



Commission on **RASE**

County • City • Community



Mayor Malik D. Evans, City of Rochester • Adam Bello, Monroe County Executive

6TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: AGENDA

12:00: Welcome and framing (Dr. Lucas)

Opening remarks

- Mayor Evans
- Executive Bello
- Dr. Rosser
- Dr. Hawkins

12:25: Executive Committee Overview (Liliana Ruiz and David Scott)

12:35: 2026 Priorities (CART Representatives)

1:15: Q&A and Closing



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Dr. Candice Lucas

Urban League of Rochester



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2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: OVERVIEW

Mayor Lovely Warren and County Executive Adam Bello,
Mayor Evans continued the work

Announced June 2020

Selected July 2020

Seated August 2020

Charge:

- a. Inventory and assess current *laws/policies* that either promote or are intended to eliminate institutional and structural biases, racism and inequities in the City of Rochester and Monroe County
- b. Provide recommendations to enhance current laws/policies to increase effectiveness, and/or “sunset” laws/policies that are ineffective or no longer applicable
- c. Provide recommendations on any new laws/policies which address “gaps” identified per “a.” and “b.”



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: THE COMMISSIONERS



William A. Johnson, Jr.



Arline Santiago, Esq.



Dr. Muhammad Shafiq



Aaron Anandarajah



Todd Baxter



Steve Brew



Logan X. Brown



Eric Caine



Frank Keophetlasy



Willie Lightfoot



Kim T. Nghiem



Danielle D. Ponder



Bruce Popper



Marcus Dunn



Karen L. Elam



Sady Fischer



Mitch Gruber



Wayne Preston Harris



Luis E. Ormaechea



Denisha R. Ortiz



Richard Tantalo



Catherine Thomas



Stephanie Townsend



Damond Wilson

2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: FIVE SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS

- 1.** Create and invest in sustainable economic opportunities in Black and Latinx communities to promote and maintain self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship, and career advancement.
- 2.** Implement and incentivize practices and programs that increase the racial/ethnic diversity and cultural competence of employees, vendors, and contractors.
- 3.** End practices that disproportionately drain resources from Black and Latinx communities.
- 4.** Decentralize services and embed them in trusted agencies throughout the community.
- 5.** Embed accountability measures in all policies to ensure equity and fairness across all services, programs, and delivery models.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

- Identify recommendations within the authority of the executive or legislative bodies for immediate implementation.
- Create a process for the implementation of recommendations within the private, not-for-profit and other government sectors.
- **Establish a successor body to the RASE Commission, with the authority to monitor the timeliness of the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report with the power to recommend and enforce corrective steps that will ensure the successful implementation of all recommendations.**
- Facilitate community engagement that leads to a strategic plan that informs and advocates for state and federal responses to these recommendations.
- **Prepare an annual committee report and community update.**



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: URBAN LEAGUE ROLE

- Work in collaboration with County and City leadership to actualize RASE recommendations.
- Serve as the point of contact and community convener of conversations about RASE updates.
- Maintain the RASE matrix / dashboard tracking progress on each recommendation.
- Organize CARTs —led by community leaders and stakeholders—focused on the following specific areas of implementation: policing, other aspects of the criminal justice system, education, healthcare, mental health, and addiction services, housing, job creation, business development, and human/social services.



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Mayor Malik Evans

City of Rochester



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2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

County Executive Adam Bello

Monroe County



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2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Superintendent Eric Roser

Rochester City School District



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Dr. Seanelle Hawkins

Urban League of Rochester



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2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE



David Scott
Chief Diversity Officer
County of Monroe



Liliana Ruiz
Director of Special Projects
City of Rochester

Role of the Executive Committee



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: EXECUTIVE TEAM

City:

- Director of Special Projects
- Special Assistant to the Mayor
- Equity Officer
- Executive Staff Assistant

RSCD:

- Chief of Staff
- Director of Special Projects and Innovation

County:

- Assistant County Executive
- Chief Diversity Officer
- Deputy Commissioner, DHS

Urban League:

- President & CEO
- SVP Equity and Advocacy
- E&A Coordinator



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: ROLE OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meet on a monthly basis to:

- Ensure continued progress on the recommendations
- Serve as Liaisons to elected officials and leadership teams
- Make decisions regarding escalated issues
- Serve as accountability partners for each other
- Support the work of the CARTs and community partners



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Dr. Candice Lucas

Urban League of Rochester



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: ~50% IMPLEMENTED

1. *Permanently fund the Monroe County Diversity Officer for Language Access to promote best practices and address any legal compliance issues.*
2. *Develop Community Behavioral Health Advocates (CBHA), a program employing local residents who are trained and certified to assist people with advocacy.*
3. *Initiate the process of shifting and embedding currently funded mental health services into trusted community-accessible sites.*
4. *Develop, maintain, and update regularly a community-wide inventory of mental health and substance treatment resources, with online and tablet-based tools that can be used readily by individuals, families, navigators, and clergy for defining needs and facilitating access to care*
5. *Monroe County should permanently eliminate the 85% attendance threshold for individuals recovering from substance abuse.*
6. *Raise the \$10,000 limit on no-bid municipal contracts to a higher level, to allow MWBE vendors access to greater potential revenue.*
7. *Host an annual joint City/County MWBE Business Development Fair (Create and financially support an information exchange that leads to new business opportunities for BIPOC-owned businesses.*
8. *Create a local city/county MWBE certification program, similar to those of Erie County/Buffalo, Syracuse and Albany.*
9. *Final interview for police candidates include representatives from the community as interviewers, including interviewers from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds for all local law enforcement officers.*
10. *De-escalation training be outlined and expanded for all uniformed police in this region with a focus on humanity and sanctity of life consideration.*
11. *Fund training and recruitment of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color as doulas and make doulas available as a public health service*
12. *Relax any regulations that create particularly high rates of sanctions.*
13. *Make the Civil Service test free for all.*
14. *Address the digital divide for Older Adults*
15. *Support and Invest in Livable Communities for Older Adults Initiative*
16. *24-hour arraignments for people arrested in the City*
17. *The district attorney should provide extensive data on cases, pleas, disposition etc., to the community through an open data portal.*
18. *Implement internet access through the City as permanent legislation starting at PreK*
19. *Make a formal declaration that racism is a public health crisis.*
20. *Explore expansion of tenant protections at the local level, as a disproportionate share of people of color in our region rent their homes.*
21. *Monroe County should enact a Ban the Box policy equivalent to the City of Rochester's policy.*
22. *Monroe County should adopt a drug testing policy congruent with the City's current policy.*
23. *Advocate for passage of a state-level pay transparency law.*
24. *Examine what ordinances, regulations or policies supporting pay transparency can be enacted by local government.*
25. *Implement Blind Removal Process for child protective services*



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCIES WORK

- Action for a Better Community
 - Black Agenda Group
 - Children's Agenda
 - Children's Institute
 - Empire Justice Center
 - FLPPS
 - Good Cause Eviction
 - HCR Homecare
 - Healthy Baby Network
 - House of Mercy
 - Our Local History
 - Parent Leadership Training Inst.
 - Rochester Monroe Anti Poverty Initiative
 - ROC-the-Future Alliance
 - St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center
 - Third Presbyterian Church
 - United Christian Leadership Ministry
- Greenlining
 - Racism is a Public Health Crisis
 - Solutions not suspensions
 - Get Ready to GROW
 - Pre-textual Stops, Zoning Alignment Project
 - Healthcare workforce; Housing Search Navigator program
 - Citywide Tenants Union and Partner Organization
 - At-home healthcare services
 - NEST Program
 - Mental Health Peer Training Program
 - Anti-racist curriculum; Building a Better Community
 - Teacher diversity
 - Level up challenge, annual Policy Agenda
 - School-based mental health clinics
 - Medical Outreach Vehicle
 - Black-owned Business (BOB) Initiative
 - Civilian Review Board



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Sector	# of Recs.	/	# Implemented
• Business Development	17	/	11
• Criminal Justice	16	/	5
• Education	22	/	3
• Healthcare	44	/	13
• Housing	9	/	4
• Human Services	23	/	13
– Older Adults	11	/	7
• Job Creation	17	/	13
• Mental Health & Addiction Services	14	/	9
• Policing	15	/	10



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: COMMUNITY ADVANCING RECOMMENDATIONS TEAMS

- CARTs are community-led teams of volunteers
- Maintain focus on recommendations outlined in the report
- Monitor the timeliness of implementation of the recommendations
- Establish a process for reporting progress to the community
- Assist with advocacy efforts at the state and federal level
- Organize public response to recommendations in need of community support



2026 RASE COMMUNITY UPDATE



Matthew Burrell
Business Development & Job Creation



Dr. Thomas Green
Healthcare



Rev. Phyllis Jackson
Human Services & Older Adults



Laurie Mahoney
Housing



Tamara Wall
Education



Yasmin Mattox
Mental Health and Substance Use



Pastor Wanda Wilson
Criminal Justice &
Policing



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Business Development & Job Creation



Youth Workforce & Career Pathways

Promote coordinated youth-to-career pipelines including: CTE expansion, union partnerships, internships, summer employment mentorship opportunities, and employer sponsored programs.

Cross-Sector Workforce & Capacity Expansion

Support strengthening of equitable workforce pipelines across high-need sectors by expanding training pathways, credentials support, employer partnerships, career exposure, and retention strategies, with intentional focus on diversifying and stabilizing the workforce, and incorporating digital literacy and preparedness for emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence.

Workforce System Navigation & Coordination

Improve visibility and coordination of workforce initiatives through reviewing and organizing various programs to provide navigation tools, clearer pathways, and stronger employer collaboration.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Criminal Justice & Policing

Commons Data Dashboards

Monitor dashboard to provide a transparent, data-driven view of the Rochester Police Department's progress toward meeting response time goals and advancing the recommendations of the RASE Commission.

- Rochester Police Dept.
- District Attorney's Office

Peer-led Crisis Response (Daniel's Law)

Collaborate with HOPE (Healing Outreach and Peer Engagement) First ROC to pilot a peer-led, non-police crisis response model that addresses non-violent incidents and behavioral health emergencies.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Education



Increase participation from all school districts

This effort seeks to strengthen participation across urban, suburban, and city schools, enhance student experiences in shared programs, and promote inclusive, diverse curricula—including the integration of Rochester’s local history—to better reflect and serve all communities.

Promote Portrait of a Graduate standards

Partner with NYS Regents, district superintendents, parents and students to implement the New York State Portrait of a Graduate standards by advancing an educational framework that prioritizes critical thinking, effective communication, cultural competence, and real-world readiness.

Advance citizen knowledge and civic engagement

Collaborate with Our Local History to create and recommend a research-based, K-12, curriculum proposal to all Monroe County school districts for engaging students & teachers to promote critical thinking, creative problem-solving & active citizenship across the focus issues of RASE.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Healthcare

Work with county legislature, administration, and department of public health

Partner with county legislature, administration, and the Department of Public Health to advance implementation of healthcare recommendations and community-based initiatives.

Through community engagement, program assessment, and the establishment of clear benchmarks and performance measures, this effort will track progress toward eliminating health disparities across the county while championing cross-sector collaboration to address the social drivers of health.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Housing



Continue advocating for affordable, equitable, and quality housing, both ownership and rentals

- Advocate to eliminate exclusionary zoning across Monroe County through Zoning Alignment Project and working with each town's board on changing zoning processes
- Encourage affordability through local banks with lower mortgage rates, focusing on City Median Income (CMI), COMIDA tax incentives, and other funding models
- Support expansion of community-controlled models of owner/rental-ship for sustained affordability

Expanded tenant protections

Advocate for expanded tenant protections through the ROC vacancy study and rent stabilization efforts.

Homelessness

Address homelessness through person-centered and housing-first solutions.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Human Services/Older Adults

Citizen Advisory Council

Actively participate with DHS to advise the commissioner and team on policy, program planning, and evaluation of recommendations to ensure effective service delivery, as noted in the report.

Elder Abuse

Advocate for expanded programming addressing elder abuse, isolation, and mental health by increasing education on warning signs and strengthening prevention and support efforts. This includes enhancing Adult Protective Services to ensure stronger protections for vulnerable adults when abuse is identified.

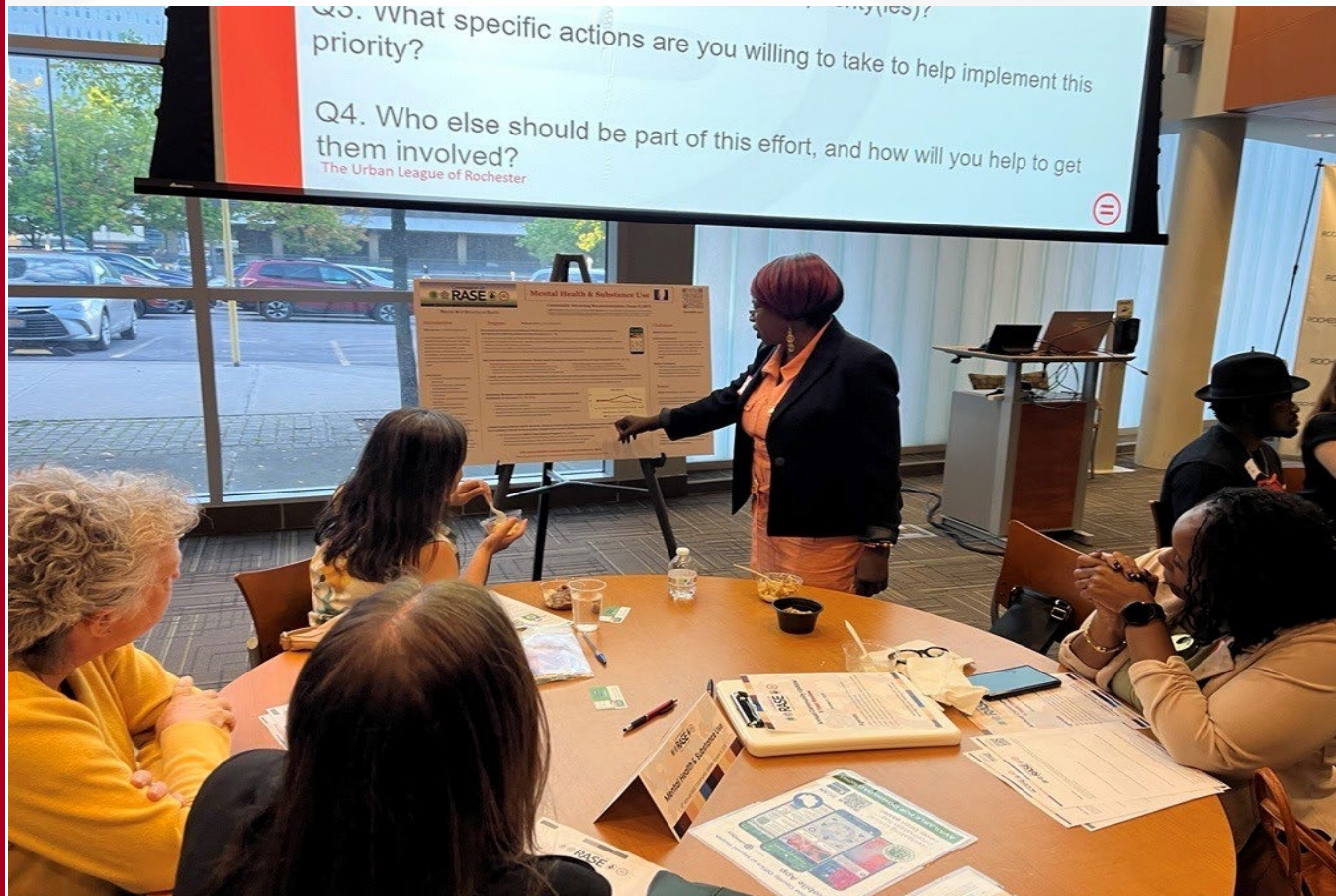
Incorporate Older Adults

Work across sectors to integrate and prioritize the needs of older adults in all policies, programs, and services. This includes strengthening coordination across issue areas such as healthcare, housing, jobs, mental health, and social services to ensure seniors are supported

holistically. [The United League of Rochester](#)



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Mental Health and Substance Use



Equitable Behavioral Health Access

Advocate for affordable access to healthcare, mental and behavioral health services, case management, and crisis response services throughout the lifespan through strengthened cross-agency collaborations.

Integrated MH/Addiction emergency response system

Develop a coordinated and integrated community response to behavioral health that would use a proactive approach to mental health and addiction services.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Cross-sector Collaborative Opportunities

Living Wage & Affordability Alignment

Advocate for policies and employer practices that align wage increases and employee benefits with cost-of-living expenses (ex. Training, health insurance, housing incentives, tuition reimbursement and scholarships, retirement, PTO, childcare, employee assistant programs, etc.).

Community Outreach, Navigation, & Engagement

Coordinate community outreach efforts across sectors to educate the community about RASE to foster cross-CART collaboration and engage community in advocacy.

Reentry and Employment Pathways

Advocate for strengthening coordinated reentry systems connecting individuals leaving incarceration to employment pipelines, behavioral health services, housing, and workforce supports

Transportation Taskforce

Partner with agencies to implement an Active Transportation and Complete Streets Plan that prioritizes safe streets, walkability, and bikability in neighborhoods with health disparities that disproportionately affect. Work to improve transit services across county.



2026 ANNUAL COMMUNITY UPDATE: Next Steps

- *Join a CART (scan the QR code)*
- *Read the RASE report(www.rocrase.com)*
- *Adopt a Recommendation*
- *View the RASE posters on display at the Central Library in the Rundel Building's Harold Hacker Hall through April 24*
- *Provide feedback on successes and challenges (email: clucas@ulr.org)*





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THANK YOU!