

NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS:  
A CRITICAL LOOK AT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN ROCHESTER

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## ABSTRACT

In the last several decades, there has been a shift away from the central planning model in America. Reactions from the grassroots have emerged as citizens strive to address urban needs independently of planning bodies. However, many would argue that this is not the answer either.

Planning at the level of urban administration currently coexists in tension with planning at the grassroots level. Planning from the top is attempting to be more attentive to needs in the neighborhoods, as citizens have begun to acquire the energy and resources to lobby for change. Oftentimes, government-grassroots partnerships are forged to exploit the capacities of both entities in planning endeavors. However, this leads to the question of how this tension creates opportunities for improvements of social conditions, whether it contributes to the larger vision of enlarging the political capacity of a society, and which is the appropriate body to make a plan and implement it.

A government-grassroots partnership was attempted in the City of Rochester, through the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (NBN) program. The year 2006 marks the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the program. After 13 years of negotiations, consultation, community meetings, conflict, and lobbying, numerous milestones have been achieved. Through NBN, hundreds of neighborhood projects have come to fruition, while many others have broken ground. These projects include physical improvements, beautification projects, the construction of new schools and stores, better public services, and increased public safety measures. NBN also received awards for its successful neighborhood revitalization efforts, and is recognized as a model of best practices.

Many people in Rochester are happy with the achievements made through NBN. However, some believe that the process can be further modified for greater success. The recent election of a new mayor into the Rochester City administration has resulted in some uncertainty in the future of NBN – will the process continue as it, be modified, or go down in history as a pet project of the previous administration?

This thesis examines the NBN process to:

1. document the NBN process in Rochester an example of government-initiated grassroots-planning action that other city planning organizations can refer to;
2. place the era of NBN in the context of Rochester's history as a city of citizen action; and
3. explore NBN as Rochester's solution to the problem of the appropriate bodies to make a plan and implement it.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Adeline Kooi was born and raised in Singapore. She came to the United States to pursue higher education. Her discovery of the positive effects of civic participation in planning has inspired this study of Rochester's NBN process. Following this stint in the U.S., she will return home to Singapore to work at the Housing and Development Board where she hopes to make a difference in people's lives through public housing initiatives.

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## PREFACE

In recent years, American cities have begun to realize that the central planning model has not been able to provide the answer to urban problems. Instead, the option of government-grassroots partnerships has slowly begun to gain more favor from urban governments. According to William Peterman,

...the notion that government is the locus of urban policy formation has been replaced by the notion of governance and public-private coalition building. For urban planning this has meant a shift away from the planner as an expert and toward the planner as a facilitator of a consensus-driven participatory approach to decision-making.<sup>1</sup>

Researchers who study planning practices have found that the top down comprehensive planning approach has failed to be sensitive to diversity and change occurring on a micro level. Rohe and Gates write that the neighborhood is the basic building block for an operationally successful city:

The city is far from simply a collection of people and buildings. Rather it is a mosaic of distinct neighborhoods, each with its own character and reputation created by the characteristics of residents, housing types, ages and styles, and economic activities.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Peterman, "Advocacy vs. Collaboration: Comparing Inclusionary Community Planning Models," *Community Development Journal* 39, No. 3 (2004): 270.

<sup>2</sup> William M. Rohe and Lauren B. Gates, *Planning with Neighborhoods*. (USA: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 1.

In their research, they find that:

comprehensive planning ... has inherent limitations that restrict its ability to address the full range of urban problems facing American cities and this, in turn, has led to a general attitude among the public that planning is ineffectual.<sup>3</sup>

Rohe and Gates thus regard the neighborhood-based approach to planning, which involves neighborhood groups, as a solution to overcoming these limitations.<sup>4</sup>

However, in another study of planning practices, Needleman and Needleman note that community planning comes as somewhat of an antithesis to the conventional planning department,<sup>5</sup> because:

[the] planning department has traditionally assumed that planning is best done by trained professionals with a minimum of participation by amateurs. Community planning, on the other hand assumes that meaningful planning requires the participation of those affected by the plan, however unsophisticated their views may be.

As a result of this, community planning appears to be more fluid, sometimes more haphazard and certainly less organized. Needleman and Needleman find in their anthropological study that there are some challenges that urban planners face when they want to do participatory planning. They note that the community often misinterprets the

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<sup>3</sup> Rohe and Gates, 51

<sup>4</sup> Rohe and Gates, 51.

<sup>5</sup> Martin L. Needleman and Carolyn Emerson Needleman, *Guerrillas in the Bureaucracy: The Community Planning Experiment in the United States* (New York, Wiley and Sons, 1974), 45.

intentions of the community developers and it takes a long time to garner sufficient trust because the community assumes that all “planners are intimately connected with city government activities and therefore culpable for all unpopular acts by other city agencies and officials” and that “planners have full control over investment in the city and therefore withholding of funds can be attributed to their insensitivity to community needs”<sup>6</sup>.

Despite the practical problems that have to be overcome, the benefits derived from government-grassroots partnerships in planning are still considerable. More support for these partnerships is provided by Robert Putnam. In his study of institutional performance, he finds that:

...a high-performance democratic institution must be both responsive and effective: sensitive to the demands of its constituents and effective in using limited resources to address those demands.<sup>7</sup>

If the government does not play an active role in leading the participatory process, leaving it instead to other entities such as community organizers, independent non-profits, faith-based groups, university partners and the like, the government has failed to tap the benefits of social capital, and failed to align the interests of the citizens with the established goals of the larger community.

In a lecture, Henry Moore provided further elaboration about unused capacity in a community. This capacity lies in the five key elements of a community: The gifts of

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<sup>6</sup> Needleman and Needleman, 89.

<sup>7</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work – Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 9.

people, associations and congregations, social institutions, land and buildings, and the local economy or other forms of exchange. Of these, he has learnt from practical experience that when governments seek channels to reach out to the community, the most successful channel of communication is through associations - associations touch the lives of people in the community in a way that an institution is unable to, because associations work on the principles of care, consensus and citizenry, whereas institutions exercise top-down control, production and consumerism.<sup>8</sup>

Paul Davidoff makes the case the planners need to advocate for people (i.e. make sure that people's most basic needs and quality of life are accounted for), especially those who are marginalized in society. He argues,

The just demand for political and social equality ... requires the public to establish the bases for a society affording equal opportunity to all citizens [therefore emphasizing] the compelling need for intelligent planning, for specification of new social goals and the means for achieving them [and requires] a practice which openly invites political and social values to be examined and debated.<sup>9</sup>

C.B. Macpherson adds a philosophical dimension to the argument for equity. As a proponent for participatory democracy, he writes that a member of society will be developed to his full capacity in terms of civic engagement and become an agent of

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<sup>8</sup> Henry Moore, "Building Community Partnerships." Fall 2005 Colloquium Lecture at Cornell University Department of City and Regional Planning. 14 October 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Davidoff, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning", in *The City Reader*, 2nd Edition, edited by LeGates, Richard T. & Stout, Frederick. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 424.

change, *only* in a society which has systems in place for citizens of that society to take ownership of its progress, rather than simply being proud of its achievements.<sup>10</sup> To take ownership, citizens are encouraged to contribute towards the goal-setting and implementation process under the direction of an external facilitator and administrator. Macpherson further describes the relationship between political apathy, participation and inequality as a “vicious circle”, i.e. a feedback loop<sup>11</sup>.

There are clearly benefits that result from greater interaction between planners in government administration and grassroots participants. However, in what spheres can this greater interaction occur? In an article examining urban development, Randy Stoecker splits the urban redevelopment process into organizing and implementation.<sup>12</sup> He writes that these two actions should be borne by different organizations, because they are two specialized functions<sup>13</sup>. Yet another string of questions pertaining to the issue of government-grassroots interaction then arises:

- Who should bear the responsibility of organizing people to plan?
- Who should bear the responsibility of implementation?
- What is a suitable mix of government and grassroots input into the plan-making and plan-implementation process that will achieve a satisfactory outcome?

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<sup>10</sup> C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*. (Oxford University Press, 1977), 94-111.

<sup>11</sup> Macpherson, 102-103.

<sup>12</sup> Randy Stoecker, *The Community Development Corporation Model of Urban Redevelopment: A Political Economy Critique and an Alternative*. August 1996. <<http://comm-org.wisc.edu/papers96/cdc.html>> (12 December 2005)

<sup>13</sup> Stoecker.

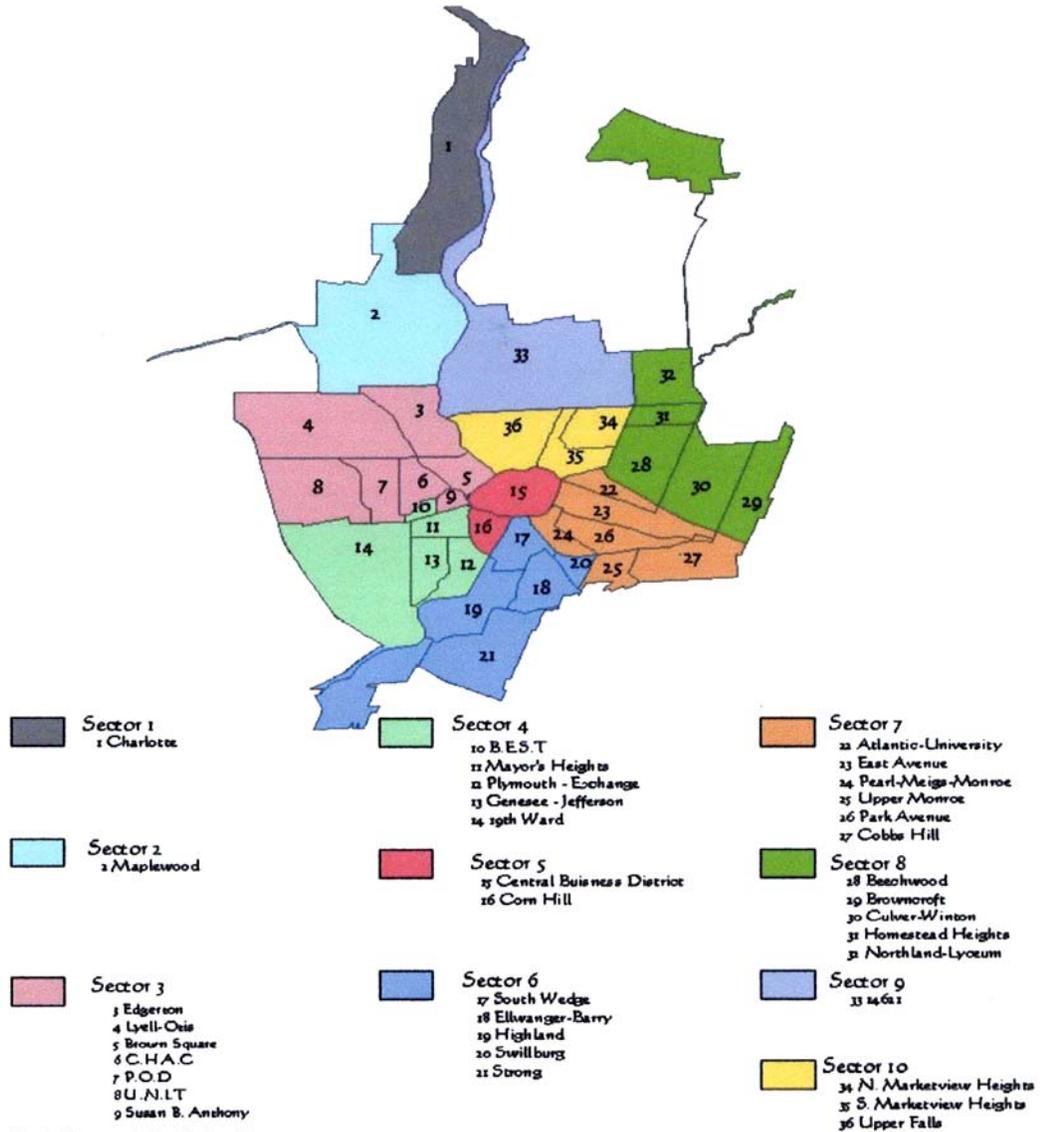
- What new sources of power and social capital will result from tapping the advantages of a government-grassroots partnership?

This thesis documents the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (NBN) process in Rochester. Its objective is to answer the above questions by investigating this government-initiated grassroots planning action process, and placing the era of NBN in the context of Rochester's history of citizen action.

# City of Rochester, New York

## Neighbors Building Neighborhoods

### NBN Sector Planning Areas



CHAPTER 1:  
STAGES OF NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS

In early 1994, the incoming Mayor William A. Johnson Jr. announced the implementation of the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods program in the City of Rochester. According to the press release by the City of Rochester prior to the launch of the initiative, Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (NBN) was described as “a citizen-based process designed to help city neighborhoods implement community planning and development projects”<sup>1</sup>. The official goal of this plan was “to establish and maintain stable, healthy and diverse neighborhoods which are developed and sustained by citizens.”<sup>2</sup>

**Inspiration and Early Support for the Program**

The earliest stages of the program can be traced back to the former Commissioner of Rochester’s Community Development Department, Tom Argust. Initially, it was put forth as an innovative idea while ex-Mayor Thomas P. Ryan was in charge of City Hall. Under the encouragement of Ryan, Argust worked with his deputy, Larry Stid, and a small team, to refine this idea and unfold the plan for implementation.

Community Program Planner from the City of Rochester, Tymothi Davis-Howard succinctly described NBN as being “birthed in the tail end of the Ryan administration ... but the Johnson administration raised it.”<sup>3</sup> For NBN to be successfully implemented, the

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<sup>1</sup> Press Release, “Reception set in City Hall.” *Democrat and Chronicle*. 19 June 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, “The NBN Planning Process”  
<<http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/dcd/NBN/history.cfm>> (Accessed 30 January 30 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Tymothi Davis-Howard, interview by author, telephone, 8 March 2006.

political support for it had to be strong, as city administrators needed to be willing to be open to the views of citizens, and flexible in making changes to accommodate the anticipated wealth of citizen input that would come out of citizen participation in NBN. Mayor Johnson's attitude was instrumental in shaping the government environment.

When he assumed his position as mayor in 1994, Johnson had big plans for the City of Rochester. He was motivated to bring about equal opportunity for the city's residents, and make improvements for daily living in Rochester. Johnson believed strongly in the strength of partnerships and participation in attaining progress, and noted the many advantages that lay within the Rochester's multitude of associations and grassroots groups. His respect for active citizenry is reflected in a State of the City address to the City of Rochester when he said:

Those stalwart citizens, blessed with faith and determination, are the true backbone of this community. They saw this for what it truly was: not one person's folly, but a long overdue victory for our community. This was truly about We, Not Me!!<sup>4</sup>

In all, Johnson was concerned about finding "metropolitan solutions without metropolitan government"<sup>5</sup> to achieve good neighborhoods, a healthy school system, regionalization, smart growth, sustainable communities, and better integration between

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<sup>4</sup> William A. Johnson Jr., 2005 State of the City Address. City of Rochester Website. <<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/index.cfm?id=683>> (Accessed 1 November 2005)

<sup>5</sup> Pierre Clavel, "Two Faces of Regionalism as a Civil Rights Issue", in *Economic Development in American Cities*, edited by Bennett, Michael & Giloth, Robert. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, forthcoming).

metropolitan areas and the suburbs.<sup>6</sup> Johnson was very taken by the idea of engaging residents and citizens and to work in a collaborative way with City Hall and he enthusiastically embraced the implementation of NBN as a means to plan the city. Johnson's governmental philosophy and support for citizen participation in the planning process was therefore one of the strong factors supporting Argust's launch of NBN. Johnson also said in an interview:

I think by and large it was Tom who was driving it, and very, very important, you had a commissioner who embraced that value. But I really think and Tom has agreed that if Mayor Ryan were still the mayor, that project would not have gotten as far because it wasn't that important to him. But it was important to me."<sup>7</sup>

There were other reasons fueling the need for more citizen participation in the planning process. First, the need to revise Rochester's outdated comprehensive plan (published in 1964) became more pressing. Because the plan was so old, it was necessary to update it to be more sensitive to modern demands. Furthermore, to qualify for more funding for urban development from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) scheme, cities needed to have comprehensive plans which were made with citizen input.

NBN also appeared to be the solution for City Hall's increasingly difficult task of funding neighborhood improvement projects in the city. Problems in the city budget had grown over the years due to decreased funding sources, tax revenues, while the need to

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<sup>6</sup> Various William A Johnson Jr. speeches

<sup>7</sup> William A. Johnson Jr, interview by Pierre Clavel, Rochester, NY, 21 December 2004.

urban revitalization grew more pressing. Over the years, cuts from the federal and state funding for city governments had impacted the City of Rochester. These cuts had made the provision of Rochester's services and the implementation of neighborhood maintenance and improvement projects challenging. For example, the CDBG funding provided by HUD in 1993 adjusted for inflation had decreased by 50% since 1983.<sup>8</sup> CDBG funding had always been a significant source of money to fund the Rochester's citywide improvement projects and provide some city services. But because it was slowly diminishing, Rochester was finding that they needed other means of raising money to fund development.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, the city's tax base was also shrinking due to the exodus of jobs from the city to other areas including the suburbs. The consistent decline of Rochester's population due to the flight from the urban center to the suburbs also caused the shrinkage of the city's income and property tax base. Those who remained were typically the urban poor who depended heavily on city aid (including food stamps, homeless shelters, welfare programs) to live. The large concentration of urban poor in Rochester placed a great strain on the city budget.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the rationale was that if the city provided more opportunities for citizen participation, people would be more invested in the city's future because they helped shape it. Potentially, NBN would provide the opportunity for citizens to take charge of their city to encourage those already in the city to remain. Improvements in

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<sup>8</sup> Betty Ciacchi, "City Groups Outgrow Grant Size", *Democrat and Chronicle*, 10 May 1993.

<sup>9</sup> This situation was not unique to Rochester. In fact other older American cities which were in dire need of urban revitalization were facing the same problem.

<sup>10</sup> Many older cities across America are also facing the same problem as inner cities become inhabited with urban poor, while wealthier taxpayers gravitate towards the residences in the suburbs. Refer to Appendix A for a statistical sketch of the City of Rochester and Monroe County in contrast with New York State.

citywide services, beautification of the city, and the promotion of lively and safe neighborhoods would also serve to attract new residents and businesses to the ailing city.<sup>11</sup>

Third, the city administration needed a new means of urban planning because its old methods were failing to meet the needs of residents and businesses. City Hall, too, found that the old methods of producing city plans independently of citizens, presenting them at public hearings only to find that the plans were overturned, was also inefficient. These aspects had to be improved. Vickie Bell, now Director of the Bureau of Neighborhood Initiatives, recalled that the old way of planning whereby the government provided money to neighborhood groups which independently applied and qualified for funding to execute neighborhood development projects was not effective any longer.<sup>12</sup> This is because neighborhood groups claimed that the government was not giving them sufficient funding for significant improvements while the government kept asking for tangible results before providing more funding. This disorganized, catch-22 process rendered efforts by all parties to improve the city less effective there was “no accountability, no responsibility, no relationships, no capacity building, and no response”<sup>13</sup>. The efforts to channel funding in a systematic manner and to maximize funding opportunities therefore needed to be stepped up.

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<sup>11</sup> Refer to Appendix B for a demographic profile of Rochester and the various sectors

<sup>12</sup> Vickie Bell, lecture at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, hosted by Prof. Kenneth Reardon. Tape recording, n.d.

<sup>13</sup> Bell, tape recording.

## **NBN - A New Planning Process for Rochester**

In response to the problems and complaints faced, City Hall decided to drastically change the plan-making process by planning at a neighborhood level according to a general vision with some established guidelines. Individual area-specific plans would then be woven into a larger comprehensive plan for the city. Community planners felt that this new means of planning would be more acceptable to the community because they would be more sensitive to, and more tailored to the community's needs. Argust was a strong supporter of public participation as a solution to some of the city's problems. He believed in giving the grassroots voice in the planning process because it was important to have "a city that can solve problems together"<sup>14</sup>. He thus conceptualized NBN as a long term means of achieving public participation in the plan-making process.

As the city planners explored how best to carry out the plan-making process in the city, they considered several variants of participatory planning and sought to refine them to fit the city's needs. Of all these processes explored by the city, it appeared that the Asset-Based Community Development model was the best fit for Rochester.<sup>15</sup>

This model was derived from research by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight at the Asset-Based Community Development Institute, Northwestern University. In their examination of troubled communities and decaying neighborhoods, Kretzmann and McKnight found that a successful way to revitalize these ailing communities is to tap into the existing capacity that lies within the communities' local institutions, citizens' associations and gifts (talents) of individuals.<sup>16</sup> This model

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<sup>14</sup> Tom Argust, interview by Pierre Clavel, Rochester, NY, 1 December 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Davis-Howard, interview.

<sup>16</sup> John. P. Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out – A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993), 1-7.

encouraged planners to focus on the potential opportunities a community possesses based on its local assets. The community must then leverage its resources to address the local, community-specific agenda for problem solving. To further expand the community's problem-solving capacity, the community must then build and leverage on new relationships between local residents, associations and institutions both within and outside of the community.<sup>17</sup> With community development conducted in a manner that is "asset-based, internally focused, [and] relationship driven"<sup>18</sup>, Kretzmann and McKnight theorized that people in the community would best know how to help themselves instead of relying on an external consultant to prescribe procedures, would be able to develop their skills to help themselves instead of becoming clients of external community developers, and would build up community spirit and strengthen the ties between people in the neighborhoods.<sup>19</sup>

Rochester's planners believed that the Asset-Based Community Development method for the NBN process was an attractive solution that would redirect the city away from its path of decline. They acknowledged that the city already possessed a network of neighborhood groups that were active across the city. From the government's standpoint, the grassroots always had a significant potential to contribute change into the city, useful

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<sup>17</sup> Anjy Tripathy. "Asset-Based Community Development" Fact Sheet for National Community Resources and Economic Development Conference. "Strengthening Communities: Enhancing Extension's Role" University Outreach and Extension, University of Missouri. An Asset Based Focus to Economic Development – Research Roundtable. 25 February 2002.

<sup>18</sup> Kretzmann and McKnight, 8.

<sup>19</sup> A case study of the practical application of the Asset-Based Community Development process exists. Savannah, GA is an Asset-Based Community Development Institute case study of a community that has successfully applied the process in its Grants for Blocks program. More information can be found in Henry Moore and Deborah Puntenney, *Leading by Stepping Back: A Guide for City Officials on Building Neighborhood Capacity*. (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1999.)

insight as to how to solve problems in the city, and also the strength to mobilize citizens to effect change.<sup>20</sup>

However, Argust observed that the formerly strong grassroots participation had begun to decline slightly as grassroots organizations were “getting into the middle age” and were beginning to be “burnt out” or “floundering because they are getting old and stodgy”.<sup>21</sup> He thus wanted this decline to be halted with the infusion of new energy and support for grassroots activities. As a result the city administration decided to intervene in an attempt to pull out the roots of mistrust and cynicism to reinvent things.<sup>22</sup> It envisioned that by revitalizing the city and opening up more communication channels between the government and the grassroots through NBN, the city’s quality of life would improve and Rochester would attract residents and businesses from the suburbs back to the city.

The NBN planning process (please refer to the timeline in Appendix 3) was officially introduced to the public by the Ryan administration in November 1993 and unveiled by the Johnson Administration in March 1994. At this stage of infancy, it was steered by the Community Development Commissioner Tom Argust, Deputy Community Development Commissioner Larry Stid, with input from other key community and business leaders.

NBN was carried out in several stages in order to unfold the program’s objectives of developing strategic action plans for each neighborhood, and build alliances for responsible local stewardship for the plans.<sup>23</sup> In the initial phases of NBN, planners from

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<sup>20</sup> Refer to Appendix C for a complete list of grassroots associations.

<sup>21</sup> Argust, interview by Clavel.

<sup>22</sup> Argust, interview by Clavel.

<sup>23</sup> Refer to Appendix D for a timeline of NBN.

the city's Community Development Department divided the city's 34 neighborhoods into ten sectors for planning purposes in February 1994.<sup>24</sup> These ten sectors were originally intended to be planning sectors and they bore the responsibility of carrying out the sector-wide planning process. Argust explained this in an interview, "A planning sector ... plans; it doesn't implement. And it [the planning sector] can go out of existence after it creates a plan."<sup>25</sup> In the same interview, Argust envisioned the planning process to be constantly renewing itself by having the planning sector periodically revise and review the plan after its implementation. The boundaries delineating each sector were initially drawn by the city planners and then presented to the neighborhoods for comment. Under the advice of community leaders, the sector boundaries were tweaked until people were finally happy with the sector that they belonged to and the people with whom they would work to create the sector plans.

Once the sectors were officially established, city planners recruited sector leaders as volunteer coordinators who would manage the NBN process within the each of the ten sectors. These leaders were drawn from the people who were neighborhood stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> All sectors established some form of organizational hierarchy to take charge of the NBN process occurring within their sector, and each group had its own unique structure depending on what worked best for the sector.

While the volunteers on the sector committees were in charge of moving the participatory planning process forward, the public was also invited to attend meetings and contribute ideas. City planners were always present at NBN meetings, and played the role

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<sup>24</sup> Refer to map on p. xiii for more information about sector boundaries.

<sup>25</sup> Argust, interview by Clavel.

<sup>26</sup> Sector stakeholders were typically regarded as people who were either living within the boundaries of the sector, neighborhood group leaders, business operators, or property owners within the sector's boundaries.

of resource personnel. They provided the organizational expertise that guided the participants in formulating ideas to improve their neighborhoods, facilitated meeting proceedings, and helped the participants formulate their ultimate vision for the physical surroundings and quality of life that each sector would ideally achieve.

Information analysis and skills-building were important in this first round of NBN. The city planners took steps to build organizing capacity within the neighborhood sectors through the NBN Institute, a city-sponsored educational and training program integrated into the NBN process to impart management skills and knowledge of community planning to sector leaders and other interested individuals. Through this program, participants were taught how to analyze demographics, and were given tools to help build their computer, administrative and information management skills. The NBN Institute instructed participants how to use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and zoning data to understand the conditions and resources within their sectors. The Institute's grassroots leadership programs exposed grassroots leaders to some skills that would help them work with and facilitate diverse groups, and better manage projects. The city planners also published a guidebook entitled *A Citizen's Guide to the Neighborhood Planning Process*. It outlines the "six planning phases, illustrates a variety of techniques for neighborhood planning, and provides helpful hints for groups completing tasks in the original NBN neighborhood planning process"<sup>27</sup>. This book became affectionately known as "The Cookbook" and is a vital guide for the sector leaders.

During the numerous sector meetings, stakeholders gathered together to brainstorm and plan for their sectors. They examined the data they had gathered,

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<sup>27</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, "The NBN Planning Process"  
<<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/dcd/NBN/planningguide.cfm>> (Accessed 30 January 2006)

provided views about current issues that the neighborhoods within the planning sectors were facing, identified what changes were needed, suggested how these might be possible, and ultimately envisioned how their sector could be in the future. These ideas were all recorded and used as input to publish the sector's planning document.

The first set of action plans and sector visions were finally published in October 1995, more than two years after NBN began. These plans defined the members of the sector, described the various communities that fell within the sector boundaries, spelt out each sector's vision, identified key issues raised by members, outlined the specific steps that the sector would take to address the issues, and provided a concrete notion of the physical outcome that could be expected from the actions taken. The main areas addressed in the plans included housing, economic development, public services, public safety, education, recreation, human services, and infrastructure improvements.<sup>28</sup> In all, the ten sector plans identified a total of 895 goals to be achieved.<sup>29</sup> The plans were then forwarded to the city planners who took charge in determining how to mobilize efforts and funding for the implementation of the goals identified in the plans.

### **Tangible Outcomes of Stage One**

Five identifiable outcomes were attributed to the publishing of the sector action plans. First, city planners used the ideas put forward in the ten sector plans to update the city's zoning code so that it would be more compatible with the goals outlined in the sector plans, and better accommodate the residents expressed needs.

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<sup>28</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods. Neighborhood Reports, 10 Volumes (Rochester, NY: Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Lara Becker, "Neighborhood Groups Redefine Power," *Democrat and Chronicle*, 7 January 2000, p.10A.

Secondly, the ten sector plans were vital in updating the city's comprehensive plan. Rochester's most recent master plan, entitled *Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan*, was another of city's initiatives that relied heavily on the mechanics of the NBN process. Commissioned by Mayor Johnson in June 2000, this plan was timely as the previous one was produced in 1964 and hence failed to address the city's then-current problems. The new plan aimed to develop the city based on "renaissance responsibility", "equal opportunity" and "community".<sup>30</sup> By knitting together the various visions and plans of the individual sectors, the new plan gave Rochester a new hope of being lifted out of the problems caused by its declining manufacturing industries. By relying on the sector plans to guide sector improvements, Rochester's envisioned renaissance focused on greater responsibility for the city's resources, creating new opportunities, and building better communities. It also addressed eleven campaigns which were identified through the NBN process: Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Education, Environmental Management, Housing, Human Services, Land Use/Zoning, Parks/Recreation/ Open Space, Public Infrastructure, Public Safety, and Transportation.<sup>31</sup>

The Renaissance Plan aimed to continue to rely on organized neighborhood-based planning as a means for Rochester to achieve its renaissance, because: "It is the policy of our city to engage the widest array of our citizens in the safety, upkeep and renewal of our neighborhoods and community, to provide opportunities for citizens to work together to plan for their collective future and to take actions to realize that future, to celebrate the positive aspects of community life and to support citizens taking responsibility for using

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<sup>30</sup> City of Rochester. *Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan* (Rochester NY: City of Rochester, 1999).

<sup>31</sup> Becker, "Neighborhood Groups Redefine Power".

these opportunities to enhance their community.”<sup>32</sup> The common goals of the ten sectors were also included as city-wide goals that would be attained by 2010, through the stewardship of grassroots groups.

Thirdly, some new city-wide initiatives were a result of the requests made in the first set of sector plans. For example, the City of Rochester collaborated with the Arts and Culture Council of Greater Rochester and Citibank to create the Culture Builds Communities Art Program because many sectors wanted more neighborhood beautification projects. The City also responded to the call to provide more city services in the neighborhoods by establishing six Neighborhood Empowerment Team (NET) offices. These offices were opened in the various neighborhoods in June 1997, and their location was determined with the consensus of the sector residents. At an annual cost of \$700,000, the NET offices bring the government closer to the people, and enable City Hall to better address local needs such as calls for police intervention, property inspection, nuisance complaints, and general consultation.<sup>33</sup>

The NET concept is:

“based on the notion that the best way of responding to neighborhood issues is by teaming residents with city staff to devise and achieve effective solutions, supported by the full resources of City Hall. This approach brings City

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<sup>32</sup> City of Rochester, *Rochester 2010: The Renaissance*,  
<[http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/mayor/r2010/c\\_campaign\\_one.cfm](http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/mayor/r2010/c_campaign_one.cfm)> (Accessed 14 January 2006)

<sup>33</sup> Mara D. Bellaby, “City Offices to Open in Six Neighborhoods,” *Times Union*, 18 December 1996.

government closer to you and your neighborhood so quality of life issues can be addressed more quickly and effectively.”<sup>34</sup>

From the NET offices, the city administration and the Rochester Police Department organized the Police and Citizens Together Against Crime (PAC-TAC) program as a response to the call for more crime prevention measures and public safety. Under this program, volunteers and a police officer patrol the street together on weekday evenings in groups of a minimum size of two. People say that NET has been successful in increasing the city administration’s responsiveness to citizen’s needs. Karyn Herman of Sector 3 provided an anecdote of drug dealers who used to gather at a particular large rock in her Sector. After some complaints to NET administrators, the rock was finally removed.<sup>35</sup>

Fourthly, people began to realize the significance of participation and more people were recruited to participate actively in the process and voice their concerns for their neighborhoods.<sup>36</sup> Even disaffected citizens who realized that their views being lost in a sea of feedback when they called up City Hall’s complaint phone line, recognized that participation in NBN was a means of effecting tangible change as they got to meet with city officials and provide input for the sector plans.<sup>37</sup> Official counts recorded that about 2000 people participated in this first round phase of the NBN process<sup>38</sup>, and their views were representative of the views of larger groups which had stakes in the neighborhoods within the sectors. In the process of taking stock of the state of their

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<sup>34</sup> City of Rochester, *About NET* <[http://cityofrochester.gov/mayor/NET/about\\_net.cfm](http://cityofrochester.gov/mayor/NET/about_net.cfm)> (Accessed 14 January 2006)

<sup>35</sup> Karyn Herman, interview by author, telephone, 4 April 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Joan Roby-Davison, interview by author, telephone, 10 March 2006.

<sup>37</sup> Herman, interview.

<sup>38</sup> Lara Becker. “Neighbors Program Takes Stock of Itself,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, n.d.(1997).

neighborhood resources, residents learned more about the true diversity, skills and organizational resources, and the actual physical inventory of each neighborhood in the sector area.

Fifthly, the creation of the sector plans served to galvanize the citizens and the city's organizational stakeholders into action, and provided the momentum for the plans to be executed. The implementation phase for the plans was allotted another three years after the planning phase, from 1996 to 1999. During this time, grassroots groups applied for grants to fund their projects and organized neighborhood-improvement efforts. Many partnerships were created in a bid to fulfill the goals outlined in the NBN plans. For example, the Rochester Gas and Electric Community Relations Team provided more staff liaison to sector committees to address energy conservation needs. The University of Rochester Alumni Association and the United Way Volunteer Office created a partnership network to better connect volunteers to sector groups.<sup>39</sup> The Rochester Area Community Foundation began to structure its funding efforts to better accommodate the needs of the sectors through the "NeighborGood" grant program which alternated its annual funding between Sectors 1-5 and 6-10. Eastman Kodak also sponsored several beautification campaigns.<sup>40</sup>

To facilitate the implementation process, city planners created an information management and feedback system which citizens used to report on their progress. This system was called the NBN NeighborLink Network, which comprised of the Information Management System, an electronic reporting system, and NeighborLink Chat sessions to

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<sup>39</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Progress Report – Paving a New Path to the Future* (Rochester, NY: Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, 1999).

<sup>40</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Progress Report – Opening New Doors ... Of Opportunities* (Rochester, NY: Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, 2000).

provide interactive participation among sector groups and the city administration<sup>41</sup>. City planners used this system to track activities, and make suggestions which could improve the process, simplify it, or provide supporting expertise for the sectors.

From 1996, when sectors began to implement their plans, to the end of 1999, 76% of the goals established during the first round of the NBN process were attained.<sup>42</sup> Mayor Johnson publicly applauded plans that had resulted in the commencement of the building of new schools, stores, street improvements and the creation of new neighborhood groups.<sup>43</sup> The successful efforts of the city in improving its quality of life were also recognized nationally. The organization Partners for Livable Communities named Rochester one of “America’s Most Livable” communities.<sup>44</sup>

## **Renewal of the NBN Process - NBN 2**

The results obtained from the first round of the NBN process were indeed heartening to the participants. After the three years allotted to the implementation of the first round of the NBN process ended, a new cycle of NBN began. This new cycle demonstrated Rochester’s commitment to the NBN process, and the possibility of its continuation as a “dynamic self-renewing process”<sup>45</sup>. Called NBN 2, the second round of NBN imposed more guidelines on the plan-making and updating process, so as to ensure that sectors established more realistic goals that could be achieved within a shorter, 18-month time frame. The plan update and amendment process began in July 1999.

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<sup>41</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *Neighbors Building Neighborhoods*, <<http://www.rochesternbn.com/dcd/NBN/whatisnei.cfm>> (Accessed 20 September 2005)

<sup>42</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *Neighbors Building Neighborhoods*.

<sup>43</sup> Becker, “Neighbors program takes stock of itself”.

<sup>44</sup> Haya El Nassar, “Rochester Among 4 Cities Deemed The ‘Most Livable’,” *USA Today*, 1 September 2000.

<sup>45</sup> Intergovernmental Solutions Program, *Rochester Revitalization Case History*, <<http://www.albany.edu/igsp/casehistories/rochesterhistory.htm>> (Accessed 1 March 2006).

The shortening of the timeframe from plan-revision to implementation differentiated NBN 2 from the previous round of NBN, because the city realized a more short-term planning and implementation process would be more sensitive and respond more quickly to changes in the sectors. For NBN 2, city planners published *A Citizen's Guide to the NBN 2 Update Process* which is a "step-by step instructional guide is used to assist Sector Committees and implementing partners in preparing NBN Sector Action Plan Amendments ... designed to provide planning, organizational tasks, techniques, sample formats and a variety of resources."<sup>46</sup> NBN 2 attempted to condense the planning process within a 6-month timeframe (July 1999 – December 1999) for the purposes of updating the existing plans.

Some of the new guidelines established served to focus the efforts of the sectors. In particular, sector committees had to set ten major goals and identify some strategies and activities to attain these goals. Sectors were asked to develop actual asset inventories, evaluate the effectiveness of their completed actions and decide whether to carry over, modify or abandon incomplete plans. Some of the preliminary ideas established in the first set of plans were also revisited and developed for further implementation according to the sector's vision. Sector leaders had to set clearer goals, strategies and activities, and were required to consult and negotiate with the relevant agencies and service providers whether the sector-proposed project was one that these agencies and service providers wanted to take on, and how much assistance they would be willing to provide.<sup>47</sup> Sectors had to identify the concrete resources that they would use to fulfill their goals.

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<sup>46</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods. "The NBN Planning Process" <<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/dcd/NBN/planningguide.cfm>> (Accessed 30 January 2006).

<sup>47</sup> Dana Miller, interview by author, Rochester, NY, 3 March 2006.

The measures were implemented to ensure the possibility of completing the goals set for NBN 2 was realistic. These measures would prevent complaints similar to that made by Bob Whiting, deputy commissioner of Rochester's Department of Parks and Human Services who was quoted in the *Democrat and Chronicle* saying:

During the first go-round, it was pretty much ad hoc. They [the residents] simply wrote the plans, decided what they would like from the city and submitted it to us. And we were in reactionary mode trying to deal with them.”<sup>48</sup>

To demonstrate its financial commitment to the sector committees, the city began to provide a sum of \$5000 per sector per year to cover meeting expenses, small projects, postage, photocopying, and secretarial duties for meetings. Other sources of financial commitment to the city came from new entities which recognized the success of NBN in and wanted to further contribute. In 2000, the Enterprise Foundation provided \$3,000,000 to the City of Rochester to help defray operating costs of neighborhood associations that had plans to meet the goals established in the NBN process. Much of this funding went towards new housing and community development non-profit corporations, and a small proportion went directly towards neighborhoods.<sup>49</sup>

Another new source of funding was the Rochester Community Development Collaborative (RCDC) which was launched in August 2000. Organized by The Enterprise Foundation, the fund comprised of grants and low-interest loans from The Enterprise Foundation, United Way of Greater Rochester, Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation,

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<sup>48</sup> Becker, “Neighborhood Groups Redefine Power”.

<sup>49</sup> Lara Becker, “City Given a Boost of \$3 Million,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 10 March 1999.

JPMorgan Chase, and Citigroup Foundation, HSBC, Rochester Gas and Electric, and The Bruner Foundation.<sup>50</sup> This was a unique initiative in Rochester, as “funders partnered long-term with a focus on strengthening a funded organization’s effectiveness by providing operating revenue and technical assistance”<sup>51</sup>. The RCDC provided a fixed amount of operating support for up to four years to four selected community organizations: NCS Community Development Corporation, Ibero American Development Corporation, North East Neighborhood Alliance with North East Block Club Alliance acting as the lead agency, and North East Area Development<sup>52</sup>. Additionally, the RCDC helped fund signature real estate projects either via a low-interest loan or grant, and provided organizational assessment help, and business plan development for the organizations to help them enhance their effectiveness and outreach impact. In a 2003 evaluation report, the Enterprise Foundation found that funders had successfully shared risk and reward, while funded organizations increased their real estate productivity, successfully implementing measures of neighborhood change. Presently, recommendations are being made to extend RCDC help to its existing funded-organizations, and to include new neighborhoods in its funding program.<sup>53</sup> In terms of financial return, the direct investment by the participating community development corporations for the previous two years produced more than a 26%<sup>54</sup> return as a result of new houses built and commercial development generated.

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<sup>50</sup> City of Rochester, “Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr. Joins Community and Business Leaders to Announce Funding for the Rochester Community Development Collaborative.” Press Release (October 27, 2003): <<http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/mayor/NewsReleases/index.cfm?release=1204>> (Accessed 12 December 2005).

<sup>51</sup> The Enterprise Foundation, *Rochester Community Development Collaborative Evaluation Report* (The Enterprise Foundation, May 2003).

<sup>52</sup> The Enterprise Foundation.

<sup>53</sup> The Enterprise Foundation.

<sup>54</sup> The Enterprise Foundation.

### **Support for Larger Projects – NBN 3**

NBN 3 began shortly after NBN 2 ended, and lasted for another 18 months from 2001 to 2003. Similar to NBN 2, the NBN 3 process measured the progress of the sectors, evaluated the relevance of established goals, explored new goals and actions to be undertaken, and updated sector plans and asset inventories. However, NBN 3 eventually took a different shape from NBN 2 as the city government had decided to commit some funding towards bigger projects that ten planning sectors wanted to undertake. The city administration realized that \$5,000 per year was not enough money to pay for major projects.<sup>55</sup>

At the end of 2000, prior to the beginning of the planning phase of NBN 3, the City of Rochester contributed new money towards NBN. This funding was intended to aid the implementation of economic development or physical improvement projects undertaken as a means to fulfill goals that met both NBN the Rochester 2010 Renaissance Plan objectives. By giving each sector committee \$100,000 per sector to spend on any improvement task that they deemed appropriate, the city demonstrated its renewed commitment to the NBN process, and its faith in the leadership and direction of the sector leaders. Mayor Johnson called this money “venture capital”. The funding was made available through the City of Rochester’s Sector Targeted Funding Initiative. To access the funding allocated to them, sectors were required “demonstrate the ability to leverage a dollar-for dollar match” in order to use this money allocated to them. The provision of this funding served to empower the sector groups, allowing them to exercise autonomy in decision-making to implement their neighborhood plans.<sup>56</sup> Sectors then had to propose

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<sup>55</sup> Dana Miller, interview.

<sup>56</sup> Lara Becker, “City Allots Neighborhood Funds,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 6 December 2000.

projects which would yield tangible “bricks and mortar” outcomes. In order to do this, sectors had to devote time to devise a process to ensure that the money was spent in a fair and equitable manner that addressed the majority needs of the sector.<sup>57</sup>

Each of the ten sectors focused their spending of this grant money on different aspects of their plans which would help them best address their unique problems. As such, the course of action and the new assets created within each sector differed widely. Different sectors had different aspects of quality of life that they wanted to focus on. To date, the spending of this money has varied between the sectors. Some sectors have spent most of their \$100,000 allocated, while others are still in the process of finding suitable projects and securing matching grant funding.

#### **NBN 4 and the Situation in 2006**

As at March 2006, the NBN process was well into its fourth round, which, very much similar to NBN 2 and NBN 3, called for the updating of plans with a smaller set of goals, and a stronger focus on the goals that can actually be accomplished. The difference between NBN 4 and its predecessors, according to sector leaders, was that NBN 4 is a process of a significantly smaller scale<sup>58</sup>. Its reduced set of goals, enabled it to be more focused on the tasks that could be realistically accomplished within the NBN 4 timeframe, given the neighborhood assets and available funding. It appeared that during the time of NBN 4, the project-implementation realm of the NBN program was receiving much more attention from the sector volunteers and service providers. NBN 4, according

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<sup>57</sup> Dana Miller, interview.

<sup>58</sup> Miller, Roby-Davison interviews.

to city planners, was to plan the NBN Participatory Evaluation Process which would be used to examine the current state of NBN and determine its future.<sup>59</sup>

At the beginning of 2006, an interim report of the NBN program was submitted to the newly elected Mayor Robert Duffy. This report was part of set of reports made by Duffy's Transition Team to help in the city's adjustment from the Johnson administration to the Duffy administration. It identified some of the current problems of the NBN process, namely the uneven administering process in the 10 sectors, the lack of "authentic inclusion of neighborhood residents and stakeholders", improper updating and amending of plans, and no measurement of success and accountability through external evaluation and auditing of the NBN process.<sup>60</sup> According to the Bureau of Neighborhood Initiatives, a complete evaluation of the NBN program was scheduled to follow shortly.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Bureau of Neighborhood Initiatives, "NBN Update Process Time Line," Facsimile, 4 April 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Subcommittee, *Robert Duffy Mayoral Transition Housing and Neighborhoods Transition Sub-committee Draft Report*.  
<<http://thefirst100days.cityofrochester.gov/Main/docs/Mayor/Transition/HousingAndNeighborhoods.pdf>>  
(Accessed 25 February 2006).

<sup>61</sup> Davis-Howard, interview.

## CHAPTER 2: CITIZEN PERSPECTIVES OF NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS

The implementation of NBN in the City of Rochester yielded different reactions from Rochester citizens at different stages of the process. The outcomes for each sector differed depending on the amount of existing activism in its neighborhoods and the socioeconomic status of its neighborhoods. The level at which the people were participating in the NBN process (e.g. city planner, community organizer, sector participant etc.) also influenced their experiences. Along the way, events and actions occurred that further shaped the way that people regarded their neighborhoods, the neighborhood organizations, the city governments, their ability to contribute, and the effectiveness of the overall NBN process which had unfolded.

### **Round One of the Plan-Making Process**

The concepts and procedures outlined in the NBN program attracted different reactions from different members of the community when the process was launched. To the government, NBN appeared to be the new driver that would allow for the smooth creation of plans. This was because city planners were beginning to face mounting challenges from grassroots groups who were often not agreeable to plans put forward by City Hall for their consultation. NBN was therefore the potential solution for the elimination of the frustration amidst planners at their failed attempts to make a plan that was supported by general consensus.<sup>1</sup> By creating a bottom up process driven by sector volunteers, the city also managed to find a viable connection that allowed it to partner

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<sup>1</sup> Argust, interview by Clavel.

with the traditional neighborhood associations, neighborhood preservation corporations, faith-based groups, and local businesses.<sup>2</sup> The NBN process paved an avenue for Rochester's citizens to engage with the government, and be empowered to influence the shaping of the city's progress.<sup>3</sup>

There were mixed reactions from the sector participants of NBN. Some believed that NBN was a welcome change in the city. Executive Director of the South Wedge Planning Council, Dan Buyer commented that:

... city government as a whole has become more accessible ... I think what NBN did was that it institutionalized the notion that regular government civil service employees need to be accessible to the public. It opened up more of city hall to the community and for community city participation.<sup>4</sup>

Joan Roby-Davison, Director of Group 14621 Neighborhood Association also echoed this sentiment:

In some parts of the city, there was virtually no contact with city hall prior to NBN. This particular neighborhood (Sector 9), we've always been a strong voice for the neighborhood residents but there are parts of the city where they were not getting the level of assistance or support that they got with NBN.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Davis-Howard, interview.

<sup>3</sup> Davis-Howard, interview

<sup>4</sup> Dan Buyer, interview by author, telephone, 1 March 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Roby-Davison, interview.

Many neighborhood association leaders also believed NBN promoted the stature of community involvement. John DeMott, active citizen in the 19<sup>th</sup> Ward Community Association and part-time employee of Sector 4 CDC, reflected on this in an interview:

We have been able to do a number of things that would have been more difficult without NBN. I think NBN legitimized community involvement. We can [have] community involvement with or without NBN in our neighborhood but NBN gave it a legitimate place in city government... NBN gave us the stamp of approval. If we wanted to have a community meeting, we would have had it anyway, but NBN gave the approval that it wasn't only a community initiative, but the city government was fostering and sponsoring and even in some cases, funding it.<sup>6</sup>

Other communities however, were unhappy with the immense cooperation needed to make NBN work at a sector level. This is because sectors were comprised of anywhere from one to several traditional neighborhoods, and many of these individual neighborhoods were used to working for their own interests, and only knew how to cater best to their constituents. Some neighborhoods were also used to working with their existing police divisions, neighborhood partners and city administrators, and were obliged to change these old working arrangements, because these personnel were now assigned on a per-sector basis.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> John DeMott, interview by author, telephone, 28 February 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Herman, interview.

Additionally, some sectors, such as Sector 1 and Sector 2, were homogeneous as one neighborhood and were able to start off from a common base, while other sectors, such as Sector 3 which had 7 small neighborhoods, had to devise means for the different interests, ethnicities and socioeconomic groups to come together. In one neighborhood report, Dan Hoffman, the Sector Three Convener wrote:

As a result of the Neighborhood Planning Process, a cultural change has begun to take place in Sector 3. The process brought together individuals/organizations, with past experiences with the city, who have never worked before... The initial period of overcoming suspicion and mistrust has grown, painfully slow, to a period of comfort and credibility amongst members, forming a fragile commitment to go forward. Even then the movement forward was dotted with periods of discourtesy and hostility between members.<sup>8</sup>

Roby-Davison, was previously active in the NBN process in Sector 8 before she moved to a different job scope in Sector 9,<sup>9</sup> also echoed that sectors that were comprised of more neighborhoods had some initial teething problems. She said:

The different neighborhoods had different priorities and concerns. So to take four, five, or six different neighborhoods and try to come up with a plan that speaks to all of them is really difficult. And that was one of the problems there, as

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<sup>8</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *Sector 3: A Place where Generations Grow – Come Grow with Us* (Rochester NY: Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> Prior to her appointment at Group 14621(Sector 9) in January 1998, Roby-Davison worked with another neighborhood group in Sector 8

I recall. Some neighborhoods felt that it only focused on the higher poverty, higher crime areas and their area was not bad enough to be included. So it's a balancing act you know. You have to keep the strong neighborhoods strong while improving the challenged neighborhoods. But when they're all in the same sector it gets complicated.<sup>10</sup>

However she also noted that perhaps the small neighborhoods working together to effect change on a larger scale saw more immediate benefits from the start – having so many small groups banding together as a sector to make their needs known enabled these residents' voices to be amplified.

Sector 4 Common Council Chairperson, Dana Miller, provided further insight into the challenge at hand to find common ground for the sector which was comprised of several neighborhoods.<sup>11</sup> He explained that Sector 4's solution to ensuring that the needs of the sector's stakeholders were represented in the plan-making process was to continually encourage participation from the different interests. There were also initial "turf battles" because representatives could not agree on what plan best catered to the different socio-economic groups without favoritism.<sup>12</sup>

The initial results of the early stages of the brainstorming process were very positive for the Rochester community. These addressed the concerns of citizens which included housing, economic development, public services, public safety, education,

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<sup>10</sup> Roby-Davison, interview.

<sup>11</sup> Miller, interview.

<sup>12</sup> In the end, however, Sector 4 eventually produced its action plan which captured the assets that were shared between the neighborhoods, and outlined the common improvements that all the neighborhoods wanted.

recreation, human services, and infrastructure improvements.<sup>13</sup> In the brainstorming rounds, more than 1400 different ideas were generated by the ten different neighborhoods collectively, and people were surprised and energized by these findings.<sup>14</sup> These ideas were eventually whittled down to the 895 goals that were published in the ten sector reports.<sup>15</sup> Many committed residents who wanted to embark on improvement tasks were also found, and sector council leaders were very encouraged by the sustained commitment from the neighborhood for the visioning and planning process.

### **The Plan-Implementation Stage**

After the ten sectors published their plans in October 1995, the implementation phase began in 1996. There was much confusion regarding who would be responsible for this stage of NBN. City Hall planners believed that because NBN was designed as an empowerment initiative that helped the community recognize and mobilize its internal assets, the project implementation process should also be “driven by residents”, because “when you need something, you ought to be looking within your own community”, and that “city hall should be seen as the last resort”.<sup>16</sup> However, NBN participants disagreed.

NBN sector leaders recognized that the city administration had made the initial assumption that plan-implementation would be naturally carried out by the residents since the residents had gone through the trouble of making it.<sup>17</sup> The leaders felt that this was a “big point of contention”, and felt that the city administration was over-optimistic

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<sup>13</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Reports.

<sup>14</sup> Bell, lecture.

<sup>15</sup> Becker, “Neighborhood Groups Redefine Power”.

<sup>16</sup> Davis-Howard, interview.

<sup>17</sup> Miller, interview.

about the capacity of the grassroots to implement their plan, and was also abandoning its traditional paternalistic role. Said Joan Roby-Davison of Sector 9's experience:

... people who [came] together to share their vision recognized that they didn't have the tools and resources to implement, all of a sudden [needed] to find a way to implement all these plans, which is really a different function. And so that was where the first breakdown began when it shifted from a pure planning and neighborhood participation process to taking the plan that they had been told would be implemented by the city and agencies and groups of people working specifically to do implementation, the sector chairs were told ok now you're responsible for making sure that the plans get implemented. And that had not been clear and some people said, I can't do that – they work full time jobs, they're really asked to take on a lot of responsibility.<sup>18</sup>

The sectors eventually recognized and accepted the limitations of City Hall's budget and scheduling. After considering the two options that faced them – either waiting for City Hall to complete the tasks as it found the opportunity to do so, or carrying out their plans independently – the sectors chose to take matters into their own hands.<sup>19</sup> Sector committees then started seeking independent funding and windows of opportunity to carry out the tasks that mattered most to them. This posed additional problems for Rochester's city planners. Democrat and Chronicle reporter, Lara Becker noted that the sector residents believed that they had a role in the process of government. For example,

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<sup>18</sup> Roby-Davison, interview.

<sup>19</sup> Miller, interview.

when the owner of Monroe Theater, a historic 1929 building, threatened to demolish the building, Sector 7 residents assumed that the city would step in to prevent the demolition in order to fulfill their NBN plan to convert it into a community stage. Citizens further presumed that the city budget would have some funds to help renovate the building and the power to acquire it from its owner.<sup>20</sup> These assumptions proved wrong, leading to the conclusion that the distinction of the roles of city and citizens needed to be better defined for future effectiveness.

Despite these initial problems, the sectors credited city hall for becoming more flexible in accommodating the needs of the neighborhoods. Dana Miller from Sector 4 said, “To the City’s credit, it did not totally wash its hands clean.”<sup>21</sup> He then cited some examples of how City Hall accommodated the needs of the neighborhoods that were expressed in the plan. Included in these were: City Hall modified the way it budgeted and changed the way its departments worked; actions taken by city hall and other public service providers were done in tandem with the plans, and the money spent on city maintenance was spent to better meet the guidelines outlined by the plans; the city redirected some of its funding based on the suggestions included in the plans.

In the plan-implementation stage, sectors were by and large left to their own devices as to how the sector plans were to be implemented and what they would achieve first. It can be said that the plan-implementation stage began after the publication of the 1996 NBN sector plans, and has continued until now. This is because sectors keep finding new projects to undertake, or the bigger projects that the sectors wanted to accomplish simply took a long time to carry out. The plan-implementation aspect of NBN

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<sup>20</sup> Becker, “Neighborhood Groups Redefine Power”.

<sup>21</sup> Miller, interview.

therefore appeared to be on-going process with the different rounds of the NBN planning and updating process (NBN 2, NBN 3 ...) superimposed.

### **Some Achievements**

NBN has enabled the success of many projects citywide, which include economic development initiatives, neighborhood beautification, and facilities upgrading. For example, Sector 8 rehabilitated a former theater and bowling alley into a childcare center and community stage called Dazzle Theater. Sector 4 constructed a community coffee shop called Urban Brew that would return profits made directly to the sector's community. In another example, Sector 10 wanted to improve its food supply for the impoverished in the sector. To do this, they tried to attract more partnerships with food-based businesses. The Greater Rochester Urban Bounty (GRUB) program was created in 1999 and acquired land to operate community gardens to increase the access of fresh produce in the sector.<sup>22</sup> Another successful example is ARTWalk. ARTWalk is an outdoor museum created in Sector 7 as one of the sector's neighborhood beautification initiatives. This physical infrastructure improvement project used funding from the Sector Targeted Funding Initiative, with matching donations from Senator James Alesi, the Memorial Art Gallery, Citibank, Arts and Culture for Greater Rochester, and Gleason Works.<sup>23</sup> Today, the project is an attractive gathering space for sector residents, and a unique venue for community arts activities.

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<sup>22</sup> Greater Rochester Urban Bounty, *About Us: Who We Are?*  
<<http://www.grubrochester.com/org/about/index.php>> (Accessed 15 April 2006).

<sup>23</sup> ARTWalk. Website <<http://www.rochesterartwalk.org/>> (Accessed 15 April 2006).

#### **Example of NBN Plan Implementation in Sector 4**

To better understand the intricacies of how NBN was executed at a sector level, Sector 4's process was examined. Sector 4 is located in the southwest region of the City of Rochester. The sector's boundaries are Genesee Valley Park to the south, the Erie Canal to the West, Plymouth Avenue to the East, and Interstate 490 to the North. Sector 4 is also connected to the University of Rochester campus across the bridge. Sector 4 is neither the poorest nor richest sector, but its historically unique as it is home to several old community associations including the politically active Nineteenth Ward Community Association, one of the oldest neighborhood associations in Rochester and in the country.<sup>24</sup>

Sector 4's constituents are largely African American, comprise of families and about a quarter of its residents live below the poverty level (Refer to Appendix 2). Organizational stakeholders in the community include Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation, Chase Bank, Action for a Better Community (ABC), Unity Health (group operates St. Mary's Hospital), and the University of Rochester (about 800 faculty and 800 students living in neighborhood).

The sector's leadership for the NBN planning process was borne by the Sector 4 Southwest Common Council, which was specially created to carry out the tasks outlined in the NBN process. This council comprised representatives from the five neighborhood associations of southwest Rochester. These five neighborhood associations were: Bullshead neighbors Eager to Stand Together (BEST), Mayor's Heights, Nineteenth Ward Community Association, Plymouth Exchange Neighborhood Association (PLEX),

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<sup>24</sup> Lara Becker Liu and Rick Armon, "City Revels in its Diverse Neighborhoods," *Democrat and Chronicle*, 1 May 2005.

and South West Area Neighborhood Association (SWAN). These associations had long played an active role to advocate for change and improvements to the quality of life in their respective neighborhoods.

Similar to the other sectors, Sector 4 tasked itself with many ambitious goals to revitalize the sector. However, because of its clarity of vision and the resources available to undertake projects, Sector 4 has been one of the more successful sectors in implementing change, and has embarked on several major economic development and property revitalization projects that have changed the urban landscape of Rochester. These projects include the \$28 million housing project at Plymouth-Exchange to renovate and build 224 new housing units<sup>25</sup>, the Genesee Street Revitalization project, and the innovative James Madison School of Excellence-Southwest Community Center project. Sector 4 also took advantage of the NBN process to fund and begin construction for the Brooks Landing and Brooks Village commercial, retail and residential development projects which had existed only as plans and visions since 1983.

Sector 4, like many other sectors, initially assumed that if projects were featured in the sector's NBN plan, they would be supported by City Hall both financially and politically. In an interview, Sector 4 Common Council Chairperson, Dana Miller, recalled that after the Common Council had submitted and published their plans, there was a buoyant expectation that money and other support would finally be poured in to support the residents' desire to improve their neighborhoods. However, when the sector leaders finally realized that City Hall did not have currently available funds, they examined their remaining choices – either wait passively and indefinitely for grants from City Hall to be

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<sup>25</sup> Rick Armon, "New Housing Begins at Plymouth-Exchange" *Democrat and Chronicle*, 4 May 2005, <<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050504/NEWS01/505040325/-1/ARCHIVE4>>

provided, or rely on the efforts of sector volunteers and other service providers to finance and the projects outlined in the sector plan.<sup>26</sup>

As a result, the Sector 4 Common Council began raising its own money to fund the tasks that it sought to undertake. For example, the circulation of a free newsletter for Sector 4 residents was considered a small but valuable task. Using funding and donations that were raised by the Sector 4 Common Council, a periodic newsletter was eventually published to provide a means for conveying the forth coming changes to be taking place in within the sector, advertise neighborhood-improvement and grant opportunities, seek feedback from residents, and help neighborhood businesses attract more users for their services.

The Sector 4 Common Council also continually looked for opportunities to implement their plans. When the school board announced that it wanted to build a new middle school, Sector 4 leaders immediately proposed that the school to be built in their neighborhood in accordance with their action plan. The school board also allowed Sector 4 neighbors to have a say in the architectural design, location, and name of the school. The school was finally called the James A. Madison School of Excellence. Sector 4 leaders were also given a say in how the school was to be staffed, and contributed their views during the interview process of the new principal.

To enhance the value of the school, and capitalize on another funding opportunity, the Sector 4 Common Council also proposed that a community center be built next to the school. The grant for \$26 million was provided by a city group seeking to build a community center in Sector 4. Dana Miller believes that because the community center was built in conjunction with the NBN plan, Sector 4 was given the chance to pick the

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<sup>26</sup> Miller, interview.

location, and eventually run it by themselves without having to engage an external service provider. Currently the Southwest Community Center is 10,000 square feet in area, and provides key social, recreational and support services for the residents.<sup>27</sup> Building the school and community center side by side has meant that there is efficient use of the built space and funding due to shared facilities. The close proximity of both entities to each other and the general good location, have ensured that strong ties exist between the community and the school.

Sector 4 also used other creative methods to secure more money for its projects. The Common Council recognized that it could not effectively tap into all available funding. It therefore decided to set up Sector 4 Community Development Corporation (Sector 4 CDC) in 1997. As an entity that could reap the legal and financial benefits of the 501(c)(3) title, Sector 4 CDC was the official economic entity that carried out the economic plans of the sector. Some members of the Sector 4 Common Council sat, and continue to sit, on the board of the CDC to provide direction for the CDC's projects.

The establishment of the CDC was rewarded when Sector 4 CDC became the recipient of several business grants and deals in order to fund its development efforts. For example, the CDC received a contract from the city to organize the Genesee Corridor Business Association. The CDC received from the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation \$90,000 in 1998, and \$40,000 in 1999. In 1999, it was given a new home by the Unity Health Care group in the basement of the St. Mary's Hospital along Genesee Street. In 2003, Sector 4 CDC finally joined the Rochester Community Development Collaborative (RCDC) to receive grant funding of \$75,000 for 3 years to cover its operation and

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<sup>27</sup> Miller, interview.

administrative costs.<sup>28</sup> The capturing of these grants would not have been possible without the setting up of the CDC as a separate and official entity because volunteer groups of people were not recognized as possible recipients of many types of funding available for neighborhood improvement activities.

The concrete achievements of Sector 4 CDC in carrying out the NBN plans published by the Sector 4 Common Council have also been significant. John DeMott, who works at the CDC, described the Sector 4 area as “continually improving in a visual way” due to the NBN efforts.<sup>29</sup> Through the CDC, Genesee Street is in the process of being revitalized. The renovation of run-down houses, and store fronts has increased the attractiveness of the street. The CDC sought expertise from universities including Cornell University and the University of Rochester to help bring the revitalization goals for Genesee Street to fruition. Using the urban plans and business studies which students helped to create for the street, the CDC is now busy working with business owners and residents, and provides some expertise and funding for their improvement projects.

Another Sector 4 project which was successfully initiated through NBN is the development of the Brooks Landing project. The idea to develop Brooks Landing area was born in 1983 as part of the plan to develop the entire Genesee River Corridor into the downtown, although discussion of the project dates back to the 1970s.<sup>30</sup> People realized that the development of Brooks Landing would play a big role in improving people’s perspectives of the area and part of this plan was to build a footbridge connecting the

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<sup>28</sup> Sector 4 CDC. Website. <<http://www.sector4cdc.org/>> (Accessed 11 March 2006).

<sup>29</sup> DeMott, interview.

<sup>30</sup> Brian Sharp, “Riverfront Hotel Gets Rolling – 2006 Opening Set for 5-Story Building at Brooks Landing,” *Rochester Business Journal*, 11 November, 2005.

University of Rochester Campus to the 19<sup>th</sup> Ward.<sup>31</sup> The Brooks Landing project, after its eventual completion, was expected to help improve the 19<sup>th</sup> Ward neighborhood's relations with the University of Rochester and attract more students off campus and into the city's neighborhoods. Although over 800 students and over 800 faculty<sup>32</sup> live in the Historic Nineteenth Ward neighborhood which is a short walk across the footbridge connecting the neighborhood with the University, the impression of the neighborhood is generally poor. The current situation as described in the *Rochester City Newspaper* was made especially clear: "You'll hear 'It's the ghetto. Don't go over there. You'll get robbed,'" says Laura Porterfield, a UR freshman. She also says that when first-years arrived on campus, juniors and seniors warned them against venturing into the Nineteenth Ward.<sup>33</sup> Improving the neighborhood would help to raise the value of the surrounding properties. This is important because values of real estate property in the City of Rochester are significantly lower than comparable properties located the suburbs<sup>34</sup>.

The Brooks Landing project was incorporated into the Sector 4 NBN action plan right from the beginning when the 1996 plan was published. According to John DeMott who is currently in charge of Sector 4's involvement with the Brook's Landing project, NBN possibly helped to increase the participation of neighborhood residents in the plans for the project. He mentioned that community participation would have been sought regardless of whether NBN was in place, but because of the project was supported

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas Paris, "Why is there a bridge from the Freshman Quad to the 19th Ward?" *Campus TimesOnline*, 8 November 2001, <<http://www.campustimes.org/media/paper371/news/2001/11/08/Features/Ask-Us-142704.shtml?norewrite&sourcedomain=www.campustimes.org>> (Accessed 12 March 2006).

<sup>32</sup> Matt Majarian, "Landing Project Begins" *Campus Times Online*, 3 November 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Erica Curtis, "This Side of the Genesee," *City Newspaper Online*, 16 April 2003, <<http://www.rochester-citynews.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A1850>> (Accessed 11 March 2006)

<sup>34</sup> According to Dana Miller, one can purchase a substantial single family house in a decent neighborhood in the City for as little as \$60,000. A comparable property in the suburbs would cost about three times more.

through NBN, a city hall sanctioned program, the apparently official nature of the design charettes and public meetings may have encouraged more serious participation.<sup>35</sup> The Brooks Landing project also secured direct state and federal funding because it was a project created with community involvement (i.e. through the NBN process) - \$500,000 was provided by federal representative, Louise Slaughter, while City Councilman, Adam McFadden, secured \$407,000 from the state government.<sup>36</sup>

The community's involvement in the Brooks Landing project design phase allowed it to acquire an economic stake in the \$18 million project, some of which is slated for completion by the end of 2006. Therefore, it was decided that if the community owned a business, it could take the earnings from the business and channel it back to serve the community. Finally, it was decided a coffee shop named Urban Brew would be owned and managed by Sector 4 CDC. The CDC would then be responsible for taking the earnings of the shop and using it for its sector-wide development projects. Because the project was developed under a sector consensus, and it would serve to benefit the sector's residents, it was well-placed to receive a proportion of the \$100,000 matching grant provided by City Hall to Sector 4 in 2000. In fact, most of the Sector 4's allocated \$100,000 of funding was eventually captured by this project, to grants from other sources for the project. These grants included \$50,000 secured by New York State Senator Joseph E. Robach and \$40,000 from the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation<sup>37</sup> and more money from the REALTORS Charitable Foundation and other organizations. Dana Miller

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<sup>35</sup> DeMott, interview.

<sup>36</sup> Howard J. Engle, "A Report to the Community – Councilman Adam McFadden Sets Precedent Via Public Presentation to the Community that he Represents", *Rochester IndyMedia*, 4 April, 2005. <<http://rochester.indymedia.org/feature/display/3579/index.php>> (Accessed 11 March 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation, *2004 Annual Report*. Website, <[http://www.dmjf.org/annual\\_2004\\_full.htm](http://www.dmjf.org/annual_2004_full.htm)> (Accessed 7 March 2006).

believed that securing Sector 4 CDC's stake in the Brooks Landing development was vital success for the sector – the office and retail building and the extended-stay hotel property that were slated for construction would eventually be owned by people outside of the community who might not be willing to contribute some earnings towards greater community-wide improvements.<sup>38</sup>

### **Later NBN Plans – The Effects of Smaller Plans and Reduced Time for Implementation**

The subsequent plans made after the year 2000 – NBN 2, NBN 3 and NBN 4 – were significantly smaller than those established in 1996. Some people viewed this as a step for the plan-making process to become more realistic, and more adaptive to the rapid changes that were taking place in the city.<sup>39</sup> By setting more stringent measures on the plan-making efforts of the sectors, city hall planners could ensure that more of the plans would come to fruition within a shorter time frame.

Others, however, viewed the increased restrictions as unnecessary obstacles. Joan Roby-Davison of Sector 9 expressed the frustration of the implementing agencies at the smaller scale of the plans. She noted that “the plans were correspondingly much weaker” because of the fewer objectives, the restricted number of strategies to achieve the goals, and fewer initiatives established. Because of the abbreviated plans, she believed that the instructions laid out by the plans became “very fuzzy”. It was difficult for community partners and neighborhood associations to determine exactly what to do, as they were unsure of the official procedures required in carrying out the tasks, and they did not have a

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<sup>38</sup> Miller, interview.

<sup>39</sup> Davis-Howard, interview.

concrete notion of the envisioned outcomes.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Roby-Davison pointed out that because “the leaders that were elected by the group were pressured by the city to put together a restricted plan, it became very difficult to have a meaningful plan done in such a short time.”<sup>41</sup>

In some cases, the smaller plans were advantageous to the larger goals of the community. These scaled down plans and implementation process broke up larger tasks into more manageable pieces. Dana Miller said that Sector 4 set out to make 10 families homeowners, as part of the general objective of increasing homeownership in the sector, and this specific goal was more effective and instructional than simply relying on the general objective for guidance.<sup>42</sup> However, some argued that in other cases, the scaled down plans caused the focus of the ultimate vision to be lost. Roby-Davison described the situation in her neighborhood:

Sector 9 has 36,000 residents and about 12,000 buildings. To focus all your housing efforts on a project that serves 3 blocks, how do you resolve that in terms of the overwhelming needs that surround the project ... There were many people involved in the brainstorming to talk about how they wanted housing to look in the neighborhood, and then all the efforts went into a very, very, very small part of the community ... If you're doing a lot of small things that are not connected, then its hard to see results. It is hard to see the impact.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Roby Davison, interview.

<sup>41</sup> Roby Davison, interview.

<sup>42</sup> Miller, interview.

<sup>43</sup> Roby Davison, interview.

As the plans progressed, neighborhood partners such as the community development corporations, block groups, neighborhood planning councils found that their work was becoming increasingly independent of the NBN sector committee directives. Dan Buyer, Director of the South Wedge Planning Committee<sup>44</sup>, provided some insight into the situation. While he acknowledged that NBN indeed helped to bring people together, he felt that many of the older and more established organizations were hardly affected by NBN as they could still follow their existing visions and plans for their neighborhoods in the participatory manner that they were already used to following. He said:

NBN has not really changed the way that the organization functions, is run, or gets its funding ... To attach certain achievements [to NBN], I don't know if I would go that far ... Most of these organizations existed well before NBN, so to say that the things they achieved, they achieved only through NBN, I think, is a misnomer. NBN has helped existing organizations do a little bit better and raise a little bit more money for stuff that they were already doing. It gave us [the big organizations] one more opportunity to interact with the constituency, another vehicle to interact with city hall, and some additional funding sources. ... [However] The funding sources we were tapping into in a lot of cases existed well before NBN was implemented. It was sort of added on top of the existing layer of

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<sup>44</sup> South Wedge Planning Committee is a neighborhood planning group that has existed in the area since 1975.

community groups which to some extent it put a structure on top of one that already existed as opposed to integrating itself with the existing structure.<sup>45</sup>

In some neighborhoods, the existing community groups preferred to work independently of the NBN process because of the differences in ideology that were encountered. In Sector 9, the sector boundaries were equivalent to the boundaries of the constituents served by Group 14621, a neighborhood organization that has existed since 1974 and provided services to aid neighborhood residents. Initially, Group 14621 partnered closely with Sector 9 at the early stages of the NBN process because the goals of the sector and Group 14621 were very closely aligned. Today, however, there appear to be two parallel leaderships (Sector 9 elected leaders, and Group 14621 which has been, historically, the leader for community initiatives in the sector) that are influencing change in the 14621 neighborhood because of disagreements in the decision-making process. Said Director of Group 14621, Joan Roby-Davison:

It is, and always been, our practice to go out and meet with neighborhood residents and convene planning sessions with them ... We were supposed to be very closely partnered with Sector 9 at the beginning. But when they moved away from including residents as participants in the process – our entire mission is built on neighborhood residents having a voice in decisions about the neighborhood, so we really can't support (whether the city runs it or not) a process that excludes neighborhood residents from the process. ... The decisions and the plans are being put together by a very small number of people. 3 or 4 people are making the

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<sup>45</sup> Buyer, interview.

plan on behalf of 36,000 and they're not allowing for input from other neighborhood residents and that's the problem. ... So we made it clear that we would continue to work with NBN but we're not an active partner right now because they clearly do not want neighborhood participation ... We still send staff to the meetings, we still work with them on projects, but we're less involved."<sup>46</sup>

People also believed that as the process became shorter and neighbors were more heavily invested in the project-implementation phases, the connection between the sectors and city hall began to wither. In terms of training, the NBN Institute served to provide training for the sector volunteers to help carry out neighborhood organizing tasks at the start of the NBN program. However this support appeared to be dwindling. One interviewee even quipped that it was beginning to seem that the NBN Institute existed on paper only, because it did not seem to have organized any education activities in the last 4 years to train the new wave of volunteers that have emerged as the NBN process renewed itself.

When community groups needed help and information, it appeared as if the NeighborLink system was not used to its potential capacity. The system was intended to facilitate the sharing of information between the city administration, sector partners and sector leaders. But David Dey, formerly of the City of Rochester, said that people were getting information from other sources and not participating in the discussion groups set up.<sup>47</sup> The NeighborLink system was also often bypassed when groups or individuals

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<sup>46</sup> Roby Davison, interview.

<sup>47</sup> David Dey. Interview by Pierre Clavel, telephone, 5 January 2005.

sought information, and people preferred to contact city hall directly with their specific questions, because it was too cumbersome to navigate their way through online systems.

The shorter process consisting of smaller tasks also appeared to impede the creation of new capacity in some neighborhoods to carry out Sector projects. While Sector 4 created Sector 4 CDC as an official corporation to carry out the improvement tasks instituted in the Sector 4 action plan, many sectors continued to rely on their existing associations and CDCs. Many of these existing organizations already had big responsibilities to the neighborhoods, yet in some cases they were pressured to somehow increase their operational capacity if they could not modify their operations to accommodate the sector plans. While new projects were implemented, these projects relied heavily on the expertise of existing service providers with restricted funding sources and limited ability to incur heavy expenses.

### **Funding Considerations**

The lack of significant amounts of funding from the city proved to be a problem. Many neighborhood service providers had initially expected that the city administration would be able to help to pay for or subsidize some of the improvement services the administration was assumed to be responsible for providing. Some were still inclined to believe that it was City Hall's responsibility to fund some of the services that the neighborhood groups were providing for the city's residents. One interviewee commented that City Hall could use its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding money from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) more efficiently by realigning its spending and limiting its expenditure on staff.

Additionally, it could farm out some of its current in-house services as these could probably be provided more cheaply by the neighborhoods.

Some understood that City Hall had a limited capacity to fund Sector projects. However, they felt that City Hall could still help to streamline the funding process, to better suit the needs of the neighborhood groups that were in charge of service provision and project implementation. Karyn Herman suggested that the city could be the fiduciary of grants for projects undertaken by partners of the various projects. This is because the organizations that undertook sector projects had to first spend their own money and then wait to be reimbursed. This process was tedious and long-drawn. Additionally, some sector partners also lacked the liquidity and working capital to spend, and therefore needed the backing and financial support before they could embark on additional sector-improvement projects.<sup>48</sup>

## **Chapter Conclusion**

In this chapter, it is clear that there was considerable enthusiasm for Rochester's NBN program as a vehicle for change. This enthusiasm came from City Hall which wanted to provide the residents of Rochester with a voice to influence change in their city. It came from neighborhood groups which regarded NBN as a tool to help them with the projects that they had planned in consultation with the residents. It also came from individual neighborhood residents who attended meetings and provided their input into the plan-making and implementation processes. Through NBN, sectors conducted activities and implemented programs which were tailored best to remedy the problems that existed in their neighborhoods.

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<sup>48</sup> Herman, interview.

However, it can be generally said that the evolution of NBN from its initial goal of plan-making, to its later use as a means for plan-implementation and evaluation caused some strain between city hall and its constituents. Why then was this strain present? The findings point to the fact that many of the sector partners were already heavily engaged in the community and found the NBN process a cumbersome structure. City Hall, despite its best efforts to ensure the longevity of NBN, failed to harness and develop the skills of new volunteers. There still exists the big and unanswered question of who ought to implement the plan, and what conditions are necessary for a community to be willing to implement its own plan.

Given that there was so much effort put into developing and implementing the NBN program to what it is today, it is useful to take a step back and examine the historical factors preceding Rochester's era of NBN. How has Rochester's history in grassroots activism, and the presence of heavily-invested community groups resulted in their reaction to the implementation of NBN described in this chapter?

CHAPTER 3:  
GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM BEFORE NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS

Rochester's history made NBN seem like a logical solution to some of the city's problems. Said Dan Buyer,

“Rochester, in particular, has a history rooted in organizing. Go back to the race riots in the 60's. This is a city that seems to be a hot-bed for social issues, social justice, and just getting involved. I think the city just has a history of it, and therefore such a rich network of community groups. People just want to be involved.”<sup>1</sup>

Tom Argust who led the team that invented the NBN process also emphasized the political and social importance of grassroots groups, “Essentially if you wanted to get anything done it was done through a much more democratic system in the neighborhood organizations.”<sup>2</sup> This chapter traces the rise of the Rochester's grassroots groups, and notes some of the hallmark events in the Rochester's history that made the city's social fabric receptive to NBN.

### **Paternalism and False Assumptions**

The City of Rochester has seen a long history of good government, active citizenry and corporate citizens who are interested in the improving the welfare of the

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<sup>1</sup> Buyer, interview.

<sup>2</sup> Argust, interview by Clavel.

city. Rochester was one of the thriving economies of upstate New York in the late 1800s and earlier part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The strong economy, anchored by companies including Bausch and Lomb, Eastman Kodak, Western Union Telegraph, Gleason Works, and R.T. French ensured a strong tax-base and jobs for Rochester dwellers and those in the region.<sup>3</sup> During this period of economic prosperity, the city government had a large capacity for widespread improvements and citizen welfare. Companies also patronized development by donating land and money for public spaces, city beautification, community facilities and educational institutes.

Rochester historian, Blake McKelvey, named Rochester during the period between 1890 – 1910 as the “The People’s City”, because of the prevailing citizen pride for their city, good public schools, and the success of key photonics firms in the city which overrode the misfortunes of others in the textile industry. Many new ethnic groups (such as the Italians) were welcomed into the city and these groups “formed ethnic societies to maintain their traditions, but they also found opportunities, now in greater abundance, for participation with the earlier inhabitants in community activities in the parks where the band concerts and the varied recreational facilities nurtured a sense of belonging.”<sup>4</sup> In particular, as McKelvey points out, George Eastman contributed much to the city’s progress during the twenties and his participation was especially welcome<sup>5</sup> due

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<sup>3</sup> Of these companies, Bausch and Lomb and Kodak are still headquartered in Rochester today. Together with Xerox these big three form the anchors of the modern photonics industry in Rochester. It is the photonics industry cluster in Rochester that has still enabled the city to be more economically fortunate than other upstate cities in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century even when Buffalo, Syracuse and many other neighboring upstate cities had lost their previously strong manufacturing bases by 1990

<sup>4</sup> Blake McKelvey, *Rochester: A Brief History* (NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 55.

<sup>5</sup> Although he was criticized by many due to his conservative labor-hiring practices, he was still lauded because of his generous civic gifts, participation on the boards of social organizations such as the YMCA, charity organizations, the Community Chest, and his support for the new Council of Social Agencies.

to “Rochester’s reliance on private efforts to meet its social and cultural needs”<sup>6</sup>. George Eastman’s example also demonstrated how a good citizen could show active contribution to improve city living.

During the 1930s to 1960s, significant external changes occurred that were beyond the city’s control, resulting in the shift from private paternalism to more efforts by organizations and the government. Changing economic conditions and increased political activism characterized the Civil Rights Movement era and the decline of “Frostbelt” cities in the Northeast.<sup>7</sup> Economic conditions were worsening in many cities in the Northeast. While Rochester was not as badly hit as other cities, it was still not spared. Signs of declining business sentiments were hardly felt in the city even though the 1950s recession was taking hold in America. In fact, Rochester received retrospective criticism as being a “Smugtown”<sup>8</sup> whose population had abundant jobs, good education, good living, and many cultural amenities (many of which existed thanks to generous donations from George Eastman). People saw no need to change the city and it was commonly regarded that: “we don’t have any problems” as “no one wanted to rock the boat” even if they sensed the slightest notion of any problem.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, although the small symptoms of crisis in the city were noticed by a few, little action was taken because people strongly believed that they had a successful city. For example, bankers noted that there was very little spending in 1958.<sup>10</sup> Migration patterns also began to take their toll on the city – wealthier residents also began migrating

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<sup>6</sup> McKelvey, 61.

<sup>7</sup> Lou Buttino and Mark Hare, *The Remaking of a City: Rochester, New York 1964-1984* (Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1984.) Introduction.

<sup>8</sup> Name coined by Curt Gerling, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. Dr. Arthur Whitaker, interview in *July '64*, produced by Chris Christopher, directed by Carvin Eison, narr. Roscoe Lee Brown, ImageWordSound and WXXI TV, 2004, videocassette.

<sup>10</sup> Buttino and Hare, 2.

out of the city and into the suburbs, while minorities began moving in especially during the 1950s when African Americans moved in large waves from the South to the North and settled in the city's Seventh Ward and old Third Ward. These newcomers were generally not welcomed into the city because they were poor, had little education, and had few labor skills to add value to businesses.<sup>11</sup> To make the situation worse, social services and welfare agencies were incapable of increasing their capacity to cater to the new demand from the influx of poor and minority newcomers. Yet people persisted in believing that Rochester was still the great city that it had always been in the past.

As part of the denial of impending urban problems, the city appeared to turn a blind eye to the needs of its poorer residents: the city's resistance to the idea that it needed public housing resulted in Rochester being one of the last major cities to build public housing, thus relegating poorer citizens to dilapidated housing options.<sup>12</sup> Cuts in the federal and state budget for cities resulted in "a general mistrust of authority"<sup>13</sup>, because the city government was beginning to fail to cater to the welfare of its citizens and unable to keep up with its former high spending for public works and municipal services. Still the people of Rochester still chose to rest on their laurels and bank on Rochester's image as a booming city with "skilled industry and skilled people, clean industry and clean people, stable industry and stable people".<sup>14</sup>

There was a mounting tension that resulted from the marginalization of the poor and minorities due to the decline in public monies, apparent unfair treatment of minorities

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<sup>11</sup> *July '64*, produced by Chris Christopher, directed by Carvin Eison, narr. Roscoe Lee Brown, ImageWordSound and WXXI TV, 2004, videocassette.

<sup>12</sup> *July '64*.

<sup>13</sup> Buttino and Hare. xvii.

<sup>14</sup> Frank T. Lamb (1964 Mayor), interview in *July '64*, produced by Chris Christopher, directed by Carvin Eison, narr. Roscoe Lee Brown, ImageWordSound and WXXI TV, 2004, videocassette.

by the police, underlying racism, and the lack of jobs open to low-skilled minorities. This tension culminated in the 1964 Rochester Riots. McKelvey notes that the riots were a “shock” to many as the city Democrats had just elected two black leaders to the county board in 1961<sup>15</sup>. Additionally, many African American Rochesterians who had lived in the city for a long time received good education, obtained stable jobs, and lived in decent housing, thus puzzling people further.

However, based on reports of the riot, retrospective analysis, and soul-searching, it is clear that the riots were a result of the general blindness to the reality of the symptoms pointing to the eventual crisis. Many said that ill-will and “quiet rage”<sup>16</sup> was simmering, and an explosive event was just waiting to be triggered. It was also noted by Robert Duffy, interviewed when he was Chief of Police, that the some of the effects of the riot have lingered until today<sup>17</sup>, thus indicating the significance of this event, its impact the people’s lives and impressions of the city and its effectiveness as a stark reminder that people had to do much more to unite as Rochester citizens, take ownership of their neighborhoods, extend help to the marginalized, and rebuild their city.

### **Greater Independence – The Rise of New Grassroots Groups**

As a result of the 1964 Rochester Riots, the city began to delve into some of the issues of inequality in the city, the effects on the business climate, safety of citizens, and community togetherness, and acknowledge that more must be done to bring healthcare, jobs, education and housing opportunities to the poor. This change in attitude appears to

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<sup>15</sup> McKelvey, p. 81

<sup>16</sup> *July '64*.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Duffy, interview in *July '64*, produced by Chris Christopher, directed by Carvin Eison, narr. Roscoe Lee Brown, ImageWordSound and WXXI TV, 2004, videocassette.

mark the evolution from predominant paternalism by private entities or individuals, to more self-help and grassroots participation. Entities that lead the way in effecting social change in Rochester included faith-based groups, grassroots associations and social justice organizations. These groups included the Board of Urban Ministry, FIGHT, Action for a Better Community (ABC), Friends of the Urban League (temporarily chaired by Dr. William Knox, an Eastman Kodak scientist), and the Ibero-American Action League. Other liberals also supported these groups, spawning new groups including Friends of FIGHT, and Metro-Act (a coalition of neighborhood groups that sought to increase equity within the city, and eliminate the influence of elite and private power on the press, Community Chest, real estate agencies, local industry and local banks).

The core of Rochester's grassroots comprised active community groups that implemented social change and tried to make city living desirable for residents. Buttino and Hare note that "neighborhood groups began supplanting the political ward system"<sup>18</sup>. These groups were vocal and active in pursuing the interests of their respective neighborhoods. They organized community activities and neighborhood improvement projects in an attempt to foster community spirit and help retain residents in the city. However, despite all these efforts to improve the quality of life in the city's neighborhoods, there was still net out-migration from the city, accompanied by a net increase in the concentration of the urban poor.

Buttino and Hare estimate that small neighborhood-based development efforts began in the early 1960s in Rochester as part of the city's "neighborhood movement"<sup>19</sup>, prior to the occurrence of the riots. This was because citizens slowly realized that efforts

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<sup>18</sup> Buttino and Hare, 92.

<sup>19</sup> Buttino and Hare, 91.

to improve the city using the top-down approach that city hall took was becoming ineffective. Buttino and Hare write: “The ward leader could not do much to improve police protection, to reshape the zoning laws, to improve housing stock, or to develop neighborhood youth programs or senior centers. Neighborhood associations became the vehicle for change,” and as a result, by the early 1980s there were more than 100 active neighborhood groups city-wide<sup>20</sup>. By working from the bottom, the small groups recognized that their small projects were building a wave of larger change. Small neighborhood groups also realized the strength in combining efforts. As a result umbrella coalition groups began to form. One city’s first umbrella coalitions was the North East Area Development, a coalition of thirty-four neighborhood groups, churches and business associations. The South East Area Coalition, founded in 1969, was similarly an umbrella coalition comprising of numerous neighborhood associations, block groups and merchant associations. The coalition worked to “insure that our neighborhoods are the best places to live, work, play and learn in Rochester”.<sup>21</sup> It is also western New York's oldest Neighborhood Preservation Company.

There was much excitement in the city due to the perception that grassroots groups could do much to change the city. These groups all had strong visions for their neighborhoods. They believed they could make improvements resulting from a participatory process that included the views and concerns of those who would be affected by the change. They worked for their constituents and gained a general consensus before projects were created and implemented. Some the neighborhood

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<sup>20</sup> Buttino and Hare, 93.

<sup>21</sup> South East Area Coalition, website, <<http://www.myseac.org/index.html>> (Accessed 11 March 2006).

groups<sup>22</sup> which were established during Rochester's early era of grassroots activism, and still exist today included:

- South Wedge Planning Committee

Established in 1975, it “builds community in the South Wedge, encourages a full range of housing opportunities, and promotes a diverse, historically significant, and commercially viable urban village.”<sup>23</sup>

- 19<sup>th</sup> Ward Community Association

One of the oldest associations in the country,<sup>24</sup> it was founded in 1965 “to combat blockbusting and to work towards a stable racially diverse neighborhood.”<sup>25</sup>

- Browncroft Neighborhood Association

It was founded in 1973 and its purpose is “to promote, organize, and carry on those activities which are intended to maintain and improve the character and quality of neighborhood living in the Browncroft area of the City of Rochester, New York.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Refer to Appendix 5 for a list of neighborhood groups.

<sup>23</sup> South Wedge Planning Committee, website, <<http://www.swpc.org/>> (Accessed 11 March 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Liu & Armon.

<sup>25</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> Ward Community Association, website, <<http://www.19thward.org/>> (Accessed 8 March 2006).

<sup>26</sup> Browncroft Neighborhood Association, Homepage, <<http://www.members.aol.com/browncrft/index.html>> (Accessed 8 March 2006).

- SouthWest Area Neighborhood Association

The association was founded by neighborhood leaders in the late 1970's and incorporated in 1982. Its mission to "improve the quality of life for residents and families in SouthWest Rochester for its constituents (Residents, Business People, Churches, and Institutions) particularly in the areas of: public safety, youth and recreation, education, economic development, housing and public infrastructure."<sup>27</sup>

- Group 14621

This neighborhood group has existed since 1974 "rehabilitates housing in the neighborhood, works with residents to form block clubs, publishes a monthly newsletter and staunchly advocates for services and resources for Northeast Rochester."<sup>28</sup>

These are just some of the older neighborhood associations in Rochester that were created by inspired citizens to serve the needs of the city's residents, advocate their interests, improve the quality of life in the area, and foster better neighborhood relations amongst residents. These neighborhoods groups were vocal in representing the neighborhoods. By having official representation, the needs of the neighborhoods were more likely to be heard. Collective action through the groups enabled residents to take more ownership of and responsibility for their neighborhoods. They implemented

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<sup>27</sup> Southwest Area Neighborhood Association , *SWAN's Mission*, <<http://www.swanonline.org/ourmission.html>> (Accessed 12 March 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Rochester City Living, *14621 Neighborhood – Group 14621: Rochester's Cultural Mosaic*. <<http://rochestercityliving.com/neighborhoods/14621/index.htm>> (Accessed 3 March 2005).

resident activities, took responsibility of cleaning up and beautifying neighborhoods, helped more people improve their housing units, and ensured that those who were living in poverty were better taken care of. These actions were within the constraints of city hall's policies and the zoning code; however, they were largely initiatives that were independent of city hall. These neighborhood groups did not hesitate to oppose the city government's plans for the area which they considered undesirable. For example, in 1975 neighborhood organizations thwarted the proposal for the Genesee Expressway, which would have destroyed the urban fabric of Rochester's southeast neighborhoods. Furthermore, City Council was persuaded to ally itself with the neighborhood groups in opposing the plan, much to the chagrin of the Chamber of Commerce and organized labor.<sup>29</sup>

### **External Factors Strengthening the Grassroots**

External conditions during the 1970s were instrumental in further increasing the power of the grassroots groups in Rochester. One key source of funding for development activity was the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which was enacted during the Ford administration through the Housing and Community Development Act. The grant came into effect in January 1975 and was used to help local governments in need of funding to “develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and

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<sup>29</sup> Buttino and Hare, 372.

moderate-income persons”<sup>30</sup>. City Hall realized that in order to benefit from this new funding, it would have to employ the support of the grassroots. This was because funding was provided only on the condition that it would be used to implement community-building programs and plans, or undertake the building of infrastructure that the city’s residents agreed upon.

In the initial stages of the CDBG program in Rochester in 1975, neighborhood groups jostled furiously for grant money. The funding process for these groups became close to a free-for-all as many groups met with government officials, lobbied noisily and did all they could to garner a piece of the \$14.6 million of grant money given to the City in that year.<sup>31</sup> This process was disorganized and a more efficient means of distribution was required.

In the following year, the Rochester government decided to make the grant distribution process more straightforward. They acknowledged that the grassroots groups had more sensitive awareness of pressing needs in the neighborhoods. The City of Rochester Department of Community Development conducted rounds of meetings in the various city neighborhoods to gain ideas for the use of the \$13.8 million of CDBG funds allocated to the City of Rochester for the year 1976.<sup>32</sup>

Steps were also taken to improve the relationship between the government and grassroots, so as to make neighborhood planning more efficient. The steps taken to strengthening the grassroots groups and building relations between the government and

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<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs*. <<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/index.cfm>> (Accessed 16 January, 2006)

<sup>31</sup> John McGinnis, “Groups Make Various Pitches for City Funds,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 28 March 28 1975.

<sup>32</sup> “City Seeks Fund Use Ideas,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 10 January 1976.

grassroots can be attributed to the late Thomas P. Ryan Jr., the city's longest-serving mayor from 1974 to 1993. He "molded an administration that gave Rochester stability and strength" through his style of "honest government" that was professional and valued integrity<sup>33</sup>, and is credited with working hard to attain greater support for the city, promoting the Rochester's identity as the core of the region, and implementing city-wide infrastructure improvements.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

From a historical standpoint, it is clear that grassroots groups have been – and continue to be – an important asset to Rochester. Historical events and government policies also strengthened the power of neighborhood groups – they have the organizing capacity to mobilize residents, and positively influenced the quality of life in Rochester's neighborhoods by reaching out to the residents and attempting to meet their needs.

The sensitivity of the grassroots groups to the city's problems, and their intimate knowledge of potential solutions to these problems are unique characteristics. City Hall, which governs from the top down, found that their top-down practices complemented by the bottom-up tendencies of the grassroots groups. However, to successfully exploit the advantages of a government-grassroots partnership, City Hall would need to find ways to impose a structure upon the myriad of different functions and projects that various grassroots groups were performing, while at the same time avoid encroaching on their freedom to respond to their constituents' needs. The NBN process therefore seemed to be the next step in the city's history of active grassroots participation and citizen action.

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<sup>33</sup> Mary Anna Towler, "Thomas P. Ryan Jr.," *City Newspaper*, 19 March 2003.

## CHAPTER 4:

### A CRITICAL LAST LOOK AT NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS

Up to this point, this thesis has examined how NBN developed in Rochester. It was noted that the NBN program is a logical continuation of the city's history of grassroots activism. It has framed NBN as Rochester's proposition of a self-sustained, self-renewing procedure for government-grassroots partnerships to be forged. It also highlights that the benefits derived from the NBN program:

1. Increased neighborhood participation across the NBN planning sectors;
2. Legitimization of planning by the grassroots;
3. Opportunities created for neighborhood residents to take charge of plans, influence the creation of official government documents (comprehensive plan and zoning code);
4. Formalizing and endorsing the neighborhood's plea for external funding from banks, foundations, philanthropic organizations, corporate funders to carry out neighborhood improvement activities, because NBN was supported by the government; and
5. Providing the citizens with the freedom to independently undertake projects and implement programs.

On the other hand, imperfections in the NBN process raised new problems:

1. The initial miscommunication between the government and the grassroots regarding the true involvement of the grassroots in NBN in terms of plan-making and implementation, and how much work the grassroots would have to contribute to ensure the success of NBN;
2. The heavy reliance on volunteers take on the tasks that could be within the job-scope of a full-time salaried project manager;
3. The apparent loss of support from the city administration in the later phases of the NBN process because it did not cater adequately to the training needs of new volunteers and failed to address requests for sector leaderships to be changed. (This loss may have impacted the initially-conceived vision of NBN to be an automatic self-renewing process);
4. The institutionalization, into City Hall, of grassroots planning and citizen organization, which was formerly regarded as an organic process, prevented sector organizations from effectively utilizing authentic citizen participation;
5. Immense independent efforts were vital in securing funding for sector projects. For bigger projects, a disproportionate amount of time and effort of sector volunteers and service providers had to be diverted towards obtaining and combining funding from many sources has to be assembled.

## **The Citizens' Analysis of NBN – The Transition Team Report**

At the beginning of 2006, the NBN process came to a crossroads because of the installation of a new mayor. Mayor Robert Duffy assumed office on 1 January, 2006 and requested a report detailing what actions should be taken regarding NBN. In the report, the Robert Duffy Mayoral Transition Team described the problems inherent in NBN as such:

Stable neighborhoods require engaged citizens, with leaders identified, nurtured and trained, with the ability to assist in developing, implementing and monitoring neighborhood plans. A City [City Hall] initiative, NBN is intended to do this, but concerns emerged: NBN is unevenly administered in the 10 sectors, with little or no staff support. NBN must become what was envisioned and anticipated - true neighborhood planning and authentic inclusion of neighborhood residents and stakeholders, with City staff as facilitators. The current process does not allow for amending or updating plans, and no outcomes are identified in existing plans. NBN has not been evaluated in over ten years since implementation. No measurement or accountability identified.<sup>1</sup>

The team also called for the long-overdue evaluation of the NBN program (this evaluation was originally scheduled to begin in January 2004, but has yet to take place), the restructuring of the current NBN process to redefine the neighborhood groupings, the return of NBN to its originally envisioned purpose of neighborhood participation but with more clearly defined basic expectations for organizational structure, requirements for

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<sup>1</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Subcommittee, 10.

majority neighborhood participation and control, and a review the NBN Institute's plans for training volunteers.<sup>2</sup> The team also noted that a new administration structure should be implemented because "the current City administration structure is ineffective in empowering residents to engage in comprehensive neighborhood planning."<sup>3</sup>

The team then suggested the creation of Urban Villages, which could enable more effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of the neighborhood revitalization process, while allowing neighborhood residents to be truly engaged in the planning process, and having more access to the organizational structure that manages it. In particular, the call for the "urban village/community"<sup>4</sup> structure was strong, and an addendum was included that detailed how this structure could potentially exist and what changes were necessary to ensure its success. Written by the Urban Village Development Subcommittee, this report<sup>5</sup> noted how the "urban village" structure could solve the current City administration's structural "[ineffectiveness] in empowering residents to engage in comprehensive neighborhood based planning." To implement this structure, sectors would be eliminated and replaced by urban villages/communities comprising of between 5,000 and 20,000 residents. Planning in these urban villages/communities would be the responsibility of urban village/community planning councils which are well-represented by stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Subcommittee, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Housing and Neighborhood Subcommittee, 6.

<sup>4</sup> According to Dana Miller, the term "urban village" and "urban community" were used interchangeably, so as to eliminate the potential political connotations that the term "village" would suggest. As stated in the Urban Village Development Subcommittee document, "A community is a collection of neighborhoods with a common identity, and a common set of assets and needs. An urban village is a community with all of the characteristics listed above. Not all communities can or need to be urban villages."

<sup>5</sup> Urban Village Development Subcommittee. "Final Recommendations, December 5, 2005." In Robert Duffy Mayoral Transition Housing and Neighborhoods Transition Sub-committee Draft Report. <<http://thefirst100days.cityofrochester.gov/Main/docs/Mayor/Transition/HousingAndNeighborhoods.pdf>> (Accessed 25 February 2006).

The proposal was that City Hall would assist in these planning endeavors – a new Office of Neighborhood Resources should replace the Bureau of Neighborhood Initiatives, so that it could carry the functions of coordinating and monitoring citywide neighborhood planning efforts, and be a resource center for community leaders. This new structure would be a means of providing effective assistance to the intermediate level of leadership that the city planners created when they elected sector leaders. Community leaders would then be able to properly carry out their duty to organize and plan for the neighborhoods in a participatory manner, mobilize resources and ensure that the plans materialize.

### **NBN and the Asset-Based Community Development Literature**

The Transition Team report provided some analysis and insight to the future NBN based on practical experience. However, the consideration of NBN in light of existing literature will also shed some light on what more can be done to improve the effectiveness of NBN and enable NBN to better serve Rochester's needs.

The theory of asset-based community development must be revisited, because the fundamentals of the NBN process are rooted in the correct application of this theory. This theory “acknowledges and embraces particularly the strong neighborhood-rooted traditions of community organizing, community economic development and neighborhood planning” and seeks to first of all focus on the “agenda building and problem-solving capacities of local residents, local associations, and local institutions ... to stress the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> John Kretzmann and John P. McKnight, “Assets-based Community Development,” *National Civic Review* 85, no. 4 (1996): 23-29.

Therefore, by accurately mapping out the assets of a community – i.e. Individuals, Associations and Institutions – a community will be better-placed to build its future from the inside out. By bringing different members of the community together, with the objective of fostering partnerships between these different entities, new opportunities will be created for the community to improve.

*Building Communities from Inside Out*, is a manual which guides community planners on the principles of the asset-based community development model. It also details how partnerships can be formed, and how best to tap into the strengths of the various assets of the neighborhood. According to the Rochester city planners, this book provided much inspiration for the NBN process. The manual claims that a community organizer will face challenges in the 5 areas<sup>7</sup>:

1. Mapping the community's assets;
2. Building relationships among local assets;
3. Mobilizing the community's assets fully for development and information sharing;
4. Convening a group that represents as many interests as possible
5. Leveraging activities, investments and resources from outside the community to support “asset-based, locally-defined development.”

The previous chapters have documented that many of the NBN sectors managed to devise means of overcoming these challenges. As a result of the NBN process, each sector's assets were inventoried and mapped out, with these lists updated periodically.

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<sup>7</sup> Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities from Inside Out*, 345.

Many new relationships were forged between entities such as philanthropic organizations, corporations, academic institutions, neighborhood associations, block groups, community development corporations, foundations, etc. Many sectors published newsletters to disseminate information about the planning process, and encouraged neighborhood residents and business stakeholders to communicate freely with the sector committees and service providers. Sector groups also tried many ways to attract people to meetings, to ensure that they obtained views representative of the sector's different interests. By inviting representatives from the small associations, block clubs and businesses present in the neighborhood, sectors also increased the probability that more viewpoints would be heard. Sectors also drew help from outside of the sector, from larger philanthropic organizations, service providers, financial institutions, and federal and state funding opportunities.

It thus appears that NBN managed to practice the path outlined by assets-based community development theory, and this should have led to a large amount of community satisfaction. Yet the findings in Chapter 2 show that many of the neighborhood partners were still dissatisfied, due to the many obstacles they faced along the way. The main criticism was that the government was not providing sufficient support for the volunteers, and fulfilling its traditional mandate of providing for its citizens' needs. A closer look at the theory put forth by Kretzmann and McKnight in *Building Communities from Inside Out* reveals that the "insiders" of a community who are considered the community's assets do not typically include the government. Rather, the government is considered the "outsider", along with philanthropic organizations, large corporations, and foundations. Therefore, while the community appreciated the

opportunity to voice their opinions and take ownership of the planning process, more was expected of the government in the implementation phases. The natural assumption appeared to be that the government should be more responsible for ensuring that the plans would come to fruition, because it had more power and was presumed to be able to secure the financial backing for development. There was also the expectation that the government would take responsibility since it was the entity that attempted to organize the people and impose the asset-building community development process in the first place.

### **Future Endeavors for Rochester**

NBN was a gargantuan effort made on the part of the city of Rochester and the citizens to improve their ailing city. While it encountered several problems that were highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Rochester nevertheless still reaped the benefits of the Asset-Based Community Development process. The launching of many significant neighborhood projects was aided or even accelerated due to the city's support of the NBN program. NBN opened up more funding sources and options for neighborhood groups to pay for their improvement efforts. The new partnerships and the increased citizen participation in neighborhood activities benefited neighborhood groups, because of the emergence of new opportunities for idea development, new forums to facilitate the sharing of expertise, and a clearer understanding of the city's needs. The novel methods used resulted in numerous benefits to the city, and resulted in the program being

nationally regarded as a model of “Best Practices”, which has inspired other cities, including Syracuse, NY, Des Moines, IA, and Newark, NJ.<sup>8</sup>

However, because of the administrative layer of sector leaders created by the city government, it appears that there are two possible paths that the new mayoral administration can take with regards to NBN:

First, as suggested earlier, the NBN process can revert back to its initial goal of seeking out citizen participation in planning neighborhood revitalization tasks. Partners and service providers need to remain as partners, in addition to acting as consultants in the planning process. However, there still exists the problem of who should solicit help from partners. On the one hand, because the city appears to want to maintain its control in the NBN process, they city should then actively seek out more partners to help out the neighborhoods. On the other hand, if local partners are being independently conscripted as is the current practice, City Hall should then play the role of facilitator, fiduciary, service and information provider and public funder more effectively. Additionally, incentives and opportunities should be given to communities to create more capacity and reward for sector leaders to take on more responsibilities. References could be made to the case of Sector 4’s successful creation of Sector 4 CDC as an example of best practices. The benefits of this were that the CDC was better positioned than volunteers to earn money, secure funding, and pay staff and partners for their project management and implementation efforts. Stoecker, who researches extensively on CDCs also supports this, in his findings that CDCs have the capacity to implement and manage projects, while a

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<sup>8</sup> Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, *NBN in the Spotlight*.  
<[http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/dcd/NBN/news\\_articles.cfm#Rochester%20Among%204%20Cities%20Deemed%20The%20Most%20Livable](http://www.ci.rochester.ny.us/dcd/NBN/news_articles.cfm#Rochester%20Among%204%20Cities%20Deemed%20The%20Most%20Livable)> (Accessed 13 March 2006)

larger community group (even if it is made of volunteers) is much more capable than the CDC in community organizing, setting a vision, and planning for the community.<sup>9</sup>

Another alternative is to create a new community structure that is more explicit about who bears the responsibility to plan and implement, and who provides the resources to achieve the goals. A suggested option is the creation of urban villages, pursuant to which village leaders (eliminate sector leaders) will have more power to act independently. The city administration would be relegated to a consultant role regarding the revitalization tasks. This will allow for the retention of a level of power similar to that of sector leadership. This power will potentially increase the community organizing capacity of the citizens and allow them to make more autonomous decisions about local leadership for the neighborhood development process, determine the goals and activities that should be undertaken to develop the community, and independently secure partners to work with them. Also included in the list of partners and service providers would be the city government. This second alternative was proposed in the Transition Team report to Mayor Duffy.

As at March 2006, the future of the NBN program was under evaluation. NBN was a project initiated by the previous mayor who strongly believed in citizen participation and collective effort to achieve goals. The new mayor, however, will either retain or eliminate the program, depending on the results yielded by an evaluation of the program. If the program is retained, the question remains of whether it will be retained in its current form, or if changes will be made according to the recommendations of the Transition Team. If changes are made, how effective will they be in harnessing authentic citizen participation? Will the neighbors' suggestions for more autonomy through an

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<sup>9</sup> Stoecker.

urban village system be taken into account and accepted? What kind of power struggle will there be between neighboring groups of different demographics, the different levels of neighborhood groups, the sector leaders, and the city administration? If the NBN program is eliminated, will a new program effectively replace it? These are all possible areas of future research for the practical implementation of NBN and the Asset-Based Planning Process.

**Appendix A: Statistical Profiles of  
City of Rochester, Monroe County and New York State**

City of Rochester contrasted with New York State

<b>People QuickFacts</b>	<b>Rochester</b>	<b>New York State</b>
Population, 2003 estimate	215,093	19,190,115
Population, percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2003	-2.1%	1.1%
Population, 2000	219,773	18,976,457
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	-4.8%	5.5%
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2000	7.8%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2000	28.1%	24.7%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2000	10.0%	12.9%
Female persons, percent, 2000	52.2%	51.8%
White persons, percent, 2000 (a)	48.3%	67.9%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2000 (a)	38.5%	15.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2000 (a)	0.5%	0.4%
Asian persons, percent, 2000 (a)	2.2%	5.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2000 (a)	Z	Z
Persons reporting some other race, percent, 2000 (a)	6.6%	7.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2000	3.8%	3.1%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2000 (b)	12.8%	15.1%
Living in same house in 1995 and 2000', pct age 5+, 2000	45.9%	61.8%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2000	7.3%	20.4%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2000	17.8%	28.0%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2000	73.0%	79.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2000	20.1%	27.4%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2000	19.3	31.7
Housing units, 2000	99,789	7,679,307
Homeownership rate, 2000	40.2%	53.0%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2000	\$61,300	\$148,700
Households, 2000	88,999	7,056,860
Persons per household, 2000	2.36	2.61
Median household income, 1999	\$27,123	\$43,393
Per capita money income, 1999	\$15,588	\$23,389
Persons below poverty, percent, 1999	25.9%	14.6%

<b>Business QuickFacts</b>	<b>Rochester</b>	<b>New York State</b>
Manufacturers shipments, 1997 (\$1000)	12,269,688	11,400,008
Wholesale trade sales, 1997 (\$1000)	5,193,441	319,697,562
Retail sales, 1997 (\$1000)	1,140,792	139,303,944
Retail sales per capita, 1997	\$5,204	\$7,678
Accommodation and foodservices sales, 1997 (\$1000)	222,521	21,680,529
Total number of firms, 1997	13,694	1,509,829
Minority-owned firms, percent of total, 1997	15.4%	19.6%
Women-owned firms, percent of total, 1997	24.2%	26.1%
<b>Geography QuickFacts</b>	<b>Rochester</b>	<b>New York</b>
Land area, 2000 (square miles)	36	47,214
Persons per square mile, 2000	6,132.9	401.9
FIPS Code	63000	36
Counties	Monroe County	

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

FN: Footnote on this item for this area in place of data

NA: Not available

D: Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information

X: Not applicable

S: Suppressed; does not meet publication standards

Z: Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

F: Fewer than 100 firms

Extracted from: US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts

Monroe County contrasted with New York State

<b>People QuickFacts</b>	<b>Monroe County</b>	<b>New York State</b>
Population, 2004 estimate	735,177	19,227,088
Population, percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2004	0.0%	1.3%
Population, 2000	735,343	18,976,457
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	3.0%	5.5%
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2000	6.4%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2000	25.6%	24.7%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2000	13.0%	12.9%
Female persons, percent, 2000	51.8%	51.8%
White persons, percent, 2000 (a)	79.1%	67.9%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2000 (a)	13.7%	15.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2000 (a)	0.3%	0.4%
Asian persons, percent, 2000 (a)	2.4%	5.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2000 (a)	Z	Z
Persons reporting some other race, percent, 2000 (a)	2.4%	7.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2000	1.9%	3.1%
White persons, not of Hispanic/Latino origin, percent, 2000	77.1%	62.0%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2000 (b)	5.3%	15.1%
Living in same house in 1995 and 2000', pct age 5+, 2000	57.4%	61.8%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2000	7.3%	20.4%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2000	12.1%	28.0%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2000	84.9%	79.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2000	31.2%	27.4%
Persons with a disability, age 5+, 2000	119,598	3,606,147
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2000	19.6	31.7
Housing units, 2002	308,063	7,754,508
Homeownership rate, 2000	65.1%	53.0%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2000	31.6%	50.6%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2000	\$98,700	\$148,700
Households, 2000	286,512	7,056,860
Persons per household, 2000	2.47	2.61
Median household income, 1999	\$44,891	\$43,393
Per capita money income, 1999	\$22,821	\$23,389
Persons below poverty, percent, 1999	11.2%	14.6%

<b>Business QuickFacts</b>	<b>Monroe County</b>	<b>New York State</b>
Private nonfarm establishments with paid employees, 2001	16,828	493,863
Private nonfarm employment, 2001	359,832	7,428,349
Private nonfarm employment, percent change 2000-2001	-0.8%	1.0%
Nonemployer establishments, 2000	38,051	1,202,943
Manufacturers shipments, 1997 (\$1000)	21,774,715	146,720,195
Retail sales, 1997 (\$1000)	6,513,211	139,303,944
Retail sales per capita, 1997	\$9,076	\$7,678
Minority-owned firms, percent of total, 1997	9.4%	19.6%
Women-owned firms, percent of total, 1997	30.7%	26.1%
Housing units authorized by building permits, 2002	2,064	49,149
Federal funds and grants, 2002 (\$1000)	4,055,234	128,994,460
<b>Geography QuickFacts</b>	<b>Monroe County</b>	<b>New York State</b>
Land area, 2000 (square miles)	659	47,214
Persons per square mile, 2000	1,115.3	401.9
FIPS Code	55	36
Metropolitan or Micropolitan Statistical Area	Rochester, NY Metro Area	

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

FN: Footnote on this item for this area in place of data

NA: Not available

D: Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information

X: Not applicable

S: Suppressed; does not meet publication standards

Z: Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

F: Fewer than 100 firms

Extracted from: US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts

**Appendix B: Demographic Profiles of City of Rochester and 10 Sectors**  
**(All tables prepared by the City of Rochester's Bureau of Neighborhood Initiatives**  
**using the 2000 U.S. Census)**

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Population and Race**

	City Total	% of Total
Total:	219,773	
Population of one race:	211,410	96.2%
White alone	106,161	48.3%
Black or African American alone	84,717	38.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,033	0.5%
Asian alone	4,943	2.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	104	0.0%
Some other race alone	14,452	6.6%
Population of two or more races:	8,363	3.8%
Hispanic or Latino	28,032	12.8%

**Family Type**

	City Total	% of Total
Total Households:	88,999	
Family households:	47,165	53.0%
Married-couple family:	22,298	
With own children under 18 years	10,042	11.3%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	14,583	16.4%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	41,834	47.0%

**Youth Population**

	City Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	61,735	28.1%
Persons Age 18+	158,038	71.9%
Total Population	219,773	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	35,747	40.2%
Renter Occupied	53,252	59.8%
Vacant	10,790	10.8%
Total Units	99,789	100%

**Income**

City of Rochester, Median Household Income	\$27,123
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**Poverty Rate**

	City Total	%
Total Persons for Whom Poverty is Determined:	211,273	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	54,713	25.9%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	156,560	74.1%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR ONE - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 1 Area Census Tracts: 85 and 86**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	8,829	
Population of one race:	8,672	98.2%
White alone	7,962	90.2%
Black or African American alone	457	5.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	34	0.4%
Asian alone	59	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	2	0.0%
Some other race alone	158	1.8%
Population of two or more races:	157	1.8%
Hispanic or Latino	369	4.2%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	4,031	100.0%
Family households:	2,056	51.0%
Married-couple family:	1,376	
With own children under 18 years	€	14.3%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	323	8.0%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	1,975	49.0%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	1,886	21.4%
Persons Age 18+	6,943	78.6%
Total Population	8,829	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	2,272	53%
Renter Occupied	1,759	41%
Vacant	229	5%
Total Units	4,260	47%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 85	\$25,116
Census Tract 86	\$37,907

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	8,546	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	1,038	12.1%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	7,508	87.9%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR TWO - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 2 Area Census Tracts: 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	19,319	
Population of one race:	18,467	95.6%
White alone	12,884	66.7%
Black or African American alone	4,311	22.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	108	0.6%
Asian alone	360	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1	0.0%
Some other race alone	803	4.2%
Population of two or more races:	852	4.4%
Hispanic or Latino	1,811	9.4%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	7,621	
Family households:	4,581	60.1%
Married-couple family:	2,509	
With own children under 18 years	1,233	16.2%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	1,160	15.2%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	3,040	39.9%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	5,744	29.7%
Persons Age 18+	13,575	70.3%
Total Population	19,319	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	3,842	46%
Renter Occupied	3,779	45%
Vacant	749	9%
Total Units	8,370	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 18	\$38,185
Census Tract 19	\$30,417
Census Tract 20	\$30,700
Census Tract 21	\$38,967
Census Tract 22	\$28,185

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	19,029	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	3,226	17.0%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	15,803	83.0%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR THREE - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 3 Area Census Tracts: 2, 23, 24, 40, 41, 87.01, 87.02, 88, 96.02, 96.03 and 96.04**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	27,069	
Population of one race:	25,619	94.6%
White alone	12,499	46.2%
Black or African American alone	9,690	35.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	175	0.6%
Asian alone	1,081	4.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	20	0.1%
Some other race alone	2,154	8.0%
Population of two or more races:	1,450	5.4%
Hispanic or Latino	4,666	17.2%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	10,242	
Family households:	6,260	61.1%
Married-couple family:	2,504	
With own children under 18 years	1,203	11.7%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	2,385	23.3%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	3,982	38.9%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	9,422	34.8%
Persons Age 18+	17,647	65.2%
Total Population	27,069	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	3,889	32%
Renter Occupied	6,353	52%
Vacant	1,916	16%
Total Units	12,158	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 2	\$14,913
Census Tract 23	\$17,188
Census Tract 24	\$21,496
Census Tract 40	\$25,926
Census Tract 41	\$18,472
Census Tract 87.01	\$28,991
Census Tract 87.02	\$28,036
Census Tract 88	\$33,885
Census Tract 96.02	\$17,461
Census Tract 96.03	\$21,678
Census Tract 96.04	\$16,055

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	26,820	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	9,521	35.5%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	17,299	64.5%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR FOUR - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 4 Area Census Tracts: 27, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 75 and 96.01**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	33,812	
Population of one race:	32,874	97.2%
White alone	5,877	17.4%
Black or African American alone	26,217	77.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	93	0.3%
Asian alone	246	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	11	0.0%
Some other race alone	430	1.3%
Population of two or more races:	938	2.8%
Hispanic or Latino	1,067	3.2%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	12,524	
Family households:	7,978	63.7%
Married-couple family:	3,226	
With own children under 18 years	1,488	11.9%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	2,694	21.5%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	4,546	36.3%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	11,403	33.7%
Persons Age 18+	22,409	66.3%
Total Population	33,812	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	6,055	42%
Renter Occupied	6,469	45%
Vacant	1,835	13%
Total Units	14,359	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 27	\$25,244
Census Tract 62	\$45,256
Census Tract 63	\$30,705
Census Tract 64	\$19,265
Census Tract 65	\$16,477
Census Tract 66	\$19,167
Census Tract 67	\$37,794
Census Tract 68	\$36,339
Census Tract 69	\$18,710
Census Tract 70	\$32,790
Census Tract 71	\$39,831
Census Tract 75	\$21,621
Census Tract 96.01	\$18,409

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	33,682	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	8,230	24.4%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	25,452	75.6%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR FIVE - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 5 Area Census Tracts: 94 and 95**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	6,629	
Population of one race:	6,434	97.1%
White alone	3,063	46.2%
Black or African American alone	2,955	44.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	33	0.5%
Asian alone	177	2.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	4	0.1%
Some other race alone	202	3.0%
Population of two or more races:	195	2.9%
Hispanic or Latino	432	6.5%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	3,283	
Family households:	769	23.4%
Married-couple family:	291	
With own children under 18 years	75	2.3%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	269	8.2%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	2,514	76.6%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	860	13.0%
Persons Age 18+	5,769	87.0%
Total Population	6,629	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	407	11%
Renter Occupied	2,876	79%
Vacant	353	10%
Total Units	3,636	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 94	\$11,485
Census Tract 95	\$27,750

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	5,335	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	1,851	34.7%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	3,484	65.3%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR SIX - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 6 Area Census Tracts: 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38.01, 38.02, 38.03 and 38.04**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	20,807	
Population of one race:	20,095	96.6%
White alone	14,663	70.5%
Black or African American alone	3,451	16.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	95	0.5%
Asian alone	1,482	7.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	7	0.0%
Some other race alone	397	1.9%
Population of two or more races:	712	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	1,104	5.3%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	7,888	
Family households:	3,202	40.6%
Married-couple family:	1,878	
With own children under 18 years	750	9.5%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	711	9.0%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	4,686	59.4%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	3,059	14.7%
Persons Age 18+	17,748	85.3%
Total Population	20,807	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	2,801	33%
Renter Occupied	5,087	61%
Vacant	497	6%
Total Units	8,385	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 32	\$15,464
Census Tract 33	\$17,697
Census Tract 34	\$28,226
Census Tract 35	\$43,819
Census Tract 36	\$35,491
Census Tract 38.01	\$29,427
Census Tract 38.02	\$0
Census Tract 38.03	\$0
Census Tract 38.04	\$0

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	15,915	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	3,652	22.9%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	12,263	77.1%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR SEVEN - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 7 Area Census Tracts: 10, 29, 30, 31, 37, 78.01, 78.02 and 93.02**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	22,505	
Population of one race:	21,997	97.7%
White alone	18,965	84.3%
Black or African American alone	2,269	10.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	104	0.5%
Asian alone	403	1.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	6	0.0%
Some other race alone	250	1.1%
Population of two or more races:	508	2.3%
Hispanic or Latino	850	3.8%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	12,768	
Family households:	3,176	24.9%
Married-couple family:	2,172	
With own children under 18 years	709	5.6%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	448	3.5%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	9,592	75.1%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	2,301	10.2%
Persons Age 18+	20,204	89.8%
Total Population	22,505	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	2,998	22%
Renter Occupied	9,770	71%
Vacant	1,001	7%
Total Units	13,769	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 10	\$31,335
Census Tract 29	\$30,802
Census Tract 30	\$24,036
Census Tract 31	\$42,087
Census Tract 37	\$41,413
Census Tract 78.01	\$36,563
Census Tract 78.02	\$67,813
Census Tract 93.02	\$17,563

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	21,519	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	3,087	14.3%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	18,432	85.7%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR EIGHT - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 8 Area Census Tracts: 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 76, 77, 83.01 and 83.02**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	27,674	
Population of one race:	26,723	96.6%
White alone	16,401	59.3%
Black or African American alone	8,751	31.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	121	0.4%
Asian alone	233	0.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	15	0.1%
Some other race alone	1,202	4.3%
Population of two or more races:	951	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	2,481	9.0%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	11,512	
Family households:	6,731	58.5%
Married-couple family:	3,805	
With own children under 18 years	1,733	15.1%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	1,581	13.7%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	4,781	41.5%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	7,543	27.3%
Persons Age 18+	20,131	72.7%
Total Population	27,674	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	6,529	52%
Renter Occupied	4,983	40%
Vacant	1,048	8%
Total Units	12,560	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 54	\$34,805
Census Tract 57	\$19,167
Census Tract 58	\$29,699
Census Tract 59	\$21,019
Census Tract 60	\$33,075
Census Tract 61	\$47,458
Census Tract 76	\$46,645
Census Tract 77	\$28,493
Census Tract 83.01	\$31,909
Census Tract 83.02	\$101,461

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	17,108	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	7,663	44.8%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	9,445	55.2%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR NINE - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 9 Area Census Tracts: 39, 46.02, 47.01, 47.02, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 79, 80, 81, 82 and 84**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	35,907	
Population of one race:	34,067	94.9%
White alone	11,109	30.9%
Black or African American alone	16,131	44.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	166	0.5%
Asian alone	777	2.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	21	0.1%
Some other race alone	5,863	16.3%
Population of two or more races:	1,840	5.1%
Hispanic or Latino	9,812	27.3%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	13,172	
Family households:	8,297	63.0%
Married-couple family:	3,431	
With own children under 18 years	1,717	13.0%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	3,021	22.9%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	4,875	37.0%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	12,621	35.1%
Persons Age 18+	23,286	64.9%
Total Population	35,907	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

Housing Units	Total Units	%
Owner Occupied	5,466	36%
Renter Occupied	7,706	51%
Vacant	2,079	14%
Total Units	15,251	100%

**Income**

Median Household Income by Census Tract	
Census Tract 39	\$21,588
Census Tract 46.02	\$15,625
Census Tract 47.01	\$17,220
Census Tract 47.02	\$30,025
Census Tract 48	\$19,635
Census Tract 49	\$20,990
Census Tract 50	\$15,959
Census Tract 51	\$19,727
Census Tract 52	\$16,875
Census Tract 79	\$19,954
Census Tract 80	\$22,154
Census Tract 81	\$27,015
Census Tract 82	\$31,845
Census Tract 84	\$31,010

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	%
Total:	35,658	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	11,494	32.2%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	24,164	67.8%

**CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY  
NBN SECTOR TEN - 2000 CENSUS DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Sector 10 Area Census Tracts: 7, 13, 15, 53, 55, 56, 92 and 93.01**

**Population and Race**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	17,143	
Population of one race:	16,386	95.6%
White alone	2,672	15.6%
Black or African American alone	10,480	61.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	104	0.6%
Asian alone	125	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	17	0.1%
Some other race alone	2,988	17.4%
Population of two or more races:	757	4.4%
Hispanic or Latino	5,434	31.7%

**Family Type**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total Households:	5,932	
Family households:	4,094	69.0%
Married-couple family:	1,094	
With own children under 18 years	552	9.3%
Female householder, With own children under 18 years :	1,987	33.5%
Nonfamily and 1-person households:	1,837	31.0%

**Youth Population**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Youth Age 0 - 17 Years	6,873	40.1%
Persons Age 18+	10,270	59.9%
Total Population	17,143	100.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

	Housing Units	Total Units	% of Total
Owner Occupied		1,467	21%
Renter Occupied		4,465	64%
Vacant		1,079	15%
Total Units		7,011	100%

**Income**

	Median Household Income by Census Tract
Census Tract 7	\$16,935
Census Tract 13	\$15,762
Census Tract 15	\$15,114
Census Tract 53	\$21,912
Census Tract 55	\$20,345
Census Tract 56	\$21,250
Census Tract 92	\$13,919
Census Tract 93.01	\$14,740

**Poverty Rate**

	Sector Total	% of Total
Total:	17,108	
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	7,663	44.8%
Income in 1999 at or above poverty level:	9,445	55.2%

**Appendix C: List of Neighborhood Groups in the City of Rochester**

Adapted from Monroe County (NY) Library System. Greater Rochester Neighborhood Association List, 2002 Edition <http://www.rochester.lib.ny.us/neighborhoods/city.htm>

### **General Associations**

ACTION FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY, INC. (ABC)

HOUSING COUNCIL IN THE MONROE COUNTY AREA, INC

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES INC

IBERO AMERICAN ACTION LEAGUE, INC

INTERFAITH ACTION

ISLA HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

LANDLORDS AGAINST DRUG DEALERS

LANDMARK SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK, INC

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE ROCHESTER METROPOLITAN AREA

METRO JUSTICE

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES OF ROCHESTER, INC. (NHSR)

NEIGHBORS BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS (NBN)

NYS COALITION OF PROPERTY OWNERS AND BUSINESSES

NYS TENANTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION. ROCHESTER CHAPTER,  
INC

PARK RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. (PRHO)

POLICE AND CITIZENS TOGETHER AGAINST CRIME (PAC-TAC)

PUERTO RICAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE CENTER, INC

ROCHESTER PRESERVATION BOARD

ROCHESTER. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ROCHESTER. NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT TEAMS (NET)

URBAN LEAGUE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, INC

**Coordinating Groups**

19TH WARD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC

CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

COALITION OF NORTHEAST ASSOCIATIONS (CONEA)

GROUP 14621 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC

NORTH EAST AREA DEVELOPMENT, INC. (NEAD)

NORTH EAST BLOCK CLUB ALLIANCE, INC. (NEBCA)

NORTH EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE (NENA)

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC

SOUTH EAST AREA COALITION, INC. (SEAC)

SOUTH WEDGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Associations in the Northeast Region**

ALPHONSE-BERNARD STREET BLOCK CLUB

BADEN STREET SETTLEMENT, INC

BEACON STREET - CARLETON STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BEECHWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION

BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL PARK BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

CITIZENS AGAINST TRAFFICKING TEAM (CATT)

CITIZENS FOR UNIVERSITY AVENUE REBUILD (CURB)  
COALITION OF NORTHEAST ASSOCIATIONS (CONEA)  
COMMUNITY PLACE OF GREATER ROCHESTER, INC  
CULVER-MERCHANTS POINT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
EIFFEL PLACE RESIDENTS BLOCK CLUB (EPRBC)  
FIGHT VILLAGE HOUSING  
GP4H (GARSON-PECK-FOURTH STREET AND HAYWARD AVENUE  
GROUP 14621 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC  
HOELTZER STREET BLOCK CLUB ASSOCIATION  
HOLLAND TOWNHOUSES TENANTS ASSOCIATION  
HUDSON AVENUE AREA ASSOCIATION  
LAURELTON AREA UNITES GREAT HOMES (LAUGH)  
LEWIS STREET CENTER, INC  
LINCOLN-HOLLISTER-NORTH COMMUNITY (LHNC)  
MAIN-GOODMAN-WEBSTER BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
MARKETVIEW HEIGHTS ASSOCIATION INC  
MERCHANTS AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (MANA)  
MILLER STREET BLOCK CLUB  
NORTH EAST AREA DEVELOPMENT, INC. (NEAD)  
NORTH EAST BLOCK CLUB ALLIANCE, INC. (NEBCA)  
NORTH EAST CHURCH CLUSTER (NECC)  
NORTH EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE (NENA)  
NORTH WINTON VILLAGE ASSOCIATION, LTD

PEOPLE WITH HOPE ACTING TOGETHER (PHAT)  
POLICE-CITIZENS INTERACTION COMMITTEE (CLINTON SECTION)  
PORTLAND AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
ROCHESTERIANS AGAINST ILLEGAL NARCOTICS (RAIN)  
WOODBURY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK CLUB  
WOODSTOCK, ATLANTIC, AKRON & MAIN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC

**Associations in the Northwest Region**

1ST WARD AND AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
BROWN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
CHARLES SETTLEMENT HOUSE, INC  
CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
CHARLOTTE-GENESEE LIGHTHOUSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CHARLOTTE-HARBOR MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION  
EDGERTON AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
FALLS BUSINESS DISTRICT ASSOCIATION  
HIGH FALLS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
JOSANA (JAY/ORCHARD STREET AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION)  
LANDLORD ASSOCIATION FOR MAPLEWOOD PROGRESS  
LYELL AREA REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE, INC. (LARC)  
LYELL AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (LABA)  
LYELL AVENUE NEIGHBORS OF SECTOR 3  
LYELL-OTIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

MAPLEWOOD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
MAPLEWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
MURRAY STREET BLOCK CLUB  
NEIGHBORHOOD HOPE  
NEIGHBORHOOD IN MOTION - ROOT OUT DRUGS (NIMROD)  
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC  
ONTARIO BEACH PARK PROGRAM COMMITTEE  
PEOPLE OF DUTCHTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (POD)  
STUTSON (STREET TEAM UNITED TO SAFEGUARD OUR NEIGHBORHOOD)  
TERRY TRACT ASSOCIATION  
UNITED NEIGHBORS INVOLVED TOGETHER (UNIT)  
WESTSIDE LANDLORD/RESIDENT ASSOCIATION

**Associations in the Southeast Region**

ATLANTIC-UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
AVERILL AVENUE BLOCK CLUB  
AVERILL CROSSING  
AZALEA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
BARRINGTON STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
CHAP 21 ASSOCIATION  
COALITION OF SOUTH EAST PROVIDERS  
CULVER-UNIVERSITY-EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (CUE)  
CYPRESS/LINDEN NEIGHBORS

ELLWANGER-BARRY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (EBNA)  
FIRST COMMUNITY INTERFAITH INSTITUTE, INC  
GENESEE RIVERSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION, INC  
GOULD STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
HARPER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
HICKORY NEIGHBORS UNITED THROUGH SERVICE (HICKORY NUTS)  
HILLSIDE-WINTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
LA FAYETTE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
LILAC NEIGHBORS  
MERRIMAN STREET ASSOCIATION  
MONROE AVENUE MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION  
MT. HOPE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
NUNDA BOULEVARD ASSOCIATION  
OXFORD MALL ASSOCIATION  
PARK AVENUE MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION INC  
PARK CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
PARK-MEIGS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
PHILLIPS PRIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
PRINCE STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
RICHMOND-ALEXANDER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
RUNDEL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
SANFORD STREET BLOCK CLUB  
SOUTH EAST AREA COALITION, INC. (SEAC)

SOUTH EAST ARTS DEVELOPMENT (SEAD)  
SOUTH EAST LOOP CITIZEN'S ADVISORY GROUP  
SOUTH WEDGE PLANNING COMMITTEE  
SOUTH WINTON AND ADJACENT STREETS ASSOCIATION (SWASA)  
SOUTHEAST LANDLORD COUNCIL  
SOUTHWEDGE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (SWEEP)  
STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
SWILLBURG NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
UPPER EAST END ASSOCIATION  
UPPER MONROE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
UPPER MT. HOPE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
WEDGE POINT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

**Associations in the Southwest Region**

19TH WARD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC  
ANTHONY STREET BLOCK CLUB  
CHANGING OF THE SCENES NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
CORN HILL NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION  
FREEDOM WAY BUSINESS COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATION  
JEFFERSON AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
MONTGOMERY NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, INC  
MONTGOMERY PRESERVATION COMPANY  
NEIGHBORHOOD UNITED ASSOCIATION

NEIGHBORS OF 19 SOUTH  
PLEX (PLYMOUTH-EXCHANGE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION)  
SOUTH PLYMOUTH AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
SOUTHWEST AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (SWAN)  
SOUTHWEST COMMERCIAL ALLIANCE  
SOUTHWEST HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS ASSOCIATION  
SUSAN B. ANTHONY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC  
THURSTON/BROOKS MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

**Associations in the Business District**

CULTURAL CENTER COMMISSION  
EAST END BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
GR ROCHESTER METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE-SMALL BUSINESS  
COUNCIL  
GROVE PLACE ASSOCIATION  
ROCHESTER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT CORP  
ROCHESTER EVENTS NETWORK  
ST. PAUL QUARTER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
TEN MANHATTAN SQUARE TENANTS ASSOCIATION

## **Appendix D: Timeline of Neighbors Building Neighborhoods**

November 1993	NBN Planning Process is introduced by the Ryan Administration
End 1993	William A. Johnson Jr. elected as new mayor of Rochester to replace out-going mayor Thomas P. Ryan
January 1, 1994	William A. Johnson Jr. becomes Mayor of Rochester
March 1994	NBN is officially unveiled by the Johnson Administration  Department of Community Development divides city's 34 neighborhoods into 10 planning sectors
11 October 1995	First set of NBN Sector plans published
1996 – 1999	First round of plan implementation
1998	City begins to provide \$5000 per sector per year to cover sector meeting expenses and small projects
April 1998	NeighborLink Network established
June 16, 1997	First set of six NET offices open
March 10, 1999	Enterprise Foundation provides \$3 million to City of Rochester to defray operating costs of neighborhood associations
January 1, 2000	NBN 2 begins (lasts for 18 months)
June 2000	Mayor Johnson commissions Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan
August 2000	RCDC launched
5 December 2000	City of Rochester allots each neighborhood sector \$100,000
January 2002	NBN 3 begins (lasts for 18 months)
End 2003	NBN 4 period used to plan the Participatory Evaluation Process
End 2005	Former Police Chief Robert Duffy elected as new mayor of Rochester to replace out-going Mayor William A. Johnson Jr.
January 1, 2006	Robert Duffy becomes Mayor of Rochester
Beginning 2006	Mayor Duffy's Transition Team reports their findings and evaluations that identify the short-term and long-term issues that the new administration will face.
Present (March 2006)	NBN is being evaluated

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