RMAPI Town Hall Meeting
December 3, 2015
Raw Notes

Group 1
Thoughts and reactions:
- Powerful
- People in poverty aren't participating as much as they could
- Lack of hope
- Go to the streets, talk to people
- People in poverty can't identify what poverty is because they are living it
- Survivors
- They say more necessities (basic needs), but they are really saying more → they want a voice
- School votes in suburbs → that's a voice (whether they use it or not), but in cities they don't get to do that
- Report – didn't see definition of poverty or solution (was that the objective of the report?)
- 3 common themes were powerful
- People need <u>navigation</u> → it's not that they don't want to
- Congregations have boots on the ground

Ideal State:
- ROC School – access, opportunity
  Children services member
- Self-sufficiencies stood out to her
- We are siloed as far as community agencies
- Look at bright spots and replicate
- Trauma, daycare – it all starts at home
- Encouraged by the process that is put in place
- People need a voice, their voice matters, need to know how to navigate
- Ideal state: inclusion, level playing field
- Street walk
- Going out and talking to working poor – ask them about upper mobility and available education
- Impressed with self-sufficiency, mentoring, and community building
- How can faith-based communities help with this in and out of the city?
- "I don't see teenagers here? So important for future"
- Wants a committee for these kids
- We have to go where they are, it has to be direct for kids
- Be prepared for critical mass with all those voices – how can we include them in the process
- Golden Rule – we have to help one another and sustain that…winning and losing together

- Brought a slinky – if I reach out to you, we connect through energy
- Kids help kits
- We provide networks so we can help one another
- Education, Engagement, Empowerment – obstacles, <u>time</u>
- Takes money and resources to give people time
- <u>Prevention</u> – uses dentist analogy – we have to prevent the next generation – focus on pre-natal population, give them the foundation ("sponges/starfish" analogy)
- Childcare programs, job training, early childcare – bringing those players to table will begin to address generational poverty
- Knows what it is to not have food, clothes, "look up at the stars"
- Granddaughter – her kids kept getting sick, she's working at Walmart, juggling hours
- When do the poor have the opportunity to get <u>time</u>?
- Sometimes services don't give them hope – Band-Aid approach
- Wants to see more people with experiences in poverty
- Lack of education
- Poverty breeds death, violence
- Interested to see the system design
- <u>Sustainable</u> jobs
- Roles of nonprofits in city – report didn't share that
- Good option to get the voices
- What is RMAPI trying to do to help existing organizations? (Karen: IBM report, convener)
- What else can we do? How do we get work out of them? Back and forth? Needs info to feed it – schools, prep students
- Power in interdependence – just as important to foster that
- How to make this real for them? (surrounding community)
- Create opportunities to co-mingle
- 99% of people think it isn't different from the past
- How do we go to them? Transportation
- How do we meet people where they are? We have to try harder
- Until we build that trust part we won't get that buy-in
- We have to rebuild the trust.

Summary:
Reaction to LB
- Powerful
- Encouraged
- Go to the streets
- Talk to and hear from people – <u>voice</u>
- Build trust
- Interdependence

- Self-sufficiency
- Navigation

Ideal State
- Access/opportunity
- Look at the bright spots & replicate
- Young people's involvement
- Inclusion/level playing field
- Education
- Engagement
- Empowerment

Group 2

Thoughts & reactions:
- Comprehensive thorough approach
- State/local collaboration a win for the long haul
- Motivated by solution focus – excited
- Looking forward to tangible results
- Insistence on inclusion is a great …
- Not done for with …
- Input from groups is great
- Last town hall very positive – organization across all topic areas
- Concern: case for change with larger community isn't there yet
- Community plan needs to articulate <u>why</u> we need to change
- Resistance from larger community re structural racism & poverty – we need to address their concerns so they'll listen to ours; need their engagement
- Poverty isn't contained by a neighborhood – addressing that is does benefit the larger
- How do we get people to think differently
- Past experience with little to no change stops people from wanting to try
- People have to see change to believe in it – implementation is critical
- Making changes for <u>one</u> person helps it spread outwards
- Changing culture & its impact on performance – focus on individualism these days. People don't see the value of the group of people.
- Change is a long intergenerational process – the pot (of change) needs to boil over.
- We're doing this for the future, not for ourselves

Ideal State:
- Community is informed & can make their own differences, solutions. People are engaged in program or work to build their own community
- People have a purpose and a way to…
- People aren't penalized for trying – e.g. daycare cuts, transportation cuts, paperwork issues

→ frustration

- System needs to be designed to help people move forward → push people up!
- Have people who can set great examples for their children e.g. education
- Reward the steps people are taking forward to break the cycle
- Environment of equality; resources are abundant; don't have high concentration of incarcerated men; policies that support people
- Everyone's voices are included
- People with disabilities are the biggest …
- Transportation
- Safe, affordable, accessible housing
- Access to basic needs – food, transportation
- Job opportunities close to home, in or near their neighborhoods; walking or biking to work
- Good sidewalks
- All public entities reflect community demographics
- Back to the village mentality – an individual has responsibility to the whole
- Addressing regional fragmentation (surrounding suburbs) – depleting resources
- Align outskirts & inner-skirts
- The only thing that truly separates us is climatology & time
- Aligning rewards to regional efforts
- Pluralism → need to inspire
- Produce equity
- Culturally specific strategies required to compete regionally & nationally
- Stable family structures
- "Miss – I just want to eat"
- Address criminal histories, lack of skills, lack of education
- Support for communities as they choose to function
- Everyone should have an easier way to get a job, instead of always struggling
- How to be more effective in the community – why does everyone have to have a master's degree – we need multiple pathways for people to succeed
- Help for people with values & morals – who is setting these good examples?
- Neighborhood support structures, working together
- I don't want to live in fear – I can't go anywhere alone
- How do we get people to care about each other? Community building – striving together
- Poverty isn't just money – it's isolation, loneliness, mistrusting
- It's okay to not be the same – we can co-exist
- We need to share the story with people – more data
- We need more opportunities to interact with people who are different
- How do people plug in to help/support/learn more?
- Develop systems for subcultural groups so other people can access them?

- Greater outreach to people outside who want to participate
- Acknowledge altruistic suburbanites
- Historical distrust of people coming in from the outside
- We need conveners, not savers – it's insulting
- We need to make better connections between & amongst people and resources
- Please translate into Spanish! This is an important part of inclusion
- How do we include the refugee population? Their experience is critical.
- Make sure to incorporate neighborhood associations
- All have something to contribute and all have something to gain

Group 3
Thoughts and reactions:
- Promising
- Overall positive, actionable
- More focused now, more coordinated (government, IBM)
- Better connection, easier to find services
- Input from those impacted
- 3 key themes – building livable communities, addressing structural racism & trauma are on target
- Adult mentorship piece is great – it's not enough to just tell, have to show
- Professional presentation – faith in the leadership
- Good balance between positivity and strategic focus
- We will not give up – no fizzling
- Preventative, not just reactive
- Exciting – sustainable
- Felt like a pep rally, short on solution; goals but no tools
- Not clear on what next steps are, need to look at best models
- Small turnout for the meeting
- Good consensus generation around solutions in report – critical

Ideal State:
- Greatly increased employment – living wage jobs
- <u>Invest more</u> in neighborhoods like Joseph Avenue – factories; need developers to go into challenging neighborhoods
- Emphasis on small business – people who live there can work there, be sure to advertise local jobs to residents
- All kids are ready for school (Pre-K), engaged parents
- Fully funded public libraries – support lifelong learning
- More people confident in their unique skills
- More parental involvement

- All residents feel heard & empowered
- More jobs with growth opportunity – can't teach kids ABCs if working 3 jobs
- Learn from European models
- Fewer single family homes, reduce benefit cliff
- Reduce urban sprawl, people come back to live in their communities
- Eliminate need to join gang to feel safe
- Families and community should nurture children, not institutions
- Less politics, more churches involved
- Living wage, not minimum wage – minimum wage will always be a minimum, shouldn't be the focus
- Fully funded services
- End tax breaks for wealthy
- Sliding scale daycare system up to 300% of the poverty line
- Responsive transportation system, take people home from midnight shift
- Neighborhood schools, parents could get involved
- Democratic culture in schools &communities
- More full time jobs
- Diversity in neighborhoods, more integrated communities
- Bring jobs back together
- Cut down on waste spent busing kids to schools outside their neighborhoods – within a mile → neighborhood schools would help with attendance

Summary:

Reaction to LB

- Promising & positive
- Need to be clear on next steps
- Input from those impacted
- 3 key themes are important – livable communities are critical
- Adult mentorship is a big plus
- No giving up!
- Preventative, not just reactive – sustainable
- Good consensus generation in report

Ideal state

- Invest more in neighborhoods
- Living wage, not minimum wage
- Less crime (comes with job creation)
- Fully funded services – public libraries
- More jobs w/growth opportunity
- Reduce urban sprawl
- Neighborhood schools

- Sliding scale daycare
- Responsive transportation system – runs all hours

Group 4
Thoughts and reactions:
- Liked that individuals with lived experiences were consulted
- People have been following process online
- Hopeful because of structural racism and trauma being addressed
- Who is on the teams? How to contact?
- Skeptical – how do resource teams & implementation teams connect?
- Seems odd that resource topics would not be addressed first
- Will the subject of the resources team process seek to eliminate the barriers through this process, or will it inform the work through organizations?
- The recommendations themselves reduce barriers through empowerment
- What happens to individuals being missed from the process? ex: teenagers
- Clarify how the recommendations came about to be the first round of implementation
- Look at populations not being addressed, ex: individuals who are re-entering, those dealing with addiction, those trying to change their lives but are dealing with different barriers
- Ensure that organizations doing good work will be supported through this process, collaborate
- Make sure that recommendation areas cover the entire scope of the issue – early childhood supports, children & parents
- Great schools for every child**
- FUNDING???**
- Funding would be able to cover the needs of <u>all</u>.
- Need full disclosure when there are failures within the initiative process. Keep clarifying goals, and ensure the public is kept informed on all progress, good and bad.
- Monitor funding – can we support the involvement for as long as we are intending? Will there be a way to support this for the 15 year goal?
- Diversification of funding – redistribution of wealth, participatory funding process
- Cultural competence & responsiveness within service agencies
- Find a way to change the way of thinking in organizations – focus on people again
- Identify the barriers to leaving poverty
- Look to the individuals who are able to help alleviate poverty through their jobs & positions ex: teachers, employers; include them
- Work to inform employers about cultural competence, ways they can help, for example hiring those re-entering
- Inform the community about how poverty is negatively impacting the entire community. Everyone needs to be concerned about this issue.

- Involve more people who have experience building the community – Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Societies? (look up)
- Young people see opportunities and are participating in their communities
- Living wage $26
- For those who need supportive short term services they can live off of that support. The impact of this isn't detrimental to their futures. Look at cost of living and fair market.
- Put this kind of information in the paper
- Need transportation system that is reliable, accessible, affordable
- Break up concentration of poverty, downtown vs. suburbs
- What does poverty look like in the city, inform those living in the suburbs, need to know how to help. Break down stereotypes, there is a diversity of poverty in the suburbs that isn't discussed
- Media campaign
- Continue making race a topic of discussion
- Diversity in team membership within the initiative
- Break up the circle of violence and lack of education that can hopefully be broken up by alleviating poverty
- Everyone can look to the future and make plans

Group 5
Thoughts and reactions:
- Positive, moving forward, well organized
- State & county on board, great start, hard to assess just yet
- After Maggie Brooks, will they stay involved?
- Ideas you can get your head around – specific ideas are being shared, we need more
- Difference in just talking about reducing poverty & addressing symptoms – good to talk about both
- Support the message of patience, not going to happen overnight
- People actually in poverty are contributing to the conversation
- Government's definition of "poverty" might not be the same as what others think - $ amount vs. situations
- Clearer definitions of poverty in all communications – glossary of terms (trauma, etc.)
- More digestible to general public – people from all parts should clearly get the same message being said & understood
- Progress report has good info
- "Waiting" for something to happen, what can community engage in?
- Topics being addressed are good, but need more action, feels like running in place
- Slow & steady is better approach, do it right
- Poverty isn't right word – don't think anything is going to change – suburbs very different

from city

- Feels like we're treading water – need to know programs that are out there first, more transparency to existing programs and agencies, knowledge of what is in the community already
- Challenge will be taking 8 areas and understanding that they are all connected and will be addressed at the same time
- Building community, can I feel safe, goes beyond $, it's a mindset, what does poverty really mean, has to do with your character – buildings are there, people don't know what's in them
- <u>Common themes</u>: people want to see things happening, feels like treading water; definition of terms with consistent use

Ideal state

- ESFSN → community agencies network, refer cases to each other
- Facilitate communication between agencies
- Jobs – poverty-free is not referring to people as cases, poverty industrial complex
- Kids educated, healthy, needs are met by virtue of conditions that are self-sustaining and prosperous
- No currency – poverty cannot be ended without this – always a winner & loser in economic system
- Highly technological, to end poverty, research in sciences
- Coping & eradication will change environment
- Presented w/opportunity
- People own their own homes, reducing structural racism
- Community of love, not an individualistic mindset – common love of something, like learning
- Love is taught in school in early times
- Love for arts, entertainment, able to express this own community
- Integrated neighborhoods
- Want to stay in own neighborhood, not worry about going to another place for a certain aesthetic, all places should look & feel the same
- Integration of city & suburbs is important
- Has to be people's choice to stay or leave where they are
- If you want to live in the city, you can live in it w/o poverty – the freedom of choice wouldn't restrict where you live
- People would come from suburbs → city
- Loving communities would encourage people to come to city
- Access to housing wherever you choose & desire to live/move
- Choices about living, jobs, freedom, neighborhoods are desirable
- Free of absentee landlords
- No economic or status competition

- <u>Common themes</u>: <u>no</u> absentee landlords; housing with freedom of choice; action based love throughout all communities

Group 6
Thoughts & reactions:
- Hopeful, but skeptical
- Education
- Worries about time frame – 5 years is still a long time, URGENT
- Parolees*
- Positive compared to previous attempts – state & local connection is good; need politicians on board
- Need <u>implementation</u>
- Want more of a major systems change, focus on housing, education
- Challenging approaches vs. safe
- Focus on trauma = key
- Community effort is good
- Bring others to the table to actually get results – young people, community members
- Average Joes need to buy into this
- $ trickle down to community to foster change
- Need to create an action plan with clear, defined outcomes
- Ensure we keep it positive & keep moving forward
- Mindset is critical to success
- Move forward after roadblocks
- Structural racism needs to be addressed – separation, locally & economically affects this; more integrated schools & economies

Ideal State:
- More integrated communities – make it personal
- Those that want to work can get a job**
- All of my neighbors have jobs
- Diverse teams of mentors
- Living wages
- Job experience at a young age → build skills
- Motivated kids
- Increased school attendance, all kids are learning
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Exposure to work ethic and jobs – ROLE MODELS
- Young people are aware of opportunities
- We care about each other – no city/suburb divide – ONE COMMUNITY
- Socially & economically diverse schools

- Community members have the resources they need to support themselves
- Neighborhood businesses by neighborhood people
- Better stores w/fair prices, healthy foods
- Businesses willing to invest specifically in city
- Use our high tech knowledge to teach new generations; programs that focus on their skills
- Young people coming out of school and getting well-paying jobs
- Same strategy implemented in city planning as suburbs – a college town on Clifford Ave with locally owned businesses
- Decisions made by neighborhoods
- Fresh, affordable food in every neighborhood
- Good legal services that don't take advantage
- Good transportation options
- People invest in the communities they live in
- Young people learning trades, youth in construction
- Whites & males relinquish privilege
- No loitering around stores
- Holding community agencies accountable
- More TRUST

Group 7
Thoughts & reactions:
- It will take everyone who is interested w/change. People are willing to state truth, therefore making change feasible. Must know what a change state will look like first! Lack of support systems (community based state is important!) People want to stay in neighborhoods but they need sources that will keep them there.
- How will we succeed?!
- Must develop goals which will take time.
- How are goals being voiced to the community besides this Town meeting?!
- Transparent to keep faith and interest!!
- How do you receive the info about RMAPI other than occasional write-ups?! (better, constant, & accurate info stating time limits & goals)
- What brought you here? Vested in seeing progress, direct contact w/population, lack of reliable public transportation
- How do you become self-sufficient if you can't get to place of employment?
- Need to engage young families
- Senior population could assist with young people
Ideal State:
- More access to transportation & community support
- Not a hand out/helping hand

- Increase desire to move to city
- Roc. City schools will reflect better
- Safer city
- Outsiders imperceptions of city…we must help change
- Everyone understands we are one (interconnectedness)
- Urban gardening = increase self-sufficiency
- Bridge cultural gap
- Basic needs! (safe housing)
- Better position to own housing (affordable)
- What draws people into cities? (Public Market, Jazz Fest, food trucks)

Group 8
Thoughts & reactions:
- Directed towards professionals; more plain language
- Vague idea of what's going on
- Critical about commentary of positive attitudes – blaming people for poverty
- Can't pull themselves out if there are barriers: social, judicial, economical
- How inclusive & diverse are the teams used to rectify poverty?
- Not enough recognition made by community
- We create groups to help w/issue but they don't last long…what is group comprised of?
- Seeing goals of groups being met is rewarding
- How will group ensure people experiencing issue are contributing to success…$$$$, change laws to eliminate barriers
- Resources need to be provided for those experiencing poverty to contribute to group
- Poverty is a <u>MINDSET</u>! Change the mindset, change the situation
- COMMUNICATION – between all involved

Ideal State:
- Quality: resources & opportunity equal for all
- Education – quality, suburb vs. city
- Accountability
- No discrimination based on class
- Harmony among all groups – how do we bridge communication gap in families?
- Work with law enforcement, government & community
- Encourage older youth to be role models for younger generation
- Medicaid implementation
- Healthcare!!
- Adequate daycare
- Holistic approach to addressing issues
- Mentoring parents to teach children *adult education*

- Getting church involved in community
- Parents need to be involved in schools children attend
- <u>Mindset</u>!! Pass down to the next generation
- Mental health – not aware of resources available to help
- Community mentors – it takes a village