

# GENESEE VALLEY PARK WEST

## MASTER PLAN

# 02

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

### 2015



City of Rochester

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# 02

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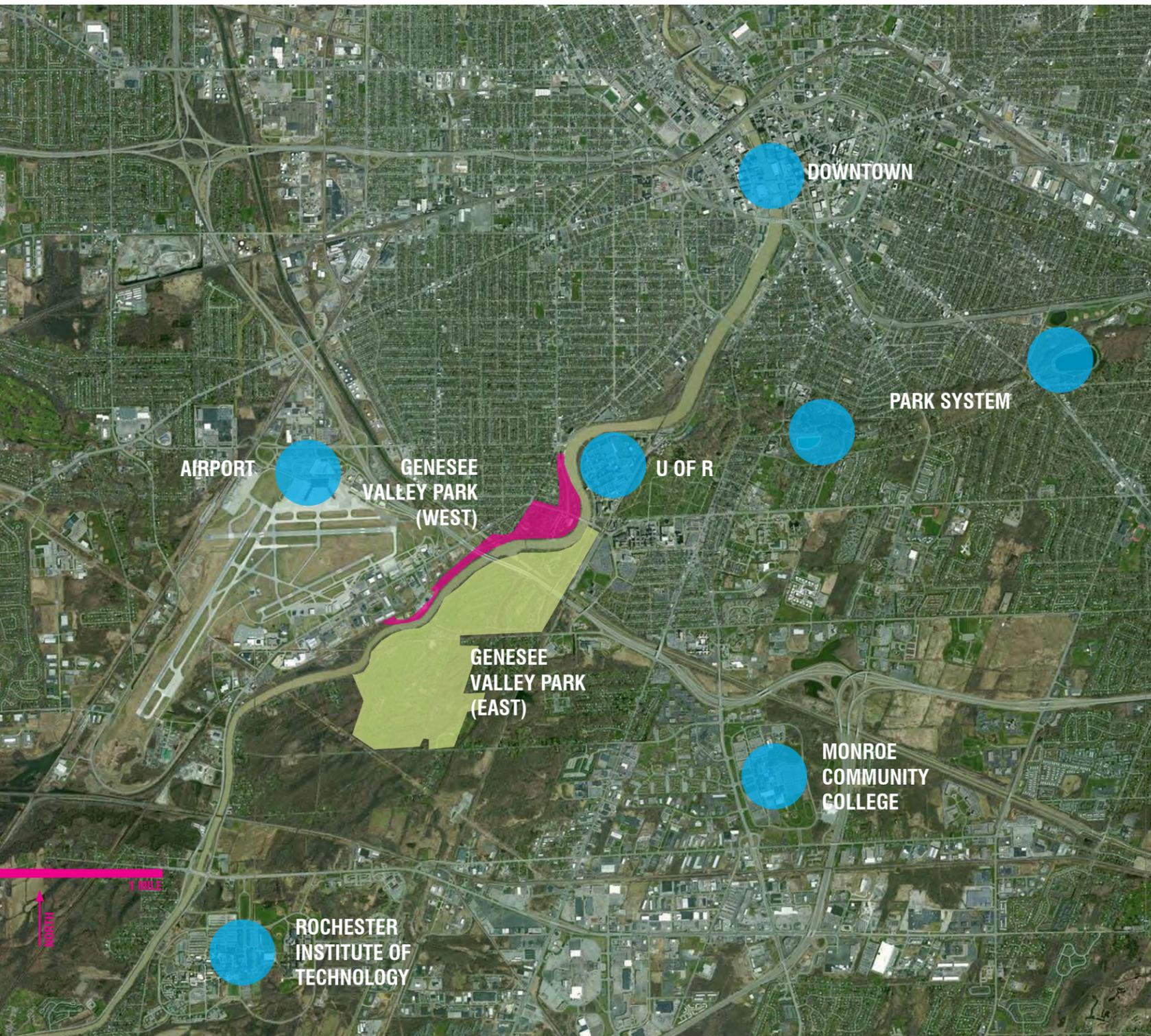
# BACKGROUND & CONTEXT





## The City & Region

## The Neighborhood & Its Dynamic



Lands of the 802 acre Genesee Valley Park which are located on the west side of the Genesee River are comprised of approximately 84 acres of parkland that has been devoted to active recreation in various forms since its inception in the late 1800s. Located on the extreme southwest edge of the City – the park boundary is either directly adjacent to or within one-half mile of the Monroe County towns of Gates, Chili, Brighton, and Henrietta. Though both are located within the City of Rochester, through an agreement made in the 1970s, the eastern portion of Genesee Valley Park is managed and controlled by Monroe County Parks Department while the western side is managed as a recreation park by the City of Rochester.

Genesee Valley Park as a whole is one of three large Rochester parks designed by celebrated landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted (Sr.) that make up the foundation of Rochester’s expansive and historically significant park system. Genesee Valley Park West is the largest and most diverse active recreation park in the city with sports fields, courts, multi-use trails, outdoor swimming and indoor ice-skating. It also uniquely features broad access to the sporting opportunities afforded by the waters of the Genesee River and Erie Canal, such as canoeing, kayaking, rowing and related water sports.

Genesee Valley Park, and particularly Genesee Valley Park West, is also the center hub of a considerable state, regional and city trail network that links Albany, Buffalo, Lake Ontario and New York’s Finger Lakes and Southern Tier. Just two miles from Rochester’s urban core, the park benefits from being at the intersection of these significant statewide trail networks – both land and water.

The Genesee River itself is the region’s most important natural asset. It functions as a major recreational and cultural resource moving both peacefully and dramatically through the city’s landscape. In days gone by, the river was the driving force in facilitating Rochester’s incredible growth as one of America’s first “Boom Towns.” Like many cities, Rochester has capitalized on this asset by transforming the industrial river edge into new park connections, a significant trail network, public waterfront access, and new commercial and housing opportunities.

Although GVPW is the epicenter of the most diverse municipal recreation opportunities in the city and serves as the hub of the region’s trail multi-use network, the near-comedic tragedy of GVPW’s unmatched assets is that it is desperately disconnected from the broader urban fabric, the day-to-day liveliness of the urban street grid and the land uses that most benefit from urban recreational parks. The park is immediately adjacent to the City’s 19th Ward and Plymouth-Exchange (PLEX) neighborhoods and the neighborhoods benefit tremendously from the park’s features. In many ways, the 19th Ward and PLEX neighborhood have a distinctive advantage over many areas in the city – that they are so close to the multitude of recreation resources offered by GVPW. However, the remaining surrounding land uses and districts are enormous barriers to connectivity that inhibit the park’s use and potential.

The park is enveloped nearly 300-degrees by enormous and sometimes inhospitable institutional land uses or physical barriers that prohibit meaningful and simple vehicular and pedestrian access to livable neighborhoods areas beyond. Except for the 19th Ward, the park is detached from the street grid. The airport constitutes a 900-acre barrier and adjacent land includes a host of industrial airport-centric land uses. The park has also been bisected by Interstate-390, which more aggressively disrupts the east side of Genesee Valley Park, but functions as a major barrier none-the-less.

Despite being the greatest assets, both the Barge Canal and the Genesee River function as physical barriers to potential park users in residential neighborhoods both in and outside the city. The waterways funnel vehicular and pedestrian traffic to bridge choke points that limit access and direct connectivity without choice. Furthermore, the University of Rochester and Strong Memorial Hospital, which constitutes the major land uses on the eastern side of the river, restrain connectivity to neighborhoods beyond. While certainly not a hostile environment on its own, the University of Rochester’s size and internal circulation are not conducive to connecting neighborhoods on either side and both the University and the hospital necessitates enormous surface parking resources – making connections ambiguous and unwelcoming.

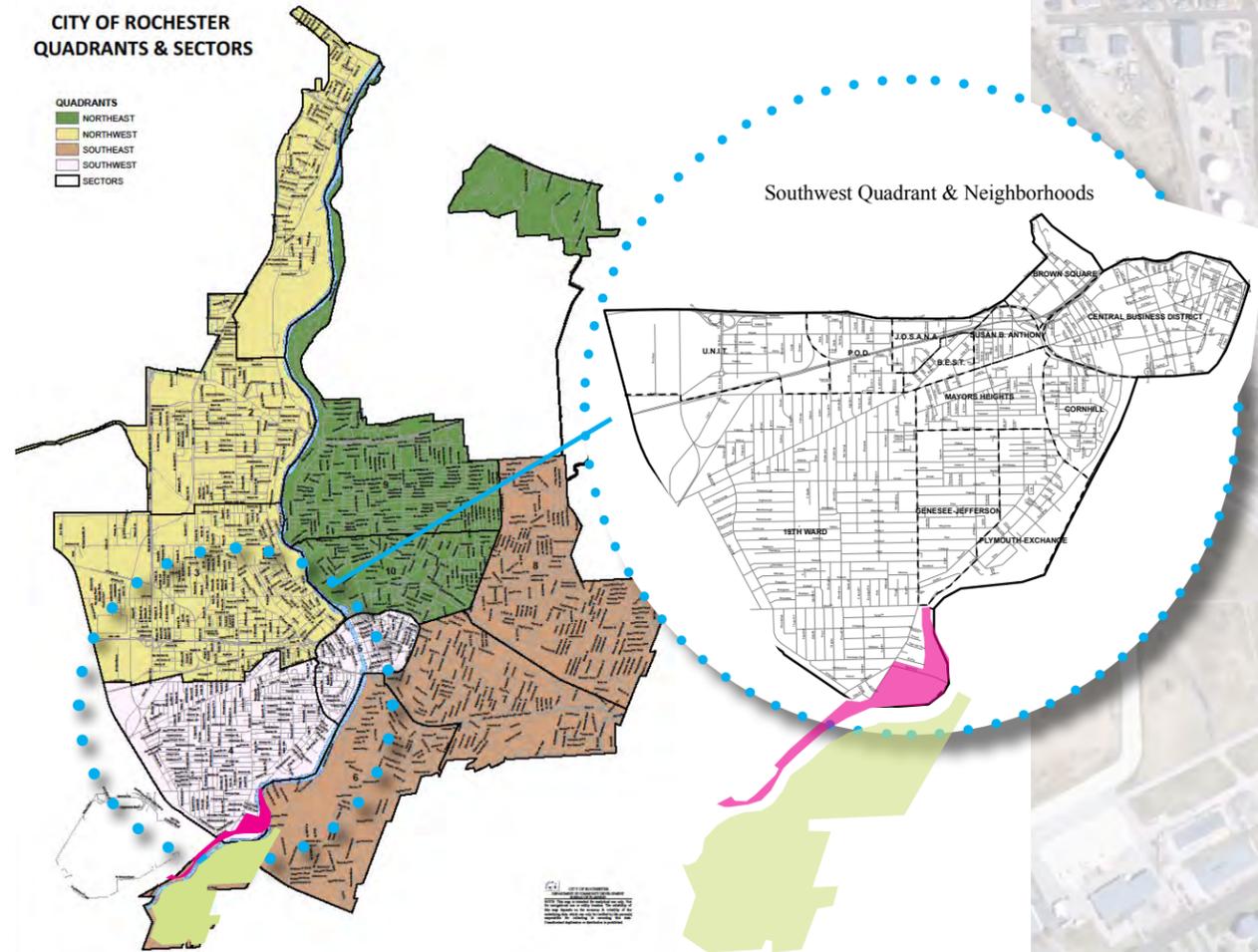
New York State GIS Clearinghouse

NEIGHBORHOOD

The park is immediately adjacent to the City's 19th Ward and Plymouth-Exchange (PLEX) neighborhoods and the neighborhoods benefit tremendously from the park's features. In many ways, the 19th Ward and PLEX neighborhoods have a distinctive advantage over many areas in the city – that they are so close to the multitude of recreation resources offered by GVPW.

CITY OF ROCHESTER QUADRANTS & SECTORS

- QUADRANTS
- NORTHEAST
- NORTHWEST
- SOUTHEAST
- SOUTHWEST
- SECTORS



Southwest Quadrant & Neighborhoods



**Brooks Landing Redevelopment**  
 Staybridge Suites Hotel  
 Public Boat Dock  
 Business Center  
 Surface Parking Lots  
 Residential

**'Brooks Court'**  
 29 Lot Subdivision addition  
 Brookscreech Way addition

**Brooks Landing Phase II**  
 Circulation Adjustment, Turnaround and Street Parking  
 Trails addition  
 River Overlook rehabilitation and addition

**Vaccum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area**  
 Mixed Use and Commercial Development  
 Multi-Family / Single Family Residential  
 Streetscape Improvements  
 Waterfront Open Space  
 Incubator / Workforce Training etc.

**College Town Mixed Use**  
 Retails, Apartments, Hotel  
 Parking  
 Celebration Dr. addition

**City Gate Mixed Use**  
 Retail, Condos, Offices  
 Surface / Underground Parking  
 Boat Dock

**Access I-390 Interchange**  
 Widen Kendrick Rd.  
 New on-ramp from Kendrick Rd. to I-390 NB  
 New on-ramp from E. River Rd. to I-390 SB  
 New Deceleration Lane  
 New Roundabout  
 Relocate Murlin Dr. (NYS DOT, Sep. 2011)

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

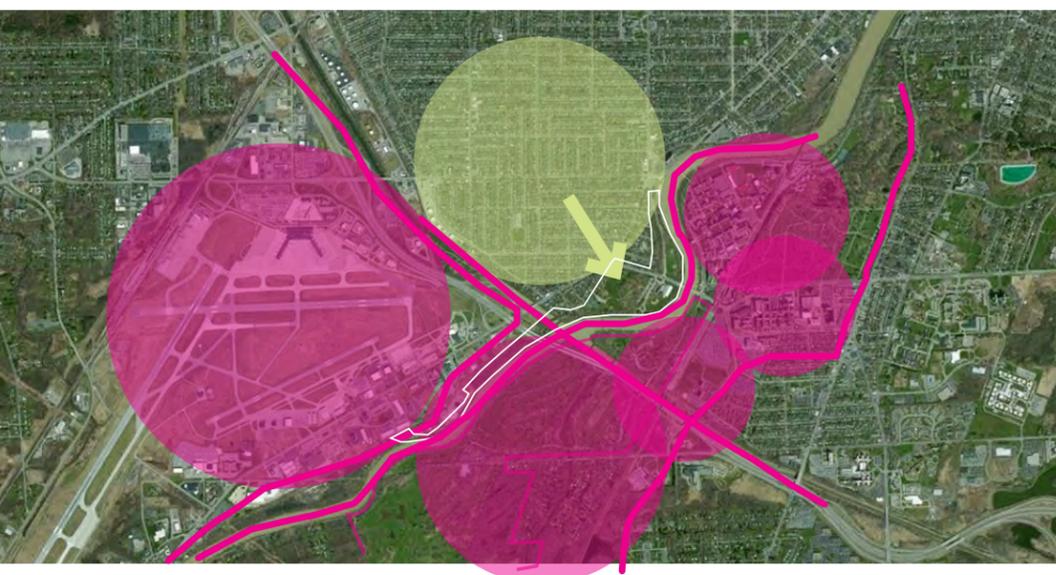


TOWNS

The park is uniquely located near or adjacent to five different Monroe County towns. The potential user base is much broader than the City of Rochester alone.



ADJACENT INSTITUTIONS



The park is enveloped nearly 300-degrees by enormous and sometimes inhospitable institutional land uses or physical barriers that prohibit meaningful and simple vehicular and pedestrian access to livable neighborhoods areas beyond. Except for the 19th Ward, the park is detached from the street grid.



LAND OWNERSHIP

**OWNER OF RECORD - COLOR KEY**

- No data (Brooks Landing Development, Private)
- City of Rochester
- State of New York Department of Transportation
- New York State Canal System
- New York State
- Private ownership (out of state owner)
- Private ownership (local owner)
- COMIDA (County IDA)
- City of Rochester (outside of city limits)
- Monroe County
- City of Rochester, c/o Monroe Community College
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation

The real connective urban fabric for GVPW is the 19th Ward, Genesee-Jefferson and Plymouth-Exchange neighborhoods. Moving from the park towards the east, across the river, one must travel nearly a mile to reach an area with the characteristics of an urban residential neighborhood that a recreation park such as GVPW should serve. Thus, it is the dynamic and cultural vibrancy of the southwest quadrant that both influences and benefits most from the park's programming and facilities.

Much has been done in the last 20 years to cross the physical barrier of the river and bring the economic benefits of the University of Rochester to the southwest quadrant. With more than 20,000 employees, the University is the largest employer in the county and its expansion and influence are a great benefit to the surrounding neighborhoods and local economy. The Brooks Landing Urban Renewal District, situated at the north end of GVPW, has seen increased, albeit sometimes contentious, economic development since its establishment. Though economic development is often times messy and disruptive, and it can be insensitive to existing neighborhoods, the progress made to revitalize the Brooks Landing area has reached a climax with a new hotel, businesses, retail, and still to be constructed improvements such as student housing and streetscape/riverfront amenities and public art.

The park itself has seen planned improvements as part of the Brooks Landing projects. The Phase I project included streetscape and park gateway improvements, a concrete dock for transient and tourist canal and river boaters, and promenade improvements along the back side of a hotel development. The Brooks Landing Phase II project includes proposed pedestrian and vehicular circulation enhancements and a vegetation management proposal for parkland north of Elmwood Avenue. While these features have been planned prior-to and independently from the overall Master Plan of GVPW, they will be incorporated into the park's overall future development scenarios and they have made important connections to the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

To further illustrate the dynamic of the neighborhood it's important to recognize that several other development initiatives are being concurrently planned and constructed within the park's primary service area. These include

the future long-term vision planning of the Vacuum Oil brownfield site just north along the river, the nearby College Town district on Mt. Hope Avenue, interstate-390 interchange and access improvements, the large multi-use City Gate development on the Erie Canal and a host of smaller neighborhood level initiatives.

## Demographics

### The Service Area

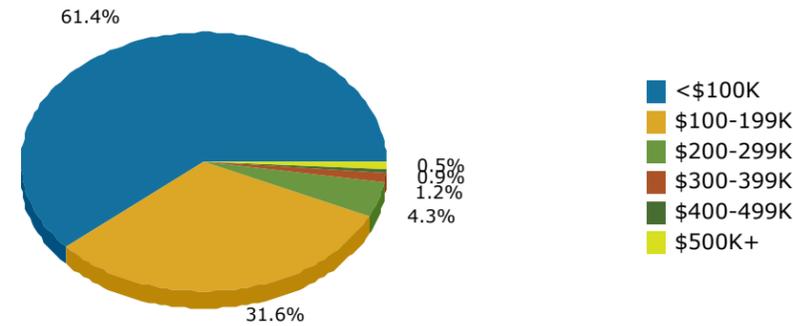
Though GVPW draws recreational users from across the region through its trails and unique waterfront recreation opportunities, the primary service area for the park has been defined as a 3-mile (15-minute) radius from the park's central core at Elmwood Avenue.



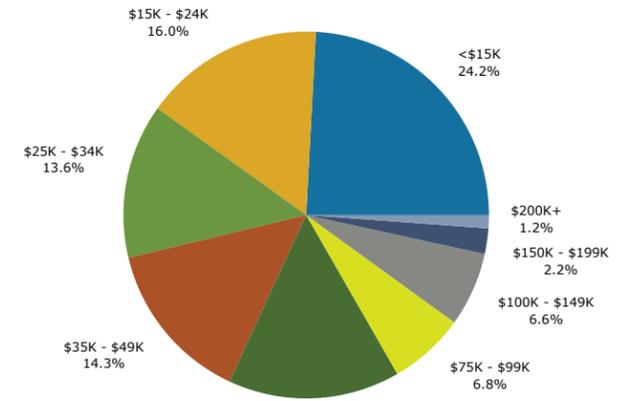
## POPULATION

	2000	2010	2012	EST. 2017	
Population	105,164	102,260	102,640	103,905	+0.25%
Households	43,008	42,455	42,368	43,384	PROJECTED
Avg. Household Size	2.22	2.16	2.17	2.15	ANNUAL RATE 2012-2017

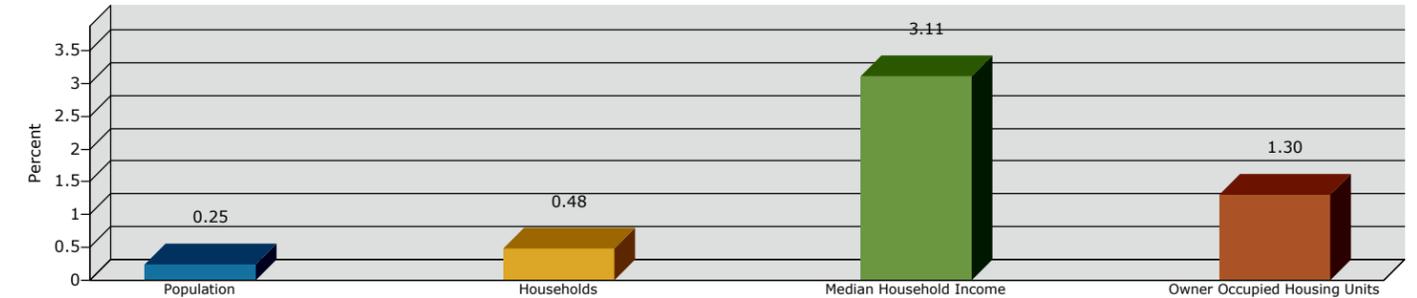
## HOME VALUE (2012)



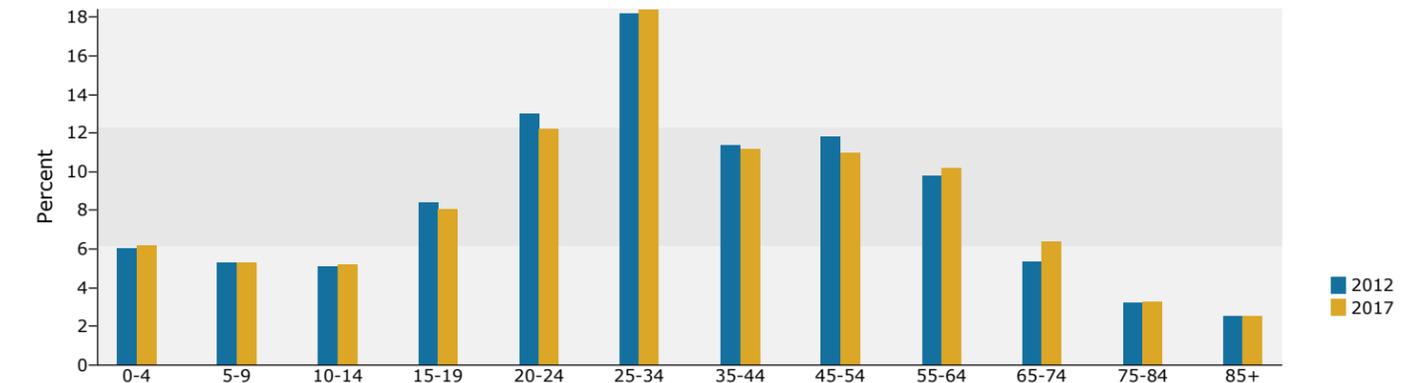
## INCOME (2012)



## ANNUAL GROWTH RATES (2012-2017)

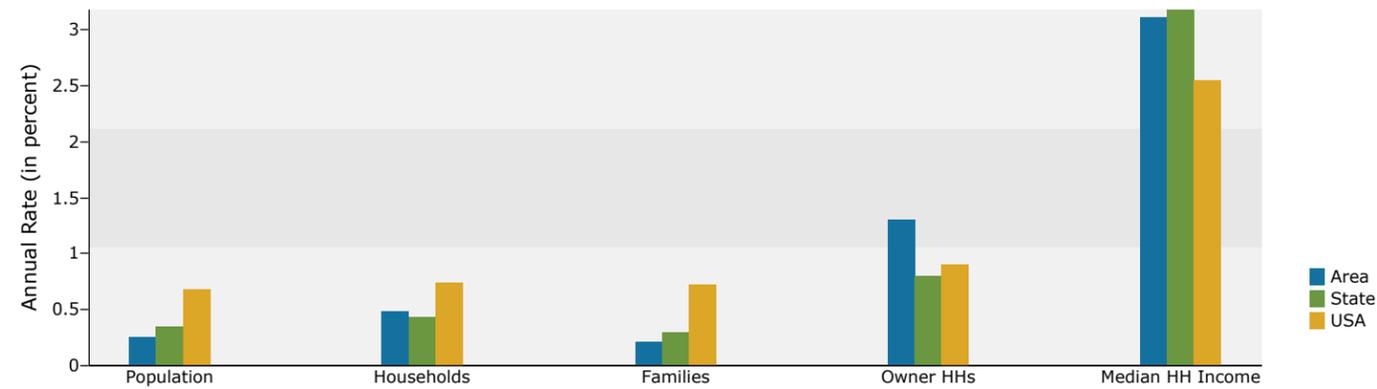


## AGE/POPULATION, 2012 vs. 2017

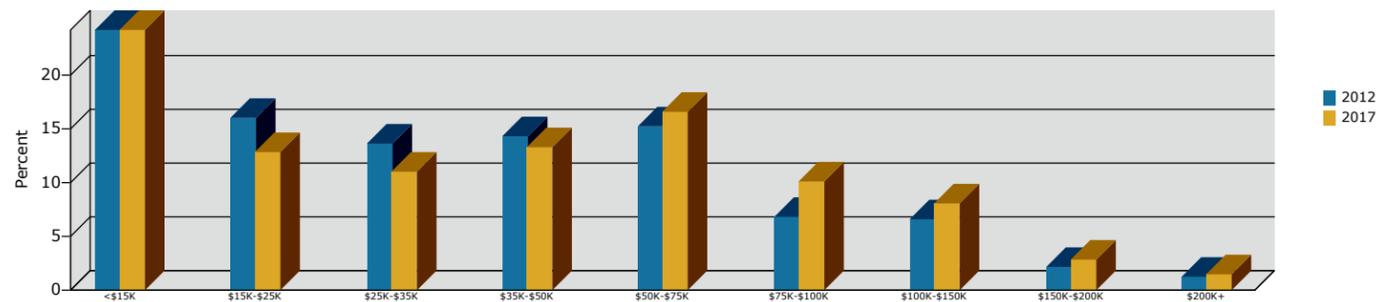


US Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1, ESRI Forecasts for 2012/2017

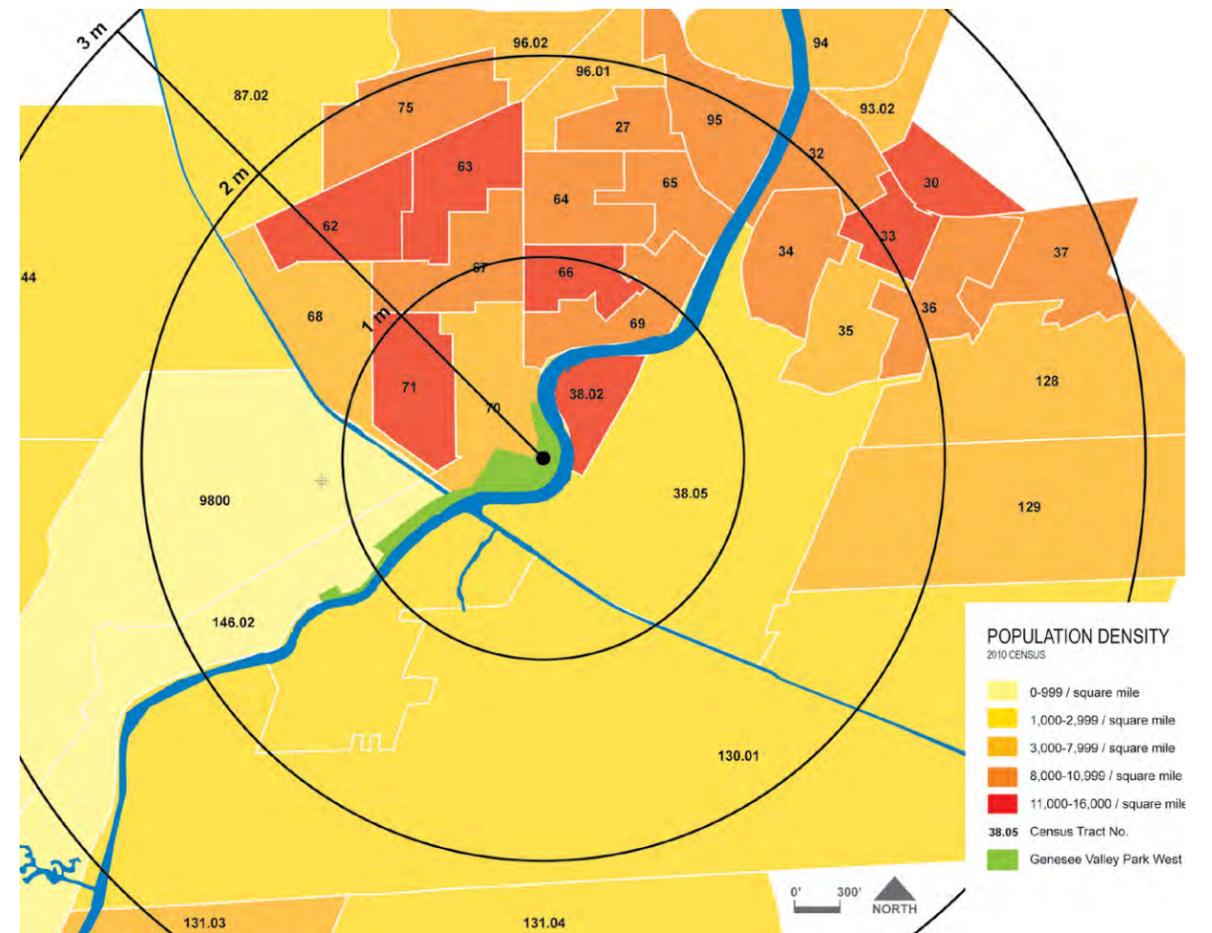
### 2017 TREND COMPARISON (SERVICE AREA/STATE/NATIONAL)



### INCOME, 2012 vs. 2017



### POPULATION DENSITY



### SERVICE AREA LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS

% POPULATION 9 most prominent groups (77% of total population)	13.3%	12.6%	11.5%	8.3%	7.5%	6.9%	6.3%	6.0%	4.4%
TYPE	COLLEGE TOWNS	CITY COMMONS	METRO CITY EDGE	SOCIAL SECURITY SET	METRO RENTERS	METROPOLITANS	RUSTBELT TRADITIONS	GREAT EXPECTATIONS	OLD AND NEW COMERS
<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>	Median age 24.4 59% enrolled in college/grad sch. High ratio of part-time workers Median income is very low 14% live in a dormitory Desires convenience and speed Internet is essential for all living High participation in all sports	Median age 24.6 6% with college degree High unemployment at 30% 19% on public assistance Limited employment options High ratio of part time workers Spending is for children needs Population is declining 0.4%/year Heavy use of parks / playgrounds	Median age 29.4 10% with college degree High unemployment at 15% Multi-generational households High ratio grandparent caregivers Spend money wisely Welfare of children is high priority	Median age 47 16% with bachelors degree 40% are +65 years old Unemployment is high Majority fixed-income Household income avg. \$16,805 +50% require public transit Heavy use of parks / rec facilities Medicare/Medicaid for health	Median age 33 66% with bachelors degree 25% with graduate degree Diverse population Beginning professional careers 90% are apartment renters Exercise regularly at health clubs Prefer tennis, yoga, skiing, jogging Internet is essential for all living	Median age 39 30% with bachelors degree 23% with graduate degree Eclectic housing preferences 60% home ownership rate Active urban lifestyles Travel frequently Prefer yoga, kayaking, skiing, backpacking and jogging Internet is essential for all living	Median age 37 15% with bachelors degree 72% home ownership rate Live in older housing stock Do not travel / stay close to home Spending on family and yard maintenance Prefer to play, shop and work in same area Bowling, fishing, hockey	Median age 33 18% with bachelors degree 50% some graduate education Beginning careers / family lives High ratio of both living alone and married couple families High recreation facility users Prefer canoeing, swimming, softball, frisbee	Median age 37 Retirees and young professionals High capacity for transition High rates of moving Unencumbered lifestyles High rates of cooking at home Very divers recreation needs, walking, swimming, bowling

ESRI Tapestry Segment Profile, Business Analyst Online, 2013

# Demographics Summary

Demographic data from the project's service area (3-mile radius around the park) give an overview of likely current and future users of the park's facilities, as well as demographic trends that will influence the park's future programming. The neighborhoods surrounding the park include a very diverse socio-economic range, including college students, working families, single parent households, families with grandparents as the primary care-giver, and high ratio of fixed-income seniors.

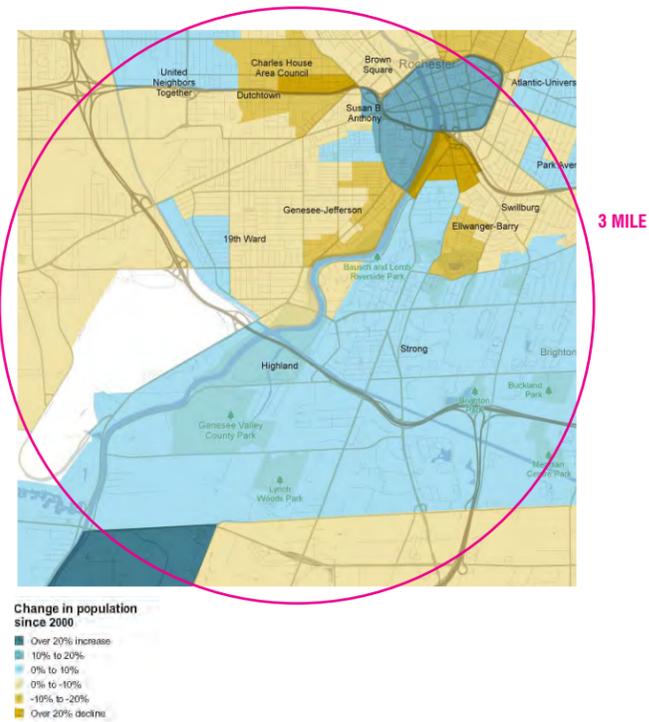
Generally, there are positive aspects of the demographic analysis, with population growth and household incomes rising. Though the neighborhoods are made up of older housing stock and built out, the population is expanding at 0.25% per year, which counters a long and sometimes precipitous, decline of population within the City of Rochester that began in the 1950s and sustained until 2010. The rate increase also reflects the New York State average, which is just over +0.3%. The population increase may, in part, be due to urban infill and redevelopment efforts over the past decade - the effects of which are highlighted in the service area's substantial drop in vacancy rates. The 19th Ward and Plymouth-Exchange census data reveals up to 40% declines in vacancy within some tracts. Vacancy in the City of Rochester stands at 10.4% while vacancy in the service area is slightly lower at 10.1% - and expected to drop to 8.7% by 2017.

Household income in the service area is forecasted to rise 3.2% by 2017, which also counters a the national trend for the same period - a drop of nearly 7%. Median household income in the service area (2012) was \$31,598, with a forecasted increase to nearly \$37,000 by 2017. This is low relative to the national average (\$50,054) and reflects the high unemployment rates of the nearby population, as well as the high proportion of fixed-income (older) and student (generally no income) residents.

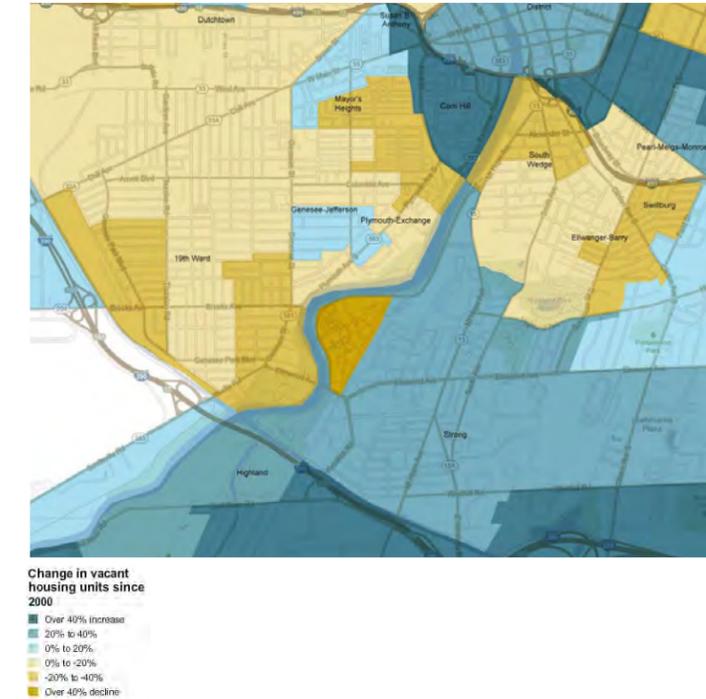
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010. Esri forecasts for 2012 and 2017.

Household sizes are also decreasing somewhat faster than the national rate, which can possibly be attributed the rise in college housing and the growth of the University of Rochester over the last decade. Average home values for the service area stand at \$83,134 (2012) and are low relative to national and state averages (even when excluding NYC values), but are above the City of Rochester average (\$73,600). Home ownership, however, has increased and continues to do so throughout the nearby neighborhoods. Owner-occupied housing units are expected to increase 1.3% in the service area by 2017, countering both a general national decline and the service area's high transient student population. For comparison, the City of Rochester owner-occupied housing unit rate stands at 37.7% while the park's service area rate is 33.2% - but growing, despite the substantial growth of student rental units.

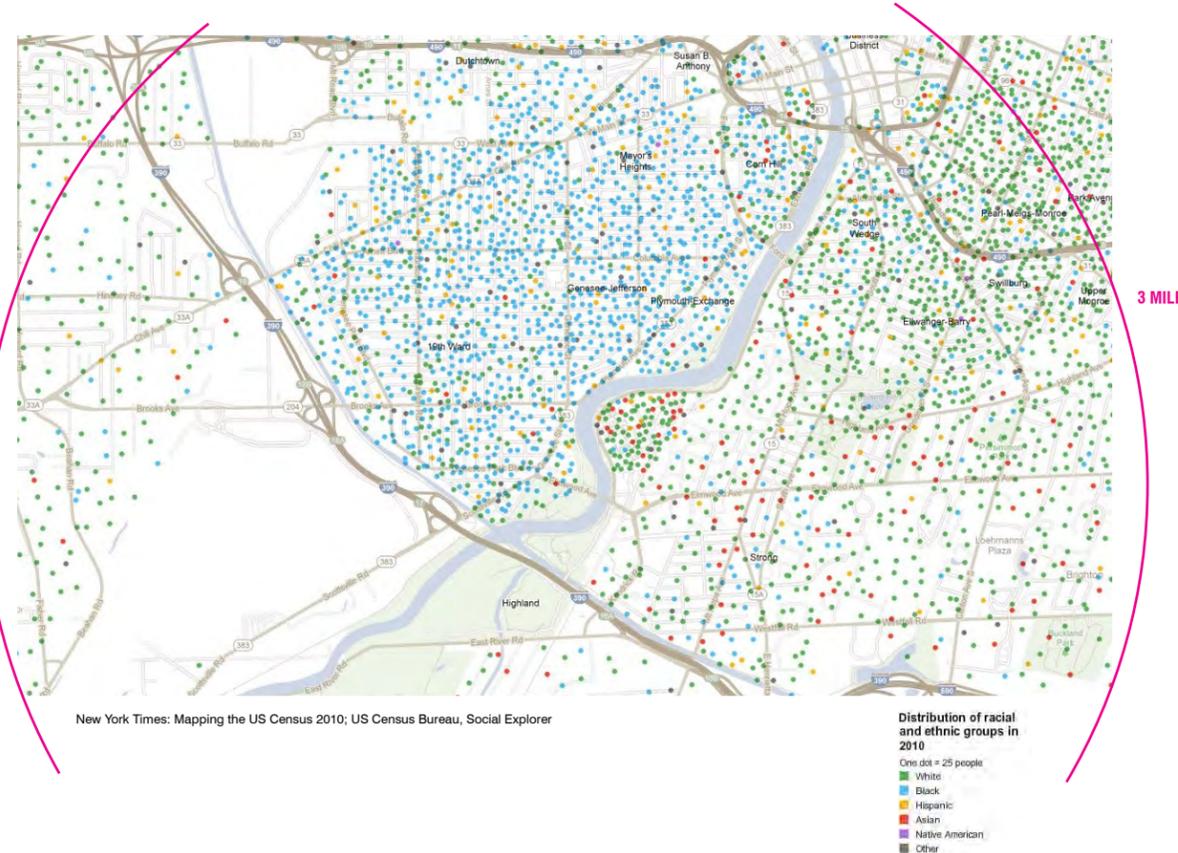
## POPULATION CHANGE (2000-2010)



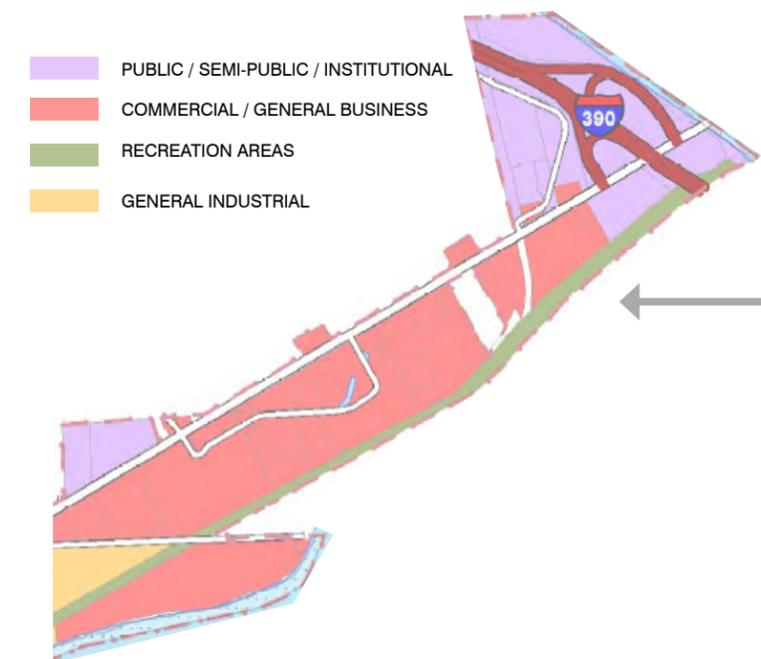
## CHANGE IN HOUSING VACANCY (2000-2010)

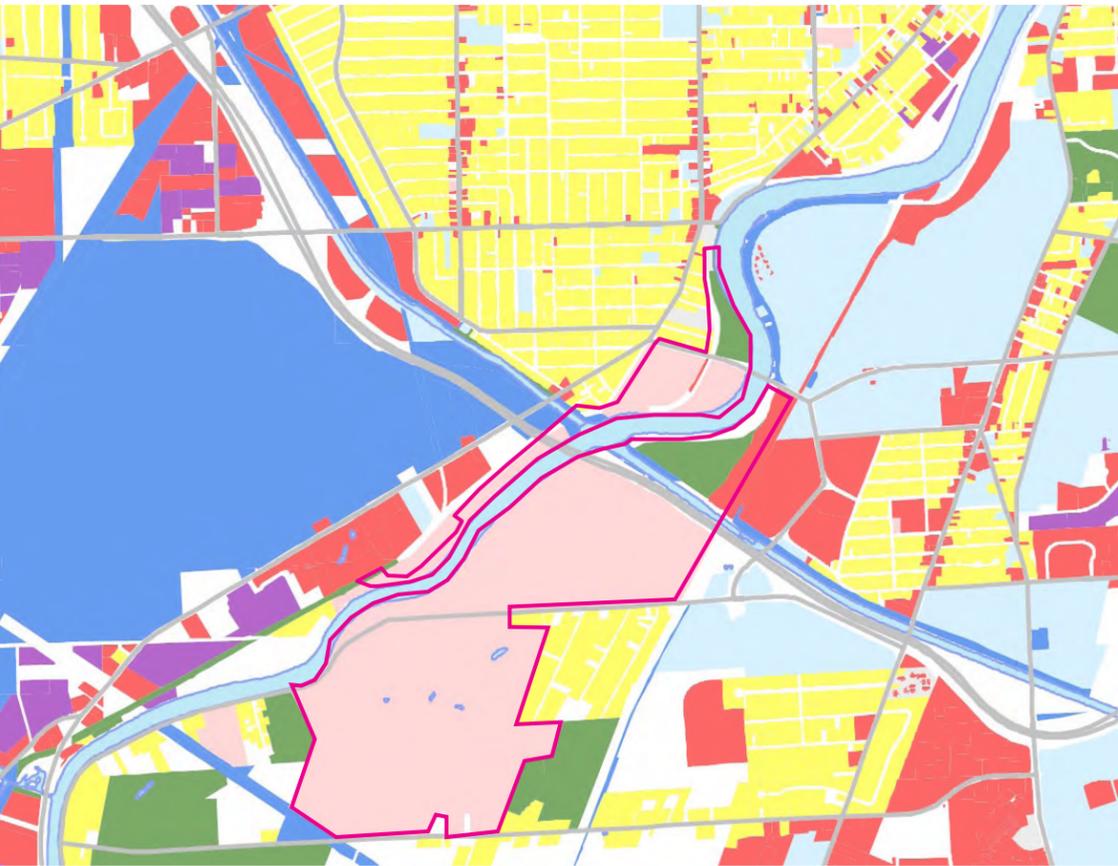


## RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION



## TOWN OF CHILI ZONING





- LAND USE
- RESIDENTIAL
  - RECREATION & ENTERTAINMENT
  - WILD, FORESTED, CONSERVATION
  - COMMERCIAL
  - COMMUNITY SERVICES
  - AGRICULTURAL
  - VACANT LAND
  - INDUSTRIAL
  - PUBLIC SERVICES

## Wellness: The Future of Public Healthcare Efforts and Public Park & Recreation Funding

### Fitness and Health Care

The benefits of urban living are enormous in terms of connectivity, access to goods and services, efficiency, employment and economic opportunity. But urban populations especially are experiencing extreme disconnect with nature, unequal access to recreation and leisure experiences, disproportionate health and wellness opportunities, which lead to a decline in understanding the natural world and its role in supporting life. Moreover, the lack of recreation and leisure experiences are directly linked to problems in health, such as inactive lifestyles, obesity, poor nutrition – further compounding the trend of inactivity and playing no trivial part in our exploding rise in healthcare costs.

complicated and involve many related metrics such as smoking, hypertension and obesity, there is one thing that is undisputed: Physical activity results in more healthy lifestyles, higher quality of life and significantly reduced healthcare costs.

The proliferation of health and wellness programs across the country is also strong. National efforts such as the National Football League's (NFL) "Play 60" program and First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" campaign combating obesity nutrition and inactivity through grants and programming efforts are not alone in their rise. Worksite wellness is also a focus as studies show that the programs result in hundreds of dollars of savings per employee annually, on insurance premiums, absenteeism and increased productivity. In 2010 the Harvard Business Review reported that programs had savings returns of \$3.27 for every dollar spent on health and wellness. A recent Cornell University study noted that an annual \$150 investment in wellness programs per employee results in an average yearly return savings of nearly \$400. (4,5)

More than 68 million Americans over the age of 5 are classified as "totally inactive" as reported in a study by the Council of Physical Activity and the Center for Disease Control. This represents 24% of all Americans over age 5 and it has increased by over 8% in the last three years alone – outpacing U.S. population growth. New York's statewide inactivity rate is 28% (6th worst in the Nation). The inactivity rate for adults over age 55 is 35%. And the trend in program investment toward combating these issues is increasing.

This escalating national response, in both the public and private sector, on healthcare issues and spending will result in substantially increased spending on preventative care. The most cost effective preventative care is promoting and facilitating healthy lifestyles. Just as the first public parks were created in the United States to provide respite from urban life, the future of public recreation and programming for public parks will be inextricably linked to our broader goals of public health and wellness.

### The Local Economics of Health

GVPW's service area (3-mile radius) has a total 2012 population of 102,640 residing in 42,368 households. Per household healthcare spending for this 3-mile area was estimated to be \$116,148,419 in 2012 – an average of \$2,741 per household. (1) This includes individual expenditures on healthcare services only – health insurance, doctors visits, hospital stays, prescription drugs - not employee-paid portions of healthcare portions or Medicaid-paid health services.

Public sector wellness and recreation programs also have much to learn from data being collected by workplace wellness. Furthermore, as workplace wellness programs become the standard there will be increased incentives for public-private partnerships, wherein local employers help the public sector fund the construction and operation of recreation and wellness facilities. As our nation ramps up its response to the healthcare economics crises in more effective ways there will be increased funding for recreation programs and facilities that focus on wellness.

The average per capita spending of New York State (low physical rate, 6th lowest in U.S.) residents on healthcare was \$8,341 in 2009. Utah has the highest physical activity rate in the U.S. (62%) and Utah's per capita spending on healthcare is \$5,031. (2,3) While the demographics of activity and economics of healthcare spending are



- ROCHESTER ZONING
- O-S OPEN SPACE
  - R-1 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
  - R-2 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
  - R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
  - PD#10 (UR, PLANNED DEVELOPMENT)
  - BROOKS LANDING OVERLAY
  - C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
  - C-2 COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
  - M-1 INDUSTRIAL
  - C-V COLLEGETOWN VILLAGE
  - IPD#15 (PLANNED DEVELOPMENT)
  - IPD#12 (PLANNED DEVELOPMENT)

(1) Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Analysis  
 (2) Council on Physical Activity, 2012 SMGA Participation Topline Report  
 (3) Kaiser Family Foundation  
 (4) The Costs of Obesity in the Workplace. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. 2010  
 (5) Workplace Wellness Programs Can Generate Savings. Health Affairs. 2010

## Recreation in the 21st Century

Recreation participation is heavily influenced by demographic changes, the popularity of sports or activities in pop-culture, ethnic cultures or the emergence of new sports and new technologies. For instance, in-line skating is a more recent phenomenon that was a result of creative and technological advances but it has also seen waning interest relative to the height of its popularity in the 1980s and 1990s. And the “Giant Stride,” a physically challenging contraption popular at the turn of the 20th century, which shows up on original plans for recreation field layout of GVPW – now unheard of in the modern world.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) reports that people are increasingly seeking quality recreation experiences while cutting back on other necessities – even during a harsh recession. This is consistent with other studies proving that people receive more pleasure and satisfaction from investing in quality experiences over material goods. What this means for recreation in public parks is that the experience needs to be exceptionally positive and satisfying to become a draw for residents. (1)

Park and recreation design in the 21st century needs to deal with the same complicating factors as all parks have dealt with, such as safety, maintenance and staffing requirements, and not often being seen as top-tier essential to City government leaders. Concurrent with this, research by the TPL shows that parks are being used more now than ever before. However, that same research also shows that there quickly comes a point in this new economy where parks stop attracting people who have choices, namely being more free time, more disposable income or a combination of the two. Some users do not have a choice for lack of time and lack of disposable income – and therefore must use parks in any condition and state. They cannot afford a private gym membership or to travel long distances for recreation experiences. Parks cannot survive, let alone thrive, without diversity of use and feeling of common ownership. Without this diversity of use there is a low user/low maintenance feedback loop. (3)

Both the National Parks and Recreation Association and the Trust for Public Land agree there are four key criteria that need to be met in order to drive users to parks and recreation facilities: Parks need to be safe, well maintained, pleasing and connected/comprehensible. This is true with

anything in an “experience economy” where the feeling of a place directly leads to how it is treated and used. Public spaces need to be designed in a manner that orchestrates memorable events – the memory and feeling itself becomes the product. This is considerably more applicable as health and wellness programming become a larger factor in recreation needs.

This is a critical issue: Meeting a perceived demand by maintaining a recommended number of facilities is less important than actually making people want to use parks. Indeed, a quality scenario is that demand outstrips supply and the parks are incredibly well used, resulting in increased funding, increased willingness to fund park programs, and significantly increasing the willingness for those who can pay to do so. Thereby facilitating diverse use and increasing the return on facility investment. The complications of accessibility for lower income populations can and must be overcome through subsidy programs, but the facility must represent something that every economic class desires to use. The goal of 21st century park and recreation facilities should be to make people want to use the park, not need to use the park because it is their only choice.

While budgets remain exceedingly tight for municipal park and recreation facilities and programs, some agencies are moving quickly toward this “experience economy” model in several ways. These budget responsive trends include providing much higher quality facilities but less of them, and also collaborating with not-for-profit or private sector partners that facilitate programming or infrastructure needs – be they wellness, nutrition, or in the case of GVPW and the Genesee Waterways Center, unique recreation opportunities.

## National Recreation Trends

### Declining Participation in Organized Sports

Nationally, there is a general increase in outdoor recreation demand, but the specifics are changing. Both the aging population and reduced working family leisure time will continue to significantly lower the demand for active team sports and shift focus to individual and

## NATIONAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Data from the National Sporting Goods Association, 2012 (NSGA)

	PARTICIPATION 2001 (MILLIONS)	PARTICIPATION 2011 (MILLIONS)	PERCENT PARTICIPATION CHANGE 2001-2011
AEROBIC EXERCISING	24.3	42.0	+72.8%
BASEBALL	14.9	12.3	-17.5%
BASKETBALL	28.1	26.1	-7.1%
BICYCLE RIDING	39.0	39.1	+0.3%
EXERCISE WALKING	71.2	97.1	+36.5%
EXERCISING WITH EQUIPMENT	43.0	55.5	+29.1%
FISHING (FRESH WATER)	39.1	28.0	+39.6%
FOOTBALL	8.6	9.0	+4.6%
GOLF	26.6	20.9	-21.4%
HIKING	26.1	39.1	+49.8%
HOCKEY (ICE)	2.2	3.0	+36.4%
IN-LINE SKATING	19.2	6.1	-68.2%
KAYAKING	3.5	7.1	+102.8%
RUNNING/JOGGING	24.5	38.7	+57.9%
SKATEBOARDING	9.6	6.6	-31.3%
SKIING (CROSS COUNTRY)	2.3	2.3	0%
SOCCER	13.9	13.9	0%
SOFTBALL	13.2	10.4	-21.2%
SWIMMING	54.8	46.0	-16.1%
TENNIS	10.9	13.1	+20.1%
VOLLEYBALL	12.0	10.1	-15.8%
WORKOUT AT GYM/CLUB	26.5	34.5	+30.2%

## ROWING PARTICIPATION

15% to 20% Annual Growth

12 new local clubs and 6 boathouses developed (or planned) in last 15 years

Rowing data from Rowing Sponsor, GWC members, and US Rowing.

### Local Clubs:

- University of Rochester Rowing
- Naiabes Oncology Rowing
- Rochester Institute of Technology Rowing
- Brighton Rowing Club, Inc. (Brighton HS)
- Fairport Crew, Inc.
- Cross Currents Minority Rowing
- Friends of Scholastic Crew (McQuaid Jesuit HS)
- Mercy Crew, Inc. (Mercy HS)
- Genesee Rowing Club, Inc.
- Rochester Community Inclusive Rowing
- St. John Fisher Rowing
- Pittsford Rowing, Inc.

Rowing programs in Rochester have seen a steady increase in participation, including the development of at least 12 local rowing clubs over the last 15 years alone. National High School and Masters-level rowing programs are the fastest growing segments of rowing, with rowing in general experiencing 15-20% annual growth in the United States. Pressure for boathouse real-estate and storage is currently at prime water areas is at its peak in the Rochester region, with at least five new boathouses developed over the same period – with an additional boathouse for the University of Rochester planned for 2014. The current rowing market in the United States is estimated to be more than 350,000.

(1) The Experience Economy, B. Joseph Pine, James H. Gilmore, 2011  
 (2) Cities in the Experience Economy, Anne Lorentzen, 2009  
 (3) Creating Value for Participants through Experience, Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 2008



### THE "GIANT STRIDE"

Early Olmsted plans for recreation facilities at GVPW indicated field play areas "Giant Strides" - now an unheard of piece of sports and recreation equipment. Hamilton Township Public Library - Local History Division

passive recreation. Recent years have seen a decline in both youth and adult organized sports. (6, 10)

### Growing Economic Disparity

Income is a key variable in sports participation rates and will continue to be the most significant barrier to participation. Equipment tends to be expensive and the challenges of single-parent households or low-income directly affects time available for recreation and physical activity. Trends in fee structures are moving away from age-based fees and more on ability to pay. A high quality facility may attract a wide base of use, but some municipalities are subsidizing fees for those who live in specific neighborhoods. (7)

### Diversity / Immigrant Populations

Discussions with Rochester Central School District "English as a Second Language" (ESL) programs report that the increasing number of immigrants, particularly refugee immigrants from Nepal, Myanmar and Somalia, are changing physical education needs and youth recreating needs in some neighborhoods. Many ESL students have no concept or interest in basketball or baseball and almost exclusively play soccer. Some ESL students participate in the YMCA Love-15 tennis program.

### Consolidated Facilities

The emphasis on market-driven standards and the experience-based economy is demanding "one stop shopping" for recreation needs. This requires less, but larger multi-purpose and multi-generational facilities, consolidated under one roof and requires significant attention to larger aspects of community mobility. (1, 8)

### Demand for Unstructured Activities

There is a general trend toward increased unstructured individual activities like open gym time, drop-in opportunities and general individual facility use. This is for a population that is constantly pressed for time, cannot commit to lengthy and regular league or group lessons. Counter intuitively, an overabundance of structured programming has shown to be a barrier to getting

communities engaged in physical activity. Lack of time is the number one barrier to sports participation in both adults and kids and it translates to a need for multipurpose facilities and flexible hours. (2, 3, 10)

### Resource-Based Recreation

Trails are consistently the number one desired amenity for all park and open space improvements. This is partially because they are multi-purpose and self-programmed - a more convenient passive recreation amenity for work-strained population with less leisure time. Trails also serve to enhance connectivity. The overall desire for passive and natural resource-based recreation such as trails or access to waterways is increasing at a vast rate. But the term "passive" implies that all the recreation opportunities can be enjoyed in a traditional large lawn park, waterfront or patch of woods, uninfluenced by facilities or management. The opposite is true: The most successful and meaningful passive recreation opportunities come from the significant monitoring, maintenance and direct management of not only trails, but the natural-resources they are built around. The most meaningful trails experience for users - the ones that keep them truly engaged in physical activity - results from careful vegetation management, a high-quality accessible riverfront, a healthy river ecology, interpretive or learning opportunities, and good design and planning. (8, 9)

### Fitness Parks

Fitness Parks are a recent park facility trend that include outdoor gyms with weather and vandal resistant "weights" and exercise machines. Fitness Parks have been promoted by the Trust for Public Land as they provide similar strength and cardio training opportunities as a private gym but are free to use and accessible by all. Parents enjoy them because they can bring their kids. (1)

### Sports Tourism

These mega-sporting events include 5ks, marathons, regattas, triathalons, and more and require sophisticated planning and marketing to be successful. They are often operated by non-profits or private businesses and seek to use public facilities due to the amenities and spatial

needs. All such events result in long distance travel for many participants and their families. Sports tourism has been a boon to local economies and is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry.

### Tobacco Free Parks

Prohibiting tobacco use in public parks is a polarizing issue but the trend is clearly there. As park use trends toward spaces intended to support respite and healthy lifestyles it becomes increasingly insincere to condone one of the most widespread and costly public health crises while attempting to meaningfully engage public health with sport and recreation. (1)

### Accessibility

A significant amount of funding for upgrades in the past 20 years has gone directly to retrofitting public facilities to be handicapped accessible. There are clear standards now for public buildings and circulation routes, but accessibility to recreation features has been seen as less essential. Accessibility to things like kayaks, pools, and exercise equipment have been made possible by sophisticated engineering and creative thinking - and the strong desire to increase access to recreation for all.

### Mobility

Mobility refers to how easy it is to get to a destination such as a public park. This is not measured from a physiological standpoint, but rather from the ease, simplicity, and selection of the transportation network. How direct are the connections to adjacent neighborhoods? How often and convenient is the bus? How easy is it for the aging and/or lower income population to get to public facilities?

### Exposure to Four-Season Recreation

Northern climates often must choose between expensive indoor facilities or seasonal use facilities. Four-season recreation requires a broad range of facilities and experiences that also present maintenance considerations - ice rink surfacing, cross-country trail grooming, plowing trails for winter use. However,



### FITNESS PARKS

Fitness Parks provide similar strength and cardio training opportunities as private gyms, but are free and accessible by all. Photo: Felipe Azenha, Kennedy Grove



### RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

Resource-based recreational opportunities, such as access to high quality waterways and trails, has shown the highest growth in demand over the past decades. Photo: Genesee Waterways Center, 2013

(1) Key Trends in Parks and Public Health | Parks & Recreation Magazine, 2013  
(2) NRPA Community Forum: Trends in Adult Sports, February 2012  
(3) Make Way for the Millennials, NRPA Now!, 2011  
(4) Not Your Grandma's Water Aerobics, Parks & Recreation Magazine, 2013  
(5) Innovation Resolves Park Design Challenges, California Park & Recreation Society, 2003

(6) National Sporting Goods Association, Sports Participation Rankings 2000-2010  
(7) Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2012, The Outdoor Foundation  
(8) National Association of Homebuilders, 2008  
(9) Money Talks. Now It Walks and Rides, Too., Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2011  
(10) National Sporting Goods Association, Participation Trends, 2011

northern climate populations without exposure or knowledge of multi-season recreation are considerably more likely to live inactive lifestyles. Recreation programming is including more non-traditional winter recreation in urban areas – where populations have very little exposure to things like downhill or cross country skiing.

### Community Walking Programs

Structured walking programs sponsored by groups such as the American Heart Association, Arthritis Foundation, American Association of Retired Persons, neighborhood associations or even corporations are gaining popularity as a way to increase fitness among an aging population. Programs focus on inclusiveness, small fitness gains and social interaction. The programs have very low entry barriers and can be specifically tailored to those suffering from disease. The National Recreation and Park Association is currently implementing pilot programs with 30 municipal recreation agencies.

### Natural Playgrounds

A natural playground or play environment is an area where kids can play with natural elements such as sand, water, boulders, logs, and living plants. Parents increasingly want access to nature for children, but also want to ensure safety and limit the inherent challenges that nature brings. Natural playgrounds are professionally designed to allow both. Studies show that access to naturalized settings is critical to childhood development and an increasing number of schools, daycares and municipal parks are developing natural play environments while reducing the reliance of pre-manufactured steel and plastic play equipment. They are also inexpensive and can become high-value community construction projects.

### Aquatic Facilities and Playgrounds

Multi-generational aquatic facilities with pools, slides, spray areas, zero-depth pool entries, and “lazy rivers” are topping public desires and recreation agency “want” lists. In many cases users will travel long-distances to use such facilities. Aquatic centers should accommodate competition, fitness and adaptive/accessibility programs – and also meet the

minimum requirements for bodies such as USA swimming. Slides that are tall and “dramatic” are in high demand by kids – they are expensive, but users will stand in line 20 minutes to use them. Shade is very important for outdoor facilities. Aquatic centers are also very popular for injury training. The overall trend for these facilities is “fewer, but larger” – with outdoor mega-facilities accommodating all age groups. Users expect and are willing to pay fees for the use of aquatic centers, with typical admissions being \$4 to \$6 depending on residency. (4, 5)

### Half-Size Fields

Half-size soccer fields are becoming popular for non-competitive recreation or smaller-team soccer, as they take up less space, are easier to maintain, and they can be more cheaply outfitted with sophisticated artificial turfs – greatly extending their use and desirability. U.S. Recreation programs consistently report that kids have more fun and learn more on smaller soccer fields. (1)

### Technology

Technology is becoming a significant component of the recreation landscape as more children engage in electronic leisure. Technology is beginning to be heavily incorporated into outdoor recreation activities. Examples include opportunities for “geocaching” (using global positioning systems that nearly every cell phone now includes), digital cameras, play equipment with technological communication and feedback, and the explosive growth of personal fitness tracking devices. The consumer electronics industry reports that fitness electronics are now a \$70 billion annual business in the US. Their research indicates that more than 5% of households with broadband internet connections now own electronic fitness tracking devices. It was 0% just 5 years ago. The number of U.S. consumers that actively track their health and fitness online or via electronic devices will double to more than 32 million by 2016. Digital devices with increasingly sophisticated abilities are becoming almost requisite to modern life, even in lower income households. Moreover, as fitness tracking becomes more common, trends point to health insurance companies providing discounts to those who achieve certain fitness goals.



### ACCESSIBILITY

Providing equal access to recreational features has been an important and growing part of the recreation landscape since the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act at the end of the 20th century.



### SPORTS TOURISM

Large-scale recreation events are becoming increasingly popular and offer tourism benefits to host communities. The value and reach of recreational infrastructure extends beyond the nearby community.

Photo: Flower City Challenge, Duathlon in GVPW

### FOUR-SEASON RECREATION

Photo Bob Berch, Genesee Valley Park



### AQUATIC FACILITIES

Multi-generational aquatic facilities with pools, slides, spray areas, zero-depth pool entries, and “lazy rivers” are topping public desires and recreation agency “want” lists. In many cases users will travel long-distances to use such facilities.

Outdoor Spash Pad / Interactive Fountain, Nashville, TN  
Bucks County Aquatic Center, MD



### HALF-SIZE FIELDS

Half-size soccer fields are becoming popular for non-competitive recreation or smaller-team soccer, as they take up less space, are easier to maintain, and they can be more cheaply outfitted with sophisticated artificial turfs. Photo: DC Scores, Youth Soccer



### FITNESS TRACKING

Technology has been heavily incorporated into outdoor recreation activities. Bio-tracking and fitness tracking is one of the fastest growing segments of digital computing. As social networks have trended significantly toward the online world, so have competitive tracking and the social aspects of fitness. Photo: Michael Ip/ABC News

### 2012 SERVICE AREA RECREATION SPENDING

Source: Esri 2012 radial analysis; 2010 and 2011 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics

TOTAL SPORTS, RECREATION & EXERCISE EQUIPMENT	<b>\$4,199,877</b>
Exercise Equipment and Gear	\$1,785,881
Bicycles	\$738,205
Camping Equipment	\$232,984
Hunting and Fishing Equipment	\$824,453
Winter Sports Equipment	\$141,270
Water Sports Equipment	\$155,398
Other Sports Equipment	\$236,715
Rental/Repair of Sports/Recreation Equip.	\$84,969

Average Annual Amount Spent per capita: **\$99.13**

### 2002 ROCHESTER RECREATION DEMAND ANALYSIS

Based on a 2002 City of Rochester population of 215,808

	NRPA REQ. (per Population)	Demand Req. per NRPA (qty)	Existing Supply (2002)	Deficit (-) Surplus (+)	Deficit / Surplus %
BASKETBALL COURT	1 per 5,000	43	64	21	<b>+48.8%</b>
TENNIS COURT	1 per 2,000	108	78	- 30	<b>-27.8%</b>
VOLLEYBALL COURT	1 per 5,000	43	48	5	<b>+11.6%</b>
BASEBALL DIAMOND	1 per 5,000	43	73	30	<b>+69.8%</b>
FOOTBALL FIELD	1 per 20,000	11	27	16	<b>+145.5%</b>
SOCCER FIELD	1 per 10,000	22	22	0	<b>0%</b>
SOFTBALL DIAMOND	1 per 5,000	43	34	- 9	<b>-20.9%</b>
MULTI-USE FIELD	1 per 10,000	22	147	125	<b>+568.2%</b>
SWIMMING POOL	1 per 20,000	11	19	8	<b>+72.7%</b>

### Recreation in Rochester

#### Demand / The 2002 Recreation Plan

In 2002 the City completed a recreation plan as part of the comprehensive Renaissance 2010 plan for the City. The plan included an analysis of the quantity of city recreation facilities relative to the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) recommended "standards" and found that there was a surplus of all types of recreation facilities except tennis courts, softball diamonds, and soccer fields.

It should be noted that the NRPA published new facility guidelines in 1995 that eliminated the NRPA recreation "standards" – which had been around in similar forms through the predecessor of the American Planning Association since the early 1960s. The NRPA's 1995 revision document, suggesting that it is more important to consider local conditions and demand rather than to use a simple number or ratio of facilities per capita. The NRPA encourages that specialized facilities such as those for swimming and aquatics are developed in response to a known need or in the desire to encourage better use of particular recreation and leisure services for residents.

Though recreation standards are not always appropriate in determining need, they are a useful tool to inform the

city about where deficiencies may lie, especially relative to individual service areas within the City. It's also important to realize that an atypical proportion of GVPW users are not city residents and come from several surrounding towns for league play, events or general use.

The 2002 recreation plan also made some general comments about facilities, which are summarized as follows as they potentially relate to GVPW:

- Seek opportunities to assess lighting to football and soccer fields to meet current demand.
- Convert multi-use fields to football or soccer fields to meet current demand.
- Add more tennis courts to existing parks and consider increasing number of lighted courts.
- Gradually eliminate above ground pools and replace with neighborhood aquatic playgrounds. Recommended locations include Genesee Valley Park West.
- Competition from other ice arenas has resulted in operating losses at the Genesee Valley Park arena.

3-MILE RADIUS RECREATION FACILITIES

Analysis of recreation facilities within the GVPW service area. The inventory includes all parks that have specific recreational infrastructure or that otherwise include enough open turf area for personal or team leisure recreation.

Facility Name	Muni	Distance from GVPW (miles, radius)	Arena / Amphith	Indoor Rec or Comm Facility	Lodge	Icerink (indoor)	Icerink (outdoor)	Indoor Pool	Outdoor Pool	Spray Feature	Waterfront Access	Play Feature	Baseball (lights)	Baseball (no lights)	Soccer	Football	Multi-Use Rec Field	Basketball	Tennis	Volleyball	Fishing Access	Cartop Boat Launch	Boat Launch Ramp	Rec / Nature Trails
Genesee Valley Park West		0	1	1	1	1			1		Yes	1	1	5			1		8		Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Genesee Valley Park (East)	Rochester	0.2									1	1		7							Yes	Yes		Yes
Flint St Rec Center	Rochester	1.1		1					● 1			1		2		1		2						
Aberdeen Square	Rochester	1.2																						
West High Field	Rochester	1.2										1		2		1		2						
Highland Park	Rochester	1.3	1									2												Yes
James Madison School	Rochester	1.4										1			1	1		2	1					
Exchange Playground	Rochester	1.5										1												
South Ave Rec Center	Rochester	1.5		1								1	1	1				1						
Bronson Ave Playground	Rochester	1.6										1						1						
Jefferson Terrace Park	Rochester	1.6										1		2				2						
Roxie Ann Sinkler / Gardiner Rec Center	Rochester	1.8		1								1		1		1		1						
Marie Daley park	Rochester	1.8										1		1										
Adams St Rec Center	Rochester	1.9		1				1				1		1			1		1					
Danforth Community Center	Rochester	1.9		1										1										
Troup St Park	Rochester	1.9								● 1		1						1						
Brighton Town Park	Brighton	1.9			1							1		1										
Skating Institute / Shumway Arena	PRIVATE	2.0				● 1						1						1						
Meigs / Linden Park	Rochester	2.0										1												
Orchard Playground / #17 Sch Rec Center	Rochester	2.3		1								1						1	1					
Campbell St Rec Center	Rochester	2.4		1								1		1			1	1						
Brown Square Park	Rochester	2.6																						
Field St Rec Center	Rochester	2.6		1								1		1		1								
Manhattan Square Park	Rochester	2.6					1			1		1												
Verona Playground	Rochester	2.6										1		2			1							
Buckland Park	Brighton	2.6			1							2	1	2			5	2	2	1				Yes
Goodwin Park	Rochester	2.8										1												
Meridian Centre Park	Brighton	2.9	1								1	1		3			3				1			Yes
Wegmans Campus Fields	PRIVATE	2.9												4										
Brighton Town Hall	Brighton	3.0							1			1												
Westgate Park	Gates	3.0			1							2		2				2	2					
Clinton / Baden Rec Center	Rochester	3.1						1						2		1		1						
Edgerton Park	Rochester	3.2		1						1		1	2	5	1		1	4	4					
Cobbs Hill	Rochester	3.3			2							1	4	2	1		2	2	6					Yes
<b>TOTALS 3-MILE RADIUS (not including GVPW)</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>			

Shaded area represents geographic distance from GVPW to nearest facility / recreational infrastructure type. (Longer = increased distance)

● Dot represents critical drawback to closest alternate facility type as noted by DYRS staff. These include the Skating Institute / Shumway Arena being a private facility, Flint Street recreation center's outdoor pool being decommissioned, and the Troup Street spray facility being too limited in scale to be considered a true "spray park." This increases the distance from GVPW to nearest adequate facility for these services.