Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative

2016 Implementation and Action

GOAL

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative is an unprecedented community-wide effort to reduce poverty in the Rochester and Monroe County region by 50 percent over the next 15 years.

BACKGROUND

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) was formed in 2015 in response to widespread acknowledgement of the exceptional poverty rates that persist in the City of Rochester, especially among children. An unparalleled public-private partnership grew to begin the important work of poverty reduction. Thousands of individuals are contributing to poverty reduction work with RMAPI, including individuals impacted by poverty, at every step of the way.

Over the course of 2015, a dual-generational action plan arose through an extensive community-engagement process. This plan included a three-tiered strategy of: (1)Adult Mentoring to better connect those impacted by poverty to job opportunities, while concurrently addressing the social barriers that prevent consistent, sustainable employment; (2) Early Childhood Supports focused on giving kids and families the best opportunity to succeed; and (3) Systems Integration which includes the design and implementation of more coordinated systems of social support that allow for a more straightforward path to self-sufficiency.

RMAPI engaged IBM to validate and build upon these recommendations and was awarded an IBM Smarter Cities Challenge grant, which commenced in the fall of 2015. The final recommendations of the IBM engagement reiterated the need for a more coordinated system of social supports, including implementation of processes and systems intended to unlock and measure community potential.

RMAPI ROADMAP FOR CHANGE
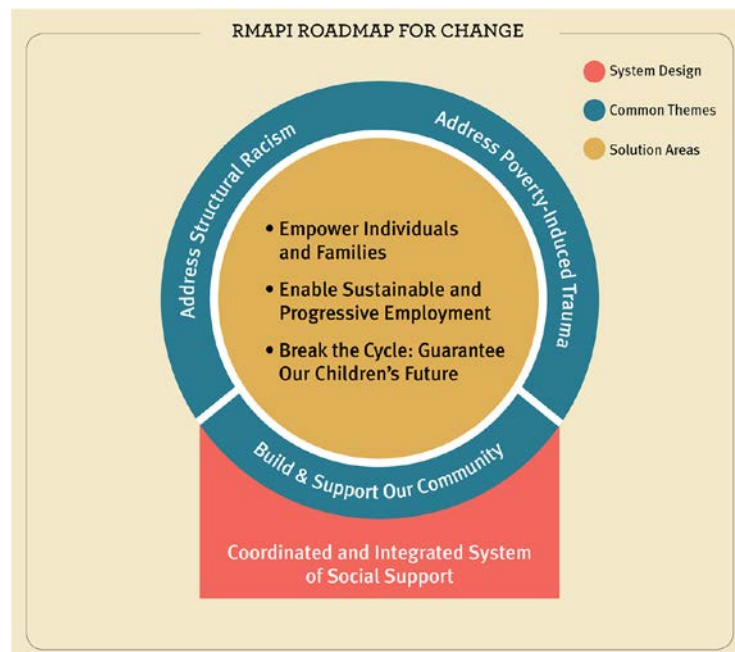
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NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Poverty Impact Statement**: RMAPI, in conjunction with the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council (FLREDC) crafted and applied a Poverty Impact Statement to be completed throughout the Upstate Revitalization Initiative and complimentary Consolidated Funding Application process. This is raising awareness about the issues that impact people in poverty, and asking applicants to define how their proposed project aligned with the community's goals around poverty reduction.

- **Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) Award**: New York State has recognized RMAPI's early success in achieving community consensus around a plan to reduce poverty, and will be replicating RMAPI's planning and engagement process by awarding ESPRI support to 16 other cities through 2017. NYS has committed $2.75 million to support RMAPI's transition from planning to implementation. These funds will be targeted towards the work of System Integration, in concert with the implementation of pilot projects around Adult Mentoring and Early Childhood Supports.

- **Invest Health Award from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**: Invest Health is focused on developing coordinated systems of social supports across traditionally siloed sectors such as healthcare, education and social services, with a particular focus on environmental solutions. This engagement is exemplary of the type of Systems Integration work recommended by the community and the IBM Smarter Cities Team. RMAPI was awarded the grant in partnership with the City of Rochester as the lead. This engagement will continue through 2017.

- **Data on "Benefits Cliff"**: The RMAPI data team, in coordination with the FLREDC, identified the "Benefits Cliff" as a potentially significant barrier for people impacted by poverty. "Benefits Cliff" is the term for what happens when public benefits phase down or out quickly, leading to an abrupt reduction or loss of benefits for families as household earnings increase, but have not increased enough for self-sufficiency to be reached. There is a preliminary investigation in progress, which will be used to inform RMAPI's work around Systems Integration and Program Development going forward.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Hundreds of people from across the community developed a set of shared values that will serve as the foundation of our work to reduce poverty. To reach our goals, we must all understand and embrace these shared values:

BUILD AND SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY	ADDRESS STRUCTURAL RACISM	ADDRESS TRAUMA
Help to rebuild struggling neighborhoods with quality support services, for example businesses, healthcare, childcare and strong community schools, that make them safe, healthy and livable.	End the activities and actions that continue racial inequality in public policies, institutional practices and other cultural norms.	Help to heal people and neighborhoods that are suffering from repeated experiences with trauma; provide support and services that are sensitive to traumatic experiences like abuse, addiction and violence.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Beginning in Q4 2016, the first pilot projects will begin in the Marketview Heights, Emma and Beechwood neighborhoods. This area was selected through a rigorous, data-driven process in partnership with the City of Rochester's Innovation Team. The target area also includes an emerging neighborhood-based initiative, Connected Communities, which is modeled after the Purpose Built Communities strategy that has worked to reduce poverty successfully in similarly struggling cities across the United States.

Adult Mentoring	
Lead	Catholic Family Center, Action for a Better Community, Community Place
Target Population	300 people
Initial Pilot	27 months, in the target neighborhood
Implementation	Q4 2016
What	Job training, job placement, social services and post-job placement coaching that focuses on maintaining employment
How	Paid mentor, facilitated by social service providers, who will provide care coordination, case management and serve as the link between all parties that are needed for individual success
Outcomes to be measured	• Unemployment rate • Rise in income of program participants • Rate of retention of employees in the program • Increase in the number of trained/skilled residents

Early Childhood Supports	
Lead	TBD
Target Population	Approximately 500 children/youth
Initial Pilot	18 months in the target neighborhood
Implementation	Expected Q2 2017
What	Home visitation/in-home parenting education and increased access to high-quality child care
How	At-risk parents and children receive evidence-based in-home education and support that promotes healthy development and wellness Bring high quality, affordable childcare to scale in the pilot implementation neighborhoods and focus on efficiencies among childcare, social services and school systems to ensure effective use of public supports
Outcomes to be measured*	• Educational milestones (i.e. speech and language development, cognition) • Physical, emotional and mental health of children • School readiness and literacy • Job retention and increased employment reliability (lack of access to childcare is a barrier to employment and job retention)

*United Way currently invests Community Fund dollars into evidence-based home visitation and summer enrichment programs that have been providing positive results for nearly a decade. This effort would include bringing those programs to scale with a wider base of eligible first-time parents and children.

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Phase I Implementation includes **Systems Design and Integration** at both the macro- and micro-level, to support the overarching goal of 50% reduction in poverty in 15 years.

At the macro-level, this priority aims to account for and align the significant number of poverty-reduction efforts and complimentary initiatives being implemented across the community, including but not limited to Connected Communities, ROC the Future, Medicaid redesign and the Finger Lakes Performing Provider System, efforts from the Mayor's Innovation Team, the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's Pathways to Prosperity initiative, etc.

In the short term, and in response to this priority, RMAPI will engage FSG, a nationally-recognized nonprofit consulting group, to help pivot the initiative towards a Collective Impact model that will strengthen and sustain implementation efforts. Collective Impact is defined as a long-term commitment by a group of stakeholders from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific problem at scale.

Build a Coordinated System of Social Supports	
Lead	Outside consultant and varied local stakeholders to begin design and implementation
What	A focus on efficacy and efficiency of services supporting people impacted by poverty by better coordinating and aligning social services, healthcare and education, creating a holistic approach to poverty reduction
How	Link providers in target neighborhoods to avoid duplication of efforts based on RMAPI workgroup and IBM Smarter Cities recommendations Leverage the work of our community partners to begin implementing systems design in Q2/3 2017, reinforcing activities through data sharing and continuous communication
Outcomes to be measured	• Greater efficiency in service delivery systems as measured by reduction of duplicative services and related costs • Better reporting and accountability of community outcomes with initial target neighborhood as Pilot • Increased value of systems of social support

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

With the person and/or family in the center, the Greater Rochester community is focusing on seven key areas of support. Our partner organizations and initiatives below are working together to help individuals and families connect to services, while building community connections and working on system-wide changes to overcome poverty in Rochester and Monroe County.
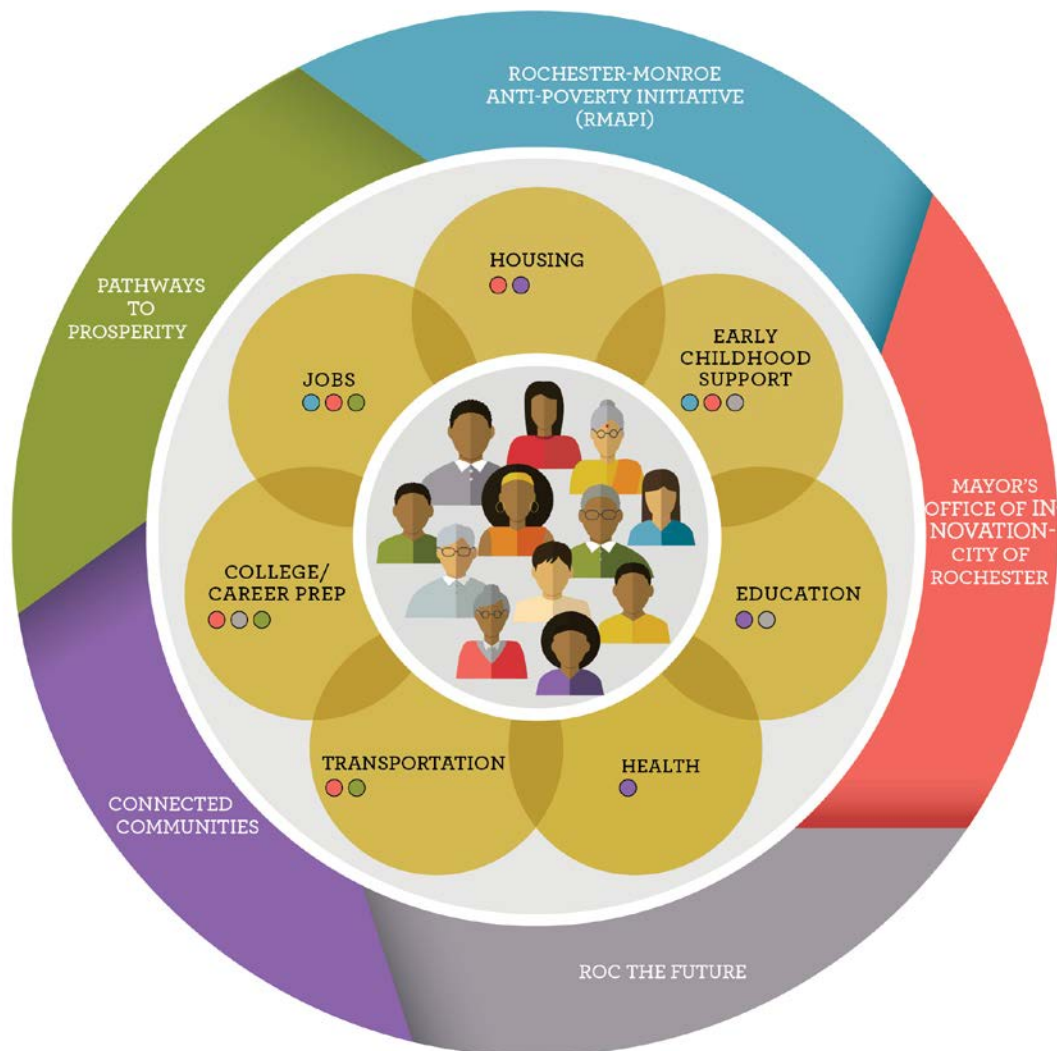
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

RMAPI, in partnership with other community initiatives, has formed a Community Advisory Council (CAC) populated with residents from the target neighborhoods and people impacted by poverty, as well the community at large. The charge of the CAC is to ensure that both program implementation and RMAPI's strategic direction is responsive to those most impacted by our local poverty challenges.