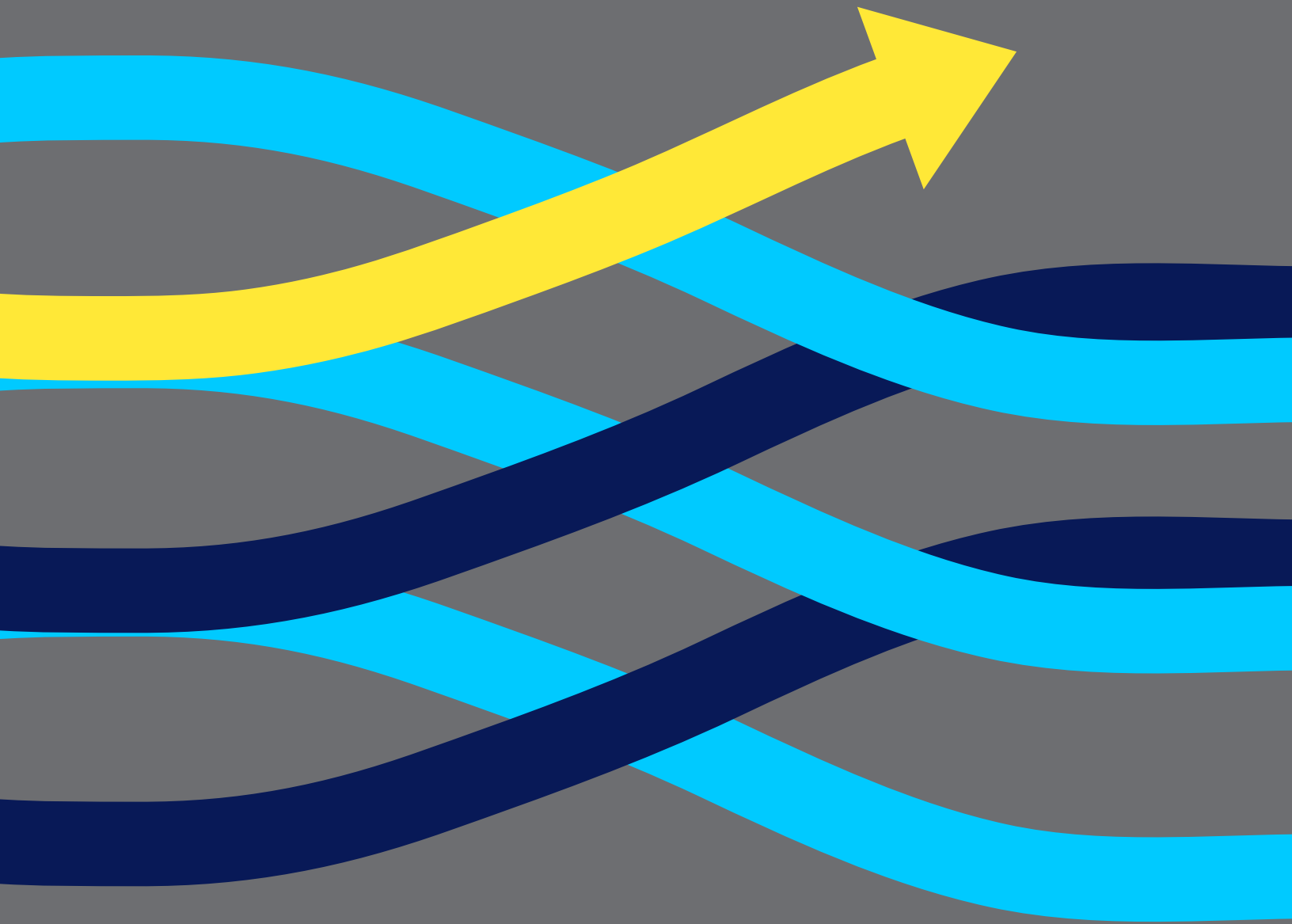


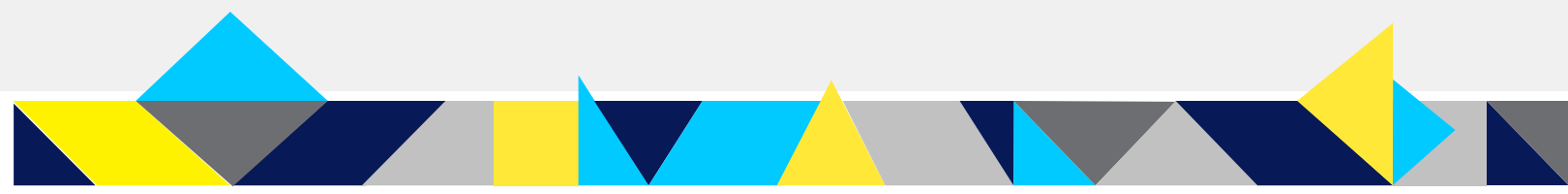
# How to Rise Above

Recommendations from the Transition Team to  
Mayor Ben Walsh



# Table of Contents

- 3. Introduction
- 4. Immediate Action Items
- 7. City Finances
- 15. Human Resources
- 19. Neighborhoods & Public Safety
- 29. Economic Opportunity & Inclusion
- 39. Education
- 46. Transition Team Members



“Under my Administration community engagement won’t just be a box to check, it will serve as the foundation for local governance. From implementing participatory budgeting practices to holding public meetings in different neighborhoods at different times of the day, we are going to bring local government back to the people.”

- *Syracuse Rising, Civic Engagement, Pg. 7*

# Introduction

During the past year’s campaign Mayor Walsh steadfastly asserted his commitment to post-partisan community engagement as the foundation for local governance. After the election Mayor Walsh’s commitment to community engagement as a foundation for local governance was manifest in a charge to a diverse Transition Team of nearly 90 members to engage the public in extending the process of building an organic platform to inform the work of the Walsh Administration.

This report is a compilation of the short and long term recommendations produced by five Transition Team working committees: City Finances, Human Resources, Neighborhoods & Public Safety, Economic Inclusion and Education. Each committee met at least three times during December and each committee, with the exception of Human Resources, held a public meeting where concerns, ideas, and specific suggestions for actions were collected. Input was also gathered through individual meetings and written submissions.

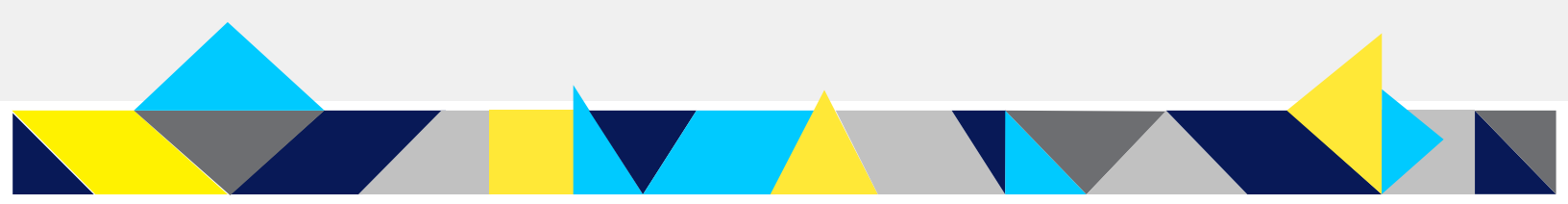
This report, presented to Mayor Walsh by the Transition Team Co-chairs, Sharon Owens, Linda LeMura, and Chedy Hampson, will serve as a framework for an ongoing public dialogue about the priorities of the Walsh Administration. The ongoing dialogue will be conducted through multiple channels of communication and supported by the Innovation Team (i-team).

The first section of this report presents a list of recommendations for immediate action items to address critical needs. The action items in this list are covered in more detail in the reports of individual committees that follow. They are all actions that can be taken immediately by the Mayor at low cost relative to their potential value.

The two sections following the list of immediate action items present the recommendations of the City Finances Committee and the Human Resources Committee. Given the fiscal challenges facing Syracuse these recommended actions are critical for establishing efficient and productive operations and making the structural changes required to build a strong, sustainable economy in Syracuse.

A strong, sustainable economy will provide the foundation required to support the recommended action items of the Neighborhoods and Public Safety, Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, and Education Transition Team Committees, described in the three sections that represent the aspirational pillars of Syracuse Rising.

*Syracuse Rising* is much more than a slogan or campaign platform – it’s a call to action for us as a community to work together to improve our city, our schools, our economy, and our way of life. Only by working together, will we all “Rise Above.”



# Immediate Action Items

**1** Provide multiple mechanisms for community engagement in establishing the Administration's priorities and fostering a culture of inclusion in City Hall.

Develop inclusive communications and community engagement strategies that accommodate different cultures, literacy levels, disabilities, work schedules, and technological capabilities specifically for the purpose of soliciting input on planning; announcing job and contract opportunities; making critical policy decisions; and the delivery of City services.

Establish a series of "town hall" conversations and provide other opportunities for residents to have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Implement live streaming of important public meetings. The Common Council has already made significant progress toward implementing this for public meetings held in the Council Chamber. All efforts will be made by the Administration and the Common Council to install the necessary equipment moving forward with this as soon as possible.

Identify and act on opportunities to diversify appointments on mayoral appointed committees or boards with a priority given to individuals from underrepresented communities, without political connections.

Conduct a search process for the new Police Chief that will be open and transparent, and engages members of the community and law enforcement.

**2** Establish the culture of City Hall to provide culturally competent, quality customer service by personnel who interact with the public.

**3** Establish a Quality Of Life Commission as described in *Syracuse Rising* and affirmed by the Neighbors and Safety Committee.

**4** Convene a Fiscal Summit with participation by anchor institutions, business leaders, the banking community, county and state officials, community-based organizations, and other representatives of the community as described in the report of the City Finances Committee.



5

Establish an I-81 Task Force to rally residents and regional leaders around the “Community Grid,” while working on an “inclusive” planning solution for developable real estate and ensuring that the City is actively participating in workforce development planning with DOT so that local hiring opportunities are realized.

6

Restart efforts to share services with Onondaga County and other municipalities by reviewing the Shared Services Plan and prioritize recommendations for immediate consideration.

7

Task the i-team with developing a new, cutting-edge Performance Management System (PMS) like Syracuse’s own SyraStat system used by prior administrations. The PMS would address financial operations, including the documentation of procedures and the development of a Grants Procedures Manual.

8

Proceed rapidly in advancing the ReZone plan with the aim of implementation in 2018.

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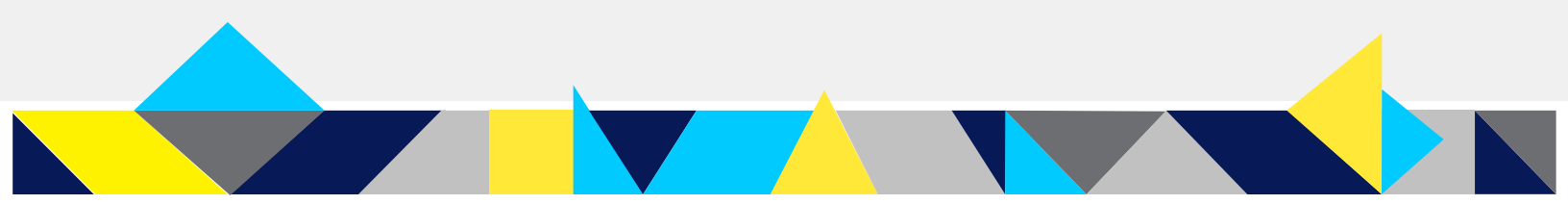
Provide greater support for the work of the Office on Minority Affairs, the ADA Coordinator and other departments or staff that are charged with ensuring all citizens have full access to all opportunities for education, employment and recreation provided by the City.

10

Establish a task force to develop recommendations for community benefits policies that tie economic development to inclusive economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged.

11

Immediately begin the process of centralizing human resource, finance and grant writing functions to provide enhanced accountability and build capacity for management talent and operations to improve control processes, create efficiencies, and better pursue funding opportunities. This will be a long term process to fully implement but it is a critical need that requires immediate action to begin the process of change.



12

Establish a closer working relationship between the Administration and the SCSD. This could include the following actions.

Appoint a representative from the Mayor's Office to serve on the CTE Partnership Council and the Code of Conduct committees.

Have the Mayor or another high level representative of the Administration join the Board of Education at community forums held by SCSD to get feedback from stakeholders.

Have a representative of the SCSD join the Mayor at Town Halls.

Speaking as a parent, the Mayor should encourage other parents and families to get actively involved with their child's education whenever possible.

Establish a regular schedule of meetings between the Mayor and the Superintendent to discuss matters relating to the City and the SCSD, including feedback about curriculum. These meetings could include other representatives from the Administration, SCSD, and the community when a specific topic of discussion warrants it.

Have the Administration's and district's communication offices collaborate in ongoing communication with the community, especially with respect to positive achievements of the schools, teachers, and students.

13

Utilize the existing functionality of the i-team to provide and deploy asset mapping whenever appropriate to support initiatives throughout the City.

14

More effectively utilize the research and grant writing operations of the City to improve and support the development of a strong TNT system.

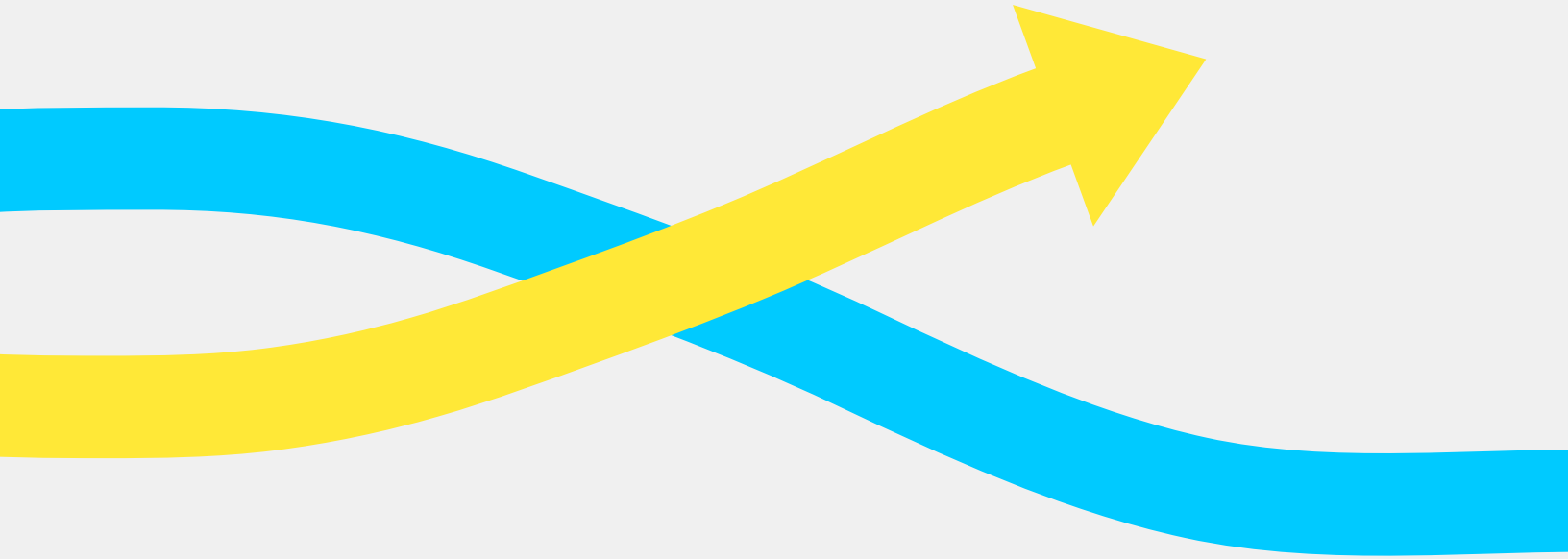
**"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. My father has always used it and as a team and leaders of our people, we should stand together and hold hands through thick and thin in order for us to create something great for our people."**

*- Habiba Boru, studies international relations at Syracuse University*



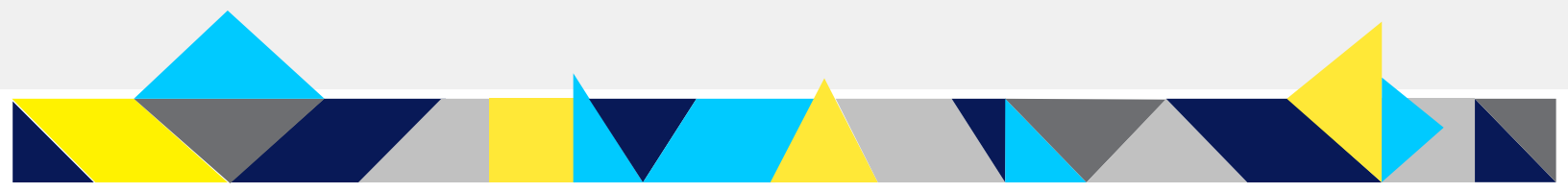
# City Finances

Chaired by: Ken Mokrzycki, Ann Rooney, Vincent Love



"I was honored to be included in such a diverse group of passionate advocates for this city. The common denominator for everyone on the team was massive love for this city, and it showed in the conversations. I think we all look forward to getting to work on these plans, and helping this new administration continue the efforts to realize Syracuse's full potential."

*- Joe Driscoll, 5th District Common Councilor*



The general recommendations for short and long term actions presented by the City Finances Committee will strengthen the City's financial position when fully implemented. These recommendations are high level themes that will require more detailed strategic discussion, planning, and analyses before they can be implemented. After participating in briefing sessions with the City's Budget Director, Finance Commissioner, and External Auditors, the Committee believes that the magnitude of the budget challenges facing the incoming Administration is not widely known and the difficulties of meeting these challenges are not fully appreciated. Communicating the budget challenges that Syracuse is facing should be considered a priority of the Administration.

For the last several years, the City has been running multi-million dollar operating deficits with recurring expenditures outpacing revenues. Simply put, the City has been routinely spending more money than it has been taking in. The City has balanced annual budgets by drawing down reserves that had been built up over many years. As a result, these "rainy day" funds have been spent down to approximately \$52 million. This practice cannot continue.

For the most recently completed fiscal year (ending 6/30/17), the general fund operating deficit was approximately \$3 million. The projected deficit for the current fiscal year (ending 6/30/18) has been estimated at \$16.5 million. The Budget Director's projections for upcoming fiscal years anticipate annual deficits in excess of \$20 million. Unless cost saving efficiencies can be found and additional revenue generated the City's reserves will be fully depleted by the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

### City Budget Deficits



It is clear that given the projected rate of spending down reserves, the incoming Administration must take immediate action to address the City's structural budget imbalance. In addition to the use of reserves to balance the budget, another commonly used technique is to freeze or reduce hiring for vacant positions. A performance management system based on mutually agreed upon goals would allow the City to right size its work force in a meaningful, quantifiable way while demonstrating what does not happen when this technique is employed.

The financial condition of the City is further jeopardized by the fact that the financial management and budgeting systems that the City relies on are not generating essential financial information on a timely basis. Audit reports have documented serious "material" weaknesses in the systems. Reports are not available to management on a routine basis. A direct link between the accounting and budgeting systems does not exist.

In light of present financial circumstances, the recommendations for short and long term actions that follow are divided into five categories: Revenue Generation, Efficiencies, Management, Systemic Change, and Community Engagement.



# Revenue Generation

## Short Term



Utilize the upcoming budget process to analyze all existing tax and fee structures.



Review all departmental billing procedures to ensure fairness, timeliness, and full cost recovery.



Review budgets of the other large New York State cities to identify any currently authorized municipal revenue sources which Syracuse has not yet tapped.



Foster positive relationships and regular communication with Federal, State, and County officials, who must authorize intergovernmental funding.



Work with other municipalities (villages, towns, and cities) to increase revenue allocation from New York State.

## Long Term



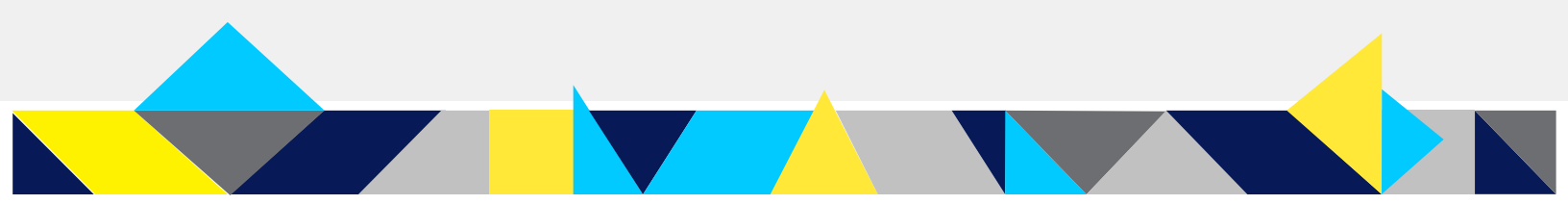
Leverage Joint School Construction Board (JSCB) funds with outside resources (ex. philanthropy, trades, private capital, etc.) to maximize impact.



Task the Budget Office with estimating the potential of possible new revenue (e.g. increasing the City's gross utility tax rate, and a tax on hotel occupancy and restaurant bills).



Develop services that the City can provide for a fee to other municipalities, community-based organizations, and other entities (e.g. asphalt, fire services).



# Efficiencies

## Short Term



Capitalize on economies of scale to achieve cost-savings whenever possible.

This should include immediately renewing efforts to share services with Onondaga County government and other municipalities by reviewing the Shared Services Plan and prioritizing recommendations for immediate consideration.



End the current practice of diverting revenue from the Water and Sewer Funds into the general fund. Use any revenue generated from the water and sewer funds to leverage additional outside resources and reinvest the funds back into their respective systems.



Since most of the City's labor contracts have expired, now is the time to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of current labor negotiation practices to find ways to contain labor costs.

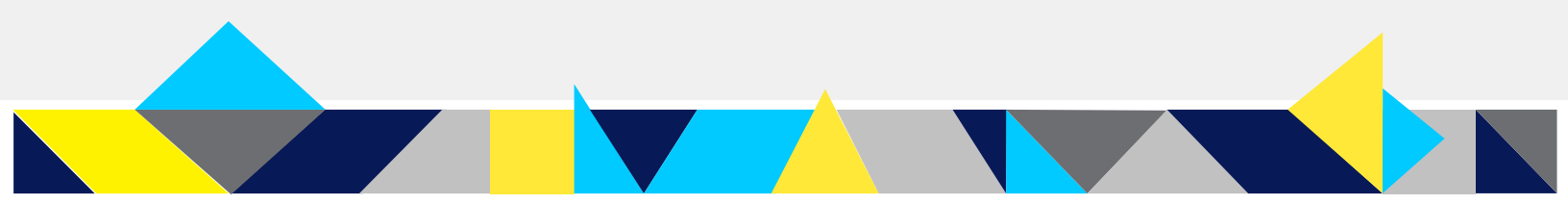
## Long Term



Establish a process for the ongoing review of the self-insurance portfolio with a more detailed analysis of alternative funding options to determine how the best value can be obtained for the cost of various insurance coverages. These analyses should include all employee benefits and any other mandated programs to understand the current administrative and cost composition of all plans to ensure they have been established in the most cost efficient manner.



Research and implement appropriate alternatives for more prompt arraignment of police department arrestees to reduce pre-arraignment detention charges.



# Management

## Short Term



Task the i-team with developing a new, cutting-edge Performance Management System (PMS) like Syracuse's own SyraStat system used by prior administrations and utilizing research and resources available from the Maxwell School. The PMS would address financial operations, including the documentation of procedures and the development of a Grants Procedures Manual. Best practice models like Denver's Peak Academy and Cincinnati's CincyStat Program should be considered.

Take steps to strengthen the financial operations of the City as part of the development of the above Performance Management System.



Centralize human resource, finance, and grant writing functions to provide enhanced accountability and build capacity for management talent and operations to improve control processes, create efficiencies and better pursue funding opportunities. Create a grants procedures manual to be utilized by all staff involved in the grant writing process.



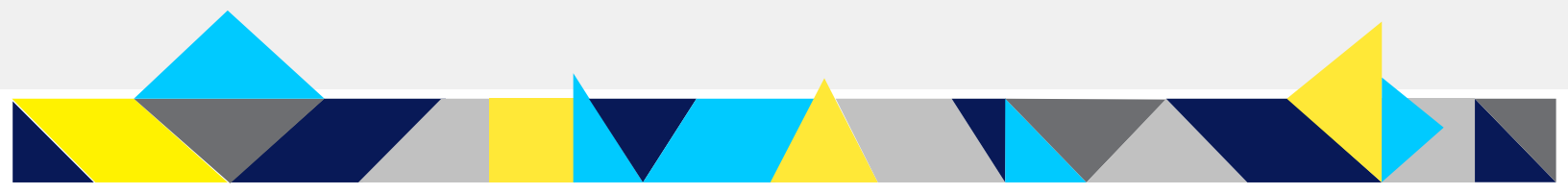
Commission an external utilization review of the police, fire department, DPW, and Parks Department.



Take the necessary steps to address financial control issues and comments from management letters of previous audits.



Ensure that the City's IT system supports the financial and human resources functions.



## Long Term



Aggressively seek new funding through the HUD Lead Hazard Control grant program and other potential funding sources.



Review and alter accordingly the long standing practice of placing uniformed officers in administrative positions that can be filled by qualified civilian candidates. As much as possible, deploy uniformed officers in patrol functions as administrative positions are replaced by civilians.



The City should design and document its internal control processes in accordance with a generally accepted framework such as either the “Green Book,” as published by the General Accounting Office, or in accordance with “internal control-integrated framework,” as published by The Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission.



Research the possibility of implementing collaborative procedures when possible between City financial operations and the SCSD.

## Systemic Change

### Short Term



Convene a Fiscal Policy Summit to bring policy experts together with local, state, and federal partners to chart a new course for fiscal stability and prosperity for all in Syracuse. This shall include developing a strategy for tackling the long term structural problems that lie at the core of the City’s fiscal problems.

Evaluate the formation, duties, and powers of the Troy Municipal Assistance Corporation, The Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, and similar entities to determine their relevance to the financial conditions in Syracuse.

Form a voluntary organization similar to the Municipal Assistance Corporation, but broaden representation to ensure inclusion of labor representation, political representation of the City and County, business leadership, and community representation.

Work with the Mayor to develop a strategic plan for fiscal stability and economic growth that can be presented to the Governor as part of a request for targeted state assistance.



Implement a more proactive code enforcement model that will detect and prioritize properties most at risk, and hold non-compliant property owners accountable by refusing occupancy.

## Long Term



Develop a revolving loan fund to connect responsible property owners with financial resources to eliminate environmental (lead, asbestos, etc.) and safety hazards (electrical, plumbing, mechanical, etc.) to improve housing quality.



Establish a more holistic approach to home health by building on the existing Green & Healthy Homes Initiative Greater Syracuse model.



Replicate Baltimore's Water Bill Affordability Programs to include: Low-Income Water Bill Assistance Program, Senior Citizen Water Bill Assistance Program, Hardship Water Bill Discount Program, Monthly Water Bill Payment Plan Program, Medical Exemption Program.



Incentivize Home Ownership and Mixed-Income Housing.



Partner with local lenders to develop an interest rate buy-down program for down payment assistance and 1% home improvement loans for City residents.



Expand and replicate Work Train, an innovative local workforce development model funded by a consortium of local organizations and foundations.



Partner with local lenders to develop a home finance and guaranteed mortgage program for police officers, fire fighters, and teachers who seek to purchase a residence in Syracuse.



Develop creative compensation packages for City employees designed to incentivize home ownership in the City.



Systematically review all City operations for options of privatization or modification.

# Community Engagement

## Short Term



Employ diverse citizen task forces with representative stakeholders to help advance recommendations when feasible to support the Administration in developing the informational resources and options for consideration. This should include more effectively utilizing faculty and student talent of Syracuse University, LeMoyne College, and OCC to help create best practice case studies of municipal governance across a range of considerations (e.g. Somerville, MA is often referred to as a model medium sized city that has reaped the benefits of more effective public management).



Use monthly or quarterly reports generated by the Performance Management System in summary format to provide access and transparency for public participation. Sessions could be conducted by Common Council members to provide more immediate and effective communication, with a goal of improving citizen satisfaction.

## Long Term

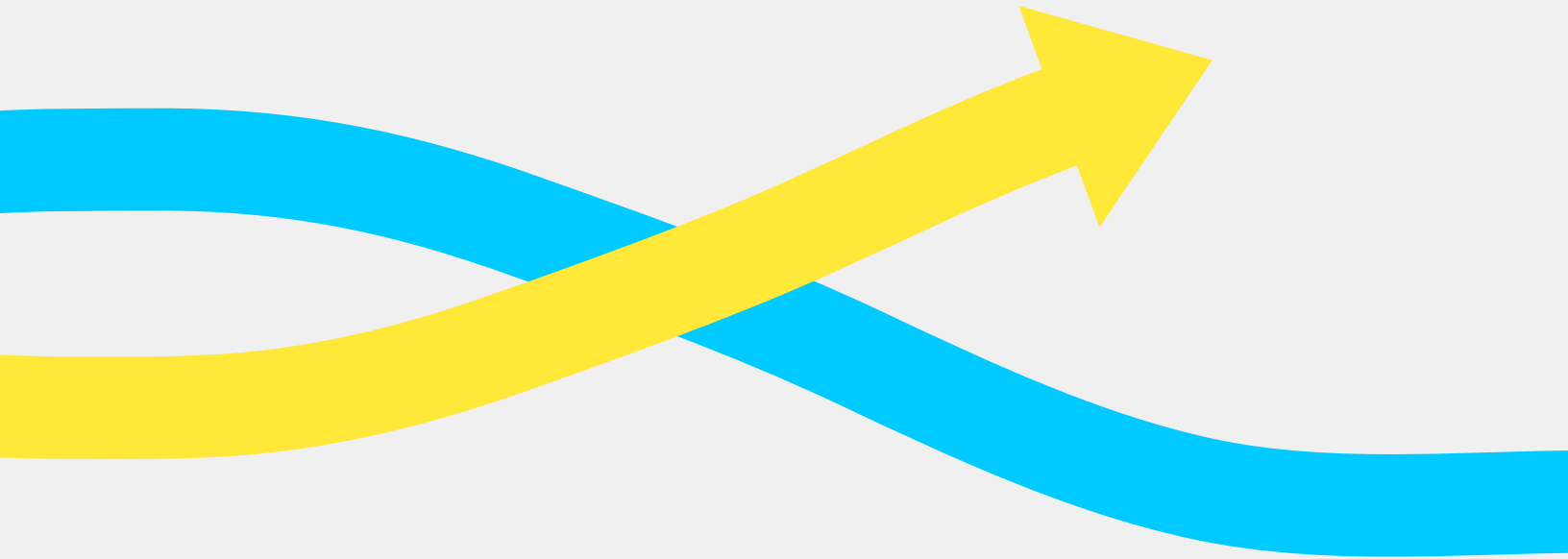


Research best practices and look to implement participatory budgeting in the second year of Mayor Walsh's term when the financial management system is producing more timely and accurate reports.



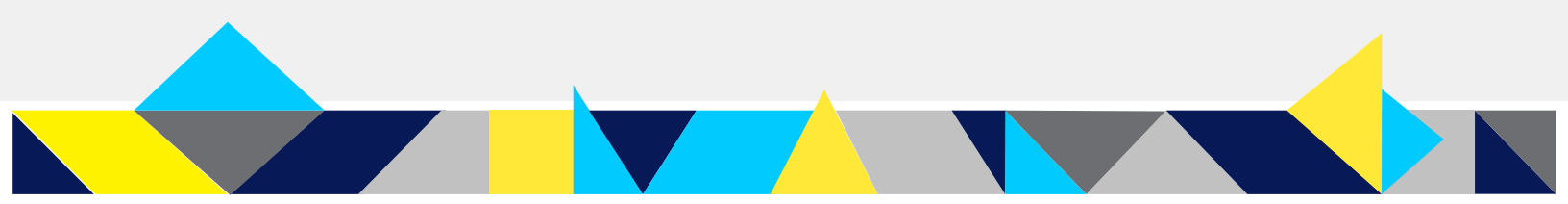
# Human Resources

Chaired by: Helen Hudson, Kathy Murphy, Angela Lee



**"The community is ripe for deep, meaningful engagement from underrepresented communities who want, no crave, access."**

*- Ruthnie Angrand, Director of Communications and Marketing in the Mayor's Office*



The primary function of the Human Resources Transition Committee was to receive and review resumes and make recommendations to the Mayor that focused on filling Department Head opportunities as well as the Mayor's Executive Team.

The campaign website hosted a link for job applicants to submit their information as well as indicate an area of employment interest. All current eligible City employees received a letter asking them to reapply through the link if they were interested in serving in the Administration. The public was made aware of the application link through news and social media outlets. Interested parties were encouraged to submit their credentials. Multiple interview sessions, phone calls, and meetings resulted in filling leadership roles by the end of the year.

The excitement and hope felt by residents after Mayor Walsh was elected was reflected in the 600 plus resumes submitted in two weeks. The charge of the Human Resources Transition Committee did not focus on policy recommendations as the other four committees included in this report did. However, the experience the committee gained while carrying out their work did provide an opportunity to offer the following recommendations.



"I learned that there are a lot of people in our community with a lot of different experiences good, bad and they were all very transparent, which helped come up with real solutions for the real issues. I loved the diversity from Backgrounds, Age, Race, culture and it reflected a new change for the City we all love."

- Maria Lewis, Constituent Service Coordinator in the Mayor's Office



# Management

## Short Term



Assess and review employment and personnel policies to insure they are up-to-date and reflect current law.



Elevate the role of human resources by appointing a designee that reports directly to the Mayor and centralize all operations.

## Long Term



Create a “one stop shop” for human resources and fiscal management functions that works for all departments. The centralized department would work with all managers for hiring, financial management, and reporting.



Provide training and development opportunities within our community (business, associations, and education institutions are possibilities) for City personnel and encourage employees to participate.



Provide leadership training and mentoring for Department Heads and Commissioners.

Establish mechanisms to develop and deploy the new knowledge created by sharing the experience and knowledge of community leaders with the knowledge and experience of City personnel.

Identify community leaders in organizations, businesses, and corporations who are willing to serve as a mentor, coach, or knowledge creation partner to help advance leader development, improve operations, and increase the organizational knowledge base of City Hall.



Invest in Skillsoft or some other development portal for employees.



Conduct an employee survey to establish a baseline for engagement and action planning in the more challenging areas of operation.

# Communication

## Short Term



Establish regular communication with the City workforce from the Mayor and the Personnel Department. Suggestions include a monthly newsletter by email, text, or tweet. Create a portal for employees to capture suggestions for improvements, concerns, and ideas. Invite city employees to enjoy the events in our city.



Schedule the Mayor and the Executive team to visit a department a month (in the department's workplace) to meet with the employees, share ideas, and listen to concerns.

## Long Term

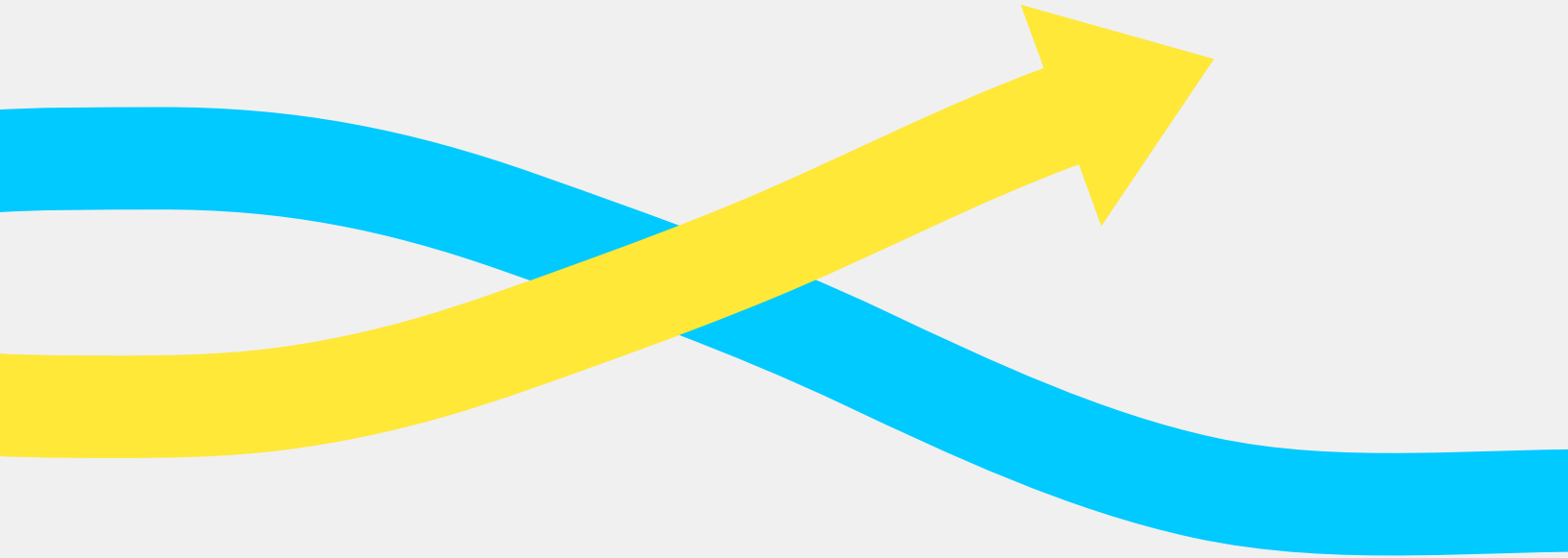


Create and communicate opportunities for all employees to learn and train for greater positions and "moving up in the ranks." Help leaders to "lean in" to their workforce and partner with them to improve.



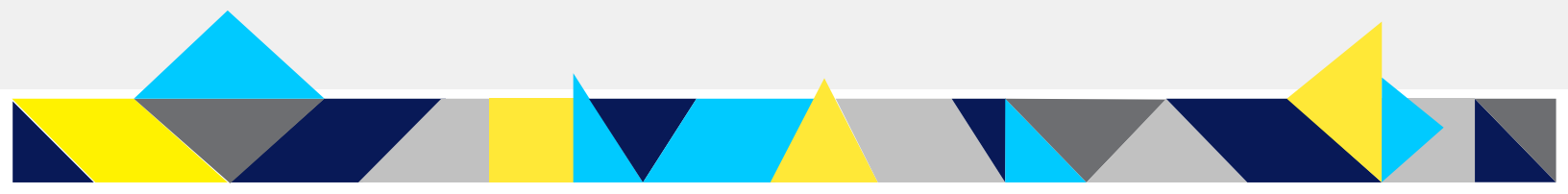
# Neighborhoods & Public Safety

Chaired by: Bob Dougherty



"I was honored to be invited to participate on the Neighborhood and Public Safety committee, and to serve with such an esteemed group of volunteers. I learned a lot about the challenges our city faces, and it was inspiring to see so many parts of our community come together to put forward cutting edge strategies to overcome them."

- Chris Carrick, Energy Program Manager, Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board



Much of the discussion about recommendations for short and long term action items from the Neighborhoods & Public Safety Committee involved community policing, youth, and ways to foster effective community engagement in working collectively to improve the quality of life for all. Recurring threads among these issues were communication (including multilingual, spoken and written), transparency, access to information, public input on budgeting and programs, and a culture change to provide quality customer service throughout all City departments.

The recommendations that follow are grouped into five categories: Youth, Police and Citizen Review Board, Quality of Life, Housing and Land Bank, Codes and DPW.



"It was a pleasure to be able to serve on the transition team on the Neighborhood/Public Safety Committee and to be able to be a voice for the residents as well as the business community on the Southwest and South Side of Syracuse. This process allowed me to learn more about each of the unique communities in Syracuse and to work with a great team on how to address the issues of all City residents."

- Desaree Dixie, Program Director, Jubilee Homes of Syracuse

# Youth

## Short Term



Develop a Youth Council that draws on community organizations, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the school district to recruit participants. The Youth Council should be led to the fullest extent possible by youth and should be given a real voice in developing policy and programs that affect them.



Develop a more collaborative effort across schools, community agencies, and law enforcement to address the problems of youth experiencing trauma. This should include establishing a point person at each school for community agencies to serve as a liaison.



Establish a centralized system for parents and caregivers to access information about age requirements and other criteria needed to be eligible to participate in programs, including information about registration deadlines.

## Long Term



Charge the i-team with developing a comprehensive asset map of youth programs offered by Parks and Recreation, the school district and charter schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, youth centers, local colleges, and other agencies that offer youth programming to identify what programs and services are offered and determine gaps to be filled by additional programming.



Implement busing for school children within 1.5 miles of their school (estimated cost is \$8 million).



Develop a construction trades training and apprenticeship program in conjunction with the school district and the Land Bank that provides the opportunity for youth to develop skills and become certified in construction trades by renovating or rebuilding properties acquired by the Land Bank. Since the Land Bank acquires houses from the City for a nominal fee this program could be started with the donation of a house to the program and a onetime investment of seed money. The sale of the first house and subsequent donated houses would provide a return on the investment to fund development of a sustainable program.



Create opportunities for positive interactions and relationship building between youth and police through community policing related activities.

# Police & Citizen Review Board

## Short Term



Establish a consensus definition of community policing that is used throughout the community to better understand the policies and practices fundamental to implementation of best community policing practices with fidelity, e.g.:

“Community policing is a philosophy of full service personalized policing, where the same officer patrols and works in the same area on a permanent basis, from a decentralized place, working in a proactive partnership with citizens to identify and solve problems.” (Robert C. Trojanowicz)



Expand current community policing initiatives to include foot patrols, bike patrols, and other best practices.



Provide training for dealing with citizens who are experiencing mental health issues.



Engage the community in the search for a new police chief through public meetings and search committee representation with an emphasis on the qualities and characteristics of the chief that residents find important.



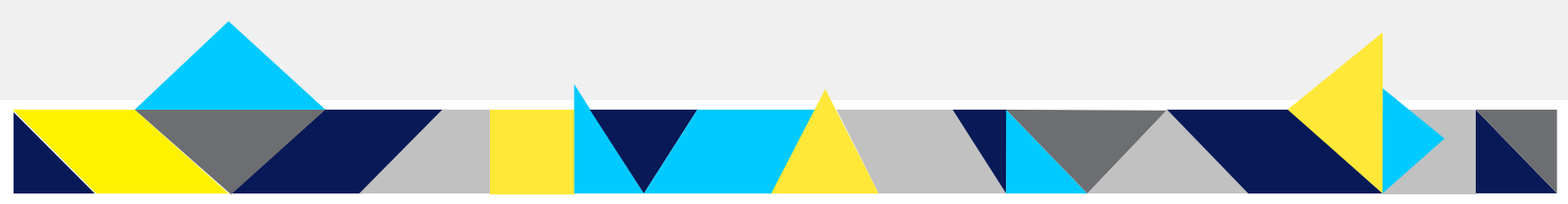
Conduct a thorough review of the Citizen Review Board (CRB) enabling legislation and policy recommendations to determine if changes to the enabling legislation are required. Develop an implementation plan for all policies deemed practicable. Priorities should include adopting a modern comprehensive use of force policy, equipping every police officer with a body camera and every patrol vehicle with dashboard cameras.

Provide written responses to all complaints sustained by the CRB after establishing a mutually agreeable timeframe to complete their investigations.

Provide public information from the CRB in a consistent and timely manner.

Establish a policy with the PBA for officer participation in CRB hearings.

Provide training to CRB members in existing police policies and procedures.



## Long Term



Implement territory integrity for community policing.



Have youth volunteer at the community police centers.



Allow time in schedule for police to attend community and cultural events to better connected with residents and promote positive, respectful engagement.



Provide Crisis Intervention Training based on the Memphis Model and other best practices.



Conduct regular audits to ensure cameras are working and that criminal activity is being monitored on a daily basis.



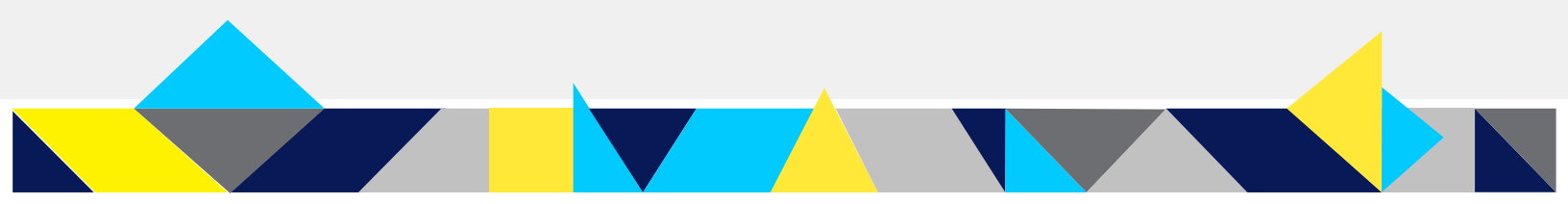
Share information to the public regarding how Shots Spotter technology works.



Conduct events on how to become a police officer and how to work with the police department.



Create opportunities for positive interactions between police and youth with programs like a youth academy (similar to the fire department), a Police Athletic League, summer clinics, and establishing PBA scholarships.



# Quality of Life

## Short Term



Create a Quality of Life Commission.

**Mission Statement:** The committee works in collaboration with the Mayor, the Common Council, and City Department Heads to enhance and expand the experience of living in the City of Syracuse. This will be accomplished through inclusive, neighborhood-based planning to address issues including, but not limited to, beautification, ordinance enforcement, and nuisance crimes.

**Composition:** The committee should include one representative from each of the eight TNT sectors and one ambassador selected by each of the five district Common Councilors who will be charged with coordinating with existing neighborhood associations.



More effectively utilize the research and grant writing operations of the City to improve and support the development of a strong TNT system.



Commit to use water and sewer revenue to leverage additional resources to repair infrastructure.



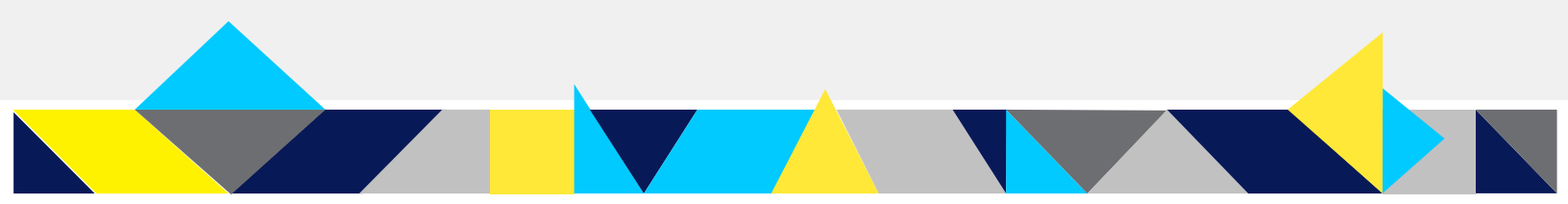
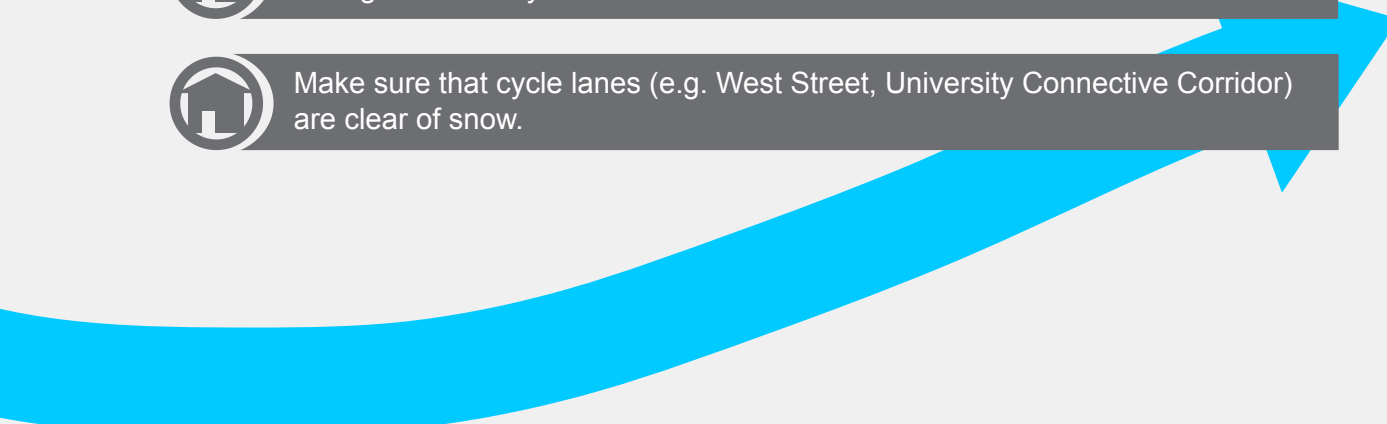
Make Earth Day a city-wide initiative and reinvigorate “Cuse Cleanup” (e.g. Mayor’s Litter Effort, Dunk your Junk, Don’t Mess with the ‘Cuse).



Recommit to the “Safe Routes to School” initiative and consider implementing throughout the City.



Make sure that cycle lanes (e.g. West Street, University Connective Corridor) are clear of snow.





## Long Term



Work with an outside firm to develop and conduct an outbound telephone survey to City residents to build area specific knowledge and greater understanding of priorities for those constituents. Additionally, information can be gathered about positive interactions with City services, programs, and initiatives.



Develop a formal sidewalk snow clearing plan in which the City clears the main sidewalk along major transportation routes in the City.

The City should enforce the Ordinance passed in 2015 that prohibits plowing snow onto sidewalks & corners. DPW supervisors were also empowered to write tickets for this offense.



Maximize grant applications by utilizing internal and external resources in a coordinated manner. Offer technical assistance with grant writing, legal assistance, and fundraising strategies for community groups to help leverage funds.



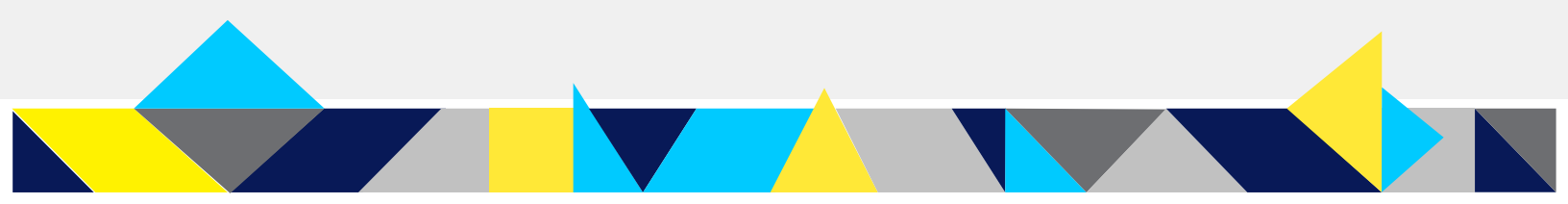
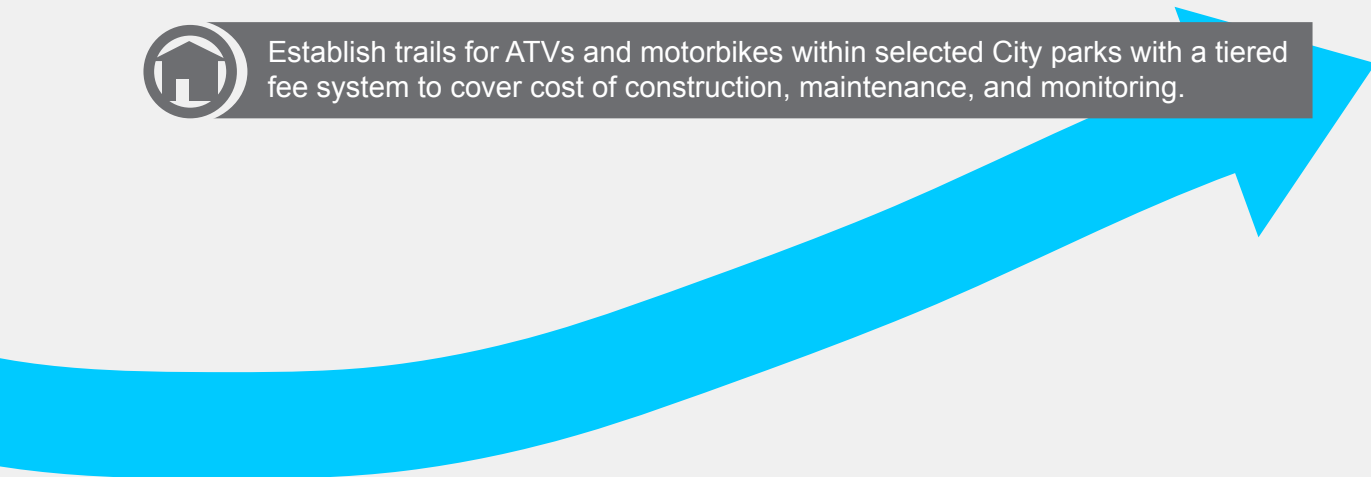
Work with SMTC and CENTRO to implement “in lane” Bus Rapid Transit service along two corridors identified in SMART 1 plan (James St. to OCC, U Hill to Destiny).



Work with SMTC, CENTRO, and the Town of Dewitt to establish Bus Rapid Transit service on Erie Boulevard.



Establish trails for ATVs and motorbikes within selected City parks with a tiered fee system to cover cost of construction, maintenance, and monitoring.



# Housing & Land Bank

## Short Term



Establish a program for low down-payment mortgages (without primary mortgage insurance) to promote owner-occupants to purchase homes in the City.



Encourage owner-occupants to improve their properties by expanding the current 1% home improvement loan program to more City neighborhoods.



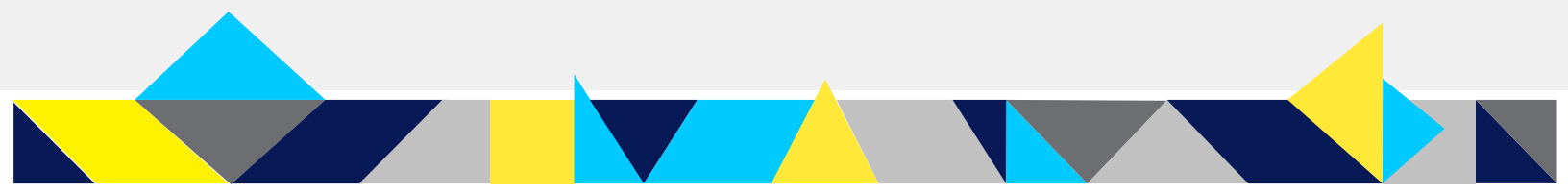
Provide affordable financing for investors to encourage them to improve their rental properties with general property improvements and to eliminate hazards such as lead paint.



Provide affordable financing to encourage the acquisition and rehabilitation of vacant properties (land bank properties, HUD homes, etc.) with a program similar to the HUD 203 (K) program, but without all the delays and red-tape.



Establish a position for a Community Engagement Specialist to attend TNT & Neighborhood group meetings in order to facilitate communication.



## Long Term



Research and implement a property management liability system to help protect renters.



Promote mixed-income development with strong consideration for accessible housing and ways to promote “aging in place.”



Develop a housing plan with the broad neighborhood participation that promotes a walkable community, improves lighting, cuts back trees and landscape and adopts Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) best practice principles.



Identify and develop prevention programs that assist individuals with having a real opportunity to save their home from foreclosure from the City and County due to back taxes, water bills, or code violations/issues.



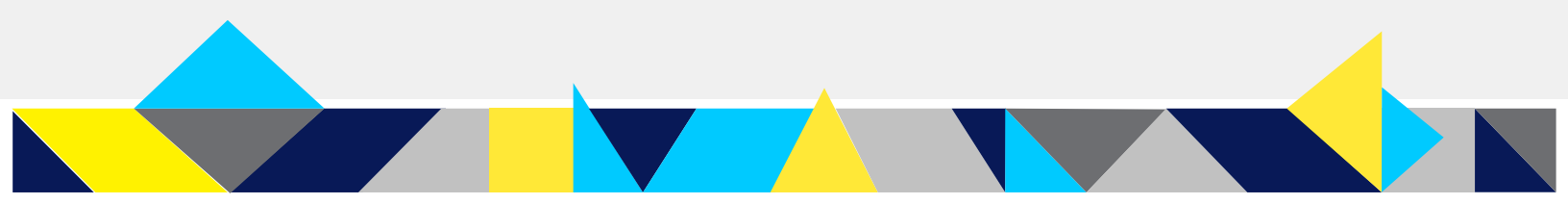
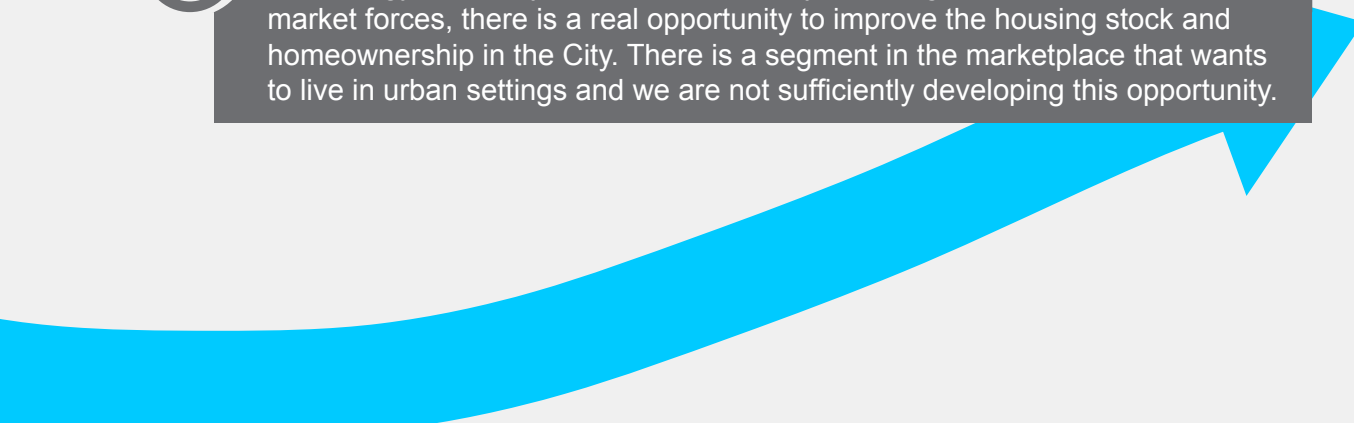
As City finances permit, provide more funding for the Land Bank and groups like Home Headquarters for housing acquisition and rehabilitation.



Advocate for funds from the Upstate Revitalization Initiative to support workforce development through deconstruction and rehabilitation of properties for residents from neighborhoods most affected.



Build upon the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative to address health, safety, and energy efficiency issues. With the Say Yes program in place and other market forces, there is a real opportunity to improve the housing stock and homeownership in the City. There is a segment in the marketplace that wants to live in urban settings and we are not sufficiently developing this opportunity.



# Codes & DPW

## Short Term



Establish a lead initiative that includes: reviving proposed legislation to inspect the interior of 1-2 bedroom rental units that empowers code inspectors with the appropriate authority to enforce lead related violations and that implements a comprehensive encapsulation strategy.



Conduct a best practices planning study and implement a program that provides for cross-training for appropriate DPW and Codes personnel to maximize staff time.



Establish a program for working with the community-based organizations and neighborhoods to better understand code violations and how to resolve them. This can be done through informational meetings, online information, or mailing of pamphlets to City residents. This information should also include having a list of licensed contractors, how to go about getting bids for work, and sources of funding like the County Lead program and available home improvement grants or loans.

## Long Term

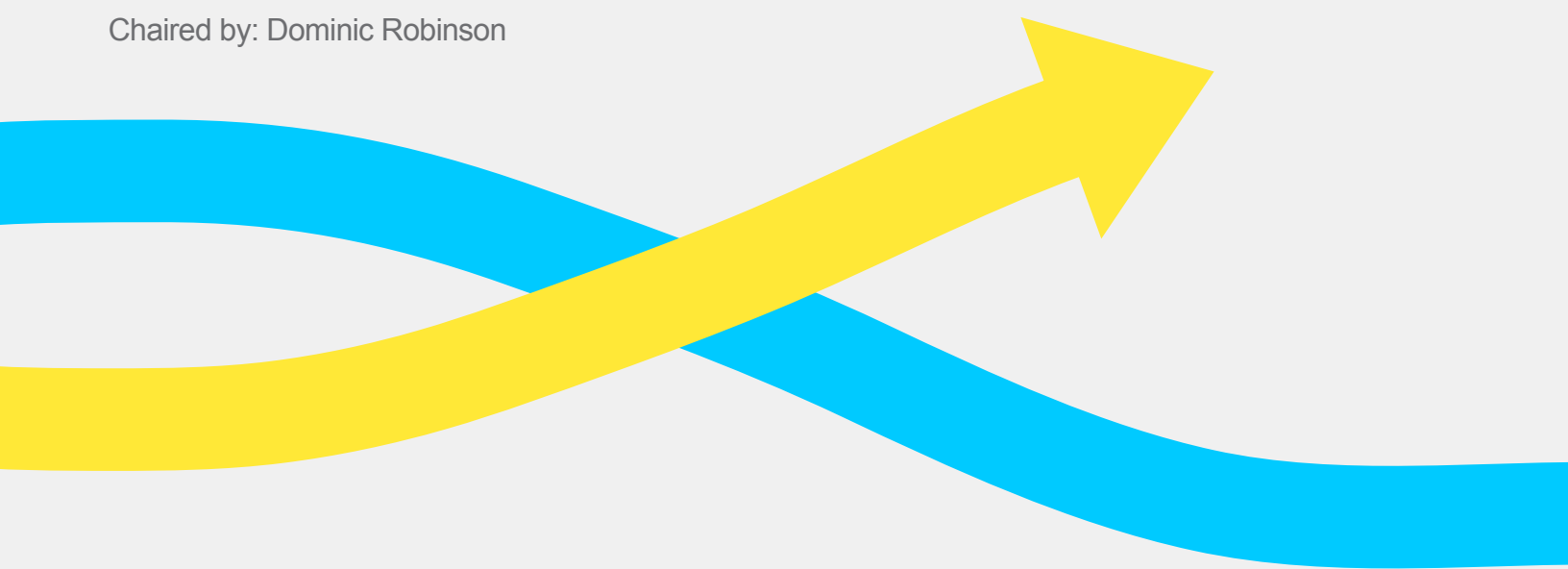


Develop a full review and comprehensive study of all infrastructure assets that includes a risk assessment analysis and useful life analysis to help prioritize maintenance and capital project investments.



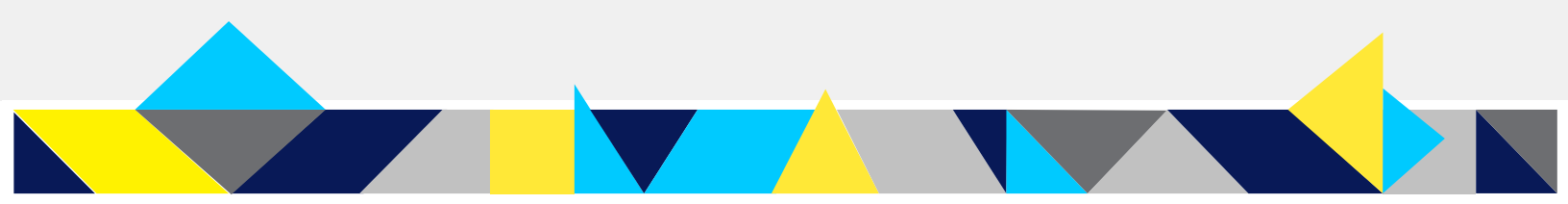
# Economic Inclusion & Opportunity

Chaired by: Dominic Robinson



"The diversity of thought represented on the transition team gives me great confidence that our community is on a path to a more inclusive and collaborative discourse. It also gives me great hope for the future."

- Robert Simpson, President and Chief Executive Officer at CenterState CEO



The short and long term recommendations for action by the Economic Inclusion and Opportunity Committee are intended to help the Administration transform Syracuse into a vibrant City where all residents thrive. The recommendations presented below were developed with a sensitivity to the City's financial constraints and other limitations on the Administration's influence. Given these constraints, a premium is placed on developing partnerships with local organizations and businesses, as well as other governmental bodies.

Syracuse, particularly the Downtown neighborhood, has seen remarkable growth over the past decade. Unfortunately, too many Syracuse residents have not benefitted from this growth. The Syracuse poverty rate is 32.1%, 13th highest in the nation, but the Northside, Near Westside, and Southwest side neighborhoods contain extreme poverty. In these neighborhoods, poverty rates can exceed 40% and the median income is less than \$15,000. Sixty-five percent (65%) of Blacks/African Americans and 62% of Hispanics live in extreme, concentrated poverty, the highest rate in the nation. If Syracuse is going to truly become a thriving 21st Century City, we must be intentional about continuing to grow our economy in a more inclusive way by tying economic development to inclusive economic opportunity and neighborhood revitalization.

The recommendations that follow are divided into 7 categories: Foster a Culture of Inclusion, Improving Systems and Services for All Businesses, Foster Innovative and Inclusive Economic Growth, Build a Diverse Middle Class, Development of Neighborhood Commercial Corridors, and Educating the Public about Reversing Systemic Poverty.



"I'm trying to make a building and a city where people who live the arts, live music, and live entrepreneurship every day, can just be more successful here rather than somewhere else. Then everything else just comes along with that. I think Ben Walsh as Mayor will help make this happen, and for that reason I am proud to be on his transition team."

- Rick Destito, Owner of "The Gear Factory" and Near West Side resident/Community Leader

# Foster a Culture of Inclusion

## Short Term



Establish a series of “town hall” style conversations on an ongoing basis in which the Mayor engages with community residents on critical issues and hears concerns.



Identify opportunities to diversify mayoral appointed committees and boards (e.g. SIDA, JSCB, CRB, etc.) that prioritize individuals from underrepresented communities without political connections.

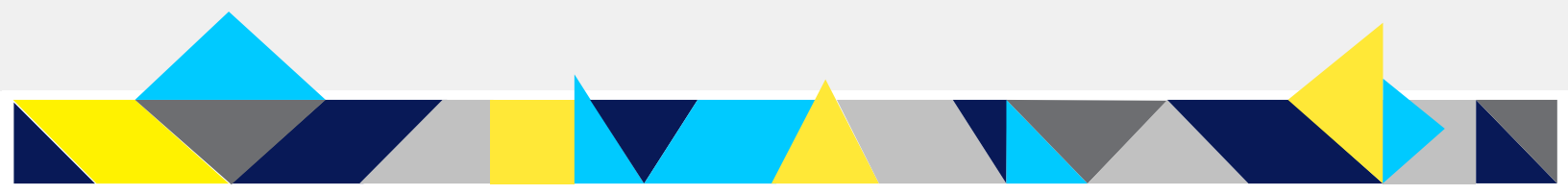
## Long Term



Develop and implement a system that promotes cultural competence and diversity awareness for City workers.



Develop inclusive communications and community engagement strategies that accommodate different cultures, literacy levels, disabilities, work schedules, and technological capabilities, specifically for the purposes of soliciting input on planning; announcing job and contract opportunities; making critical policy decisions; the delivery of City services; and other key items.



# Improving Systems and Services for All Businesses

## Short Term



Within the first month in office, convene all department heads and a critical number of City workers to establish a “can-do” attitude in City Hall and to seek their participation in improving customer service for businesses, developers, etc.



Fast track passage of “Rezone Syracuse” so that zoning challenges are not a barrier to development.

## Long Term



Establish strategies for consolidating information and processes (e.g. ombudsmen) so that information and processes for businesses and residents are accessible in a single portal or office.



Streamline codes and permitting processes for businesses and developers in ways that create transparency and allow for predictability of timing.



Develop proactive, intensive supports for resident owned businesses and developers (particularly MWBE's), who want to invest in businesses and properties and who don't have access to legal and other forms of technical assistance.





# Fostering Innovative and Inclusive Economic Growth

## Short Term



Establish a committee to develop recommendations for Syracuse's "Community Benefits" policies that tie economic development to economic opportunities. The committee should include representatives from community-based organizations and advocacy groups, workforce development, labor, business, and developers. The committee should review other municipal models (noted in companion documents) and consider incentives, mandates, and other means of ensuring benefits, as well as strategies for building a "pipeline" of workers and companies that benefit from opportunities.



Establish a committee to develop recommendations for Syracuse's "Economic Development" policies for business attraction and expansion incentives to prioritize business growth and development projects that create "good jobs" (beyond initial construction period) that are accessible to residents across skill levels. The committee should also provide recommendations to foster local ownership and grow neighborhood business corridors to position Syracuse's business ecosystem to be competitive in a 20th Century Economy.



Provide additional resources to increase the capacity of the Office of Minority Affairs and the Syracuse Resident Employment Advisory Committee to assess all City contracts and City employment to identify current rates of employment of City residents (with neighborhood and demographic data) and set targets for establishing better rates of inclusion over the next four years.



Position the "Office of Minority Affairs" to function at a higher level, across all departments, with appropriate levels of support and access to all necessary data.



Change the City's MWBE certification form to reflect the NY State's, in order to help streamline paperwork for contractors and allow them to pursue both certifications at once.



Support the expansion of CNY Works Summer Youth employment program by identifying opportunities for City employment and attracting businesses to participate.



Ensure that all City services are available to individuals with disabilities.

## Long Term



Develop comprehensive community benefits policies to promote training and placement programs that tie economic development to opportunities for residents.



Establish a clear set of priorities for economic development in the City that benefits all residents, align economic development incentives to these priorities, and identify ways the Mayor can support projects in receiving other forms of funding and support. (Note: Syracuse must develop strategies for tying incentives to all long-term projects and operations, not just construction projects).



Develop strategies for diversifying the City workforce, including: proactive communication of open positions. Develop partnerships with the County and community training organizations to create prep courses for Civil Service exams. Better utilize programs like CNY Youth Summer Jobs, Onondaga Earth Corps, and other internship programs to expose youth to City employment.



Develop strategies and partnerships for achieving greater resident and minority participation in City contracts (e.g. tree planting, paving) that should include developing pipelines of eligible contractors.



# Build a Diverse Middle Class

## Short Term



Convene a task force that includes housing non-profits, Syracuse Housing Authority, developers, and residents to establish a vision and identify the tools and strategies for a “mixed-income” housing plan to identify potential projects and establish goals.



Conduct a marketing event (or series) for local realtors, especially those that work with relocating professionals, to help them do a better job “selling” the City. Share with them a vision for “Syracuse Rising” and help them promote the City as a “first option” to potential buyers.



Work with the Executive Director and Board of the Land Bank to develop strategies for making properties more accessible to local ownership, especially within underrepresented communities.

## Long Term



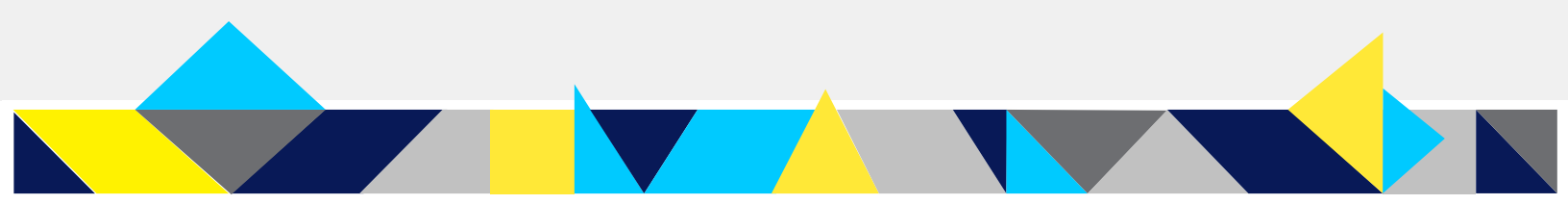
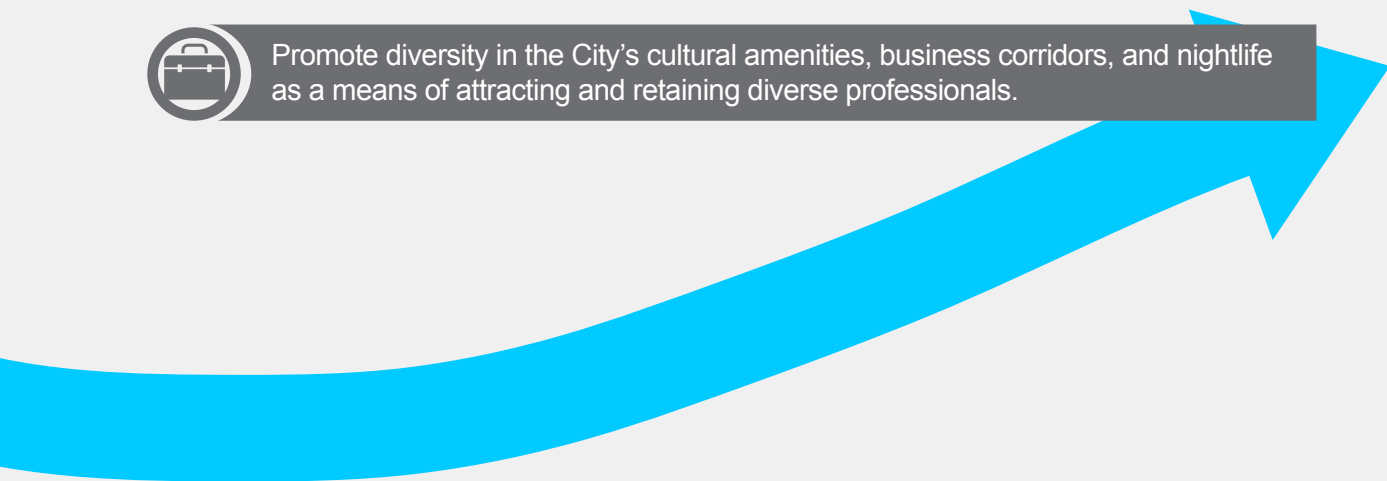
Partner with businesses and anchor institutions to develop (or in some cases, expand) guaranteed mortgage programs or other home ownership incentives.



Promote a “welcoming” culture for immigrants and refugees and partner with key organizations to better accelerate their participation in our economy.



Promote diversity in the City’s cultural amenities, business corridors, and nightlife as a means of attracting and retaining diverse professionals.



# Promote Development of Neighborhood Commercial Corridors

## Short Term



Partner with neighborhood organizations and other relevant entities to create economic development plans for all neighborhood commercial corridors in the City. Work with SIDA to leverage resources to commission additional neighborhood market studies. Work with neighborhood groups to develop long-term marketing strategies for corridors.



Develop a comprehensive map and database of available properties in the City that could be marketed to potential businesses.

## Long Term



Work with partners to develop integrated investment strategies for commercial corridors that includes identifying multiple funding streams for targeted areas and considers how current local, state, and federal programs can be applied. Also work with partners to develop dedicated loan funds for development and business growth.



# Promote and Plan for Replacing I-81 with a “Community Grid”

## Short Term



Use City communications resources/strategies to advocate for the Community Grid (press releases, social media, events, town halls, etc.) and work to help our neighboring communities understand why the community grid is important for their long-term prosperity.



Convene a task force to create plans for community grid development opportunities that are inclusive (mixed-income housing, locally-owned businesses, etc.).



Ensure that the City is actively participating in workforce planning conversations and activities with DOT so that local hiring opportunities are realized.

## Long Term



Work with the State and CENTRO to ensure we use the I-81 project to enhance our multi-modal transit systems to better serve the transportation needs of everyone in our community.



# Educate the Public about Reversing Systemic Poverty

## Short Term



Establish “community conversations” that bring together different groups (e.g. Downtown Advocates and the Urban Jobs Task Force) to better understand critical challenges and work together to develop strategies for addressing them. Pay particular attention to issues of homelessness, reentry from incarceration, mental health, and youth violence.



Promote ways to align services and resources provided by Onondaga County Department of Social Services to ensure more effective delivery of the same for low-income residents.

## Long Term



Pursue open-data strategies across all departments where applicable.

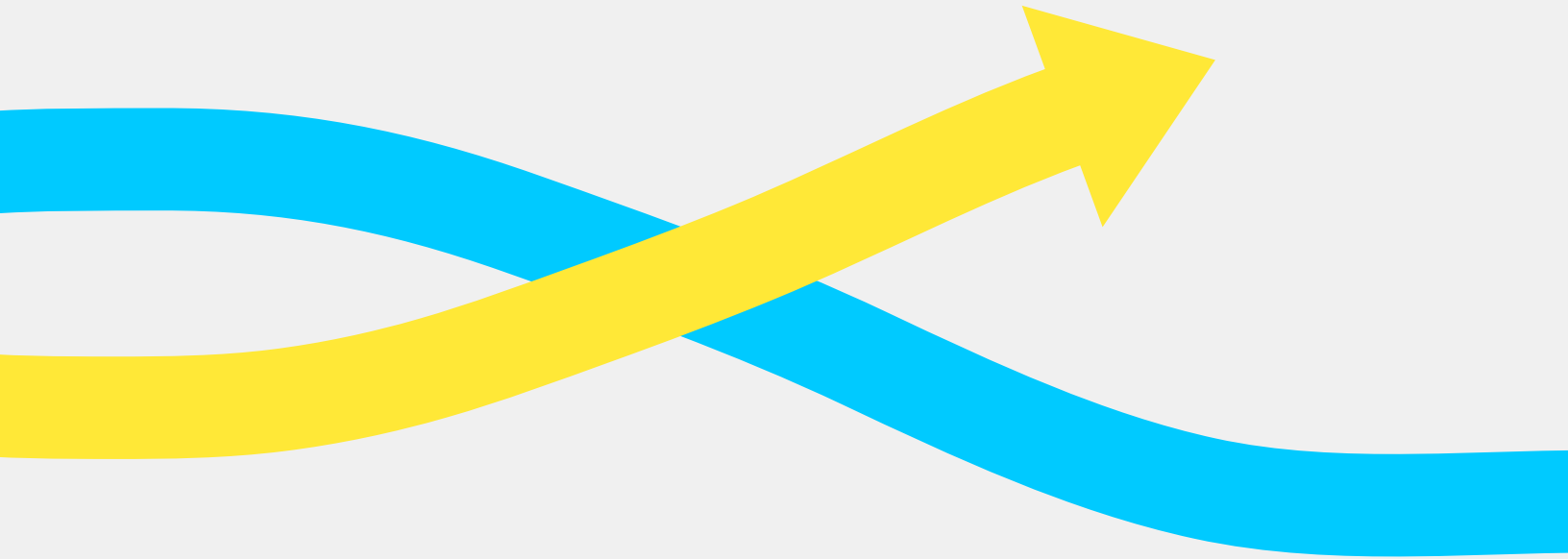


Move certain City funds, like those slated for the renovation of schools and the SIDA accounts, to the Cooperative Federal Credit Union. This is a small way in which the City could assist the one community development credit union that provides access to financial services and access to capital for economically excluded populations.



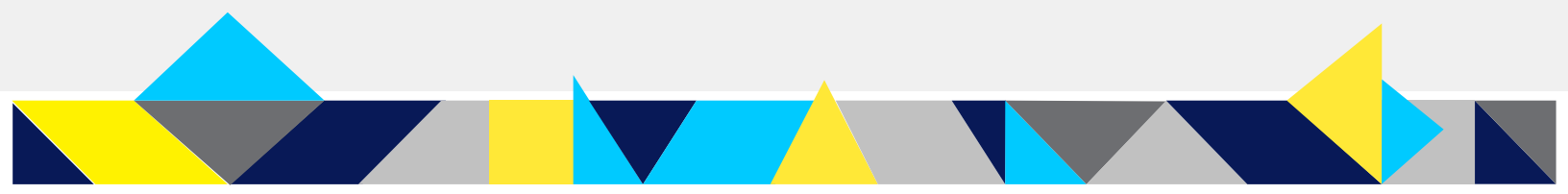
# Education

Chaired by: Jaime Alicea



"One of the most important aspects of social and systematic change is education, which is why I was so honored to be able to serve on the Education Transition Team, in an effort to ensure that all students at SCSD are afforded the best experiences in effective, efficient, equitable, engaging, and empowering educational opportunities."

- Joshua Michael King, Masking & Kompany



The short and long-term recommendations for action of the Education Committee involves the general strategy of strengthening the relationship between City Hall and The Syracuse City School District with special attention to investing in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, community engagement and communication strategies, school climate, and expanding or enhancing middle school programs.

During the last several years stakeholders have raised concerns regarding student achievement, behavior, and funding. As a parent of a student in the SCSD, Mayor Walsh is well positioned to work hand-in-hand with Superintendent Alicea and the School Board to ensure our children have the resources they need to succeed. This will require advocating at the State and Federal level for adequate funding to support the initiatives in the school district so every child, regardless of race, disability, socioeconomic status, or zip code, should not only be encouraged to dream, but be provided with the foundation to achieve those dreams.

The recommendations for short and long term actions are divided into seven categories: CTE and P-Tech, Community Engagement, Curriculum Development, School Climate, Joint School Construction Board (JSCB), Middle School, and Print and Media Campaign.



“As a team, we talked over small actions to do with community centers and business partners that can improve: CTE participation, parent participation (across language and income barriers), student retention and pride in our neighbors. The consensus in the education transition room was far more than “yes we can.” We started doing it and want to continue doing it as a team.”

- Ruthnie Angrand, Director of Communications and Marketing in the Mayor’s Office





# Invest in CTE and P-Tech

## Short Term



Link on the City website to SCSD programs in order to provide better information about the districts 24 CTE programs (which includes 2 P-Tech programs).



Have a representative from the Mayor's office on the CTE Partnership Council.

## Long Term



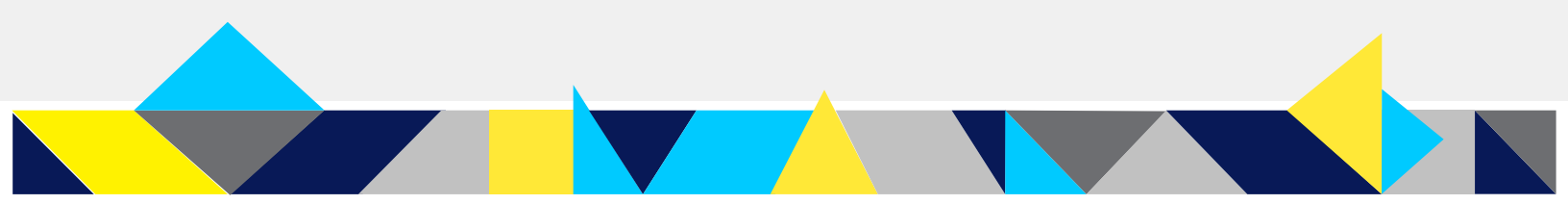
Advocate for funding for middle and high school CTE programs.



Bring together regional businesses, colleges, and universities to meet with school district officials and students to discuss the latest trends in the CTE and P-Tech fields and develop related internship programs for students.



Determine how the CTE Construction Technology Program at Nottingham High School can work with the City and the Land Bank to develop the program described in Neighborhoods and Safety long term recommendations for Youth.



# Community Engagement

## Short Term



Commission an asset map as a guide for connection and collaboration with community-based organizations.



Have the Mayor or other senior officials join the Board of Education at community forums to get feedback from stakeholders.

When attending or having meetings in the community include school district representation.

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Work with the school district to coordinate ongoing communication with the community, especially with respect to creating a more positive image of our schools, teachers, and students. (see Media Campaign below).



The Mayor should use his status as a parent to encourage other parents and families to get involved with their child's education.



Utilize community based organizations to provide support, capacity building, and in-school service functions whenever possible.

## Long Term



Work with the school district to develop recruitment partnerships and support the hiring process to build a staff (professional and non-professional) that truly reflects the diversity of the district.



Work with the Common Council and the school district to establish partnerships with neighboring districts that augment the resources of SCSD and enhance the education of our students.



Use technology to create a city-wide initiative to establish uniform information sharing processes with all community-based organizations, the SCSD, and the City.



Establish a Joint Education Advisory Committee, which will meet regularly to provide feedback to the Mayor and the Superintendent.

# Curriculum Development

## Short & Long Term



Establish monthly meetings between the Mayor and the Superintendent to discuss all matters relating to the City and the school district, including feedback about curriculum.



Have a representative of the Administration attend School Board Education Work Sessions and identify opportunities for appropriate City officials to participate in curriculum development discussions.

# School Climate

## Short Term



Have the Mayor and other Administration officials participate in the annual Student Voices Summit to hear middle and high schooler voices directly.



Have a senior official from the Administration serve on the Code of Conduct committee.

## Long Term



Provide incentives for district staff to live in Syracuse.



The district will share data from their annual climate surveys with the Mayor's office. Climate surveys are taken by all students, parents, and staff.



Advocate for funding to reduce the distance for busing or establish alternative transportation options.

# JSCB

## Short Term



Work with the Superintendent to appoint a School Board member and a Common Council member to the JSCB Board.



Work with the Superintendent to conduct JSCB meetings with a more open format that provides for greater community engagement.

## Long Term



Work in collaboration with the school district, Board of Education, and Common Council, as well as State elected officials on the statutory language for JSCB Phase III construction to allow for increasing the maximum cost allowance (MCA) and allowing funds to be used for new school construction when rehabilitation is not practical.



Work with the Superintendent to ensure the community and all stakeholders have the opportunity to give feedback on renovations and that this feedback is taken into consideration before development of the design.



# Middle School

## Short & Long Term



Have representation from City Hall on all SCSD committees dealing with middle level education.



Coordinate grant writing with the district for educational programs and opportunities.

# Media Campaign

## Short Term



Use current electronic resources available to the City to highlight the positive things happening in the SCSD.



Work with the SCSD to link the SCSD and the City website, showing the partnership between the two.



City communication personnel and district communication personnel work to put out info and campaigns alongside each other.

## Long Term



Create a strategic public relations campaign that identifies key areas of focus, including issues and concerns affecting youth and the positive things that are happening.



# Transition Team Members

## Transition Team Co-Chairs

Sharon Owens  
Linda LeMura  
Chedy Hampson

## Inauguration

Jennifer Owens  
Dirk Sonneborn  
Victorica Coit

## Human Resources

Kathy Murphy  
Helen Hudson  
Angela Lee

## Neighborhoods & Public Safety

Bob Dougherty (Co-Chair)  
Bob Andrews (Co-Chair)  
Rebecca Shaffer Mannion (Co-Chair)  
Monica Williams  
Joseph Carni  
Randy White  
Katelyn Wright  
Mike Walsh  
Paul Joslyn  
Tim Jennings-Bey  
Rick Destito  
Chris Fowler  
Desaree Dixie  
David Rufus  
Joe Driscoll  
Chris Carrick  
Sue Straub  
Maria Maldonado-Lewis  
John Vigliotti  
Kerry Quaglia  
Vernon Williams  
Mary Salibrici  
Khris Dodson  
Tina Zagya

## Economic Opportunity & Inclusion

Dominic Robinson (Chair)  
Fanny Villarreal  
Robert Simpson  
Joseph Bryant  
Carolyn Evans-Dean  
Rickey Brown  
Tim Penix  
Lenore Sealy  
Pastor Derek T.H. Galloway  
Anne Marie Talericio  
Bishop Ronald Dewberry  
Craig Marcinkowski  
Greg Lancette  
Cora Thomas  
David Nutting  
Alamin Muhammad  
Alfonso Davis  
Ray Blackewell  
Sam Abdel  
Eric Allyn  
Yashira Jiminez  
Jay Subedi  
Sharon Washington  
Ronald Jennings  
City Finances  
Ken Mokrzycki (Co-Chair)  
Ann Rooney (Co-Chair)  
Vincent Love (Co-Chair)  
Mike Frame  
David VanSlyke  
Vito Sciscioli  
Minch Lewis  
Kimberly Boynton  
Mike Lisson  
Howie Hawkins  
Michael Feng

## Education

Jaime Alicea (Co-Chair)  
Katie Sojewicz (Co-Chair)  
Rita Paniagua  
Mary Nelson  
Education (Cont.)  
Ahmeed Turner  
Melissa Hidek  
Habiba Boru  
Juhanna Rogers  
Josh King  
Karen Cordano  
Ruthnie Angrand  
Hasan Stephens  
Cjala Surratt  
Sue Boyle  
David Kirby  
Ty Marshal  
Sam Rowser  
Otis Jennings  
Freida Jacques  
Bob Gardino  
Steve Swift  
Elana Stroman  
Brad Powless

## Staff

Kristy Frame (Executive Director)  
Stephanie Crockett (Communications Director)  
Barry Lentz (Policy Director)

"I agreed to serve as the Policy Director for the work of the Transition Team because of the Mayor's commitment to community engagement as the foundation of local government. During the campaign, and the last two months of working with the Transition Team, I was impressed and energized by the wide range of citizens, across traditional party and ideological boundaries, eager to collaborate with the Walsh administration in addressing the challenges facing Syracuse."

*- Barry Lentz, Policy Director for the Transition Team*

