



Legislation Text

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Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Program - Rochester NY (B)

On June 12, 2006, the City Commission referred the issue of Rochester's "Neighbors Building Neighborhoods" program to the Equal Opportunity Committee for review and report back to the full City Commission within 60 days.

The Mayor of Rochester, New York appointed a Commission on Race and Ethnicity and charged them with the task of eliminating racism in the community. They implemented a program titled "Biracial Partnerships for Community Progress" which matched business and civic leaders of different races and ethnic groups. These partners committed to meeting 16 times over the course of a year, supplemented by seven cluster group meetings of ten to twelve partners. Each cluster group had a trained coach. The program began with a large group meeting at the beginning of the year and ends with a final group meeting at the end of the year to celebrate their new friends and understandings. 82% of the participants completed the program. The program began with community leaders change makers and the plan was to increase the number of participants to 500 in early 2005 and to 1000 during 2006.

The Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (NBN) process was initiated in March 1994, and it divided the City of Rochester into ten planning sector areas. The NBN process enables residents, business people, and organizations to be the "planners" for their neighborhoods. Each sector has a committee that has been encouraged to involve businesses, institutions, the faith community, youth and senior citizen population among others. City efforts have focused on promoting diversity within the sector committees. The City of Rochester, Rochester City School District, neighborhood associations, businesses, private and parochial schools, churches, agencies, community groups, Monroe County, foundations and corporations are just some examples of those involved. Each planning sector group organized itself, created vision statements, identified neighborhood issues, priorities, and developed action plans to realize their goals.

The City Commission encourage consideration of similar programs as potential outcomes of Race Relations Summit on September 6-7, 2006.