

ROC  
2025

2022/2023 IMPACT REPORT

PHOTO CREDIT:  
CITY OF ROCHESTER  
COMMUNICATIONS BUREAU

# UPWARD MOMENTUM

**ROC2025 is a coordinated capacity-building initiative to drive our region's growth by dedicating more resources, enhancing the reach and impact of current efforts, and positioning Greater Rochester to compete more effectively for jobs and investment.**

## **Business Growth & Attraction**

To more rapidly expand the number of employers and jobs in our region.

## **Regional Talent Strategy**

To expand, deepen and diversify the worker pipeline that supports regional growth.

## **Downtown Innovation**

To revitalize and activate the heart of Greater Rochester and enliven the downtown experience.

## **Regional Branding & Marketing**

To shout our story from the rooftops and ensure our region is part of the consideration set for employers and talent nationwide.



**Total funds pledged** (as of June 2023):

**\$22,255,000**

**34** member companies  
and foundations

**21** board-level  
investor partners

Dear Friends & Partners,

It is my distinct pleasure to share with you ROC2025's Annual Impact Report, documenting our progress to date and the exciting work that stands before us.

April 2023 marked the fourth anniversary of this innovative alliance established to accelerate economic growth and opportunity in our region. And notwithstanding the profound challenges and economic impacts introduced by a global pandemic in 2020—some of which persist today—the impact of our work together is undeniable.

Greater Rochester's economic development engine is accelerating, fueled by collaboration, strategic alignment and a comprehensive investment strategy to outcompete peer regions. Key to that acceleration are the partners in business, philanthropy and government that have stepped up in significant ways to support ROC2025's mission. More than \$22.2 million has been pledged to advance ROC2025's capacity-building plan since 2019.

#### **OVER THE PAST YEAR:**

- Investments in business attraction, retention and expansion elevated another record-setting year of activity at Alliance partner Greater Rochester Enterprise. That means more jobs for our region.
- Investments in talent strategy accelerated essential programs that are retaining and attracting world-class talent to our region and strengthening connections between job seekers and employers under the leadership of Alliance partner Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce. That means a deeper talent pipeline for our region.
- Investments in downtown revitalization have advanced critical efforts to establish a dedicated improvement district, building on recent redevelopment momentum to activate public spaces, enhance the street-level experience, and reclaim downtown's place as the region's vital neighborhood of commerce, culture, history and recreation. That means a healthier center city for all.
- And investments in our award-winning Greater ROC regional marketing campaign expanded efforts to reclaim and reassert the narrative about this place—our place—igniting more excitement among residents and garnering attention from a national audience. That means greater prominence and visibility for Greater Rochester's assets and an aligned brand for a region that is increasingly part of the consideration set for companies and talent nationwide.

In four short years, we've seen Greater Rochester's peer-metro rank improve across a host of critical measures, including annual job growth rate, unemployment rate and gross regional product. In the past 24 months, the region has added nearly 25,000 jobs and our performance so far in 2023 (+5,300 from January through May) leads all large upstate metros.

But progress aside, work remains. Amid bright signs of accelerating growth, we still see an economic expansion rate that lags peer and national benchmarks. That reality has implications for economic opportunity and our region's long-term vitality. The coordinated investments we're making today serve as the foundation for a brighter future in Greater Rochester—a future in which we outperform competitors and are firmly positioned as the country's "it" region for growth, prosperity and innovation.

Greater Rochester's resurgence is underway. Are you in?



Joseph Stefko, Ph.D.  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
ROC2025



# BUSINESS GROWTH & ATTRACTION

ROC2025 is making significant capacity-building investments in a coordinated business growth ecosystem. Through grants to Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE), we're expanding the region's capacity to identify business growth prospects, cultivate national site selectors, strengthen relationships with C-level executives, respond quickly to inbound business growth opportunities, and conduct proactive outreach with high-growth targets. This includes attracting external companies and retaining and expanding incumbent companies, ensuring the firms that already call Greater Rochester home have the connectivity and support they need to thrive.



Love Beets, Genesee County, NY

## KEY INVESTMENTS

- **Two additional managing directors and a business development associate to support an active project pipeline of 100+ opportunities**
- **Activated an integrated CRM data management infrastructure**

## KEY PENDING INVESTMENTS

- **Additional GRE business development staff capacity**
- **Economic Gardening program support for second-stage MWBE firms**

# MOMENTUM IN ACTION

## REGIONAL PERFORMANCE SINCE THE START OF ROC2025

Ranked out of a peer group of 53 metros

### Job Growth Rate



# 10 POSITIONS

(from #45 to #35)\*

### Unemployment Rate



# 18 POSITIONS

(from #40 to #22)\*

### Regional GDP



# 16 POSITIONS

(from #50 to #34)\*\*

### Labor Force



# 1 POSITION

(from #46 to #45)\*\*

### Real Per Capita Personal Income



# 4 POSITIONS

(from #47 to #43)\*\*

\* Monthly data through May 2023

\*\* Annual data through 2021

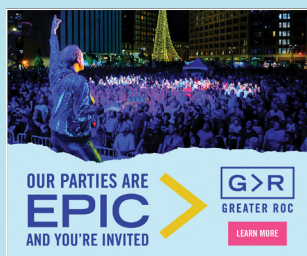
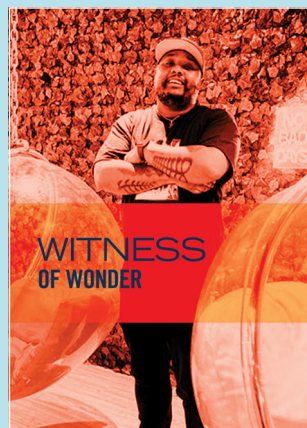
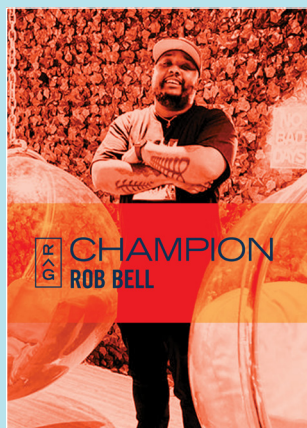
\*\*\* Monthly data through May 2023



# REGIONAL MARKETING

ROC2025 has brought to life the most significant, coordinated regional branding and marketing campaign in the region's history. The Greater ROC initiative is reclaiming and reasserting Greater Rochester's story and visibility and elevating its reputation and profile as a place to live, work, play, and start or grow a business.

As a fully integrated campaign, the effort connects and amplifies the region's brand identity and key messaging across all economic development verticals, including business attraction, talent attraction and retention, and tourism. The multi-channel, tactic-rich campaign focuses both in-region—to build excitement and positive energy across Greater Rochester—and externally, with targeted media buys in key markets that align with our partners' business and talent attraction objectives.





Greater ROC is celebrating our region and telling its story boldly, loudly and authentically through the voices of the people who call it home. Small business owners, chefs, social media influencers, artists, athletes, downtown developers, community organizers, young professionals, researchers, winemakers, restaurateurs and more—each is adding their unique story to the Greater ROC mosaic for the world to hear.



## CAMPAIGN REACH

- **84.8M impressions**
- **12.6M video views**
- **265K+ website sessions**
- **90K+ social media engagements**

Data pulled from campaign re-launch (May 2021) through 2022.

“To me, the most profound impact our region has on humanity is that it’s allowing us to see the whole universe.”

### Dr. Don Figer

Professor in the College of Science and founder and director of the Rochester Imaging Detector Laboratory, Center for Detectors, and the Future Photon Initiative at RIT. Dr. Figer studies massive stars, young star clusters and the galactic center. He leads research teams to develop devices that use photons for cutting-edge applications, such as on the James Webb Space Telescope.



## KEY INVESTMENTS

- **Designed and activated Greater ROC brand identity and campaign**

## KEY PENDING INVESTMENTS

- **Ongoing support for in-region and external branding campaign**

# TALENT STRATEGY

ROC2025's investments have activated one of the nation's most robust and integrated regional talent strategies. Our portfolio of funded programs—led by Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce—is driving a multifaceted strategy to attract and retain world-class talent to support growth opportunities in the region. Together, we're increasing the effective size and connectivity of Greater Rochester's employable labor force, recruiting talent to the region, improving the retention rate of our college graduates, and positioning our metro as a top-flight destination for the best and brightest.

- **Campus ROC** is increasing retention rates among the 19,000 students who graduate from our 19 colleges and universities annually
- **Greater ROC Careers**, the region's first comprehensive “one-stop” portal connecting job seekers and employers across all industries, firm sizes and skill levels
- **Greater ROC Remote**, an incentive-based program that encourages remote workers in high-cost markets to relocate to our region
- **Veterans Connect**, a partnership with Fort Drum that is connecting regional employers to highly skilled “end of service” soldiers who are transitioning to civilian status



I grew up in Rochester and decided to move to New York City and very quickly realized I would love to be doing what I'm doing in New York in Rochester instead! I definitely think there's a lot of opportunity to open your own business in Rochester with all the resources we have and the people who are willing to help.

**Danielle Raymo**  
Rochester Brainery



## KEY INVESTMENTS

- **Incubated a Chamber-based office of regional talent strategy**
- **Underwrote the Campus ROC initiative to retain higher percentage of college graduates**
- **Powered the Greater ROC Careers regional job clearinghouse**
- **Funded Greater ROC Remote to recruit world-class talent**

## KEY PENDING INVESTMENTS

- **Additional regional talent strategy staff capacity**
- **Expand Greater ROC Remote talent attraction program**



## **Greater ROC Careers**

### **461 PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS**

- 34,439 jobs posted
  - 56,901 job searches
  - 3,860 applications submitted
  - 2,960 active job seekers
- 

## **Greater ROC Remote**

### **COHORT 1**

- 3,200 applicants from all 50 states
  - 50 program participants
  - 2.1:1 relocations-to-participant ratio
  - \$5.9M new and induced earnings added to region
- 

## **Veterans Connect @ Fort Drum**

### **514 REGIONAL EMPLOYERS ENGAGED**

- 25 employers participating in on-base recruitment
- 4 career fairs
- 15 on-base recruiting days
- 349 engaged soldiers
- Cohort 1 relocations in process



# DOWNTOWN INNOVATION

ROC2025 is helping drive a sea change in Downtown Rochester, building on recent years' redevelopment momentum to create a new paradigm in how the public and private sectors join forces to activate key spaces.

With seed capital from ROC2025 and New York State, the new Partnership for Downtown Rochester is leading the charge to create a Business Improvement District (BID), a powerful vehicle that will restructure the current Downtown Development Corporation, targeting resources, accelerating the pace of redevelopment and increasing street-level vitality. The initiative leverages two decades of investment in downtown Rochester, including \$2.3 billion+ in development, sustained downtown population growth, a Downtown Innovation Zone that spans nearly 200 innovation and creative-class companies, and the state's transformational ROC the Riverway plan, which is reclaiming public spaces and reaffirming Rochester's connection to the Genesee River.

## DOWNTOWN ROCHESTER IS ON THE MOVE.

**Through collaboration and partnerships, organizations, businesses and initiatives are coming together to revitalize, strengthen and grow our emerging City of Rochester.**



**Downtown Revitalization Initiative selects \$10M IN TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS to advance Main-Clinton block**



**NEW RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS come online at Park Square, 270 on East and VIDA**



**ROC THE RIVERWAY project is completed at Rundel Library North Terrace**



**15.6M TOTAL VISITORS to downtown in 2022, a 22% increase year-over-year**



**New Downtown Definitely  
event series attracts  
15,000+  
ATTENDEES  
to 12 events**



**94% RESIDENTIAL  
OCCUPANCY RATE  
and 10,000+ residents**



## KEY INVESTMENTS

- **Activated Partnership for Downtown Rochester**
- **Seed capital for creation of Business Improvement District**
- **Downtown Definitely activation series**

## KEY PENDING INVESTMENTS

- **Downtown Ambassador hospitality program**





# COLLABORATION THAT OPTIMIZES

ROC2025 isn't another economic development organization. It's a collaborative vehicle for investing to build and sustain a truly world-class system that helps Greater Rochester thrive. Our innovative alliance structure was specifically designed to coordinate capacity-building investments that deepen the horsepower of our regional economic growth ecosystem. We maximize the support of investor partners by keeping our costs low, with our treasury functions, technology support and office space all provided on an in-kind basis by our Alliance partners.

ROC2025 conducts all of its capacity-building work through our Alliance organizations' existing infrastructures, partnering to deliver new and expanded programming across our four pillars: Business Growth & Attraction, Regional Talent Strategy, Downtown Innovation and Regional Branding & Marketing. This innovative model ensures that investor-partner support goes where it's intended: to advance the competitiveness and horsepower of Greater Rochester's economic-growth ecosystem without the need for a new organization.

## INVESTOR PARTNERS

<b>Alesco Advisors</b>	<b>Gallina Development</b>	<b>Rochester Institute of Technology</b>
<b>Baldwin Richardson Foods</b>	<b>Konar Foundation</b>	<b>Rochester Regional Health</b>
<b>Billitier Electric</b>	<b>LeChase Construction</b>	<b>Sands Family Foundation</b>
<b>Buckingham Properties</b>	<b>M&amp;T Bank Charitable Foundation</b>	<b>United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes</b>
<b>CDC of Upstate NY Inc.</b>	<b>Mother Cabrini Health Foundation</b>	<b>University of Rochester</b>
<b>Constellation Brands</b>	<b>New York/Empire State Development</b>	<b>Upstate National Bank</b>
<b>Dixon Schwabl + Company</b>	<b>Paychex Charitable Foundation</b>	<b>Wegman Companies Inc.</b>
<b>Elmer W. Davis Inc.</b>	<b>Pike Construction Services</b>	<b>Wegman Family Charitable Foundation</b>
<b>Excellus BlueCross BlueShield</b>	<b>Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation</b>	<b>Wilmorite</b>
<b>ESL Charitable Foundation</b>	<b>Riedman Foundation</b>	
<b>Farash Foundation</b>	<b>Rochester Gas and Electric</b>	
<b>Five Star Bank</b>		

# LEADERSHIP

**Robert Sands**, Chairman

**Dr. Joseph Stefko**, President & CEO

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## VOTING MEMBERS

**Robert Sands**

as Chair of Greater  
Rochester Chamber  
of Commerce

**Todd Liebert**

as Vice-Chair of Greater  
Rochester Enterprise

**Chris Hill**

as Chair of  
Rochester Downtown  
Development Corp.

**William Gunther**

as Chair of  
Visit Rochester

**Martin Birmingham**

Five Star Bank

**Jim Bourdeau**

Constellations Brands

**Dan Burns**

M&T Bank

**Alex Castro**

(at-large director)

PathStone Corporation

**Ginny Clark**

Sands Family Foundation

**Dr. Richard “Chip” Davis**

Rochester Regional Health

**Andy Gallina**

Gallina Development

**Bill Goodrich**

LeChase Construction

**James Gould**

Alesco Advisors

**Dr. Seanelle Hawkins**  
(at-large director)

Urban League  
of Rochester

**Rufus Judson**

Pike Construction  
Services

**Howard Konar**

William & Sheila  
Konar Foundation

**Dr. Sarah Mangelsdorf**

University of Rochester

**Kenneth Marvald**

CDC of Upstate  
New York Inc.

**Faheem Masood**

ESL Federal Credit Union

**Martin Mucci**

Paychex

**Dr. David Munson**

Rochester Institute  
of Technology

**James Reed**

Excellus BlueCross  
BlueShield

**David Riedman**

Riedman Foundation

**Joseph Sayre**

Rochester Gas &  
Electric Corporation

**Erin Tolefree**

Baldwin Richardson Foods

**Joseph Wesley**

Wegman Family  
Charitable Foundation

**Thomas Wilmot**

Wilmorite

## NONVOTING MEMBERS

**Rep. Joseph Morelle**

U.S. House of  
Representatives

**Hon. Adam Bello**

Monroe County Executive

**Hon. Malik Evans**

Mayor, City of Rochester

**Vincent Esposito**

Empire State  
Development

**Steve Hyde**

Genesee County IDA

**Brian Pincelli**

Wayne County IDA

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



Greater Rochester Enterprise is an economic development organization committed to attracting new capital investments and creating regional wealth and new jobs throughout the region.



Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce passionately serves, promotes and advocates for members to secure economic prosperity throughout the Greater Rochester region.



Rochester Downtown Development Corporation drives economic vitality—accelerating development by marketing assets that attract businesses and investments—creating a more vibrant and inclusive community.



Visit Rochester is the official tourism promotion agency for Monroe County, marketing Greater Rochester as a preferred destination to grow and maximize visitor spending and economic vitality.

### **ADDITIONALLY, OUR PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERS ARE VITAL TO ROC2025'S WORK TO ACCELERATE ECONOMIC GROWTH:**

Empire State Development

Monroe County

City of Rochester

Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Offices/IDAs



# CONTINUING THE UPWARD MOMENTUM



Empire State  
Development

## REGIONAL REVITALIZATION PARTNERSHIP

ROC2025 serves as coordinator for the RRP, a unique \$80 million co-investment among the State of New York, Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation and local philanthropies to advance transformational projects in commercial corridors, placemaking and workforce development.



## REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION HUB

ROC2025 serves as coordinator for development of our Regional Tech Hub application and strategy development, helping lead an innovative consortium with Buffalo and Syracuse to secure federal designation and millions in funding for the upstate corridor.

## ADVANCING THE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

Innovation is in Greater Rochester's DNA, and tomorrow's cutting-edge companies are being built right now. ROC2025 added the startup ecosystem to its capacity-building focus areas this year, creating a new pathway to partner and scale existing community assets and accelerate startups across the region.

Contact us to find out how you can get involved.  
And follow us on our social platforms to stay updated on our progress.

Learn more at [roc2025.org](https://roc2025.org)

# ROC 2025



@ROC\_2025



@ROC\_2025

Joseph Stefko, President & CEO, ROC2025  
[jstefko@roc2025.org](mailto:jstefko@roc2025.org) | 585.210.8460

