

# D. CITY + NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION

## INTRODUCTION

Promoting the City of Rochester to local, regional, national, and international audiences is one of the primary purposes of *Rochester 2034*. Rochester has a great story to tell and the entire community must work together to make sure it is heard. Our powerful message will foster the confidence of those who invest in our city, whether they are residents, workers, employers or visitors. Additionally, promoting city neighborhoods increases resident and investor confidence, thus creating positive effects on real estate markets, civic pride, and overall quality of life.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Rochester has a great story and the entire community must work together to make sure it is heard.
- Promotional efforts, like *Celebrate City Living* and *Downtown Definitely*, highlight the benefits of living and investing in the City and help to foster interest and excitement.
- By marketing and branding their neighborhoods, community organizations can help foster community pride and bring in new residents and businesses.
- More needs to be done to celebrate and promote school programming and successes in the RCSD.

## A PROUD + PROGRESSIVE CITY

Rochester is the largest city in a six-county Metropolitan Statistical Area of more than one million people, in the heart of New York's breathtaking Finger Lakes Region. The city straddles the Genesee River from the Erie Canal on its southern border to the Port of Rochester at the terminus of the river at Lake Ontario. A beautiful 96-foot waterfall provides an iconic vista in the center of the city.

The Flower City is the largest population and employment center between New York City and Buffalo and provides a quality of life that combines the convenience and accessibility of a small town with the cultural offerings of a large city. Rochester is within a 10 hour drive of many of the largest cities in North America, including New York City, Toronto, Boston, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Washington and Baltimore.

The Rochester region is in the midst of economic transformation shaped by its unique history as a center of imaging sciences and other technological advancements.



## A PROUD + PROGRESSIVE CITY CONTINUED

For much of the 20th century, Rochester was informally known as the Image City because it was home to the Eastman Kodak Co., Xerox, and Bausch and Lomb. The principals of these iconic companies were also prominent philanthropists who helped shape Rochester's quality of life with generous investments in the city's artistic, cultural and natural resources. They helped establish the Rochester Institute of Technology and the University of Rochester as centers of innovation and research, which are now cornerstones of the region's growing knowledge economy.

The science and talented graduates emerging from these institutions, along with a knowledge base and trained workforce from the former "big-three" employers, is one reason the U.S. government has made investments to establish Rochester as a national center for photonics research and manufacturing. Downtown Rochester is home to more than 50 firms that specialize in design and innovation.

This economic transformation has coincided with major changes to the built environment as the City continues to focus on quality of life with its investments in infrastructure. The City has built a deep draft Marina at the Port of Rochester; replaced a sunken expressway with an at-grade boulevard with improved access for pedestrians and bicyclists; demolished a downtown mall and superblock, making way for more pedestrian-friendly redevelopment opportunity; and has installed more than 100 miles of bicycle lanes. The City Department of Environmental Services is bringing more green infrastructure to the city and is pursuing an aggressive plan to reduce Rochester's carbon footprint.

In 2018, the City launched an ambitious effort to change a historically industrial relationship with the Genesee River to one built on aesthetics and environmental sustainability with its ROC the Riverway initiative. This \$500 million plan will

guide investments in public spaces near the river to leverage the tremendous value of Downtown's waterfront and attract private development and the next generation of employers and workers.

Rochester is home to many world-class events focused on food, music, the arts and culture. A series of wildly successful festivals help define the Rochester experience. The City of Rochester Public Market, in addition to being the nation's oldest and best farmer's markets, hosts many events throughout the year, including free summer concerts and monthly Food Truck Rodeos.

Rochester has a rich history as a center for social justice and human rights, being the home and final resting place of freedom-fighter and abolitionist Frederick Douglass and suffragist Susan B. Anthony. Residents and visitors can enjoy tours of many historic sites including Mount Hope Cemetery, visit one-of-a kind museums, or they can simply take a self-guided walk in one of the city's eight Preservation Districts.

Rochester is also a city of neighborhoods, with a well maintained stock of 19th and early 20th century homes in a variety of architectural styles, including Victorian, Tudor and American Four Square. Thriving commercial corridors host eclectic boutiques, artisan coffee shops, unique entertainment venues, and sidewalk cafes to give residents plenty of walkable destinations.

**Despite the many challenges of our past, Rochester has proven time and time again to be resilient, innovative, and generous. We must continue to celebrate that heritage and let it guide us as we approach our 200th birthday in 2034.**

## D. CITY + NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

### LOCALS' LOVE FOR ROCHESTER

During the *Rochester 2034* community engagement process, City planners asked the community to express what they love about the city and various neighborhoods. Pop-up events were held throughout city to capture people's enthusiasm for all things Rochester.



STUDENTS + RESIDENTS DISCUSS WHY THEY

## LOVE ROCHESTER...







## D. CITY + NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

### STRATEGIC PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS

#### CELEBRATE CITY LIVING

Celebrate City Living is Rochester's resource for learning about Rochester living and housing, touting the city as a great place to establish roots and grow. As part of this initiative, the Rochester Coalition for Neighborhood Living, conducts an annual housing exposition that brings people from all over to gather and discover the character and amenities of Rochester's diverse neighborhoods. The [program's website](#) helps people find available housing and learn about Rochester's many distinct neighborhoods, events, and housing resources.

#### DOWNTOWN DEFINITELY

A public-private collaboration created a marketing campaign entitled "Downtown Definitely" in 2018 to highlight Downtown's developing character and amenities. Downtown has become one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the region, blending young professionals, artists, students, mid-career executives, senior citizens, retirees, and people of all incomes. Downtown's residential population grew to 7,200 in 2018, adding 4,000 people since 2000. At least 3,000 more are expected to move in by 2021. New housing and innovation companies are fast-tracking the highly visible transformation underway in Center City. The [Downtown Innovation Zone](#) is an online hub for Downtown's digital and technology ecosystem, promoting and supporting multiple incubators and start-up companies.



## ROCHESTER'S FLOWER CITY LOGO

Rochester's Flower City Logo is widely recognized as a symbol of Rochester civic pride. Its origin is rooted in local history. Rochester first made a name for itself as a mill town in the 1800s, primarily the milling of grains into flour. Rochester's nickname, "The Flour City", eventually evolved into the "Flower City" later in the century, after nursery and seed businesses began to dominate the local economy. Rochester's logo is reflective of both nicknames. Designed by the City around 1975, the logo is a lilac, which refers to the City's official flower, and the nearly 400 varieties of lilacs that bloom in the city. The five lines dissecting the logo represents to the spokes of a water wheel, the driving force of the flour industry.



The logo has gained popularity among recent years, and can be seen throughout the city on flags, on t-shirts, and even as tattoos. The City encourages use of this logo as an expression of community pride. Visit [cityofrochester.gov/trademark](http://cityofrochester.gov/trademark) to learn how to apply for commercial or non-commercial usage of Rochester's Flower City Logo.

## MARKETING PARTNERS

### VISIT ROCHESTER

Visit Rochester is the official tourism promotion agency for Monroe County, aiming to grow and maximize visitors to enhance the local economy. Visit Rochester's members include the lodging, retail, restaurant and service industries as well as community organizations.

### ROCHESTER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

A private, not-for-profit, economic development entity, the Rochester Downtown Development Corporation (RDDC) works to create the synergy and balance that is part of a healthy downtown. RDDC's agenda promotes and nurtures a broad range of development initiatives. These include housing, commercial, entertainment, and large public projects. RDDC's primary role is to promote and advocate for a vibrant and economically strong downtown as part of the region's larger asset package.

### GREATER ROCHESTER ENTERPRISE

The Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) is Rochester's economic development organization committed to attracting new capital investments and creating regional wealth and new jobs. They highlight our talented workforce, exceptional quality of life, and proximity to major markets as major reasons that Rochester is the right place for business expansion. More information on business in Rochester can be found [here](#).

### GREATER ROCHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The mission of the Chamber of Commerce is to advocate for an environment that promotes the success of their members and of the local economy. The Chamber features a variety of programs and services to serve its members that can help them reach their full potential. The organization is a strong partner with the City of Rochester, GRE, RDDC, and other economic development and promotional partners in the region.



## D. CITY + NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

### NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION

Building strong neighborhoods and real estate markets contributes significantly to a city's brand and perception. It requires more than constructing and rehabilitating buildings – grassroots community participation and targeted marketing and branding efforts are necessary. Neighborhood marketing and branding improves perceptions and increases resident and investor confidence in neighborhoods, thus having positive effects on real estate markets and overall quality of life.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS + EVENTS

The sense of community found in neighborhoods has been shown to be linked to so many positives attributes: creating sense of belonging, providing a physical and mental health boost, and even lowering crime rates. Rochester's many neighborhood groups are tremendous assets for building community and promoting neighborhoods. These groups are recognized as important partners in making Rochester successful and attractive for living, visiting, and opening a business.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD SIGNS + BANNERS

Throughout Rochester, neighborhood banners and welcome signs enhance a sense of place and identity while beautifying streets and instilling pride. These signs and banners are an effective way to celebrate a distinct city neighborhood. They add color and flourish to a streetscape and create a sense of unity, pride and belonging. The City of Rochester provides assistance to community groups who would like to design and install welcome signs and banners in their neighborhoods.



What residents of the Maplewood Neighborhood LOVE about their community!

## “BRANDING YOUR CITY” BY CEOs FOR CITIES

A brand — clear, compelling and unique — is the foundation that helps to make a place desirable as a business location, visitor destination or a place to call home. Development of a brand strategy for a city leverages the features of that place to provide a relevant and compelling promise to a target audience. It is not an ad campaign or a tagline. Rather, the branding strategy is a deeper, more emotionally shared vision that influences actions. There are many reasons why it is critical for a place to have a brand strategy, but the most common is to stimulate economic growth. That’s because a strong brand can:

- Shift the perception of a place that may be suffering from a poor image among external and internal constituents.
- Create a common vision for the future of the community and its potential.
- Provide a consistent representation of the place.
- Enhance its local, regional and/or global awareness and position.
- Shed unfavorable stereotypes associated with a place and make it more appealing.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION CONTINUED

### NEIGHBORHOOD BRANDING

The first step in determining a neighborhood brand is identifying its unique strengths and attributes. This can be a fun, positive, and unifying exercise for a neighborhood group to undertake. During the *Rochester 2034* community engagement process, City planners asked neighborhood members to express what they love about their neighborhoods. Residents across the city were excited to list all the great characteristics of where they call home. The top five things mentioned across the city are:

- **Local Amenities** (i.e., parks, gardens, businesses, and events)
- **Walkability**
- **A sense of community within neighbors**
- **History / Architecture**
- **Convenient Location**

These common themes should influence any branding or promotional efforts undertaken locally or city-wide.



### NEIGHBORHOODWORKS AMERICA

NeighborWorks America is one of the country’s preeminent leaders in affordable housing and community development. They published a series of articles entitled, “Neighborhood Branding and Marketing: A Series on Redefining Your Neighborhood Image” that offers a step by step approach to creating a neighborhood brand and how to use it to boost resident confidence and attract new residents, businesses, and other investment. Find the series of articles [here](#).

Recent NeighborWorks grant awards centered on marketing and branding Rochester’s Triangle and Swillburg neighborhoods resulted in marked increases in home sale prices and fewer days on the market. Additionally, there was a notable increase in the number of residents participating in community activities and an increase in volunteer hours.



# D. CITY + NEIGHBORHOOD PROMOTION [CNP]

## ACTION PLAN

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PARTNERS
<b>CNP-1</b> Support neighborhood efforts around branding and promotion.	CNP-1a Distribute copies of the NeighborWorks series of articles entitled, "Neighborhood Branding and Marketing: A Series on Redefining Your Neighborhood Image" to neighborhood groups.	<b>City,</b> Neighborhood Groups
	CNP-1b Pursue funding for support of community branding and promotion, including guidance on creating signage, public arts, beautification, banners, and other visible improvements.	<b>City,</b> Neighborhood Groups, Community Groups/Funders
	CNP-1c Install more welcoming neighborhood gateways through signage, beautification, public art, and wayfinding.	City, Neighborhood Groups
<b>CNP-2</b> Promote the City of Rochester as a premier place to live, work, and visit.	CNP-2a Create strategies for being more intentional about positive messaging about the city. Actively counter the negative perceptions perpetuated through social media and other channels.	<b>City,</b> Neighborhood Groups, Building/Property Owners, Residents, Media
	CNP-2b Preserve and promote iconic and unique Rochester facilities and events that appeal to local residents and attract tourists, convention business, corporate relocations, and the recruitment of skilled workers.	<b>City,</b> Visit Rochester, FLRTC, RDDC, GRE, Chamber of Commerce
	CNP-2c Continue the Celebrate City Living effort as an effective program for generating interest in living in the city. Explore opportunities for more deliberate relationships between CCL, Street Managers, business associations, and neighborhood groups.	<b>City,</b> Celebrate City Living Coalition, Street Managers, Business Associations, Neighborhood Groups

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

“Create banners throughout the city to promote City and Neighborhood branding”

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

“We need gateway improvements to welcome people to neighborhoods.”

**Notes:**

1. Partners listed in bold are recommended to lead the implementation of that strategy.
2. For a list of partner acronyms see [Appendix A](#).

GOAL	STRATEGIES	PARTNERS
<p><b>CNP-2</b> Promote the City of Rochester as a premier place to live, work, and visit.</p>	<p>CNP-2d Prepare a series of guided Rochester Walking Tours (i.e., historic tours, mural tours, architectural tours) to complement existing self-guided tours. Include a creative plan for promoting the tours and distributing materials.</p>	<p><b>Landmark Society,</b> Neighborhood Groups, City</p>
	<p>CNP-2e Utilize "What's Good Rochester" as a platform to collect broadcast and social media content from local residents and organizations, promoting all the current positive assets, projects, people, and developments in the city.</p>	<p><b>City,</b> WXXI Station</p>
	<p>CNP-2f Convene a stakeholder group to develop a marketing brand/campaign for the City of Rochester.</p>	<p><b>City,</b> Business Community, GRE, Chamber of Commerce, Visit Rochester, Tourism Destination Representatives</p>
<p><b>CNP-3</b> Work with the Rochester City School District to promote innovative school programming and successes.</p>	<p>CNP-3a Produce regular videos featuring students, graduates, parents, teachers, and administrators that promote the positive stories around attending city schools.</p>	<p><b>City,</b> RCSD</p>
	<p>CNP-3b Continue to celebrate and broadcast achievements by students and teachers of RCSD and charter schools.</p>	<p><b>City,</b> RCSD, Charter Schools</p>