

# ROCHESTER COMMUNITY COALITION

## 2015 Top Priorities for State Investment

Business – City and County Government – Education – Labor – Nonprofits  
 Many voices, one agenda for a greater Rochester

### EQUITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM):** AIM funding finances critical public safety, education, and economic development services in Rochester. However, a massive disparity exists among upstate cities on a per capita distribution basis. For example, if Rochester were funded at the same rate as Buffalo, our city would receive an additional \$41.7 million. Despite major efforts to restructure city government, including workforce reductions, Rochester will face an estimated budget gap of more than \$34 million in its next fiscal year. Adjustments to the AIM formula could not come at a more critical time.

**2015 Goal:** A new formula for calculating the true financial needs of cities across the state is long overdue. We propose a thoughtful revision of the method for determining AIM funding, based on the realities facing Rochester and our sister cities throughout the upstate region.

### SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

As outlined in a recent report by the Rochester Area Community Foundation and ACT Rochester, there is a poverty crisis in Rochester. Rochester has the second highest child poverty rate in the country and ranks as the fifth poorest city when compared to the largest metro areas in the U.S. We strongly support Governor Cuomo's call for the formation of the Rochester Anti-Poverty Task Force and request state assistance to advance programs that strengthen working families and job creation.

**Child Care Funding:** Well-established evidence shows that high quality child care opportunities for working families lead to greater workplace productivity for current employees and improved academic readiness and health for children. Winning Beginning, a statewide coalition of 36 children's organizations, is advocating to increase the New York State investment in child care subsidies for low-income working families by \$100 million in FY 2015-2016. This would provide child care services for at least 13,000 additional children statewide who live in working families and who are already eligible for this assistance.

New York is the least affordable state for child care. Poverty rates are rising in the suburbs across Monroe County. Monroe County has the highest need outside of New York City, yet has lost more than 7,200 child care subsidy slots since 2001. Increased state funding for Monroe County would provide greater opportunities for families in need to secure affordable child care and improve outcomes across our community.

**2015 Goal:** Monroe County seeks an increase of at least \$4 million in New York State funding over its 2014-15 allocation. This would restore subsidies to at least 250 additional children. Longer term, we seek a change to the allocation formula that takes into account our region's high concentration of poverty.

**Market Driven Community Co-Op Corporation (MDCC Corp.):** The City of Rochester has proposed an innovative way to bring new employment and income into targeted areas with a concentration of poverty. The city proposes to create a Market Driven Community Co-Op Corporation (MDCC Corp.), which would leverage local anchor institutions (i.e., universities, hospitals, large employers) to transfer some of their existing value-added service contracts to MDCC Corp. subsidiaries located in distressed areas of Rochester. The initiative will fund a comprehensive citywide effort to provide technical, legal, and financial assistance for the start-up of five new worker cooperatives and creation of 200 jobs. This model does not just create jobs; rather it also changes neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. By creating a new economic center for the neighborhood, this model keeps families in place, which in turn helps sister businesses, educational centers and programs, and spurs the creation of new quality-of-life amenities. The MDCC Corp. initiative is based upon successful national models in Cleveland and New York City, as well as in the Basque region of Spain.

**2015 Goal:** \$1 million

### STRENGTHENING EDUCATION

**Hillside Work Scholarship Connection:** This nationally recognized development model helps at-risk youth successfully complete high school and continue on to post-secondary education and/or employment in good paying middle skills jobs at rates much higher than their peers. HWSC's efforts help families and children break the cycle of poverty in the communities where they operate.

HWSC has 28 years of successful progress and outcomes. Program growth has been supported in part through public/private partnerships that recognize HWSC's proven results. This investment will serve a cohort of 600 additional at-risk children through a four-year program cycle beyond the 2,300 children HWSC currently serves in the Rochester city schools. This investment will provide a potential return of \$100 million to New York State via increased expected earnings and decreased social cost.

**2015 Goal:** \$10 million dollars over four years of which 2/3 (\$6.7 million) comes from public dollars and 1/3 (\$3.3 million) comes from leveraging private dollars.

### CREATING JOBS THROUGH INNOVATION

**Rochester Institute of Technology MAGIC Spell Studios:** RIT will expand its Media Arts Games Interactive Creativity (MAGIC) Center with new facilities that strengthen its leadership in game design, film and animation, graphic design and imaging science and make the region a hub for innovation and job creation in these fields. The \$26 million project is projected to graduate at least three companies from its incubator over the next five years and scale up in the succeeding five years to grow additional companies and new jobs. New job potential in the first five years, including jobs at RIT and existing companies in this field, is estimated at 35-50 jobs, and at least 100 new jobs over ten years. The project will also increase enrollment in related programs at RIT, with a specific goal of retaining graduates in the region to join this industry cluster. RIT is working with several corporate partners to leverage New York State's investment in this initiative and to secure additional funding.

**2015 Goal:** \$15 Million (\$1.5 million secured through 2014 REDC process)

**University of Rochester Institute for Data Science:** The University of Rochester is among the top ten most powerful university-based supercomputing sites in North America, and home to the most advanced computer system dedicated to health research in the nation and the state's first Center of Excellence focused on data science. The unique capabilities at the University have already generated more than \$300 million in research funding over the last six years and involve more than 650 faculty, students, and research staff from more than 40 departments across the University. By leveraging basic research, training, and technology development in the expanding field of data science, we will establish New York State as an international leader in analyzing and commercializing the limitless uses of data to spur innovation, attract talent, improve quality of life, and drive economic growth. The University requests \$25 million in NYS support for a new 60,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility that will bring leading researchers, engineers, and computer scientists together with the necessary resources to empower collaborations in data science across all fields. The University's Data Science initiative is estimated to create 460 jobs both at the University and in the community, generate \$23 million in labor income, almost \$2 million in tax revenue, and attract about \$530 million in research funding over ten years.

**2015 Goal:** UR seeks \$25 million in capital support for the Institute for Data Science that will be matched by the University (\$1.5 million secured through 2014 REDC process.)

**Integrated Photonics Institute for Manufacturing Innovation (IP-IMI):** In October, President Obama announced that the Department of Defense would take the lead in the creation of an Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Institute, committing \$110 million to the project. As home to one of the oldest and largest optics, imaging, and photonics sectors with more than 100 photonics companies, coupled with unparalleled academic and research excellence in optics and photonics at UR and at RIT, the Rochester region is widely recognized as the global center for leadership and innovation in these sectors and the natural choice to host a National Institute for Photonics Manufacturing. Over the past 100 years or more, educational institutions and programs to support the local photonics industry have been established. These include the Institute of Optics at UR, the Chester Carlson Center for Imaging Science at RIT, and the Optical Systems Technology program at MCC. In addition, there is a complete optics fabrication facility at East High School in the City of Rochester. This is the only such facility of its kind in the U.S. Together, these institutions form a complete educational ecosystem to support the regional photonics industry. No other industrial cluster in the U.S. has a more complete ecosystem. Companies, universities, and other academic and training institutions from around the world will collaborate to bridge the gap between applied research and product development to create solutions to spur the growth of next generation manufacturing here in New York State. Tying the regional photonics educational programs to the regional photonics industrial cluster is a critical aspect of rebuilding the Rochester photonics industry and improving the quality of life in the region.

**2015 Goal:** The Rochester region seeks a commitment from New York State that would leverage hundreds of millions in federal and private sector funding in support of the goal of establishing the federal manufacturing institute headquartered in Rochester.

## FINGER LAKES REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PRIORITY PROJECTS

The Rochester Community Coalition supports the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's (FLREDC) 2014 Progress Report and its 32 transformational priorities.

The Coalition appreciates the \$80.7 million in economic development support announced in 2014 and being named one of the five winners of the state's 2014 Regional Council award. This support, which totals nearly \$306 million over the last four years, will enable our region to move forward with projects that will foster innovation and entrepreneurship, help small businesses grow and prosper, train our workforce for the jobs of the future, extend economic opportunity to underserved communities, revitalize key industrial development sites, catalyze growth in key industry sectors, and strengthen our communities and quality of life.

In order to build upon the economic development momentum that has been gained through the Regional Council process, the Coalition supports full funding for all of the 2014 priority projects and the following economic development priorities:

**Eastman Business Park:** Efforts to preserve and strengthen Eastman Business Park remain the region's top priority. The park is one of the nation's premier industrial development sites and possesses a unique set of assets that make it highly attractive to high-tech and manufacturing companies. Thanks to the significant support from the Governor, we have made substantial progress in resolving critical barriers to future growth at the park. The state's continued partnership and support is absolutely essential to resolve outstanding issues and to create the economic development tools needed to attract new companies and enable existing companies to grow.

**Science Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Park (STAMP):** STAMP, a 1,243-acre site in Genesee County, will attract the next generation of nano-technology (semiconductor and solar), bio-manufacturing, and advanced manufacturing companies to the state, create a high-tech corridor spanning upstate, and drive significant economic growth in both the Finger Lakes and Western New York regions. The project will create an estimated 1,400 construction jobs with 1,500 permanent manufacturing jobs at the site by year 2016. At full build-out, the site could support upwards of 10,000 jobs. In addition, the Coalition supports Project Eagle, which will help to accelerate the development of the site and the creation of 1,000 new high-tech jobs.

We appreciate the \$33 million awarded to STAMP in the 2014-2015 New York State Budget. We look forward to this investment, which will place the site in a competitive position to attract billions of dollars in private funding.

## INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

**NYS Route 390/I-490 Interchange/Lyell Ave. Interchange:** Critically important to the future development of Eastman Business Park, Rochester Technology Park, and many other initiatives identified by this Coalition and the Governor's Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council, this project will address many of the region's existing and future highway capacity and safety issues. To provide a simple measure of this project's importance to New York State as a whole, the 200,000 vehicles that use this interchange every day is equivalent to the traffic carried by both the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges combined.

Every year the NYSDOT allocates a regional allotment of federal and state highway and bridge funds to each region. These funds must be reserved for the maintenance and repair of our existing infrastructure; therefore it is equally imperative that this be considered a priority project and that funding for this multi-phased undertaking must not come from the annual DOT allocations.

**2015 Goal:** \$157 million

**Rochester J.O.B.S. (Job Opportunities Bring Success) Initiative:** This city/county collaboration focused on Rochester's tourism industry will revitalize our economy, support job growth in our region, attract tourists to our city, and help to retain our young talent. The Coalition supports the following infrastructure priorities:

### 2015 Goals:

- **Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center (\$76 million):** The Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center (JAFRRC) has over time proven itself to be a tremendous asset to the community and region both from an economic standpoint and by enhancing and promoting the community's reputation from a local, regional, and national level. Current analyzed trends demonstrate a need for modernization of the current facility and additional square footage to retain and attract existing and new business. Due to peak event load demand and increased competition, employing a strategy of renovation and expansion is needed to remain competitive and set us apart as a continued industry leader. This project is estimated to create 180 construction jobs and 1,000 full-time jobs.
- **Blue Cross Arena at the Community War Memorial (\$37.5 million):** The Blue Cross Arena at the Community War Memorial, which opened in 1955 and is home to the Rochester Americans, Knighthawks, Razorsharks, and Lancers, hosts an average of 150 events a year. It last was renovated in 1998, a \$41 million overhaul that brought the venue up to date and added 5,000 seats, luxury boxes, and a new look. Plans for Blue Cross envision a makeover to add restaurants with outdoor seating, court-side clubs, "party pits" and main lobby message boards or graphics as well as an outdoor marquee. This renovation is estimated to result in 200 construction jobs and 60 full-time jobs.
- **Broad Street Aqueduct (\$25 million):** This investment will help to convert the interior space of the Broad Street Aqueduct into a two-level retail space. The converted aqueduct also would provide a long-desired, climate-controlled passageway between the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center and the Blue Cross Arena at the Community War Memorial, making the city attractive to larger conventions and events. The project is estimated to result in 120 construction jobs and 140 full-time positions.
- **Frontier Field Modernization (\$13 million):** Frontier Field, which is home to the Rochester Red Wings, is in need of updating and structural improvements to keep it up to date with today's baseball standards and to maintain Rochester's standing as the #2 Top Minor League Market in the Country. Recently, a nationally recognized stadium consulting firm reviewed the stadium and recommended updates and structural changes. With 35 full-time staff, 400 seasonal workers, and more than 500,000 visitors annually, Frontier Field and the Red Wings play a vital role in our quality of life, and this renovation will help increase tourism and investment in our community.
- **Seneca Park Zoo Tropical Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza (\$38 million):** The Seneca Park Zoo Tropical Exhibit and Main Entry Plaza project involves the replacement of the obsolete Main Zoo Building with a number of new animal exhibits, which will emphasize natural environments and conservation, as well as other associated improvements. The Tropical Exhibit Building will include Tropical Africa, featuring gorillas, and Tropical Asia, featuring orangutans. The project also consists of Main Entry Plaza improvements, including ticketing, administration, education, gift shop, and concessions.