



Final Report

City of Rochester Recreation Master Plan



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Section I – Introduction

Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc. and Ballard*King & Associates, Ltd. have completed the Recreation Chapter of the Master Plan for the City of Rochester, New Hampshire. This plan is designed to provide direction and priorities for the City as it relates to parks and recreation facilities and programs over the next 10 plus years. The plan is based on documents and data provided by the City regarding current facilities and programs as well as information gathered from numerous site visits to the community, interviews with key staff and officials, and a public meeting held on June 10th 2010.

The intent of the Recreation Master Plan is to review current City demographics, operations, programs and facilities; assess recreation programs and services needs and priorities as well as, parks and recreation facility needs and priorities. From this information an action plan has been developed to guide the implementation of the master plan.

City Staff Interviews:

- Chris Bowlen – Director of Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department
- Anne May – Assistant Director of Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department
- John Scruton – City Manager
- Michael Behrendt – Chief of Planning
- Michael Hopkins – School Department Superintendent

Elected Officials Interviews:

- T.J. Jean, Mayor
- Sandy Keans, City Council
- Charles Grassie, City Council, Chairman of the Community Development Committee
- Bob Watson, School Board Chairman

Scope of Work:

Review existing recreation facilities, programs and resources:

Recreation facilities
Recreation programs
Identify gaps in service

Review current structure of Recreation Department and Arena:

Integration of facilities and staff

Preparation of growth and development projections for the City of Rochester

Population
Households
Other pertinent information

Review department annual operating budget

Expenses and revenues

Fee structure

Marketing plan

Develop short, medium and long term goals

Action Plan

10 year plan

Arena Building Assessment

Possible addition of a gym

Final report

Any recommendations being made are with the knowledge that it may be difficult to implement all of the findings in this master plan with the current operational and capital funding level for the Department, the staffing level of the Department, and the necessary time requirements for completion.

Section II – Demographic Projections Summary

The following is a brief summary of the demographic realities within the City of Rochester and the surrounding area. The complete demographic analysis can be found in the appendix of this document.

Table A - City of Rochester Demographic Statistics & Comparison

Population Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	28,461	31,114	32,165

Number of Households Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	11,434	12,690	13,192

Number of Families Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	7,648	8,353	8,621

Average Household Size Comparison

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	2.46	2.43	2.41
United States	2.59	2.59	2.59

Source – U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI

It should be noted that the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning forecasts that the City of Rochester’s population will continue to grow beyond the year 2014.

Population Comparison:

	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection
City of Rochester	34,290	35,560	36,650

Population Distribution by Age: Utilizing census information for the City of Rochester, the following comparisons are possible.

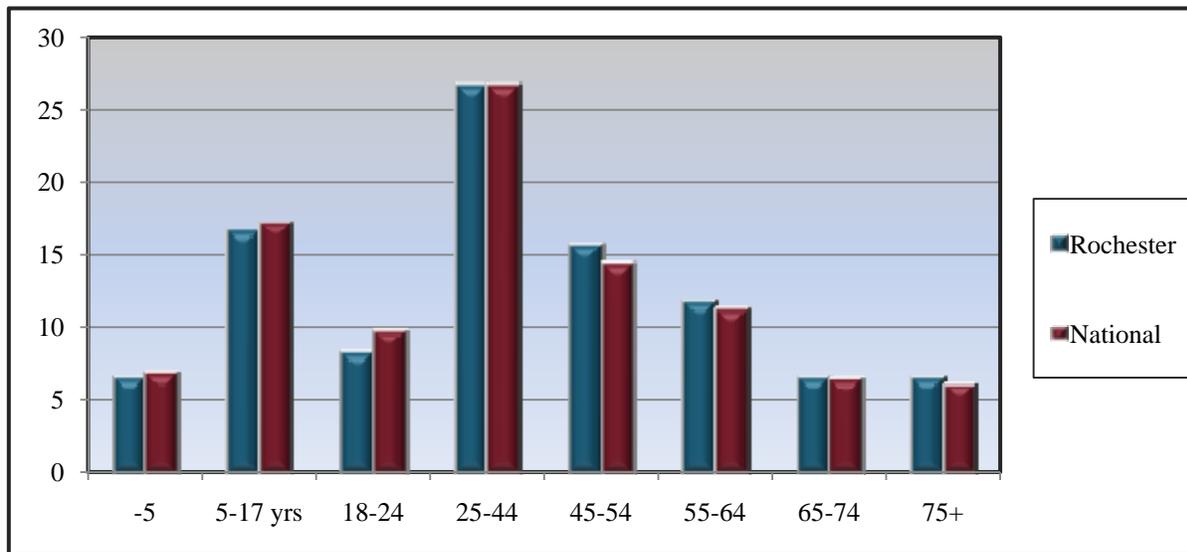
Table B – 2009 Rochester Age Distribution

(ESRI estimates)

Ages	Population	% of Total	Nat. Population	Difference
-5	2,085	6.7%	7.0%	-0.3%
5-17	5,268	16.8%	17.4%	-0.6%
18-24	2,625	8.4%	9.9%	-1.5%
25-44	8,365	26.9%	26.9%	0.0%
45-54	4,914	15.8%	14.6%	1.2%
55-64	3,705	11.9%	11.4%	0.5%
65-74	2,080	6.7%	6.6%	0.1%
75+	2,072	6.7%	6.2%	0.5%

- Population:** 2009 census estimates in the different age groups in the City.
- % of Total:** Percentage of the City population in the age group.
- National Population:** Percentage of the national population in the age group.
- Difference:** Percentage difference between the City population and the national population.

Chart A – 2009 Rochester Age Group Distribution



The demographic makeup of the City of Rochester, when compared to the characteristics of the national population, indicates that there are some differences with a slightly smaller population in the -5, 5-17 and 18-24 age groups and a larger population in the 45-54, 55-64, 65-74 and 75+ age groups. The largest positive variance is in the 45-54 age group with +1.2%, while the greatest negative variance is in the 18-24 age group with -1.5%. These demographic characteristics would point to a slightly older population.

Next, the median age and household income levels are compared with the national number. Both of these factors are primary determiners of participation in recreation activities. The lower the median age, the higher the participation rates are for most activities. The level of participation also increases as the income level goes up.

Table C - Median Age:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	36.7	38.8	39.2
Nationally	35.3	36.9	37.2

Chart B – Median Age

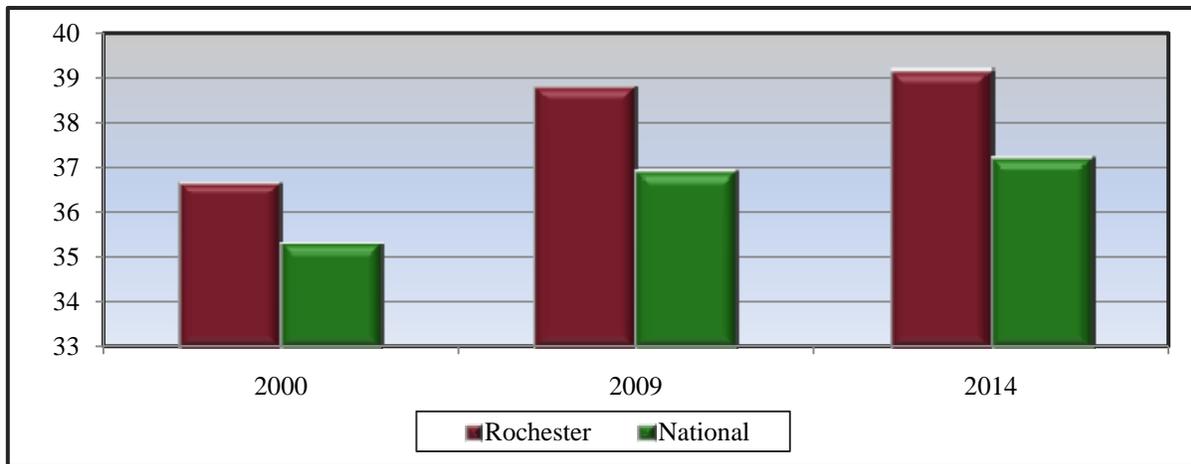
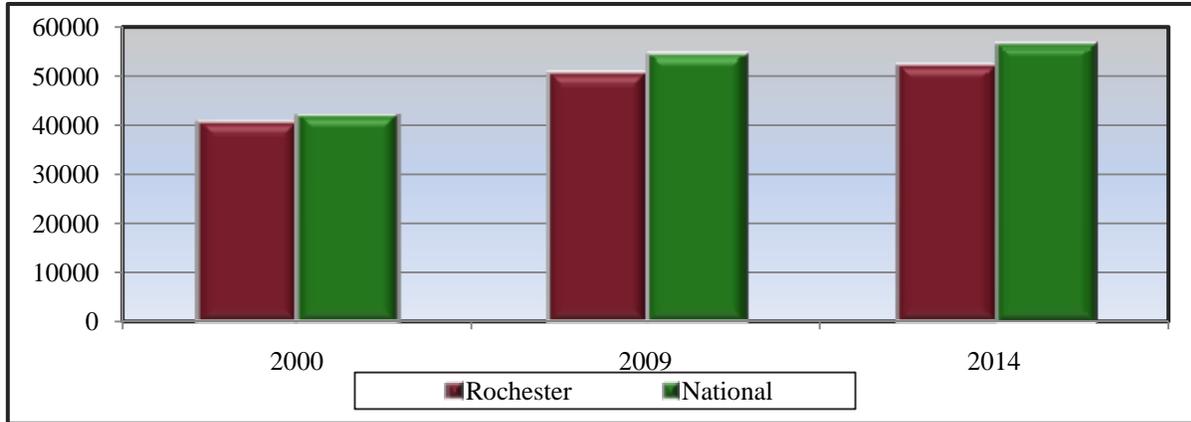


Table D - Median Household Income:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	\$40,558	\$50,520	\$52,196
Nationally	\$42,164	\$54,719	\$56,938

Chart C – Median Household Income



The percentage of households with median income over \$50,000 per year is 50.7% compared to 54.6% on a national level. Furthermore, the percentage of the households in the City with median income less than \$25,000 per year is 20.6% compared to a level of 21.0% nationally. This indicates a slightly lower median household income.

Market Area

In addition to serving the residents of the City of Rochester, many of the parks and recreation facilities and programs draw users from outside of the City itself. With this, in mind a larger market area that includes the neighboring communities of Barrington, Strafford, Farmington, Milton, Somersworth and Lebanon and Berwick, Maine has been established. The following are the basic demographic characteristics of this geographic area.

Table E – Market Area Demographic Statistics & Comparison

Population Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	43,698	49,516	51,861

Number of Households Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	16,468	18,934	19,938

Number of Families Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	11,918	13,524	14,149

Average Household Size Comparison

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	2.65	2.61	2.59
United States	2.59	2.59	2.59

Source – U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI

Table F - Median Age:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	36.0	38.6	39.0
Nationally	35.3	36.9	37.2

Table G - Median Household Income:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	\$45,016	\$55,527	\$58,217
Nationally	\$42,164	\$54,719	\$56,938

Demographic Summary:

City of Rochester –

- There is projected to be a steady increase in the overall population numbers in the future.
- The population is slightly older than the national median age and the household size is smaller indicating fewer families with children.
- All age groups are expected to see an increase in population over the next five years with the exception of the 25-44 category.
- The median household income level is lower than the national numbers.
- There is very little ethnic diversity.

Market Area –

- The population base is larger than that of the City.
- Many of the demographic characteristics are the same as the City except household size is larger indicating more families with children and the median household income level is higher than the City and the national numbers.

Section III – Recreation Facilities Evaluation

The City has a variety of active and passive recreation facilities available for its citizens. This includes the following:

Indoor Recreation

The City has a limited number of indoor recreation facilities.

- *Rochester Ice Arena* – this ice rink serves as the only indoor recreation facility that is totally operated and scheduled by the City. The facility is a single sheet that has seating, a small concession area, and office space. The building is also currently occupied by the YMCA who utilizes the area for offices and some program space.



Rochester Ice Arena

- *Community Center* – the building is owned by the City but is primarily utilized by the School Department for its offices. The center also houses a variety of social service agencies. The Rochester Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department has its offices in the Community Center and some of the spaces in the building (gym and meeting rooms) are utilized for recreation programming on a limited basis. The primary recreation amenity is the large three court gym which is an excellent facility for a wide variety of active recreation programming but the space is shared by the City’s recreation department, by the schools for its academic, athletic and other needs; and by other tenants and organizations. However, the schools have priority use of the gymnasium. Despite the fact that the recreation department is just a tenant in the building, there is the perception that they are in fact the building manager.



Community Center

Community Center Space Allocation:

The following chart summarizes the major spaces/uses in the Community Center.

Space/Use	Square Footage
Community Center (in total)	200,000
School Department	32,100
DHHS	19,750
Gymnasium	15,750
Recreation Offices/Conference Rooms 1&2	4,000
Karate Studio	5,200
Community Room	7,875

The following chart summarizes the current users of the Community Center over a year's time. This does not include any leased or dedicated use spaces in the building, only open general use areas.

Community Center	Hours	Percentage of Time
Non- Gymnasium Uses		
Adult Programs (primarily recreation)	1,469	37%
Government (municipal and state)	183	5%
High School (academics and athletics)	478	12%
Civic & Community Organizations	335	8%
Individual User Groups	253	6%
Youth Organizations and Programs	1,240	31%
Total	3,958	
Gymnasium Only Uses		
Adult Programs (primarily recreation)	415	12%
Government (municipal and state)	0	0%
High School (academics and athletics)	1,202	36%
Civic & Community Organizations	259	8%
Individual User Groups	238	7%
Youth Organizations and Programs	1,224	37%
Total	3,338	
Total Comm. Center Uses		
Adult Programs (primarily recreation)	1,884	26%
Government (municipal and state)	183	3%
High School (academics and athletics)	1,680	23%
Civic & Community Organizations	594	8%
Individual User Groups	491	7%
Youth Organizations and Programs	2,464	34%
Total	7,296	

Outdoor Swimming Pools

The City currently operates three outdoor pools, one in each geographic area of the City, on a seasonal basis. These pools are all relatively new (built within the last 10-12 years) and are presently in good operating condition. However, in the future the pools will need to be replastered, and the mechanical systems upgraded as part of routine maintenance and operation.

- *Hanson Pines Pool* – this pool is located on the edge of Hanson Pines and is the largest of the outdoor pools with a six lane lap pool and small wading pool.
- *Gonic Pool* – this is a six lane lap pool located next to Gonic Elementary School.

- *East Rochester Pool* – this is also a six lane lap pool that is located next to Nancy Loud elementary school.



Hanson Pines Pool

Parks

The city has a number of formal, developed, parks.

- *Rochester Common* – located in the middle of the City this park has a veteran's memorial, perimeter track, small band stand and a baseball field.
- *Blair Park* – this small pocket park is located downtown on Lafayette St.
- *Duval Park* – this is a small park located downtown that is part of the River Walk.
- *Ledgeview Park* – this is a small park located in Gonic that was part of a developer required allocation of community space.
- *Shaw Park* – a small area located in front of City Hall.
- *Factory Court* – this is a small area on North Main Street scheduled and maintained through Rochester Main Street. The area serves as a venue for summer lunchtime concerts.
- *Woodman Square* – a small grassy area on Charles Street.
- *Central Square* – a small park with benches located in the center of the City.



Rochester Common

Natural Undeveloped Park Areas

- *Hanson Pines* – this is a 30 acre natural park that has a series of trails. The park is deed restricted for only passive uses.
- *Pickering Ponds* – the site of the old settling ponds for the waste water plant, this natural area has a number of walking trails around the perimeter of the ponds. There is also access to the Cocheco River.
- *Squamanagonic* – this large land area has been leased to the Sportsman Association who uses the area for archery and dog training. The Police Department also uses the area as an outdoor gun range. The Boy Scouts and other organizations also utilize the property.
- *Stillwater Circle* – this is a small area that was once graded for a park but has never been developed.
- *Henderson Property* - this is 160 acres of natural area located next to the river that is utilized as an aquifer recharge zone.



Pickering Ponds



Squamanagonic

Other

- *Multiuse Bike and Skate Park* – the park is located next to the Hanson Pines Pool.

Beyond these City properties, there is also the old Boston & Maine Railroad bed that cuts right through the middle of the community.

In addition to these recreation facilities there is strong usage of school facilities including eight elementary schools, the middle school and Spaulding High School. The School Department is also in the process of developing the Hillsdale property into additional playing fields that will have some recreational use by the community as well.

Another quasi-public provider is the Rochester Housing Authority which operates the Rochester Youth Safe Haven, a community center for youth after school programs.

Neighboring communities (primarily Dover and Somersworth) also have indoor and outdoor recreation amenities that are often utilized by Rochester residents.

Besides these public facilities there are also a number of non-profit parks and other facilities including:

- *Roger Allen Park* – this park serves as the primary location for outdoor youth sports practices and games. It has 11 youth baseball fields, 5 girl's softball fields, a youth football field, and multiple soccer fields. The park also has a very nice playground and is just completing a new Buddy Ball field that allows children with disabilities to play baseball and other activities.
- *Rochester Fairgrounds* – this large area is a venue for a variety of community activities and events including the annual Rochester Fair.
- *YMCA pool and property* – located next to the Rochester Ice Arena the YMCA has twenty acres of property that includes a pavilion, small open field, and ropes course as well as a small outdoor pool. The YMCA has long range plans to develop a comprehensive indoor recreation and fitness center at another location.
- *Rochester Senior Citizen Center* – the Senior Center is a small socially oriented facility that is located inside of the Community Center.
- *Waste Management Turnkey Recreational Area (Mount Isinglas)* – Waste Management has developed several trails and recreation areas including a golf driving range and dog park on their property.
- *Rochester Opera House* – located in City Hall this beautiful old opera house has been restored and is the primary location for a variety of events from theater to concerts, comedians, and other community activities.

- *Monsignor Gilles Simard Field, Paradise Park, Riverside Park and Keay Field* – these are parks that feature athletic playing fields that are utilized by youth and adult sports in the area.
- *William H Champlin Jr. Forest Reservation* – acquired by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, this large open space area features a number of walking trails.



Waste Management Turnkey Recreation Area



Monsignor Gilles Simard Field

The private sector also has a role in providing recreation services to the residents of Rochester. Most of these facilities are indoor fitness facilities and golf courses such as:

- Planet Fitness
- The Works (Somersworth)
- Curves for Women
- Rochester Country Club
- Oaks Golf Course (Somersworth)
- Hilltop Fun Center (Somersworth)

Note: This is not a comprehensive list of all parks and recreation facilities located in Rochester. There may be other facilities that have an impact on the market as well.

Summary: The following points summarize the recreation facilities that are found in the greater Rochester area:

- The City has only one true indoor recreation facility which they fully control scheduling and operations, which is the Arena. There is strong use of school gyms and other facilities as a result.

- The Community Center does not function as much of a recreation facility with limited active recreation spaces and having to share gym time with the School Department and other users.
- In an effort to serve each area of the City, there are three small, neighborhood based, outdoor pools.
- The City has a limited number of developed parks with playing fields in its inventory. However, with the presence of a significant number of other non-profit parks (especially Roger Allen Park) this limits the need for additional public fields.
- The City has an outstanding inventory of natural and undeveloped park areas. This is further enhanced with the Henderson property, and Waste Management land in the Turnkey Recreational Area.



Henderson Property

On the next page is a chart that lists the major recreation and open space facilities that are available in the Rochester area.

ROCHESTER PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY		
LOCATION AND TYPE		
NAME OF AREA OR FACILITY	Acreage for Outdoor Recreation	Primary Recreation Use/Other Uses on Site
City of Rochester		
Rochester Ice Arena	5.0	Hockey
Blair Park	0.5	Playground
Duval Park	0.5	Pocket Park
East Rochester Pool		Swimming
Gonic Pool		Swimming
Hanson Pines	26.0	Playground, Trails, Woods, River Access
Hanson Pines Pool		Swimming
Ledgeview Park	4.0	Playground
Pickering Ponds Trails	72.0	Hiking
Rochester Common	5.0	Playground, Walking Path, Open Area, Softball Field
Salmon Falls River (Easement)	16.0	River Access
Squamagonic	74.0	Outdoor Activities
Skateboard Park	1.0	Multi-use Skate/Bike Park
Tennis Courts	1.0	Tennis
Rochester Schools		
Allen School	14.0	Playground/Sports Field
Chamberlain School	20.0	Playground/Sports Field
Gonic School	5.0	Playground/Sports Field
Loud School	5.0	Playground/Sports Field
Maple Street School	2.0	Playground/Sports Field
McClelland School	4.0	Playground/Sports Field
East Rochester School	17.0	Playground/Sports Field
Rochester Middle School	26.0	Sport Fields
Rochester Community Center		Various Activities, Gym, Tennis Courts
School Street School	1.0	Playground/Sports Field
Spaulding High School	26.0	Various Activities Gyms, Fields
Spaulding High School - Track	2.0	Walking/Running

Other Providers		
Monsignor Gilles Simard Babe Ruth Field	9.0	Baseball Field
Paradise Park		Softball Field
Riverside Park	7.2	Softball Field
Rochester Country Club-Golf	174.0	Golf
Waste Management Recreational Area		Hiking
Keay Field	4.0	Sport Fields
Rochester Fairgrounds	56.0	Various Activities
Roger Allen Park & Memorial Field	92.5	Sport Fields
YMCA Pool and Property	20.0	Pool, Ropes Course, Pavilion
St. Elizabeth Seton School		Gymnasium
Boston & Maine Railroad Bed		Walking, Biking, Snowmobiling
Champlin Walking Trails	185.0	Walking
Total Inventory	875.7	
OTHER PARKS AND LANDS WITH ACTIVE RECREATION POTENTIAL		
Name of Property	Gross Area	Primary Recreation Use/Other Uses on Site
Henderson Property	165.0	Open Space
Sky Haven Airport	195.0	Open Space
Total	360.0	
OTHER - OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION PARCELS		
Inventory-Passive/Conservation	0.0	
ALL AREAS		Used by or Available to Support Recreation Facilities
TOTAL PUBLIC RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE	1235.7	875.70

Overall Service Gap:

Trends - To assist in the process of developing a recreation master plan for the City of Rochester it is helpful to understand some of the facility trends that are being seen nationally with parks and recreation agencies. However, it should be noted that each city is unique and the area of the country has a strong bearing on trends and other operational factors.

- The types of facilities that are now being provided by parks and recreation agencies have become more diverse and now often include.
 - Neighborhood parks (less than 15 acres, often provided by developers and other organizations)
 - Community parks (15-50 acres)
 - Regional parks (50-200 acres)

- Open space or preservation areas
 - Trails
 - Specialized facilities
 - Aquatic centers
 - Ice rinks
 - Recreation/Community centers
 - Performing arts center
 - Sports complex
 - Amphitheater
 - Tennis center
 - Nature/Interpretive center
 - Adventure sports (BMX, skateboard park, etc.)
 - Boat launch/Marina
 - Golf course
 - Dog park
- There has been a much stronger emphasis on open space acquisition and trails development in the past 10 years, compared with other types of facilities.
 - A greater emphasis on partnering with other recreation and parks providers to develop and manage amenities and programs.

Rochester – Considering the current inventory of recreation facilities the following are some identified gaps in service. When the City’s recreation facilities are combined with the other recreation provider’s facilities in the market, there are relatively few gaps as it is unrealistic to think that the City will have facilities in all of the park classifications noted above.

- The City has few neighborhood parks but there is a strong movement away from cities providing these amenities. The elementary schools are relied on to serve this role.
- The City does not have a true regional park but Roger Allen Park basically serves this function.
- While there are a wide variety of open space and preservation areas, there is no formal designation of these land areas for this purpose.
- Most of the open space and preservation areas have some trails within the park itself, but there is no regional or connected community trail system.
- There is a noticeable shortage of indoor recreation space (beyond the Arena) that the City can control for recreation purposes. The Community Center cannot serve this function due to a lack of other active recreation space as well as a shortage of gym time during prime use times. The lack of gym time is due to use by multiple organizations and not having priority use of the space.

The City currently has a significant number of parks and recreation facilities as well as open space in the community. Ultimately a philosophical decision will need to be made regarding the need to provide any additional amenities in the future. To accomplish this, the following issues will need to be considered:

- *Developing a Parks and Recreation Facilities Philosophy:* With the overall facility deficiencies noted above, it is unlikely that the City has the ability to fund a comprehensive array of parks and recreation amenities. As a result, the City will need to develop facility priorities based in large part on the recreation programs and services that they would like to support.
- *Assessing the Role of Other Parks and Recreation Providers:* With the development of a City facilities philosophy, then the role of other providers can be determined.
- *Determining the Level of Financial Commitment:* If the City is going to develop and operate a number of new parks and recreation amenities then there will have to be significant outlays of capital dollars to build new facilities as well as a commitment to new operating funds to staff and equip these amenities.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations:

Utilizing the information gathered from interviews with City staff, council members and a community meeting, the following are some of the identified facility needs.

- *Rochester Ice Arena* – The Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department should transition its offices and programming to the Arena once the YMCA vacates the front portion of the building in 2013. However, for this to be accomplished the following steps will have to be taken.
 - Secure adequate funding to complete a basic renovation to the building through the CIP process.
 - Remodel the existing YMCA space to accommodate not only the office needs of the department but also to provide some classroom space for basic recreation programs.
 - Move the entrance to the Arena back to what was once the front of the building. Reconfigure the concessions and skate shop to a more prominent location.
- *Community Center* – The Rochester Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department has limited use of the spaces in the center with the only dedicated space being the actual offices themselves. While the center is no longer an adequate location to serve as the primary site for indoor recreation programming, the gym space is still valuable and should continue to be utilized (when available) for sports programming. However, the Recreation, Arena and Youth Services Department should not be seen as being responsible for the day to day operation of the Community Center. The building does need physical improvements including air conditioning, way finding, etc.

- *Open Space* – The City should establish a formal park classification designation for open space that limits the development of formal recreation amenities to trails and other facilities that support nature and outdoor education. Hanson Pines, Pickering Ponds and the Henderson Property should be placed in this open space category.
- *Conservation Easements* – In addition to the formal designation of open space, another category for similar land areas should be Conservation Easements, which would include land areas that are not in current public ownership. This category of park property would be administered by the City’s existing Conservation Commission.
- *Trails Master Plan* – The City should develop a trails master plan that looks at designating easements, right of ways and other existing amenities (Boston & Maine Rail bed) that will connect various areas of the City through a hard surfaced trail system for walking and biking.
- *River Access* – As part of the trails master plan and as an element of a parks open space plan, enhancing access to the Cocheco River should be a priority. This should help enhance the area and provide a potential tourist draw.
- *River Walk* – Continue to work towards the implementation of the River Walk Master Plan utilizing downtown and Duval Park as the anchor. The River Walk should be developed in phases over time as funding is available.
- *Boston & Maine Railroad Bed* – Develop a plan to acquire the rights to develop a hard surfaced trail on the old railroad bed. The trail should be developed in sections as funds become available.
- *Henderson Property* – Designate the Henderson property as Open Space and establish a soft surface trail system within the property that has access to the river. Consider the long range plan to develop a small nature center on the edge of the property.
- *Rochester Common* – The Common serves as “central park” for Rochester and it should continue to be a primary location for community events and activities. However, this should not be a site for organized sports and as a result the existing baseball field should be eliminated and replaced by open turf.
- *Additional Gym Space* – The Arena should be master planned to eventually add a double sized gym to the building. This should be seen as more than just a traditional gym to support sports, it must have true multipurpose capabilities. However, for this to occur additional parking will be necessary and this may require an agreement with the YMCA to utilize some of their property for this purpose. Ultimately the Arena and gym should be master planned so other possible indoor recreation elements could be added to the building at some date in the future.

- *Outdoor Pools* – The three existing outdoor pools should continue to be operated as long as funding is available. The pools are in reasonably good condition and are strategically located in the three regions of the City.
- *Squamagonic Park* – This park should be master planned to include a combination of active outdoor recreation areas and open space. Support facilities for the active use areas will need to be added along with parking and an improved entrance. When significant improvements are made to the park, operational responsibility should revert to the City.
- *Stillwater Circle Park* – This small park has not yet been developed but a master plan should be completed to identify key elements that should ultimately be included.
- *Playgrounds Update* – The City should continue the process of updating and replacing existing playgrounds in the parks. This should also include the development of several age appropriate playgrounds (ones specified for toddlers and pre-school age).
- *Recreation Facility Signage* – All of the City’s parks and recreation facilities need to have consistent signage. The sign should clearly identify the amenity as being a City entity and available for parks and recreation use. Signage should include basic rules and regulations as well. All signs should have a consistent look and color with a City or recreation logo clearly visible.

Parks and Recreation Facilities That are Low Priority or Should be Provided by Others:

The following facilities should be considered as low priorities for the City and are probably better suited to be provided by other organizations.

- *Neighborhood Parks* – Developers, non-profits and other community organizations should be responsible for the development and operation of any neighborhood parks. The City should avoid building or acquiring any parks of less than 5 acres. The elementary schools should be used as the primary sites for neighborhood based programming and recreation activities.
- *Additional Sports Fields* – Considering the presence of Roger Allen Park and the fact that it has not yet been built out with fields, this is the best location for any future sports fields that are needed in Rochester. In addition, the presence of new fields as part of the Hillsdale property development by the School Department should help even further.
- *Comprehensive Indoor Recreation Center* – While a center that would include such elements as a fitness center, gym, track, indoor pool and classroom space would be well utilized in Rochester, a facility of this magnitude is not only expensive to build but also operate. Since the YMCA has plans to develop such a facility in the future, they are better suited to take on such a project. However, if the YMCA does not move forward with their project in the next 3-5 years then the City should complete a feasibility study for such a facility.

- *Old Military Buildings* – There has been some initial interest in the City possibly pursuing the acquisition of the old Rochester Armory Building and/or the Raymond Bisson Reserve Center as possible locations for expanded indoor recreation opportunities. However, these are older buildings that have not been designed for recreation purposes and as a consequence would most likely require a considerable capital expenditure to make them usable for these needs. As a result, the City should not actively pursue the use of these two buildings for recreation purposes unless a full facility assessment is completed for each building that details the capital improvements that are required, the cost for such improvements, and the operational costs for managing the facility.

Section IV – Recreation Programs & Services Evaluation

The City currently offers a variety of recreation programs and services for the residents of Rochester. This includes the following general program areas:

Youth Sports

Basketball
Lacrosse (indoor)
Soccer (indoor)
T-Ball (indoor)
Roller Hockey
Hockey
Learn to Skate
Open Skating
Open Gym
Tennis Lessons/Clinics
Swimming Lessons
Hershey Track & Field
Golf

Adult Sports

Open Gym
Open Skating
Volleyball
Basketball
Roller Hockey
Hockey
Floor Hockey

Other Adult

Table Tennis

Other Youth

Summer Camps
Vacation Camps
Arts & Crafts
Preschool Play

Special Events

Clean Up Days
Holiday Events
Concerts
Sports (runs, etc.)

The vast majority of programming focuses on youth sports activities and camp programs. With the presence of the Rochester Ice Arena there is also a strong emphasis on hockey and other ice activities as well as providing a venue for other non-ice sports activities during the off season.

In addition to the recreation activities that are provided by the City, there are a number of other recreation service providers in the area. Some of these providers are:

Non-Profits

- *YMCA* – child care services, camp programs, before and after school programs.
- *Rochester Child Care Center* – child care services, before and after school programs, and summer youth programs.
- *Rochester Housing Authority* - youth after school programs.
- *Girls Inc.* – camp program and youth after school programs.

- *Rochester Youth Sports Organizations* – these organizations include, Rochester Youth Football, Rochester Girls Softball, Rochester Youth Soccer, Roger Allen Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, American Legion Baseball, and Rochester Youth Hockey.
- *Rochester Senior Citizen Center* – the center provides a variety of senior programs but mostly passive oriented activities.
- *Good ol' Sports* – a senior organization that provides meals and entertainment.
- *Rochester Opera House* – the facility hosts a number of musical, theatrical and other community based events.
- *Sole City Dance* – located in the Community Center, this studio offers dance and yoga programming.

Private

- *Health Clubs* – the health clubs in the area focus primarily on fitness and some sports activities.
- *Martial Arts Studios* – there are several studios (one in the Community Center) that provide karate and other martial arts instruction.
- *Golf Courses* – there are several golf courses in the Rochester area that provide instruction and other golf related activities.
- *Other* – there are also gymnastics, cheerleading, fencing and multiple dance facilities in the Rochester area.

Summary: The following points summarize the recreation programs and services that are found in the greater Rochester area:

- The City's Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department offers a significant number of recreation programs and services but the focus is clearly on youth sports and camps as well as hockey and other activities that can take place at the Arena.
- With the exception of basketball, the youth sports organizations in the community run most all of the youth team based sports.
- The YMCA, Rochester Housing Authority, Rochester Child Care Center, and Girls Inc. provide most of the child care and before and after school programming taking place in the community.
- The Rochester Senior Citizen Center and Good ol' Sports are the primary providers of senior services that focus more on passive and social based activities.

- The Rochester Opera House and Sole City Dance are the main providers of performing arts activities while Art Esprit and Artstream are the primary organizations which offer visual arts services.
- Health clubs are the primary supplier of fitness services.
- There are a number of dance and martial arts studios in the area.

Overall Service Gap:

Trends – The following are some of the recreation program and service trends that are being seen nationally with parks and recreation agencies.

- Recreation programming has become very diverse with offerings in the following main areas.
 - Sports – youth and adult
 - Fitness and wellness
 - Aquatics
 - Cultural arts
 - Youth (non sports)
 - Teens
 - Seniors
 - Special populations
 - Special interest
 - Outdoor education and adventure
 - Special events
 - Family focused activities
- Many of these programs are offered with shorter sessions (two to three classes) or on a drop-in pay as you go basis (especially fitness). In addition, there has also been a concerted effort to integrate conventional recreation programming with community based social service programs. Most of the social service programs are offered by other community based agencies.
- Providing such a wide variety of recreation programs and services has required recreation departments to contract for a significant number of services and/or act as a clearing house or community organizer of other organizations that provide recreation programs and services.
- Cities simply have been unable to provide all the demanded programs and services to a community on their own.
- There has been a greater emphasis on partnering with other recreation providers to provide programs.

Rochester: Based on the current listing of recreation programs, the following are some identified gaps in service. When the City's recreation programs are combined with the other recreation providers in the market, there are fewer gaps but still significant shortcomings.

- Limited number of adult sports.
- No fitness and wellness programs beyond those offered at the private health clubs.
- No year round aquatic programs due to the lack of a public indoor pool.
- Limited senior programs that currently focus primarily on the older senior.
- Virtually no outdoor/environmental education programs.
- Cultural arts programming that is limited to performing arts.
- Very few non-sports based youth programs.
- Few general or special interest programs.
- A limited number of recreation sponsored, community based, special events.

Overall Deficiencies:

- General lack of facilities (especially indoor) to support programming growth and variety.
- Strong number of programs in certain areas but fewer in others that require indoor facilities or other specialized facilities (indoor pools, etc.).
- Unable to provide time and facilities for most indoor drop-in, self directed, recreation activities.

Ultimately the City will need to determine its role in providing recreation services. To accomplish this, the following will need to be considered:

- *Developing a Recreation Program and Service Philosophy:* The first step in determining the ultimate role of the City of Rochester in providing recreation programs and services to its residents is to develop a basic philosophy to guide the process. It is unlikely that the City has the capacity, the funding, or the overall interest in providing a full array of recreation programs and services in all identified program areas. As a result the City will need to determine where their priorities are and where they would like to best use their resources. Some of the areas that appear to have the greatest need are teens, seniors (younger and more active), general interest, outdoor education, fitness/wellness, and special populations.

- *Assessing the Role of Other Recreation Service Providers:* When the City has developed a realistic recreation program and service philosophy, then the role of other recreation service providers in the market area can be identified and integrated into the overall service plan.
- *Determining the Level of Financial Commitment:* To develop and conduct a new and varied level of recreation services the City will have to make a financial commitment to programming. This will include not only operating dollars for staff, equipment and supplies but also capital commitments to develop more facilities (primarily indoor multi-use spaces).

Recreation Program and Service Recommendations:

Based on the information noted above combined with interviews with City staff, council members, and a community meeting the following are some of the identified program needs.

- *Arena Based Programming* – With a history of ups and downs in the participation rate of youth hockey, the Arena will need to continue to look at expanding the base of programming to non-ice uses and activities (especially during the off-season). This may require the installation of artificial turf in the rink to further promote more traditional outside team sports.
- *Development of a Broader Focus on General Recreation Programs* – There appears to be a reasonable interest in general recreation programs (self improvement, special focus, etc.). To adequately develop programs in this area will require indoor space that has multipurpose rooms with a priority for on-going programs.
- *Fitness and Wellness* – Although not envisioned as a major program area, the fact that there are major concerns in the United States with improving overall levels of health, and reducing obesity (especially among children) there will need to be an effort to provide more fitness and wellness programs in the Department’s recreation offerings. This may be accomplished through partnerships with other providers with an expertise in this area.
- *Youth Activities (Non-Sports)* – It must be realized that not all youth are interested in sports and even those that are often have other interests as well. Youth activities could include cultural arts, self improvement and general interest classes as well as teen focused activities.
- *Outdoor Education* – Since the City has an abundance of open space and natural areas, there is an outstanding opportunity to develop some general outdoor programs for youth, adults, and families.
- *Senior Programs and Services* – The Senior Citizen Center is already in the Community Center and their focus is mostly on the more traditional senior (social services, passive recreation, etc.) and the older aged individual.

- *Active Older Adults* – There are not a great deal of programs that are targeted at the aging Baby Boomer generation. This segment of the Rochester population will grow at a very fast rate in the coming years and developing programs and services to meet this demographic group will be important.
- *Teen Programs and Services* – This is the age group that is the most difficult to program for but it appears that there is not currently much being offered for teens. Developing a teen advisory board to guide program development will be essential as will partnerships with other youth and teen focused community organizations.
- *Programming Focused on Families* – This is one of the newest areas of focus for parks and recreation agencies. Rather than targeting single age groups (youth, teens, adults, etc.) specific activities are designed to appeal to family units.
- *Home School Market* – With a strong home school population in the area, developing programs (especially at the Arena) to serve this market will be important.
- *Special Population Programs* – From inclusion sports to classes and services specifically designed to serve the needs of special populations, the City will need to continue to expand its efforts in this area. For many public recreation agencies there is usually an attempt to partner with other public and non-profit recreation providers to regionalize these types of services and make them more cost effective.
- *Self Directed Activities* - There has become a much stronger emphasis on providing opportunities for self-directed recreation activities within parks and recreation agencies. This could take the form of providing opportunities for exercise, pick-up sports games such as basketball, and other play activities (playgrounds). This often requires the availability of space that is not being programmed for these types of activities to succeed.
- *Partnering With Other Providers* – It is clear that the City cannot provide all of the desired recreation programs that will be needed in the future. In order to meet these needs it will be necessary for the City to partner with other organizations and entities to provide additional services. This could involve other public recreation providers, non-profit providers or the private sector. In addition to formal partnerships the City's Recreation, Arena, & Youth Services Department should also become a clearinghouse and resource center for recreation programs and services that are available in the area.

Other Recreation Program and Service Issues:

- A long term programming plan will need to be developed that outlines program and service priorities for the next five years, the individual responsible for the development of the program, and the required resources (staff, funding, fees, etc.) to implement the activity. This programming plan should be updated annually.
- The City needs to adopt a policy that allows private, outside vendors, to provide programs and services at recreation facilities as long as there is no direct risk to the City

itself. The City may need to issue an RFP for these services to ensure that the all vendors are given a full opportunity to participate.

- A lifecycle analysis of City recreation programs and services needs to be undertaken where program registrations by interest area are tracked and reviewed on a seasonal basis. Programs should be slotted into the following categories:
 - New – programs in the start-up phase that are just starting to build in popularity.
 - Mature – programs that have consistent high levels of registrations and are still growing in popularity.
 - Old – programs that are seeing a decline in popularity

Programs that are in the old category should be changed, updated or discontinued.

- In general, programs should have an overall cancellation rate of approximately 20%. Numbers that are higher than this level indicates that either too many or not the right types of programs are being offered. Levels below 20% indicate that not enough new program ideas are being explored.
- There has been a desire expressed (through interviews and public meetings) to have the City provide more after school programming for the community. However, the YMCA, Rochester Housing Authority, Rochester Child Care Center, and Girls Inc. are currently providing this service. As a result, the City should have only a minor role in this program area and if existing needs are not being met then these organizations should be encouraged to expand their efforts.

Section V – Department Organizational Structure Assessment

To effectively assess the organizational structure that is found in the Rochester Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department, it is critical to understand that the Arena was originally operated by an independent Arena Commission and it has only been in the last 6-7 years that operations were moved under the City's recreation department.

The Recreation Arena & Youth Services Department has worked hard to integrate recreation services with the Arena's operation. While this has been reasonably effective there are several other steps that should be taken to enhance the organization.

- The Recreation Commission Board and Arena Commission Board should be combined into a single advisory board with representatives from both existing groups. The combined board should be no more than 10. It is recognized that this will require a City Charter change to accomplish.
- Having offices in the same building (ideally at the Arena) would enhance communications and help build a stronger team.
- Strong consideration should be given to moving parks and recreation facilities and grounds maintenance under recreation to form a true parks and recreation agency.

Specific Staffing Issues

- There needs to be clear areas of responsibility identified for the Director and Assistant Director. While it is recognized that the Assistant Director will handle director duties when necessary or when the Director is out of town, there must be a more definitive delineation of specific job functions. It should be expected that the Assistant Director would handle more of the day to day operations of the department while the Director would handle more of the administration functions (budget development, staff management and structure, policies and procedures, and organizational training). Another option is to have the Assistant Director serve as the Recreation Superintendent overseeing all programs and services (minus Arena programming) while the Director would be responsible for Arena operations as well as department wide planning and administration.
- The Program Coordinator should be moved to a position under the Recreation Supervisor if the primary role of this individual is in the area of programming (as the title implies). If the primary job function is marketing and other administrative practices, then the position should be placed under the Assistant Director and there should be a more accurate title determined.
- With limited funding, the department will be dependent in increasing measure on volunteers for some functions. In order for this to be effective one staff member needs to head up this function. This would be an excellent role for the Assistant Director and/or the Program Coordinator.

- Properly managing both full-time and part-time staff is critical to maximizing City resources and controlling operational costs. Full-time staff should be scheduled to provide facility (Community Center, pools and Arena) supervision during high use times (often evenings and weekends) as well as when most programs and services are taking place. In addition, full-time staff should have staggered schedules to better utilize manpower and resources while providing the greatest benefit to the City. For part-time staff, managing work hours and schedules are paramount. Hours and overall staffing levels need to be carefully monitored and adjusted to reflect actual service demands and utilization levels.
- Full-time job assignments should be by function and overall organizational needs, not on personal abilities or likes.
- To help augment paid staff, the Department will need to develop a stronger volunteer network to support programs and services.
- Any existing job descriptions for full-time and key part-time staff need to be reviewed and updated to ensure that they accurately reflect the actual job functions of each staff member. Basic job descriptions are needed for all key staff if they are not currently present.
- Staff at the supervisor level should have the responsibility of developing and monitoring the budgets for their areas. This would then roll up to overall management responsibility at the director level. Budgets at the supervisor level should be accompanied by clear goals and objectives.
- The Department should reinstate a formal performance appraisal process for all full-time staff with an emphasis placed on measuring job performance and developing a personal improvement plan.
- While the Department appears to have some very basic operating procedures there is not a comprehensive operations manual for the department that covers rules and regulations, employee conduct and expectations and basic risk management and safety standards. It is essential that this type of document is developed in the near future.
- Increasing the level of staff training and development should be a focus for the Department in the next several years. To accomplish this, an increase in funding will be necessary. Staff training could include team building, customer service, communications, financial management, problem solving, and long range strategic planning.
- There needs to be a greater focus on automating more functions within the Department, this includes time cards.
- Full-time staff has only general tracking of how their time and work load is handled but a better system of accounting for time spent by function and program area is needed.

Section VI – Department Annual Budget Assessment

One of the most important aspects of a recreation master plan is the operating budget. This facet of a department's operation will usually dictate the parameters that facilities and programs must perform within and the options that are available to make effective changes or additions in operations. Budget issues include:

General

- It must be recognized that public recreation facilities and programs will always have to be subsidized to some extent as this is a community service function of government that helps define quality of life in a city.
- While the Department has three primary accounts for recreation, they must continue to focus on a strong cost center accounting policy in its budgeting process with specific budget categories for major facilities and program areas. Recreation should mirror the Arena's system of expense and revenue accounting.
- Yearly budget priorities should be directed by long term operational and management goals that are updated on an annual basis. These goals must mirror and enhance City Council goals.
- The Department must have stronger payment and money handling procedures in place that ensure that all program and service fees are collected in a timely manner. It is absolutely essential that well written policies are developed and strictly enforced.
- Credit cards should be accepted for any and all payments. This should significantly improve participation in recreation activities and result in higher revenues being collected.
- The Department must acquire and launch a comprehensive program and registration software program. Once this software is in place all revenues collected by the Department should be entered and accounted for at the time of transaction. Ideally the software system should also be able to integrate directly with the City's overall accounting software. It will be nearly impossible to have strong financial tracking and accountability without such a software program.
- Sound financial practices require good budget monitoring procedures and strong record keeping. The operational budgets need to continue to be monitored on at least a monthly basis with any possible deviations or modifications noted at that time.
- The Department needs to continue to make on-going budget comparisons with previous years, quarters and months as a way to benchmark current operations.

Expenditures

- There is not a well defined five year capital improvement plan for the Department. It is absolutely essential that such a plan is developed to identify capital needs as well as prioritize these needs. CIP budgets are common place for most parks and recreation agencies.
- All furniture, fixtures and equipment at the pools should be placed on a depreciation schedule with dollars budgeted for replacement of these items on an on-going basis. With the City's current budget situation this simply may not be possible at this time. Most public agencies do not have depreciation funds due to the high cost of funding this type of program. The Arena does have such a plan in place and it is working well.
- At least a small level of funding should be allocated for promotions and marketing.
- It will be important that the Department allocate some additional annual funding for parks and recreation staff training. Particular areas of concern are customer service, emergency situations and other factors such as diversity and child abuse recognition. Funding levels should support a well thought out training plan that is developed annually.
- Currently the Recreation, Arena & Youth Services Department pays \$60,000 annually for use of the Community Center. If the Department moves its offices to the Arena, then it should be expected that this level of payment will be reduced substantially to represent only the time used in the gym. However, the same level of payment should be transferred to the Arena as "rent" for office space.

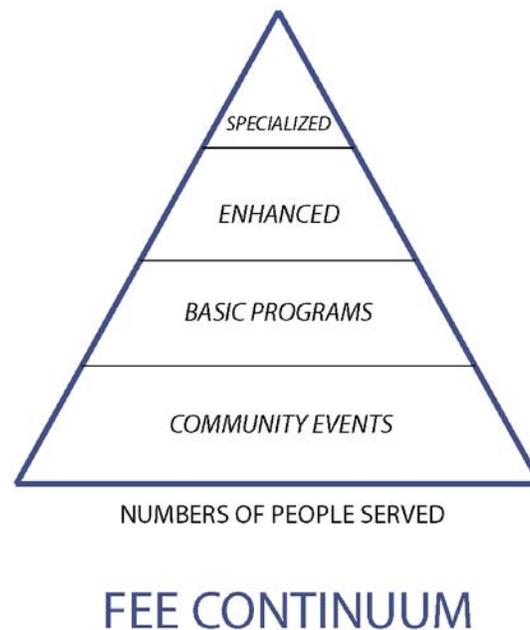
Revenues

- Each program and service offered by the Recreation Division should have a cost and revenue projection completed prior to starting the activity that outlines expected financial performance. At the conclusion of the program a cost/revenue summary should then be completed that indicates the actual financial performance of the program. This effort should be refined to insure that each individual program and service meets its financial goals.
- All programs should have strict minimum numbers of registrants (or attendees) that ensure revenues are adequate to cover costs of operation and that recreation facilities are being utilized to their optimum level. It is acceptable to allow new, first time, programs to be below the minimum but this should only occur for the first session they are offered.

Fees and Charges

- A formal program cost recovery policy must be adopted to guide program and service fee setting. Most programs should be required to cover a minimum of all of the direct costs through fees and charges. If the City is going to continue with a resident, non-resident fee differential then the fee policy should stipulate a consistent percentage fee differential

between a resident and non-resident (no more than a 25% differential is recommended). It must be recognized that a fee differential of 25% or more, greatly discourages non-resident use (and ultimately revenue) of department programs and facilities. Many cities and departments are now tiering their programs into different categories with differing levels of cost recovery.



In this particular case programs in the community event category would have the lowest cost recovery level while specialized activities would have the highest. The exact percentage of cost recovery is established for each program category noted then individual programs are placed in the appropriate category.

- An annual fee survey should be conducted with the other facilities and organizations in the Rochester area to determine where City fees fall in comparison.
- It is critical that there is a policy that encourages an adjustment of fees at least every two years to keep from falling behind on increases in expenditures or increases in fees from other providers. This should keep the City competitive with other providers in the area.
- Ensure that rental policies and fees are being enforced for every use of City recreation facilities.

Future Funding Options

It is recognized that the City's tax cap limits the availability of funding for expanded recreation facilities and programs. As a result, other funding options need to be explored. These include:

- The City needs to set up a foundation (501(c)3) to help as a conduit for donations, grants and other potential revenue sources.
- Community Development Block Grants have been used for some recreation facility development in the past and this source of funding, while limited in scope, will still need to be utilized at least for a small amount of capital funding.
- The City may want to consider requiring a percentage of all program and facility use revenue (5% to 10%) to be allocated to a capital improvement fund.
- The City should identify 3-5 grants a year to pursue for funding specific aspects of recreation programming and/or facility development. This will need to be coordinated at the Director or Assistant Director level. Grants should focus on energy savings, teen services and senior activities as well as wellness.
- Establish strong equity partnerships with other providers and entities to develop new facilities and provide additional programs.
- Develop a comprehensive sponsorship program on a department wide basis (modeled after the Arena sponsorship program) to help fund key programs and facilities. The sponsorship program will need to be set up with a revolving donor/sponsor account.

Marketing

- The Department does not currently have a formal marketing plan to guide promotion of facilities and programs and one should be developed. The first priority must be the development of a concise and pointed annual marketing plan as well as a more visionary five year plan. The yearly promotional plan should be a simple document that is built on an overall promotional philosophy and contains bullet points for specific goals. This straight forward document should identify 3 to 4 areas of focus for the year, the specific promotional tasks that will be completed, a timeline for implementation, a cost estimate, the responsible staff, and a way to measure success. The overall marketing effort must be coordinated and directed by one individual.
- At least a small budget for marketing will have to be developed and will require a level of annual funding.
- The marketing plan must take into consideration the market position of the City's facilities and programs. There are a number of other sports, recreation, aquatic and fitness providers in the greater Rochester area giving residents of the City a number of alternatives.

- The marketing plan’s direction and focus will need to be guided by the key markets that will be served. It is clear that the City’s primary goal is to serve the residents of Rochester itself with a second priority being non-residents of the area. As a result, the marketing plan must address both residents and non-residents. The different demographic populations in the area should be addressed including youth, seniors and families.
- There needs to be continuing efforts to “brand” the facilities and programs through all publications, promotional materials, flyers, signs, web site, and other items. All promotional materials need to have the same format, look, logo, etc.
- Program fees should be listed as the “Base Rate” (non-resident fee), and then as the “Resident Discount Fee”. This provides a more positive approach to pricing.
- The areas of focus for promotions in the short term are:
 - Increasing overall participation rates in recreation programs and services.
 - Educating the community on the open space lands that are currently available in Rochester.
 - Increasing the overall usage of the Arena, especially for non-ice functions during the offseason.
 - Promoting other parks and recreation service providers.
- The use of email as a viable communications medium needs to be encouraged and should be expanded to include specific demographic groups and program participants.
- The manner in which users find out about the Arena/pools, recreation programs and services, needs to be tracked on a regular basis and should guide future marketing resource allocation and areas of focus.
- The annual promotional efforts for facilities and programs should have a formal evaluation mechanism to determine the overall effectiveness of the marketing plan as well as specific promotional efforts.
- The Department currently utilizes flyers and small monthly newsletters to promote recreation programs and services. There should be an effort to develop 3 seasonal newsletters/program brochures to promote recreation activities (winter/spring; summer; and fall). This publication should be given a permanent name that represents its purpose and the sale of appropriate advertising to help off-set printing and production should be strongly considered.

- The existing Department website needs to be revamped and improved. There needs to be a more wide spread use of pictures of facilities as well as individuals taking classes. Maps showing locations of all parks and recreation facilities and a listing of all amenities needs to be easily accessible as well. In addition, the same informational brochures and program flyers that are distributed in the community should be available in PDF format on the website. There should also be a much greater emphasis on utilizing on-line registration as a way to sign up for classes. Links to other facilities and providers should be easily identifiable from the home page.
- Strong consideration should be given to utilizing Facebook, Yammer, and Twitter as communication and promotional tools for programs and activities offered by the Department.
- A formal sponsorship program should be developed for most high profile programs and services that are offered by the Department in an effort to fund at least a portion of the cost of these programs.
- The City should continue to establish partnerships with other local organizations in an effort to expand markets and services without having to do it all internally.
- Conduct a formal survey of community residents on an every other year basis to determine the general satisfaction with recreation facilities and programs and help to focus on the future direction of the Department.
- Strong consideration should be given to changing the name of the Department to something that is shorter and better represents the overall function of the Department. This would also require a new logo to be developed.

Section VII – Master Plan Goals and Action Plan

Based on the findings of the Recreation Master Plan process, the following are the recommended priorities for the City of Rochester. Ultimately, the priorities will need to be established by City Council and City administrative staff.

Goals

The following represents the key goals for the City of Rochester recreation in the next 10 years.

- *Develop a Parks and Recreation Philosophy* – Determine the basic philosophy for providing parks and recreation facilities, programs and services. Utilize this information to determine priorities and use of resources.
- *Determine the Role of Other Parks and Recreation Providers* – Utilizing the parks and recreation philosophy, determine the role of other providers in the market area and integrate them into the overall service plan.
- *Determine the Level of Financial Commitment* - To develop and conduct new parks and recreation services, the City will have to make an on-going financial commitment to the Department.
- *Respond to the Demographics of the Community* – Realize the demographic characteristics that are present in the market and develop facilities and programs to reflect this.
- *Utilize Partnerships to Expand Parks and Recreation Opportunities* – Establish strong partnerships with other community organizations to expand parks and recreation facilities, programs and services.
- *Maximize Use of Community Resources* - Commit to identifying and utilizing all available community resources in an effective manner to support parks and recreation programs, services and facilities.

Action Plan

This action plan has been divided into three time categories with priorities for recreation facilities and programs being identified as well as the management and financial implications of these actions.

Short Term (1-3 years)

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- *Relocation of the Recreation Department* – Complete the required planning for the movement of the Recreation, Arena and Youth Services Department offices and community spaces to the Arena. This would include determination of needed improvements and renovations to the Arena as well as the method for funding.
- *Parks Designation System* – Establish a parks designation system that includes categories for open space, conservation easement, and preservation.
- *Hillsdale Property* – Work with the School Department to establish priorities for recreation use of the new Hillsdale property. Note any physical changes/improvements that will be needed to maximize public use.
- *Playgrounds* – Continue to upgrade playground equipment in all City parks.
- *Riverwalk* – Continue to implement the Riverwalk master plan.
- *Community Center* – Determine the necessary improvements that need to be made to the Community Center to enhance the use of the facility. This would include air conditioning the gym, way finding in the building, etc. Complete a funding analysis for the project.
- *YMCA* – Open negotiations with the YMCA for additional property to allow the expansion of the Arena.
- *Henderson Property* – Designate the property as open space and complete a planning model for trails and a possible future nature center.
- *Rochester Commons* – Remove the formal baseball field from the park and replace with open turfed area.
- *Signage* – Develop and install consistent themed signage identifying all City parks and recreation facilities.
- *Trails Master Plan* – Develop a comprehensive trails master plan for the City and the immediate surrounding area. This effort should include other local jurisdictions and organizations.

Recreation Programming

- *Program Plan* - Develop specific 1 year and 5 year program goals and a more detailed program development plan.

- *Fee Policy* - Establish a fee philosophy and format for determining basic fees for all types of programs.
- *Recreation Programs and Services Partnerships and Clearinghouse* – Develop strong partnerships with other providers to bring a broad base of recreation programs to the community. Promote the concept of the Department being a clearinghouse for recreation programs and services provided by other organizations in the greater Rochester area.
- *Outside Vendors* – Adopt a policy that allows outside groups and organizations to provide recreation programming in City facilities. There should be a fee for such use.
- *After School Programming* – Encourage the existing providers to expand after school programming.
- *Arena Programming* – Add new non-ice programming to counter act the decline in ice hockey.
- *General Programming* – Establish basic general programs for youth and adults making use of available indoor recreation space.
- *Fitness/Wellness* – Offer a series of introductory fitness and wellness programs through a partnership with local health care providers or other recreation service agencies.
- *Youth Activities (Non-Sports)* – Offer a series of youth activities beyond traditional sports.

Management

- *Combine Boards* - Combine the Recreation Commission Board with the Arena Commission Board. Complete the required changes to the City Charter.
- *Management and Operational Goals* – Establish yearly management and operational goals for the Department that will identify clear priorities and areas of focus for the coming year.
- *Automation of Management Processes* – Purchase the necessary computer software and hardware to automate facility scheduling, program registration, on-line registration, time card management and other functions.
- *Credit Cards* – Allow the use of credit cards as payment for all programs and services offered by the Department. This should begin in the next 3 to 6 months.
- *Payment and Money Handling* – Establish new guidelines to improve payment and money handling procedures within the Department.

- *Five Year Capital Improvement Plan* – Develop a 5 year CIP plan that identifies priorities for capital improvements to City parks and recreation facilities.
- *Staff Responsibilities* – Develop clear job responsibilities for all full-time staff and reorganize the staffing plan as necessary. Establish work schedules that provide the greatest coverage for on-going management and supervision of parks and recreation activities.
- *Performance Appraisals* – Ensure that performance appraisals are conducted for all Department full-time staff on an annual basis.
- *Policies and Procedures Manual* – Develop a formal, comprehensive, Department policies and procedures manual.
- *Cost Center Accounting* – Develop sub-budget categories that allow for cost center accounting to occur for major program and service functions performed by the Department.
- *Alternative Funding* – Identify and pursue 3-5 grants a year.
- *Website* – Update and improve the Department’s website

Middle Term (4-6 years)

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- *Long Range Planning* - Establish specific 5 year and 10 year facilities goals and a detailed development plan.
- *Relocation of Recreation Department* – Complete the required renovations and improvements to the Arena to allow the Recreation, Arena and Youth Services Department offices to be moved from the Community Center.
- *Swimming Pools Assessment* – Review the physical condition of each of the outdoor pools and plan for any necessary upgrades or improvements.
- *Community Center* – Complete the necessary improvements to the Community Center to enhance the use of the facility.
- *Riverwalk* – Continue to implement the Riverwalk master plan.
- *Henderson Property* – Construct trails that were identified in the planning model.
- *Arena Expansion* – Develop plans for the addition of a double sized gym to the Arena and determine a method to fund the expansion.

- *Individual Parks Master Plan* – Complete a master plan for the development of Squamanagonic and Stillwater Circle parks.
- *Implementation of the Trails Master Plan* – The trails master plan that was developed should be implemented in phases.
- *Military Buildings* – Assess the feasibility of obtaining and utilizing the two military facilities in the community as community recreation facilities.

Recreation Programming

- *Lifecycle Analysis* – Perform a lifecycle analysis for all City recreation programs and services.
- *Outdoor Education* – Working with other community agencies, establish a number of outdoor education programs that take advantage of the many open space areas that are available in the community.
- *Active Older Adults* – Develop programs that focus on serving the needs of active older adults (Baby Boomers). These should include fitness and wellness programming as well as self improvement and sports.
- *Teen Programs* – Establish a teen advisory board to guide program development for teens.

Management

- *Combining Parks with Recreation* – Complete an internal analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of moving parks operations within the same department as recreation.
- *Volunteer Network* – Establish a formal volunteer program to enhance the efforts of paid staff.
- *Capital Project Financing Plan* - Develop a long range plan to finance the development and operation of a variety of parks and recreation amenities. This should include alternative funding mechanisms.
- *Foundation* - Establish a 501(c)3 foundation with the City Council serving as the directors of the organization.
- *Staff Training and Development* - Develop a formal yearly staff training and development program with adequate funding for the plan.
- *Marketing* – Develop and fund a comprehensive marketing plan based on 1 year and 5 year goals.

- *Program Projections* – Require all programs and services that are offered by the Department to have a cost and revenue projection completed prior to starting the activity. All programs should have strict minimum enrollment numbers.

Long Term (7 plus years)

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- *Arena Expansion* – Add a double sized gym to the Arena.
- *Swimming Pools Upgrade* – Complete the planned upgrades for each of the outdoor pools.
- *Continue the Implementation of the Trails Master Plan* – Continue the implementation of the trails master plan.
- *Henderson Property* – Construct the nature center that was identified in the planning model.
- *Individual Parks* – Complete the construction of Squamanagonic and Stillwater Circle parks.

Recreation Programming

- *Home School Programming* – Develop programs to specifically serve the home school market.
- *Special Population Programs* – Establish additional programs that can serve the needs of special populations. This should be accomplished through partnerships with other neighboring communities as well as other community based organizations.
- *Self Directed Activities* – With the development of additional indoor recreation facilities, the Department will need to focus time on providing opportunities for community members to enjoy their own self directed activities.
- *Family Focused Activities* – Develop a series of programs that focus on bringing families together for recreation purposes.

Management

- *Standards* - Establish basic operations and maintenance standards for all park amenities and facilities. From this a maintenance management plan will need to be developed that outlines specific custodial and maintenance practices and tasks for all the Department's facilities.

- *Sponsorship Program* – Develop a comprehensive sponsorship program for City parks and recreation facilities as well as individual programs.
- *Depreciation Schedule* – Establish a depreciation schedule for all Department equipment. Develop a funding program to support the schedule.
- *Citizen Survey* – Complete a survey of City residents on an every other year basis to determine satisfaction with current parks and recreation facilities, programs and services as well as future priorities.
- *Other Providers Survey* – Complete a simple survey of other recreation providers in the community on an every other year basis to determine program and fee benchmarks as well as future planning efforts.

Section VIII – Arena Building Assessment

Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc. has completed a basic assessment of the existing Arena building and has recommended a number of improvements as well as the future addition of a new gymnasium.

Description and Condition of Major Building Systems

Foundations

Visible portions of the foundation are cast-in-place concrete. A typical pre-engineered metal building will have a perimeter foundation wall, with piers below the steel bent “column” bases. We would assume conventional foundations systems below the locker room addition on the east side of the building.

The wood canopy on the western side of the building is supported on cylindrical concrete piers.

Slabs

Slabs appear to be conventional slabs on grade with the exception of the rink floor.

Typically in pre-engineered structures, the slab is thickened along the steel frame lines to create a grade beam that ties the two foundations together.

Structure

The structure consists of a steel pre-engineered frame. Sub-girts and framing support the perimeter metal wall panels and the roof panels.

A wood framed covered entry was added to the west side of the building to protect the former rink entry and fire escape. The structure is supported on 7 wood columns; the columns are braced back to the metal structure. The building supports the opposite side of the structure.



Covered entry at west side

Smaller metal canopies protect the current YMCA entrance and new rink entrance on the north and east respectively.

The second level of the YMCA area of the building is wood framed with plywood decking.



Framing in YMCA area

A small wood-framed structure is located that serves as an office and meeting space inside the rink along the west wall; a wood framed press box is located on the east side of the rink at center ice.

Building Envelope

Metal Panels

The portions of the perimeter walls and the gable ends of the building are clad in vertical metal wall panels that are part of the pre-engineered building system.

The metal wall panels are in generally serviceable condition. Surface should be inspected on a periodic basis to ensure all fasteners and washers remain secure and watertight. The panels along the east and west areas are losing finish and have surface damage. These panels need cleaning, repair and possibly recoating/painting.

The lower areas of the walls (grade to approximately 8 ft) are painted concrete masonry units. Areas of the CMU are cracked and show signs of water damage. The west side of the building is covered with organic growth caused by water sheeting down the surface of the building face. The west side of the building is relatively shady and CMU surface remain moist enough to support the organic growth.



Masonry and Metal Panel Deterioration at Southeast corner



Organic growth on CMU along west elevation

The CMU appears to be a single wythe wall (single layer of concrete masonry). It cannot be confirmed that the walls have any insulation within the block cores.

It appears that a layer of insulation is sandwiched between the exterior metal panel and a metal panel secured from the inside.



Interior wall surfaces

The upper areas of the gable end walls as well as the ceiling have foil faced, low-e insulation panels.



Interior view of Rink

Roofing

The roof is made of pre-engineered roof panels. The only roof penetrations are the boiler chimney and small vents.



There are no gutters or snow guards provided on the floor.

A large diverter is located behind the chimney

It is reported that the City routinely shovels the roof during heavy snow storms. The foot traffic, plus the weight of the snow can cause the metal panels to deflect and loosen the fasteners. The roof should be inspected each spring to ensure that the roof remains weather tight.

Doors

The majority of exterior doors are painted hollow metal and appear to be in serviceable conditions. Large insulated overhead sectional doors provide vehicle and Zamboni access to the rink space. The overhead doors are in serviceable condition.

Windows

The only windows in the structure are in the north elevation facing the parking lot. The windows are thermally broken, insulated units.

Interior Elements

Rink

At the time of the observation, a multi-purpose floor surface was placed over the rink slab to accommodate non-ice activities in the off season.

The rink's dasher board and netting remains in place.



The rink piping is distributed through a header trench. It is reported that the under slab piping was checked/tested and found to be in good working order.

At the time of the observation, a new refrigeration plant, utilizing an ice chiller (ice cube) system was being installed. The system can provide cooling for the off ice season if the plant is operated.

Bleachers

A six (6) row high set of telescoping bleachers is located along the west side of the rink. The ends have been retrofitted with modern stackable guard assemblies. The wood finish is in fair condition; there are no center aisles that would be required for a new bleacher installation.



Public Amenities

The ticketing/control desk, concessions and rental counter are on the west side of the rink opposite the new entry.

The counters and amenities are not accessible to individuals with disabilities.



Concession Area



Skate Rental and Warming Room Below elevated office/meeting space

The meeting space is accessed by a stair adjacent to the bleachers and is not accessible.

Toilet Rooms

The public toilet rooms are accessible from the north end of the rink and housed in the YMCA section of the building.

The toilet rooms are painted concrete masonry units, concrete floors with matting, and a combination of hard and ATC ceilings.

The toilet partitions are painted metal.

Toilet fixtures are in good working order. Modifications have been made to provide accessible facilities. The modifications are not in full compliance with applicable accessibility regulations.



Summary of Suggested Improvements:

1. Inspect the roof assembly. Long term, the roof panels should be refastened with new mechanical fasteners at loose or damaged panels. Assume 50% of the roof area.
2. Install gutters and downspouts along the east and west ends of the building to prevent damage to the wall surfaces.
3. Provide a drywell or recharge system to collect the rainwater and discharge it in a controlled manner.
4. Replace the exterior wall panels on the west and east elevations.
5. Power wash, repair, and repoint concrete masonry walls surfaces. Paint wall surface.
 - Clean 100% of wall.
 - Repoint 50% of wall.
 - Replace 5 % of wall.
 - Paint 100% of wall.

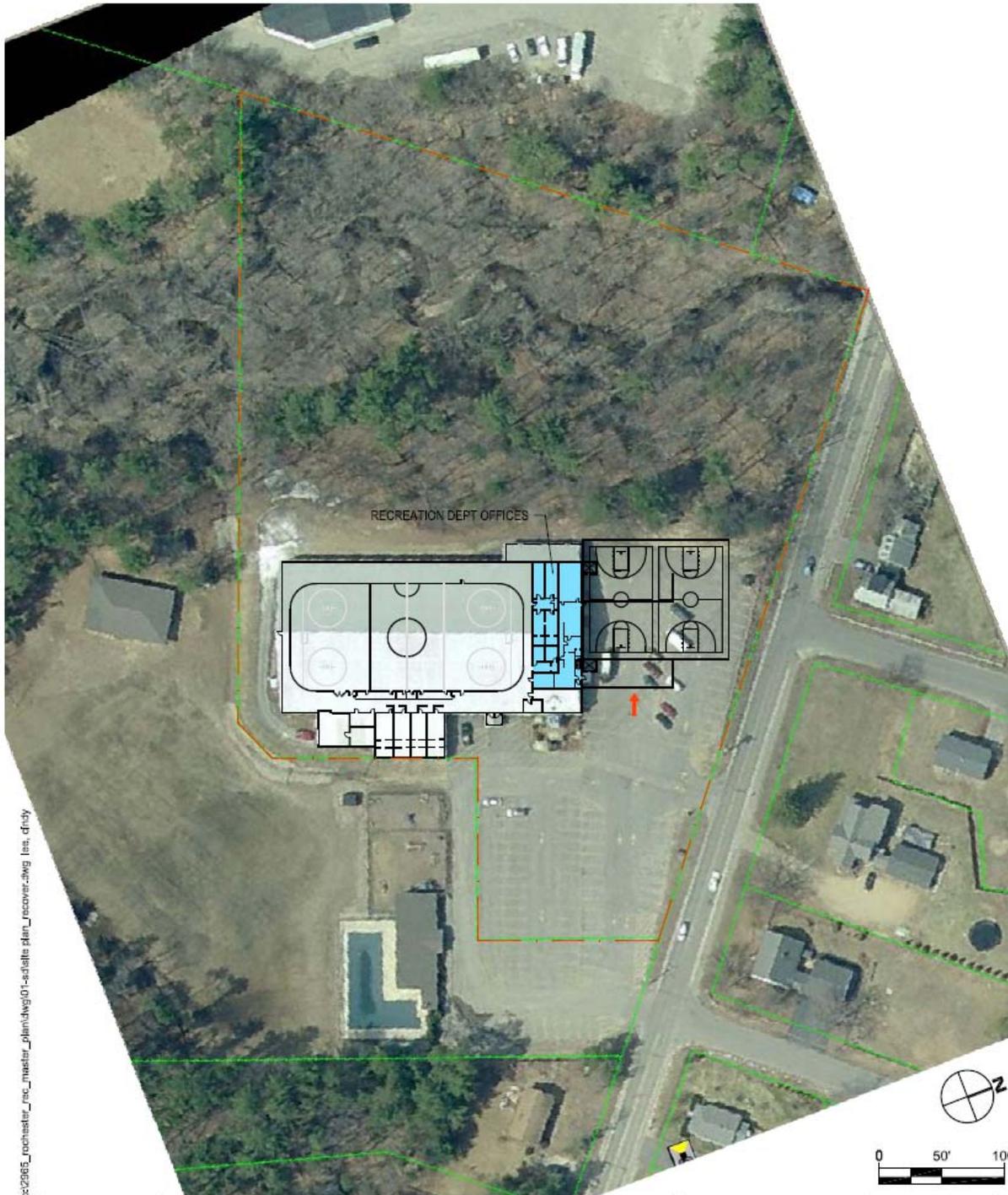
Arena Building Upgrades

As a potential addition of a gymnasium space is considered, the following work will be required/triggered by the new work.

- Upgrade accessible toilets to full compliance with New Hampshire Accessibility requirements.
- The increase in building area will require installation of an automatic fire protection system throughout the existing building. The Rink system would be a dry sprinkler system.
- The upper level of the YMCA would require an elevator if this space is used for public programs. An enclosed second means of egress would be required from the upper level YMCA space as well. This area could be classified as a mezzanine which would allow one open stair.

Site Plan Options

The following sketches are conceptual site plans showing options for locating a gymnasium addition on the site. Sketch SK-1 and SK-2 show the gym addition on the north side between the street and the existing rink so that the Recreation Department office can be centrally located between the two program elements. SK-4 pushes the addition to the west where there is a steep slope but maintains a 100'-0" buffer zone from the stream. SK-3 shows the addition to the east in the existing parking lot. In all cases, parking count and a safe drop-off will have to be incorporated in the course of the design process.



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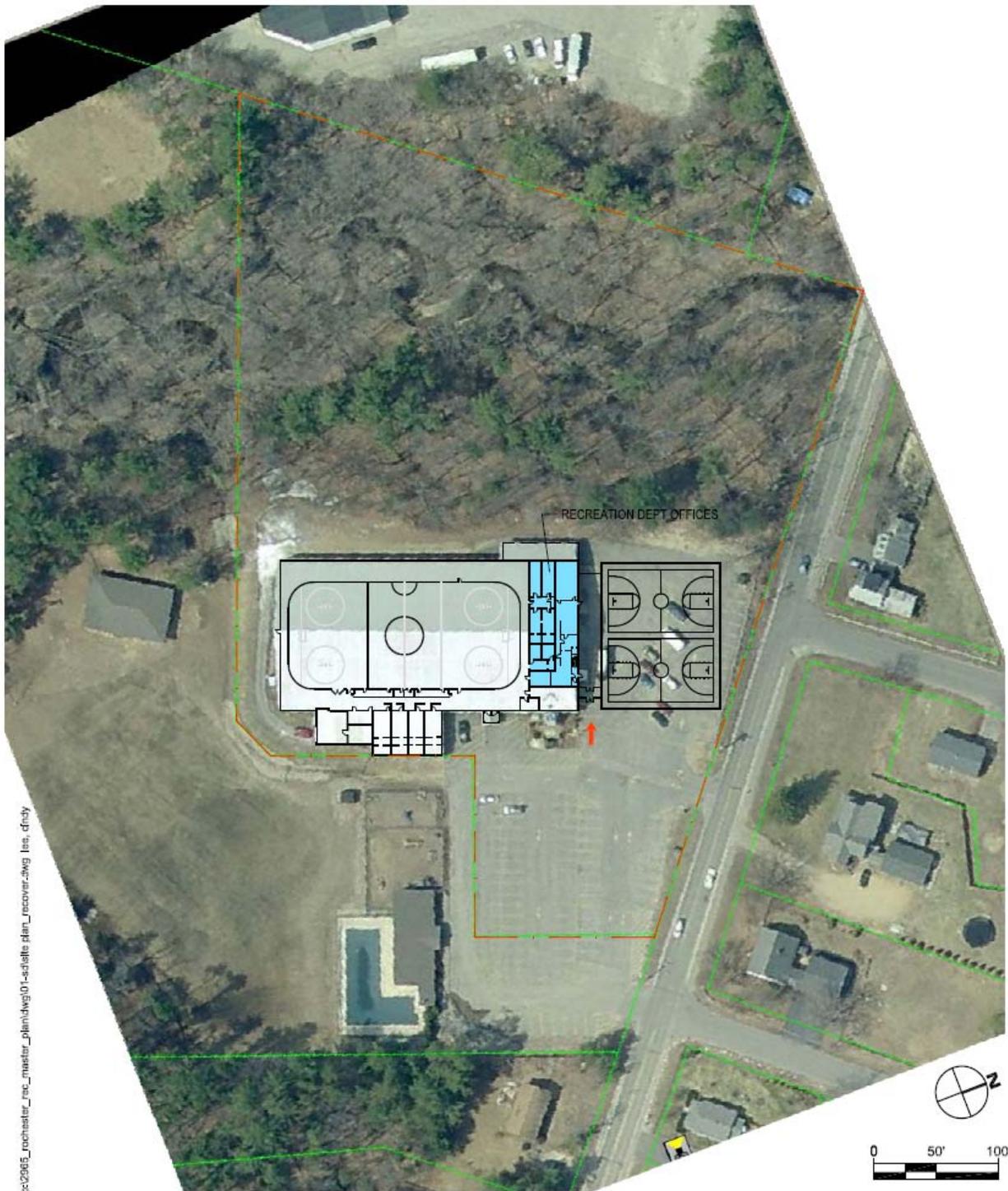
bh+ta
 300 A Street
 Boston, MA 02210
 617 350-0450 Tel |
 617 350-0215 Fax
 www.bhplus.com

**ROCHESTER
 RECREATION
 MASTER
 PLAN**
 Rochester, NH

**Conceptual Site Plan
 Gym in the North before Grade Drop**

DATE: 5/8/2010
 SCALE: 1" = 100'
 PROJ. NO.: 2955.00
 FILE NAME: site plan.dwg

SK-1



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300 A Street
Boston, MA 02210
617 350-0450 Tel
617 350-0215 Fax
www.bhplus.com

ROCHESTER
RECREATION
MASTER
PLAN
Rochester, NH

Conceptual Site Plan
Gym on the North Side

DATE: 5/8/2010
SCALE: 1" = 100'
PROJ. NO.: 2965.00
FILE NAME: site plan.dwg

SK-2



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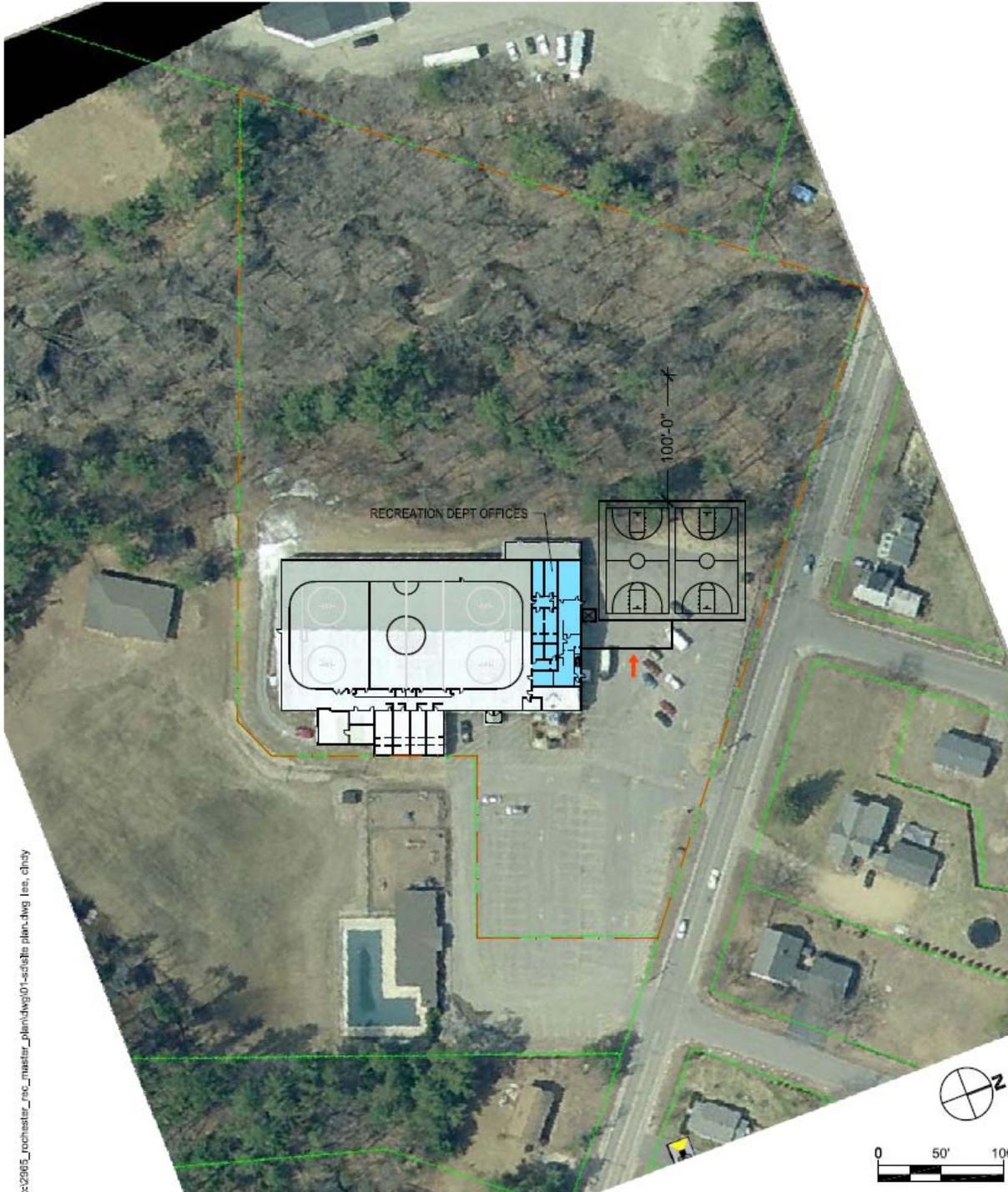
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300 A Street
Boston, MA 02210
617 350-0450 Tel
617 350-0215 Fax
www.bhplus.com

ROCHESTER
RECREATION
MASTER
PLAN
Rochester, NH

Conceptual Site Plan
Gym on the East Side

DATE: 5/8/2010
SCALE: 1" = 100'
PROJ. NO.: 2965.00
FILE NAME: site plan.dwg

SK-3



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**ROCHESTER
 RECREATION
 MASTER
 PLAN**
 Rochester, NH

**Conceptual Site Plan
 Gym on the Northwest Corner**

DATE: 5/8/2010
 SCALE: 1" = 100'
 PROJ. NO.: 2985.00
 FILE NAME: site plan.dwg

SK-4

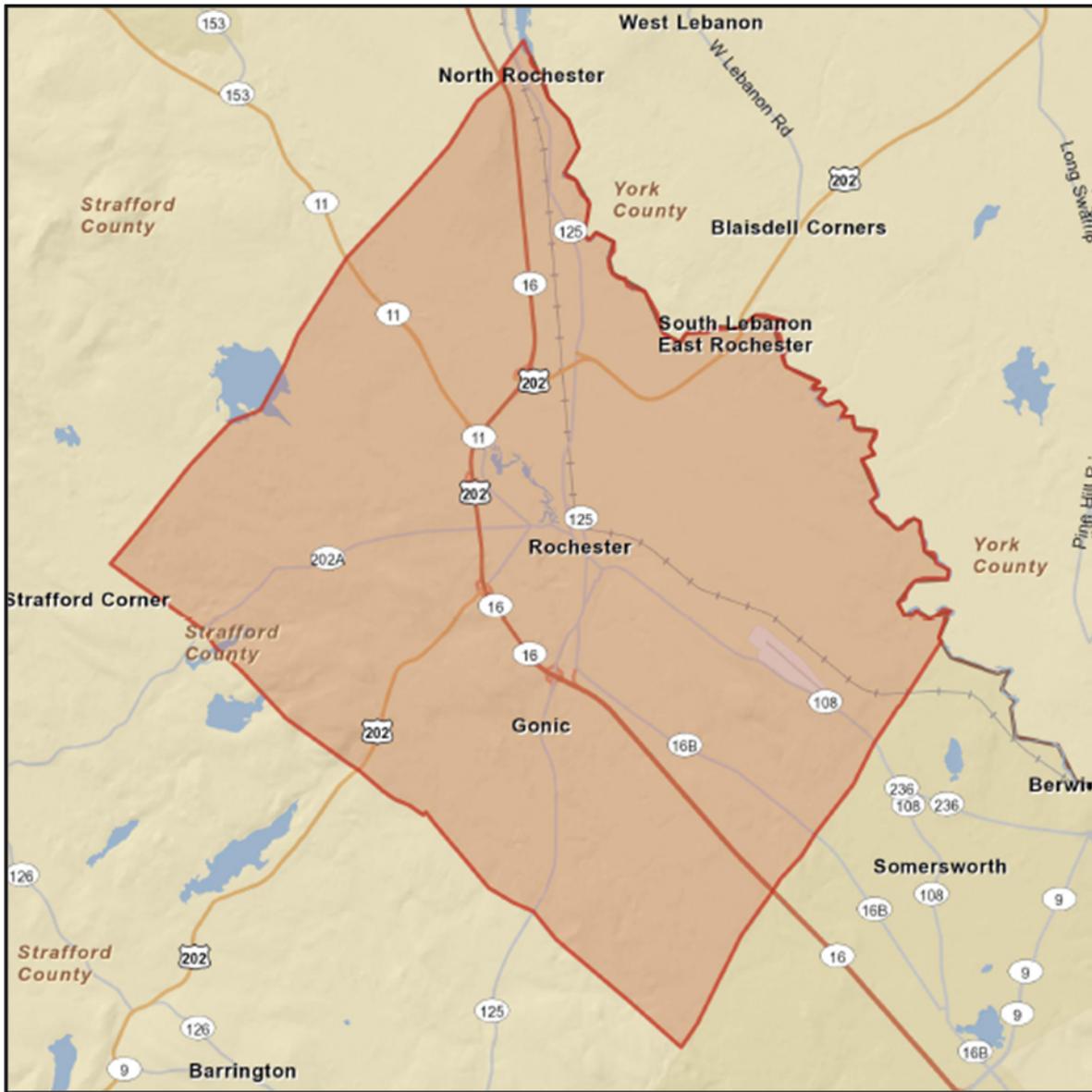
Section IX – Appendix

Demographic Projections

City Owned Properties

Demographic Projections

Map A – City of Rochester



Population Distribution by Age: Utilizing census information for the City of Rochester, the following comparisons are possible.

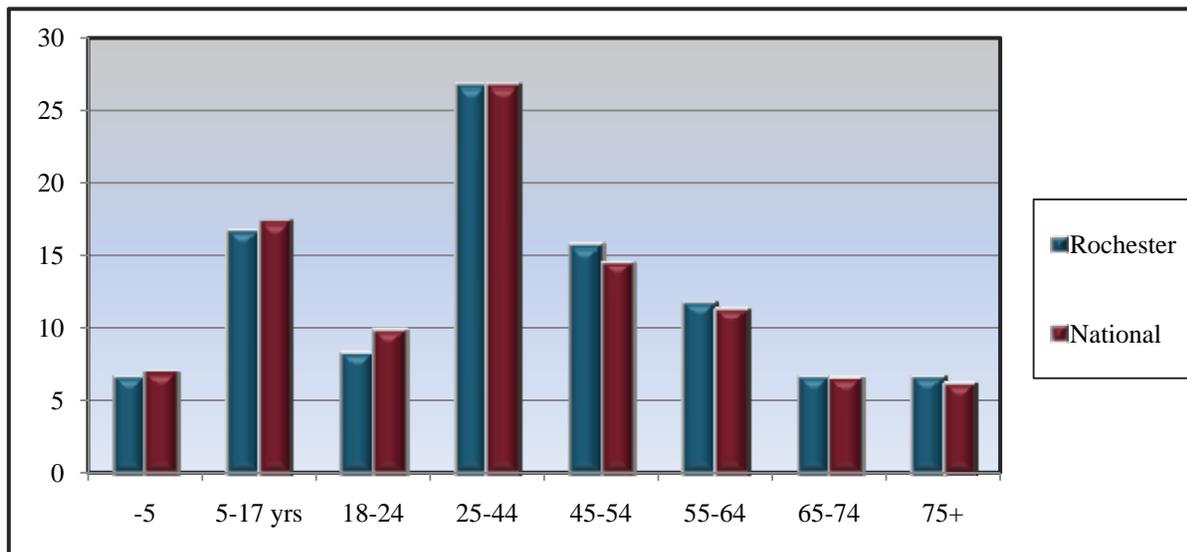
Table B – 2009 Rochester Age Distribution

(ESRI estimates)

Ages	Population	% of Total	Nat. Population	Difference
-5	2,085	6.7%	7.0%	-0.3%
5-17	5,268	16.8%	17.4%	-0.6%
18-24	2,625	8.4%	9.9%	-1.5%
25-44	8,365	26.9%	26.9%	0.0%
45-54	4,914	15.8%	14.6%	1.2%
55-64	3,705	11.9%	11.4%	0.5%
65-74	2,080	6.7%	6.6%	0.1%
75+	2,072	6.7%	6.2%	0.5%

- Population:** 2009 census estimates in the different age groups in the City.
- % of Total:** Percentage of the City population in the age group.
- National Population:** Percentage of the national population in the age group.
- Difference:** Percentage difference between the City population and the national population.

Chart A – 2009 Rochester Age Group Distribution



The demographic makeup of the City of Rochester, when compared to the characteristics of the national population, indicates that there are some differences with a slightly smaller population in the -5, 5-17 and 18-24 age groups and a larger population in the 45-54, 55-64, 65-74 and 75+ age groups. The largest positive variance is in the 45-54 age group with +1.2%, while the

greatest negative variance is in the 18-24 age group with -1.5%. These demographic characteristics would point to a slightly older population.

Population Distribution Comparison by Age: Utilizing census information for the City of Rochester, the following comparisons are possible.

Table C – 2009 Rochester Population Estimates
(U.S. Census Information and ESRI)

Ages	2000 Population	2009 Population	2014 Population	2009-2014 Percent Change	2000-2014 Percent Change	2000-2014 Percent Change Nat'l
-5	1,929	2,085	2,084	0%	8.0%	14.4%
5-17	5,266	5,268	5,375	2.0%	2.1%	4.7%
18-24	2,180	2,625	2,664	1.5%	22.2%	16.2%
25-44	8,974	8,365	8,383	.8%	-6.6%	0.6%
45-54	3,828	4,914	4,618	-6.0	20.6%	16.2%
55-64	2,450	3,705	4,304	16.2%	75.7%	64.3%
65-74	2,071	2,080	2,657	27.7%	28.3%	41.3%
75+	1,763	2,072	2,080	.4%	18.0%	19.1%

Chart B – Rochester Population Growth

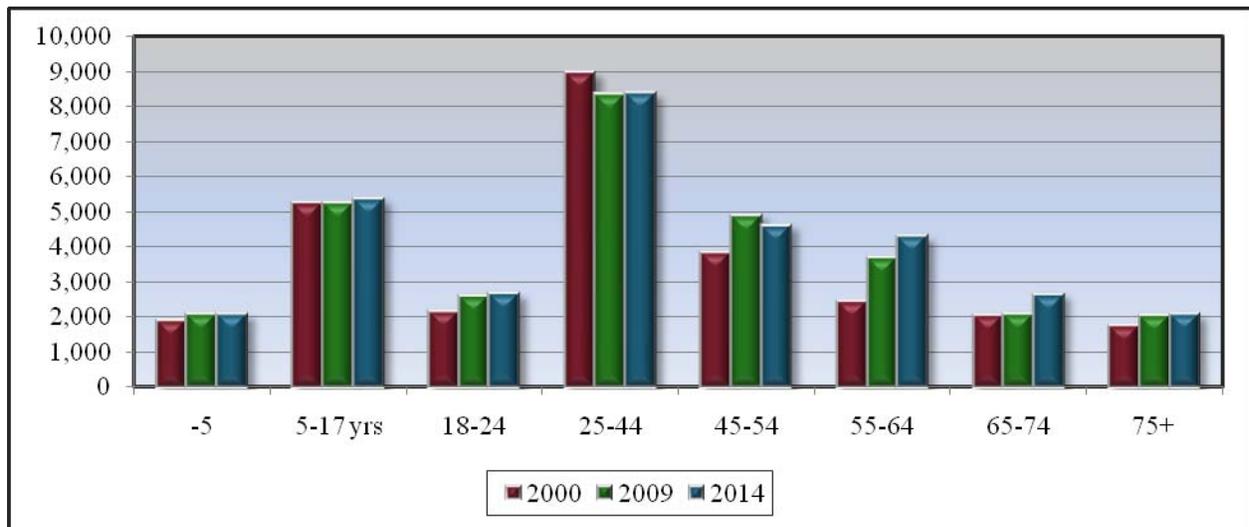


Table-C, looks at the growth or decline in age group numbers from the 2000 census until the year 2014. It is projected that all of the age categories, except the 25-44 age group, will see an increase in population. It must be remembered that the population of the United States as a whole is aging and it is not unusual to find negative growth numbers in the younger age groups

and net gains nearing 45% in the 45 plus age groupings in communities which are relatively stable in their population numbers.

Below is listed the distribution of the population by race and ethnicity for the City of Rochester based on 2009 population estimates.

Table D – Rochester Hispanic Population and Median Age

(Source – U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI)

Ethnicity	Total Population	% of Population	Median Age
Hispanic	410	1.3%	22.0

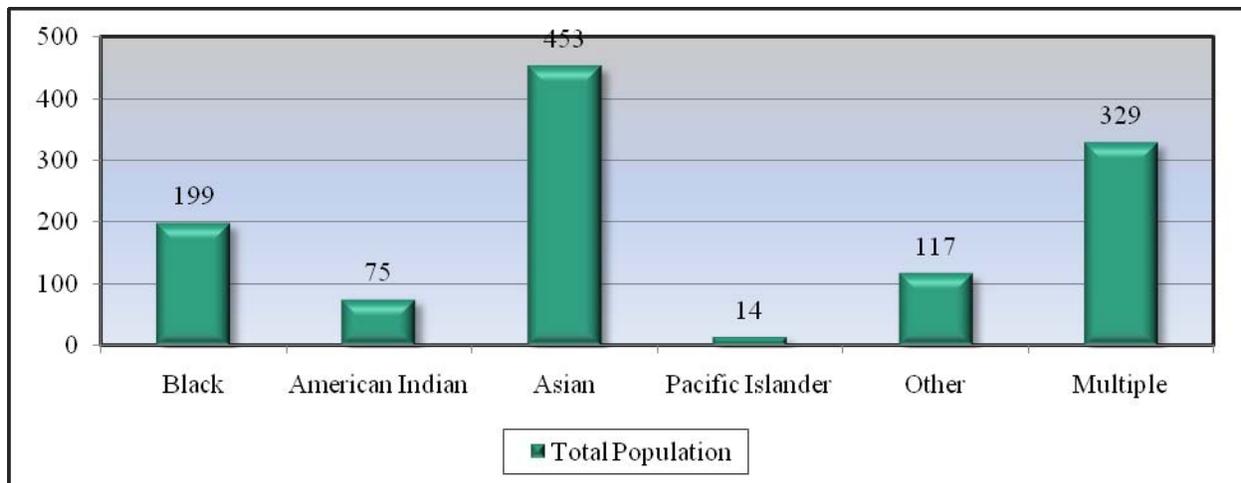
Table E – Rochester Ethnic Population and Median Age

(Source – U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI)

Ethnicity	Total Population	% of Population	Median Age
White	29,927	96.2%	39.2
Black	199	0.6%	26.6
American Indian	75	0.2%	38.1
Asian	453	1.5%	33.6
Pacific Islander	14	0.04%	22.5
Other	117	0.4%	26.8
Multiple	329	1.1%	23.7

2009 City of Rochester Total Population: 31,114 Residents

Chart C – Rochester Ethnic Population

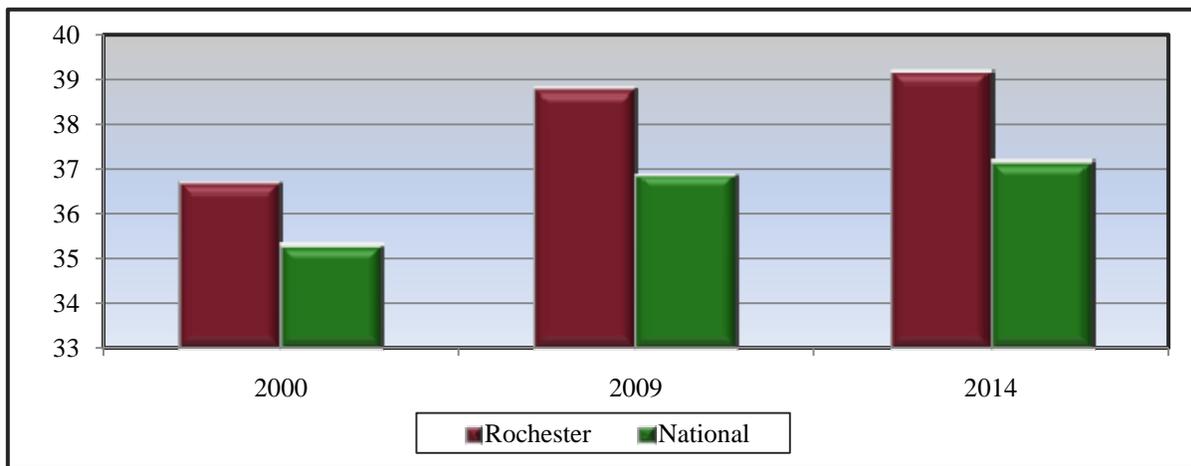


Next, the median age and household income levels are compared with the national number. Both of these factors are primary determiners of participation in recreation activities. The lower the median age, the higher the participation rates are for most activities. The level of participation also increases as the income level goes up.

Table F - Median Age:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	36.7	38.8	39.2
Nationally	35.3	36.9	37.2

Chart G – Median Age



Map B - Median Age by Census Block Group:

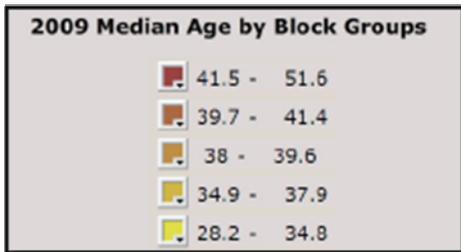
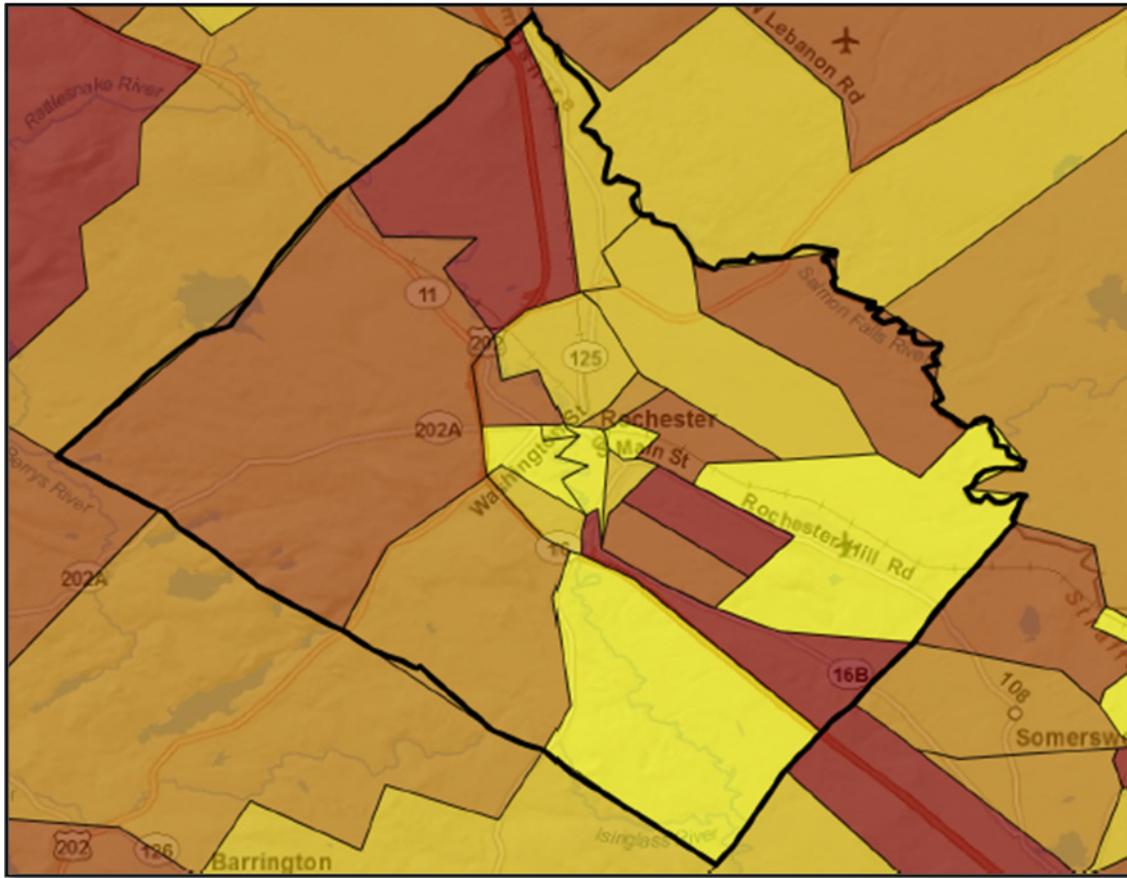
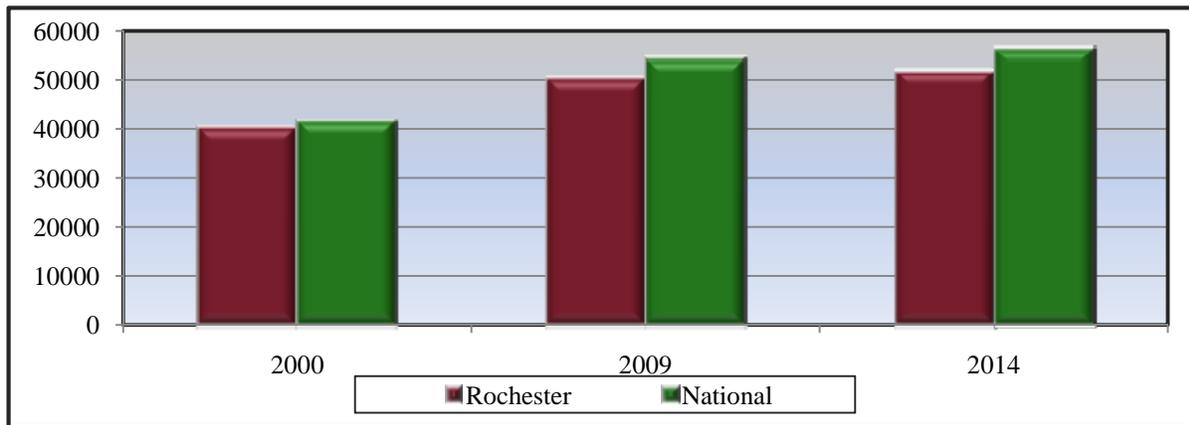


Table G - Median Household Income:

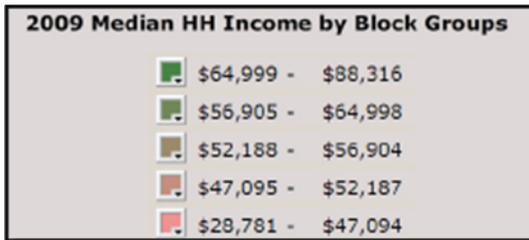
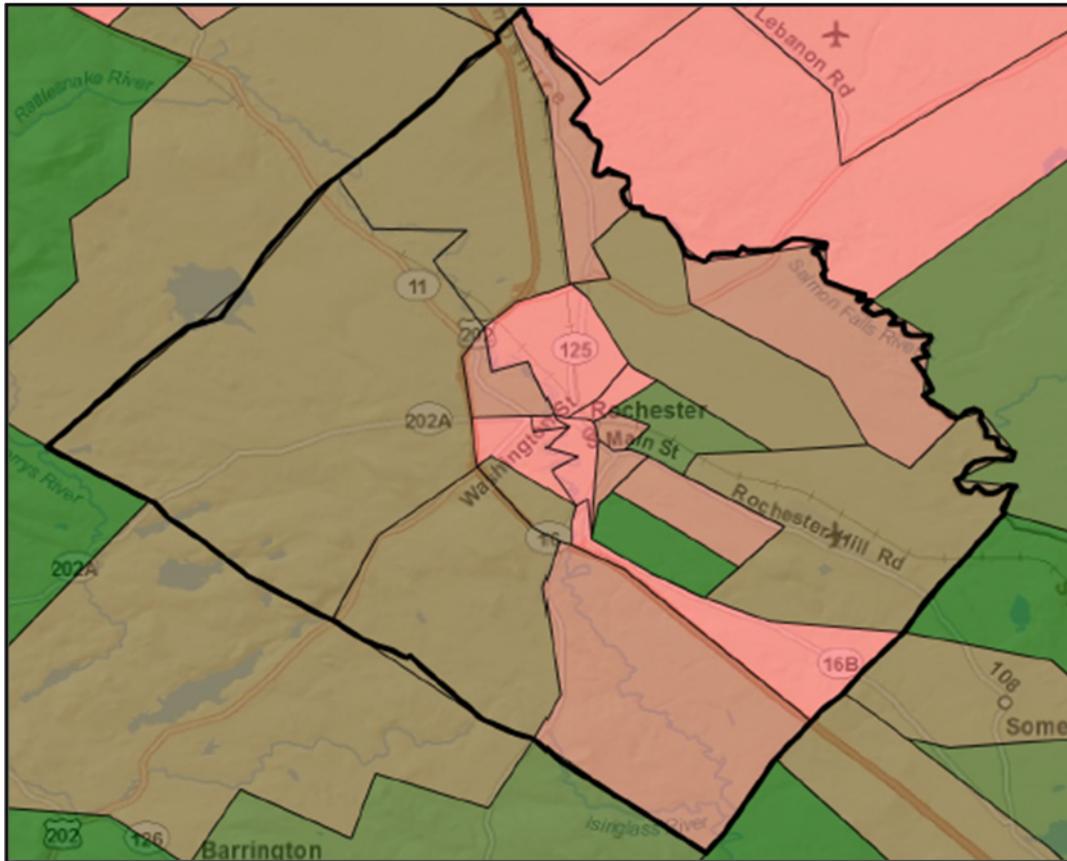
	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
City of Rochester	\$40,558	\$50,520	\$52,196
Nationally	\$42,164	\$54,719	\$56,938

Chart H – Median Household Income



The percentage of households with median income over \$50,000 per year is 50.7% compared to 54.6% on a national level. Furthermore, the percentage of the households in the City with median income less than \$25,000 per year is 20.6% compared to a level of 21.0% nationally. This indicates a slightly lower median household income.

Map C - Median Household Income by Census Block Group:



In addition to taking a look at median age and median household income, it is important to examine Household Budget Expenditures. In particular looking at housing information; shelter, utilities, fuel and public services along with entertainment & recreation can provide a snap shot into the cost of living and spending patterns in the City of Rochester. The table below looks at that information and compares the City of Rochester to the State of New Hampshire.

Table H - Household Budget Expenditures¹:

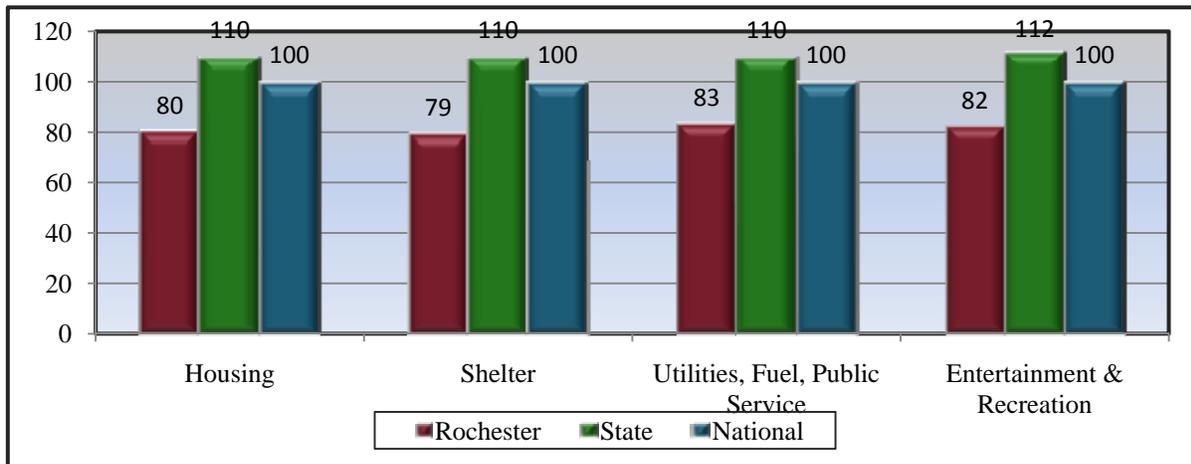
Primary Service Area	SPI	Average Amount Spent	Percent
Housing	80	\$16,158.28	29.7%
<i>Shelter</i>	79	\$12,391.09	22.8%
<i>Utilities, Fuel, Public Service</i>	83	\$3,767.19	6.9%
Entertainment & Recreation	82	\$2,644.89	4.9%

State of New Hampshire	SPI	Average Amount Spent	Percent
Housing	110	\$22,124.46	29.9%
<i>Shelter</i>	110	\$17,182.25	23.2%
<i>Utilities, Fuel, Public Service</i>	110	\$4,942.22	6.7%
Entertainment & Recreation	112	\$3,630.62	4.9%

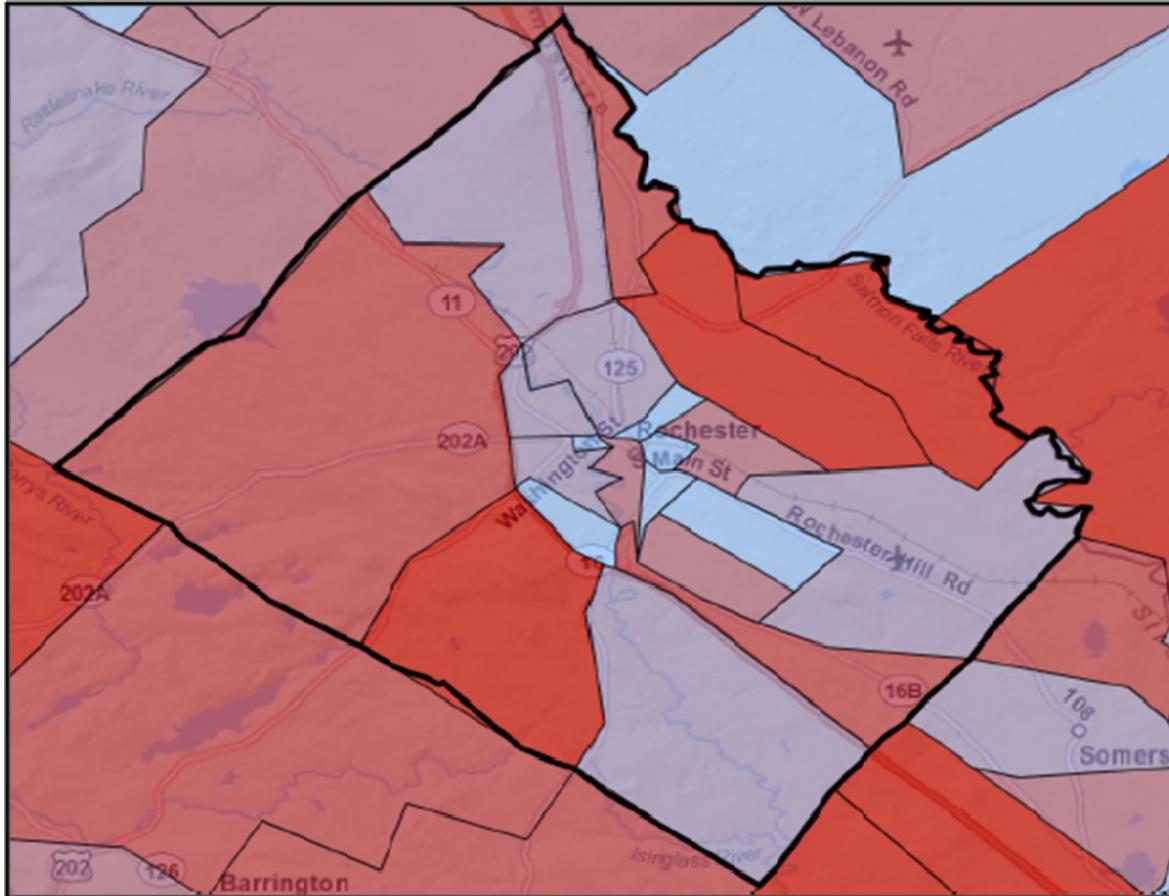
- SPI:** Spending Potential Index as compared to the National number of 100.
- Average Amount Spent:** The average amount spent per household.
- Percent:** Percent of the total 100% of household expenditures. **Note:** Shelter along with Utilities, Fuel, Public Service are a portion of the Housing percentage.

¹ Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2004 and 2005 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. ESRI forecasts for 2008 and 2013.

Chart I – Household Budget Expenditures Spending Potential Index



Map D - Total Entertainment & Recreation Dollars Spent by Census Block Group



Market Area

In addition to serving the residents of the City of Rochester, many of the parks and recreation facilities and programs draw users from outside of the City itself. With this, in mind a larger market area that includes the neighboring communities of Barrington, Strafford, Farmington, Milton, Somersworth and Lebanon and Berwick, Maine has been established. The following are the basic demographic characteristics of this geographic area.

Table I – Market Area Demographic Statistics & Comparison

Population Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	43,698	49,516	51,861

Number of Households Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	16,468	18,934	19,938

Number of Families Comparison:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	11,918	13,524	14,149

Average Household Size Comparison

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	2.65	2.61	2.59
United States	2.59	2.59	2.59

Source – U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI

Table J - Median Age:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	36.0	38.6	39.0
Nationally	35.3	36.9	37.2

Table K - Median Household Income:

	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection
Market Area	\$45,016	\$55,527	\$58,217
Nationally	\$42,164	\$54,719	\$56,938

Demographic Summary:

City of Rochester –

- There is projected to be a steady increase in the overall population numbers in the future.
- The population is slightly older than the national median age and the household size is smaller indicating fewer families with children.
- All age groups are expected to see an increase in population over the next five years with the exception of the 25-44 category.
- The median household income level is lower than the national numbers.
- There is very little ethnic diversity.

Market Area –

- The population base is larger than that of the City.
- Many of the demographic characteristics are the same as the City except household size is larger indicating more families with children and the median household income level is higher than the City and the national numbers.

City Owned Properties

The map on the following page shows the location of the City owned properties in the community. It should be noted that not all of these properties are recreation or open space related.

