevelopment, the four-acre site is anticipated to be the culminating investment opportunity within the VOBOA. The linear site is envisioned to include three to four, four story structures totaling 200,000 to 250,000 square feet of mixed use development with structured parking similar to the U-shaped development proposed for 15 Flint Street. In the Plan, the buildings are oriented parallel to Exchange Street, with enlarged public spaces along the staggered road frontage. This expanded public realm affords the opportunity for individual, intimate spaces that can be tailored to the needs of ground floor tenants; yet also offer a continuous ribbon of pedestrian and dining activity facing the Genesee River canal interpretive feature and waterfront greenway. The development of this block will include the extension of Fenwick Street to Ewing Place, expanding the neighborhood street grid and improving the circulation of pedestrians and vehicular traffic from South Plymouth Avenue to the Genesee River.

**Y. EXCHANGE STREET MIXED USE (PROJECT #25)**

The redevelopment of the Exchange Street corridor north of the former Foodlink building is envisioned to include limited mixed use commercial development of a similar character, scale and massing to development in the adjacent neighborhood. Surface parking is proposed for the interior portions of the site. The streetscape along Exchange Street is also proposed to be modified along this development block through the expansion of the roadway cross section. The new cross section is proposed to include an 8 to 10 foot wide center median with trees and street lights and on-street parallel parking. The street frontage along Exchange Street and Fenwick Street may include a mixture of ground floor commercial/office space with upper story office, light industrial and flex space, or potentially residential units.

A development concept including space for boutique or artisanal manufacturing, or incubator space for small, early-stage businesses was consistently supported by the community throughout the planning process. These types of uses would provide high-value, skilled jobs within the neighborhood, while potentially encouraging employees to live within the area.

The final makeup of development along Exchange Street, as with other locations within the VOBOA, will be influenced by the extent and type of development in surrounding areas as well as the actual development pursued by property owners. Similar to Project #24, the Master Plan

assumes that the site will be cleared for redevelopment during Partial Buildout activities, and the City should play a significant role to coordinate owner participation in future redevelopment.

## 4.5 Other Implementation Activities

### 4.5.1 Zoning Map Recommendations

An effective tool used to help realize a master plan is through implementation of the zoning map. In addition, given the extent of environmental remediation likely required for some sites within the VOBOA, particularly within the footprint of the Former Vacuum Oil refinery, zoning will play an important role in cleanup planning since the future use of brownfield sites directly affects the nature and extent of the required cleanup activities. Below is a discussion of how best to implement the VOBOA plan through the use of the City's Zoning Map (refer to **Map 3** in **Section 3.2.2**).

#### A. R-1 LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

As discussed in **Section 3.2.2** above, the predominant zoning district in the VOBOA is R-1 Low-density Residential. According to the City Zoning Code, the purpose of the R-1 district is to:

“...maintain residential areas at relatively low densities. The R-1 District is a distinct urban area that is characterized predominantly by owner-occupied, single-family detached and attached homes but often contains a diverse mix of other preexisting higher-density residential uses. Each R-1 neighborhood is unique in character, composition and scale. The district requirements are intended to preserve and promote neighborhoods characterized by unobstructed front yards and pedestrian-scale streetscapes and to protect against undesirable uses and residential conversions.”

The R-1 district is intended to be predominantly single-family homes, attached and detached, and to support low-density residential living. This is an important district to retain in the VOBOA based largely on the feedback received from the neighborhood which indicated that low-density housing is the preferred land use in the VOBOA. R-1 will remain the predominant zoning district in the VOBOA.

**B. R-2 MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

Introducing an R-2 district along Plymouth Avenue generally between Cottage Street and Fenwick Street may have positive impacts to the future of the VOBOA. S. Plymouth Avenue is classified by the U.S. Department of Transportation as an Urban Principle Arterial Street.<sup>8</sup> This street classification indicates that S. Plymouth Avenue serves a major activity center and is intended to accommodate large traffic volumes. Increasing the residential density of S. Plymouth Avenue is not inconsistent with this street classification and provides potentially positive impacts described below.

Currently, there are no R-2 districts in the VOBOA. The purpose of the R-2 district is to:

“... provide a mix of housing choices. The inclusion of single-family residential, two-family residential and multifamily residential provides a diversity of housing choices while the bulk and density regulations maintain the lower-density scale of the neighborhoods. These residential areas are located proximate to neighborhood-scale shopping and service opportunities. The district requirements are intended to preserve, promote and protect a quality of urban residential living characterized by unobstructed front yards, pedestrian-scale streetscapes and buildings scaled and designed to be compatible with the neighborhood.”

Only about 30% of the parcels along S. Plymouth Avenue that are zoned R-1 are currently being used as a single-family residence. Fifty percent (50%) of the parcels are occupied with 2-family homes. Fifteen percent (15%) are parcels containing three or more apartments. An R-2 zoning district would more accurately reflect the actual uses along S. Plymouth Avenue and would support a diverse mix of housing choices for the neighborhood.

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<sup>8</sup> The characteristics of an Urban Principle Arterial Street are:

- Serves major activity centers, highest traffic volume corridors and longest trip demands
- Carries high proportion of total urban travel on minimum of mileage
- Interconnects and provides continuity for major rural corridors to accommodate trips entering and leaving urban areas and movements through the urban area
- Serves demand for intra-area travel between the central business district and outlying residential areas

Introducing an R-2 district along S. Plymouth Avenue has a number of advantages that may provide positive impacts to the neighborhood, including:

- The new district would continue to draw density to S. Plymouth Avenue thereby potentially relieving some of the density pressure on the areas zoned R-1 in the interior of the VOBOA.
- Many of the homes along S. Plymouth have already been converted to more than one dwelling unit and have larger lots sizes so those homes will become conforming in the district.
- Many of the homes are larger in size which means they are more expensive to maintain. The owners of these homes will have an easier path for creating additional apartments in the home to derive income to help with maintenance costs.
- Adding the district to the VOBOA will enable the option for more housing options to be introduced to the marketplace.
- Allowing more residential units will bring more people to support commercial enterprises in the neighborhood, thereby potentially increasing neighborhood goods and services available to all residents in the VOBOA.

Negative impacts that could result from the increase in residential density are primarily to neighborhood character and parking supply. To monitor and mitigate those impacts, increasing the number of dwelling units on a property requires a permit from the City of Rochester and is subject to the City Zoning Code and the NYS Building Code. A permit application triggers a review that takes into account parking regulations and health and safety regulations. Whenever a dwelling unit is being rented, it is subject to maintaining a Certificate of Occupancy (CofO). CofO's require periodic inspections to ensure the property is being maintained properly.

South Plymouth Avenue is unique in that it allows on-street parking on both sides of the street with very few restrictions. With the current density, the demand for parking on S. Plymouth Avenue is not more than the supply. If a property owner proposes to increase the number of units on the property, parking provisions are taken into account during the review and approval process. If the change in use will cause a deficiency in parking, then the application would be denied and an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance would be required.

With regard to neighborhood character, most of the single-family homes have already been converted to two and three-family homes along the corridor of S. Plymouth Avenue. The character is already more dense than a traditional single-family neighborhood. Therefore, rezoning this corridor should not cause a drastic change in the character of the area, but rather it would reflect the current neighborhood character.

**C. R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

The R-3 zoning district is currently in the VOBOA at two locations at the northern tip and the southern tip, as described in **3.2.2**. According to the City Zoning Code, the purpose of the R-3 district is to:

“...provide residential areas that accommodate higher-density housing while protecting, maintaining and enhancing existing residential areas. The R-3 District may include various housing types ranging from single-family detached to high-density apartments. The district adds to the urban character of Rochester and provides diversity in housing types particularly in proximity to Community Center and Village Center Districts.”

At the southern end of the VOBOA, the Riverview Apartments complex is a dense residential development constructed to accommodate student housing and is zoned R-3. Adjacent to this residential complex, is an apartment complex on Luther Circle, zoned as R-1, owned and operated by the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA). The VOBOA plan indicates that the RHA complex should be maintained, but possible reconstructed to continue its use as an affordable and accessible housing option for neighborhood seniors who wish to age-in-place within the PLEX neighborhood. This complex, however, is nonconforming in the R-1 district and rehabilitation and reconstruction becomes more difficult from a permitting and funding perspective. Extending the existing adjacent R-3 zoning district to include Luther Circle would not only provide a more appropriate zoning district for Luther Circle, but would also enable an easier path toward redeveloping, improving, and replacing the housing on the street.

Another possible future use of the R-3 district in the VOBOA planning area is within the actual footprint of the Vacuum Oil/Exxon site in the area south of Flint Street, primarily 5 and 15 Flint Street and City-owned waterfront and former canal property. This area is vacant and currently zoned R-1. The privately-owned parcels total approximately 7 acres and are currently the subject of a development plan proposed by the owners, One Flint Street LLC. The proposal, reflected in the VOBOA Implementation Plan, is for the development of a multiple-family housing complex primarily for student housing. The R-3 zoning district would facilitate a multiple-family housing development which is likely the highest and best use due to the waterfront location and proximity to downtown, the University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology. In addition, this housing type could relieve some of the housing pressures that are forcing the conversions of single-family homes to student rental which is causing concern in the neighborhood. The yard and bulk requirements for the R-3 zone would provide for adequate setbacks, but may allow for heights that could be out of character for the surrounding properties. Height should be limited, through the site plan review process, to 45 feet from the elevation of the Flint Street frontage. This is generally the height of the preexisting Foodlink building located at 936 Exchange Street at the corner of Flint Street and Exchange Street. Limiting height will reduce potential neighborhood character impacts related to massing. This site is located within an established neighborhood with heights generally associated with three story single-family residential houses. To maintain the existing neighborhood character new buildings should maintain heights associated with the existing Food Link building.

#### D. **C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

During the planning process, neighborhood feedback indicated that there is a desire for an increase in commercial goods and services available within the VOBOA to serve the people living there. The dominance of the R-1 district zoning limits the amount of area that can be used to provide for more goods and services in the VOBOA. Currently, there are only 15 parcels located within or immediately adjacent to the VOBOA boundaries that are zoned C-1. Increasing the amount of commercial zoning is an effective strategy to facilitate the establishment or expansion of neighborhood commercial uses. The purpose of the C-1 district is to:

“...provide for small-scale commercial uses offering primarily convenience shopping and services for adjacent residential areas. Proximity to residences requires that commercial operations in the C-1 District are low intensity, unobtrusive and conducted at a scale and density compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. There is a relatively low demand on public services, transportation and utilities.”

A C-1 commercial district is intended to promote neighborhood-scale commercial uses so the Zoning Code limits the size to a maximum of 3,000 sq.ft. Strict design standards promote attractive, transparent and pedestrian-friendly buildings with minimal signage. The type of commercial development in a C-1 zone is meant to complement the adjacent residential uses and not detract from them.

The Implementation Plan recognizes that there are two areas where commercial development is likely to occur. One area is along S. Plymouth Avenue. Rezoning some identified nodes along this principal arterial to C-1 Neighborhood Commercial would be in keeping with the classification of the street.

The positive impacts associated with increasing the number of parcels zoned C-1 include:

- Existing commercial buildings that are rezoned from R-1 to C-1 become conforming in the district which will make it easier for the owner to improve the building and get it occupied with commercial tenants.
- As discussed above, it will help bring more convenient goods and services to the neighborhood residents.
- Job opportunities in the neighborhood would increase with the increase in number of commercial enterprises.

The potential negative impacts to the neighborhood from increasing the number of commercial operations is the increase in traffic and an increase in demand for parking. According to the traffic study conducted for the VOBOA plan (see **Appendix 9**), S. Plymouth Avenue has ample capacity for the potential increase in commercial uses, with most intersections retaining a LOS C or better after both Partial and Full Buildout. With regard to parking, the Zoning Code requires on-site parking for commercial operations. Any establishment of a new commercial operation would be subject to these parking requirements. If on-site parking cannot be provided, then the property owner would be required to get a Special Permit or an Area Variance. Both of these processes requires a public process so the neighborhood would have an opportunity to get involved in the decision making for the off-site parking request.

**E. M-1 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT**

The M-1 zoning district is currently in the VOBOA at two location, at the site of the Nordon Inc. at 691 Exchange Street and at the industrial area along Exchange Street generally between Flint Street and Violetta Street. According to the City Zoning Code, the purpose of the M-1 district is to:

“...promote the retention and growth of employment opportunities by providing areas where a broad range of industrial uses may locate and where options for complementary uses exist in older two-story and multistory buildings. The obsolescence of many industrial buildings for traditional manufacturing purposes is recognized, and the reoccupancy and redevelopment of those buildings are encouraged through the allowance of retail sales and services, offices, and eating and drinking establishments. Residential conversions are permitted primarily to accommodate loft-style living spaces and to meet the needs of those seeking the benefits of live-work arrangements.”

At this time, to implement the VOBOA Implementation Plan there is no need to introduce new M-1 zoning districts, nor is it necessary to rezone existing M-1 districts. Although much of the industrial space in the VOBOA is vacant, adaptive reuse is strongly encouraged through the application of the M-1 district regulations in the City Zoning Code. The code allows flexibility to the extent that retaining the M-1 zoning would actually allow maximum reuse opportunities for these sites.

A minor change in the existing M-1 district that is located at Exchange Street and Flint Street is the proposal to extend the M-1 district to include an adjacent parcel at 984 Exchange Street that is owned and being used by Turn Key Operations.

Redevelopment in the M-1 district is subject to design guidelines and standards and use requirements that impose additional regulations on the reuse of the sites. These additional requirements and regulations in the City Zoning Code are designed to help mitigate any potential negative impacts of a user of the site on the surrounding neighborhood. Any uses proposed at the site that do not meet the requirements of the Zoning Code would be required to get a Variance from the Zoning VOBOArd of Appeals and the neighborhood would have the opportunity to participate in that review and approval process.

**F. PD PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

A Planned Development District (PD) is a zoning district that allows a customized zoning district for a particular development project. This is a tool that is used when the proposed development involves a mix of interrelated uses. The purpose of the district is to:

“...recognize a defined area for unified and integrated development intended to create more flexible development opportunities than would be possible through the strict application of the land use and development regulations of this chapter. Planned Development Districts allow diversification in the uses permitted and variation in the relationship of uses, structures, and open spaces and are conceived as cohesive unified projects with unique standards and regulations.”

This district is useful when future development may require flexibility unavailable through more traditional zoning districts. The PD District offers an opportunity for the City to work collaboratively with developers so the two entities can work to identify appropriate and marketable uses, context sensitive dimensional requirements, parking, landscaping, open space, public amenities, and other zoning-related performance criteria. The PD designation also provides the ability to implement the overall development plan incrementally over time, with flexibility to come back to the City for changes.

The advantages of the PD District are that development parameters, e.g., height and setbacks, specific to a development proposal can be included as part of the regulations. Once the parameters are included in the PD District, it would take an act of City Council to make changes. The disadvantages to the PD District is that it is a long process to develop the district regulations and approve the district.

#### **G. O-S OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

The O-S zoning district is currently in the VOBOA in one location, the parcel dedicated to the Exchange Street Playground, 719-775 Exchange Street. According to the City Zoning Code, the purpose of the O-S District is to:

“...preserve and enhance Rochester's open spaces and recreational areas by protecting these natural amenities and restricting development that does not respect these environmentally sensitive areas. Rochester recognizes the value and importance of the resources for City and regional residents and, therefore, strictly limits the development of these areas. Open Space Districts are intended to apply to all publicly owned parks, squares, recreational areas, natural wildlife areas, the waterfront and cemeteries.”

The Implementation Plan recommends the rezoning of land along the entire Genesee River waterfront in the VOBOA to O-S. This would reserve the waterfront for public access and restrict development. Rezoning of the following areas of the VOBOA to O-S district is proposed:

- Along the Genesee Riverway Trail;
- At an expanded area of City-owned land that is located east of the parcels that front on the east side of Cottage Street;
- Along a strip of land that would connect the Exchange Street Playground with the Genesee Riverway Trail; and,
- At 632 S. Plymouth Avenue which is a City-owned parcel that the PLEX Neighborhood Association has expressed interest in for expansion of the Exchange Street Playground. See Section **4.4.2-A** for further discussion.

Rezoning to O-S would commit the area to parkland which gives it protection beyond that of the City Zoning Code. It would become subject to alienation procedures involving the NYS Legislature if ever a proposal was advanced to take the land out of park use.

#### H. ZONING'S IMPACT ON REMEDIATION

Environment remediation will likely be required for a number of parcels within VOBOA, particularly within the footprint of the Former Vacuum Oil refinery. Once the nature and extent of contamination at a parcel is fully understood, a site developer working in the Brownfield Cleanup Program will take steps to remediate the parcel consistent with its proposed use. The requirements for remediating a parcel are more stringent for use with a residential component than ones involving a commercial or industrial use. Thus, since the zoning applicable to a parcel influences its uses allowed, the same zoning classification may influence the potentially applicable soil cleanup objectives that a remediated parcel must meet.

Soil cleanup objectives for a single-family residential use are more stringent than for a restricted-residential (all other housing not single-family under common ownership or control), commercial or industrial use, with industrial uses having the least stringent soil cleanup objectives. See 6 NYCRR § 375-1.8(g). For open space or recreational uses of lands, such as a ball field or walking trail, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) applies the commercial use soil cleanup objective for passive recreational uses (i.e., public uses with limited potential for soil contact) and the restricted residential soil cleanup objective for those recreational uses with a reasonable potential for soil contact.

Separate and apart from complying with the use-based soil cleanup objectives, a developer under the Brownfield Cleanup Program will be required to remediate sources of contamination that may be deemed to be impacting the groundwater. A "source area" or "source" of contamination impacting groundwater is defined by the DEC regulations as:

*Source area or source* means a portion of a site or area of concern at a site where the investigation has identified a discrete area of soil, sediment, surface water or groundwater containing contaminants in sufficient concentrations to migrate in that medium, or to release significant levels of contaminants to another environmental medium, which could result in a threat to public health or the environment. A source area typically includes, but is not limited to, a portion of a site where a substantial quantity of any of the following are present:

- (1) concentrated solid or semi-solid hazardous substances;
- (2) non-aqueous phase liquids; or
- (3) grossly contaminated media.

Thus, the NYSDEC also established soil cleanup objectives for protection of groundwater. If soil in an area of groundwater contamination has the same contaminant above the protection of groundwater standard as is also found in the groundwater, the NYSDEC will typically treat that area as a source of contamination and select a remedy to best address that source. In some instances, that may be excavation but it does not necessarily have to be. For VOCs in soil, it may also be a technology that removes the contamination from the soil in-situ such as soil vapor extraction.

The degree in which groundwater may be remediated at a site in the Brownfield Cleanup Program is largely dependent upon whether restrictions on groundwater use will be imposed. In addition, the potential for the groundwater to influence surface water bodies or wetland areas or otherwise be part of a complete exposure route, along with feasibility to remediate, will be relevant to the degree to which the groundwater must be remedied.

#### **4.5.2 Housing Strategy**

In order to explore a variety of housing alternatives within the Study Area, a *Housing Analysis and Reinvestment Strategy* was prepared in 2016 (**Appendix 6**). The housing strategy presents a variety of options to assist the City and the neighborhood in creating a diversity of housing types, developing affordable housing, increasing home ownership, improving design of new construction, and applying strategic anti-displacement strategies to ensure current residents can remain in their homes or neighborhood.

### **4.6 Socio-economic Benefits of Implementation**

Brownfield revitalization can bring numerous benefits to, in some cases providing a “ripple effect” that brings community benefits for health, the environment, the local economy, a community’s civic capacity, neighborhood identity, and neighborhood infrastructure. The ripple effect from brownfield revitalization can catalyze other benefits that go far beyond the original cleanup and property redevelopment. According to the EPA, there are many public health and environmental benefits associated with revitalization and brownfield remediation:

- Reducing or eliminating exposure to contamination.
- Brownfield and underutilized site reuse is a smart growth approach that improves walkability and has been linked with a reduction in vehicle miles traveled, which in turn improves air quality. Pedestrian friendly environments provide places for residents to interact, exercise and enjoy the outdoors.
- Reusing brownfields and underutilized property is a more efficient use of existing infrastructure and can also lessen the pressure on greenfield development.
- Brownfield revitalization can create green jobs and decrease poverty rates, provide market-rate and affordable housing and create public open spaces—thus contribute to a more stable community where residents have the opportunity to socialize and share information. Increasing social connections can help improve public safety, as those who feel connected to and invested in their neighborhood are more likely to monitor activity and the environment.

## 4.7 Implementation Strategy

Moving the VOBOA Plan forward will require various funding sources to make these projects a reality. Each project is broken down in the list below with potential funding sources and cost estimates. Descriptions of the funding sources are detailed in **Section 4.8**.

**4.7.1 Implementation Actions Matrix**

Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2017 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
1	Plex Park	Schematic Design	\$30,000	City, BOA, Private	2019	Preliminary design to be completed as part of Parks and Open Space Master Plan.
		Final Design	\$50,000	City, Private, TIF/PIF, EPF, LWRP	2020	
		Construction	\$1,200,000	City, Private, TIF/PIF, EPF, LWRP	2020-2024	
2	South Plymouth Avenue Infill Development	Planning	\$35,000	City, Private	2018	Preparation of design guidelines for South Plymouth Avenue corridor.
		Construction	Varies	Private, PILOT, SLIHTC/LIHTC	2019	Varies on project by project basis.
3	South Plymouth Avenue Commercial Redevelopment	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$200,000+/-	City	2018-2023	City assembly of land to facilitate redevelopment by private entity.
		Demolition/ Construction	\$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000	Private, City, NMTC, PILOT, SLIHTC/LIHTC	2023	Costs based on new 20,000 to 30,000 square foot building.
4	Flint Street Green Infrastructure Improvements	Streetscape Design	\$100,000	City, EFC	2017-2018	City should apply for funding through Consolidated Funding Application. Based on design, site acquisition may be required and is not included in this cost estimate.
		Construction	\$800,000	City, EFC, TA, LWRP	2020	Contingent and dependent on success of future grant applications.
5	Multifamily Housing and Roadway Connection	Site Acquisition (estimate)	TBD	City, Private	2018-2021	Anticipated that City would bear costs to acquire property for roadway extension. Site acquisition costs would be based on property appraisal.
		Construction	\$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000	City, Private, NYS HOME, CDBG, LIHTC, HFA Bonds, HWF	2020-2023	Costs based on +/- 26 new housing units; includes approximately \$500,000 for construction of new roadway to be contributed by the City.
6	Waterfront Public Realm Enhancements	Environmental Investigation	\$60,000	City, BOA	2018	Assumes necessary investigations for all waterfront properties have been completed.
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, ERP	2019	Dependent on findings from site investigations
		Planning / Design	\$325,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	Detailed design with community engagement.
		Construction	\$2,000,000 - 4,000,000	City, CC, LWRP, RT	2019-2024	Significant costs include the rehabilitation of the riverwall.

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Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2017 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
7	Car Top Launch / Water Access	Planning / Design / Permitting	\$75,000	City, BOA, LWRP	2018-2019	Final design and permitting to be completed with City or LWRP funds.
		Construction	\$300,000	City, CC, EPF, LWRP	2019-2020	Construction completed in conjunction with Project 8, Interim Parking Lot.
8	Interim Parking	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$75,000+/-	City	2018	Project will require acquisition of 15 Flint Street or relocation of interim parking lot onto alternative City owned property.
		Environmental Investigation	TBD	City, BOA	2018	Required prior to construction of interim use. Assumes City ownership or willing private property owner.
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, ERP	2019	Dependent on findings of additional site investigation.
		Final Design	\$15,000	City	2020	
		Construction	\$100,000	City	2020	Design and construction completed in conjunction with Project 7, Car Top Boat Launch.
9	Parkland and Trail Development	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$75,000+/-	City	2018	Project would require City acquisition of 15 Flint Street.
		Environmental Investigation	\$35,000	City, BOA	2018	Required prior to redevelopment activity.
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, ERP, Private	2019	Dependent on findings of further environmental investigations.
		Schematic Design	\$30,000	City, BOA, Private	2019	Preliminary design to be completed as part of Parks and Open Space Master Plan.
		Final Design	\$50,000	City, Private, TIF/PIF, EPF, LWRP	2020	
		Construction	\$1,200,000	City, Private, TIF/PIF, EPF, LWRP	2020-2024	Project will require acquisition of 15 Flint Street and potential remediation activities.
10	Site Clearing and Redevelopment Preparations	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$400,000+/-	City	2018-2021	Project will require acquisition of 920 Exchange Street, 936 Exchange Street, 22 Flint Street and potential remediation activities.
		Environmental Investigation / Structural Analyses	\$200,000+/-	City, BOA, Private	2021	
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, BOA, ERP	2021-2023	Dependent on findings from environmental investigations and structural analyses of existing buildings.
		Demolition	TBD	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF	2021-2023	Dependent on findings from environmental investigations and structural analyses of existing buildings.

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Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2017 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
11	New Road Construction	Schematic Design	\$150,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	Preliminary planning conducted as part of BOA Step 3 Implementation activities.
		Final Design and Engineering	\$300,000	City, STEP	2019-2020	Final design and engineering required based on concept studies.
		Construction	\$3,800,000	City, STEP, REDC, TIF, LWRP, PWEAA, EDF	2021-2024	
12	Exchange Street Gateway and Streetscape Improvements	Schematic Design	\$30,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	Preliminary design conducted as part of BOA Step 3 Implementation activities.
		Final Design and Engineering	\$70,000	City, TA, HSIP	2020	Final design and engineering based on conceptual design study.
		Construction	\$700,000	City, TA, HSIP	2021-2023	
13	Enhanced Trail Connection and Playground	Conceptual Design	\$10,000	City, BOA, LWRP	2018	Preliminary design conducted as part of BOA Step 3 Implementation activities.
		Final Design	\$25,000	City, LWRP, EPF, Private	2018	Final design based on conceptual design studies.
		Construction	\$130,000	City, LWRP, EPF, KaBoom, Private	2018-2020	City should seek private funding sources to offset playground costs. Trail and safety enhancements completed by City.
14	Housing Redevelopment	Strategic Planning	\$20,000	City, BOA	2018	
		Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$700,000+	City, Private	2019-2023	Requires innovative and aggressive approach to land acquisition with some participation by City likely required.
		Design	\$100,000+	Private	2023-2024	Site design and architecture.
		Construction	\$4,000,000+	City, Private, HOME, CDBG, LIHTC/SLIHTC, HFA Bonds, HFW	2024-2029	Includes reconfiguration of street network.
15	Fenwick and Exchange Streets Neighborhood Infill Development	Design	TBD	Private	2022	Market analysis identified the potential need for expanded access to health care services for area seniors which would be appropriate on vacant site,
		Construction	\$1,200,000+	City, Private, NMTC, PILOT	2025	Cost based on 6,000 square feet of new construction.

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Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2017 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
16	Foodlink Redevelopment	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$50,000+	City, Private	2018-2020	Site acquisition would not be required if existing property owner were interested in teaming with City to complete subsequent redevelopment.
		Structural Building Analyses	\$10,000	City, BOA	2018	
		Environmental Investigations	TBD	City, BOA	2018-2019	
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, ERP, Private	2019-2022	To be determined based on outcomes of structural building analysis and environmental site investigations.
		Design	TBD	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2022-2023	Design costs TBD based on outcomes of previous efforts.
		Construction	\$6,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2023-2025	Costs based on 40,000 square feet of remediation and renovation.
17	Mixed Use Development with Structured Parking	Design / Engineering	TBD	City, Private, Institutional Partner	2024	Project anticipates that acquisition and remediation of 15 Flint Street will be completed as part of Project #9.
		Construction	\$24,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2026-2032	Costs based on 100,000 square feet of mixed use space plus structured parking for 175 vehicles.
18	Adaptive Reuse of 5 Flint Street	Site Acquisition (estimate)	\$50,000+	City, BOA, Private	2018-2019	Site acquisition would not be required if existing property owner were interested in teaming with City to complete subsequent redevelopment.
		Structural Building Analyses	\$10,000	City, BOA	2018	
		Environmental Investigations	TBD	City, BOA	2018-2019	
		Remedy Selection and Remediation	TBD	City, ERP, Private	2019-2022	To be determined based on outcomes of structural building analysis and environmental site investigations.
		Design	TBD	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2023	Design costs TBD based on outcomes of previous efforts.
		Construction	\$5,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2024-2028	Costs based on 33,000 square feet of renovation, assuming existing structure is determined to be structurally adequate for an adaptive reuse project.

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Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2017 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
19	Waterfront Mixed Use with Structured Parking	Pre-Development Planning Studies	\$50,000+	City, BOA, LWRP	2018-2020	Pre-development planning includes the completion of studies to determine if site is developable as proposed. Pre-development studies include geotechnical analyses, floodplain studies, etc.
		Environmental Investigations	\$50,000	City, ERP, Private	2018-2020	
		Design	TBD	City, Private	2029	Project anticipates that acquisition and remediation of 5 Flint Street will be completed as part of Project #18. These sites are project to build out after completion of redevelopment on 5 Flint Street property.
		Construction	\$21,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	2032	Project 18 will further enhance understanding of anticipated structural needs of future development. Costs based on 90,000 square feet of mixed use space plus structured parking for 150 vehicles.
20	Waterfront Amphitheater	Schematic Design	\$20,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	
		Final Design	\$30,000	City, EPF, LWRP, Private	2020-2022	Final design to be based upon outcomes of conceptual design from BOA Step 3 project.
		Construction	\$150,000 to \$200,000	City, EPF, LWRP, TIF, Private	2027	
21	Signature Waterfront Public Gathering Space	Schematic Design	\$20,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	
		Final Design	\$100,000	City, EPF, LWRP, Private	2020-2022	Final design to be based upon outcomes of conceptual design from BOA Step 3 project.
		Construction	\$1,000,000+	City, EPF, LWRP, TIF, Private	2027	Cost based on one acre of high quality urban plaza.
22	Canal Interpretation / Water Feature	Schematic Design	\$25,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	Feasibility analysis required.
		Final Design	\$50,000+	City, EPF, LWRP, Private	2022-2024	Final design to be based upon outcomes of conceptual design from BOA Step 3 project.
		Construction	\$700,000	City, EPF, LWRP, TIF, Private	2029	Assumes all environmental investigations and associated studies are completed.
23	Wetland Interpretation and Nature Trail	Schematic Design	\$20,000	City, BOA	2018-2019	
		Final Design	\$30,000	City, EPF, LWRP, Private	2020-2021	Final design to be based upon outcomes of conceptual design from BOA Step 3 project.
		Construction	\$90,000 to \$150,000	City, EPF, LWRP, TIF, Private	2024	Cost based on 300 feet of linear boardwalk at \$300-\$500 per linear foot.

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Project No.	Name	Phasing and Anticipated Costs (all costs are shown in 2012 dollars)		Potential Funding Resources	Time Frame	Notes
24	Flint Street Mixed Use Development with Structured Parking	Schematic Design	TBD	City, Private	Beyond 2032	Project anticipates that acquisition, remediation and demolition will be completed as part of Project # 10.
		Final Design / Engineering	TBD	City, Private, REDC	Beyond 2032	
		Construction	\$50,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	Beyond 2032	Costs based on 200,000 square feet of high quality mixed use space plus structured parking for 500 vehicles.
25	Exchange Street Mixed Use Development	Schematic Design	TBD	City, Private	Beyond 2032	Project anticipates that acquisition, remediation and demolition will be completed as part of Project # 10.
		Final Design / Engineering	TBD	City, Private, REDC	Beyond 2032	
		Construction	\$15,000,000+	City, Private, REDC, TIF, BCP, EDF, NMTC, PILOT	Beyond 2032	Costs based on 100,000 square feet of mixed use commercial/flex industrial space.

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#### **4.7.2 Local Management Structure to Implement VOBOA**

To effectively implement the VOBOA Master Plan, there must be a management entity appointed to champion the action steps identified in the plan. It is recommended that the City's Department of Environmental Services Division of Environmental Quality initially lead an interdepartmental team called the *VOBOA Implementation Team* to coordinate the ongoing implementation of the plan while environmental cleanup processes and projects are still underway within the VOBOA. This team, including staff from the Office of Management and Budget, Street Design, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, and Buildings and Zoning, would be charged with following the plan through implementation.

To support the City team, the VOBOA Project Advisory Committee that has been in existence throughout step 2 and 3 of the VOBOA planning process will continue to be convened. The group has representation from the City, State, neighborhood association, business association, and local developers and offers an opportunity for everyone to share thoughts, project and initiative updates, and to discuss overlap and partnerships to move ideas forward. They will continue in their advisory role to City government on the implementation of the VOBOA plan. At its discretion, the Division of Environmental Quality will be responsible for convening the committee.

### **4.8 Funding Sources and Programs for Implementation**

Funding for VOBOA Plan initiatives will come from a host of public and private resources. Timing and levels of investment will be predicated on numerous issues beyond the control of City staff, including the disposition of State and Federal budgets and the regional and national economic outlook. In addition, the availability of financing and the costs of investment will also dictate the extent and timing with of private sector involvement. The City will be required to marshal a consistent level of public dollars in the beginning stages of implementation in an effort to reduce private sector risk and lure investment.

Many projects discussed will require additional investigations for financial feasibility and design alternatives. Spending for these pre-development initiatives will be dependent upon public financing and grants. These monies serve to reduce up front risk and investment by private developers. Grant funding sources are constantly changing, with available monies becoming increasingly competitive as the State and Federal governments continue to decrease spending. The City should maximize their competitive position by leveraging the planning process and community commitment outlined in the VOBOA Nomination Study.

The following is a brief overview of key funding programs in existence as of 2017.

#### **4.8.1 State of New York Grant Programs**

There are a multitude of grant opportunities available through state and federal agencies. **Figure 40** describes the most relevant grant opportunities available to help fund projects identified in this plan.

##### **A. CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION (CFA)**

The New York State CFA consolidates over 30 programs available through 12 state agencies, acting as a single point of entry for access to funding. The CFA replaces multiple applications for funding with a single, annual application for economic development resources. Applications are coordinated through the Regional Economic Development Councils and grant resources are available for projects that align the Regional Economic Development Plan. Some of the resources described in this section are included in the CFA. Specific funding sources and programs can change from year to year and should be monitored. In future years, some programs may be phased out while other new programs are added.

#### **4.8.2 State of New York Tax Credit and Loan Programs**

Economic incentives and inducements are important tools used within New York State to help businesses grow, reduce business costs, and reward job creation. The State offers a variety of incentive programs and consolidates nearly all of its significant programs under the administration of Empire State Development Corporation. Some of these programs benefit businesses directly while others are allocated to local and regional economic development entities so that they may fund projects that directly address community visions and needs, under State guidance. **Figure 41** includes a summary of these programs.

Figure 40: State of New York Grant Programs

Agency	Grant Name	Description
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	<b>Climate Smart Communities Program</b>	<p>The Climate Smart Communities Environmental Protection Fund grant program will enable communities across the state to put climate plans into action. The program matches state resources with community commitments to bring local and regional plans to fruition. The competition for grant funding will reward foresight and innovation in climate protection and showcase the ingenuity of many communities. There is a total of \$11 million available in the 2016 CFA round.</p> <p>Eligible Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate protection implementation projects               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Construction of natural resiliency measures (green infrastructure, flood mitigation, streambank stabilization)</li> <li>○ Relocation or retrofit of climate-vulnerable facilities</li> <li>○ Conservation or restoration of riparian areas</li> <li>○ Reduction of risk</li> <li>○ Clean transportation (on or off road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, construction of safe routes for non-drivers, and implementation of transit improvements)</li> <li>○ Reduction or recycling of food waste</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Climate Smart Communities Certification Projects               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Certification Action 3.11 - Right-size the local government fleet.</li> <li>○ Certification Action 6.17 - Develop a natural resource inventory.</li> <li>○ Certification Action 7.1 - Conduct a vulnerability assessment.</li> <li>○ Certification Action 7.3 - Review existing community plans and projects to identify climate adaptation strategies and policies or projects that may decrease vulnerability.</li> <li>○ Certification Action 7.4 - Develop climate adaptation strategies.</li> <li>○ Certification Action 7.6 - Update the multi-hazard mitigation plan to address changing conditions and identify specific strategies to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
New York State Department of State	<b>Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)</b>	<p>The NYSDOS administers LWRP funding which can be utilized for waterfront improvement projects in conjunction with an approved LWRP document. Funds can be utilized for planning, design and capital improvements, including the preparation of design and construction documentation for infrastructure and shoreline improvement projects, as well as trails and parks</p>

Agency	Grant Name	Description
NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)	<b>Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP)</b>	<p>The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) supports projects across New York State that utilize unique stormwater infrastructure design and create cutting-edge green technologies. Eligible projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permeable pavements</li> <li>• Bioretention/bioswales</li> <li>• Green roofs and green walls</li> <li>• Stormwater street trees</li> <li>• Construction or restoration of wetlands, floodplains, or riparian buffers</li> <li>• Stream daylighting</li> <li>• Downspout disconnection</li> <li>• Stormwater harvesting and reuse</li> </ul>
NYSERDA	<b>Cleaner Energy Communities Program</b>	<p>Local governments in New York State can use the Clean Energy Communities program to implement clean energy actions, save energy costs, create jobs, and improve the environment. In addition to providing tools, resources, and technical assistance, the program recognizes and rewards leadership for the completion of clean energy projects.</p> <p>Communities that complete four out of ten “high impact actions” can be designated as a Clean Energy Community, making them eligible to receive additional grants for clean energy projects.</p>
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic Preservation (OPRHP)	<b>Municipal Grants Program (parks, historic properties, heritage areas)</b>	<p>A matching grant program for the acquisition, development and planning of parks and recreational facilities to preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures for park, recreation or conservation purposes and for structural assessments and/or planning for such projects. Funds may be awarded to municipalities or not-for-profits with an ownership interest, for indoor or outdoor projects and must reflect the priorities established in the NY Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).</p>
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	<b>Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant</b>	<p>The Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program provides funds for hazard mitigation planning and projects on an annual basis. The PDM program is available to local governments. It was put in place to reduce overall risk to people and structures, while at the same time, also reducing reliance on federal funding if an actual disaster were to occur.</p>

Agency	Grant Name	Description
Empire State Development	<b>Economic Development Purposes Grants</b>	<p>Funding is available for economic development initiatives and projects that create or retain jobs, generate increased economic activity and improve the economic and social viability and vitality of local communities. Examples of ways the funds can be used include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring or leasing land or buildings, machinery, equipment</li> <li>• Acquiring existing business or assets</li> <li>• Demolition and environmental remediation</li> <li>• New construction, renovation, or leasehold improvement</li> <li>• Acquiring furniture and fixtures</li> <li>• Planning and feasibility studies</li> <li>• Site and infrastructure development</li> <li>• Marketing and advertising</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For-profit and not-for-profit businesses</li> <li>• Business Improvement Districts and Local Development Corporations</li> <li>• Public benefit corporations, including industrial development agencies</li> <li>• Economic development organizations</li> <li>• Research and academic institutions; incubators</li> <li>• Technology parks</li> <li>• Municipalities, counties, and regional planning councils</li> <li>• Tourist attractions; community facilities</li> </ul>

**Figure 41: State of New York Tax Credit and Loan Programs**

Type	Name	Description
Tax Credit	<b>Brownfield Redevelopment Tax Credit (ESD)</b>	<p>Encourages cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites by offering several types of tax credits to companies that complete cleanup programs under the State’s Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) authorized in 2003. The amount of the credit is equal to a percentage of certain eligible costs incurred. Credits can be used against the New York State corporate franchise tax and certain personal income taxes (including shareholders of New York “S” corporations and beneficiaries of estates and trusts). Tax credits are offered to companies for undertaking activities in several areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Site Preparation and Onsite Remediation Credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covers site preparation and onsite groundwater cleanup costs; and remediation, demolition, excavation, fencing, security and other capital costs to make the site usable for redevelopment. Excludes site acquisition costs</li> <li>• Sites are eligible for 22% to 50% of the cost of remediation, based on the level of cleanup</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Tangible Property Credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covers costs of buildings and improvements, including structural components of buildings, that are placed into service within 10 years after a Certificate of Completion is issued for the site cleanup</li> <li>• Credits range from 10% to 24% of eligible costs (1) subject to caps, (2) depending on the level of site cleanup achieved, and (3) the specific State tax law/article under which the company pays taxes. Sites in the VOBOA are awarded 5% in addition to the calculated amount.</li> <li>• Manufacturing projects are capped at \$45,000,000 or 6 times the site preparation and onsite groundwater remediation costs, whichever is less</li> <li>• Nonmanufacturing projects are capped at \$35,000,000 or 3 times the site preparation and onsite groundwater remediation costs, whichever is less</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Eligible sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites must be eligible for the Brownfield Cleanup Program. Companies must first enter into a brownfield site cleanup agreement (BCA) with the Department of Environmental Conservation, submit a cleanup plan, obtain plan approval, complete the approved cleanup program, and obtain a Certificate of Completion.</li> </ul> <p>Non-eligible sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class I or Class II hazardous waste disposal sites, and sites that are listed on the National Priorities List (Superfund)</li> <li>• Sites that were subject to cleanup under another regulatory program, as these were excluded from the BCP</li> </ul>

Type	Name	Description
Tax Credit	<b>Excelsior Jobs Program (ESD)</b>	<p>Provides tax credits for strategic businesses that make a substantial commitment to growth, either in employment or through investing significant capital in a NY facility in a targeted strategic industry. Companies that meet and maintain the established jobs and investment thresholds may qualify for four new fully-refundable tax credits. The credit is claimed over a 10-year period. Program costs are capped at \$500 million annually.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excelsior Jobs Tax Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A credit equal to 6.85% of wages for new jobs</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Excelsior Investment Tax Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A credit equal to 2% of qualified investments</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Excelsior Research and Development Tax Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A credit equal to 50% of the federal research and development credit, capped at 3% of research expenditures in NY State</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Excelsior Real Property Tax Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available only to firms locating in certain distressed areas equal to 50% of eligible real property taxes in year 1, decreasing 5% in each successive year</li> <li>• Also available to firms in targeted industries that meet higher employment and investment thresholds (defined as “Regionally Significant Projects”)</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted (strategic) industries include: scientific R&amp;D, software development, agriculture, manufacturing, financial services, back office, distribution, other (as approved)</li> <li>• The Job growth track comprises 75% of the program</li> </ul>
Tax Credit	<b>New York State Historic Properties Tax Credit</b>	<p>Administered by NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Division for Historic Preservation, in conjunction with the Federal Historic Tax Credit Program. Credits are available for residential homeowners, and for commercial (income producing) properties.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commercial Properties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State credit is used in conjunction with the federal tax credit. Owners can use both, each providing 20% tax credits for qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QRE) as defined by the US Internal Revenue Service. Together, these offset up to 40% of the QRE, with the state credit capped at \$5 million.</li> <li>• Any individual or company may apply for the credits.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

Type	Name	Description
Tax Credit	<b>(Continued.) New York State Historic Properties Tax Credit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any commercial, office, industrial or rental residential building qualifies if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing building in a historic district so listed, or is eligible for inclusion on the registers</li> <li>○ Has an approved Federal Tax Credit Part 1 certification provided by the National Park Service</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Most interior and exterior work is eligible for the credit</li> <li>• New additions and site work do not qualify for the credit</li> <li>• Can be used in conjunction with grants for housing or façade work.</li> <li>• Unused credits will become refundable for projects placed in service on or after 2015</li> </ul> <p>2. Homeowner Properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides credits equal to 20% of qualified expenses, up to a credit value of \$50,000.</li> <li>• Landscaping, fencing, additions, garage work or other work outside the historic building generally do not qualify</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner-occupied residential structure</li> <li>• Listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, or a contributing building in a historic district so listed</li> <li>• Located in a Federal Census Tract that is at or below the State’s family median income level</li> <li>• Homeowner must be a NY State taxpayer and the owner of a qualified historic home</li> <li>• Project must have qualifying rehabilitation costs that exceed \$5,000</li> <li>• 5% of the total must be spent on exterior work</li> <li>• Work must meet the standards for rehabilitation adopted by the National Park Service</li> <li>• State Historic Preservation Officer must approve work before it begins</li> </ul> <p>3. Non-historic buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-historic buildings placed in service before 1936 are eligible for a 10% federal tax credit for rehabilitation expenses</li> <li>• The review process is less formal, but the following criteria will apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It must be rehabilitated for non-residential use</li> <li>○ At least 50% of existing walls must remain in place as external walls</li> <li>○ At least 75% of existing external walls must remain as exterior or interior walls</li> <li>○ At least 75% of the internal structural framework must remain in place</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Type	Name	Description
Tax Credits	New Markets Tax Credits (ESD)	<p>The NMTC program subsidizes long-term capital investment, through interest-only loans at below-market rates, to foster job creation and community development in “Low-Income Communities” statewide. Funds are an allocation of federal New Markets Tax Credits under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than \$10 million will be devoted to a single borrower</li> <li>• A portion of the loan may be forgiven at maturity</li> </ul> <p>Borrowed funds may be applied to capital expenditures for the operating company, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real estate loans for acquisition, new construction, major rehabilitation</li> <li>• Machinery and equipment loans</li> </ul> <p>Borrowed funds may be applied to real estate developments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial and commercial developments</li> <li>• Office and retail developments</li> <li>• Mixed use developments including a residential component in limited circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding is not available for real estate developments containing residential development that is “for sale”, in which the residential rental income will exceed 80% of gross rental income, or in which Low-Income Housing Tax Credits are used</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <p>Borrower project must be located in a census tract that meets one of the following tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty rate: at least 20%, or</li> <li>• Median family income: at/below 80% of the region</li> <li>• Additional preference is given to borrowers in non-metro counties, and certain areas with particularly difficult conditions, termed “distressed” area</li> </ul> <p>Preference will be given to projects meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total development costs: between \$5 million and \$25 million</li> <li>• Job creation/retention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Operating companies: at least 1 permanent job per \$38,000 of total investment</li> <li>○ Real estate developments: at least 1 permanent job per 350 sq. ft. developed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Project readiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 75% of project financing has been identified</li> <li>○ If bank debt is involved, the lender has prior experience with NMTC financing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other NY State involvement: the State is providing other forms of assistance that may be used to leverage the NMTC financing</li> </ul>

Type	Name	Description
Loans	<b>Economic Development Fund (ESD)</b>	<p>Provides general financial assistance for projects that create or retain jobs, or increase business activity in the State. Funds are available for construction, expansion, and rehabilitation of facilities; acquisition of machinery &amp; equipment; working capital; and training full-time permanent employees. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of real estate</li> <li>• Demolition</li> <li>• Construction (incl. planning and design), renovation</li> <li>• Site and infrastructure</li> <li>• Machinery, equipment</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Feasibility planning; soft costs</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private businesses involved in industrial activity, manufacturing, warehousing/distribution</li> <li>• Research and development, high technology, service and other non-retail commercial enterprises</li> <li>• Not-for-profits</li> <li>• Municipalities, Local Development Corporations, Industrial Development Agencies</li> </ul> <p>Examples of projects that are <u>not</u> eligible include: residential, casino, legal, medical, and nursing services.</p>
Loans	<b>Manufacturing Assistance Program (ESD)</b>	<p>Provides financial assistance for manufacturers to improve their operations through investing in capital projects that enhance productivity and competitiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds are capped at \$1,000,000. Award amount is determined by the magnitude of the improvements and their overall benefit to the company, the amount of private investment leveraged, and the economic impact of the manufacturer within its regional economy</li> <li>• Must be used for machinery, equipment and necessary building modifications</li> <li>• Company must demonstrate at least 20% improvement over baseline operations</li> <li>• Minimum of 85% of company workforce must be retained for 5 years</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <p>A minimum investment of \$1 million is required. Manufacturers must employ 50 to 1,000 workers and export at least 30% of their production beyond the immediate region, or supply at least 30% of their production to a prime manufacturer that exports beyond the region. Examples of eligible projects include those that are designed to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased production output; Improved process efficiency</li> <li>• Improvements in quality control</li> <li>• New product line</li> <li>• Resource conservation and/or pollution prevention</li> <li>• Revenue enhancements, cost reductions</li> </ul> <p>Projects in which there are reductions in employee benefits and wages are <u>not</u> eligible.</p>

Type	Name	Description
Loans	<b>Job Development Authority Direct Loan Program (ESD)</b>	<p>This is a state-guaranteed bond financing program that provides loan assistance to cover a portion of the cost of acquiring and renovating existing buildings, or constructing new buildings (Real Estate projects) including the “soft costs”, or for purchasing machinery and equipment (M&amp;E projects) including the ‘soft costs’ (delivery, installation, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In most cases, JDA loans can be for up to 40% of Real Estate projects or M&amp;E projects</li> <li>• Loans up to 60% for projects located in Empire zones or economically distressed areas</li> <li>• The combination of a bank loan and a JDA loan cannot exceed 90% financing</li> <li>• JDA Real Estate loan is normally a second mortgage loan</li> <li>• M&amp;E loans are secured by a first lien, co-equal with the bank’s lien on the M&amp;E</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities used for manufacturing, distribution/warehousing, and selected services</li> <li>• Retail facilities involving customer visits to the business are <u>not</u> eligible</li> <li>• Working capital is <u>not</u> eligible</li> </ul>
Loans	<b>Micro Enterprise Loan Fund (ESD)</b>	<p>ESD has capitalized 3 revolving loan funds for financing small loans to NY Sate certified minority and women-owned businesses (MWBEs) through locally based administering micro-lending corporations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan amount up to \$7,000</li> <li>• Funds to be used for acquisition or improvement of real property and purchase of machinery and equipment</li> <li>• Interest rates are determined by the administering micro-lending corporation</li> <li>• Maximum loan term is 24 months</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant must be a small and high-risk, for-profit business</li> <li>• Must be a NY State certified MWBE</li> <li>• Annual gross revenue cannot exceed \$100,000</li> <li>• New start-ups must demonstrate entrepreneurial or other business training</li> </ul> <p>Examples of expenses that are <u>not</u> eligible for program funds include: debt refinancing, residential construction or renovation, payment of taxes, projects of newspapers, broadcasting, medical facilities, libraries, community centers, or public infrastructure.</p>
Loans	<b>Minority and Women Owned Businesses Programs (multiple) (ESD)</b>	<p><i>Minority and Women Owned Business Development and Lending Program:</i>  This program provides financial assistance to MWBEs as well as projects that assist the development of entrepreneurship among minority persons and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lending in conjunction with local, community and regionally-based entities</li> <li>• Lending for certified government contractors and eligible contractors</li> <li>• Incubator assistance</li> <li>• Technical assistance</li> </ul>

Type	Name	Description
Loans	<b>(Continued.) Minority and Women Owned Businesses Programs (multiple) (ESD)</b>	<p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified minority and/or women-owned business enterprises</li> <li>• Banking organizations</li> <li>• Technical assistance providers</li> <li>• Incubator sponsors</li> <li>• Municipalities, Authorities and Agencies</li> <li>• Administering corporations</li> </ul> <p><i>Minority and Women Owned Business Revolving Loan Trust Fund Program:</i>  This program provides financial and technical assistance to MWBEs that are unable to access traditional financial services, to allow them to grow and flourish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working capital loans capped at \$35,000</li> <li>• Fixed asset loans capped at \$50,000</li> <li>• Assistance with completing loan applications</li> <li>• Mentorship and peer group programs</li> <li>• Credit Union services (some locations)</li> </ul>
Loans	<b>Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (ESD)</b>	<p>This program supports small businesses, targeting those that have had difficulty accessing regular credit markets. It supports additional small business lending statewide, through 20 community development financial institutions and other community-based lending organizations serving regions of the State.</p> <p>Funds from the program used to finance an applicant loan cannot exceed 50% of the principal amount, and cannot exceed \$125,000. Loans are generally categorized as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro-Loans: principal amount less than or equal to \$25,000</li> <li>• Regular Loans: principal amount greater than \$25,000</li> </ul>
Loans	<b>New York State Linked Deposit Program (ESD)</b>	<p>LDP is an interest rate subsidy program developed in 1993 to encourage and assist small businesses in NY State to make investments and undertake projects that will contribute to improving their performance and competitiveness. Eligible businesses can obtain commercial loans at subsidized interest rates from authorized commercial banks, savings banks, savings and loans, farm credit institutions or the NY Business Development Corp. The lenders are compensated with a deposit of NY State funds. Interest rate subsidy can be 2% or 3%, depending on the type of business and location.</p>
Loans	<b>Capital Access Program (ESD)</b>	<p>The program provides matching funds to financial institutions for loan loss reserves as incentive to increase small business lending to companies that otherwise find it difficult to obtain regular or sufficient bank financing. Partner financial institutions will enter into a CAP lender agreement with ESD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan capped at \$500,000</li> <li>• Can be used with other term loans or lines of credit</li> <li>• Financing for working capital</li> <li>• Technology or facility upgrades</li> <li>• Business startups, expansions</li> </ul> <p>Eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small business, independently owned, employ fewer than 100 workers</li> </ul>



## 5 SEQR COMPLIANCE

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### **5.1 Steps and Procedures Undertaken for SEQR Compliance**

The VOBOA Plan was completed in accordance with SEQR policies and procedures. Building off the environmental review conducted as part of the Step 2 VOBOA Plan, additional Phase I and Phase II ESAs, a wetland assessment and invasive species report, and an Environmental Impact Statement for the West River Wall were undertaken as part of the Step 3 Implementation Strategy. Projects that are implemented in the future will comply with SEQR regulations.

The Step 3 Implementation Plan also incorporates a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), which considers the potential compounding impacts of implementing various projects over a large area and details appropriate mitigation measures for changes that may result to housing, transportation, and other elements.

The table below indicates how the content requirements for a GEIS are satisfied within this VOBOA Plan:

<b>BOA Implementation Plan</b>	<b>GEIS Content</b>
<b>Section 1</b> Description of Project and Boundary	Description of Proposed Action
<b>Section 2</b> Community Participation	Description of Public Engagement Component
<b>Section 3</b> Existing Conditions (Environmental Setting)	Description of the Environmental Setting
<b>Section 4</b> Implementation Strategy	Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts Description of Mitigation Measures Description of Alternatives to the Proposed Action
<b>Section 5</b> Compliance with SEQRA	Consistency with SEQR Consistency with NYS CMP Coastal Policies Conditions for Future Actions

## **5.2 Consistency with Related Planning Studies and Efforts**

### **5.2.1 SOUTHWEST ROCHESTER RIVERFRONT CHARRETTE, 2012**

The Southwest Neighborhood Planning Group was obtained funding through the Rochester Area Community Foundation and the NYS Council on the Arts to conduct civic engagement project that established a community-inspired vision for the Plymouth Exchange and adjacent portions of the 19th Ward neighborhoods. The project area is inclusive of the VOBOA Study Area, and was conducted in parallel with the public participatory process of the VOBOA Nomination Study. The culminating Charrette was held in June 2012, which explored resident and design community ideas in six focus areas. Where applicable, the findings from the Charrette were incorporated into the VOBOA Master Plan.

### **5.2.2 SOUTHWEST QUADRANT STRATEGIC PLAN, 2010**

The City Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (NBD) established teams of City Staff for each of the City's four quadrants. Each quadrant is charged with creating a strategic plan that develops an annual work program to engage residents, businesses, neighborhood groups and community stakeholders as partners in community, economic and business development efforts. The Strategic Plan outlines 11 Key Result Areas (KRAs) which focus on developing strategies that improve public safety, living standards, public engagement, and housing development, among other topic areas. The Southwest Quadrant Strategic Plan includes the VOBOA Study Area, and cites the Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area as a KRA for business and economic development. The VOBOA Nomination Study will also support KRAs for quality of life, access to recreation, quality housing choices, and public safety.

### **5.2.3 HOUSING SUBDIVISION CONCEPT PLAN, 2006**

This report was completed in tandem with the 2006 Pre-Nomination Study, and presents alternative development schemes for residential development, waterfront greenspace and recreation areas within the original VOBOA boundary. Known environmental data was utilized to site housing away from areas of high risk and contamination. These concepts will provide a foundation for understanding redevelopment potential within the VOBOA Study Area.

### **5.2.4 SOUTH GENESEE RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY, 2001**

In 2001, the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University prepared land use and development plans for the South Genesee River Corridor, in an update to the previously completed efforts by Lane, Frenchman in 1986. The Corridor Study focused on four key areas, including the Plymouth Avenue Corridor and the Exchange Street Riverfront on the west side of the river. The study identified target sites for revitalization, renovation, and new investment; and also developed recommendations for improving public access to the River, enhanced streetscapes, and the rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing industrial uses. A key recommendation for improving the riverfront communities was the rehabilitation of the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Bridge for pedestrian use. This project has progressed through the design stage, and will begin construction in 2011-2012.

### **5.2.5 CITY OF ROCHESTER LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (2017 update completed and undergoing NYS review)**

The LWRP includes recommendations for several focus areas, including the VOBOA area. The document defers to the work done through the VOBOA planning process. Most projects proposed within the boundaries would be required to be consistent with the LWRP to the extent practicable (see [Section 5.3](#)).

### **5.2.6 ROCHESTER 2010: THE RENAISSANCE PLAN, 1999**

The 2010 Renaissance Plan is the City of Rochester's most recent comprehensive plan, and incorporated the goals and visions of the ten sector plans prepared under the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods program. The plan articulates three themes upon which to base urban revitalization efforts: Responsibility, Opportunity, and Community. The Renaissance Plan includes seven focus areas which are consistent with the goals and vision of the VOBOA Program:

- **Campaign One:** Involved Citizens
- **Campaign Three:** Health, Safety, and Responsibility
- **Campaign Four:** Environmental Stewardship
- **Campaign Six:** Economic Vitality
- **Campaign Seven:** Quality Service
- **Campaign Eight:** Tourism Destination
- **Campaign Nine:** Healthy Urban Neighborhoods.

### **5.2.7 GENESEE RIVER SOUTH CORRIDOR LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 1986**

This land use and development plan for the South River Corridor recommends a coordinated series of improvements to reconnect the neighborhood with the River and redevelop vacant or underutilized properties to redensify the residential neighborhood. Major recommendations of the plan relevant to the VOBOA Study Area include:

- Closure of Exchange Street north of Doran Street to reduce truck traffic through neighborhood;
- Development of a dual loop roadway system to funnel traffic from Plymouth Avenue;
- Creation of new housing development sites along the River on vacant land;
- Rehabilitation and reuse of industrial buildings along Flint and Exchange Streets for mixed use;
- Development of a linear park along the Genesee River with numerous connections to intersecting neighborhood streets;
- Development of new housing adjacent to Utica Place and Doran Street (completed).

### **5.2.8 GENESEE RIVER SOUTH CORRIDOR PLAN GEIS, 1986**

The Generic Environmental Impact Statement was completed in tandem with the Land Use and Development Plan, and identifies west bank residential development along the Genesee River South Corridor as having potentially significant environmental impacts. However, it goes on to conclude that positive economic and social impacts of the plan far outweigh any potential negative environmental impacts. The plan provides a comprehensive framework to guide land use and development along the river corridor. The plan promotes residential revitalization, expands the tax base, and leverages recreational advantages provided by the river for public enjoyment. The findings and mitigation measures from the 1986 GEIS document will be used to inform and support those from the Nomination Study and subsequent GEIS created as part of this VOBOA planning effort.

## **5.3 Consistency with NYS Coastal Management Policies**

Consistency review is the decision-making process through which proposed actions and activities are determined to be consistent or inconsistent with the coastal policies of the New York State Coastal Management Program or approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans (LWRPs).

All LWRPs include a local consistency review law that is used to ensure that the actions of the community are consistent with the policies, uses and projects described in the LWRP. Communities with approved LWRPs, such as the City of Rochester, conduct consistency reviews as part of their local decision-making on applications for development proposals.

During the SEQRA review for these activities, the potential impact(s) to coastal or inland waterway resources must be given equal weight with other environmental considerations in the determination of significance. If a positive declaration is issued, the EIS must address the potential impact(s) of the proposed action on coastal or inland waterway resources

## 5.4 Conditions for Future Action (Thresholds for Future Review)

Thresholds and conditions for future review are established to help ensure that private development proceeds in accordance with the VOBOA Plan. This may include conditions for supplemental EIS's to reflect site-specific impacts that cannot adequately be addressed at this time.

### 5.4.1 REDEVELOPMENT, LAND USE, AND ZONING

The VOBOA Plan establishes preferred land use patterns, recommended development projects, and zoning revisions to facilitate redevelopment. The mitigation actions described in Section are based on the intensity of development proposed by the VOBOA Plan (summarized below) as well as existing City plans and codes. Future development proposals should demonstrate consistency with these codes as well as with the scale/intensity thresholds established for each timeframe below.

Use	Unit	Unit per job or resident	Partial Buildout (0-15 years)			Full Build Out (15+ years)		
			Total Units/sf	Employees	Residents	Total	Employees	Residents
Office	sf	300	81,192	271	0	144,645	482	0
Restaurant	sf	200	24,417	122	0	32,067	160	0
Manufacturing	sf	2000	52,250	26	0	86,250	43	0
Retail	sf	500	37,812	76	0	50,095	100	0
Residential			0	0	0	-	0	0
Single/TH Residential	units	2.09	21	0	44	47	0	98
Apartment/Condo Residential	units	2.54	293	0	743	369	0	937
Parking Garage	# spaces	200	624	3	0	1,102	6	0
Meeting/Conference Space	sf	2500	0	0	0	5,006	2	0
Museums/Cultural Space	sf	3000	4,463	1	0	4,463	1	0
Hotel	# rooms	0.44	0	0	0	97	43	0
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>1,035</b>

Redevelopment proposals that exceed the scale/intensity thresholds listed above or are inconsistent with the City of Rochester Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and/or Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan have not been adequately studied in this report and may require more mitigation actions than those listed in **Section 4.2**. Inconsistent redevelopment proposals require additional project-specific SEQRA assessments and supplemental EIS's to identify possible adverse impacts above and beyond those listed in this report and to determine additional, appropriate mitigation actions. Supplemental EIS's are often required after the preparation of a GEIS to more thoroughly analyze site- or project-specific environmental impacts that were not adequately addressed in the initial GEIS.

## **5.4.2 NATURAL RESOURCES**

Proposed development projects should not be located within a designated State or Federal wetland or within a 100' buffer of a State wetland. Projects should be designed to avoid the wetland to the maximum extent possible or minimize the footprint; if not, wetland mitigation would most likely be required. Future project-specific proposals that impacts wetlands to the extent that require permitting or mitigation may not have been adequately considered in this assessment and a new project-specific SEQRA assessment should be undertaken.

Future proposed development should comply with all shoreline regulations set forth in the City of Rochester Zoning ordinance which establishes setbacks and other performance standards intended to protect shoreline natural resources.

## **5.4.3 OPEN SPACE AND PARKS**

Implementation/ buildout of the VOBOA Plan involves improvements to publicly owned for parkland use. The dedication of lands will require legislative approvals, including rezoning to Open Space (O-S).

## **5.4.4 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

As project-specific proposals are submitted for the redevelopment of the Strategic Sites, a more complete assessment of their potential impact to the transportation systems will need to be completed.

## **5.4.5 INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **A. WATER**

Individual projects that require public infrastructure improvements to deliver adequate water supply to the site to support the project should be subject to further review under SEQRA.

### **B. WASTEWATER**

Individual projects that generate wastewater of a volume, rate, or composition that exceed the capabilities of the local sanitary sewer system and/or Publicly Owned Treatment Works should be subject to further review under SEQRA.

### **C. STORMWATER**

Individual projects which involve soil disturbance of 1 or more acres will be subject to the Federal, State and local requirements for stormwater discharges and should be subject to further review under SEQRA. Eligibility under the SPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities may not be applicable to all VOBOA redevelopment projects. If not, then projects may require an individual SPDES permit, as well as other Federal, State and local permits.

#### **5.4.6 VISUAL IMPACTS**

Individual projects should be assessed for their potential visual impacts. The visual impact assessment should include a viewshed analysis to determine where the new development will be visible from and line-of-sight diagrams to facilitate an assessment of their level of impact. Various methods can be utilized to minimize visual impacts of waterfront development including vegetative covers and building setbacks. Vegetative covers create an aesthetically-pleasing screen, reducing the visual impact from the River associated with development along the shoreline. Building setbacks also minimize visual impacts along the shoreline by taking advantage of the natural topography and existing vegetation to screen structures from the River. In addition, building siting and height restrictions can ensure visual impacts are limited from the existing neighborhood to the riverfront.

#### **5.4.7 Environmental Cleanup**

Any proposed development on parcels within the VOBOA that undergo environmental cleanup need to be consistent with the future use restrictions. Institutional and engineering controls, including state environmental easements associated with the NYSDEC's approved remedy and certificate of completion need to be obtained. Proposed reuses that are inconsistent with NYSDEC approved future uses would likely need to undergo additional investigation and cleanup.

# 6 APPENDICES

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Appendix 1.	Community Involvement Plan
Appendix 2.	Project Advisory Committee – Meeting Summaries
Appendix 3.	Public Meetings – Meeting Summaries
Appendix 4.	Wetland Assessment & Invasive Species Report
Appendix 5.	Phase 1A Archaeological
Appendix 6.	Housing Reinvestment Strategy
Appendix 7.	Vacuum Oil Housing Analysis
Appendix 8.	PLEX Redevelopment and Community Health Toolkit
Appendix 9.	Traffic Analysis Report
Appendix 10.	Wall Evaluation Report
Appendix 11.	Parks and Open Space Master Plan (pending)
Appendix 12.	Luther Circle Redevelopment Alternatives - memo
Appendix 13.	Neighborhood Redevelopment Strategies – memo
Appendix 14.	Exchange Street Residential Development Pro Forma
Appendix 15.	5 Flint Street Structural Assessment (available upon request)
Appendix 16.	Phase I ESA for 920 Exchange / 91 Violetta (available upon request)
Appendix 17.	Land Appraisal for 920 Exchange / 91 Violetta (available upon request)
Appendix 18.	Geotechnical Analysis (pending)
Appendix 19.	West River Wall Conceptual Design (pending)