



Maggie Brooks
County Executive

MONROE200 MILLENNIALS 2015 SURVEY & FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

DATA COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY:

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Office of the County Executive

Monroe County, New York

Maggie Brooks
County Executive



June 10, 2015

Dear Community Partners:

In my 2014 State of the County Address, I announced the beginning of a yearlong initiative called, monroe200.

As Monroe County Executive, and the mother of two millennials who moved to New York City, I join many others in wanting to know why some of our best and brightest young people are leaving the County. The “Brain Drain” that our region is experiencing has become the norm for many communities across the nation. Therefore, it is important for both community and government leaders listen to our local millennials and learn what they want in the community where they choose to live. By understanding their needs and wants, our region will be able to not only retain, but also attract our young talent.

Monroe200 is comprised of over 200 local millennials, also known as ROCmillennials, who were nominated by college presidents, municipalities, young professional groups, and community organizations. Some millennials even joined the effort by e-mailing and calling my office with interest after they heard about the County’s undertaking from friends. It became clear that the millennial voice in Rochester is strong and one that wants to be heard.

We kicked-off the first meeting of the monroe200 in October of 2014, where I met so many passionate and bright millennials who want to make a difference in their community. After an energetic kick-off, monroe200 members were placed into one of eight groups based on their interests; Jobs & Economic Development, Housing, Education, Recreation & Culture, Health & Wellness, Safety & Security, Transportation & Mobility, and Environment & Sustainability. In order to provide each group with subject knowledge and leadership I recruited ‘subject matter experts’ who are in the top of their respective fields and acted as mentors to their assigned monroe200 group. You will find biographical information on each expert in this report. Their willingness to join monroe200 and their incredible guidance and mentorship played a key role in the success of the initiative.

Both experts and ROCmillennials stayed connected and kept the conversation going through social media and email communications. An incredible amount of insight and creativity emerged from conversations online and from each of the focus group meetings. monroe200 members met in focus groups with their subject groups to

discuss their thoughts and opinions on a wide range of topics, however most questions and discussion points were related directly to their subject matter group. This report provides a list of all the discussion questions asked and each subject matter group has a dedicated section which reports the findings and observations from our data specialists at Franz Consulting.

This report's final copy is a result of the hard work and dedication of all the monroe200 millennials. Each and every member had an opportunity to preview this report as a draft and provide feedback on how their thoughts were represented. Each subject group's edits were considered when producing this final report because this document is a public declaration of the millennial generation. It represents their thoughts and opinions, while incorporating statistical data from a survey completed by the monroe200 members.

It is with great privilege, that I present Monroe County's monroe200 Final Report. By reading this document you will learn about hard working, bold and driven local millennials, who will define our future and continue moving Monroe County in the right direction.

I am making it my personal mission to ensure this report arrives in the hands of local stakeholders, business leaders, college presidents and many more throughout the community. This is the voice of our local millennial generation and I plan to make sure that it is heard.

Sincerely,



Maggie Brooks
Monroe County Executive

Executive Summary

- Franz Consulting was invited to help Monroe County conduct research on the monroe200 Millennials, a group of approximately 200 young adults (ages 20-30) selected by Monroe County to participate in the monroe200 project.
- In preparation for focus group research, we conducted an online survey. We received responses from 122 millennials. Some key findings include:
 - 64% were women and 84% self-identified as White/Caucasian.
 - 89% consider the Rochester area home.
 - 48% live in the City of Rochester while 46% live in Monroe County/not the City of Rochester.
- In conjunction with Tipping Point Communications, we conducted eight separate focus groups. In all of the focus groups, we collected general information about the opinions of the monroe200 millennials. Based on the focus groups, we generated key general themes that reflect the major ideas from these participants.
 - Several key positive themes from these focus groups show that the millennials are connected to the area, invested in their community, appreciate the convenience and size of the County, have many opportunities for outdoor activities and nightlife, and appreciate their access to education and the cost of living/cost of housing.
 - Several areas of consideration for the future show that millennials are concerned about their careers, looking for more connections, interested in greater communication, contact and integration of services, and expect the County to lead by example in new initiatives such as sustainability and public safety.
- Each focus group session we facilitated began with a kickoff speech by County Executive Maggie Brooks and then was followed by an approximately 30 minute introduction to the area by a local expert. The topic specific sessions covered the following areas; Housing, jobs & economic development, health & wellness, education, environment & sustainability, transportation& mobility, safety & security, and recreation & culture. A key theme from each focus group show that millennials:
 - Are satisfied with the housing market and at the same time would like some changes that fit their generation.
 - See some job opportunities but not necessarily at their level nor in the area they want.
 - Appreciate the local health & wellness system and want some changes to fit their needs.
 - Recognize the great education in Monroe County but are concerned about the quality of the Rochester City School District.
 - See environmental sustainability as an area for future improvement and development.
 - Find it quite easy to get around but suggested some areas for improvement.
 - Appear to have a somewhat dichotomized view of public safety in the area.
 - Recognize that they have many recreational and cultural opportunities while at the same time they are interested in more localization and centralization of offerings and communication about what is available.
- Several of the final messages from the focus group participants included a hope that the County will a) keep the millennials involved, b) find ways to reach them using the communication mediums that they use, and c) work to keep them here in Monroe County and many consider Monroe County to be their long-term home.

Introduction

Tim Franz, Jim Bowers, and Kathleen Donovan of Franz Consulting, in conjunction with Tipping Point Communications, conducted an online survey and then facilitated a series of eight focus groups with participants from the monroe200 from January 16 to January 31, 2015. Focus groups were held at Tipping Point Communication's office on University Avenue and lasted approximately two and a half hours each.

Although each group focused on a unique topic, the format and structure was similar: Each focus group commenced with brief introductory remarks from the County Executive, Maggie Brooks, followed by a 20-30 minute presentation from a resident expert on the primary topic. Then, after participants were introduced to each other, members of Franz Consulting facilitated the discussion, the questions for which can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Each group consisted of five to thirteen participants and centered on one of eight topics, listed in order of presentation (resident expert and their position and affiliation are in parentheses):

- Housing (Mark Siwec, Mark Siwec Realty Group)
- Jobs and economic development (Mark Peterson, President & CEO, Greater Rochester Enterprise)
- Health and wellness (Laura Fasano, VP of Healthy Living, Greater Rochester YMCA)
- Education (Dr. Anne Kress, President, Monroe Community College)
- Environment and sustainability (Susan Maney, Former Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Member of Parks Advisory Council)
- Transportation and mobility (Rich Perrin, Executive Director, Genesee Transportation Council)
- Safety and security (David Moore, Director of Public Safety, Monroe County)
- Recreation and culture (Don Jeffries, President and CEO, VisitRochester)

In general, questions probed participants as to why they live and continue to live in Monroe County; what would make them leave and what would make them stay; their perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of life in Monroe County; and perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of their topic specifically. In addition to the notes taken by members of Franz Consulting, participants were asked to write down their own thoughts on each of these questions. Moreover, each session was audio recorded by Tipping Point Communications.

Franz Consulting conducted the online survey that was open to participants from January 12 through 31, 2015. The questionnaire for this survey can be found in Appendix B of this report. One hundred and twenty-one participants completed the survey, for a completion rate of 60.5%. The notes from focus group participants and members of Franz Consulting, combined with the responses to the online survey, form the basis for the conclusions outlined in this report.

We report the findings of those who participated in the focus groups and the online survey and are not necessarily trying to represent all in this age range who live in the Rochester area. Moreover, this is only meant as a snapshot at the time when the data were collected; conducting this study at a different time with different participants may result in different conclusions. For example, there were many comments about snow and snow removal during some of our focus groups; though Monroe County should consider this, the temperature had recently dropped and there was a major snowfall just prior to the focus groups.

Finally, none of the participants were selected at random, and thus using these findings to generalize to all millennials should be avoided.

What's important? (to the monroe200)

95.2%

Say Participating in Sports and Physical Activities

81.2%

Say Attending Sporting Events

97.5%

Say Museums and Plays

65.8%

Say Church

96.6%

Say Music

100%

Say Restaurants

91.5%

Say Bars and Nightlife

100%

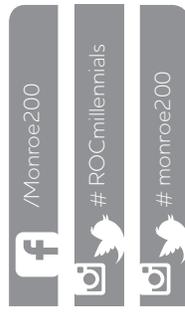
Say Local Events and Festivals

NOTE: All percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.



monroe200 is a diverse group of over 200 local young people participating in a first-of-its-kind effort to engage the millennial generation and listen to their insights, opinions, and suggestions on how the Rochester area can better attract and retain young talent in the short and long terms.

The **monroe200** have offered feedback in wide-ranging, focus-group style discussions on important quality-of-life topics, such as: Education, Environment and Sustainability, Health and Wellness; Housing, Jobs and Economic Development; Recreation and Culture; Safety and Security; and Transportation and Mobility.



RACE/ETHNICITY



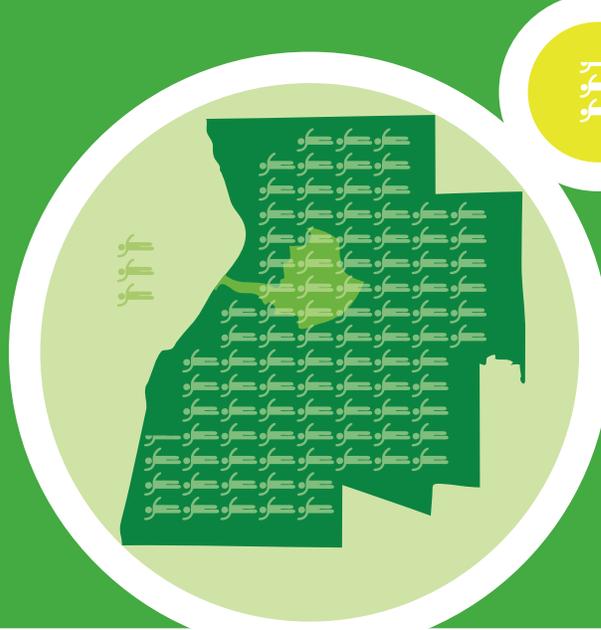
AGE



MARITAL STATUS



EMPLOYMENT



88.4%

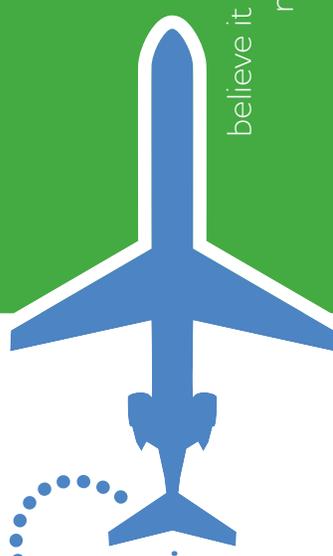
of the monroe200 consider the Greater Rochester area home.

RESIDENTIAL BREAKDOWN

- 47.8% CITY OF ROCHESTER
- 46.3% MONROE COUNTY
- 3.3% GREATER ROCHESTER AREA
- 2.5% OUTSIDE OF GREATER ROCHESTER

96.6%

believe it is important to live near close relatives.



52.5%

of monroe200 millennials are likely to move out of the Rochester area in the next 5 years

91.7% of the monroe200 are willing to move outside of the Greater Rochester area for a job.

Participant Profile & Survey Summary

The survey conducted between the initial introduction of monroe200 in 2014 and the first focus group held in January 2015 provides a portrait of monroe200 Millennials (ages 18-30). Of those responding to the survey:

- 73 (64 percent) were women
- 41 (36 percent) were male
- 88 (75 percent) were between the ages of 23 to 30
- 98 (84 percent) were White/Caucasian
- 8 (7 percent) were Black/African American
- 116 (99 percent) had at least some college education
 - 49 (42 percent) have Bachelor degrees
 - 44 (37 percent) completed some graduate school
- 90 (77 percent) were single/never married

Key characteristics of the 120 monroe200 millennials who responded to the survey, and important to the Monroe County Executive's goal of retaining (and recruiting) the millennial generation in or to the Greater Rochester area, are that:

- 107 (89 percent) consider the greater Rochester area "home"
- 98 (81 percent) have family or closed relatives who live in the greater Rochester area
 - 78 (80 percent) had parents residing in the area
 - 66 (68 percent) had siblings residing in the area
 - 27 (28 percent) had spouses residing in the area
- 93 (78 percent) felt it was somewhat or very important to live near close relatives such as their parents or grandparents

In terms of residence, monroe200 Millennials responding to the survey were nearly evenly split in where they currently live. Fifty-eight (48 percent) currently reside in the City of Rochester. Fifty-five (46 percent) live in the towns and villages throughout Monroe County and the greater Rochester Area.

In addition to the survey, participants in several of the focused groups were asked to describe their generation in one or two words. Their responses suggest a generation that is outwardly oriented in that they want and seek connections with others. Participants use descriptors for their generation such as:

- Self-focused
- Ambitious
- Greedy
- Positively calculating

As an explanation of these characteristics, a monroe200 participant who attended the focus group on transportation & mobility notes that given the economic insecurity millennials experience, they almost have to possess these traits to make it and to succeed.

Given their self-focus, the millennials in monroe200 describe their generation in what some might consider contradictory or incompatible terms in their desire for ties to others. Though aware of themselves, monroe200 participants also see themselves as:

- Connected
- Globally oriented/Global Citizens
- Accepting of others' life-style choices
- Informed/Knowledgeable
- Picky/"Know what we want"

A high level of energy also is reflected in how focus group members see their generation. Common in their description is the view that their generation was:

- Passionate (generally and about issues)
- Enthusiastic
- Energetic
- Rule Breakers/"We do things differently"

Reporting that they are a highly energized generation, monroe200 Millennials can be seen as constantly in motion, including the negative costs associated with that constant motion. Among the descriptors that captures this state are:

- Overly committed
- Overly stimulated
- Cripplingly overwhelmed
- Easily bored

As suggested by one member of monroe200 attending the focus group on environment and sustainability, being overwhelmed and overly committed is in part a result of the "wide array of things we care about and that we want to fix everything we see as being broken."

monroe200 Millennials also described themselves in terms suggesting a concern that they are not taken seriously or that there are roadblocks preventing them from going forward. These sentiments are captured through such descriptors as:

- Underestimated
- Frustrated (that leadership opportunities do not seem readily open for them)

In all, millennials described themselves in strikingly similar terms across focus groups. This self-perception explains many of the comments on specific topics below and should be kept in mind in seeking to understand what the monroe200 is looking for in a lifelong community.

Focus Group: General Findings

There were many themes that cut across all focus groups. We summarized the general themes in this section that appeared in several (and many times most or all) focus groups. Some of these themes were quite positive while others provide ideas for future development for the County's services.

Most of the participants reported that they were from the area and were here because of family or due to their education. They remain because of family and/or current jobs, and would leave for job opportunities or for family. If they were to leave, most of the participants reported that they would move either to a larger city and/or a location that is south (i.e., warmer).

Good News:

- Connected to Monroe County. In all of the focus groups, participants indicated how connected they felt to living in the Rochester area. They reported that they want to stay but are concerned that they might have to leave for economic reasons. They consider the Rochester area to be their home and report that they have a sense of “pride in the area.” One participant, for example, reported that he “wanted to teach in a place that felt like home, with family, and a sense of history” and another felt connected to the “very rich history” here.
- Invested in Their Community. The participants reported wanting to stay in the community and being a part of it. In addition, they are interested in participating in ways to improve the County. The participants believe there is strong community outlook in Monroe County, giving it a lot of potential. More than one of the participants said, “We *want* to remain here,” while also saying that the County should make sure they don't give them a reason to feel like they have to leave.
- Convenience. One common theme across all of the focus groups was the convenience of living in Monroe County. The participants reported that they liked the ability to easily get from a city to the surrounding suburbs and then into the rural areas. More than one reported that they “can quickly get around” in the Rochester area because it is “big but easily drivable with no insane rush hour” and they can “be downtown at restaurants and then drive 15-20 minutes to Mendon Ponds Park and hike.” Many of the participants appreciated that there is access to everything from the airport to Lake Ontario.
- Size of Metro Area. Similarly, participants reported that they appreciate the size of the metropolitan area. They can get around easily, but Monroe County and the City of Rochester is large enough that they have access to the opportunities that keep them local. One participant, for example, reported that she appreciated Rochester because it has “a big city feel in a small city.”
- Opportunities for Activity. Arts, recreation, and outdoor activities were a central theme across many of the focus groups. The participants reported that they stayed in the area because of the local museums (large and small), theaters, parks, lakes, bike lanes, ‘walkable’ communities, summer activities, festivals, and many other similar opportunities that the Rochester area has to offer. Though happy with the opportunities for activities, some were also requesting even more bike lanes and sidewalks, as well as additional winter activities. One participant even indicated that “everything kind of stops” in the winter. Finally, many participants asked the County to continue to “develop the waterfront” in the area.

- Healthy Community. Many participants appreciated the healthy food options available, from the public market to the organic section at Wegmans. In addition to the well-kept parks, team sports, and pedestrian walkways, they view their local community as an active one.
- The Nightlife/Social Life. A number of participants reported an appreciation of the nightlife, including the many restaurants, bars, coffee houses, and theaters. In addition, some participants reported the importance of the innovative small businesses in the area. These local establishments were important to millennials for remaining in the Monroe County area.
- Access to Education. The majority of the focus group participants reported the importance of access to education. They discussed the many higher education institutions (many of them had graduated from one of these local schools) and the top-notch K-12 education available in the suburban districts. Many of the reasons given for reasons to stay in Monroe County included the potential to further their higher education. However, several indicated concerns with the Rochester City School District and indicated that they would be leaving the City of Rochester when they had children as a result.
- Cost of Living/Cost of Housing. In more than one focus group millennials indicated the importance of the low cost of housing as part of what makes them want to stay in the Monroe County area. However, when discussing the low cost of housing, they would also almost immediately discuss the high cost of taxes that accompanies the low cost of housing. More than one reported that one of the three best things about living in Monroe County was the “cost of living.”

Thoughts for Future Development:

- Many are Content, But.... Although many reported that they want to stay in the Rochester area, there was a minority that also reported that they may leave at some point. Some of these report a desire to explore other big cities before returning to their Monroe County “home.” Others report that they may have to leave in order to seek career advancement.
- It’s about the Jobs. And, though they want to stay, there were many participants who reported concerns about remaining in their future career if they stay in the Monroe County area. In fact, concerns about job opportunities are easily **the most commonly reported** issue that the millennials stated will take them away from Monroe County. Many believe there is a lack of opportunity for salary and personal growth within their current place of employment.
- Development. Many focus group participants noted a desire for increased development of the City of Rochester, specifically the waterfront with more activities and housing options
- Connections. Participants reported that they are searching for connections. This includes connections through a voice in government and the ability to influence decisions that are relevant to their future. One participant indicated that they want the County to “really consider the millennial voice” while another said that they want to help to “drive the agenda” in the future. In addition, they are interested in making connections with others who have similar interests, though participating in the many activities offered in the Monroe County area. Many stated that it is hard to find other millennials in Monroe County. The want to network for careers and also make social connections.

- Downtown Life. Almost every group had participants who want to live downtown and experience “City Life.” Unfortunately, many do not feel comfortable living downtown because of safety concerns, a confusing public transportation system, the inability to go places without a vehicle, and the poor conditions of the Rochester City School District.
- Communication. The participants reported that they desire more communication about what is going on in the area. However, they want this communication using the channels with which they are comfortable (Twitter, one-stop calendar online source, and/or smartphone app).
- Integration of Services. In many of the focus groups, the monroe200 Millennial participants were trying to find a ‘one-stop-shop’ for what is happening in the area using the communication tools that they use (e.g., an app or through Twitter). However, they were often talking about events that were cutting across several different municipalities, including Monroe County, the City of Rochester, local towns, and even the other outlying counties in the Rochester area.
- Lack of Understanding of County Services. Related to the previous point, the participants are only beginning to learn about the services for which different municipalities are responsible. For example, they frequently misunderstood the impact of the County on the school districts. One participant stated that the most important thing that Monroe County should do is to “improve the City School District.” Although certainly important, this is not an area where the County has direct influence.
- Lead by Example. The millennial participants indicated that they expect the County to be the leader in the initiatives that are important to them, including in areas such as affordable daycare, sustainability, diversity initiatives, etc.
- Constant Contact. The monroe200 participants want Monroe County to see this as the start of the conversation, and would like the county to continue to engage in a conversation about improving the county.
- Weather. One repetitive theme in each group was: Monroe County’s cold and snowy weather conditions in the winter months could make them consider leaving the area.

In general, the participants want to stay in Monroe County and be a part of its future development. They certainly report being excited about the process of being part of the solution and want to see the results of economic development. However, the worries about some of the local school districts and job opportunities remain a core concern from the millennials. For example, one wrote that the most important thing for making millennials stay is “Good jobs for everyone and not just millennials.”

The upside is that Monroe County has a solid base with which to sell itself, one that is perceived as essential for any area in getting millennials to live and work –accessibility, affordability, and an abundance of activities. Participants were able to list off numerous positive qualities of living in the area without much effort, and were mostly frustrated by not being able to easily find out about the many things happening in Rochester and Monroe County at large. In other words, the County has a number of bright points that it can highlight to the millennial generation.

The downside is that participants were also consistent in their criticisms of the County, and these problems are arguably on a larger scale.

Housing

Eleven monroe200 Millennials participated in the focus group about Housing. These participants discussed their ideal type of housing today and in 10-15 years, their opinions about a housing strategy, where the housing should be located, and their view of an ideal neighborhood.

In the online survey, we asked participants about their current living situation and how satisfied they were with the current cost of living, which is closely tied to the cost of housing. The results showed that most of the participants were renting and that participants were quite satisfied with the cost of living in the Rochester area.

Which of the following best describes your living situation?	Count	Percent
1. Own and live in a condominium or house	31	26.72%
2. Rent a condominium or house	15	12.93%
3. Rent an apartment	40	34.48%
4. Live in a dorm or student housing	16	13.79%
5. Live rent-free in friend or family member's residence	14	12.07%

Which of the following best describes your financial living situation?	Count	Percent
1. Very satisfied	31	25.83%
2. Somewhat satisfied	64	53.33%
3. Somewhat dissatisfied	18	15.00%
4. Very dissatisfied	1	0.83%
5. Do not know enough to have an opinion	6	5.00%

The major themes from the Housing focus group participants included the following:

- Housing Affordability. One of the strengths that participants reported about the housing in the Rochester area is that, in general, it is very affordable. The millennials appreciate how they could buy a home at some point and still afford the many valued activities and hobbies. One wrote that a strength of the area was “affordable rent in a safe area.” However, many of the participants also discussed the high property taxes as a barrier to owning a home.
- Except for the Middle. Unfortunately, the participants also indicated that they were just beginning their search for homeownership and were not finding readily available housing at their price-point. They report seeing enough subsidized housing and many higher-cost homes that they might eventually be able to afford. For example, one wrote that there should be “more emphasis on affordable homes.” This applied to renting as well as owning. First, the participants reported that they could find apartments (usually when discussing rental housing in the City of Rochester) that were inexpensive and intended for those in or just out of college. There are others who are only

finding rental properties that were high end and costly. In addition, those looking to purchase their first (or second) home also reported finding few mid-level opportunities.

- Neighborhood. The housing group participants stressed the concept of a “neighborhood.” It is a very important factor for the group members because they want to be connected to their community. The idea of a neighborhood also adds a feeling of security and makes the difference between having a place to live and a place to call “home.”
- A Place to Call Home. Many of the millennial participants reported that they cannot yet afford the houses that they will eventually want based on credit, student loans, and salary. As a result, they were looking for a place to call a home in desired communities. One theme that we heard when discussing this was the importance of developing mid-level housing, such as townhouses, in the suburban communities. Some of the participants reported that they like the “conveniences of the complexes” because these large apartment communities allow them to participate in activities. The long-term plan for most of these participants included a 3-4 bedroom house in the suburbs with a strong, active neighborhood, good schools, and some land. Regardless of whether it was short- or long-term, they “love the feeling of community and the security of knowing their neighbors.”
- Renting vs. Buying. Many of the participants are not yet ready to buy houses. They do not want the responsibility of homeownership or to be “tied down” to a property. The millennial participants stated that they spend a lot of time in the City, so buying a house outside the city makes their social and professional lives more difficult.
- Location, Location, Location... Sort Of. Realtors often emphasize the importance of location when considering housing. This theme was certainly echoed by the millennials, but they reported that they were not necessarily tied to one specific area. Instead, we heard about some urban areas, such as the Park Ave. neighborhood. There was also a considerable amount more discussion of east side housing (Brighton, Pittsford, Penfield, Webster, Mendon) rather than those on the west side (Gates, Chili, Ogden, Greece, Clarkson). Several participants also reported how they would like to see continued development at the waterfront.
- Again, Connections. The millennials reported that an important part of their choice of long-term housing was that they would feel connected, know their neighbors, and feel like a part of their community. For example one reported that she would like to be “surrounded by like-minded people” and a “small, connected feel with places that are within walking distance.”
- And Again, Sustainability. A surprising number of the participants indicated that when buying a home, they will be/are looking for a place with gardens, solar power, and a place to raise chickens. A theme we heard was that the participants were interested in “a self-sustaining space.”

The group was found great consensus when one millennial participant stated, “There are two kinds of people, the people who just complain about Rochester and the people who want to better it. That’s us. Millennials like us are the ones who want to better the community and be the change.” When reflecting on current housing opportunities, six of ten of the participants reported that they wanted to live in the city. On the other hand, the participants reported that in ten to fifteen years, all but one reported that they intend to live in the suburbs or nearby rural areas. They also recognized that many of the topics are interrelated, such as safety, sustainability, recreational opportunities, and K-12 education as impacting where they wanted to own a family home. One of the interesting final comments from one of the participants was to “fix Medley Center,” and this participant suggested that using it as a mixed shopping, recreation, and housing center may be one way to improve it.

Ideas Moving Forward:

- Focus on the middle/affordable housing policies to encourage the transition from subsidized housing (for example, incentives in the Irondequoit/Brighton area to make it more affordable).
- Create a campaign to reach more potential homeowners and educate them on the benefits and costs of home ownership.
- Utilize abandon properties to have people learn and experience skills used in the construction trade and encourage programs similar to Habitat for Humanity.
- Help educate the public to get rid of the stigma of affordable/subsidized housing.
- Tax credits or incentives for young professionals buying homes for the first time or increasing different programs to a wider variety of candidates.
- Create commercials about Rochester and all it has to offer, while including where to find information.

Jobs & Economic Development

Of those millennials invited to participate in monroe200, 120 responded to the survey question: “What is your current employment status? Of that 120:

- 85 (70.8%) were employed full-time (35 hours or more per week)
- 9 (7.5%) were employed part-time
- 25 (20.8%) were students
- 1 (0.8%) was unemployed

Ninety-one respondents (98%) of those employed full or part-time had jobs located in the greater Rochester area. Eighty-six (91%) of those employed were somewhat to very satisfied with their current position. However, 34 respondents (36%) felt that there were insufficient opportunities for advancement and personal growth in their current position. Additionally and despite the general level of satisfaction with their positions, 92 respondents (86%) of them were somewhat to very willing to move outside of the greater Rochester area for a job.

In addition to the survey, 16 participants in monroe200 engaged in a focus group discussion.

- One question asked of this group was to grade how well government, business, and elected leaders understood the issue of jobs and economic development as it related to themselves, e.g. the participants or millennials’ situations. The focus group grades varied but were evenly distributed:
 - 4 As
 - 4 Bs
 - 4 Cs
 - 4 Ds
- Averaged out on a scale where 5 is an “A” and 2 is a “D,” the group grade for assigned to government, business, and elected leaders was 3.5, or roughly a “C+” or a low “B-.” What explains these varied grades appears in part related to the individual situation of the focus group participants. However some common themes did emerge. Focus group members seemed frustrated that:
 - Too many entry level positions expected applicants to have experience in the kind of position for which the employer was recruiting
 - Their educational and past work experiences were not sufficient
 - Employees seem uninterested in training or mentoring new entry level hires
 - There are a lack of job opportunities in general

In regard to the first theme, one focus group member noted that “there were not enough entry level jobs for millennials right out of college. Most employers want up to three years experience on entry level type jobs. This causes many college grads who first came to the area to for college to have to look outside of the area to find a position.” The emphasis on experience in this participant’s comments reinforces millennials’ perception that employees are not overly interested in investing in entry level employees via training and mentoring. They feel that companies do not want to take the time to mentor or invest in the millennial generation, although it can benefit the company in the long-run. At the same time, one participant stated, “Our generation is more likely to take risks and we don’t want to work at the same job for 30 years. We are mobile, adaptable, and we want more and we’re willing to work for it.”

The 16 focus group members also felt that there is a disconnect between those in the area promoting jobs and economic development and the millennial generation, particularly in terms of for what they were

looking. Their impression was that the “tone and topic” of the discussion was off, that less emphasis should be placed on the total number of jobs brought into the region. One member of the group noted: “They appear to be out of touch with what millennials really want and what will entice us to stay.” Another observed: “Much of it is abstract. One hundred jobs here, two hundred there. It doesn’t mean much if you’re stuck in the service industry or the new place doesn’t impact your neighborhood.” Rather than mere numbers, focus group members thought more emphasis should be placed on specifying the qualification for those jobs, lining up those jobs with the right talents, and clear indications of the starting salaries. They want a more tangible conversation; what are the jobs and salaries? What education do you need for these jobs? How many jobs are available for college graduates? In part this was seen as a communication issue in that when recruiting jobs and announcing them, that they be done so where prospective employees will be able to say “that job is me.”

One source of the feelings expressed above relates to the 36 percent of the survey respondents who felt there were not sufficient opportunities for advancement and growth in their current positions. Focus group members noted that opportunities in companies in which they are employed seem closed off to them. They expressed the belief that a substantial portion of this lack of advancement and opportunity was due to the size of the company in which they were employed, the limited number of opportunities smaller employers can offer, and the absence of openings as older workers remain on the job. The group felt that large companies are limited in this community but small business jobs do not have the potential to move up. One participant noted that he had changed jobs four or five times in order to advance his career. He expressed a longing to be able to settle into a company or organization with career growth opportunities.

This condition and the source of it led some of the focus groups to note that the absence of large national and international companies in Rochester that could address this lack of advancement and opportunities for millennials is one of the shortcomings in the greater Rochester area and a contributing factor in retaining and attracting members of their generation to the area. Again the focus here was on the entry level opportunities and the ability to advance within a company. Other factors discouraging the kind of jobs and economic development capable of attracting and retaining millennials include:

- Concerns regarding the overall safety and security of the area
- A lack of a well-thought out public transportation infrastructure
- Overall quality of K-12 public education in the City of Rochester
- High taxes
- Keeping millennials in Rochester

Despite these shortcomings regarding the area’s ability to attract the kind of jobs and economic development that can attract and retain millennials such as themselves, focus group members also expressed a belief and confidence in the assets in the greater Rochester area that could support, promote, and encourage job growth and economic development. Generally, despite their frustrations, focus group members appreciated the overall quality of life millennials can experience in Rochester. A number of aspects of life in the area seemed to be behind this assessment including:

- An active and vibrant social scene in terms of bars and restaurants
- The large number of area festivals
- Ample opportunities for various outdoor activities
- The area’s diverse culture
- Higher education opportunities

Millennials appear to be waiting to see how effective and willing government and the private sector are in incorporating all the positive elements in the greater Rochester area to recruit and develop the type of board based employment sector that would entice them to remain here.

Ideas Moving Forward:

- A County run website for job postings with an area specifically for entry level jobs and an area where employers know to post new hire positions and qualifications.
- Increased networking opportunities for millennials with area businesses.
- Competitive incentives offered with local businesses, similar to the way colleges have scholarship competitions.
- Professional development courses targeted specifically for millennials.

Health & Wellness

In the online survey, millennials were asked about their participation in sports/physical activities. The survey showed a majority find it important (70%) and are satisfied with the quality of the activities and events.

	1. Very <u>important</u>	2. Somewhat <u>important</u>	3. A little <u>important</u>	4. Not at all <u>important</u>
Importance of Participating	39.32% 46	30.77% 36	24.79% 29	5.13% 6
Satisfied with Quality	1. Very <u>satisfied</u> 35.90% 42	2. Somewhat <u>satisfied</u> 53.85% 63	3. Somewhat <u>dissatisfied</u> 10.26% 12	4. Very <u>dissatisfied</u> 0.00% 0

As can be seen in the table, participating in activities is important to the millennials and many of them are satisfied with their opportunities.

Five monroe200 Millennials participated in the focus group about Health and Wellness, the smallest of the eight focus groups. After the introduction by Maggie Brooks and the expert's introduction to the topic, Franz Consulting facilitated the focus group questions. In the focus group, we asked several health and wellness specific questions.

The health and wellness-specific themes that resulted from this group included:

- High Quality Healthcare. Participants reported that healthcare in the Rochester area is, in general, excellent. There were several participants who reported a concern about finding a primary care physician (e.g. there is "trouble finding physicians"). The participants stated they are happy that you do not have to wait forever to see a doctor, and most appreciated the high-level of care in the strong, local hospitals as well as the many local healthcare providers.
- Outdoor Activities are Abundant. The millennials reported that they are regularly participating in outdoor activities to remain healthy. They appreciate the local parks, lakes, and the summer festivals. For example, one participant said that "the number of lakes in the summer and the number of mountains in the area" make this a great area. They appreciate the Rochester area, and one millennial even stated, "There is pride in Rochester that you don't see in other communities."
- Access to Wellness Programs. Though they are active, they are looking for a way to learn about the wellness programs that are available. For example, they are unclear about the activities that the parks offer and are unclear about how to learn about them. They are interested in participating in outdoor activities in the parks as well. One participant reported that "we have great parks and just need to use them more effectively to incorporate wellness into the community."
- Excellent Access to Healthy Food. Participants appreciated that they had easy access to healthy food. They mentioned the Public Market, local farm markets, Wegmans, and local, nutritional food. There were some concerns reported, however, that these options were not accessible to lower-income residents. More than one participant stated that the County should "continue to work to grow the Public Market and the local farmer's markets."

Access to Healthcare Difficult for Lower Income. Similar to the previous one, some participants reported concerns about access to quality healthcare for lower-income and rural residents. For example, one participant reported that there was “a lack of knowledge about community health care organizations.”

- Cost of Healthcare is Too High. Although appreciative of the quality of care, participants reported concerns about the growing cost of healthcare.
- Prevention vs. Reaction. The monroe200 participants in this group believe that there should be focus on preventing health issues rather than fixing them once it becomes a problem.

One of the overarching themes in this group was not just that they wanted activities, but they wanted activities in which they were connected with others. The participants are looking to build a strong social and job network, similar to what they had in college. In addition, this group reported a social activism; they wanted the activities that have a social justice component (e.g., go skating and bring canned foods to get in). Similar to other groups, they are looking for an “easier to access events calendar using apps.”

Ideas Moving Forward:

- Increase awareness and education around local provider and mental health resources.
- Create a program that will link individuals with a primary care physician and transportation to appointments and check-ups.
- Transportation to other types of appointments such as therapy and other mental health services.
- Create better access to mental health and behavioral preventive care for the K-12 age group; this will then extend to the rest of the population in terms of parent engagement.
- Create a public website where local activities and classes can be added.
- Partnerships with local farmer’s markets and colleges to distribute materials. Put this on a website to list information to parents and students.
- Increase awareness of low-cost or free healthcare clinics.

Education

Three of the questions in the online survey asked participants about education. Specifically, survey participants were asked “how important is it for you currently/5 years from now to live in a good school district” and to rate their current school district.

	How Important Now?	How Important In 5 years?
1. Very important	32.77% (39)	55.00% (66)
2. Somewhat important	18.49% (22)	24.17% (29)
3. A little important	25.21% (30)	14.17% (17)
4. Not at all important	23.53% (28)	6.67% (8)

How would you rate the school district in which you currently reside? **Responses**

1. Excellent	15.83% (19)
2. Good	21.67% (26)
3. Fair	17.50% (21)
4. Poor	32.50% (39)
5. Do not know enough to have an opinion	12.50% (15)

The survey results showed that many of the millennials were less concerned with school districts today than they would be in about five years. In addition, there was considerable variability in their ratings of their current district.

The Education focus group had nine participants. These participants discussed the importance of education to the millennials in the Rochester area. The education focus group questions investigated the quality of education, how the future opportunities will factor into their long-term decisions, and the impact of the performance of the Rochester City School District on their decision to remain in the area.

The participants in the Education focus group reported the following key themes about the impact of education on millennials:

- **Great K-12 Education.** A key quote by one of the participants was that “education is the future” of the Rochester area because of “its freedom, its stability, and it’s something that nobody can take away from you.” All of the participants reported that they appreciated the strength of the K-12 schools in the area.
- **Not Leaving because of RCSD.** Although there was considerable discussion in this focus group about RCSD, not one of the participants said that it would cause them to leave Monroe County. These participants unanimously agreed that they would change school districts instead.
- **Love the City of Rochester but Not the Schools.** As a result, all but one who currently lived in the City of Rochester said that the quality of RCSD schools is going to cause them to leave the city.

Most of these planned on leaving as soon as they had children or when their children reached school age.

- Excellent Higher Education. Many of the participants in this (and other) focus groups had earned or are earning their degrees at one of the colleges or universities in the area. They reported the strength of the higher education system here because they “can continue their education at any of the area colleges and universities.” Several also stated how important the great non-traditional education programs are in Monroe County, such as 2+2 at MCC and adult programs.
- Link between Employment and Education. Although not one of the questions, we developed a conversation about the link between employment and education. The participants indicated that one of the opportunities in the area is the large number of jobs available in the area because of the strength of the colleges and universities.
- Need More Technical Education. The discussion about the impact of the many colleges and universities in the area on supporting their future careers led to a subsequent discussion about the current lack of technical education. Several of the participants indicated that improving the technical education, possibly through more support of the local and outlying community colleges, would help to improve the technical skills gap that they reported some area employers struggling with.
- What about Urban-Suburban? A recent newsworthy discussion in the area has occurred around the Urban-Suburban program. As a result, one follow-up question we asked was about the importance of the Urban-Suburban Program to the millennials. There were mixed reaction to this question. The general consensus was that it is “successful if done at an early age” and the program “would certainly improve the diversity of certain suburban districts.” However, one participant was in the Urban-Suburban program and described it as “is a slap in the face to urban kids” and disrespectful of the great offerings within RCSD. This participant also argued it could make things “worse because of the expectations placed” on the children who are in the program. These expectations included the educational as well as social expectations and sometimes led the participant to feel isolated and ostracized from their school community.
- And What about that Law School? A second follow-up question we asked was about whether the millennials see the need for a law school in Monroe County. The participants were concerned about the competitive nature of jobs in that field and whether graduates would actually be able to compete. One suggested that if there is a law school, it “needs to affiliate with a better school” to be competitive and help with employment opportunities of the graduates.

A simple final comment by one participant sums up the opinions of many of the participants. She said continue to “improve the education system and we will stay.”

Ideas Moving Forward:

- More tuition reimbursement programs through local employers.
- Create more after-school programs (not through the schools), such as intramurals or unique hobbies (such as how to knit or cook) at town recreation centers.
- Offer after-school homework help in the Rochester City School District.
- Promote more adult education and training on how to go back to school, especially for skilled trades.
- Prepare children for future new technology through career courses or programs in order to have local students get one-step ahead.
- Create a link between students and career opportunities in the area.
- Promote student internships and mentorships.
- Have all Universities require co-ops or internships to promote post-college job security.
- Promote career tests early-on in school so students can explore career options early.
- Get community input from employers to learn about the types of jobs available and then promote that career path.
- Increase the relationships between Universities and employers.

Environment & Sustainability

The eight participants in this focus group expressed some dissatisfaction with the current emphasis on environment and sustainability by Monroe County, but were generally quite optimistic about the County's potential to change going forward. In particular, participants felt Monroe County has an abundance of natural resources (e.g., Lake Ontario, green spaces such as the Genesee River Trail, local food) and thus a great deal of potential but had some concerns and offered a number of concrete suggestions for the County to explicitly incorporate the environment into planning and decision making.

One of the major themes was a perceived lack of knowledge and/or communication about environmental issues and participation opportunities. Participants felt that the larger Rochester community was unaware of environmental issues, let alone where to go for more information. At the same time, participants expressed frustration that the County government did not communicate these opportunities or offer guidance on how to participate in programs. Some examples of this manifested in comments such as:

- Seeing recycling thrown in the trash because it wasn't sorted correctly
- A belief that more citizens would ride the bus if the routes were easier to understand
- The need to educate citizens on the impact of their actions (e.g., storm drains expel into Lake Ontario)

At the same time, participants felt there were a number of small, even symbolic actions the County could take to convey to residents that the environment is an important part of decision making. Although these participants were particularly concerned about the environment, and in some instances indicated that governmental inertia on the issue would lead them to move to a "greener" city, they also believed these actions would generate positive changes in the larger community. For instance, participants felt the County offices could "lead by example" by:

- Using alternatives (e.g., halogen, CFL) to incandescent light bulbs
- Going "paperless"
- Increasing recycling
- Having employees take public transit and/or alternative transportation methods to work

Participants expressed frustration that citizens perceive protecting the environment and a growing economy as at odds, although understood that most citizens will choose the latter if forced to take a side. Participants suggested that the County be more explicit about the long-term savings of environmental programs and to convey to residents that these issues are not mutually exclusive.

Moreover, participants offered a number of specific suggestions that they felt would be relatively easy and low-cost to implement, and would make a positive difference in making Monroe County a more environmentally-friendly place to live. These suggestions included:

- Implementing county-wide recycling and composting at the same level as trash disposal
- Better and more consistent plowing of the sidewalks to encourage walking
- Using an alternative to salt for snow melting
- Increasing the number of small neighborhood parks, including "ecoparks" and dog parks
- Increasing the number and frequency of routes from the city to the suburbs and surrounding areas

- Providing small incentives to ride the bus, such as free transit for students or if riding in the city center

While participants across most of the focus groups recognized that the eight topics were intertwined, this group was much more explicit in this regard.

Participants noted that many do not ride the bus because they feel it is unsafe; three female participants in this group alone indicated they had experienced harassment while riding the bus. Similarly, participants noted that the health and wellness of a community is improved by making public transportation and green spaces more accessible. In sum, participants felt not that environmental and sustainability issues *should* be an explicit component of all decisions made by the County, but that they are inevitably a core component, and recognizing that will help the County tackle all these issues simultaneously.

Ideas Moving Forward

- Implement an educational program in K-12 schools to help change the environmental lifestyle of the younger generation.
- Create a public rating system with environmentalism and sustainability ratings for businesses.
- Create a cash-back system with recyclable materials.
- An incentive for businesses to decrease availability of plastic bags.
- Monroe County can provide workshops on composting, building solar panels, and other sustainability focused subjects.
- Campaigns by electric companies or third party entities to promote using less energy.
- Having public events that show energy usage through bikes that charge phones (bike peddling stations) in gyms and bus stations.
- Sheltered Rent-a-bike stations or bike sharing stations downtown.
- An “eco-rep” who would work with health inspectors for restaurants and businesses to see if environmental standards are being met.
- Community courses that provide information about recycling.

Transportation & Mobility

The eight participants in this focus group had mixed views on the issue of transportation and mobility. Out of the 8 participants, one is a regular user of the Regional Transit service (RTS) and one is an occasional user of RTS. Echoing the sentiments of participants across all focus groups, they felt that the ability to get anywhere in and around Rochester in 15-20 minutes was one of the best things about living here. At the same time, they recognized that the accessibility of the city via the highways made it difficult to promote the use of alternative transportation, including RTS.

In addition to the natural accessibility of the County via the highways, participants in this and other focus groups noted that RTS had a number of problems to overcome in order to get more citizens to use mass transit, especially in the City of Rochester. These comments generally focused on:

- A lack of safety and experiences with harassment on the bus
- The confusing and unintuitive routing system currently in place
- Stereotypes surrounding people who use the bus (e.g., low income, unclean)
- RTS is not fast or inexpensive enough to use public transportation

Beyond these specific problems, participants were overwhelmingly of the consensus that fixing these problems would not likely lead them to use the bus and many need vehicles for their jobs. With the exception of one, participants indicated that driving got them where they needed to go more quickly, was more flexible, and often cost just as much as or only slightly more than taking the bus. Moreover, while there was widespread acknowledgement of the new downtown transit center as an example of positive change, participants were discouraged by multiple fights involving young people. In general, participants were fairly convinced that positive changes to RTS would not boost ridership significantly, at least among participants of monroe200 and similar millennials.

However, participants offered a number of alternative suggestions for improving transportation and mobility in Monroe County beyond RTS, including:

- Making parking easier and more accessible downtown and in popular neighborhoods (e.g., Park Ave, East End, South Wedge, NOTA, Public Market)
- More taxis and taxi-like systems (e.g., Uber, Lyft, CarShare)
- Bike share stations throughout the City
- More bike lanes and walking/running paths

The perceived lack of parking was cited by a number of participants across focus groups as preventing millennials from visiting and spending time in the city center. However, participants recognized that there were a number of interesting neighborhoods with unique characteristics, (e.g., the South Wedge, Pittsford) which they viewed as another positive aspect of living in Monroe County. Participants suggested that if the County focused on building up these communities there would be less of a need to facilitate transportation, as residents would find everything they need close by.

Ideas Moving Forward:

- Create campaigns geared to “choice-riders,” or those who choose to ride the bus, but not for economic reasons. This could include emphasizing the importance of creating a sense of community and how public transportation can both encourage it and thrive within it.

- Create an easier schedule to read.
- If RTS made it so riders would arrive to their destination quicker, many would take the bus more often.
- Offer open houses on “how to ride” RTS.

Safety & Security

The thirteen participants in this focus group viewed the safety and security of Monroe County as being dichotomized. On one hand, the suburbs and surrounding areas were seen as generally safe and having relatively good community ties. Some participants did indicate a concern about drugs and particularly heroin in the schools, but others argued that this was a problem everywhere or that the amount of drugs in suburban schools was no worse now than when the participants were in school themselves.

On the other hand, the Rochester city center was perceived to be dangerous. Many participants, particularly females, claimed they would not feel comfortable walking around downtown, particularly at night. Although some suggested that the legacy of crime downtown is somewhat outdated and/or exaggerated, many maintained that concerns about safety were legitimate. This is perhaps best demonstrated by responses to the online survey, in which:

- 25% rated the safety of their community as excellent, and 32% as fair or poor
- 3% rated the safety of the greater Rochester area as excellent, and 53% as fair or poor

This concern appeared across multiple focus groups. For example, participants in recreation and culture commented that bars and restaurants they might otherwise like to visit were too isolated, and they would not feel comfortable walking to/from these locations. Similarly, participants in the transportation and mobility group suggested they would not ride the bus due to experiences with and/or fears about harassment. Across all focus groups, participants who wanted to start a family in the next 5-10 years expressed concern about having a safe place for their children to play and/or live.

In addition, several specific themes emerged from the safety and security focus group. However, the most consistent themes did not concern Monroe County specifically, and instead focused more narrowly on the city and Rochester Police Department (RPD) or the larger culture of the state of New York (NY). Comments about the City of Rochester centered largely on the perceived poor relationship between police and the community, including the perception that RPD:

- Does not communicate with citizens when they are dealing with a problem near where they live
- Has slow response times and/or does not communicate anticipated response times
- Has little to no police presence in some areas of town, especially at night
- The perception of police is that they only react to crime instead of trying to prevent crime
- Needs a better street presence as opposed to remaining in their patrol cars
- Needs to have more crackdowns on area drugs

Overall, participants perceived the safety and security of downtown to be one of the largest obstacles to getting millennials to stay or even spend time in the city center. One participant stated that there are concerns to Rochester's dangerous reputation that is sometimes inaccurate, but still deters people from coming into the City.

However, participants also expressed a number of concerns about that the larger state culture, in particular a perceived overreach of government into citizens' lives, prevented participants from being proactive in their own safety and security. This theme emerged in a variety of ways, including comments that indicated:

- A belief that it's "almost illegal" to defend oneself in NY, this is specifically referring to the Safe Act
- A willingness to leave Monroe County and NY altogether due to governmental overreach

Although concerns about governmental overreach emerged on occasion in the other focus groups, this was a major concern for participants in safety and security.

While a number of focus group participants indicated they joined monroe200 to have their voice heard, many if not most of the safety and security participants specifically noted they were dissatisfied with the direction of the community and wanted to part of the solution, not the problem. Thus, their comments should be interpreted with this in mind.

Ideas Moving Forward:

- Police can post body camera footage online to show their day-to-day treatment, which can humanize them to those who may not trust the police.
- Put more police in schools and create more gun free zones.
- Publicize the types of training police go through to make split-second decisions and judgment calls while on the job. Advertise Firefighter tax incentives.
- Promote programs that help youth learn about first responder and law enforcement jobs, such as EMTs and firefighters, in order to keep them on a career path and educate them on their many opportunities.

Recreation & Culture

One-hundred and seventeen of the monroe200 participants responded to the following survey question: “How important is it to you to have sufficient opportunities to participate in the following activities or communalities?” In terms of the raw number and percentages for monroe200 participants responding “very important” the break out in order of greatest importance is as follows:

- Restaurants 88 or 75 percent of respondents
- Local events (food market, festivals) 82 or 70 percent of respondents
- Participating in sports/physical activities 36 or 39 percent of respondents
- Music 45 or 39 percent of respondents
- Nightlife & Bars 40 or 34 percent of respondents
- Church 35 or 30 percent of respondents
- Museums & Plays 34 or 29 percent of respondents
- Attending/watching sports 31 or 26 percent of respondents

One possible conclusion is that the top two categories reflect in some undefined way the social nature of the millennials participating in monroe200. When combined with participating in sports or physical activities the three may suggest that these millennials prefer active participation rather than passive engagement reflected in going to museum and plays or going to listen to music. Some millennials suggested that this is because the active events are publicized more than going to plays or museums.

Restaurants and Local events also topped the list in terms of the level of satisfaction regarding the quality of these various recreational or cultural opportunities. monroe200 participants were surveyed on the following question: “How satisfied are you with the quality of these activities, events, or communities in the greater Rochester area.” Restaurants and local events were the only two areas which exceeded 50 percent of survey respondents being very satisfied i.e. 58 and 59 percent respectively. Church approached a majority of the respondents being very satisfied at 49 percent. The remainder broke out as follows:

- Museums & Plays 43 percent very satisfied
- Participating in sports/physical activities 36 percent very satisfied
- Music 33 percent very satisfied
- Nightlife & Bars 32 percent very satisfied
- Attending/watching sports 24 percent very satisfied

Comments from those participating in the Recreation/Culture focus group does allow for some speculation. For example, the low score for music may be a function of the type of venue where most of the music heard in the greater Rochester area is located e.g. bars or established traditional venues such as the Eastman Theater. Notice again that nightlife & bars were neither very important to the quality very satisfying to the monroe200 participants responding to the survey. This may have an impact on their assessment of the music scene in Rochester area despite such highly successful enterprises like the International Jazz Festival.

Indeed focus groups members noted a need for a new downtown music venue target to their generation and how they listen to music and liked to be entertained. They indicated an interest in a new state-of-the-art venue with a “social media wall” and a “local feel” and not some homogenized venue like are found in Casinos. They also observed that the “older and more established” venues such as the Auditorium Theater

and the Eastman did not general fit well with the Millennial Generation, or at least those participating in the focus group.

While recognizing its need, the focus group participants were in consensus for the need to better market the recreational and cultural opportunities to those already here, regardless of their generation. They agreed that a “Live In Rochester Center” focused on branding the greater community and its recreational and cultural opportunities to residents is needed. They called for an effort to “increase awareness of what goes on here,” “to make what is here more visible,” and “help the Rochester area not to take itself from granted.”

As an extension of the need to better market to ourselves, focus group members also suggested that beyond the initial effort made by VisitRochester on move-in day at the various campuses there needs to a sustained effort to pull these students into the community by marketing events to them. This as one group member noted also should have an international dimension as well because “there are thousands of students in Rochester who come from all over the world.”

Another area that focus group members addressed was the relationship between transportation and attending recreational and cultural events. Of particular concern was what some focus group members saw as the low quality of taxi service and taxi drivers. In recognition that millennials are inclined to carry less cash and rely more on electronic based funds, one suggestion was that cab drivers should be required or encouraged to have card swipe machines installed their cabs. In addition, many participants in other focus groups mentioned the importance of developing additional bike lanes and routes as well as improving walkable communities. Finally, there were some participants who encouraged the County to take a more active role in improving the roads, including repair and snow removal.

Focus group members, reflecting the millennials’ comfort with technology, suggested the development of an “information & ticketing hub” that could centralize information on area recreational and cultural events and “leverage the word-of-mouth communication of our generation.”

In the end two words seem to capture focus group recommendation around recreational and cultural activities. These monroe200 participants stressed an interest in ‘localization’ and ‘centralization.’ In regard to localization there was a fondness for local food or what one focus group member called “drug food,” meaning local foods of which someone cannot get enough and for food trucks. The idea of centralization is somewhat reflected in the interest in the information hub noted above. It also is reflected in the comment of one focus group participant who noted “whether it’s a theater or a new sports complex, centralize the entertainment venue with bars and restaurants around it.”

Ideas Moving Forward:

- Create an app or centralized way to find out everything that is going on in Rochester. All events, classes, anything “to do.” This would be more effective for the millennial generation than the newspaper.
- Promote public transportation to get home safely from the weekends.

Final Comments

The monroe200 Millennial participants had several final comments for the County as it continues to develop its programs. Some of the more common themes included:

- They ask that the County keep in touch with these participants. They are energized and want to be more involved than they are.
- Remember that they use ways of remaining in contact that are different from what many other generations used. For example, they do not read the newspaper.
- They want the Rochester-area to remain their home while at the same time are looking to explore other major cities.
- Though very interested in staying in Monroe County, they are concerned about their long-term career possibilities and the availability of relevant jobs.
- They appreciate the affordability of housing but are concerned about taxes.
- They believe that education is the future for Monroe County, yet have concerns about some of the school systems, mostly in the City of Rochester.
- They are excited about the numerous outdoor and recreational opportunities available to them but need to learn more about what is available with the tools that they use.
- They see Monroe County has having numerous advantages in terms of green spaces and natural resources, but would like the County to do more to encourage residents to utilize them.
- Participants enjoy the accessibility of the larger County area with their car, but see a number of obstacles with respect to transportation downtown.
- Participants see a lack of safety, perceived or real, as a major obstacle to creating livable communities for millennials in the downtown area.

Bios of Consultants

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His topical areas of expertise include individual and small team decision making, improving team performance, and using teams to drive organizational change. Some of his ideas about improving teams are in his book, titled *Group Dynamics and Team Interventions*. He is also an experienced applied researcher, specializing in conducting focus groups and individual interviews, designing custom surveys, analyzing employee and workplace data, and evaluating the effectiveness of training programs.

Prior to his work as a college professor, Dr. Franz was a Survey Consultant for the Wyatt Company in Fort Lee, NJ (now Watson-Wyatt, Paramus, NJ). He also worked as a Compensation Consultant for Buck Consultants in Stamford, CT and Chicago, IL. In these roles, he designed and conducted custom compensation surveys and salary administration projects for clients in the Northeast and Midwest. In addition, he designed selection tests, employee development instruments, and custom organizational surveys as a contract consultant for Custom Solutions, A London House Consulting Group in Rosemont, IL (now NCS/London House Workforce Development Group).

Dr. Franz is a member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the American Psychological Society, and the American Society for Training and Development. His scientific research has been published in premier journals such as the Journal of the American Medical Association, the Journal of Applied Psychology, and the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. He received his Doctorate in Social/Organizational Psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago and his Master's degree in Psychology from the University at Buffalo.

KATHLEEN M. DONOVAN, PH.D.

Dr. Donovan is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at St. John Fisher College, teaching courses in American politics and quantitative methods. Her research focuses broadly on public opinion and political behavior, and employs a variety of methodologies including experiments, surveys, and quantitative analyses of observational data. She currently has several articles under review, and is working on a number of papers that explore how fictional media impact public opinion on crime as well as how extra-legal factors influence perceptions of police use of force, among others.

Dr. Donovan is a member of the American Political Science Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, the New York American Association for Public Opinion Research, and the International Society for Political Psychology. While completing her Ph.D. in political psychology at Stony Brook University she worked in the Center for Survey Research in a variety of capacities, including data analyst,

survey programmer, supervisor, and interviewer. Prior to that she worked at the University of Cincinnati's Policing Institute as a research assistant while earning her M.S. in criminal justice.

DR. JAMES R. BOWERS

Dr. James R. Bowers, a 26 year resident of Rochester and Monroe County, is a self-described “teacher, helper, and (not often enough) singer/songwriter.” Dr. Bowers is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science & Legal Studies at St. John Fisher College in Rochester New York. He also is the owner and proprietor of two small consulting and business enterprises: Success Coaching & Consulting and All About the Song Music. The common theme running throughout these professional pursuits is his commitment to

- Creativity & commonsense strategic thinking
- Helping to maximize in others their creativity and commonsense strategic thinking so that they can more successfully achieve their personal and profession goals and aspirations or those of the organizations they lead

Over the course of these years Dr. Bowers' community service includes:

- Advisor on the application process of the Career Mentoring Charter High School of Rochester. 2007 to 2008
- Advisor to the North Edge Associated Neighborhoods. 2007 to 2008
- Candidate for the Rochester City Council, Northeast District. 2007
- Commissioner of Schools, Rochester City School District. 2002-2005.
- Founder and President of the Board of Directors of North Edge Community Organization. 1996 to 1998
- Leadership Rochester, Class of 1996-1997
- Member of the 21st Democratic Part Legislative Committee. 2002-2008.
- Member of the Advisory Committee of the Fair Housing Enforcement Project. 1998 to 2001
- Member of the Law and Government Advisory Board, John Marshall High School, Rochester City School District. 1997 to 2000, 2003-2006
- Member of Rochester Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr.'s Stewardship Council. December, 1995 to 1999.
- Political Analyst for Rochester, Western New York, and occasionally national media outlets, 1991 to present
- Political Analyst and Commentator. RNEWS, 1993 to 1996

Dr. Bowers has been the recipient of a number of awards and recognitions for his work on behalf of others and the general community including:

- 2006 Monroe County Democratic Committee Public Service Award
- 2004 Junior Achievement of Rochester President's Award
- 2004 Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley Community Leadership Award
- 1998 Trustee Distinguished Scholarly Achievement Award
- 1997 Father Dorsey Faculty Service Award
- 1995 St. John Fisher Dean's Citation Award as a Teacher-Scholar

As a “not often enough” singer/songwriter, Dr. Bowers also has recorded and marketed three CDs of original music: “Tequila Lips” (2002); “No Apologies” (2006); and “Seeking Calm Water” (2013).

Bios of Subject Matter Experts

MARK SIWIEC

Since 1991, the formula for Mark's success has been based on three simple tenets: honesty, persistence and an unparalleled commitment to his clients. Whether a first-time homebuyer or a lifelong owner seeking to make a change, you'll benefit from Mark's proven sales record, smart negotiating skills and more than 20 years of Rochester real estate experience.

Mark and his team of full-time real estate professionals are here to see both buyers and sellers through the complete sales process. From the initial phone call to the day of closing and beyond, Mark and his team will make the transaction easy, understandable and stress-free. In addition to exceptional marketing and sales strategies tailored specifically to each home, you can expect an unrivaled level of service, with frequent updates and regular communication to ensure that you'll always feel included in the process. **That's why Mark is consistently ranked Rochester's #1 agent, with \$40 million in annual sales and more than 76% of his sales based upon referrals.**

Along with an uncompromising dedication to his clients, Mark is an active member of the Rochester community and a well-known patron of the arts in the area. A recipient of the prestigious Forty Under 40 award, Mark is also a member of and contributor to several community organizations. These connections not only help ensure a thriving community in which to live, but also provide Mark and his clients an active and dynamic social and professional network—a network that can help put you in touch with key buyers and sellers. Let Mark and his team of dedicated real estate professionals help you find or sell your next home.

PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES

- Member of the Board of Directors of COMIDA- County of Monroe Industrial Development Agency
- Member of the Board of Directors of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
- Member of the Board of Directors of the Monroe Community College Foundation
- Chair of the MCC Foundation Spring Gala, 2013 and 2014
- Chair of the Rochester Area Community Foundation Evening Out at Home, 2008
- Former member of the Strong Museum Board of Directors
- Former member of the Empire State Pride Agenda Board
- Mark and his partner, Duffy Palmer, are committed to financially supporting the following organizations:
 - Young Women's College Prep Charter School
 - Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection
 - Allendale Columbia School
 - Bivona Child Advocacy Center

MARK PETERSON

Mark Peterson, President & CEO of Greater Rochester Enterprise has an outstanding background in regional economic development, financial administration, and high-value fund raising. By positioning the Greater Rochester region as a highly attractive target destination for businesses, continually marketing the region, raising funds, and attracting new business opportunities, Mark and the GRE Team have successfully recruited dozens of new companies creating thousands of new jobs and more than \$500 million in new investment into the region.

A certified fund raising executive (CFRE) since 1992, Mark has an impressive history of garnering substantial monies at several world-class nonprofit organizations totaling more than \$120 million. In 2009

Mark was honored as the Robert A. Clinger Outstanding Professional Fundraiser by the Genesee Valley Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Dedicated to giving back to his community Mark serves on a number of nonprofit boards including as Chairman of the Board for CDS Monarch, one of the largest nonprofit organizations in the region. In 2008 Mark helped found St. John Bosco Schools, an independent Catholic school that has received national recognition.

Mark is a regular contributor to articles in The Economist, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, as well as a frequent guest of the highly rated and award winning radio show, "Eyes on the Future," with a weekly audience of more than 15,000 listeners airing every Saturday morning at 10 am on WHAM 1180.

In 2011 Mark was appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo as a member of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council and he continues to serve on the council's Executive Committee.

LAURA FASANO

Laura Fasano has been with the YMCA of Greater Rochester for the past 20 years and currently is the Vice-President for Healthy Living. She is responsible for the successful leadership of program development, quality standards, program training, with a primary focus on Health Innovation.

Laura has over 25 years of health/wellness and operational experience within the YMCA movement. Her experience and operational background led her to various positions within the YMCA of Greater Rochester and YMCAs in the northeast.

Laura's wealth of experience and expertise is leading the YMCA of Greater Rochester in the new phase of Health Initiatives that include chronic disease prevention and strategic partnerships in the Rochester community.

DR. ANNE KRESS

Since 2009, Anne M. Kress has served as president of Monroe Community College in Rochester, New York. Her career spans more than 20 years in higher education with special interests in topics relating to student access and success, global education, workforce development, technology, and the intersection between traditional liberal education and essential 21st century learning outcomes.

Kress currently serves on New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council, on the Board of the New York Power Authority, and has been involved in state higher education policy in New York and Florida. Locally, she serves on the boards of the Rochester Business Alliance, Greater Rochester Enterprise, United Way of Greater Rochester, and the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection. Kress has been honored by the New York State Senate as a Woman of Distinction, by the Women's Council of the Rochester Business Alliance with its Athena Award, and by the Rochester YWCA with its Empowering Women award. Nationally, she serves on boards, commissions, and councils for organizations including the League for Innovation in the Community College, AACC, ACE, ETS and the Council on Foreign Relations, and is a frequent presenter at national conferences and meetings.

She earned a doctorate in higher education administration, master's and bachelor's degrees in English, and a bachelor's degree with honors in finance all from the University of Florida. In 2011, Kress was named a Woman of Distinction by the New York State Senate and in 2012, she was named an outstanding alumna by the University of Florida's Institute of Higher Education.

You can follow her on Twitter @MCCPresident.

SUSAN MANEY

Susan is a resourceful and energetic leader who inspires to engage in community organizations and sustainable partnerships. Beginning her career in Western New York, Susan started with the Landmark Society of Western New York and traveled around the state and Pennsylvania to further her career and spreading the importance of sustainability throughout the community. Most recently, Susan served as the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County for over a year and is a current member of the Monroe County Parks Advisory Committee.

She earned her education all over the country. Susan received her Bachelor of Science in Horticulture from Oregon State University and her Master of Science in Horticulture Administration and Certificate of Museum Studies at the University of Delaware.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Rochester Rotary Club – Member August 2013 to present

Corning Rotary Club – Member 2004-2013, Past President, Paul Harris Fellow

Corning Gaffer District – ArtsFest, GlassFest and Wineglass Marathon Committees

Spencer Crest Nature Center, Corning, NY – Board member, Vice President

Finger Lakes Chapter, Fund Raising Professionals

Winner – Wave Maker Award – Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes

Corning Area Chamber of Commerce – Business advocate

Mount Hope Cemetery Docent and Sustaining Lifetime member

Rochester Civic Garden Center – Sustaining Lifetime member

RICH PERRIN

Richard Perrin serves as Executive Director of the Genesee Transportation Council, a position he has held since February 2004. In this capacity, he is responsible for directing and managing activities related to federally-funded transportation policy, planning, and investment decision-making in the nine county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, which includes the Rochester, New York metropolitan area.

Prior to his appointment as Executive Director, Rich held the position of Program Manager for Regional Development where he was responsible for the production of the long range transportation plan and served as the lead staff member on various programs and projects, including those related to economic development and air quality. Before joining the Genesee Transportation Council, he managed the development of several land use and economic development plans at the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.

Rich currently serves as President of the national Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations,

Chairman of the New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and is a member of the National Academies' Transportation Research Board's Metropolitan Policy, Planning, and Processes Committee. He is a regular contributor to national research projects and peer exchanges on performance-based planning and programming, system management and operations, and energy and greenhouse gas analyses.

Locally, Rich is on the Executive Committee of the American Planning Association's Genesee-Finger Lakes Section. He is a former co-chairman of the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's Infrastructure and Transportation Workgroup and Board member and Secretary of the Center for Environmental Initiatives.

Rich received his Master's degree in urban planning from the State University of New York at Buffalo and his Bachelor's degree from St. John Fisher College. In addition, he has completed the Wharton Transportation Executive Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

He resides in the Town of Perinton, New York with his wife, Marilyn.

DAVID T. MOORE

David Moore is the Director of Public Safety for Monroe County, New York. This position coordinates and manages a wide variety of services, which includes providing budgetary review, grant coordination, technical assistance, planning guidance, training services and management for all divisions of the department. Formerly he served the City of Rochester, New York as the Director of the Office of Public Integrity and he was previously the Chief of Police with the Rochester Police Department from 2006 until 2010. He has an extensive career history with more than twenty years with the Colorado Springs, Colorado Police Department, as chief of the Fountain, Colorado Police Department, and as chief of Laurel, Maryland Police Department. In March 2000, he received the Purple Heart Award for excellence in tactical operations as a police officer in El Paso County, Colorado. Mr. Moore has a Bachelor's degree in Language and Communication and a MLS degree in Language and Communication from Regis University, Denver, Colorado.

Appendix A: Members of the monroe200

Dre Collier	Alicia Van Strander	Christina Kompanijec	Emily Weber
Victor Hernandez	Andrea French	Joseph Cicero	Deepika Sivakumar
Alessandra Jenais-Oster	Thomas Polech	Albert Algarin Jr.	Nikole Van Wie
Colby Brown	Elayna Reed	Patrick Asselin	Chelsea Reed
Tyrese Bryant	Nick Reggi	Meghan DeFisher	Elizabeth Ike
Denis Jeffires	Samantha Rothchild	Wesline Manuelpillai	Bridget Kelly
Anastasia Duble	David Stoffel	Kevin Scantlen	Sarah Love
Clare Farnung	Mariah Texidor	Keith Alexander	Rachel Varner
Eric Rodems	Broxton Tosado-Prater	Heather Halstead	Darcie Morgan
Vincent D'Agostino	Alexis Arnold	Erin Adcock	Chris Genrich
Zackary Laffin	Rochelle Greek	Stephanie Rankin	Michael Montemalo
John Magee	Diana Castro	Jennifer Moffit	Lisa Good
Morgan Martin	Elyse Springer	Mariah Reynolds	Adam Johnson
Cody Armstrong	Tyler Pierce	Derek Payne	Kayla Eddy
Andrew Widanka	Jason Polasek	Lauren McCluskey	Shannon Glasgow
Michelle Paul	Haley Werner	Jordan Garbarino	Lashawn Boyd
Delvin Moody	Braa Elkhidir	Matthew Lawson	William Monroe
Mohamed Partapurwala	Robyn Putney	London Booker	Andrew Hollister
Jennifer Montfort	Negra Tutundzic	Daniela Bulos	Jody Davis
Emily Adams	Kyle Gotowka	Anthony DiPerna	Eric Ernst
Hanok George	Cody Gardner	Emily Marullo	Andrew Loughlin
Megan O'Leary	Alexander Pena	Tyler Lucero	Christian Gonzalez
Christie Smith	Jon Shah	Lori Bartkovich	Zach Wakefield
Katherine Wegman	Amanda Camilo	Katherine Wegman	Natasja Rudge
Kevin Wilson	Robert Yawman	Ashley Mackey	Frederick Alfreds
Kathryn Klimek	Jenna Kempie	Myra Mathis	Rebecca Rabideau
James Schaefer	Samantha Looker	Kathryn Strang	Shaun Moore
Vincenzo Ferrara	Emily Wozniak	Brent Lindsay	Jeff McKeown
Nadirah Wesh	Trent Monroe	Lauren Marotta	Marcus Blythers
Jermayne Myers	Kayleigh Stampfler	Kristen Fluhler	Sam Duritza
Marissa Reed	Amy Dorman	Nicole Loiodice	Megan Carl
Erica Gillette	Sam Dragos	Bridget Hurley	Johnathan Francisco
William Monteith	Bryn Luther	Erin Maloney	Tarah Friedman
Christopher Nguyen	Alexis O'Hara	Danielle Mensing	Christiann Lermينياux
Christa Harvey	Marcia Vanderlee	Shannon Putney	Stephen Maier
Jeffrey Mangiafesto	Jamiee McClary	Francesca Kulzer	Nicholas Piron
Greg Cunneyworth	Amanda Sharpe	Stephanie Leonardo	Olivia Thomas
Sean Fitzpatrick	Micah Villanueva	Amber Kallassy	Mattea Hilliard
Ashley Barker	Alec Rider	Jessica Bates	John Hoffmann
Timothy Reed	Chris Soufleris	Bethany Kwarta	Jake Lebowitz

Aimee Hofmann	Meaghan Porter
Jahmar Elliot	Sophie Valenti
Susanna Virgilio	Alan Rivers
Brian Sullivan	Samantha Rivers
Alissa Lintala	Tushar Timande
Emily Walsh	Madelaine Britt
Ergin Akbas	Matt Murphy
Sarah Mayne	Erin Strobl
Jolana Babacek	Andrew Brady
Matthew Simonis	Jillian Schwartz
Faziri Ndahiro	Ruth Torres
Chenisvel Nunez	Cristina Biondo
Kristen Squire	Olenka Masny
Caitlin Welc	Christopher Brandt
Kelly Lovejoy	Natalie Lipton
Jenna Marwitz	Babatunde Adekson
Michaleigh Moylan	Herb Alexander
Jenelle Harriff	Amanda Brown
Clement Chung	Alana Burke
Amber Maker	Luke Colella
Hema Autar	Laura Shipp
Taylor Potter	Phil Martello
Ann Marie McFee	

Appendix B: Focus Group Questions

All Groups

1. Why did you decide to be a part of the monroe200?
2. What brought you to Monroe County in the first place?
3. What is most important in making you stay in Monroe County?
4. What would take you away from Monroe County?
 - a. If you were to move away where would you go? Why?
5. What are the 3 best things about living in Monroe County?
6. What are the 3 biggest challenges that Monroe County has in trying to retain millennials?
7. What are 3 specific things Monroe County could do today to improve your quality of life?
8. In general, what are 3 things Monroe County can do in the long-term to improve your quality of life?

Jobs/Economic Development

1. When you hear government, business, and elected leaders talk about jobs & economic development how well do they appear to understand the issue as it relates to your situation or the situations in which “ordinary” people find themselves?
2. What does the Rochester area have that can be used to improve its economic development in ways to attract and retain millennials such as yourself?
3. What shortcomings are there in the Rochester area that discourages the kind of economic development that could attract and retain millennials such as yourself?

Housing

1. If you are/were or are planning to remain in the Rochester area what in the short term would be your ideal type of housing? What would your ideal type of housing be 10 or 15 years from now?
2. If there could be a coordinated housing strategy between the City, County, and the surrounding towns on what should the emphasis be placed: on high end, middle class, affordable, or subsidized housing?
 - a. Where should these different types of housing be located?
3. When you consider housing choices how important is the idea of “neighborhood?” How does it factor into your housing considerations

Recreation/Culture

1. Broadly defined, in what kind of recreational or leisure activities do you personally engage?
 - a. How well does the Rochester Area allow you opportunities to engage in those activities?
2. In what kinds of recreational & cultural opportunities should the Rochester area invest to attract & retain millennials such as you?

Education

1. The type and quality of educational opportunities are often mentioned as reason why people come to or leave a particular area. Did some kind of educational opportunity bring you to the Rochester area originally?
 - a. Will future educational opportunities factor into your decision to remain or leave the Rochester area?
2. Much dismay is expressed toward the perceived low performance of Rochester City Schools. How important is this performance to you personally and how important is city school performance in your decision to remain, leave, (or return?) the Rochester area?

Safety/Security

1. Generally speaking, how safe do you feel when you are out-and-about in the Rochester area? Does that feeling change at night? Does it change depending where you are?
2. Does how safe you feel affect in anyway the activities in which you engage such as the sporting events, concerts, or plays you might attend or what "night-life" you might enjoy?" Why or why not?

Transportation/Mobility

1. Are you a regular user of Rochester area mass transit?
2. It is often said that you can get to any place within the Rochester area in 15 to 20 minutes. Does this compactness appeal to you? Why or why not?

Environment/Sustainability

1. How important is it for you to live in a community that is trying to be more "green?"
2. When the environmental or sustainability goals conflict with other goals such as those associated with economic development, job creation, or housing, which goals should take priority?

Health & Wellness

1. What is do you think about the quality of the health care and wellness system in the Rochester area?
2. What are two things about health and wellness care in the Rochester area that makes this a place that would attract millennials?
3. What is one thing in the health and wellness system in the Rochester area that could be improved that would make you want to continue living here?