

IVORY TOWERS AND SHUTTERED FACTORIES: THE ROLE OF ROCHESTER'S
UNIVERSITIES AS A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FORCE

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Rochester, New York provides an interesting case study in the realm of shrinking cities; like many of its Rust Belt counterparts, the city saw rapid suburbanization and widespread deindustrialization following the Second World War, however, the mid-size city's two prestigious institutions (University of Rochester, UR, and Rochester Institute of Technology, RIT) distinguish it from many other Rust Belt towns. Despite the fact that Rochester lost a third of its residents from its 1930s-era peak (roughly 330,000, now about 210,000), the city and region have withstood the half-century storm of decentralization and economic restructuring better than most Rust Belt cities of comparable size. Today, the population hemorrhage appears to be healing and the Census data suggest the city may be reaching a stable population once more, albeit about 100,000 less than its peak.

As Rochester's industries wax and wane, the presence of the two academic institutions in the town have remained constant. The roles of UR and RIT as buffers Rochester's decline, regional economic engines, and divisionary forces among the populace, and the role institutions of higher education in shrinking cities as a whole, require further examination. Throughout this paper, the economic and social impacts of UR and RIT will be analyzed and Rochester, municipally and regionally, will be studied as an example of the dichotomy, or lack thereof, that exists between cities and institutions.

In the interest of full disclosure, I am writing this as a "townie." My upbringing in Rogers Park, Chicago and Evanston, Illinois, has given me extensive experience with the campuses of Loyola and Northwestern University, respectively. I have witnessed the economic benefits of these campuses in Downtown Evanston and along Chicago's Sheridan Road and noticed the different methods of spatial exclusion that both universities have implemented in their built environments and through policies.

Acknowledging this, I will seek to expunge this paper of any implicit biases that I may have and analyze the role of institutions in a fair manner. Rochester will be the primary case study, but the impacts of institutions of higher education in other shrinking cities or neighborhoods will also be analyzed, such as Pittsburgh's various academic institutions (Duquesne University, University of Pittsburgh, and Carnegie-Mellon) and the University of Chicago, which straddles the city's affluent and prosperous Hyde Park and working-class, yet rapidly-changing Woodlawn neighborhoods.

UR and RIT have had an immense impact on the City of Rochester and the region as a whole; despite their presence, the town-gown disparity remains painfully visible and clear. Throughout my study of Rochester I will highlight the beneficial and detrimental aspects of the universities' presence and propose policy changes to allow the region to prosper in tandem, not in spite of, its institutions.

Introduction and background of the city of Rochester and its institutions

Historically home to the Seneca tribe, European settlement began in earnest in the Rochester area following the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797, though white farmsteads were common in the Genesee River area as much as fifty years prior. The falls and rapids of the Genesee allowed for milling operations and early industrialization to occur in the early 1800s and the construction of the Erie Canal in 1832 bolstered Rochester's position as a regional hub of industry. Bausch & Lomb, best known for their optical care products, was founded in the area in the 1850s, further developing the city's repertoire of industry into the field of medical instruments. Though Bausch & Lomb remained a large factor in Rochester's economy, the founding of the Eastman-Kodak company in 1888 made Rochester the nation's (and the world's) hub for the production and innovation of photographic equipment. In the following years, various other industries appeared in the area, most notably the automobile manufacturer Cunningham, which existed until 1936, and the General Motors Rochester Products Division, which has manufactured specialty automotive parts since 1939. Xerox (founded in 1906) was also a prominent player in Rochester's economy, particularly in the late 1950s. Despite the wide range of industrial operations in Rochester, the Eastman-Kodak Corporation was the region's leading employer by far, employing over 60,000 workers at its early 1980's peak, with Bausch & Lomb and Xerox completing the trio of Rochester's largest employers, known affectionately as the "Big Three"¹.

Industrialists George Eastman and Henry A. Strong were instrumental in the industries driving the city's significant industrial presence and developing the city's medical, academic, and cultural institutions. George Eastman bankrolled much of the University of Rochester and the Eastman School of Music, and Henry A. Strong funded much of the Strong Memorial Hospital. These philanthropic investments endowed the mid-sized region with world-class institutions.

A storm of decentralization began to brew in the region following WWII, when white flight and suburbanization began to siphon residents from the central city to suburbs like Greece and Pittsford; new limited-access highways were constructed throughout the city to facilitate this demand. Even though the City of Rochester itself was losing population, employment remained stable in the region with Xerox, Bausch & Lomb, and Kodak adding jobs in the postwar period.

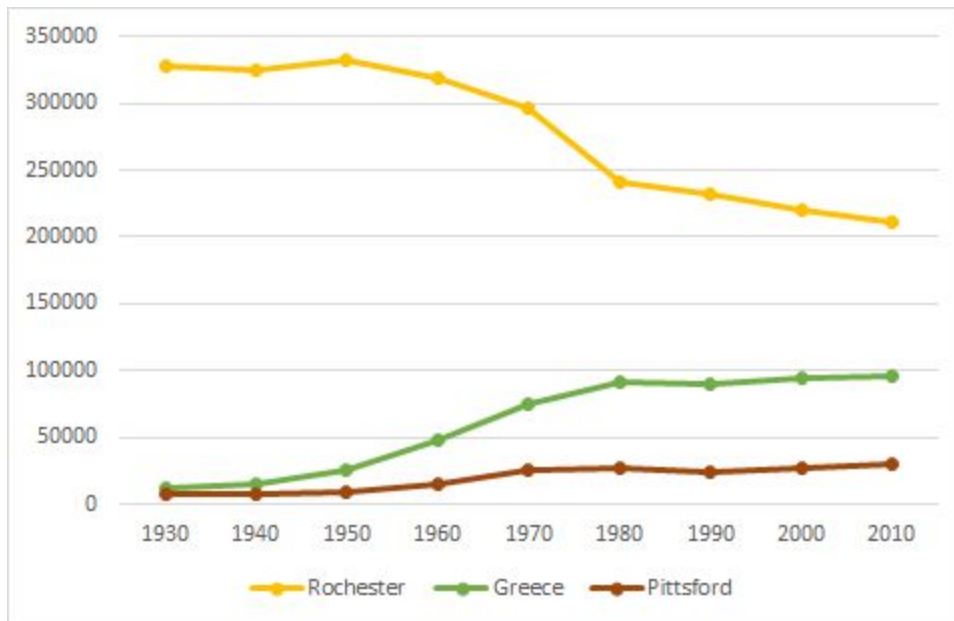
This growth became a stark decline after the 1980's, when the city's top employer, Kodak, began to rapidly lose market share and began to hemorrhage revenue. Despite having invented the digital camera, Kodak chose to continue its focus on film-based photography equipment and its competitors, like Fujifilm, Nikon, and Canon flourished in the American market. Though Kodak eventually made its foray into digital film, its competitor's products were far more advanced and affordable. As of 2016, Kodak, which once employed over 60,000, now employs 1,640 workers and is no longer one of the region's top ten employers². Xerox and Bausch & Lomb did not meet as grim a fate as Kodak, but each of the firms did move their headquarters to Norwalk, California, and Bridgewater, New Jersey, respectively^{3 4}. Both of these

¹ Owens, C. (2018, January 15). Can the City of Kodak and Xerox Rebuild Its Workforce for the Digital Age? Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://nextcity.org/features/view/can-the-city-of-kodak-and-xerox-rebuild-its-workforce-for-the-digital-age>

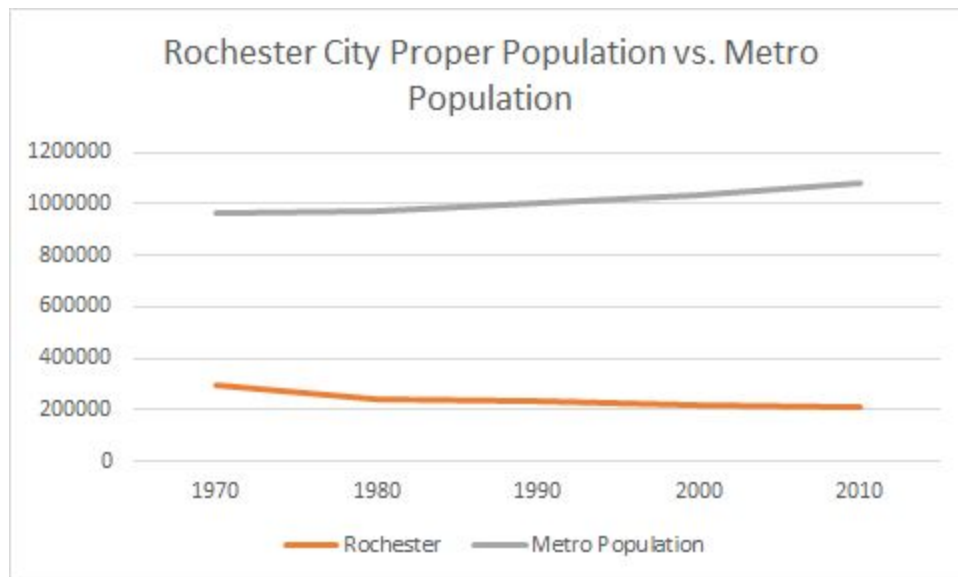
² Kodak's Rochester, NY workforce dips below 2,500. (2014, March 21). Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.bizjournals.com/albany/news/2014/03/21/kodaks-rochester-ny-workforce-dips-below-2-500.html>

³ Lahman, S. (2018, January 27). Xerox to leave downtown offices, relocate employees to Webster campus. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/money/2018/01/26/xerox-leave-downtown-offices-relocate-employees-webster-campus/106937600>

processes cut jobs in the Rochester area, yet both of these companies still maintain a presence in the area, albeit much less than at their peak.

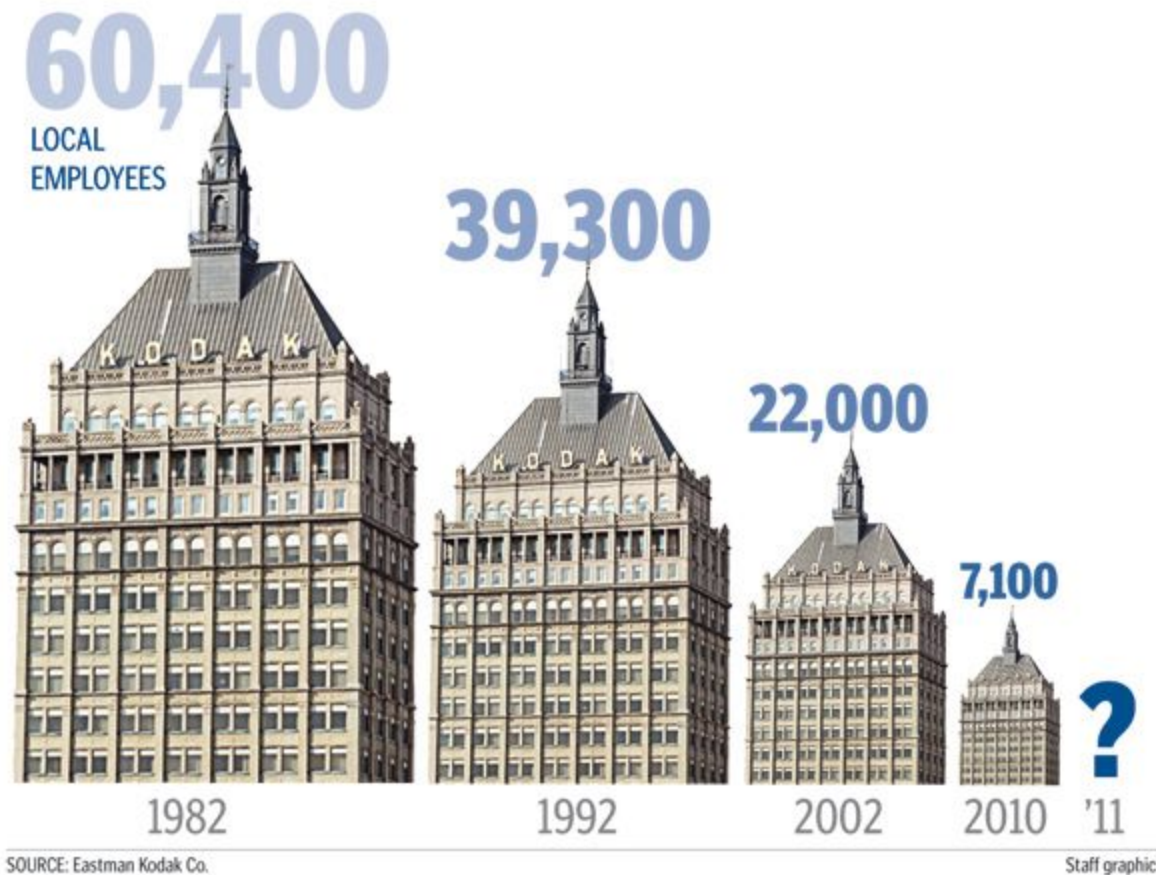


The pattern of suburbanization is evident in the Census figures of Rochester and suburban Pittsford and Greece. Note the small population declines between 1980-1990, much of this can be attributed to the beginning of Kodak's decline and layoffs.



Despite the decline of Rochester's population, the region continued marginal growth. Job decentralization and suburban growth were a large part of this growth. (Metropolitan area census data for Rochester was only measured following the 1970 census)

⁴ Daneman, M. (2013, July 30). Bausch Lomb moving headquarters to N.J., cutting jobs. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2013/07/30/bausch-lomb-valeant-takeover/2599413>



An image from Rochester's Democrat-Chronicle newspaper helps visualize just how rapid Kodak's decline was⁵

Economic impacts

The presence of an institution is an inherently attractive proposition for businesses seeking to tap into a wide talent pool of young, well-educated, tech-savvy professionals. Academic institutions, especially those with a pronounced research presence, generate economic activity that is not contingent on the geography of industry. Despite relative geographical isolation between some college towns and traditional, attractive urban areas, high-wage, white collar industry may often elect to put down roots in the college town, where access to research and young talent is guaranteed. The University of Illinois' Research Park, for example, has attracted over 110 companies through its proximity and partnership with a major research university and the availability of shared resources in its business incubator, despite Champaign's isolation from the traditional urban innovation hubs of Chicago, Indianapolis, and St. Louis⁶. Although many companies seeking young talent will set up shop in Chicago, as evidenced by the eight corporate headquarters set to relocate to Chicago's Loop, research

⁵ Koifman, V. (2011, February 3). Kodak to Sell CMOS Sensor Business? Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <http://image-sensors-world.blogspot.com/2011/02/kodak-to-sell-cmos-sensor-business.html>

⁶ About. (2018). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://researchpark.illinois.edu/about>

parks in places like Champaign or Iowa City attract research and development jobs and forge improved economic relations between the city and school⁷ ⁸. Rochester's role as a film photography hub no longer carries much economic activity with it and the region cannot piggyback off of the booming economy of a neighboring region or city like Providence and Boston or Martinsburg, West Virginia and Washington, DC--the whole area is in an economic slump, all of its neighboring upstate New York cities (Buffalo, Syracuse, and Niagara Falls) have seen sharp declines in population with the exodus of industry⁹ ¹⁰.

Rochester's academic institutions and associated medical facilities work to its advantage within the region. With a combined enrollment of roughly 30,000, RIT and University of Rochester students are a relatively large portion of Rochester's population 210,000. Together, these schools pony up roughly \$400 million for research. University of Rochester has the 68th highest university research budget in the nation, surpassing famed institutions like University of California, Irvine and Brown University. University of Rochester also has a proportionally higher impact (dollars of impact per student) than prestigious institutions like University of Michigan. The high level of research in this unassuming city continues past the academic scale; Bausch and Lomb's Research Institute and medical research conducted by Strong Memorial Hospital are some notable examples of the activity in the area.

The University of Rochester is close partners with the research divisions of Bausch & Lomb and Strong Memorial Hospital. U of R and RIT's presence in the area has been instrumental in the success of the Eastman Business Park, a business, tech, performing arts, and manufacturing incubator located in a repurposed Kodak factory and administration facility on the city's underserved north side¹¹. Kodak entered the real estate industry as sales declined and sought to repurposed property that no longer met its needs; bolstered by municipal tax breaks and a highly-trained, entrepreneurial student body, the Eastman Business Park has attracted roughly sixty tenants since its founding in 2007. In its campus master plan, the University of Rochester plans to further expand its brick and mortar research presence by establishing another research park and incubator just south of its current campus.

In the city's downtown area, the University of Rochester has worked to transform a large dry goods building into a second business incubator with commercial and residential features into Sibley Square. Sibley Square, which was funded by a combination of real estate developers, University of Rochester, and economic development grants from the State of New York. NextCorps, a venture capital firm operating as an extension of the university, is located in this building. NextCorps provides funding and incubator space for startups in various high-tech and STEM fields. The goal of the facility is to tap into the young talent from the region's major

⁷ Rios, C. (2018, April 27). These Are All the Recent Company HQ Moves to Chicago | UM. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://urbanmatter.com/chicago/company-hq-moves-chicago/>

⁸ Link, A. N. (2003, Fall). Real Numbers: University-Related Research Parks. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://issues.org/20-1/realnumbers-13/>

⁹ McVey, J. (2013, August 19). Martinsburg facing competition for economic development. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://www.journal-news.net/news/local-news/2013/08/martinsburg-facing-competition-for-economic-development/>

¹⁰ Raimondo, G. (2017). THE FUTURE OF PROVIDENCE & RHODE ISLAND. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.bisnow.com/events/boston/The-Future-of-Providence-Rhode-Island-824>

¹¹ Tobin, T. (2014, July 02). Eastman Business Park, incubator get tax-free zones. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/money/business/2014/07/01/eastman-business-park-ur-incubator-get-tax-free-zones/11920831/>

universities and generate a positive economic impact for the region through the creation of jobs and fostering entrepreneurship to make the region^{12 13}

Rochester Institute of Technology's business and technology incubator, just south of its campus, also maintains a few shared space offices in a mainly suburban form. Though not as glamorous as Sibley Square or Eastman Park, the incubator and research park is located in close proximity to the airport and many suburban office parks, facilitating cooperation between the institution and private firms.

The research presence of these institutions and the presence of a business incubator (though aided by tax breaks) have helped maintain a steady base of high-paying jobs in the region and, in some cases, even attracted new investment¹⁴. Despite its loss of blue collar employment, the city and retain a high amount of white collar jobs and its demographics exhibit this; Rochester was ranked the 38th highest educated city among the 150 largest in the nation by the Economic Policy Institute, edging out major cities like Philadelphia, Charlotte, and Indianapolis in the rankings¹⁵.

The success of city and university initiatives is palpable, yet the growth of jobs requiring a college degree may leave out a significant portion of Rochester's less-educated population. Prior to the collapse of Kodak and subsequent deindustrialization, those without college degrees could still land a well-paying, benefit-laden manufacturing job in one of the town's major production plants such as General Motors or Kodak, but following deindustrialization, a growing income disparity emerged¹⁶. This is the case for much of post-manufacturing America as income gaps increase with an ever-widening gap between high- and low- paying jobs and the disappearance of America's middle class in the face of rapidly vanishing manufacturing jobs.

Two separate worlds

Socially, Rochester's institutions exist in somewhat of a vacuum, segregated from much of the city through topographical features, isolating land uses, and geographical socioeconomic and racial patterns of neighborhoods. The University of Rochester is sandwiched between the Genesee River to its north and west, Mt. Hope Cemetery to the east, and its medical campus at Strong Memorial Hospital to its south in South Rochester city proper. Across the river is Rochester's 19th Ward, a stable neighborhood that is roughly 70% Black; its only direct connection to the University is via a pedestrian bridge, which has created a small cluster of student housing and student-oriented retail in the blocks surrounding the bridge's entry point¹⁷. The presence of modern buildings, funded primarily by the University of Rochester,

¹² Michaud, M., & Iglinski, P. (2018, February 19). New high-tech hub for entrepreneurship debuts in Sibley Square. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/nextcorps-new-high-tech-hub-entrepreneurship-debuts-sibley-square-299512>

¹³ About. (2018). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://sibleysquareroc.com/>

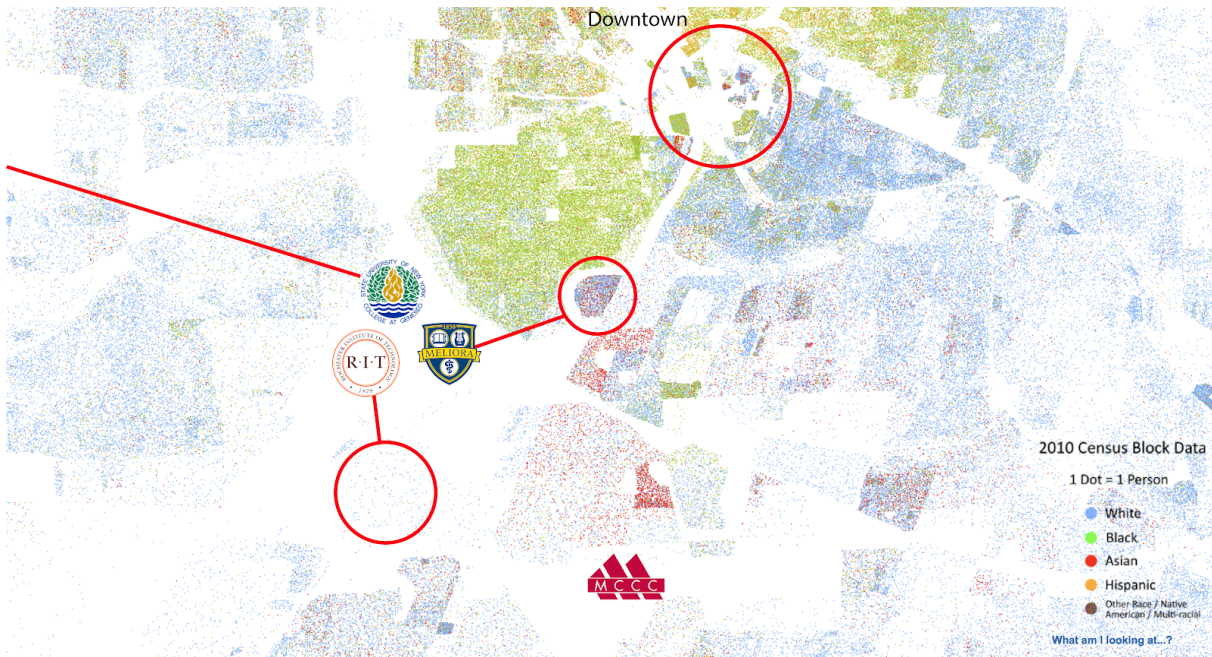
¹⁴ First New Photonics Company Making the Move to Eastman Business Park. (2017, March 31). Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.eastmanbusinesspark.com/news/first-new-photonics-company-making-the-move-to-eastman-business-park>

¹⁵ Wayne, B. (2017). 2017's Most & Least Educated Cities in America. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-and-least-educated-cities/6656/>

¹⁶ Yglesias, M. (2013, December 11). Deindustrialization and Inequality. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/12/11/deindustrialization_and_inequality_the_kuznets_curve_bends_again.html

¹⁷ 19th Ward, Rochester, NY Demographics. (2016). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://www.areavibes.com/rochester-ny/19th-ward/demographics/>

distinguishes this area from the rest of the ward which features modest historic homes and storefronts. Whereas the campus remains somewhat isolated from its surroundings, its adjoining medical center is much better integrated into the urban fabric of Rochester with twelve connecting bus routes compared to only one local, non-institution funded route that services the secluded campus¹⁸. This makes sense, as the Strong Memorial Hospital employs far more employees from across the region, but the lack of connections between the campus and region overall may be a force perpetuating a town-gown divide by limiting the city's access to campus itself.



Campus locations within a racial dot map show the prevalence of institutions in South Rochester, whereas the primarily Black, lower-income communities to the north have no institutional presence. Monroe Community College, the county's community college, which provides accessible, affordable education, is also situated in the less-dense, more-white, southern section of the town. Source: University of Virginia Racial Dot Map¹⁹

Both the history and future plans of the University of Rochester paint a clearer picture of the town-gown relationship. When the University moved to the newly-opened main campus 1930, the university sought to capitalize on the scenery of the Genesee River and the adjacent Mount Hope Cemetery (one of the nation's first landscaped municipal cemeteries), rather than locate near the city's population centers. As the institution continued its growth, its focus became more oriented towards recruiting talented students from afar, both domestically and internationally, than serving the Genesee Valley region. U of R sought to bolster its attractiveness to prospective students in 1986 by removing the name "Rochester" from the

¹⁸ RTS System Map [Digital image]. (2017, April 3). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.myrts.com/Portals/0/Schedules/RTS-System-Map-April-3-2017.pdf>

¹⁹ Racial Dot Map. (2016). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <http://demographics.virginia.edu/DotMap/>

University's title, proposing renaming the institution "Eastman University," as the City of Rochester conjures images of a "cold, distant outpost" and the prestigious character of the university is cheapened by the inclusion of its hometown in the name²⁰. Although U of R never changed its name, the institution's 1995 Renaissance Plan sought to strengthen programs, gradually admit fewer students, and introduce a focus on the campus' residential character, furthering the U of R's long-time goals of promoting itself to the academic elite, but gradually excluding many of the Genesee Valley residents in process, either intentionally or unintentionally.



University of Rochester's three points of entry keep the campus isolated within the city. (Source: University image)

²⁰ Winerip, M. (1986, February 25). OUR TOWNS; CHANGE OF IMAGE IN 'COLD AND DISTANT OUTPOST'. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/02/25/nyregion/our-towns-change-of-image-in-cold-and-distant-outpost.html>



The University of Rochester's 2008 campus master plan indicates an aggressive expansion strategy including two entire new campuses. As shown in the master plan, green spaces and other physical barriers appear to isolate the campus from its surroundings.

Unlike 1995 Renaissance Plan, which reaffirmed the institution's intentions to remain small and exclusive, the 2008 University Master Plan outlined an aggressive expansion program along the campus' southern peripheries²¹. The expansion plan was not simply focused on academic and medical expansion, but also called for new private housing, office space, and retail offerings. The Mount Hope Development, a redevelopment of a former asylum site adjacent to the Strong Medical Campus, featuring apartments, retail, and a Hilton Garden Inn Hotel, is the first phase of the master plan to be built and the student-oriented, mixed-use mini-neighborhood. The completion of the neighborhood in 2013 signified a tangible shift in the University's local presence, becoming a force in local real estate alongside its role as an institutional and research and development hub. Rochester's new "college town" is by no means unique, universities across the nation have recently taken an interests in the development of their campuses, seeking to make a more enticing environment for prospective students. Drexel University in Philadelphia is currently in the midst of a building boom, wherein partnerships with private developers have led to an influx of mixed-use, pseudo-institutional developments around its campus, the University of Chicago recently announced new residences and a privately-owned hotel along its southern campus fringes, even public institutions like the rural University of Connecticut have backed private, mixed-use projects to improve the attractiveness and vibrancy of the underdeveloped campus area^{22 23 24}. These partnerships drawn up by universities and developers and the blurring of the lines between institution and developer are a recent phenomenon and has been criticized for favoring the will of the institution, rather than the needs of the community²⁵. The imbalance of power has the potential to cause friction between academic and community interests and the construction of more centralized, amenity rich "college towns" further limits the amount of interaction between students and the general public

²⁶.

Rochester Institute of Technology, in south suburban Henrietta, sits on a 1,300 acre campus with a buffer of woodlands, physically separating the campus from the surrounding area, save for a few access roads. The urban form nearby is similar--forests and the occasional small tract of single-family homes. RIT, which was forced to move in 1968 after the City of Rochester announced that routing of the Inner Loop sunken expressway would require the demolition of much of the campus, settled on an expansive suburban location. Immediately following its relocation, the Institute gained national acclaim as the site of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf and it became a hub for the digital imaging, engineering, and computing disciplines. Despite hosting a student body of almost 20,000, only one bus line services the

²¹ *University of Rochester: 2008 Campus Master Plan*(Rep.). (2008). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from University of Rochester website: http://www.rochester.edu/adminfinance/masterplan/ExecutiveSummary_10-17-08.pdf

²² Fang, H. (2017, June 16). Universities Are Increasingly Asking Private Developers To Build Their Student Housing. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bisnow/2017/06/16/universities-are-increasingly-asking-private-developers-to-build-their-student-housing>

²³ Koziarz, J. (2017, May 12). University of Chicago to build 15-story hotel near Obama Library. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://chicago.curbed.com/2017/5/12/15630122/obama-library-hotel-development-the-study-university-chicago>

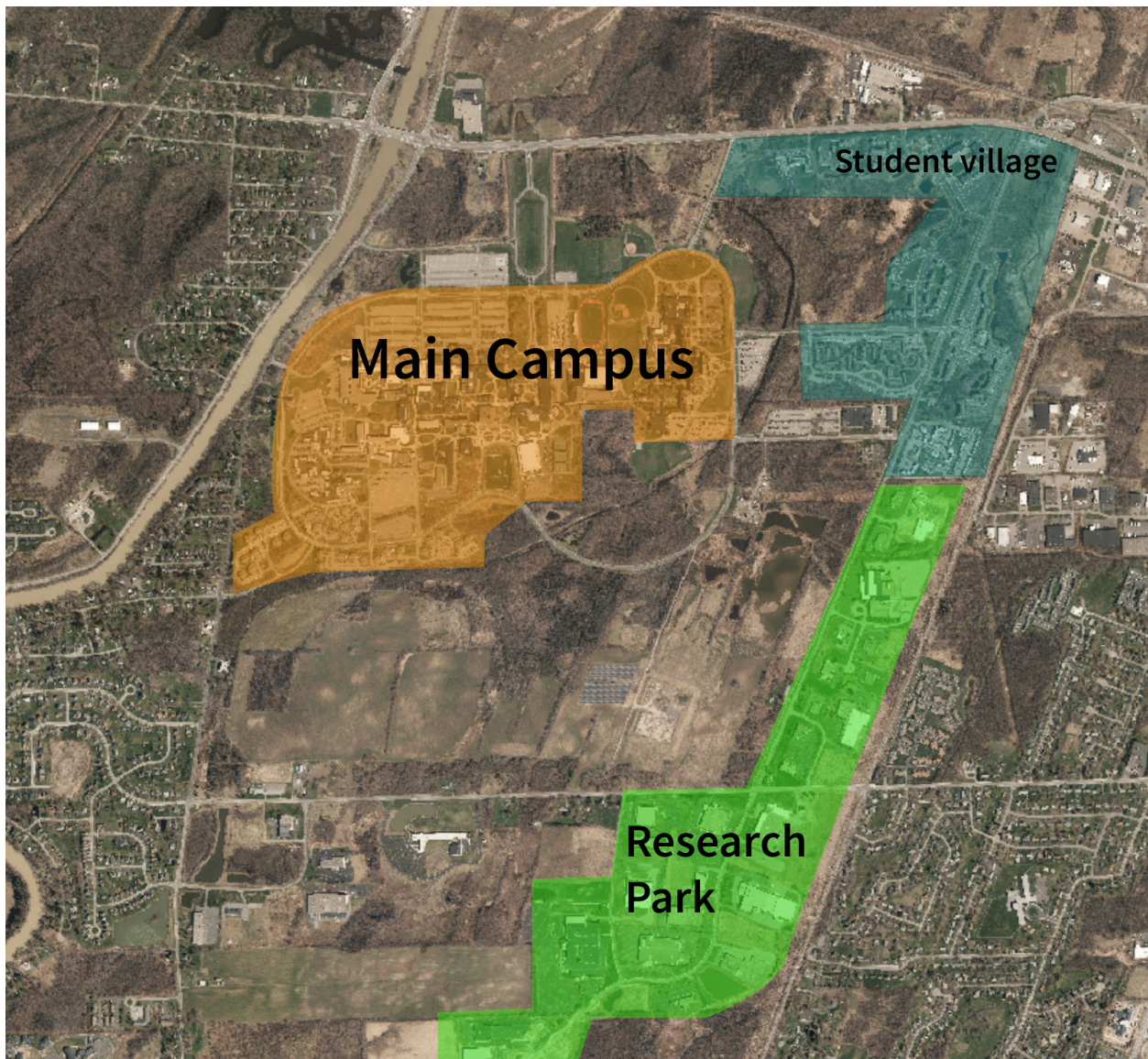
²⁴ Storrs Center Case Study. (2016, December 05). Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://casestudies.uli.org/storrs-center/>

²⁵ Calder, A., & Greenstein, R. (2001, July 01). Universities as Developers. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.lincolinst.edu/publications/articles/universities-developers>

²⁶ Prince, G. S., Jr. (2003, July 01). Principles for College and Community Interactions. Retrieved May 10, 2018, from <https://www.lincolinst.edu/publications/articles/principles-college-community-interactions>

university and it primarily passes through the city's wealthier neighborhoods on its route from RIT to Downtown.

Per the RIT Master Plan of 2002, the campus also sought to create a more mixed-use campus environment mainly consisting of apartments and retail offering on the edges of its campus along main arterial roads. Currently, there are some suburban, low-rise apartments and a few freestanding restaurants, but the implementation has not been as ambitious as its northern neighbor²⁷.



Through natural features like forests and open prairie, RIT's campus remains isolated from much of the region's urban form. (Source: Monroe County, NY GIS Portal)

²⁷ Rochester Institute of Technology Campus Master Plan(Rep.). (2002). Retrieved May 11, 2018, from Bayer Landscape Architect website: <http://www.bayerla.com/rit-campus-master-plan-1/>

The presence and prominence of business, tech, and manufacturing incubators at RIT, Sibley Square, and Eastman Park furthers the institutional goals of creating “the next Silicon Valley” by developing clusters of specialized, high-paying industry within the region. However, these facilities may have little impact for much of Rochester’s residents who, by in large, are not college educated and lack the resources to perform such an undertaking²⁸. These incubators have been successful in developing startups and increasing the stock of high-tech industry in the area but fail to address the massive barriers to social mobility.

Juxtaposed to Rochester’s prestigious private institutions, the city’s public school system, Rochester Public School District, has become increasingly inadequate for the education of Rochester’s youth. The school district has a student body of roughly 30,000, of which 75% are classified as “poor.” The inadequacy of the city’s public schools has resulted in a high demand for private education from those with the means to afford it; Rochester’s population is 37% white, yet only 11% of Rochester’s school children are white, this speaks to socioeconomic inequalities among different racial groups and subsequent differences in quality of education. Historically less-affluent racial groups attend these schools at higher rates; for example, Rochester is 41% Black, yet 66% of Rochester Public School’s enrollment is Black.

Currently the school district is facing a budget shortfall of \$68 million and another round of budget cuts and cost-saving measures is planned²⁹. The lack of investment in the city’s education system is telling and it is reflected in the district’s performance index of 31 out of a possible 200, the median for all state districts is 100. The district’s graduation rate of 51.9% is the lowest among all urban districts in the state of New York. Outside Rochester city proper, the story is much different, the affluent, white suburban districts of Brighton, Fairport, and Pittsfield all have graduation rates at or above 95% and are ranked as some of the state’s best school districts. Aside from Rochester, almost all of the region’s school districts are well above the State of New York’s 80.2% graduation rate^{30 31}.

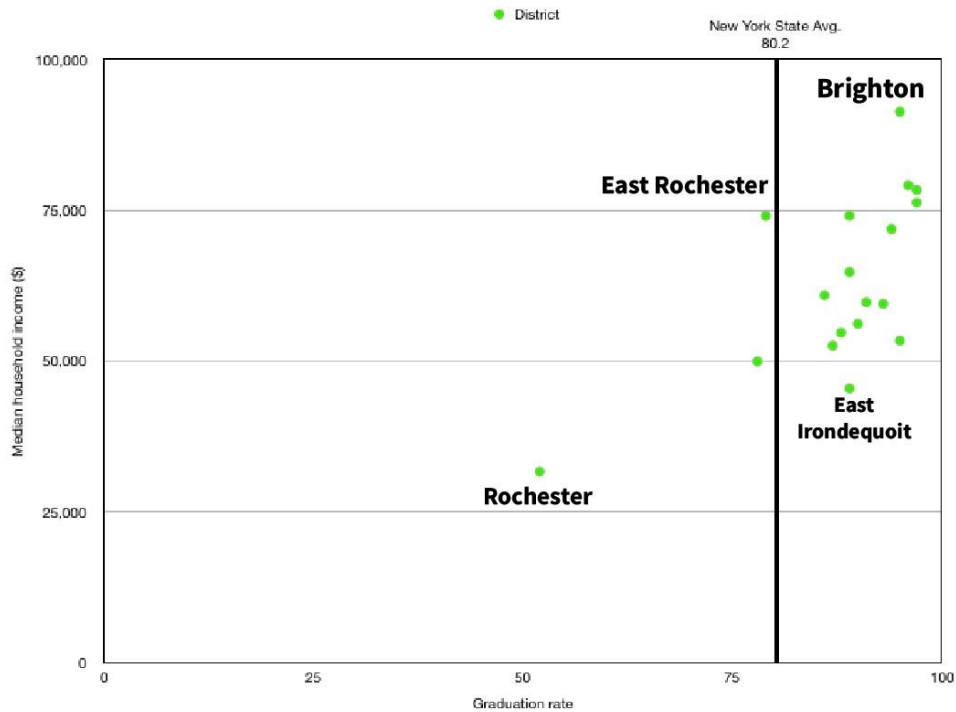
²⁸ Mitra, S. (2014, August 07). The Problems with Incubators, and How to Solve Them. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://hbr.org/2013/08/the-problems-with-incubators-a>

²⁹ New York School Test Scores: Rochester City School District. (2017). Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/new-york-schools-test-scores/counties/monroe/districts/rochester-city-school-district>

³⁰ Molineaux, C. (2018, February 27). Rochester City Schools face \$65 million deficit. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <http://www.whec.com/news/rcsd-budget-deficit-2018/4805679/>

³¹ Spector, J., & Murphy, J. (2018, February 07). RCSD June graduation rate increases to 51.9 percent; still worst among Big 5. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2018/02/07/rcsd-graduation-rate-increases-51-9-percent-still-worst-among-big-5/315050002/>

Rochester Area School District Graduation Rates and District Median Income



Regionally, one's income and location have a large effect on their potential academic success. Noticing this pattern, Rochester's median household income of \$32,474 and its public school graduation rate of 52% is no surprise. Academic success follows wealth in this region. Source: point2pointhomes School District Database

Town-gown relationships elsewhere

Town-gown relationships elsewhere in the nation have been equally as contentious. Pittsburgh's Carnegie-Mellon University, Duquesne University, and University of Pittsburgh have been credited with aiding the region's recovery after the collapse of the steel industry and fostering new tech and healthcare industries. In the same vein, Detroit's lack of major, private research universities has been studied as a possible factor that is hindering the city's recovery³².

Even now, Pittsburgh is continuing to add jobs, most notably in the business and healthcare sectors, signifying an uptick in the economy that can likely be at least somewhat attributed to its universities³³. Despite this economic growth, its income disparity has only

³² Pope, J. (2013, July 27). Could a Private University Have Made a Difference in Detroit? Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/07/could-a-private-university-have-made-a-difference-in-detroit/278148/>

³³ Year-Over-Year Job Growth. (2018, March). Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <http://pittsburghtoday.org/indicators/economy/job-growth/year-over-year-job-growth/>

widened in recent times, signifying that the presence of universities may not be the an effective means of closing regional disparities and bringing about equity³⁴.

Other locations, like Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood, have experienced rapid institutional expansion with little of the benefit. The southward expansion of the private University of Chicago into the working-class, mostly Black neighborhood paired with the future Barack Obama Presidential Library has raised concerns about the future of the neighborhood and the effects of possible gentrification. Though census data have shown that the neighborhood has been attracting many Black families, fears have arisen that a new residence hall and university-operated hotel in the neighborhood will increase the demand for private student housing in the area, thus raising rents and pushing out many existing inhabitants³⁵. Despite the university's expansion, which may have a positive effect regionally, the neighborhood of Woodlawn still suffers from poverty, crime, and disenfranchisement³⁶. As universities continue to expand, stories like Woodlawn's repeat themselves with few variations, but in many cases it is too early to assess the regional or local benefits of these projects.

An analysis of town-gown relations begs the question: what is the institution's responsibility towards its hometown? Especially in the case of private institutions, there is no legally-binding contractual agreement, nor are there any benchmarks for properly facilitating relations. Even in the case of public institutions, campus growth can adversely affect a city; Texas State University in San Marcos, for example, has doubled its campus population since 2000, adding 20,000 students, which has put strain on the city's existing housing stock and resulted in rapid land acquisition³⁷. Both public and private campuses can implement exclusionary tactics that further delineate social and physical boundaries between the town and the gown. College campuses have been lamented for acting as a gentrifying force in surrounding areas and social tension can further be exacerbated by socioeconomic and class differences between the two populations. Perhaps there is no university handbook on being a good neighbor, each institution has its own definition of and commitment to community outreach. But without oversight, how can universities be kept in check? How does one weigh the positive impacts of a local institution against its wrongdoings in the community? Do positive impacts, economic or otherwise, justify some of these institutions' detrimental practices? As American universities continue to grow, these questions, still without a definitive answer, become evermore pressing.

Conclusion and possible policy implementations

There is no widely-accepted best practice for a harmonious town-gown relationship. Maintaining a social and economic synergy between municipalities, regions, and institutions is a

³⁴ Grant, T. (2018, February 22). Report finds racial wealth gap hasn't recovered to pre-Great Recession levels. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <http://www.post-gazette.com/business/money/2018/02/22/Repor-finds-racial-wealth-gap-hasn-t-recovered-to-pre-Great-Recession-levels/stories/201802210155>

³⁵ Cholke, S. (2018, January 25). University of Chicago makes good on promise of Hogwarts-style dorm life. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://chicago.curbed.com/2018/1/25/16932984/university-chicago-new-dorm-opening-transform-woodlawn>

³⁶ Emmanuel, A. (2017, November 07). In Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood, untapped economic opportunity. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <http://www.chicagoreporter.com/in-chicagos-woodlawn-neighborhood-untapped-economic-opportunity/>

³⁷ McGraw, D. J. (2016, April 18). The College That Ate a City. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://nextcity.org/features/view/san-marcos-fastest-growing-city-texas-state-university-affordable-housing>

balancing act riddled with conflicting interests and regional power structures. The Rochester area is has both prestigious private research universities and a public school system that remains constantly strapped for cash and performs well below the standards set by the State of New York. This divide in education quality is also noticeable in along geographic lines; suburban school districts in Rochester's wealthier suburbs consistently rank among the best in the state while Rochester City Schools are drastically underperforming.

A possible remedy to this would be a town-gown partnership that allows for Rochester City School District students to reap some of the benefits of the institutions in their backyard. A possible benchmark for this partnership is Northwestern's "Good Neighbor, Great University Initiative," wherein the university offers scholarships to high-performing students in its hometowns of Evanston and Chicago. In 2015, the university awarded almost \$3 million in scholarships to 327 students. Alongside that, the university maintained an academic office at Evanston Township High School, offered tutoring for Evanston high school students, and allowed for students who have excelled in the academic courses (and taken all possible honors or advanced placement courses in a given subject) at the high school to participate in university courses³⁸.

Replicating this process in Rochester would involve the opening of a handful of UR/RIT outposts in the city schools, potentially high schools with the highest need. Here, university students, either as employees or volunteers, could assist in tutoring programs and offer their expertise. For gifted students in the Rochester City School system, the ability to enroll in partially-subsidized, college-level classes at each either university and coordination within existing school schedules would allow students to reach their full academic potential and potentially take fewer classes in college, having received credit from a university, making higher education more accessible financially. Lastly, a scholarship program for Rochester students would help the universities and city harness its own local talent, and these students may be more likely to remain in the region. The high research activity and knowledgeable student body at both of the institutions can help Rochester's high school students learn basic computer programming skills, a skill that can help residents tap into the growing tech industry and a skill that is becoming more valuable overall. As the universities fuel the growth of high-tech and "new manufacturing" jobs in the area, a more educated populace can make the area an attractive location for firms seeking to expand, in turn making the area (and its universities) more attractive for prospective students and professionals.

Potential funding sources remain uncertain. However, one could make the argument that University of Rochester (endowment: \$2.3 billion) and RIT (endowment: \$750 million) could stand to spare a few million and use this program as good PR. Consistent funding from Rochester City Schools, which now faces a \$68 million budget shortfall, may be improbable, but the school system could aid in the construction of facilities, transportation of students to UR or RIT, and training of student tutors. State funding may also encourage the universities' participation with funding for this pilot project. In the case of Northwestern, much of the "Good Neighbor, Great University" plan was wholly funded by the University, possibly to restore the

³⁸ Kotecki, P. (2015, December 04). Good Neighbor, Great University initiative grows. Retrieved May 11, 2018, from <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2015/12/04/campus/good-neighbor-great-university-initiative-grows>

opinion of Evanston residents following an aggressive \$1 billion expansion project, but the institution now prides itself on the initiative.

Alongside this outreach program from the city's private institutions, a better relationship between the area's publicly-funded Monroe Community College and SUNY-Brockport and the city's high schools can also help widen the horizons of Rochester's students. Monroe Community College maintains a robust trade school that can prepare students for blue-collar, yet well-paying, employment. A more streamlined process, especially regarding credits and academic standing, between Rochester's schools and Monroe Community College will make community college more accessible and reduce the daunting pricetag that comes with a college education. While there are tangible benefits from a more integrated public education system from secondary to post-secondary levels, these colleges are limited financially and logistically and private university outreach remains a more effective option.

Through Sibley Square and Eastman Park, the University of Rochester has once again started to reinvest its capital and talent in its hometown of Rochester, a city that they believe once cheapened their name as an institution. Perhaps it and RIT can double-down on their institutional commitment to their namesake city. A partnership would be more than just "good PR," but a commitment to the growth of the city in tandem with university growth. A commitment to make Rochester more than a "cold, distant outpost."