



Recovering and Building a
NEW ERA
for Everyone

Mayor Lovely A. Warren
2020-21 State of the City



"To my mentor and my rock, my inspiration for fairness and justice for all. Rest in peace, boss man."

In Loving Memory of The Honorable
Assemblyman David Gantt, 1941 - 2020



"Mom, thank you for always being by my side. Then, now and always."

In Loving Memory of
Elrita "Rita" McClary Warren, 1949 -2020

"To all those we have lost in the past year, we offer our prayers and condolences. May the year ahead bring us all peace."

Dear Neighbor:

The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 will almost certainly be remembered as an historic turning point for Rochester, the latest in a long-line of transformations that have shaped this city since its founding. From the Young Lion of the West; to the Flour City with a U; to Flower City with a W; to the Image City; to the Photonics Capital of the World, Rochester has always managed to confront change with resilience and resolve and control its own destiny. 2020 will be no different.

This has been a year of turmoil. A worldwide pandemic created an economic crisis and brought us to the breaking point. People from all backgrounds and walks of life finally said enough is enough and demanded justice, fairness and a recognition that historic racism and inequality lies at the source of most, if not all, of the community's most pressing problems, including crime, poverty, health disparities and employment opportunities. These are the ingredients for inevitable change, the kind of change that arrives whether we welcome it or not.

We also know the pandemic has not delivered its consequences equally among the people of Rochester. Those with less, especially our communities of color, are bearing a disproportionate share of the suffering. And they are more likely to experience long-term consequences as the pandemic continues to reverberate through our economy.

We must act now to address these disparities, and make sure the Rochester that emerges from the pandemic finally delivers the equity our citizens deserve. We must seize this opportunity to confront the lasting effects of slavery, legal segregation as well as institutionalized racism and structural inequality. We must recognize that this is the time for a new era of equity and recovery.

The Equity & Recovery Agenda begins the process to reverse historical inequality and lay the foundation for a new era of prosperity based on fairness and justice.

In this document you will find bold initiatives to confront the greatest manifestations of institutional racism and inequality in the four areas we need to address to achieve a new era of equity together: housing, law enforcement, jobs and education.

Building on Success: Regaining our Momentum for Growth and Opportunity

The first objective is to regain our city's pre-pandemic momentum set in motion by almost eight-years of successfully creating more jobs, safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities. Before the pandemic, Rochester was on a trajectory toward new levels of growth and opportunity:

- Since 2014, our city has dramatically increased affordable housing, providing almost 4,000 new or renovated units to nearly 9,000 residents.
- Record investment created jobs and new business opportunities and an almost 3 percentage point drop in unemployment.
- Increased citizen engagement contributed towards historically low crime rates and new partnerships brought more fairness to our courts, including a city traffic court.
- Programs to address the needs of children, both in and outside the classroom, have prepared a new generation of learners for future success, especially at our libraries and R-Centers.

Pandemic Response: Setting the Stage for Recovery by Minimizing Loss

These are some of the many accomplishments that have put our city in a position to weather the storm and regain our momentum. They are a starting point to providing critical support to those who need it most.

We know many city neighborhoods suffered irreversible tragedy during the pandemic and our hearts break for our citizens who live and work here.

We have lost loved ones. Many have lost their livelihoods and now have to put their dreams on hold. Our children are almost certainly experiencing a level of learning loss greater than their peers in the suburbs.

It has been my goal since the start of the pandemic to minimize suffering with creative responses that:

- Encourage COVID-smart practices, including mask wearing, social distancing and free testing sites.
- Support small businesses with much-needed revenue.
- Avert eviction and homelessness with direct rental support and free legal representation.
- Help children adapt to remote-learning by providing free, nutritious meals and bridging the digital divide with free laptop computers and learning labs at our R-centers.

Our pre-pandemic accomplishments and our continued response to the pandemic give me hope for Rochester’s recovery. But my greatest source of optimism for the success of the Equity and Recovery Agenda is the true source of its power: the people of Rochester, our community’s greatest asset.

Historic change doesn’t happen without great effort by the people who direct that change. Applying the hard-won lessons of those who came before us, the ERA agenda puts the power of change into the hands of our people by giving them access to opportunities.

We must recognize that opportunities are not a finite resource. Opening doors for one group should not close them to others. We can lift the burden of racism and inequality without shifting the burden. Eliminating racism will put us in a position to create and thrive and lift Rochester to heights never reached before.

Fellow citizens of Rochester, I am asking you now to join me as we set out together to accomplish the goals laid out in our Equity & Recovery Agenda.

Together we will create Rochester’s next new era and make sure it is Rochester’s first era for everyone.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lovely A. Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mayor Lovely A. Warren
City of Rochester



Rochester Racism: a Tale of Two Cities Generations in the Making

Not far from my house in Northeast Rochester, you can find two touchstones to Rochester's progressive past – as well as its shameful history of institutional racism.

The Fernwood Park and Norton Village apartments are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places as examples of the "Garden City Movement" to construct affordable housing units with greenspace and play areas for children. Waring Plaza was built to provide shopping and banking within walking distance. Constructed for returning veterans of World War II, the apartments were sponsored by the owners of Rochester's department stores and hailed as proud landmarks of the city's willingness to help those in need.

A few years later, when an opportunity was presented to build a similar development farther west along Norton Street, near Franklin High School, the Rochester City Council rejected the proposal. According to famed City Historian Blake McKelvey, a majority of the tenants would be newly arriving Black migrants from the Jim Crow South. City Council reasoned that the influx of "negroes" would rather live near each other. They opted instead to build the affordable housing units in the old Seventh Ward, Rochester's most densely populated neighborhood.

The result was Hanover Houses, seven high rises that quickly became overcrowded and looked nothing like the Garden City models off Waring Road. Hanover Houses went on to become a tangible symbol of the conditions that sparked the race riots of 1964. By that point, the development had already helped motivate people like Lena May Gantt and Minister Franklin Florence to engage in their lifelong fight for racial justice in Rochester.

The clashing story of these affordable-housing projects remains the story of Rochester today – a tale of two cities. A generations-old tale of people of color getting squeezed together, pushed aside and left behind -- denied the promise of Rochester.



The old Third and Seventh Wards and surrounding neighborhoods, the site of the 1964 riots, continue to host Rochester's concentrations of Black and Brown people living in poverty and coping with reduced prospects in terms of housing, crime, education and jobs. They are the same areas that were "redlined" by the Home Owner's Loan Corporation, a New Deal program to support the housing market that contributed to racist lending practices.

When you look at the poverty that defines so many of our neighborhoods, you are not looking at accidents or oversights. It is not the unintended consequence of social programs or the policy choices of Democrats versus of Republicans.

What you see – the abject poverty and neglect; the lost opportunities and stolen futures – are the intentional consequences of legal segregation and codified discrimination – the deliberate results of government-sponsored racism.

The governments and civic leaders of yesterday created these problems. It is up to us – the governments of today and tomorrow and our partners in the private sector to fix them. We must stand on the shoulders of Lena Gantt and Minister Florence, Connie Mitchell and so many others, to fight for what is right.

Racial equity. Long overdue racial equity.

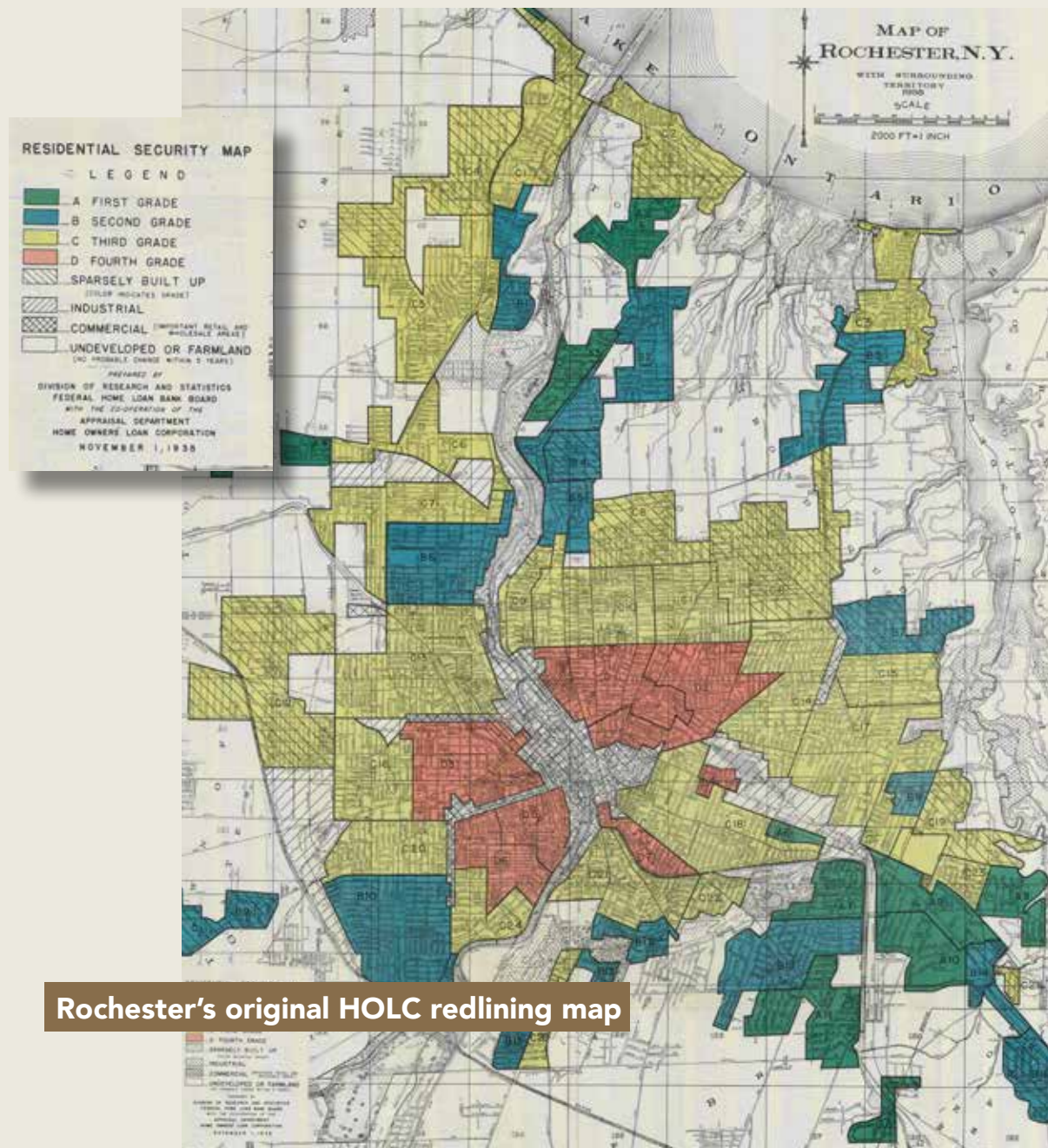


"What you see – the abject poverty and neglect; the lost opportunities and stolen futures – are the intentional consequences of legal segregation and codified discrimination – the deliberate results of government-sponsored racism."

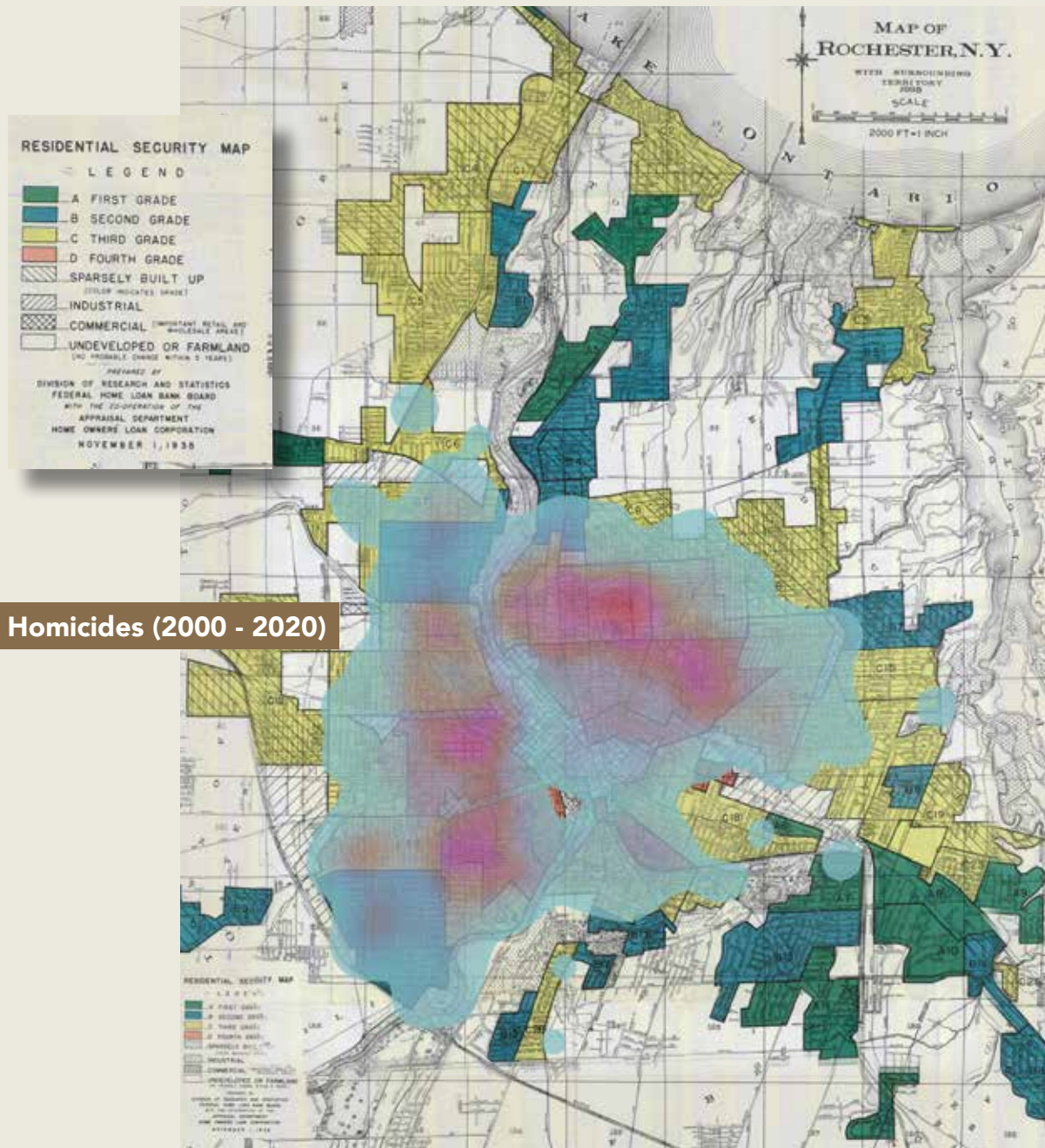


Rochester's History of Institutional Racism

In 1933, the federal government established the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) as a "New Deal" program to support mortgage refinancing during the Great Depression. HOLC created color-coded "Residential Security Maps" of major American cities, which eventually influenced private sector lending practices for decades following the Depression. The maps used criteria that included the racial makeup of neighborhoods to assess their desirability and lending risk. Those coded red were deemed "hazardous."



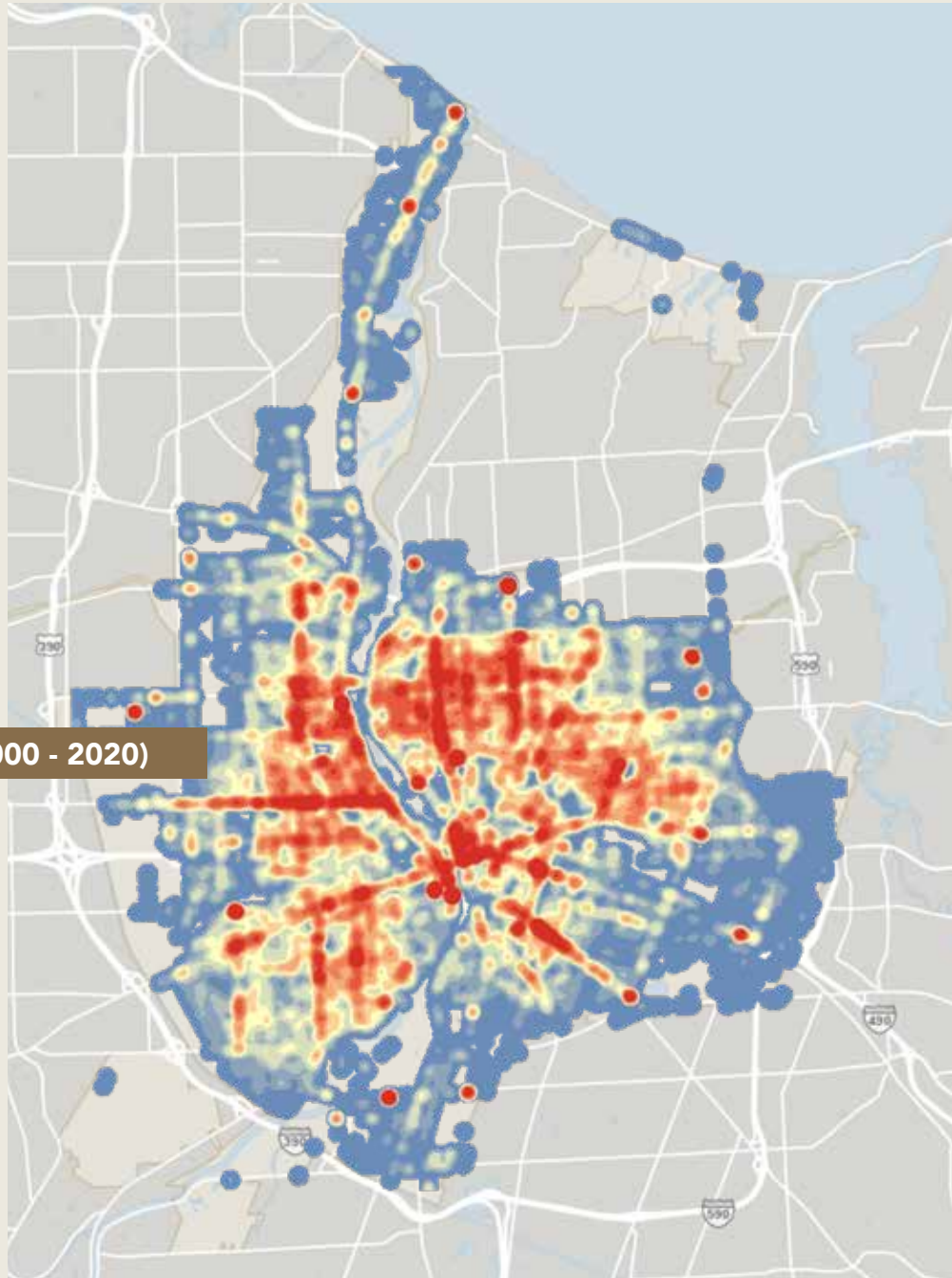
For instance, the HOLC description for Rochester's Third Ward (which includes today's Corn Hill Neighborhood) coded the area red, citing its "75% Negro" population with narrative characterization that said: "Years ago this was a section of beautiful homes. Some still remain – massive structures and still handsome but with no real value except for conversion purposes. Negroes have come into the area and today it is the poorest section of the city."





These maps contributed to the hyper-segregation of American cities and the term “redlining” has evolved to describe institutional practices that continue to reinforce that segregation, including interest rates, insurance premiums and even pizza-delivery boundaries. In Rochester the legacy of HOLC continues to endure. The plotted locations of many indicators of poverty, including incidents of violent crime, create a familiar crescent shape from the southwest to the northeast of Downtown that closely mirror the original red lines of the HOLC evaluators.

Arrests (2000 - 2020)



Our Work So Far – Equity Has Always Been Our Goal

Since taking office in 2014, I have worked to improve equity and fairness for all of our residents – regardless of how they are defined or how they define themselves. I have always believed that the path to equity is through creating more jobs, safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities.

We will not overcome our historic inequities in a period of years. Our goal is to continue building a record of accomplishment that moves us forward to a day when we can truly say that Rochester is a community where all children have an equal opportunity to succeed and fulfill their dreams.

Much remains to be done. However, we must understand not only our challenges, but also our successes, before we can chart our path forward.

Here are a few of our accomplishments toward those goals. These are by no means exhaustive, but illustrate what we can achieve when we commit to creating a new era of recovery and hope for everyone.

Others See Rochester's Progress

#1 city for future growth and tech investment (MIT Economics, 2019);

#1 market for hiring cybersecurity talent (CBRE Labor Analytics, 2020);

#1 market for new patents per 1000 workers (US Patent and Trademark Office, 2015);

#6 hottest real estate market (Realtor.com, 2019);

#13 best place to live for quality of life (US News and World Report, 2018);

#17 city for young professionals (Realtor.com, 2020).





MORE JOBS



DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Rochester and partners have invested over **\$300 MILLION IMPROVING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS**, including roads, bridges, libraries and R-Centers since 2014, creating **OVER 4,900 JOBS**.



DID YOU KNOW?

Over **600 LOCAL BUSINESSES** have received over **\$1.2 MILLION IN EMERGENCY RETENTION GRANTS** since March from the City of Rochester.



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

REJOB TRAINING

DID YOU KNOW?

REJOB, Rochester's environmental job training program, has **HELPED 95 PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY FIND WELL-PAYING JOBS** since it started in 2017.



DID YOU KNOW?

Over **5,600 JOBS HAVE BEEN CREATED ANNUALLY AND OVER \$340 MILLION**

on average has been invested in private construction in Rochester in each of the last 8 years. These jobs and investment are more than double the eight years prior. In total, we have generated **OVER \$2.4 BILLION** in private investment since I took office.



DID YOU KNOW?

Rochester's Office of Community Wealth Building has provided **FUNDING AND/OR START UP ASSISTANCE TO OVER 150 BUSINESSES** since it was founded in 2018.



DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2018, Rochester has increased contracts awarded to Minority and/or Women-owned businesses **BY 300% PROVIDING \$27 MILLION** to increase equity and build wealth in our community!



SAFER, MORE VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS



DID YOU KNOW?

This year Mayor Warren opened **THE INTERNATIONAL PLAZA** on North Clinton Avenue **AND THE ROC CITY SKATEPARK** fulfilling two long-standing promises to our community.





DID YOU KNOW?

INNER LOOP EAST has been transformed from a concrete moat that divided our downtown from the East End into a vibrant neighborhood that includes a mix of affordable, workforce and market-rate housing. **\$22 MILLION IN PUBLIC INVESTMENT HAS GENERATED \$229 MILLION** in private investment.



SAFER, MORE VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS



Warren Administration Accomplishments: 2014 to 2020

DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren has proposed that all newly hired Rochester Police Department officers **BE REQUIRED TO LIVE IN THE CITY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN** our officers and the community they protect and serve.



DID YOU KNOW?

ROCHESTER HAS CREATED CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAMS

to provide a non-law enforcement response to 911 calls for people experiencing a mental health or addiction related issue.



DID YOU KNOW?

ROC THE RIVERWAY is reconnecting our City to the Genesee River and revitalizing our waterfront. **OVER \$50 MILLION** is being spent to improve the heart of our city, including renovations to our Convention Center and the War Memorial at the Blue Cross Arena.



DID YOU KNOW?

To stabilize our neighborhoods, protect our homeowners and improve property values, we have **REDUCED THE NUMBER OF VACANT STRUCTURES IN OUR CITY BY 36% SINCE 2015.**

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2016, Mayor Warren and City government have required Rochester Police Department officers **TO WEAR BODY WORN CAMERAS** and use them to record every traffic stop or arrest.





GREATER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



DID YOU KNOW?

SCHOOL 17 HAS BECOME A TRUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL where children have access to wrap-around services including **MEDICAL** and **DENTAL** care and families have access to **JOB TRAINING** and other vital assistance.



DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren partnered with RCSD and community leaders to **CREATE A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED UNIVERSAL PRE-K PROGRAM** for Rochester's families and increased the number of children who got this vital head start on learning by **OVER 1,200%**.

DID YOU KNOW?

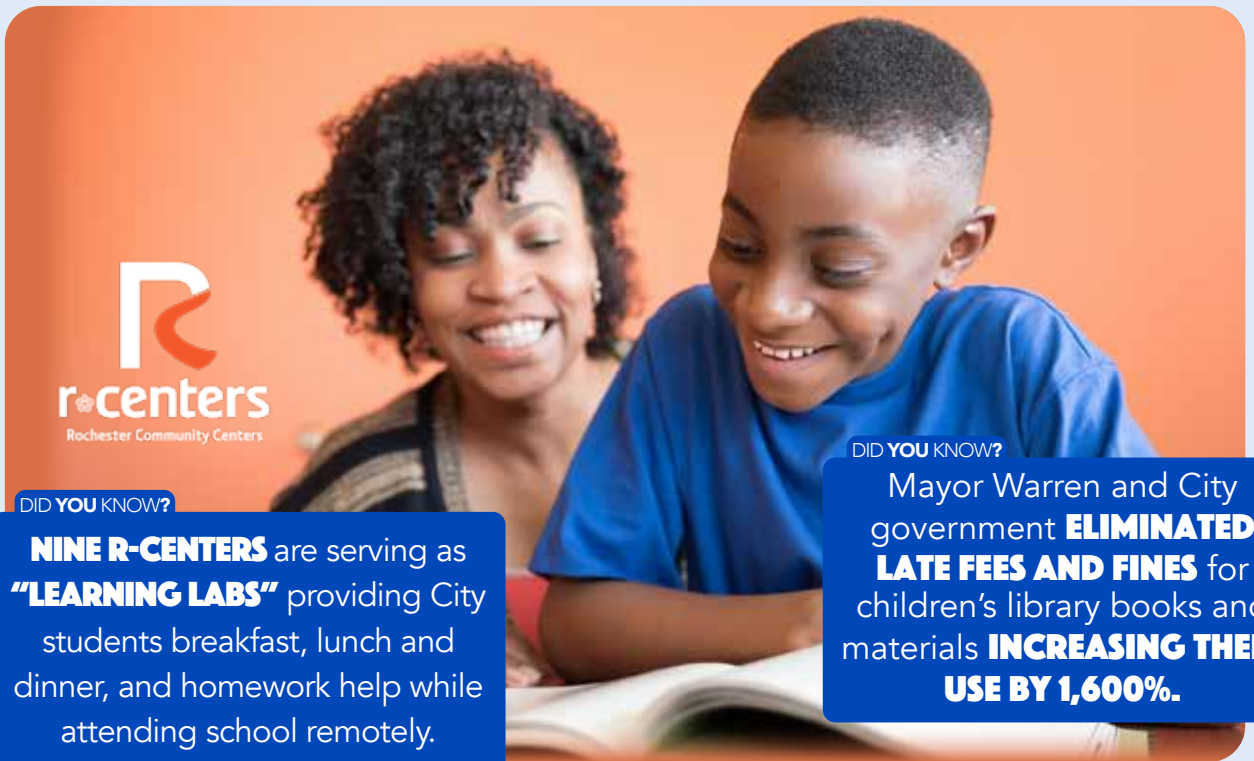
26 CITY SCHOOLS have been completely renovated with new classrooms, technology and other facilities. This **\$760 MILLION** in funding is providing our kids with schools equal to their suburban neighbors.





DID YOU KNOW?

Over **2,900** City school students have received laptops and/or internet devices due to **\$1 MILLION** from Mayor Warren and City government to help them learn during the pandemic.



DID YOU KNOW?

NINE R-CENTERS are serving as **"LEARNING LABS"** providing City students breakfast, lunch and dinner, and homework help while attending school remotely.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren and City government **ELIMINATED LATE FEES AND FINES** for children's library books and materials **INCREASING THEIR USE BY 1,600%.**



EQUITY AND FAIRNESS FOR EVERYONE

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2014, **OVER 3,800 AFFORDABLE HOMES** providing housing for **OVER 9,000 RESIDENTS**, have been built or renovated with programs supported by Mayor Warren and City government. These safe and affordable homes provide the foundation for families to build wealth and for our kids to learn and succeed.



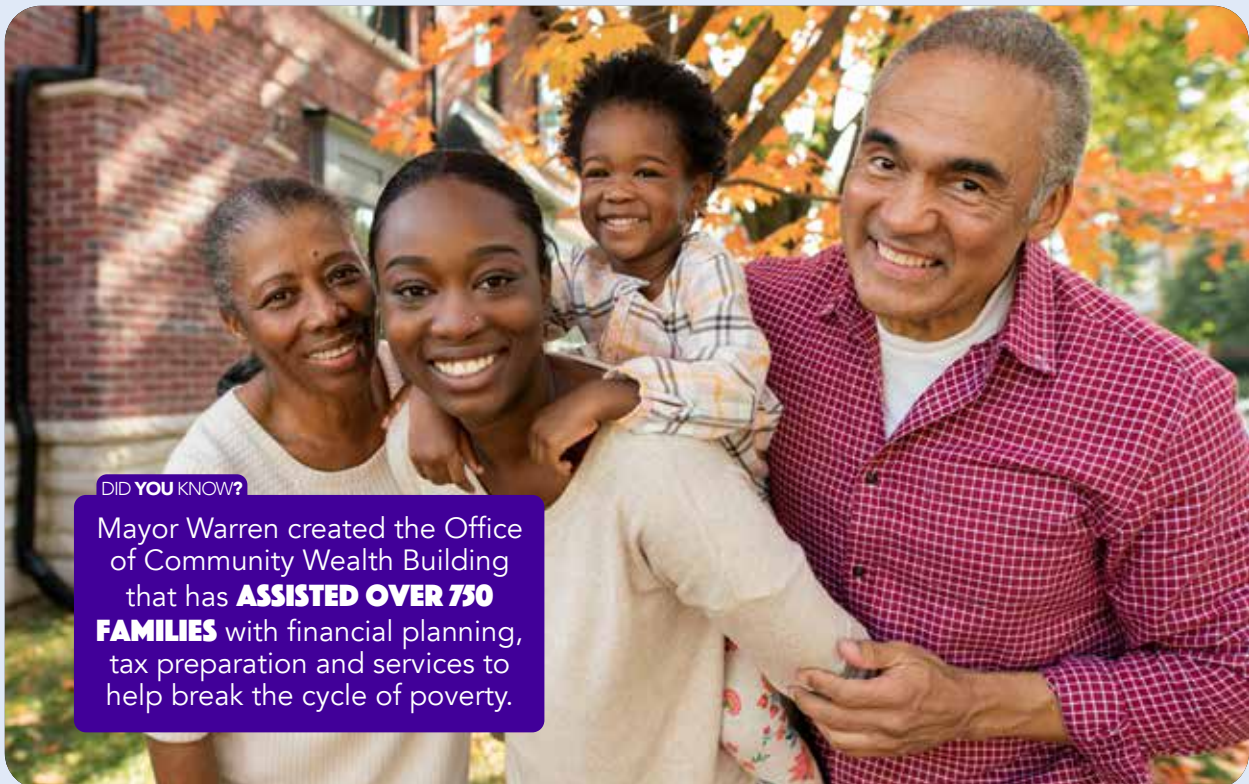
DID YOU KNOW?

Over **\$6.5 MILLION** is available to Rochester residents needing emergency rent assistance, legal assistance to fight evictions and other housing services. Making sure tenants have the help they need is a priority for City government.



DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Rochester, its partners, Foodlink and the Rochester City School District, have provided over **1.5 MILLION MEALS** to the community since the start of the pandemic. Mayor Warren has made providing safe and reliable access to food for those in need a priority.

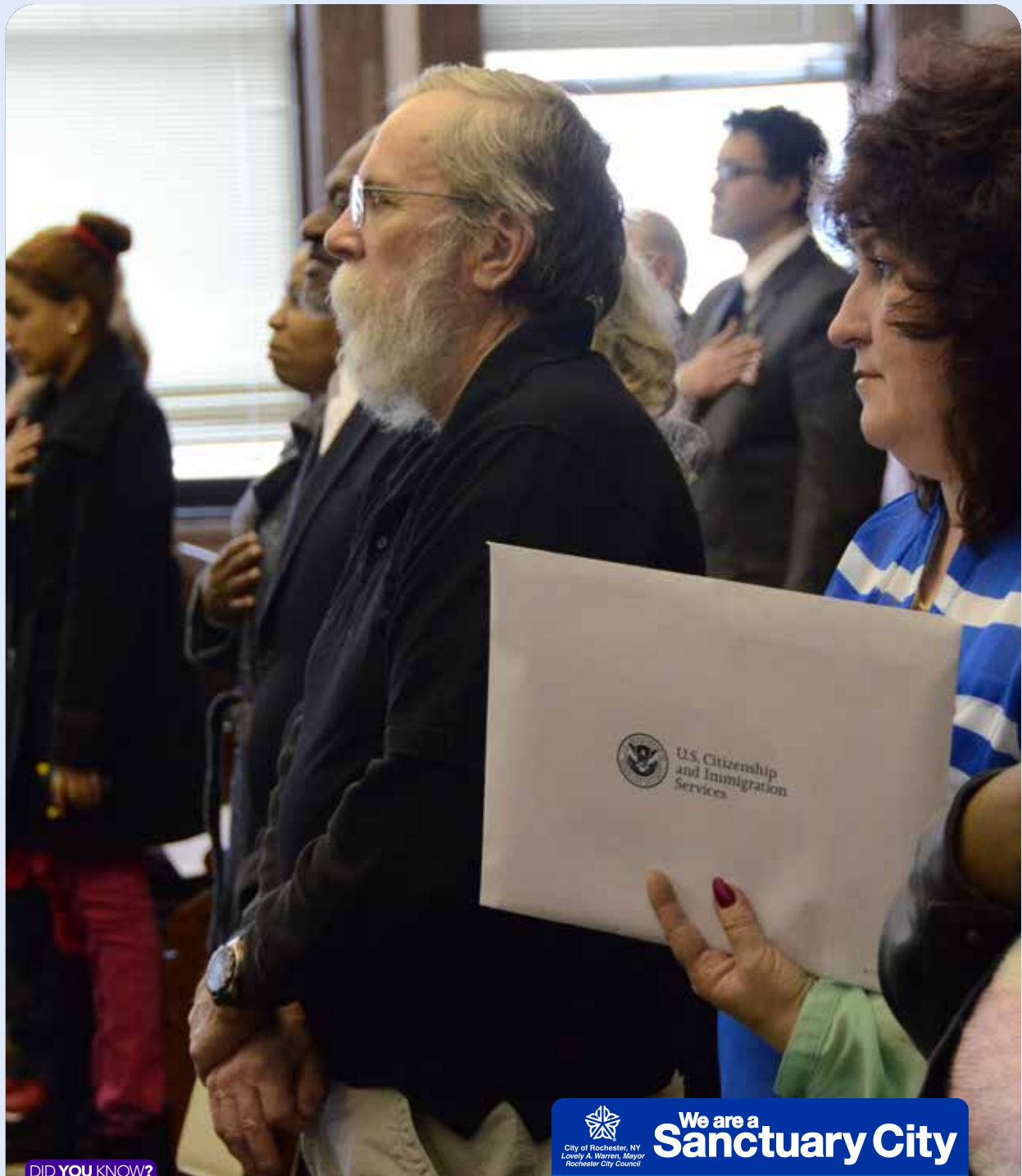


DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren created the Office of Community Wealth Building that has **ASSISTED OVER 750 FAMILIES** with financial planning, tax preparation and services to help break the cycle of poverty.



EQUITY AND FAIRNESS FOR EVERYONE



Warren Administration Accomplishments: 2014 to 2020

DID YOU KNOW?



We are a **Sanctuary City**

Rochester today is **JUST AS DEDICATED TO EQUITY** as we have been throughout our proud history. We are a **SANCTUARY CITY** that welcomes New Americans no matter their original home. We also **"BANNED THE BOX"** to prohibit employers from asking about criminal convictions because everyone deserves redemption. And, our **TRANSGENDER EMPLOYEES** also have access to healthcare they need and deserve.



DID YOU KNOW?

NEARLY \$10 MILLION IN SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE BEEN AWARDED to local students to attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities since 2014 at college fairs sponsored by Mayor Warren, UNCF and RCSD. It's another way Rochester is working to create equity and empower a new generation of leadership.



DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren is the co-Chair of the National League of Cities Race, Equity and Leadership Initiative and Rochester has **SECURED \$1.6 MILLION IN GRANTS** from President Obama's My Brother's Keeper program to assist residents looking to secure a career or a better education.



DID YOU KNOW?

Mayor Warren and City government created a **"TRAFFIC COURT"** so city residents could have the **SAME OPPORTUNITIES** to defend themselves from tickets as suburban residents. She also partnered with the County to return a full-service DMV office to Downtown.



Using Evidence to Achieve Equity and Recovery

Many of the accomplishments illustrated have resulted from our City's data driven decision making.

Achieving the full benefit of equity and recovery requires that we fully understand the elements of change by collecting, analyzing and applying data. The City of Rochester is fortunate to have access to a myriad of facts and figures every day. This data helps us recognize specific factors behind change, which then become the foundation for our decision making. We strive to support the goals of our Equity & Recovery Agenda with evidence-based data.

The team who collects and analyzes this data - the Mayor's Office of Data and Analytics – plays a key role in evaluating our actions and helping to shape City programs so they can achieve their fullest potential. For example, when the COVID-19 pandemic compelled the Rochester City School District to consider remote learning models, we collaborated with them and our local food bank, Foodlink, to establish grab-and-go meal distribution sites across the city to ensure students and their families maintained access to nutritious meals. The City's Office of Data and Analytics team performed a scientific, geographic analysis of the entire city to determine which sites would be in ideal walking distance for students. As a result, more than 1.5 million meals were efficiently provided to city children and their families at City R-Centers and school locations during the pandemic.



Examining data has also helped us respond to the pandemic in other ways. We partnered with Harvard University to survey city landlords to understand the impact of the pandemic on the city's rental market. While we had an idea that renters and landlords were struggling, we learned that nearly one in three city tenants were behind on their rent. In addition, the evidence told us that evictions are frequently a catalyst for generational poverty -- especially for people of color. We recognized the potential for a housing crisis when state and federal moratoriums on evictions would eventually be lifted. In response, we quickly prepared a host of services to help

renters and landlords avoid evictions - including providing rent assistance, repair grants and free legal aid for evictions.

These are just a few small examples of what the ERA Agenda is all about. The relationship between race and poverty is well established and beyond dispute. The ERA Agenda encourages a close and constant evaluation of that relationship, through the examination of data, in the development of strategic and targeted solutions that lead to positive change and bring long overdue equity to the people of Rochester.





Other Ways Data Drives City Policies and Programs

The City's 2018 Citywide Housing Market Study found that more than half of all evictions in Monroe County occurred in city neighborhoods with the highest rates of poverty and the lowest incomes. It also found that the City's affordable housing policies were based on countywide income levels. In response, the City amended its City Code to allow for the construction of more affordable housing units in areas where people have extremely low or very low incomes.

The City's 2019 Commercial Corridor Study demonstrated how Rochester's high rates of poverty and low income levels presented formidable challenges to filling empty storefronts. It also showed us how shifting retail trends could provide new opportunities for creativity in retail development. Evidence showed that prior to the pandemic, consumers began shifting their spending patterns away from suburban, "big box" stores and towards the character and appeal of the unique shopping experiences available at older, smaller buildings among Rochester's commercial corridors. In response, the City expanded the capacity of the Rochester Economic Development Corp. (REDCO) to support emerging city entrepreneurs with grants, loans and technical assistance.



A 2016 study of the City's Red Light Camera program revealed that a majority of the violations were occurring in neighborhoods with the highest rates of poverty and provided inconclusive safety benefits. Mayor Warren terminated the program that year.



The Equity & Recovery Agenda - Everyone Should Have An Equal Opportunity To Succeed

"Now, as a nation, we don't promise equal outcomes, but we were founded on the idea everybody should have an equal opportunity to succeed. No matter who you are, what you look like, where you come from, you can make it. That's an essential promise of America. Where you start should not determine where you end up." – President Barack Obama

Fulfilling the promise of President Obama's words is at the heart of the Equity & Recovery Agenda.

His call speaks to the moment we face as a nation and as a city. How do we build a just and equitable community for everyone? How do we create an era where and when we recover together so that every child has a fighting chance, and an equal opportunity, to fulfill their dreams?

I am proposing my Equity and Recovery Agenda as a hopeful answer to these questions so that Rochester can serve as the example:

We will be the City that shows our nation that policing can change and respect the needs of the people it serves while keeping our community safe.

We will be the City that shows that a "housing first" agenda can lift people out of poverty.

We will be the City that makes our schools the heart of our neighborhoods.

We will be the City that values our newest Americans and supports our artists and expresses our creativity.

We will be the City that creates a path to equity where we all recover and succeed together.

The ERA agenda is my next step down this path and I hope our entire city will join me in this work. I look forward to discussing and working with all those who want to build a brighter future. I am open to your ideas and supporting your efforts as well. It is important to state that enacting many of the following proposals will need action by City Council and our other partners. I'm committed to working collaboratively to earn their support.

Together, I know that we can put our faith in Rochester into action and that we will succeed.

Mayor Warren's Equity & Recovery Agenda

Creating the City of Rochester "Housing First" Trust Fund

Since taking office, my Administration has taken a "housing first" approach to fighting poverty. While Housing First has traditionally referred to helping our homeless, I believe that a safe, affordable and sustainable home is the first and most critical step toward achieving equity for all. Hence, the "Housing First" trust fund. Families and children must have the security a home provides before they can be successful in their careers and education. Lifting people up will always start with ensuring they have a place to call "home."

Our most notable effort to place housing first has been redefining the affordable housing standard to 30% to truly assist people in need in our community. Prior to this achievement, many so-called affordable homes were out of reach to our residents. This, combined with our other efforts, has helped create over 3,800 homes serving over 9,000 residents.

But, there is more to be done. Recent research conducted by the City in conjunction with Harvard University has shown that many two-person and larger households locally are no longer rent burdened. Many single-person households are still spending more than 30% of their income for housing. This means our residents are over housed, meaning there are too many two-bedroom or larger homes or apartments and not enough affordable one-bedroom or studio units.

In addition, many families still lack access to the financing necessary or the ability to save to purchase a home. As has been shown time and time again, the asset of a home is critical to building wealth and achieving financial equity.

A "Housing First" Trust Fund will make homeownership a reality for more city families. The fund will also provide a sustainable source of revenue for supports we provide to renters including: emergency rental assistance, access to counsel when facing eviction and continued support for the dedicated housing court.

Creating a new era for everyone in Rochester that truly provides a path to equity starts with the "Housing First" Trust Fund.





Housing First Trust Fund Programs and Services

The City of Rochester is currently exploring all of the opportunities a Housing First Trust Fund could create to provide stability for our families and advance equity. Some of these ideas include:

- Working with the renters of two-family homes to help them acquire the property, become owners and accelerate their financial growth while stabilizing neighborhoods.
- Providing funding to the Rochester Land Bank to acquire higher-quality properties for owner occupancy programs.
- Allowing the Land Bank to offer properties directly to residents seeking to buy a home without them having to competitively bid against investors.
- Providing new owner-occupants with \$24,999 rehabilitation grants, as well as Financial Literacy and Planning Assistance to ensure long-term stability and wealth building.
- Shift all non-lien tax sale properties directly to the Land Bank via a credit bid.



- Strengthen neighborhoods by offering any City-owned tax lien acquisitions via lottery for a dollar to residents on the same street. This would allow homeowners to build wealth and strengthen stability in their neighborhoods. Owners of these properties would be eligible for rehabilitation grants and other services to ensure the creation of safe and affordable rental properties.
- Expanding emergency-based debt and rent relief to qualifying residents. This will help prevent evictions and foreclosures and stop temporary financial crises from becoming negatively life-altering events.
- Reducing owner and tenant utility costs by making energy efficiency improvements in newly constructed or renovated housing for low-income residents.
- Funding supportive services within housing court to help families overcome problems related to eviction.

A Partnership to Place “Housing First”

To truly make the programs that can be realized by the City’s “Housing First” Trust Fund a success, we will need support from our government partners, our non-profit organizations and the advocate community. Working collaboratively to provide other family supports via Monroe County Social Services will be essential. We will also need to work with our courts and the State Office of Court Administration to enhance our housing court to encourage judges to work with service providers in a similar manner to other diversion courts. The Tenants Union and landlords must also have seats at the table as we fully envision and implement the goals of the “Housing First” Trust Fund.

We must all recognize and contribute to helping build the foundation for success for our children and families by ensuring that all Rochesterians have a safe and affordable place to call home. This work will be at the heart of my future efforts as Mayor.





Create the “ERA Emergency Fund” To Prevent Families From Falling Into Poverty

Throughout the pandemic, our City has stepped up for our businesses and families. We have served millions of meals and provided over a million dollars in emergency grants and funding to local businesses, delivered hundreds of families emergency rent assistance, and given laptops and internet access to our students.

Many of these efforts are detailed elsewhere in this State of the City. However, there is more work to be done.

Many of our families rely on hourly wage and/or service jobs for employment and have seen tremendous disruption in their lives and careers during the pandemic. In addition, the bureaucracy and red tape to apply for social services and/or unemployment benefits can take weeks before assistance is available. Often, this leads to people and families having to make impossible choices:

- between paying for food or medication,
- fixing their car to get to work or paying their rent,
- paying the utility bill or affording a co-pay for needed doctor’s visit.

These crises may appear small to someone on the outside. However, they can have life-changing consequences for people trapped within them. Missed medication can lead to a serious medical problem. A person may lose their job or their safe place to live. A frozen pipe due to lack of heat can result in substantial and expensive damage to a home that leads to expenses from which a family doesn’t recover.

That is why I am proposing the creation of an ERA Emergency Fund that can serve as a lifeline while individuals and families wait for more permanent assistance, or hopefully, keep them from having to seek it. The ERA emergency fund would provide micro grants of up to \$2,000 to assist people with overcoming a temporary crises like the ones described above so that they do not become life-changing events.

To create the ERA Emergency Fund, I propose that the City convene a working group of willing partners from my administration, City Council, our County, State and Federal government leaders, non-profit organizations, as well as interested economists and other academics from our colleges and universities to design the program. I will personally conduct the outreach necessary to bring this group of leaders together.

An important part of creating the fund will be designing a research component that can rigorously examine the outcomes and provide justification for future action. This data will establish the program’s impact in assisting families and, I believe, demonstrate its ability to keep families from needing to access other assistance.

Obviously, the critical first step in making both the ERA Emergency Fund, and the Housing First Trust Fund, a reality is adequate funding. I believe the most critical source for providing it must be the long overdue legalization and appropriate taxation of marijuana.



The ERA emergency fund would provide micro grants of up to \$2,000 to assist people with overcoming temporary crisis.

From Oppression to Opportunity – Using Marijuana Tax Revenue to Create the Housing First Trust Fund and the ERA Emergency Fund

It has become obvious to elected leaders throughout our state and nation that the criminalization of marijuana has resulted in the needless incarceration and oppression of Black and Brown people in Rochester and throughout our country. I am heartened that Governor Andrew Cuomo has stated that he will pursue legalization in the coming year.

However, the associated tax revenue, anticipated to be up to a half-billion dollars annually, cannot simply be vacuumed into the State's General Fund. The funds that result from marijuana legalization must be used to make amends for the decades of damage done to minority communities. To this end, I propose that the State designate that a substantial portion of the tax revenue from marijuana sales be required to fund equity initiatives in communities. In Rochester, that would mean the creation and operation of the Housing First Trust Fund and the ERA Emergency Fund.

The total dollars necessary to successfully launch these efforts would be between two to five million dollars annually, which is substantially less than potential local sales of legal marijuana would generate. Therefore, it is essential that our community and all of our elected officials at both the state and local levels commit to achieving marijuana legalization and appropriate taxation to fund our shared work towards equity and recovery.



A Partnership for Equity – Other Potential Funding Sources

Many cities throughout the country, and notably Syracuse and Ithaca in New York, have revenue agreements with their major universities and non-profit organizations. Currently, about 35% of property in the city is exempt from paying property taxes, including properties owned by non-profit organizations.

If fully assessed, these properties would generate tens of millions of dollars in revenue for the City and offset the burden paid by our homeowners and renters.

Therefore, I will be asking the largest owners of these tax exempt properties, including the University of Rochester, to come together and discuss how they can participate in our ERA agenda efforts, including supporting the creation of the Housing First Trust Fund and the ERA Emergency Fund.

It is time that our community, including our universities and non-profits, follows the example of other progressive cities throughout our nation and come together to invest in equity.

Please know that I understand that these sources of revenue are controversial to some. Yet, what they really require is the support, understanding, and most importantly, empathy of the leadership of these organizations and our State government. Delivering equity requires a genuine commitment to sacrifice in order to repair the damage that has been done.





Create an Office of Neighborhood Safety – A Whole City Approach to Reducing Violence

We have a wide variety of programs and initiatives across the City, both public and private, that are dedicated to stopping violence. What is clear is that the coordination and, therefore, the effectiveness of these programs must be improved.

Therefore, I am proposing the creation of a Neighborhood Safety Task Force to be chaired by the Deputy Mayor to identify and evaluate all of our violence prevention efforts to determine how best to coordinate their management under a new Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS). The Task Force will integrate with existing efforts to respond to Governor Cuomo's order to reimagine policing that already involve the Police Accountability Board, City Council and other agencies.

The task force will evaluate Rochester's existing efforts and determine if they are successfully employing the following proven strategies: **(1)** violence interruption, which includes employing credible messengers to identify and mediate conflicts before they turn violent; **(2)** transformative mentoring, which uses mentors with experience living in violent conditions to provide one-on-one mentoring over a long, intensive period to help change behaviors; **(3)** job readiness, which provides a pathway to a career and out of violent circumstances; **(4)** trust building, which employs civilian messengers to strengthen the relationship between public officials and neighborhood residents; **(5)** public safety data collection and analytics, which incorporates data into everyday decision-making to maximize the impact of office programming; and **(6)** coordinating non-police responses to calls for service, which behaves as a "third branch of emergency services" in addition to RFD and RPD to address issues such as homelessness, substance use and mental health needs.



The Peacemaker Fellowship

Engaging our highest risk residents and providing them a path to peace and opportunity is essential to achieving equity. The alternative is more violence on our streets and the high human and financial costs it places on all of us. Therefore, I propose that the Task Force design and create the Peacemaker Fellowship. The fellows designated under this program would be individuals considered most likely to become victims of gun violence. They would be provided mentorship opportunities and work with other fellows to achieve education, a career or other life goals. A similar effort in Richmond, CA has had great success. Over a 10-year period, the city's homicide rate fell by 80% along with a 55% reduction in gun homicides and hospitalizations and a 43% reduction in firearm-related crimes, according to a quantitative evaluation published in the American Journal of Public Health. We need to make every effort to achieve similar success here in Rochester to preserve our most precious asset, our residents.



Reforming our Police Department and Honoring the Life of Daniel Prude

During this pandemic, another crisis placed our history of systemic racism and institutional inequality back before us in a manner that demands action. The death of an unarmed Black man, Daniel Prude, while in the custody of our Police Department created rightful anger, understandable cries for resignations — including mine — and focused our entire city on the work that must be done to create equity and fairness for everyone.

Most importantly, I recognize that Daniel Prude's death cannot be in vain and that we can no longer simply say the right things, we must act.

Nothing we do will restore Mr. Prude's life, but we can apply the difficult lessons learned to prevent future tragedies. We must address the fundamental challenge facing our Rochester Police Department. We must create a department that truly protects and serves our community because it has the empathy and perspective to do so. Every officer has to be connected to the residents they serve and see their challenges, not through the lens of the badge, but through a lens of understanding for our shared humanity.



Appointment of Cynthia Herriott-Sullivan as Police Chief

To reform policing in our City, I appointed a new Police Chief, Cynthia Herriott-Sullivan to lead the department, the first woman to ever do so. She has spent years fighting to create the fundamental change necessary to reduce crime by providing people with housing and other services to give the so-called "least among us" hope and opportunity for a better future. Chief Herriott-Sullivan is a proven and respected leader in law enforcement. She has served on the board of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement (NOBLE) where she has helped drive change in police departments across our country to ensure neighborhoods are safe.

Chief Herriott-Sullivan and her command staff, including Executive Deputy Chief Andre Anderson, are dedicated to rebuilding trust and re-establishing community policing in Rochester. I am particularly pleased that EDC Anderson is helping lead RPD since he brings true experience to the job after serving as Chief of Police in Ferguson, MO -- where he created a foundation for unity and healing after the tragic shooting of Michael Brown, Jr.

Chief Herriott-Sullivan is in the midst of her 90-day plan to educate herself and the command staff on how to truly build the empathy and perspective necessary for fundamental change in the practices and procedures of our Rochester Police Department. This knowledge will lead to additional ERA agenda proposals to ensure safer and more vibrant neighborhoods in our city.

However, I am not waiting to take action, in addition to installing new leadership at RPD, I have proposed or implemented items on the following pages as crucial portions of my Equity & Recovery Agenda for policing in Rochester:



Reforming our Police Department and Honoring the Life of Daniel Prude

Require Newly Hired Police Officers to Reside in the City of Rochester

If we are to address the barriers that exist between our police department and our community, we have to eliminate that very distinction. Our police department has to be part of our community, not comprised of those who simply come into our city to police it.

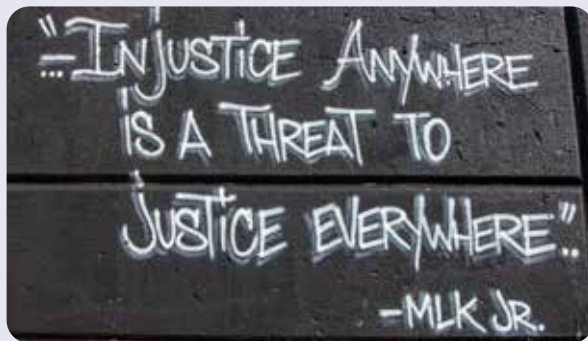
That is why a residency requirement for newly-hired police officers is so important. This simple change will bring officers and those they serve closer together and create relationships that break the lens of the badge and create mutual understanding.



Creating the Office of Crisis Intervention Services to Provide a Non-Police Response to Mental Health and Addiction-Related 911 Calls

Ensuring that our neighbors in crisis receive the help and compassion they need is an essential change that our new Crisis Intervention Teams will provide. By ensuring that mental health professionals and other resources are available to respond when needed, we can de-escalate situations, focus on the safety of the individual in crisis and emphasize access to treatment and medical care. This office will work for better outcomes for those in crisis and allow our police department to focus on protecting our neighborhoods.

Working with City Council, we have re-allocated resources for this office, and renamed our new Department of Recreation and Human Services. A pilot plan to deploy the new Crisis Response Teams is being developed and it will be implemented in 2021.





Reforming Police and Achieving Equity

Reforming our police department to truly ensure safer, more vibrant neighborhoods is critical. I'm dedicated to working alongside our community through the Police Accountability Board, the RASE Commission and leaders throughout our city. Yet, police reform is just one part of my Equity & Recovery Agenda to overcome structural inequality and racism. To achieve this goal, we must address the other challenges mentioned herein.



Make Every Elementary School A Neighborhood Community School

Enrico Fermi School 17 has shown that making a child's school the center of a family's life by providing meals, after-school care, health care, including mental health and dental care, access to social services, including housing and nutrition assistance, job-training for parents and more can not only improve educational outcomes for children, but quality-of-life and economic outcomes for families.

The ERA agenda renews the call for the City, RCSD, Monroe County and others to ensure that the full range of community school services is available at every RCSD neighborhood elementary school.

Today, we are working with our partners to bring this model to the Upper Falls neighborhood and Abraham Lincoln School 22. Planning continues to make this our next beacon school where we will deliver the same success as we have in the JOSANA Neighborhood.

Importantly, within the past month, the RCSD's assigned monitor, Shelley Jallow, provided direction towards this goal: make every elementary school a neighborhood school. In addition, she required that a feasibility plan be completed by May 2021. Her call aligns with the previous work of Distinguished Educator Jamie Aquino, who also supports the creation of neighborhood community schools.

Ms. Jallow's edict creates a tremendous opportunity. We should plan to make every elementary school not just a neighborhood school, but a community school with the full range of services from the City, County and community partners. I will seek to work with all involved to determine how we can leverage our resources to truly make each elementary school a cornerstone of its neighborhood.



Ideas that should be vetted during the plan development include:

- How can the pending Phase 3 of the School Modernization Project include the creation of spaces to house the supportive programs, like medical care, dental care, social services, job training and other programs, to truly create each school as a neighborhood hub?
- How can we leverage our Department of Recreation and Human Services to enhance the benefits each neighborhood school can provide our children?
- Can we create a “Walking School Bus” program to each school to encourage our kids to be active and potentially provide supplemental employment to neighborhood families? What other opportunities exist to employ and empower parents to be central to the success of their neighborhood school?



I have great faith in the leadership of our RCSD Superintendent Dr. Lesli Myers-Small and look forward to working with her and her leadership team to seize this opportunity.

It is clear to me that neighborhood community schools can be beacons for equity. Creating them as centers where children and families can get the full range of support they need, combined with housing first policies of the ERA agenda will be truly transformative.





Leverage Our Investments in Infrastructure to Ensure and Expand Employment for City Residents

We have had great success expanding the number of contracts and amount of dollars earned by our minority and women-owned businesses. In fact, since 2018, Rochester has increased its contracts awarded to such firms by 300%, to \$27 million. However, now is not the time to rest, but rather to step up and build upon our achievements.

Therefore, as part of the ERA agenda, I propose we increase our minority-owned business public works construction project procurement goal to 30% from 20% - an increase of 50% - and our women-owned business public works construction project procurement goal to 12.5% from 10% - an increase of 25%.

Clearly, when we set high standards, and demand that our contractors and suppliers meet them, we can achieve success towards creating equity. These higher procurement goals will ensure that we help more Black and Brown families build wealth and ultimately lift up our entire community.

We also need to ensure that the workforce designing and building our infrastructure in our neighborhoods actually reflects our community.

I appreciate that programs like Project Phoenix and the Multi-Craft Apprenticeship Preparation Program are working to diversify our construction trades. However, the path to recovering and achieving equity requires our trade unions to continue to be at the forefront of building a better society.

Therefore, I am asking our trade unions to do more. City residents who want to make a career in the construction trades should always see an open door at our union shops. I will host a labor summit with local trade unions and union contractors to determine a fixed number of apprenticeship spots per year for city residents with preference given to Black and Brown residents and/or women or non-binary residents.

While our City cannot mandate this goal, achieving it will strengthen the opportunity for union contractors, and therefore union labor, to win City jobs since they will be best positioned to meet the City's existing Equal Employment Opportunity requirements.

One of the quickest paths to achieving equity is to ensure employment for as many of our residents as possible. By leveraging our City's investments in its infrastructure, we will accelerate our progress.





Valuing Those Who Are Caring For Us and Our Loved Ones – Providing A Living Wage For Health Care Workers

The pandemic has shown us what jobs are truly essential to our community. While many of our front line health care workers such as doctors and nurses, are well-respected and well-compensated. There are critical health care providers that are unfortunately overlooked and ill paid: our home health aides, certified nursing assistants and similar positions.

These caregivers provide direct care to those who often cannot care for themselves and are at-risk of being exposed to illness, including COVID-19. Many provide care that a patient's loved ones cannot do, or sadly, will not do.

This is essential and life-saving work that also provides dignity and kindness to the patients served. However, the pay for these positions does not come close to capturing the value of this work. Locally, most of these positions pay considerably less than \$15 an hour.

It is time we stand up and demand a fair wage for these essential health care workers. Simply put, our medical care system does not work and our most vulnerable would surely suffer.

Therefore, I will join with our local unions, health care advocates and RMAPI to fight for state legislation that mandates a \$15 minimum wage for health aide and nursing assistant positions. I hope that our entire state delegation will join me and demonstrate leadership on this clear opportunity to create equity and fairness for these truly essential workers.

I must add that this issue is deeply personal for me. My mother, Elrita, who recently passed, was a Home Health Aide for most of her career.

My mother was known for her dedication to the geriatric patients she cared for. She always wanted her patients to know that someone truly cared for them, that they were not forgotten, they weren't alone and that they were still valued. That was tremendously important to her.

Fighting for a fair wage for those who continue her work is tremendously important to me.





Expanding Urban Farming to Create Entrepreneurs and Fight Food Deserts – RocCity HomeGrown

Parcels that have suffered decline due to decades of redlining and disinvestment do not necessarily have to be redeveloped in a traditional manner. We need to think differently about land use and our Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan has provided us a great start. It provides a framework for expanding urban agriculture and using it as a path toward equity.

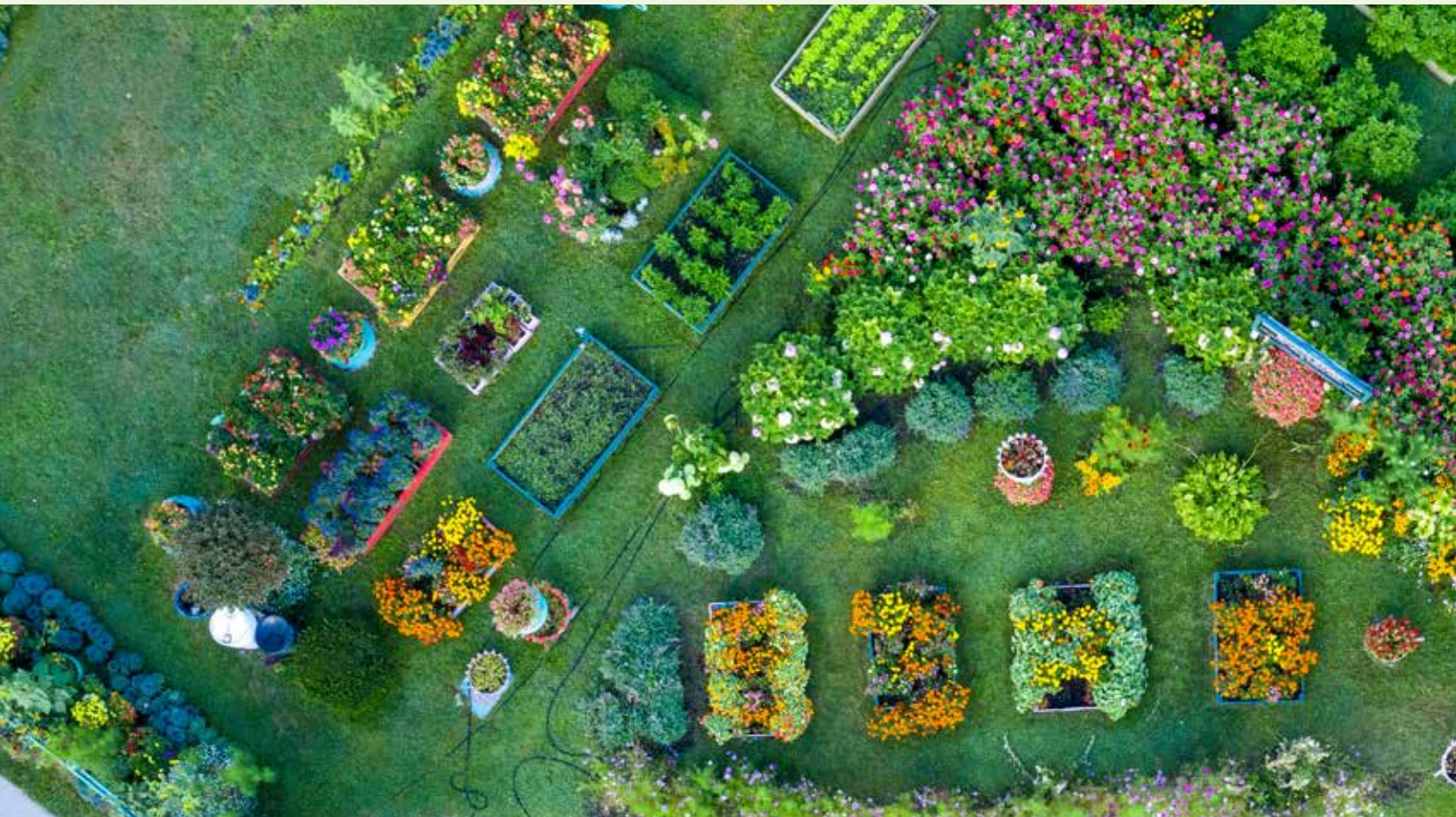
Today, far too many of our residents lack access to quality fruit, fresh produce and healthy foods within their neighborhoods. In addition, many city families would benefit financially from the lower food costs and/or the additional income that urban farming can provide.



RocCity HomeGrown will be our answer to these challenges by streamlining access to available city land for farming, providing assistance to residents who want to grow their own food or start a small food business, and developing sustainable neighborhood markets.

RocCity HomeGrown will be a new initiative led by our Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) with involvement across multiple city departments and support from REDCO. OCWB is uniquely positioned to lead this effort due to its success with other innovative and non-traditional programs to empower our residents. (see sidebar page 41)

The initiative's initial charge will be the creation of an urban farm database of quality parcels to be developed as community gardens or small-scale farms. In addition, it will develop a process for providing low or no-cost leases, or equitable purchase options, to families and cooperatives with the goal of increasing the acreage used throughout the city for sustainable agriculture. Along with



community partners, it will conduct market studies and determine how best to bring these locally grown farm products to market.

These efforts build upon, and greatly expand the City's current Community Garden program. RocCity HomeGrown will seek to partner with FoodLink, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Taproot Collective and other entities to define and prioritize its efforts to meet the goals above.

Along with RocCity HomeGrown, the city's Neighborhood and Business Development will continue its Zoning Alignment Project to allow urban agriculture in residential neighborhoods, which is foundational to these efforts.

Bringing new life to our neglected parcels to help our residents grow not just healthy foods, but businesses, is another exciting way Rochester will recover together and create equity in our city.



The Office of Community Wealth Building – Empowering Residents and Entrepreneurs

Rochester's Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) has made notable progress in improving the financial lives of our residents and helped many in our community fulfill their dreams of owning their own business since its creation in 2018. As we implement other elements of the ERA agenda, OCWB is expanding on the efforts below to help our city achieve financial equity.

Financial Empowerment Center: The OCWB's Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) exists to help families understand how to manage their finances, reduce debt, increase their savings and break out of the cycle of poverty. In 2020 alone, the FEC has served 580 families and helped them reduce over \$200,000 in debt and increase their savings by \$200,000, collectively. Prior to engaging with the FEC, many of these families lacked savings accounts. They achieved their success by learning household budgeting and money management skills aimed at their long-term goals.

Kiva Rochester: Access to even small amounts of capital has been a barrier to many residents who want to create their own business and work for themselves. To help overcome this challenge, OCWB partner to bring Kiva, the world's largest micro-lending program to Rochester. To date Kiva Rochester has provided over \$600,000 in funding to over a 100 local businesses, including Fuego, Misfit Doughnuts and James Brown's Place. Helping these local entrepreneurs not only creates wealth, but more vibrant neighborhoods throughout our community.

Nexus i90: Beyond access to startup capital, new entrepreneurs often rely upon a network of other successful business leaders to navigate the early days of leading their company and for advice on how to accelerate their growth. However, many new business owners of color, or from less wealthy families, lack that network of resources. Nexus i90 addresses this gap by providing entrepreneurs with access to other business leaders via an integrated case management approach that identifies business needs and provides solutions. This places city entrepreneurs on equitable footing with their peers and helps all of us on the path to equity.



Create a New Americans Advisory Council

Rochester, like many cities, continues to see an influx of New Americans from various countries and cultures.

Nearly one in five Rochester residents speaks English as a second language, the most common first language being Spanish. Roughly 8.7% of Rochester's 2016 population was born abroad. In 2016, approximately 2,284 people had moved to the city of Rochester from outside the U.S. Rochester has also seen the growth of Bhutanese, Nepalese and Sudanese communities, among other immigrant groups moving here as part of resettlement programs.

As City government, we have done much to try to help our newest neighbors succeed. Our Neighborhood and Business Development Department has brought together various groups to secure funding to create housing education programs. Our Maplewood Library branch has become a central hub for our New Americans to ask questions and gain information about needed services and programs. We are dedicated to welcoming new people from every nation to Rochester!

Unfortunately, many of these efforts are ad-hoc and at-times, do not fully meet our newest Americans where they are in terms of respecting their skills and stations in life.



To meet this challenge, we will provide our newest Americans with a voice and adequate access to our City's leadership. The goal of establishing a New Americans Advisory Council (NAAC) is to improve communication among the traditional and emerging leadership of these communities, the service providers that assist them and City Hall.

The NAAC will build on existing efforts including the Rochester Committee on Refugee Resettlement, Mary's Place, Catholic Family Center, Refugees Helping Refugees and House of Refuge. By adding additional voices and City leadership to create direct dialogue with my office and City Council, we will be able to better meet the needs of our newest Americans.

Creating the New Americans Advisory Council will take a great deal of work, along with focused and dedicated effort. I have asked Bijaya Khadka to serve as its founding chair. He is charged with working with our various City departments and City Council to convene a NAAC working group that will develop and propose formal legislation to create a New Americans Advisory Council. Mr. Khadka has made helping our newest Americans central to his life. He has the knowledge, passion and credibility to lead this effort as part of our work to building equity.

The working group is a necessary step because the New Americans community is not a monolith, nor are the various groups and organizations that work to meet their needs. However, I have confidence that we can come together to create a Council that will honor our community's history as a leader in advancing human rights.





Create an “Arts Equity Fund” – 1% for the Arts to Support Diverse Voices

Creating a path to equity and recovery requires inspiration and reaching their hearts to create empathy and understanding. Public art is a powerful tool to bring us together and achieve this goal. We are a city committed to the arts and blessed with numerous and diverse artists. In fact, we have already supported many notable projects including:

Roc Paint, Peculiar Asphalt & Roc Music: nurture and train young artists while brightening our city with murals and music.

Numerous Concert Series: Party In The Park, Bands on the Bricks, CariFest, Gospel Jubilee and many more events featuring local musicians.

Cultural Festivals & Events: Puerto Rican Festival, Clarissa St. Reunion, Pride and Black Pride Festivals, Joseph Avenue Arts & Cultural Alliance to celebrate our shared heritage and diverse voices

Now, the Arts Equity Fund will build upon these successes to create a new, bold era of public art in Rochester.

We will commit 1% of the funding from every capital project for infrastructure that totals over \$1 million to the Arts Equity Fund. Based on our average capital spending since I took office, this will generate hundreds of thousands of dollars annually that will be used to fund the creation of art by local artists in every corner of our city.

The type of art will not be limited under this fund. Possibilities include public sculptures, performance art, murals, the written word – whatever inspires us to work together to achieve equity. This is critical to elevate artists and voices who have not been traditionally supported financially as another step on the path to equity.

To ensure management of the Arts Equity Fund and the achievement of these goals, I am proposing the creation of a City Arts Commission that will ultimately be charged with administering the fund and working with artists throughout Rochester. To create the commission, I have directed our Planning Office to engage a consultant to help us convene a broad section of our arts community to determine the structure of the commission.

Achieving equity and recovering together will not always be an easy process. It will not happen quickly, but with sustained, faithful and genuine effort. We will need continued inspiration that the arts can provide. That is why the Arts Equity Fund is essential.





Working Towards A More Sustainable Future – Equity Through Environmental Stewardship

The science regarding our changing climate is clear. Global warming due to actions of humankind is already raising temperatures worldwide and we see its affects throughout our planet: wildfires, coral reef decimation, increasing numbers of hurricanes and severe storms.

Rochester, to date, has been largely spared the most severe effects of our changing climate. Our geography, nestled next to Lake Ontario and the Finger Lakes, actually makes us a likely destination to weather many of the worst changes anticipated in the coming decades, if strong action is not taken to address climate change.

We cannot allow this fact to lessen our resolve to do our part to combat climate change and global warming. In fact, our access to water resources, like our pristine Candice and Hemlock lakes, creates a responsibility for us to act.

Community Choice Aggregation via Rochester Community Power

Our city is at the forefront of driving the adoption of renewable energy through the creation of Rochester Community Power (RCP). RCP is our community choice aggregation program to provide access to renewal electricity to city residents at lower rates than legacy electricity sources.

RCP is in the process of conducting its education and enrollment campaign throughout our city. I will continue to support its efforts to ensure our residents have the ability to improve our environment while reducing their utility bills.

The Success of the Office of Energy and Sustainability

Rochester is one of only 43 cities worldwide to be named an “A” city for its work combating climate change. We were recognized for our notable efforts, including our Sustainable Homes Rochester program, our expansive number of electric vehicle charging stations and our 2-MW solar farm located on the former Emerson St. landfill.



I'm proud of the work of our Office of Energy and Sustainability. However, our work is not done. Going forward, to help us achieve equity, I am empowering the office to pursue the following programs and initiatives to further our success in improving our environment:

- Enhanced education and outreach regarding existing resources for weatherization and energy efficiency to help our residents improve their homes and reduce their energy bills.
- Potentially requiring landlords to participate in energy efficiency programs for their income qualified tenants.
- Explore implementing a Home Energy Score program for real estate transactions.
- Installing solar panels as part of existing roof replacement programs where it is feasible.
- Continue to pursue energy efficiency requirements in as a factor in awarding affordable housing opportunities.
- Explore adoption of New York's Stretch Energy Code to lead the way in efficiency.
- Conduct energy benchmarking via case studies to inform energy policy improvements to increase energy efficiency and renewable adoption.

This aggressive green agenda will continue our leadership on this most critical of issues to ensure our community's more equitable future.

The new era of recovery and equity must involve our entire community. The Equity & Recovery Agenda, or ERA, is my sincere effort to create pathways to justice. I welcome the discussions and additional ideas that these proposals will inspire. I truly hope that my fellow elected officials, community and faith leaders and residents will embrace this opportunity.

My work, and our shared work, in achieving the ERA is just beginning. Yet, when we look back at where we started and what we have already achieved, it is clear that we can succeed. To do so, we will need to embrace the spirit of Rochester that has allowed us to reimagine and recreate ourselves since the beginnings of our great city.

We can achieve equity and recover together!
God bless you and all of Rochester!

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Lovely A. Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Mayor Lovely A. Warren
City of Rochester



City of Rochester, NY