



**21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY PARTNERSHIP  
COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR DIVERSITY**

Approved May 11, 1999  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership Steering Committee

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership Steering Committee**

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Wendy Shannon

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Paul Wilson

## **Sub-Committee for the Diversity Plan**

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Bill Boyne

Hilla Cline

Mary Gorfine

Mary Hirman

Frank Iossi

Jim Licari

Jack Noennig

Valerie Pace

Rev. Jim Price

Don Sudor

Phil Wheeler

Paul Wilson

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## INTRODUCTION

This document presents the 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee recommendations for ***a community wide strategic plan to address diversity in our community***. The document is also available on the Internet at [www.ci.rochester.mn.us/21stcentury](http://www.ci.rochester.mn.us/21stcentury) and [www.olmstedcounty.com/21century](http://www.olmstedcounty.com/21century)

All residents have a role in making Olmsted County a welcoming place for newcomers and a community where all residents have an equal opportunity to succeed. This strategic plan for diversity includes the recommendations of 21st Century Partnership along with appendices addressing

- demographic diversity in our community
- the report of the 21st Century Partnership Diversity Task Force
- and what you can do to make our community a welcoming community for all of us.

## **COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DIVERSITY**

The Diversity Task Force of the 21st Century Partnership called for the development of a Community Strategic Plan for Diversity. Developing such a plan is intended to put diversity in the forefront of the community's agenda.

This plan spells out a number of policies and specific strategies to be adopted and adhered to by different parts of the community. Each set of policies identifies responsible parties and measures of attainment.

Adopting the specific policies spelled out in this plan will represent a new community consensus around diversity issues. Following through with the policies and their individual strategies will result in a community that welcomes diversity and ***provides a safe, non-discriminating environment with respect and opportunity for all***. In future years, the community will be able to apply the measures listed in the plan to see if the strategies have been effective and to modify the plan as needed.

### **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

The increasing diversity of our community has brought a number of people into contact with unfamiliar cultural practices. This is true both of long-term residents of the majority community, as well as of immigrants from other countries adjusting to the culture of Minnesota. The magnitude of this issue is indicated by the fact that there are students from 58 different countries attending Rochester schools, having as their native tongues almost as many languages. There are almost as many languages and countries of origin in Olmsted County schools as occur in all the school systems in California.

Rochester and Olmsted County benefit from the skills, cultures, and life experiences that newcomers bring to our community. We need to ensure that our neighborhoods, schools, service establishments, and work places present a welcoming environment to newcomers in order to realize these benefits.

The Strategic Plan identifies the following six focus areas for community - oriented diversity education efforts.

- 1. Community Leaders:** If diversity issues in this community are to be resolved positively, it can only be through the full engagement and active involvement of the community's opinion leaders. These include not only elected officials at the local and state level, but also business and religious leaders, print and broadcast media managers, and the board chairs and directors of the non-profit sector. The 21st Century Partnership Diversity Task Force recognized this fact when it called for putting diversity "on the community's agenda." Involving community leaders in diversity requires their participation in becoming educated about diversity issues. The following addresses this need.

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<b>Program</b>	<b>Provide opportunities for elected officials and other community leaders to learn about diversity issues and successful diversity programs .</b>
Customers	City, County, and School District elected officials; leaders of religious organizations; owners and CEO's of private businesses; and leaders of non-profit organizations
Responsible Parties	Community entities such as local government, businesses that are leaders in terms of employing minorities and promoting diversity awareness in the work place; other area diversity resources
Measures of Effectiveness	Increased awareness of "best practices" and the extent to which the area's work force is becoming diverse.
<b>Specific strategy</b>	<b>Area employers should arrange visits by elected officials of area governing bodies by December, 2001</b>

2. **Criminal Justice System:** The 21st Century Partnership Diversity Task Force Report recommends mandatory annual diversity training for law enforcement officers and other criminal justice system personnel. The purpose of such training would be to sensitize law enforcement and other elements of the criminal justice system to cultural differences. It is critical that the criminal justice system treat all residents of our communities even-handedly, and that newcomers to the community come to recognize that law enforcement staff in particular and the criminal justice system in general can be relied on to help newcomers who are victimized.

In addition, with initiatives such as Crime-Free Multi Housing and the progress in problem-oriented and community-oriented policing, the Police Department is increasingly a source of information for the majority community on diversity issues. It is important that this information be current and accurate.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Provide annual education programming on cultural differences and other aspects of diversity.</b>
Customers	Area law enforcement and criminal justice system personnel, including public and private attorneys, area judges and court system personnel, probation officers, and corrections officers.
Responsible Parties	Area units of local government; the Community Justice Forum; area Bar Association; area Diversity Resources and the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce.
Measures of Effectiveness	Substantiated complaints of unfair treatment; analysis of outcome of similar incidents by majority/minority status; community surveys assessing how the criminal justice system is perceived.

3. **Landlords and Real Estate Professionals:** It is important to focus community education efforts on the real estate community and area apartment and other rental housing owners because they control access to the residential environment that every community member experiences. Members of minority groups including immigrants and refugees, accounted for a significant share of the population growth in Olmsted County during the 1990's. Based on current estimates, that trend is expected to continue and it is important for the owner and rental real estate industry to recognize and address this change in the market. The Rochester Area Realtors Association provides periodic training opportunities in fair housing law. A program on area diversity trends and concerns could be coupled with this ongoing training to emphasize concerns affecting this area in particular.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Develop and deliver customized diversity education for all individuals involved in the residential location decisions on the part of the minority and majority communities. The training should address cultural differences, community concerns about segregation, and legal issues.</b>
Customers	Area real estate professionals and staff; area lenders; area apartment and manufactured home park owners and managers.
Responsible Parties	Area organizations of real estate professionals, lenders, and rental property owners and managers, area Diversity Resources.
Measures of Effectiveness	The "dissimilarity index " (explained in the demographics page); surveys of home purchasers and tenants; audit teams to assess differences in customer treatment by majority/minority status.  Records of complaints received by the Human Rights Commission related to landlord tenant issues, suspected block-busting, redlining, and racial or other steering.

4. **Neighborhoods:** Involving minority community members in neighborhood activities is an important recommendation of the 21st Century Partnership Diversity Task Force Report for several reasons:
- Relationships among neighbors are an important determinant of whether or not a community will be perceived as "welcoming" diversity.
  - As neighborhoods become more active in local government decisions, it becomes increasingly important to involve all neighbors in community decision processes.
  - Opposition to affordable housing in areas adjacent to established neighborhoods threatens to exclude affordable housing from newly developing areas. Doing so will curtail the supply of land for affordable housing and jeopardize the supply. It may also result in concentrating affordable housing in a few heavily impacted neighborhoods.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Develop and distribute an educational program addressing neighborhood concerns related to diversity, especially related to lower cost housing and racial diversity.</b>
Customers	Area neighborhood and block watch groups, whether officially organized or not.
Responsible Parties	Neighborhood Resource Center and other coordinating groups; area Diversity Resources.
Measures of Effectiveness	Awareness of diversity issues and attitudes as measured by community surveys.

- 5. Retail Trade and Service Establishments:** Respectful treatment in service establishments and retail stores is taken for granted by most Olmsted County residents however, not all newcomers and visitors share the same experience. In a welcoming community, retail trade and service establishments must be perceived as inviting and hospitable to a diverse clientele. It is in the best interest of area retail trade and service establishments and their customers to provide diversity education to all employees and business managers.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Provide opportunities for diversity and cultural awareness education ng to retail trade and service establishment employees and managers.</b>
Customers	Retail and service businesses too small to support in-house diversity programs; especially security personnel in businesses, retail and service establishments.
Responsible Parties	Retail business employers and shopping center owners, the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, and area Diversity Resources.
Measures of Effectiveness	Number and seriousness of complaints related to treatment of customers at retail trade and service establishments referred to the Olmsted County Human Rights Commission.

- 6. Work Places:** Employment discrimination in the work place can take a number of forms. In its extreme forms, discrimination may result in qualified employees being rejected for jobs or promotions for reasons unrelated to their suitability for the position. Such reasons might include discrimination on the basis of race, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation and marital status.

In less extreme forms, diversity issues in the work place may include misunderstandings related to lack of awareness of cultural norms. Better awareness of cultural differences on the part of all employees and managers can help to alleviate misunderstandings and create work environments that promote mutual respect.

To address these problems, the following strategy is proposed:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Provide opportunities for diversity and cultural awareness education to employees and managers.</b>
Customers	Businesses too small to support in-house diversity programs
Responsible Parties	The Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Diversity Council and other area Diversity Resources
Measures of Effectiveness	Number and seriousness of employment related complaints to the Olmsted County Human Rights Commission. Job satisfaction and retention as measured by surveys.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND DIVERSITY**

All Olmsted County jurisdictions, and in particular the City of Rochester, are suffering from a critical shortage of affordable housing. Rental vacancy rates for market rate units were estimated at around 1-2% in the 1998 Housing Study prepared for the Olmsted County Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Preliminary data from the 2000 Census indicates an overall rental vacancy rate of 4% (which may include units under construction or already called for and therefore not truly on the market). By comparison, the national average rental vacancy rate from 2000 Census data is 6.8%.

Many area employers need entry level and other lower paid employees to fill the jobs that they are creating. According to economic forecasters, the major impediment to the continued economic growth of the Rochester-Olmsted community is the critical shortage of housing.

The Diversity Task Force Report discusses the need to increase the supply of affordable housing and the need to provide affordable housing in scattered locations throughout area communities. Some neighborhood groups have opposed affordable housing proposals based in part on concerns about increased traffic, increased crime, and adverse impacts on property values.

Opposition to affordable housing in areas adjacent to established neighborhoods threatens to exclude affordable housing from newly developing areas. Such exclusion results in a shortage of affordable housing and a community that is segregated by income class. Segregation by income class can lead to de facto segregation by race in our community. Continuing to curtail the supply of land for affordable housing in fringe locations jeopardizes the supply of affordable housing and will result in concentrating affordable housing in a few heavily impacted neighborhoods.

Evidence from national studies confirms that scattered subsidized and other lower cost housing development does not adversely affect housing values in adjacent areas. Studies also indicate that segregating lower cost housing in a few neighborhoods clearly destabilizes those neighborhoods, leading to declining housing stock, declining performance in neighborhood schools, and other social problems.

We are at a crossroads in our community. We can design our future to consist of integrated neighborhoods with an adequate supply of housing in a variety of price ranges. Or we can design our community to consist of concentrated pockets of lower cost housing isolated from the remainder of the community. The experience of other cities in the US clearly indicates that integration is the more desirable future.

Dividing our community either by income or by race fosters inequity, isolation, barriers to communication and ultimately divisiveness. Class segregation, even without corresponding race segregation, is inimical to the long-term cohesiveness of our community and to our quality of life. *A community that is not integrated ultimately will disintegrate.*

**Recommendations:**

1. UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

- support low income tax credit housing and other subsidized housing.
- accommodate private development proposals that include townhouses, apartments, and manufactured housing as part of neighborhood development areas.
- enforce minimum standards for housing and enforce such ordinances as the Disorderly Use Ordinance in order to address neighborhood concerns about crime and potential impacts on property values.
- increase the supply of land zoned for lower cost housing, especially providing for mixtures of housing by style and cost.
- provide for neighborhoods with housing that is integrated by income class as well as by race.

2. AREA DEVELOPERS:

- accommodate affordable housing up front as part of well-planned communities.
- provide for affordable housing as an integrated part of neighborhood development plans
- address concerns related to traffic and property values.

4. REAL ESTATE MARKETERS AND LANDLORDS:

- provide accurate information to new or relocating residents about all neighborhoods, without making assumptions about the preferences those residents may have based on their race or income; avoid *steering*.
- treat all housing customers equally
- characterize all neighborhoods accurately.

5. NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

- We need to remind ourselves
  - *that lower income households are not equivalent to lower quality families*

- *that the "goodness" of a neighborhood is not measured by the price of its structures but by the character of its residents*
- *that the quality of a community is not measured by the degree to which it is exclusive.*
- We need to focus neighborhood concerns about housing on legitimate issues that can be remedied (accommodating traffic without disrupting neighborhoods, ensuring good management of rental housing, and so on).
- We need to create a welcoming environment in all neighborhoods for persons of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds.

**Measures of Effectiveness:**

- For affordable housing, vacancy rates by price range for owner and renter occupied housing.
- For the enforcement of minimum standards of housing and crime-free neighborhoods, crime, police calls, and housing violation data.
- For segregation, the "dissimilarity index," which represents the percentage of a minority population that would need to move to a different neighborhood in order to result in an even distribution of the population across the community. (Race segregation in the urbanized area of Olmsted County is quite low compared to other metropolitan areas in the U.S. Dissimilarity indices for persons in poverty and housing styles in 1990, and racial minorities in 1990 and 2000 have been calculated and are presented in Appendix 1: Demographics.)
- Also for segregation, the concentration of minority population, which can be determined by calculating the weighted mean percentage of minority residents living in blocks with minority residents. For Olmsted County's minority population in 2000 (based on Census data), blocks with any minority residents had an average of 28% minority residents, compared to a County average of 11% minority residents. This level of concentration is low compared with other metropolitan areas in the U.S.
- For segregating practices, records of complaints received by the Human Rights Commission related to suspected block-busting, redlining, and racial or other steering.

**Glossary:**

- "*Affordable housing*" means housing that, through subsidy or other means, costs no more than 30% of the household income of households earning 80% of the area's median income.
- "*Block-busting*," a practice outlawed by the 1968 Fair Housing Act, means the practice of encouraging panic selling among the white majority by inducing fears of "neighborhood transition," and other code words for racial diversity in neighborhoods.
- "*Integrated*" means including low income and other minority populations in roughly the same proportions as their proportions in the community, reflecting the goal that neighborhoods include diverse populations while avoiding concentrated poverty and racial segregation.

- “*Neighborhood*” means an area with generally identifiable geographic boundaries roughly equivalent in size and population to the fully developed attendance area of an elementary school.
- “*Redlining*” is the illegal restriction on mortgages in certain neighborhoods based on their racial composition.
- “*Steering*” is the practice of directing members of certain racial or income groups into or away from certain neighborhoods, regardless of eligibility for or interest in individual houses in other neighborhoods. High-income individuals may be directed away from certain neighborhoods even if they express interest in houses in mixed income, integrated neighborhoods. Low income or minority individuals may be directed away from certain neighborhoods even if they would qualify as purchasers of individual houses in those neighborhoods.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS**

Local governments should prepare an “environmental justice analysis” when they propose capital expenditures that trigger an environmental impact statement. State and local governments investments in infrastructure often create attractive facilities that may increase property values in adjacent areas, such as bridges and roads, bikeways and bus systems, parks and schools. Other investments (some highways, sewage treatment facilities, landfills, and so on) may detract from adjacent neighborhoods.

The federal government requires that infrastructure investments using federal funds be evaluated in terms of their impacts (favorable and unfavorable) on neighborhoods. To meet federal standards of “environmental justice,” infrastructure investment impacts, whether good or bad, must fall evenly on all neighborhoods. They must not disproportionately benefit affluent neighborhoods nor adversely affect lower income or minority neighborhoods.

Such an evaluation should be required of all infrastructure investments that trigger environmental impact statements, whether they involve federal funds or not. As part of its 2001 work program, the Rochester Olmsted Council of Governments is finalizing a methodology for evaluating environmental justice as it applies to transportation investments. Once developed, the methodology should be expanded to apply to other infrastructure investments as well.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Develop a model environmental justice analysis procedure and use it to evaluate local government infrastructure investment impacts, ensuring that neighborhoods are treated equitably.</b>
Customers	Area units of local government (school boards, city councils, township boards, and the Olmsted County Board).
Responsible Parties	Rochester Olmsted Planning Department and the Rochester Olmsted Council of Governments, with participation by community diversity resources and environmental advisory boards.
Measures of	Infrastructure investments show balanced impacts across the

Effectiveness	community.
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**PROGRAMS ORIENTED TO MINORITIES**

**1. Minority Employment:** In a time of severe labor shortages, it is in the interest of both employers and workers to facilitate the full employment of all area residents who wish to work. A number of area employers are doing an exemplary job of helping minority workers obtain jobs and advance to higher level positions. The programs listed below recommend systematically building on that information and in some cases emulating specific programs shown to be effective by area firms.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Develop and distribute a set of "best practices" related to minority recruitment, training and retention specific to occupation and industry.</b>
Customers	All area employers (public, private, non-profit).
Responsible Parties	Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, the Workforce Development Center, and employers with exemplary practices.
Measures of Effectiveness	Awareness of "best practices" among area employers; ultimately, labor force participation and retention rates and wage rates for minorities identified by race, ethnicity, ability/disability, and native language.
Specific Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop workplace mentoring programs for minority employees</li> <li>• Provide training in English for Speakers of Other Languages, either in the workplace or at other locations, such as is now being provided by ISD 535 Community Education, IBM, Mayo Foundation, Pemstar and others.</li> <li>• Recognize the value added by bilingual employees and compensate accordingly.</li> <li>• Through Rochester Community Education and other public and private organizations such as the Private Industry Council (Workforce Center), provide assistance to under-employed persons to achieve employment consistent with education and experience.</li> <li>• Assist in the formation of job networking groups among minority populations, such as those in place within IBM. The purpose of these groups is to provide peer support, advice in professional growth and insights into workplace issues.</li> <li>• Make greater use of minority-based employment agencies.</li> </ul>

**2. Residential Environment:** Newcomers to area neighborhoods, especially those coming from other countries, sometimes need help becoming familiar with the expectations associated with occupying a residence. Just as majority community neighborhoods need education in cultural differences and other diversity issues, so do newcomers to those

neighborhoods need education about the majority culture. As a community, we need to respect the broad range of cultural traditions that our residents represent. We also need to be aware of the differences among us and to be clear on the rules that regulate our behavior.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Familiarize minority newcomers with the laws and cultural expectations related to owning or renting residences in Olmsted County, especially landlord - tenant responsibilities, lease requirements, home maintenance expectations, and expectations related to the neighborhood.</b>
Customers	Minority newcomers to the community.
Responsible Parties	Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association; Olmsted County Housing and Redevelopment Authority; Community Housing Partnership; and area Diversity Resources.
Measures of Effectiveness	Complaints related to misunderstood expectations received by Human Rights Commission or others: neighborhood and minority resident surveys.

**3. Civic Involvement:** The 21st Century Partnership Task Force on Diversity called for improving the internal diversity performance of community institutions and ensuring that institutions in the community include diversity as a priority in their own planning and programming. The network of relationships that knit the majority community together should be made accessible to the minority communities in the community as well. Strategies to extend opportunities for greater civic involvement to minorities could include

- involvement in neighborhood groups,
- appointments to citizen committees serving local government,
- recruitment by service clubs,
- involvement in non-profit boards,
- involvement in interest groups such as the League of Women Voters, and
- involvement in committees advising business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce.

**4. Adult Literacy Program:** English language training is critical for the job success and community participation of non-native English speakers. As a community, we need to continue to support programs such those offered in adult literacy through Rochester Public Schools. In addition to adult basic education for native speakers of English, G.E.D. preparation, and diploma opportunities for adults, a variety of English language training classes are available.

The English program provides seven sequential levels of instruction in the English language and U.S. culture. The classes are open to all non-native speakers of English in the Rochester Area. In addition, the following programs are also available:

- Assistance for foreign-born residents preparing for the U.S. Citizenship Exam
- Refugee tutoring assistance

- Work skills programs
- Parenting classes and preschool education for speakers of other languages

Classes are offered in several locations, including the Rochester Community and Technical College Heintz Center, Ability Building Center, Corrections Department and on-site employer customized educational assistance through the Work Skills Project.

- 5. Health Care:** Olmsted County is a diverse community made up of many cultural groups bound together by common life experiences, traditions, behaviors and values. Health care institutions should provide education programs for all staff members regarding cultural and cross-cultural health care traditions to ensure effective outreach and provide equal access to services. Education programs for health care employees should include background regarding the differences in customs, traditions, language and history as well as the positive health care practices that exist within cultures.

Many refugees who come to this region in search of safety and a new life have experienced overwhelming suffering and loss as a result of war, torture and the hardship they experienced in refugee camps. Differences in language, income, education, and access to appropriate health care may also compromise the physical and mental health of residents. It is important for health care providers to support community education and outreach programs beyond the mainstream or majority culture to meet the needs of all residents, including those in the immigrant and newcomer population.

The following goals and objectives will ensure that the health care needs of all residents are met:

- Assure that the employees of health care institutions have the opportunity to learn the health care traditions of the community members they serve.
- Improve access to health care by providing education and outreach to all cultural and cross-cultural communities within Olmsted County.
- Assure appropriate and timely interpreter staff in health care systems for English language learners and non-native speakers.

- 6. Youth Participation:** Some of the youth in our community cannot afford to participate in youth sports and other community activities. While scholarship programs are available through some youth organizations, many still have fewer lower income participants than would be expected based on community population characteristics. It is not enough merely to passively accommodate minority and low income youth participation. To increase the level of participation on the part of lower income youth and ethnic minorities,

- Youth oriented organizations should make a deliberate, proactive effort to involve lower income and minority youth in their programs. Such efforts should include waiving fees, assisting with the purchase of equipment, providing assistance with transportation when necessary and active recruitment efforts.
  - Youth oriented organizations should also make an effort to attract minority adult leaders to their boards and youth contact positions.
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- Public entities should establish as a condition for the use of public facilities (meeting rooms, sports fields, and gymnasiums) that the organization using the facility has established efforts to increase participation among low income and minority youth.

**SCHOOLS**

All of the public school systems in the Rochester Olmsted community should have completed state required diversity plans and placed them on file with the Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning. School districts should also provide staff development programming and resources to ensure that teachers and other staff members understand the value of integrating diversity education strategies into all aspects of K – 12 curriculum. As a suggestion for private school systems or for public school systems considering revisions, the 21st Century Partnership, in consultation with the Diversity Council Education Committee and Rochester Public Schools, offers the following curriculum suggestions intended to

- Create a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students.
- Support an environment that nurtures diversity and strives to eliminate name-calling, racism, gender bias, and other forms of discrimination.

<b>Actions/Strategies</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Persons responsible</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>
<b>Elementary</b>			
Read books and stories depicting various cultures, men and women in a variety of roles, and people with mental and physical challenges in a variety of roles	On-going	K-5 Staff and volunteers	School district & community resources
Provide multiple experiences creating an understanding of inter-generational experiences, and sharing of family traditions. For example, each student could present an interview held with a grandparent or older family friend.	Once per year	K-5 Staff and volunteers	
Provide multiple experiences comparing and contrasting the culture and traditions of people of different countries around the world. For example, each student could complete an assessment showing understanding of the differences and similarities.	Ongoing	K-5 Staff and volunteers	
Establish family mentorship program by matching ESOL families with native speaking families.	On-going	School Administration and Diversity Committee members (including	Volunteer families

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<b>Actions/Strategies</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Persons responsible</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>
		parents)	
Include diverse food choices on school lunch menu	On-going	Site committee and School District nutrition specialist	
Set aside an area in each school library for a monthly display of diversity materials	On-going	PTSA and Site Diversity Committee	School district & community resources
<b>Middle School</b>			
Assign books with authors, settings, themes and characters representing diverse cultures and ethnic groups	On-going	Language Arts Department	School district & community resources
Social Studies department should provide experiences at all grade levels on cultural diversity, including cultural diversity in our communities	Winter Trimester	Social Studies and language arts staff	School district & community resources
Provide story problems that include diversity themes	On-going	Math Department	School district & community resources
Provide opportunities for native speaking students to meet and get to know ESOL students better to eliminate name-calling and other forms of harassment	September	Staff	
Demonstrate what it would be like to be in a situation where one does not know the language. Afterwards, process how the students feel about the experience	Once a year	Staff	
Introduce diverse performing groups and explore a variety of music from various cultures and religions	On-going	Music Department	School District, PTSA & community resources
Encourage frequent discussions regarding racial issues and discrimination of all kinds	On-going	Staff	School district & community resources
Provide lessons on social skills and self-awareness	On-going	Staff	
Enforce zero tolerance of discrimination incidents in school	On-going	Staff	Appropriate consequences

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Actions/Strategies	Timeline	Persons responsible	Resources needed
			for both positive and negative behavior
<b>High School</b>			
Enhance library/media collection to incorporate diverse literature and non-print media	On-going	Staff	Resources to purchase new materials
Increase availability of conflict managers	On-going	Conflict Manager Coordinator and Administration	Time for coordinator to organize and facilitate conflict mediation and to train additional staff and students.
Continue to use bulletin boards to display multicultural ideas and themes	On-going	Diversity Committees	School district & community resources
Increase involvement of minority parents through Minority Student Advocate	On-going	School administration and Minority Advocate	Salaries and benefits for minority student advocate position and activities
Increase minority student participation in school related activities and athletics through assistance with fees and equipment and through active recruitment	On-going	Staff and students	Funds for fees and equipment; time for recruitment
Develop an understanding of diversity among students, based on respect, success, school pride, spirit, and traditions	On-going	Staff, students, and alumni	Money for fees supplies and materials.

**ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION**

*"The responsibility for change is proportional to the power the individuals and groups hold in society. It is therefore the responsibility of the majority population to provide vision,*

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*leadership, and strategies to stop discrimination... A community that works well must promote a "zero tolerance" approach to discriminatory behavior."*

- 21st Century Partnership Diversity Task Force Report

All of the other programs and policies in this Community Strategic Plan for Diversity address the need for education in one form or another. Education will promote awareness and appreciation of cultural differences and help to create a welcoming environment for diversity. One of the goals of diversity education is to eliminate discrimination. However, patterns of discrimination will persist and must be confronted. ***This community will have a policy of "zero tolerance" for discrimination.***

The following programs are proposed to make such a policy effective:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Assist in identifying and resolving discrimination concerns and in preventing discrimination</b>	
Customers	Victims of discrimination; majority and minority communities.	
Responsible Parties	Olmsted County Human Rights Commission; other area Diversity Resources.	
Measures of Effectiveness	Numbers of complaints resolved; satisfaction of participants; numbers of complaints received.	
Specific Strategies	Provide counseling to minority residents to resolve potential misunderstandings and identify discrimination problems.	Area Diversity Resources
	Continue to provide mediation resources for discrimination concerns.	Olmsted County Human Rights Commission
	Provide education to employers and others on the laws pertaining to discrimination	Olmsted County Human Rights Commission
	Create a fund to support legal action as merited to address discrimination concerns not amenable to resolution through mediation	Area charitable foundations; community Diversity Resources; local Bar Association

**MONITORING PROGRESS**

An important recommendation of the 21st Century Partnership Task Force on Diversity directed the Steering Committee to "develop a valid instrument to measure community attitudes and perceptions regarding diversity" and to "track changes annually in the community's response to diversity."

The task force suggested a ***periodic community survey*** assessing majority and minority attitudes and levels of satisfaction with progress in diversity areas. In addition, the task force suggested several measures related to other task force areas, including:

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- Crime - hate crimes, victim/criminal demographics
- Education and Workforce Readiness - high school graduation rate, employer feedback
- Jobs and the Economy – employment e.g. *recruitment and retention rates*, demographics *especially in government hiring*
- 
- Neighborhoods - Human Rights complaints, voting records
- Youth, Families and the Elderly - school data (i.e. graduation rates, demographic characteristics of exceptional students, drop out rates, participation rates of low income and minority youth in extracurricular activities, etc.), family services data (elderly, runaways, suicides, etc.)
- Rural and Small City Vitality - economic indicators, characteristics of in migrant population
- Availability of affordable/workforce housing
- Civic and other community group demographics

The Steering Committee agrees with this recommendation and recommends that the community commit the necessary resources to the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department for implementing it.

## APPENDIX 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The Olmsted County community is going through a period of significant growth and change. Our strong local economy has brought high rates of job growth and very low unemployment. As local labor resources are tapped to their full extent, area businesses are increasingly relying on in-migrants to the community to fill their business expansion needs. As a result, our community is becoming home to an increasingly diverse population.

This newfound diversity is reflected in our schools as well as our workplaces. From fall of 1989 to fall of 1999, minority enrollment in school systems based in Olmsted County increased by 160%, ranging from a 54% increase in the Asian/Pacific Islander student population to an 819% increase in the Black (African American and Sub-Saharan African student population).

Race	Fall 1989 Enrollment			Fall 1999 Enrollment		
	ISD 535	Other Than ISD 535	Total	ISD 535	Other Than ISD 535	Total
Total	13,379	4,427	17,806	16,050	5,267	21,317
Black	107	9	116	1,025	41	1,066
Asian/Pacific Islander	880	17	897	1,337	42	1,379
Hispanic	93	4	97	402	42	444
Native American	22	-	22	51	8	59
White	12,277	4,397	16,674	13,235	5,193	18,428

The 2000 Census Data provides detailed race information, including (for the first time in Census history) a count of persons listing multiple racial backgrounds. The Census information is presented below.

Race	Rochester	Olmsted County	Rochester	Olmsted County
Total	70,745	106,470	85,806	124,277
Black	728	788	3,064	3,330
Asian/Pacific Islander	2,926	3,237	4,863	5,346
Hispanic	822	970	2,565	2,959
Native American	214	295	258	317
White	66,650	101,880	75,088	112,255
Two or More Races			1,537	1,881
Non-Hispanic White			73,656	110,598

From 1990 to 2000, the percentage of persons of color and Hispanics in the community increased from around 5% to 11%. Preliminary estimates indicate that this group comprised over 90% of the excess of in-migrants over out-migrants. Had this in-migration not occurred, the labor force shortage would be far more severe.

The following table is based on

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**COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DIVERSITY**

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- information from the State Health Department annual Health Statistics from 1990 through 1999
- Census counts of population by race, and
- Preliminary Planning Department estimates of net migration adjusted to birth and death figures and total Census counts.

The estimates are not final in part because the change in the Census definitions of race result in inconsistencies with State Health Department tracking of births and deaths by race. The same cautions apply to the Hispanics.

SUMMARY OF 1990 – 2000 CHANGES	1990-2000 Net Change	White Increase	Minority Increase	Share of Net Change	White Share of Net Change	Minority Share of Net Change
natural increase	10,718	9,529	1,189	60%	89%	11%
net migration	7,089	596	6,493	40%	8%	92%
total population change	17,807	10,125	7,692	100%	60%	40%

- "Natural increase" is the excess of births over deaths.
- "Net migration" is the excess of in-migration over out-migration.

The following table presents summary data for Rochester and Olmsted County. The information for 1990 is from published 1990 Census reports. The information for 1997 is derived from school enrollment data, birth and death records, and population projections prepared by the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department. The Rochester and Olmsted County total population estimates are Planning Department estimates and are higher than the State Demographer's estimates by about 2%.

Population Factor	Rochester		Olmsted County	
	1990	1997	1990	1997
total population	70,745	<b>80,500</b>	106,470	<b>120,000</b>
household population	68,345	<b>78,100</b>	103,949	<b>117,479</b>
population 5-19 years old	14,092	<b>16,719</b>	23,177	<b>27,261</b>
median income (family of four)			\$44,500	<b>\$62,800</b>
white population	66,650	<b>71,675</b>	101,880	<b>110,016</b>
white household population	64,529	<b>69,554</b>	99,639	<b>108,446</b>
white population 5-19 years old	12,833	<b>13,832</b>	21,745	<b>24,224</b>
minority population*	4,095	<b>8,825</b>	4,590	<b>9,984</b>
percent minority	5.8%	11.0%	4.3%	8.3%
minority household population	3,816	<b>8,546</b>	4,310	<b>9,033</b>
percent minority household population	5.6%	10.9%	4.1%	7.7%
minority population 5-19 years old	1,259	<b>2,887</b>	1,432	<b>3,037</b>
children in households with incomes below poverty	1,637	<b>2,540</b>	2,208	<b>3,444</b>
percentage of all children	9.2%	12.3%	7.7%	10.3%
total number of households	27,913	<b>33,200</b>	40,058	47,100

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households with children present	9,427	10,710	14,868	16,768
total number of families	17,776	20,614	27,737	31,798
families with incomes below poverty	869	1,008	1,255	1,439
married couple families	14,967	17,357	23,914	26,730
married couple families with children present	7,658	8,659	12,473	13,593
children in married couple families	14,933	17,274	24,633	28,249
married couples with incomes below poverty	306	355	560	578
single parent households with female head	2,307	2,675	3,003	3,981
single parent households with female head with children present	1,508	1,749	1,975	2,618
children in single parent households with female head	2,442	2,832	3,258	4,319
female headed households with incomes below poverty	485	562	589	761
single parent households with male head	502	582	820	1,087
single parent household with male head with children present	261	303	420	557
children in single parent households with male household head	404	469	652	864
single parent male headed households with incomes below poverty	78	90	106	100
children (0-17)	17,779	20,575	28,543	33,433
children in households with all resident parents in labor force	13,237	15,705	21,760	25,664
percentage of all children	74.5%	76.3%	76.2%	76.8%

\* The total of minority and white population exceeds total population due to ethnic categories (such as Hispanic) overlapping race categories.

Source: Planning Department based on Census data for 1990; 1997 estimates are based on school enrollment data for public school districts based in Olmsted County, adjusted to estimated total population. Planning Department estimates of population and households are higher than State Demographer's estimates by 3,463 persons and 2,209 households.

**DISSIMILARITY INDEX:**

The dissimilarity index is a measure of the percentage of a minority population that would have to move to result in a perfectly even distribution of the population across the neighborhoods in a community. Researchers use this statistic to compare levels of segregation in metropolitan areas, using census tracts as a substitute for neighborhoods. Applying this approach to Rochester urban area census tract data from 1990 (covering Rochester and the adjacent four townships), the Planning Department has calculated the dissimilarity indices presented in the table below. The figure for males is presented for comparison purposes. Males (a minority of the Rochester urban area population not subject to residential discrimination) have a dissimilarity index of 3.14%. By contrast, persons with incomes below the poverty level had an index of 31.75%.

Factor	Dissimilarity Index Value	Adjusted Value*
gender (males)	3.1%	2.8%

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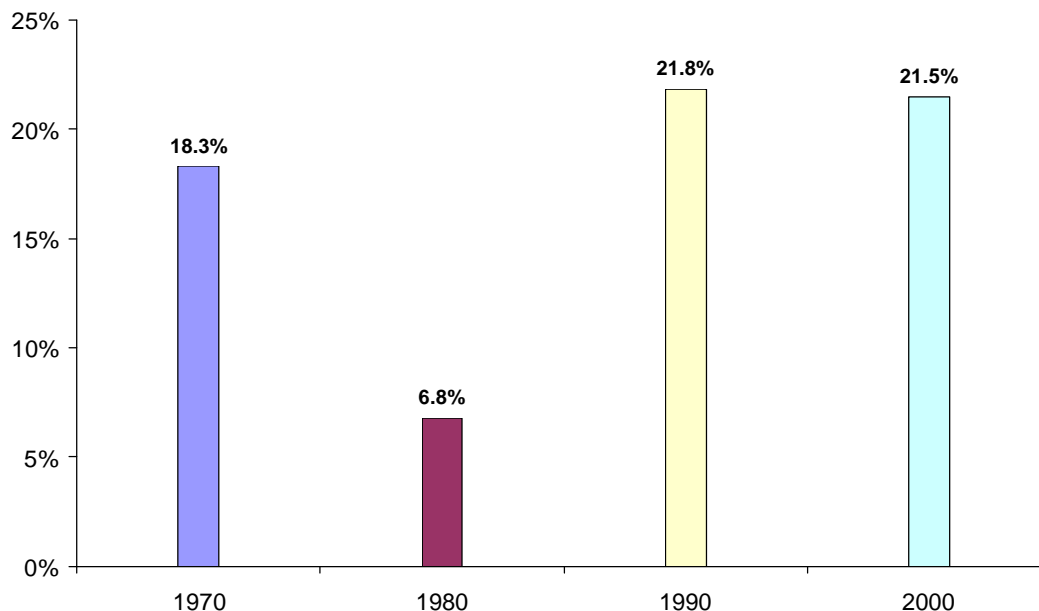
race (nonwhite and Hispanic)	23.6%	22.2%
tenure (renters)	27.9%	27.6%
elderly (persons over 65)	28.8%	27.9%
multi-family housing	30.9%	30.5%
income (persons < poverty)	31.8%	30.8%

\* The *adjusted* dissimilarity index (referred to in the literature as the *index of systematic segregation (ISS)*) modifies the dissimilarity index to account for the random distortions of the index that result when unit populations are small and/or the community proportion of the minority group is small.

Racial minorities had lower indices than low income persons and lower cost housing styles. Rochester indices for racial minorities had increased significantly from 1980 to 1990 (from 9.5% to 23.6%), after falling from 21.4% in 1970. Race indices in 1990 remained low in comparison to larger metropolitan areas and in comparison to similar sized cities in Iowa. It appears that the concentration of population by race is the result of the concentration of population by income, rather than directly the result of race segregation. However, if policies encouraging dispersion of lower cost housing are abandoned, the result may be an increase in segregation by race.

Data from the 2000 Census indicate that, so far at least, segregation by race has not increased Trends in dissimilarity are shown by the following graph.

Index of Systematic Segregation for **White - Non-Hispanic** vs **All Other**  
 for the Rochester - Four Township Area  
 Source: US Census 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000



The high dissimilarity in 1970 may reflect the fact that the small minority of nonwhites had higher average incomes than the white majority population in 1970, while since 1980, an

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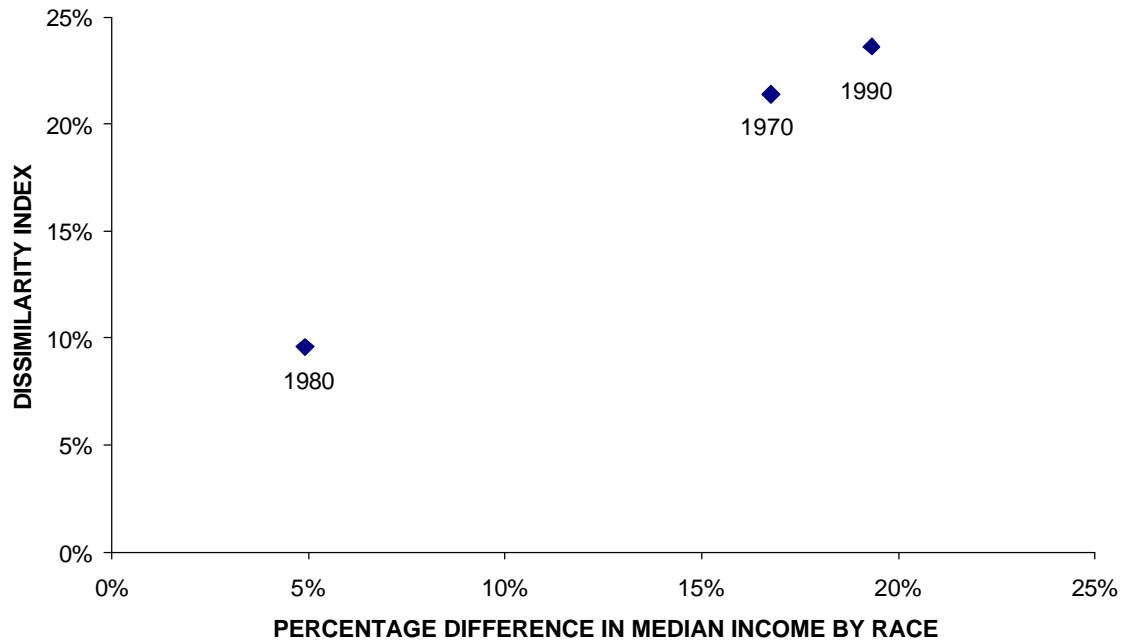
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increasing share of minority residents have been lower income residents. This is shown in the following table.

Year*	Ratio Of Non-White To White Median Income	Absolute Percentage Difference	Dissimilarity Index By Race
1970	1.17	17%	21.7%
1980	1.05	5%	9.6%
1990	0.81	19%	23.6%

\* 2000 Census data on income is not yet available.

**INCOME AND SEGREGATION IN ROCHESTER URBAN AREA 1970-1990**



It is likely that racial segregation is occurring indirectly through segregation by income. Whatever the cause, however, we need to take the necessary steps to avoid becoming a community that is segregated by race and class.

## **APPENDIX 2: REPORT OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY PARTNERSHIP TASK FORCE ON DIVERSITY**

*The following is the report of the 21st Century Partnership Task Force on Diversity, as modified following its adoption by the Steering Committee and its implementing agencies.*

### **OPENING STATEMENT**

In Phase I of the 21st Century Partnership process, a broad cross-section of Olmsted County residents identified diversity as a "make or break" issue on which the social and economic health of this region depends. This report details the findings, objectives, and goals that the Task Force on Diversity has determined are critical first steps on our journey to a community - wide commitment promoting unity and respect for all people. Members of the Task Force agree, that by not addressing these changes and issues, we put our collective future at risk.

Olmsted County has maintained a leadership role in health care, technology, education and business. We believe that our community must add diversity to our list of positive accomplishments. By doing so, we will step forward as leaders for the nation in the 21st century, pledging to oppose discrimination in any form. The Olmsted community will blend talent, culture, abilities and race to create a mosaic in which all people are respected and welcomed.

The responsibility for change is proportional to the power the individuals and groups hold in society. It is therefore, the responsibility of the majority population to provide vision, leadership and strategies to stop discrimination. It is against this background that the 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee identified the following issues as the focus areas for the Diversity Task Force:

- eliminate racism
- create a welcoming environment for all cultures and abilities
- promote the positive values of diversity

#### ***Eliminating Racism***

Racism exists in Olmsted County. The community has found this issue difficult to confront. there is a definite need for a more coordinated, community wide emphasis and increased focus on diversity by elected bodies and business groups. There have been many diversity initiatives in the community; the activity has been directed at the cultural aspects, pointed short-term education, and broad awareness programs such as the "Not In Our Town" project. These have all been positive efforts, however, the Olmsted community has not yet reached the core or root of the problem.

While the goal to "eliminate racism" is unrealistic in the near term, a community that works well must promote a "zero tolerance" approach to discriminatory behavior.

#### ***Creating a Welcoming Environment for all Cultures and Abilities***

The current environment is not accepting of diversity in race, abilities, lifestyles or sexual orientation. We have made some progress over the years. More must be done to create an open and welcoming community if we are going to minimize future problems and maximize

the strengths of our diverse population. A major step in this direction would be to extend the Human Rights Ordinance to the balance of the county and to amend it to address sexual orientation, age and disability. The current lack of a county-wide structure with the authority in grievance resolution is a significant inhibitor to progress.

***Promoting the Positive Values of Diversity***

Of the three areas that the Diversity Task Force reviewed, promoting the positive aspects of diversity has received the most attention in the community. There are programs events and educational sessions that emphasize other cultures and beliefs. It is clear that the community is not leveraging the value that a diverse population brings to its culture, government, education, businesses and citizens. It is imperative that we look forward to our future, recognizing that the economic educational and social success of the county are at stake.

**VISION**

The Diversity Task Force has identified the following vision statement for the Olmsted community related to diversity:

***Our community will provide a safe, non-discriminating environment with respect and opportunity for all.***

This statement embodies the concept that diversity involves the entire community and has elements that include race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation and age.

To achieve this vision, the Diversity Task Force has defined three objectives that must be met.

1. Focus the community's attention on diversity.
2. Eliminate the suspicion and fear resulting from negative stereotypes and promote positive inter-racial awareness.
3. Provide increased opportunities for everyone and enable all people to fully participate in the social, educational, economic and civic life of the community.

**KEY FINDINGS**

- A long- range strategic plan is needed in Olmsted County to provide a more focused approach to the increasing diversity of the region.
- Diversity is an integral component of all 21st Century Partnership task forces. The recommendations outlined by the task forces on Crime, Education and Workforce Readiness, Jobs and the Economy, Neighborhoods, Rural and Small City Vitality and Youth, Families and the Elderly provide additional framework to support our vision.
- The population of Olmsted County is becoming increasingly more diverse. There is a need for more analytical data to measure the impact of this diversity.
- Governing bodies, civil organizations and community programs do not represent the diversity of the community.
- Negative stereotyping of our changed community has and will continue to adversely affect our local businesses and community economics.

- A common perception in the majority community maintains that minority groups have created an unsafe, rapidly deteriorating environment in this community.
- The majority population has a significant role and responsibility in addressing the issues of racism and discrimination.
- Partnerships are needed between the majority and minority to identify and solve problems together.
- It is imperative to educate our children/youth on the values of diversity: they are our future.
- The former volunteer-run Rochester Human Rights Commission in the City of Rochester did not have the authority or resources to meet this community's (city and county) needs.
- The Human Rights Ordinance adopted by the City of Rochester did not include all of the protected classes identified in Minnesota Statutes.
- There is no systematic way to identify and reach out to new people in the community.
- The media (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.) has a significant impact on the community's perception of diverse groups.
- The supply of low and moderate income housing does not meet the demand and the community needs to integrate low and moderate income housing throughout all neighborhoods.

## **OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

### ***Objective 1: Focus the community's attention on diversity.***

#### ***1. Improve coordination of diversity efforts.***

##### ***a. Reorganize the county-wide Diversity Council to include major employers and other community leaders.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Diversity Council (accomplished 2/5/99)

##### ***b. Encourage the collaboration of independent citizens' groups to promote diversity efforts.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Existing diversity organizations, faith communities and citizens.

#### ***2. Establish a comprehensive diversity action plan.***

##### ***a. Develop a community consensus committing the community to a series of concrete steps to eliminate racism, to create a welcoming community environment, and to promote the positive values of diversity.***

Recommended Responsible Party: 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee.

##### ***b. Develop a valid instrument to measure community attitudes and perceptions regarding diversity.***

Recommended Responsible Party: 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee with the assistance of the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department.

##### ***c. Track changes annually in the community's response to diversity.***

Recommended Responsible Party: 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee with the assistance of the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department.

Measures: Develop a diversity measure component that ties to other 21st Century Partnership key issues.

Crime - hate crimes, victim/criminal demographics, survey data

Education and Workforce Readiness - high school graduation rate, employer feedback, survey data

Jobs and the Economy - employment, demographics, survey data

Neighborhoods - Human Rights complaints, voting records, survey data

Youth, Families and the Elderly - school data (i.e. graduation rates, exceptional students demographics, etc.), family services data (elderly, runaways, suicides, etc.)

Rural and Small City Vitality - economic indicators and survey data

***d. Develop strategies to respond to survey findings.***

Recommended Responsible Party: 21st Century Partnership Steering Committee

Measures: Surveys demonstrating improved perceptions of opportunity, safety, and openness.

***Objective 2: Eliminate the suspicion and fear resulting from negative stereotypes and promote positive interracial awareness.***

**1. Increase the level of diversity awareness among community members.**

***a. Encourage the long-term commitment of media to provide accurate information, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of others.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Print and broadcast media

***b. Establish training programs for management and employees at all levels.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with area employers and Diversity Council

***c. Establish mutual learning partnerships and mentorships among diverse individuals and groups.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with area employers, schools, etc.

***d. Develop classes to orient newcomers to the resources and customs of the community.***

Recommended Responsible Party: ISD 535 Community Education in cooperation with the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association and Private Industry Council.

***e. Continue to celebrate the variety of cultures in our community.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Rochester International Association, RochesterFest, Diversity Council, and faith community.

**2. Enforce laws in an equitable and culturally sensitive manner.**

***a. Mandate annual diversity training for law enforcement officers and other criminal justice system personnel.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Area governing bodies

Measures: Detention, arrest, conviction and sentencing records, survey data

**3. Educate parents to communicate positive images about other groups of people.**

***a. Encourage partnerships with employers, PTSA's, religious institutions, neighborhood groups and social and service clubs, to support parents in teaching acceptance of others.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Diversity Council, in cooperation with PTSA's, religious institutions, media, schools, and neighborhood groups

**4. Educate teachers and students about stereotyping.**

***a. Establish regular workshops to understand the negative impact of stereotyping on student learning and to build positive images within the educational environment.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Schools - daycare through adult education

***Objective 3: Provide increased opportunities for everyone, and enable all people to full participate in the social, educational, economic and civic life of the community.***

**1. Incorporate diverse populations into neighborhoods.**

***a. Ensure that the governmental development review process incorporates diversity standards.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Zoning authorities

***b. Increase the supply and distribution of affordable, decent, safe, and sanitary housing for all groups in the community.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Private builders and housing assistance providers

***c. Encourage neighborhoods to include lower income housing into their neighborhoods.***

Responsible Party: Diversity Council, Neighborhood Council, and United Way

**2. Facilitate the economic participation of minorities in the community.**

***a. Eliminate discrimination and encourage inclusive hiring policies.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Area employers and Human Rights Commission (see Goal 3)

Measures: Rates of unemployment, underemployment and business ownership

***b. Increase the accessibility and convenience of transportation to those with limited mobility.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Area employers and transportation providers

***c. Increase the availability and convenience of affordable, decent, safe, sanitary and culturally appropriate child care.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Child Care Resource and Referral, area employers, child care providers and Family Action Collaborative (FACES)

***d. Increase the availability of job training, English language training, small business startup assistance and minority internship programs.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Area employers, governments, Community Education, IMAA, and FACES

**3. Enforce human rights in accordance with Minnesota Statutes**

***a. Create a county-wide Human Rights Commission.***

Recommended Responsible Party: County Board (accomplished Fall 1998)

***b. Adopt a county-wide Human Rights Ordinance to include all protected classes covered by Minnesota Statutes.***

Recommended Responsible Party: County Board (accomplished Summer 1998)

***c. Provide staff to assist the County Human Rights Commission in mediating diversity conflicts.***

Recommended Responsible Party: County Board (accomplished Summer 1998)

***d. Monetary restitution for human rights offenses awarded by Administrative Law Judge***

Recommended Responsible Party: County Board

***e Empower the County Human Rights Commission to refer human rights cases to the County Attorney.***

Recommended Responsible Party: County Board

**4. Improve the internal diversity performance of community institutions.**

***a. Ensure that institutions in the community include diversity as a priority in their own planning and programming.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Private, non-profit and government institutions

**5. Ensure equal access to services on the part of minority clients and customers.**

***a. Implement actions (such as funding requirements) to ensure that services, activities and programs are reaching minority populations.***

Recommended Responsible Party: Businesses, nonprofit organizations and government

Measures: Rates of participation in services activities and programs

**GLOSSARY**

CULTURE	The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population.
DISCRIMINATION	Prejudice plus the power to take action, usually negative action, against people because of their group. When people act on the basis of their prejudices and stereotypes in usually a negative way.
DIVERSITY -	Recognizing, appreciating, valuing, and utilizing the unique talents and contributions of all individuals.
ETHNIC	Racial group, classified according to common traits or customs. Of or pertaining to a religious, racial, national or cultural group.
INTER-RACIAL	Relating to, involving or between races.
MULTICULTURAL	Of, relating to, or intended for several individual cultures.

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PREJUDICE	Attitudes and/or opinions about people that are formed simply because they belong to a specific religion, race, nationality or other group. Judging a person from a group, before we get to know them as individuals.
RACE	A local geographic or global human population distinguished by a more or less distinct group genetically transmitted physical characteristics.
RACISM	Racial prejudice plus the power to take action, usually negative action, against people because of their group.
STEREOTYPE	Oversimplified generalizations about a group of people. An opinion, usually negative, which is formed against all people within a group.

## **APPENDIX 3. WHAT YOU CAN DO: SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTION TO ADDRESS DIVERSITY**

As our community becomes more diverse, it is important that all of us make our community a welcoming place for all members of our community. In addition to advice on how to get in touch with area diversity organizations, the following includes recommendations from two outside sources for individual action and advice to communities of faith from the volunteers working with the Diversity Council.

### **Specific Local Opportunities**

To find out more about existing diversity related programs in the community, see Appendix 4 of the diversity plan which is included on the Diversity Web site at [www.ci.rochester.mn.us/21st century](http://www.ci.rochester.mn.us/21st%20century) or [www.olmstedcounty/21century](http://www.olmstedcounty/21century) Many of the diversity related organizations need your help. Several encourage membership, accept donations, and rely heavily on volunteers in their programs.

### **Suggestions**

If you would like to make additional suggestions for making our community a more welcoming place, please send them to the Olmsted County Human Rights Commission.

### **Expert Recommendations**

Two sources of recommendations for individual action in support of improved relationships among people of different backgrounds are presented below.

1. The first is based on suggestions in Handling Diversity in the Workplace, Kay duPont, CSP, American Media Incorporated, 1997.

#### **Guidelines for Individuals**

- Find out about volunteer opportunities in your community, e.g. literacy, citizenship, mentorship programs.
- When communicating with non-native English speakers:
  1. Avoid jargon, slang, and idioms.
  2. Slow down your speech (but don't talk louder – hearing is not a problem).
  3. Use simple words.
  4. Pronounce and enunciate clearly.
  5. Repeat your ideas in different words.
  6. Check for understanding.
- If you are a non-native English speaker, ask coworkers to slow down or repeat themselves – your request will not be considered rude. Ask about expressions you don't understand.
- Be aware of changes taking place around you and welcome that change.

- Recognize and respect others and their individuality.
- Think before you speak, and be sensitive to others.
- Talk about your differences and ask tactful questions about how people want to be treated.
- Listen more.
- Recognize your own biases and prejudices.
- Eliminate stereotypes and generalizations.
- Expose yourself to other cultures.
- Remember that your race/gender/personality style is not the center of the universe.
- Be careful with humor.

#### Guidelines for Organizations

The consequences for not speaking out against intolerance in the workplace can be staggering for companies: Racial bias claims cost the American economy about \$215 billion per year.

- Provide opportunities for your employees to volunteer in the community.
- Supply information to employees on English for Speakers of Other Languages and citizenship education programs.
- Be a role model, regardless of your job title or level in the organization.
- Celebrate all holidays or no holidays.
- Use non-prejudicial words in your marketing and service efforts.
- Hire people who are bilingual, and advertise that you speak other languages.
- Offer ongoing diversity training for your employees – at all levels.
- Adhere to all ADA and EEOC regulations.

2. The following excerpt entitled “What You Can Do,” is included in One America: The President’s Initiative on Race, which can be accessed at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/Initiatives/OneAmerica/america.html>

#### Ten Things Every American Should Do To Promote Racial Reconciliation

One of the most striking findings from our work is that there are many Americans who are willing to accept that racial prejudice, privilege, and disparities are major problems confronting our Nation. Many of them told us that they would welcome concrete advice about what they should do. To fill that need, we offer a brief list of actions that individual Americans could take that would increase the momentum that will make us One America in the 21st century:

- (1) Make a commitment to become informed about people from other races and cultures. Read a book, see a movie, watch a play, or attend a cultural event that will

inform you and your family about the history and current lives of a group different than your own.

(2) If it is not your inclination to think about race, commit at least one day each month to thinking about how issues of racial prejudice and privilege might be affecting each person you come in contact with that day. The more that people think about how issues of race affect each person, the easier it will be for Americans to talk honestly about race and eliminate racial divisions and disparities.

(3) In your life, make a conscious effort to get to know people of other races. Also, if your religious community is more racially isolated than your local area, encourage it to form faith partnerships with racially different faith groups.

(4) Make a point to raise your concerns about comments or actions that appear prejudicial, even if you are not the targets of these actions. When people say or do things that are clearly racially biased, speak out against them, even if you are not the target. When people do things that you think might be influenced by prejudice, raise your concerns that the person or institution seriously consider the role that racial bias might play, even unconsciously.

(5) Initiate a constructive dialogue on race within your workplace, school, neighborhood, or religious community. The One America Dialogue Guide provides some useful ideas about how to construct a dialogue and lists some organizations that conduct dialogues and can help with facilitation.

(6) Support institutions that promote racial inclusion. Watch television programs and movies that offer racially diverse casts that reflect the real world instead of those perpetuating an inaccurately segregated view of America. Support companies and nonprofit organizations that demonstrate a commitment to racial inclusion in personnel and subcontracting. Write the institutions to let them know of your support for what they are doing.

(7) Participate in a community project to reduce racial disparities in opportunity and well-being. These projects can also be good ways of getting to know people from other backgrounds.

(8) Insist that institutions that teach us about our community accurately reflect the diversity of our Nation. Encourage our schools to provide festivals and celebrations that authentically celebrate the history, literature, and cultural contributions of the diverse groups that comprise the United States. Insist that our children's schools textbooks, curricula, and libraries provide a full understanding of the contributions of different racial groups and an accurate description of our historic and ongoing struggle for racial inclusion. Insist that our news sources--whether print, television, or radio--include racially diverse opinions, story ideas, analysis, and experts. Support ethnic studies programs in our colleges and universities so that people are educated and that critical dialogue about race is stimulated.

(9) Visit other areas of the city, region, or country that allow you to experience parts of other cultures, beyond their food. If you have an attitude that all people have

histories, cultures, and contributions about which you could benefit from learning, it is usually not difficult to find someone who enjoys exposing others to their culture.

(10) Advocate that groups you can influence (whether you work as a volunteer or employee) examine how they can increase their commitment to reducing racial disparities, lessening discrimination, and improving race relations. Whether we are a member of a small community group or an executive of a large corporation, virtually everyone can attempt to influence a group to join the national effort to build One America.

The Olmsted County Human Rights Commission has suggested a list of steps based on these suggestions but including additional issues other than racial concerns. Their suggestions include

1. Make a commitment to become informed and get to know people who are from other races, cultures, religious convictions, or sexual orientations, or who are facing challenges due to disabilities.
2. Commit at least one day each month to thinking about how discrimination and privilege might be affecting each person you come into contact with that day.
3. Make a conscious effort to get to know individuals with disabilities as well as people who are of other races, cultures, religious convictions, sexual orientation.
4. Make a point to raise your concerns about comments or actions that appear prejudicial, even if you are not the target of these actions.
5. Initiate a constructive dialogue on race, religious conviction, disability, or sexual orientation within your workplace, school, neighborhood, or faith community.
6. Support institutions that promote inclusion.
7. Participate in a community project to reduce disparities in opportunity and well-being based on race, religious conviction, disability, or sexual orientation.
8. Insist that institutions that teach us about our community accurately reflect the diversity of our nation.
9. Visit other areas of the city, region, or country to allow you to experience parts of other cultures beyond simply their food and dress.
10. As a member of community groups and organizations, advocate for an increased commitment to reducing racial disparities, lessening discrimination and improving relations with diverse groups.

## **FAITH COMMUNITIES**

Our struggle to overcome racism and discrimination will require a transformation in our hearts and minds as well as in our communities. Faith communities (the congregations of churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other religious organizations, including both their lay and ordained leadership) have a significant opportunity to contribute to the community's approach to diversity. Individually and collectively they must actively assume leadership roles in order to create a welcoming community that fosters an appreciation for diversity and social justice. Most religious teachings emphasize the common humanity of all people, making a respect for diversity a natural emphasis of religious life. Through their efforts at organizing participation in support of diversity (dating back to the civil rights marches of the fifties and sixties), many local faith communities have provided leadership in community diversity efforts. The following suggestions are intended to build on this tradition of community activism in support of diversity efforts.

### Community Relations and Community Activism

- Encourage members of your congregation participate in diversity events such as the Martin Luther King Parade, the Native American Powwow, the International Festival, and others (see Appendix 1 Diversity Events).
- Encourage members of your congregation to become involved in social justice issues such as affordable housing
- Establish family mentorship programs by matching ESOL families with native speaking families. Promote cross congregational opportunities for social and educational interaction
- Promote an active presence in the neighborhood and the community by providing facilities or space for community meetings and activities
- Formally recognize schools, businesses or other community groups for their efforts to eliminate discrimination and promote racial equality
- Provide opportunities for members of the community to learn about your religious community and for members of your religious community to learn about other religious communities.
- Avoid using the services of agencies and industries that fail to take affirmative action to achieve equal opportunity

### Activities Within the Faith Community

- Welcome diversity among your members.
- Develop religious education classes and other programs for children and adults that
  1. Incorporate curriculum materials that depict a variety of cultures and avoid gender bias
  2. Encourage frequent discussions on racial issues and discrimination
  3. Study the impact of issues like racism, poverty, and housing shortages on the educational attainment and health of children and families in the community

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4. Study the local history of your congregation – the ethnic background and immigration experiences of founding members and how those experiences compare to those of modern immigrants to our community
  5. Create an appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions.
- Influence members to be sensitive to the values and cultural contributions of all racial groups
  - Provide translated communication materials whenever possible
  - Ensure minority representation in decision-making Incorporate diverse cultural traditions into liturgy
  - Encourage and support members of minority groups to pursue religious vocations
  - Serve as a model employer by promoting equal opportunity employment and comparable worth based pay
  - Make your buildings accessible to those with physical disabilities

7p.m.)

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