



OUTSIDE AGENCY OVERSIGHT Committee Meeting

August 24, 2022

MISSION (WHAT WE DO)

Empower citizen leaders to create sustainable neighborhood networks that promote a vibrant, healthy and livable community.

Aligns With
City Strategy
Quality Services for Quality Living

City Focus Area
Cultural and recreational opportunities that provide access and equity



ORGANIZATION HISTORY (WHERE WE'VE BEEN)

1996 Mayor's Advisory Council on Neighborhoods formed to determine best practices for neighborhoods

2001 The Rochester Neighborhood Resource Center (RNRC) incorporated as a 501C3

2020 Responded to COVID pandemic to combat neighborhood isolation safely including murals, performance grants, Chalk the Walk, and the Front Door Project

2021 Stabilized organization. Board managed without staff on health leave, and neighborhoods isolated from pandemic stress with limited activity

2022 Focusing on strategic planning and continuing neighborhood engagement opportunities to allow for rebuilding of social connections



SOCIAL ISOLATION ACROSS NATION



As such, COVID-19 has underscored the necessity of strengthening local and federal systems to rebuild and sustain the social and emotional needs of the population.

It is clear that no single organization or sector can solve this issue alone. Now is the time to study the costs of human loneliness.

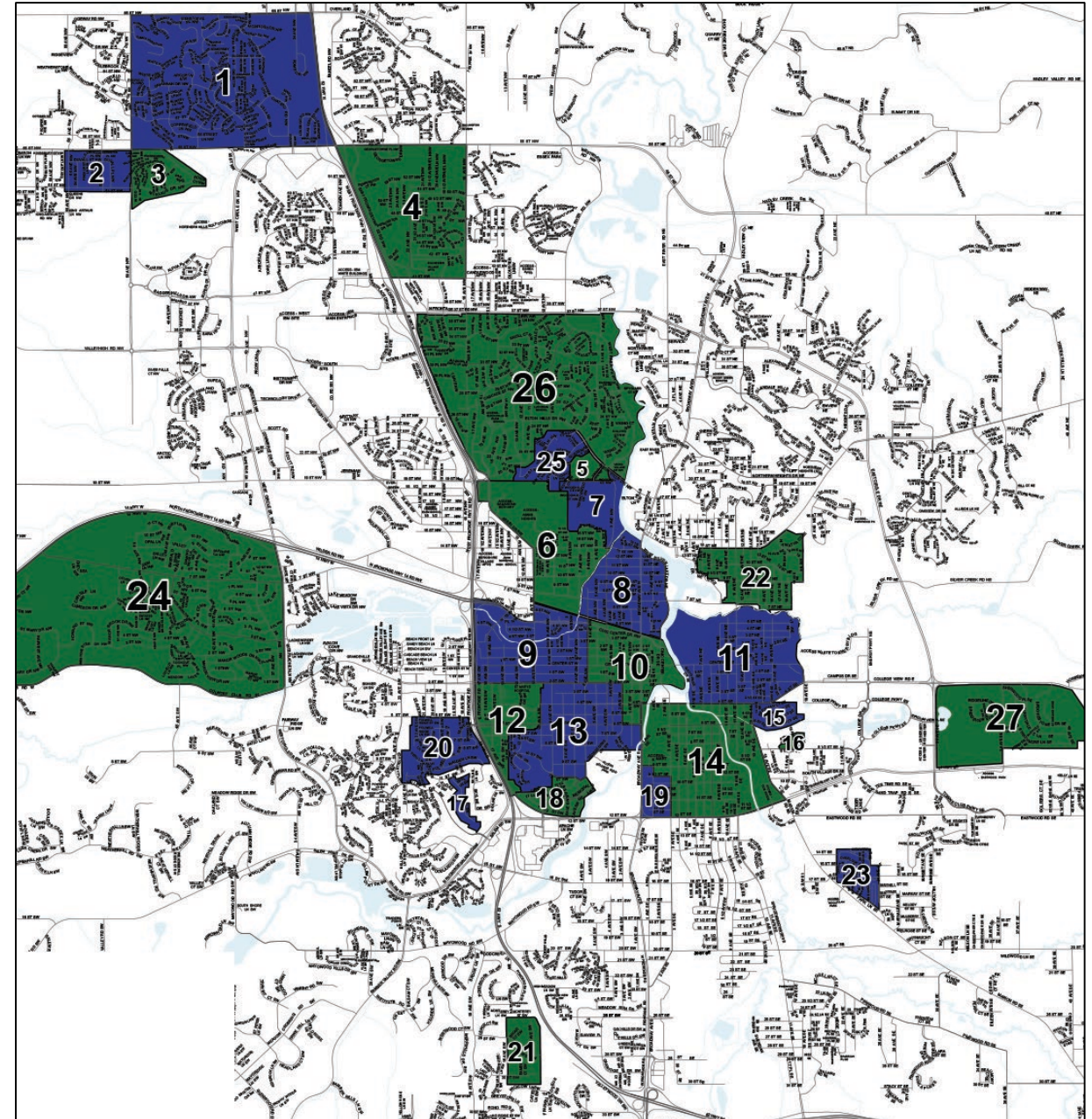
Our future health depends on encouraging and maintaining greater social connection. ”

~A June 22, 2020, article by Julianne Holt-Lunstad for Health Affairs.org entitled “The Double Pandemic Of Social Isolation And COVID-19: Cross-Sector Policy Must Address Both”

CURRENTLY REGISTERED NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

PROVIDING RESOURCES

- Many NAs working to rebuild connections from pandemic
- 27 neighborhood association (NA) boundaries representing at least 20,748 households of the estimated 39,450 residential parcels in Rochester
- Elton Hills NW (26) and Stone Bridge Circle/Brookstone (27) are the most recently registered
- One size does not fit all, NA structures and goals are vastly different
- Resources also shared with nonregistered groups such as the Meadow Park Initiative



STORIES BUILD EMPATHY



I still have Meadow Park neighbors that were involved in the Front Door Project portraits comment about the positive experience it was for them, especially in the isolation of the pandemic lockdown. It was the first time they felt truly seen and included as a part of the Rochester community.”

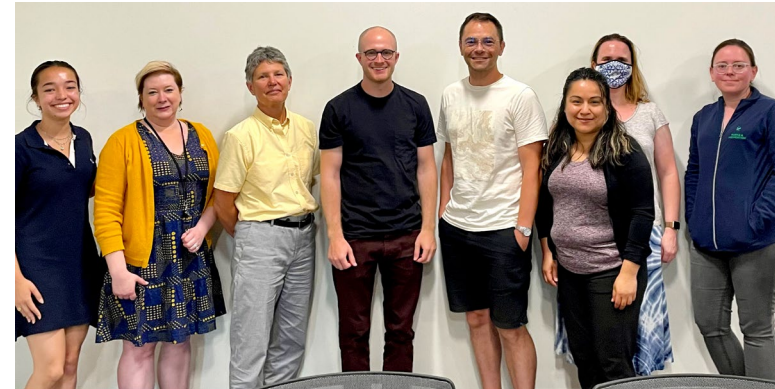
~April Sutor, neighborhood organizer in Meadow Park and Homestead Trails, at RNeighbors Focus Group, June 2022



2023-25 STRATEGIC PLANNING (ROAD MAP CREATION)

- Received grant from United Way for DEI planning work
- Working with Julie Brock Consulting on 3 year plan with measurable strategies, metrics, and actions
- Conducted two focus groups (neighborhood leaders & RNeighbors Board) and 1 online survey
- **Leading strategies identified: Neighborhood Connections & Diversity, Equity, Inclusion**

RNeighbors Strategy
Cultivate the organization's internal capacity and leverage resources needed to grow as a dynamic resource in an increasingly diverse city



FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK



During the last two years...social connections have faded and frayed. It's going to take a lot of work to build those up again.

People now have much less capacity to give their time and talents, even to causes that they care about.

We need new blood and new ideas and new energy. And those people need to be properly supported.”

*~Caitlin Doran, Slatterly Park NA past President
at RNeighbors Focus Group, June 2022*

FROM NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS (WHAT WE HEARD)

- Equitable infrastructure help: website, bank account, bylaw assistance, copy fund, etc.
- Social opportunities to learn from other neighborhoods – build bridges, connections
- Amplify events of neighborhoods – RNeighbors storytelling
- Bring back Council on Neighborhoods
- Project Grants without as many strings
- Events/programs that help neighbors engage are important: tree planting, Litter Bit Better and Movie in a Box ranked top in survey
- Continue inclusive projects that highlight neighbors, but on a city-wide scope –such as murals and Front Door Project - unifying



2023 FUNDING REQUEST

\$76,700

- Supports baseline operations and staffing (1 FTE)
- \$25,000 less than 2022 – due to City’s need to trim fund funding requests and current small budget surplus
- Anticipate need to increase funding back to usual amount in 2024

BACKGROUND

- Since 2001, RNeighbors’ annual budget is 93-96% funded by the City
- Surplus from staff partial salary, as well as 2020 and 2021 being years with low neighborhood activity including few Neighborhood Project Grants applications
- Loss on DNR grant reimbursements - effected by pandemic
- Financials completed by Bill Nietz, Nietz Tax & Accounting, LLC
- Silver-level GuideStar status, demonstrating commitment to transparency

IN-KIND OFFICE SPACE

In June 2020 RNeighbors moved to the Development Services & Infrastructure Center (DSIC) with the intention that rent could be used to hire for a part-time staff person. The pandemic interrupted this intention but is a goal in 2023.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Thank you for your great support and encouragement to keep going.

It has meant so much to actually feel connected in with this community.”

~Kitteren Jester, Chalk the Block 2022 Participant, *July 2022*



QUESTIONS



I moved here recently and am very proud to live in a town with these kinds of volunteer initiatives.”

~Renaë Burke, facebook feedback about Litter Bit Better, April 2022