



# ROSELAND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT STUDY

**CORRIDOR FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION**

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Corridor for Collective Action

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This document features a first-person account of an individual who does engagement work at the community level and provides his reflections on his experiences. The opinions presented here are those of the author, and publication through IPCE does not indicate endorsement of the views, opinions, or ideas shared.

### **Acknowledgements**

I want to first thank God for this opportunity to compile information about Roseland, my childhood neighborhood.

To my wife and children: I would like to thank you for your acquiescence and unconditional love.

To the best Starbuck's Coffee this side of Heaven: Your hospitality at the Chatham Ridge location (160 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St.) is exceptional.

“Greatness is done on purpose . . . and it’s practiced.”  
–Robert Douglas

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## **Abstract**

The greater Roseland area is a diverse community of activists, parents, entrepreneurs, and civic-minded individuals working toward the common goal of community betterment. However, it is also an area plagued by violence, unemployment, and community blight due to many internal and external factors. This report examines the key community organizations and leaders in Roseland and provides a first-hand account of the community assets and opportunities available. It also identifies recommendations for further assessment and improvement of the community. Robert Douglas, a lifelong Roseland resident and community advocate, authored this report.

## **Introduction**

The scope of this report is to examine the internal, external, and socioeconomic factors affecting the greater Roseland area, its residents, institutions, and faith-based and community-based organizations with regard to regional civic engagement and dialogue. This report will set forth recommendations for methods and best practices with which to establish civic engagement processes in an effort to improve the quality of life of Greater Roseland constituents.

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and myself, an Independent Research Consultant from the S.O.N. Foundation, collaborated to conceptualize and develop an empirical report studying civic engagement in Greater Roseland. I have been engaging with residents in the greater Roseland community for over 15 years and founded the S.O.N Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit community-based organization committed to S.O.N. (Saving Our Neighborhood) one block at a time through research and policy advocacy. S.O.N Foundation members develop projects to stimulate community engagement, promote self-determination, rehabilitate fragmented community structures, and restore positive self-images in its citizens. Joseph Hoereth, Director of the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement at UIC, commissioned the Roseland Civic Engagement Study.

Greater Roseland is an area with much potential and many needs. This dichotomy often places the area on the radar of organizations and interest groups that seem to serve dual purposes: to aid in the improvement of the community and/or to exert their own agendas focused on institutional results. Many of the collaborative efforts proposed in the greater Roseland area come in the form of advisory councils, committees, or task forces imitating community engagement efforts. In most cases, the results are false promises of economic growth and neighborhood safety that actually only improve the economic growth of the outside agency.

I have been a member of several institutional groups that have engaged Greater Roseland with the intent to show community engagement but in fact led to community blight. Here are some of the initiatives in which I have participated:

- Roseland Neighborhood Housing Advisory Council
- Greater Roseland Safety Networks Coalition
- Windy City Habitat Neighborhood Development Committee
- Gately Park Advisory Council
- Far Southside Community Action Council
- Roseland Collaboration and Resident Empowerment Advisory Council
- Chicago State University President Obama Library/Museum Committee

I pursued these efforts with the intention of creating substantial change in the lives of Greater Roseland inhabitants; however, all of the listed initiatives had little to no impact on the quality of life of community members. Whereas these agencies and institutions sought out my input and opinions at the outset of the studies and/or initiatives, my passion for the community and drive for the greater good of its residents caused me to ask the difficult questions (e.g., How many residents were impacted? Were local vendors hired for the project?), which often led to ostracism by the organizers. The tepid, and sometimes nonexistent, responses to valid questions proved that the purported honorable intentions reported were not in the best interest of the greater Roseland community.

Given these repeated experiences, I am exploring other options to engage and aid the community through this report. A genuine civic engagement narrative must be developed to expose the body politic---the counterfeit sense of getting along just to move initiatives forward---being established through supposed strategic partnerships. Toward this end, I began exploring



opportunities through which Greater Roseland residents could participate in genuine civic engagement dialogue. Over the past five years, I have participated in various initiatives in an effort to enlist the support of Greater Roseland stakeholders. The initiatives cover many areas of need, from violence prevention to environmental impact:

- South Area Civic League
- Roseland Preparatory Academy
- Roseland Colts Elementary Football Team
- Roseland African American Male Achievement
- Far Southside Workforce Development Collaborative
- Far Southside Second Chance Act Coalition
- Corridor for Collective Action

These efforts engaged many families despite the fact that they were met with opposition from politicians and other leaders. Although there was a fair-to-moderate level of success, politicians and other leaders usually dismantled critical civic engagement initiatives before Greater Roseland stakeholders could gather requisite information. As my involvement in institution-driven initiatives continued, I noticed that involved residents never challenged the system. However, due to my engagement, over the past five years I have been blackballed from career opportunities and involvement in social change in Greater Roseland, and I have also been targeted as an agitator by the established body politic.

It is important to note that this report is the product of both my observations and life experiences—a first-person ethnography. Because this is an empirical report, the information within was captured by me and sifted through the lens of my personal experiences. I made the transition from gang member to college graduate, all within Greater Roseland, which gave me

influence in and a broader knowledge of the community. To provide an authentic view of Greater Roseland, I present the voice of the people through interviews conducted with the following: Roseland Business Development Council; Roseland African American Male Achievement Coalition; community-based organization executive directors; community residents; and neighborhood associations. All interviews consisted of the same questions; however, I also held genuine conversations with the purpose of capturing a more in-depth community narrative.

The purpose of this report is to introduce methods of deliberate practice and effective civic engagement processes into the greater Roseland community. This report considers possible methods for Greater Roseland stakeholders to engage one another in decision-making and/or community planning initiatives. The scope of work involved gathering empirical information from people most affected by Greater Roseland's critical issues. The report incorporates information about Greater Roseland's historical context, leading institutions and organizations, influential residents and activists, key neighborhood assets, and challenges and threats to neighborhood stability and community cohesion. Though some organizations and persons declined to participate in interviews, their efforts and impacts on Greater Roseland are presented in this report.

This report compiles information regarding Greater Roseland's assets and opportunities; it examines best practices in building genuine community partnerships; and finally, it makes recommendations for stakeholders to recognize and appreciate community strengths, including human capital. In building human capital, all of the parties involved with community revitalization must be committed to building healthy places within Greater Roseland.

### Historical Background

The residents of the greater Roseland area take great pride in their communities, their history, and the culture their communities foster. They value their communities as places for

gathering, raising families, and creating lifelong cultural norms. Roseland's history as well as its culture must be understood for a study like this.

In 1873, James H. Bowen, president of the Calumet and Chicago Canal and Dock Company, suggested the name Roseland for the tidy village with its beautiful flowers. In 1879, George Pullman founded Greater Roseland when he started designing the Town of Pullman, which is now a neighborhood within Greater Roseland. In 1896, Pullman was designated the world's most perfect town at the Prague International Hygienic and Pharmaceutical Exposition because of its beautiful architectural design. The Town of Pullman was thriving in the mid-to-late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century with the manufacturing of railroad cars. In fact, Pullman was home to the manufacturing of the Sleeping Car. However, the inflation of the 1970s followed by the collapse of the steel and automotive industries in the 1980s left many of Roseland's families without jobs, which effectively halted upward mobility. White flight, the overnight turnover of population, led to the downfall of community institutions that had helped residents in earlier times, and those that managed to survive were not established enough to carry the burden of an underemployed and overwhelmed community (Historic Pullman Foundation 2017).

Presently, Roseland's 111<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor is the gateway to its many neighborhoods. Additionally, Roseland Medical District, Historic Pullman Park, 5<sup>th</sup> District Police Station, and access to the Bishop Ford & Interstate 57 Expressways are all within a 10 mile stretch of it.

The Greater Roseland community has been without a genuine social contract—where the community buys into nonverbal social norms—for over 30 years. A steadily decreasing population has not helped in rebuilding a social contract. According to the 2010 census, Roseland's population decreased by 10,000 residents. As 2020 approaches, residents, business

owners, and community stakeholders must examine and implement strategic and deliberative processes to sustain the social and economic capital of the community. Developing a strategic civic engagement plan for Greater Roseland is of the utmost importance.

## **Interviews**

Drawing from candid interviews and discussions, this section examines specific businesses and developments of Greater Roseland in order to provide greater perspective on the particular challenges facing the area.

### Roseland Business District Down Zoned

The Roseland Business Development Council, founded by John D. Edwards in 1979, was the original Chamber of Commerce in Roseland. As the owner of Edwards Clothing Store located at 11363 South Michigan Avenue, Edwards recruited other area business owners who started their companies around the same time to be a part of the council. Roseland's commercial corridor along Michigan Avenue between 103<sup>rd</sup> and 119<sup>th</sup> Streets was once bustling with consumers from all over the far Southside. Currently, Roseland's Michigan Avenue commercial corridor does not represent the surrounding area, as Black businesses only make up 10% of the corridor and Alderman Beale is downzoning many vacant storefronts. I discussed the past and present state of business in Greater Roseland with three of the oldest business owners of the area. The following are paraphrased accounts taken from the interviews and discussions.

Edmund Scott, Roseland Business Development Council President and owner of Scott Enterprises, believes that Roseland's political leadership is not concerned with black business development. According to Scott, Alderman Beale of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward attempted to sabotage his

business—the only structure on the southeast corner of 115<sup>th</sup> and Michigan Avenue—during the 2015 tax season, which is the busiest period of the year.

After the death of his father, John D. Edward, Ladell Edward inherited the family business and took up the mantle as a business leader in Roseland. As Executive Director of the Roseland Business Development Council, Edward echoed Scott's sentiments, arguing that Roseland's truncated leadership is hurting local businesses; businesses do not come into Roseland because they do not see a return on their investment. He went on to say that other ethnicities do not travel to Roseland because of the community's high crime rates.

Bass Furniture's owner, Edward Davis, has one of the oldest black-owned businesses along Roseland's commercial strip on Michigan Avenue. According to Davis, the political leadership's lack of business savvy is preventing businesses from moving to the strip. One of the biggest threats to the business district is the Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI) clients, of whom 90% have substance abuse issues. HRDI provides methadone to individuals looking to overcome heroin addictions. In most instances, this population does not seek to end their habit; rather, they're looking for an early morning fix. This early morning gathering of drug addicts is sending bad messages to the youth who attend Curtis Elementary School located directly behind the facility and hurting local businesses. Many of the black retail businesses are suffering due to the lack of investment and beautification along the corridor. When asked to name some of the challenges facing the Greater Roseland commercial district, the Roseland Business Development Council's response was unanimous: Alderman Anthony Beale and his lack of support for local black businesses.

The conversation did not end with the negative experiences with the Alderman. These shrewd businessmen went on to discuss the possibilities that exist within the community. They

pointed out the strength and potential in Roseland's transportation infrastructure. With its proximity to the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra stations, and major highway systems, businesses along the corridor could and should be thriving. To build a self-sustaining infrastructure, whether it is commercial, residential, or institutional, internal stakeholders must be fully vested in the vision.

S. B. Friedman Development Advisors is a real estate and development advisory firm specializing in development strategies and public-private partnerships. Founded in 1990 S.B. Friedman Development Advisors work with public, private, and institutional clients to grow organizations. They developed a comprehensive strategic plan for Greater Roseland in October of 1999. Current business leaders must revisit that plan and develop a regional marketing plan for the commercial corridor

### Zombie Properties

A strange dichotomy unique to Greater Roseland exists with regard to housing and home ownership. The Roseland community has one of Chicago's highest home ownership rates despite the alarming number of abandoned properties, and at the same time has one of the highest rates of "red flag homes" in Chicago. West Pullman, a neighborhood of Greater Roseland, boasts the highest rate of African American home ownership in Chicago. Given this information, the City of Chicago decided to invest in its housing stock in hopes of repopulating this once robust community with the launch of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) in 2006.

According to the City of Chicago's official website, "The City was awarded a total of \$153 million in NSP funds to assist 29 community areas affected by foreclosure" (City of Chicago

"Neighborhood Stabilization Program" 2017). Through the NSP program and the TIF-Purchase

Rehab Initiative, subsidy money was readily available for potential and current residents to buy or rehab a home in a Micro Market Recovery Program (MMRP) area. “MMRP is a neighborhood stabilization initiative targeting small geographic areas that are experiencing higher-than-normal problems with foreclosures” (City of Chicago “Micro Market Recovery Program” 2017). Through these funding streams, the City also had forgivable loans available to help current owner-occupants make home repairs. Though these revenue streams existed with the intent of improving residences and making home ownership affordable for residents, the lack of integral leadership and community engagement stifled the efforts of the NSP and TIF programs.

The state of the housing crisis reached peak levels, prompting the Woodstock Institute to publish an article about the City’s red flag foreclosures. Red flag foreclosures (where a legal foreclosure process has been filed and has not been completed) are disproportionately concentrated in Chicago’s black communities and often on particular blocks (Smith and Duda 2011). This raises the question of why the third largest city in the country has allowed so many foreclosures to go unresolved, leaving a concentration of vacant properties across disenfranchised neighborhoods such as Roseland.

The Woodstock Institute report on red flag foreclosures put out in 2011 found the following:

Over 71 percent of red flag homes are concentrated in African-American communities, compared to only 6.5 percent in predominantly White communities. African-American communities are 11 times more likely to have a red flag home. They are also three times more likely to have a foreclosed property and six times more likely to have a vacant building than are White communities. Communities with the most red flag homes include West Englewood (176 properties), Roseland (137 properties), Englewood (137 properties), and Austin (110 properties).

The impact on Roseland was consistent with the recent trend of the real estate crash having devastating impact on African Americans.

For most Americans, the real estate market crash is finally behind them and personal wealth is on par. But for African Americans, 18 years of economic progress has vanished, with an unemployment rate almost twice that of whites as the purported rebound in housing slips further out of reach. The home ownership rate for African Americans fell 50 percent during the housing bubble in early 2006 to 43 percent in the second quarter. For whites, the rate stopped falling two years ago, settling at about 73 percent, only 3 percentage points below the 2004 peak, according to the Census Bureau. In 2009, America's first black Commander and Chief came into a situation where the gentrification process was expedited in minorities communities disproportionately from whites. When the country's first Black president took office in 2009, he inherited an economic and housing crisis that affected minorities disproportionately. In a speech on the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington, he called for expanding King's dream of racial equality to include economic opportunity for all (Gopal 2013).

### Roseland Workforce Development

To ameliorate the quality of life for the residents of Greater Roseland, dialogue around workforce development must occur regarding public and private partnerships with the intent to find applicable solutions to this economic issue.

Several organizations provide workforce development services to the Roseland community: Chicago Workforce Center, Phalanx Family Services, Metropolitan Family Services, Community Assistance Program, and Catholic Charities. All of these organizations are doing great work in and for the community; however, they seemingly operate in silos. The cross-collaboration necessary to effect sustainable change is nonexistent. In an effort to combat the isolation between organizations, the S.O.N Foundation has worked to establish civic engagement initiatives that focus on collaboration. One example includes revisiting the historical hiring policies of Pullman Porters and other industries that initially shaped Roseland's population by hiring community members.



With a 47 percent unemployment rate for black males aged 20 to 24 (Córdova and Wilson 2016) I sought to interview employees of workforce development centers seeking solutions to the problem. CEO Tina Sanders of Phalanx Family Services asserted that there is a lack of cohesion amongst social service practitioners. Sanders stated that her organization is willing to participate in a regional workforce development coalition focused on decreasing the unemployment rate in Greater Roseland

Chicago Transit Authority is currently redeveloping the 95<sup>th</sup> Street Station, the busiest hub of the entire transit system. The City of Chicago and CTA began construction in the fall of 2014 on the 95<sup>th</sup> Street/Dan Ryan terminal, a \$280 million project that will house local businesses and make significant improvements to an important South Side train station. The project will bring significant improvements to a station that serves thousands of customers each day and is a vital part of the South Side (Chicago Transit Authority “95<sup>th</sup>/Dan Ryan Station & Terminal Improvements” 2017). This project would be ideal in engaging residents and providing much-needed jobs in the construction industry.

The Sherwin-Williams Paint Company closed its manufacturing plant in the early 1990s; however, their corporate office is still located at 11541 South Champlain and currently is not hiring. In the 1990s, the company was sued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for contamination of air, land, and water surrounding the factory. As a result, the area has been flatland for the past 15 years. The environmental clean-up process presented another potential career path in environmental hazards; however, the community was not informed and another opportunity for economic increase disappeared.

Another opportunity for workforce development has presented itself through the recently designated Roseland Medical District (RMD). According to the Roseland Community Medical

District Act, “RMD was created to attract and retain academic centers of excellence, viable health care facilities, medical research facilities, emerging high technology enterprises, and other facilities and uses as permitted” (Illinois General Assembly 2011). Research has also found that medical districts have substantial economic impact. A UIC news article describing research put out by UIC’s Center for Urban Economic Development discusses the economic impact of the Illinois Medical District on Chicago’s economy:

The Illinois Medical District adds \$3.4 billion to the Chicago region’s economy, is responsible for more than 18,000 jobs, and contributes more than \$75 million in tax revenue to the state and nine-county area, according to an economic impact study by UIC researchers. The district’s employees receive \$3.1 billion of direct and indirect compensation, with an average of \$75,627 in wages and benefits per person—more than \$6,500 greater than the average regional salary (Ranallo 2013).

Though residents are unclear on the direction of the RMD due to a lack of transparency, the community is optimistic that their interests will be protected by the appointed commission.

The RMD Commission consists of 12 members, with the Governor, the Mayor, and the President of the Cook County Board appointing three members each. The Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Directors of the Illinois Departments of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and Department of Public Health will serve as ex-officio members. This group has yet to engage the Roseland community on the economic impact of the RMD despite engagement efforts by the S.O.N Foundation and Corridor for Collective Action to dispel fears of residents regarding gentrification and institutionally engineered “push out.”

### Education Haves & Have-Nots

Education in the City of Chicago, under the leadership of Mayor Rahm Emanuel, can best be described as the “Haves and the Have Nots.” The closing of 50 Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in 2014—the largest public school closing in the nation’s history—greatly impacted Greater Roseland. The buildings in Greater Roseland were shuttered due to underutilization and low

standardized test scores—not for the building safety issues that concerned community activists—leaving parents to worry and wonder where their children would attend school the next school year. CPS-based initiatives (i.e. Local School Council [LSC], Parent Teacher Association [PTA], Community Action Council [CAC], and Parent University [PU]) created to focus on youth and families in the community seem to function with sincere empathy for the situation, as they seek to bring about change in neighborhood schools. When Kohn Elementary School, Jesse Owens Elementary School, and Songhai Elementary Learning Center closed, Greater Roseland activists convinced CPS leadership to increase parent involvement by creating “Safe Passage” corridors to help children make it to school through gang territories.

I spoke with Joyce Chapman, President and Founder of the Pullman Community Development Corporation and Chair of the Far South Side Community Action Council, concerning issues of education. Chapman used the “Haves and Have Nots” Theory to describe education within CPS. She explained the “Haves” are the politicians, corporations, and institutions—the people with information who only share that information with those whom they befriend. The “Have Nots” are the people receiving second-hand information with little to no resources. Despite having access to limited information, the “Have Nots” have made the greatest impact on families and community engagement in Roseland. According to Chapman, “Resources and funding are being placed in ineffective hands.” One of Greater Roseland’s biggest challenges is the way information is disseminated throughout the community; it is the counterfeit community concept where the “Haves” receive information immediately to help their situations, but the “Have Nots” living in poverty-stricken areas receive the information after it’s too late to help. To combat this theory, Chapman believes, “We are many bodies, but are one mind; our one mind should be how can we be a help to one another.”

Chapman is one of the community's most vocal and assertive community education reform advocates. She stood with me when CPS tried to introduce their Community Action Council initiative to Roseland residents, with an outside organization taking the lead. I staunchly rebuked the efforts and informed CPS that this initiative would not move forward without genuine community members leading the efforts to empower Greater Roseland's children and families. Since 2012, Chapman has been the Far Southside Community Action Council Chairperson, and during her tenure, the community was awarded the Parent University project. Parent University's purpose is to provide parents in the community the necessary skillset required to change the quality of life for their families.

As a graduate of Chicago State University (CSU), I credit that institution with infusing me with an ability to engage in society's most critical issues. On a journey towards educational empowerment, many CSU professors worked with me on public policies that directly affect Greater Roseland's quality of life: Richard Darga, Dean of Library and Informational Services, sponsored a Chicago Public Schools Head Start Fatherhood Project; Wanda Wright, Director of Community Relations, coordinated a civic engagement initiative—South Area Civic League; and other professors and faculty invited me into their intellectual community to exchange ideas and develop policies. However, the efforts made by CSU faculty and staff were short-lived and somewhat ineffective due institutional bureaucracy halting and diminishing progress.

Given the efforts of some CSU professors with regard to civic engagement, it was disheartening to learn that the institution has not taken an active role in the education concerns of this community. CSU's main concern is the State of Illinois' budget impasse. While the institution is in a nebulous situation because funds are not allocated equitably throughout the state, the administration could release a statement on the state of education in the greater

Roseland community. Chicago State University President Thomas J. Calhoun refused to participate in an interview for this report.

### Air, Water, Land

Civic engagement was a thing of beauty in the greater Roseland area during the mid-2000s. Organizations like Developing Communities Project (DCP), where President Obama started his community organizing career, were leading the charge for transportation equity, parenting, education, environmental awareness, and public safety. This organization's history and leadership motivated and encouraged me to pursue public policy research and community advocacy.

From 2011-2014, the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the DCP Environmental Taskforce conducted major research to evaluate Greater Roseland's air, water, and land quality. This project was supported by the US EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE), which aims to build community awareness and capacity to address local toxic environmental pollutants. Together, DCP and the Voorhees Center worked with key community leaders to facilitate critical conversations on ways to reduce exposure to toxic pollutants and its mental health risks and impacts. Community participation was great, and members of the task force helped launch the flag project in Chicago Public Schools. The CPS Flag Program used colored flags based on the U.S. EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) to notify teachers, coaches, students, and others about the air quality conditions. A student at one of the partnering schools raised a colored flag each day corresponding to the air quality forecast.

As the investigation into environmental issues in Greater Roseland progressed, philanthropists invested in new methods of engaging environmental practitioners. GOD's Gang

is an urban agriculture organization in Greater Roseland that focuses on sustainable agricultural products and initiatives for healthy living. In an interview with Carolyn Thomas, Founder of GODS Gang, I learned that The Chicago Community Trust (CCT) took the lead in developing a regional strategy on sustainable urban farming. Over 15 years ago, The Trust had the “Bringing Change to the Table” conference, a regional effort to find methods of deliberative practice to create civic engagement conversations in the (new at that time) urban agricultural industry. Thomas, a master organic urban agriculturalist, was a part of this think tank; but when a request for proposal came out, GOD’s Gang was not part of the funding cycle of the philanthropic organization the Chicago Community Trust.

Environmental Injustice Matters Conference was a hot topic during in the mid-2000s. According to an interview subject who would prefer to remain anonymous, Roseland’s long-term challenges are in tandem with black involvement in the community’s revitalization. Roseland’s crime, unemployment, failing schools, and environmental pollutants are only the precursors for black flight, which refers to the “white flight” phenomenon of the early 1970s, when blacks migrated from the south to the north and white families moved out of neighborhoods like Roseland, Austin, Englewood, and Bronzeville. To combat these racially motivated agendas, the interviewee believes Roseland residents must get rid of those community leaders and residents who are against black mobilization: “We must go back to our organizing roots and develop our own think tank and research institutions.”

### Public Safety

As a lifelong resident, I have been on both sides of public safety issues in Greater Roseland. For the first 25 years of my life, I lived in abject poverty. Growing up in a fatherless home and experiencing many types of abuse led me to street organization involvement. Many urban theorists believe that poverty is the lynchpin of public safety issues. Navigating the trials

of a poverty-driven life without a positive male influence can be toxic to a young boy and lead to destructive behaviors. Once I navigated and survived the system, I set a goal to become a positive role model for youth living the life I once led.

I have been involved with curbing recidivism through Congressman Danny K. Davis's Second Chance Act Taskforce. The Second Chance Act (SCA) supports state, local, and tribal governments and nonprofit organizations in their work to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for people returning from state and federal prisons, local jails, and juvenile facilities. Though resources were allocated through the SCA in 2007 and its reauthorization in 2015, Greater Roseland is still not engaged in the conversation about recidivism, or whether this population can help mitigate gun violence. In a conversation with Greater Roseland resident Jerry Brown, he expressed his disappointment in youth engaged in violent acts. He went on to discuss an altercation with a group of young people outside his West Pullman home: a group of youth were waiting on him to leave his home to rob him. The youth beat him with the barrel of a hand gun, and he had to be hospitalized. Dr. Gary Slutkin, Epidemiology Research Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, has called violence an infectious disease that could be cured.

At the time, Jerry Brown and I had a mentor-mentee relationship. Though the youth committed a criminal act, I tried to convince Jerry Brown not to press charges because I believed those youth could be set on a different path with a solid foundation. During this time, I was consulting with Dr. Slutkin about his cure violence concept. I introduced Jerry Brown to James Brown, the football coach at Gwendolyn Brooks College Prep at the time, with the hope of treating the young men's deviant behaviors with an athletic rites of passage process. James Brown is the man who helped me find a better way to deal with my past poverty and

abandonment issues. I felt James Brown could do the same for the young men involved in the beating of Jerry Brown. Even without pressing charges, due to other incidences, one of the young men was convicted and sentenced to two years and the other one is still on the run. This seemingly isolated incident speaks to Greater Roseland's socioeconomic conundrum. Jerry Brown, the home owner, feels he had to take care of his property by calling law enforcement, and the behavior of the youth interrupted the community's natural order of business by preventing a community activist from contributing to other community projects.

James Brown is also an activist who challenged Chicago Public Schools' safe passage corridors in Greater Roseland. In a 2012 meeting, activists including James Brown and I met with CPS' Chief of Safety and Security to express what dangers exist within the Greater Roseland and West Pullman designated Safe Passage Corridors. Since that meeting, those corridors have been the sites of multiple murders, home invasions, methadone clinics, and many gang-involved altercations. Another meeting on this topic is scheduled with CPS' Chief of Safety & Security for an August 16, 2016 walk through. This is another civic engagement opportunity to work as a community to come up with a regional safety strategy.

From 2010-2013, Chicago Area Project, in partnership with Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA), created then Governor Quinn's Neighborhood Initiative. This government-initiated violence prevention strategy had five program components: Mentoring Plus Jobs, PLAN, School-Based Counseling, Safety Net Works (SNW), and Re-Entry Programs. It was implemented in close to 20 neighborhoods throughout the State of Illinois, and the Developing Communities Project (DCP) hired me as the Project Administrator charged with executing the Neighborhood Recovery Initiative Parent Leadership in Action Network (NRI PLAN) component in Greater Roseland. During the two years I served as the project administrator of the



NRI PLAN, over 2000 Greater Roseland residents were engaged with metacognitive strategies to deal with stress and trauma. In this role, I had to hire 50 different parents each year from the greater Roseland community to be “go to” resources for other parents dealing with stress and trauma. Greater Roseland was in desperate need for a mental health strategy to deal with the stress, trauma, and crippling poverty affecting urban communities across America.

I contacted one of DCP’s founding members, Desta Houston. In our conversation, Houston stated that people living under the national poverty level are trying to keep food on the table. Because times are hard for Greater Roseland families, organizations need to compose a regional workforce development agenda and a job readiness process. Houston worked at DCP for 25 years and believes that if Greater Roseland stakeholders work together, the community can make real improvement.

#### S.O.N Foundation Safety Network Collaboration

With gun violence terrorizing communities across Chicago, one of NRI’s strategies was to convene a safety network in targeted areas. To mitigate violence in Greater Roseland, S.O.N Foundation was a funded member of the Greater Roseland Safety Network Coalition. As the founder of S.O.N. Foundation, I was highly engaged with violence prevention strategies across Chicago. S.O.N Foundation developed a scholastic sports project in collaboration with Gwendolyn Brooks College Prep. In 2009, the Colts Tackle Football and Tutoring program was launched with the support of Principal Dushon Brown and Coach James Brown. In implementing an elementary violence prevention strategy, the goal of ending deviant behavior in elementary school before it progressed to high school was enacted. It is the belief of S.O.N Foundation to infuse meta-cognitive strategies in elementary sports training.

## Key Community Organizations & Institutions

The positive, effective work being done in and around the greater Roseland community is a direct result of the community organizations and institutions maintaining programs and initiatives designed to better the lives of residents.

<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>CEO / OWNER / DIRECTOR</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION TYPE / SERVICES PROVIDED</b>
A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum	Dr. Lyn Hughes	Museum
Agape Community Center	Milton Massie	Ministry Development, Youth Sports & Recreation
Carter G. Woodson Regional Library	City of Chicago	City of Chicago Public Library
Jadonal E. Ford Center/ Catholic Charities	Velma Walker	Adoption, Maternity, Pregnancy, Children/Youth, Family Abuse or Neglect, Counseling, Emergency Assistance, Employment & Job Training, and Homelessness Services
Chesterfield Community Council	Elizabeth Prowell	Neighborhood Association
Chicago Neighborhood Initiative	David Doig	Community Development Corporation
Chicago State University	Rachel W. Lindsey, PhD	University
Far South Community Action Council	Joyce Chapman	Community Parent Education Advisory Council
Fenger High School	Richard C. Smith Jr.	General Studies
Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy	Shannae Jackson	General Studies

Harlan Community Academy High School	Ramona Colette Fannings	General Studies
Historic Pullman Foundation	Michael Shymanski	National Park
Kids Off the Block	Diane Latiker	Violence Prevention, Public Safety, and Youth Services
London Towne Houses Cooperative	JoAnn Kenner	Housing Cooperative

<p>Metropolitan Family Services: Calumet Center</p>	<p>Audrena Spence</p>	<p>Adoption Preservation, At-Risk Counseling and Education, Behavioral Health, Community Schools, Domestic Violence Clinical Services, Early Learning Home Visiting Program, Extended Family Support, Family Works, Financial Opportunity Center, Get In Chicago, In-Person Counseling, Intensive Placement Stabilization, Job Plus, Legal Aid, MOMs Plus, Project Strive, Safe Start, Senior Homeowners Program, Step Up, Upward Bound, Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA), Youth Futures Chicago, and Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program Provides home-based intervention to families formed through adoption or subsidized guardianship. Adjustment, grief/loss resolution, attachment, educational and emotional issues are addressed through counseling, crisis intervention and 24-hour on-call assistance. Therapeutic respite services and related referrals, psycho-educational and support groups, workshops and help with securing resources also are provided. The program is supported by DCFS.</p>
<p>Neighborhood Housing Services: Roseland</p>	<p>Phil Snorden</p>	<p>Housing Services</p>
<p>Olive-Harvey College</p>	<p>Angelia Millender</p>	<p>Associate Degree Studies</p>

Phalanx Family Services	Tina Sanders	Fathers, Families, and Healthy Communities, Student Outreach and Re-Engagement (SOAR), Youth Employment Program (YEP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Work First, CDBG (Community Development Block Grant)- Industry Specific Training & Placement (BNA) Employment Preparation & Placement< Leading, Emerging Adolescents to Destiny (L.E.A.D), Bridging the Digital Divide-Basic Computer Training, and Ticket To Work
Pretend Town Educational & Recreation	Wendy Jones	Youth Educational Services
The Pullman Civic Organization	Lorraine Brochu	Neighborhood Association
George M. Pullman Elementary School	Dr. Julious Lawson	General Elementary Studies
Roseland Business Development Council	Edward Scott	Business Chamber of Commerce
Roseland Christian Ministries	Jei Wilson	Family Shelter, Food Pantry, Housing, Roseland Christian Reformed Church
Roseland Community Hospital (Medical District)	Tim Egan	Community Hospital
Roseland Heights Community Association	Clevan Tucker Jr.	Neighborhood Association
Rosemoor Community Association	Gloria Cosey	Neighborhood Association

S.O.N. Foundation	Robert M. Douglas Sr.	Policy/Advocacy, Violence Prevention, Research Institution, Sports & Recreation, Education Reform, Community Organizing,
SGA-Roseland Children's Initiative	Lisa Sargent Davis	Early Childhood Services, Student Support Services, Family & Community Services, and Youth Justice Services
South Side Help Center	Vanessa Smith	HIV/AIDS Awareness, Capacity Building Assistance, Mental Health Counseling, Housing Services, Case Management, Youth Self Enhancement Program (YSEP), Creatively Relating Entertainment and Arts To Education C.R.E.A.T.E.), Youth Mentoring, Young Men For Community Advocacy Project (YMCA), Bovina Life Skills Program, Family Violence and Prevention Program, Young MSM Project, Valerie Smith-Reid Scholarship Fund (VSRF)
Trinity All Nations Ministries	Bishop Larry Roberts Sr.	Church
West Chesterfield Community Association	Michael LaFargue	Neighborhood Association
Windy City Habitat for Humanity	Jennifer L. Parks	Housing Services

## Community Leaders

The tireless efforts of the men and women serving as leaders in Greater Roseland have been the lynchpin of the resilience and growth of the community despite various trials and setbacks. Their commitment to the conservation of the integrity of the community is to be

applauded.

<b>COMMUNITY LEADER</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>	<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b>
<b>Artriss Williams</b>	Community Activist	Roseland/Michigan
<b>Cheryl Johnson</b>	Environmental Activist	Altgeld Gardens
<b>David Doig</b>	Community Developer	Historic Pullman
<b>Diane Latiker</b>	Youth Violence Prevention Activist	Roseland/Michigan
<b>Jerome Mosley</b>	Wild Hundred Clothing	Roseland/Michigan
<b>James Brown</b>	Football Coach	Greater Roseland
<b>Jerry Brown</b>	Community Activist	West Pullman
<b>Joyce Chapman</b>	Community Activist	Historic North Pullman
<b>Lin Hudson</b>	Historian	Historic Pullman
<b>Marcus Thomas</b>	Organic Urban Farmer	Greater Roseland
<b>Dr. Yvonne Wilson</b>	Pastor	West Pullman
<b>Pastor James Meeks</b>	Chair of the Illinois State Board of Education	National
<b>Salim Al-Nurridin</b>	Health Care Advocate	Greater Roseland
<b>Sandy Lewis</b>	Community Advocate	Rosemoor
<b>Kellye Gilchrist</b>	Community Activist	West Pullman
<b>Reverend Alvin Love</b>	Pastor	West Pullman

<b>Wayne Osborne</b>	Baseball Coach	Greater Roseland
<b>Desta Houston</b>	Community Advocate	Greater Roseland
<b>Michael LaFargue</b>	Community Advocate	West Chesterfield
<b>Antoine Dobine</b>	Community Activist	West Pullman
<b>Sequane Lawrence</b>	Center for Arts & Technology	West Chesterfield
<b>Cynthia Stewart</b>	Sustainable Options for Urban Living, Inc.	West Pullman
<b>Heather Ireland Robinson</b>	The Beverly Arts Center	Rosemoor
<b>Marcus Flenaugh</b>	Foundation College Prep	Ada Park
<b>Quincy Roseborough</b>	Metropolitan Family Services	Greater Roseland
<b>Aaron Mallory</b>	Guide Right Organization	Greater Roseland

## **Key Opportunities for Engagement**

Although a community the size of Greater Roseland has many options in developing a comprehensive neighborhood civic engagement process, it is necessary to create strategies focused on the area's issues of crime, poverty, closed schools, and housing as a public health crisis. This section of the report will identify opportunities where public and private collaborations could benefit all parties involved if implemented with integrity and compassion to change the quality of life in this society.

### **POTENTIAL PARTNERS FOR ENGAGEMENT**



### **Roseland Christian Ministries**

Roseland Christian Ministries (RCM) is dedicated to serving the Roseland community through service, work, worship, and fellowship via our core ministries. Roseland Christian Reformed Church, the worshipping body born out of RCM, partners with us to carry out the mission that God has given us to display his love to the community we are called to serve.

[www.roselandchristianministries.org](http://www.roselandchristianministries.org)

### **Pullman Park Development**

Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI) is the master developer of Pullman Park, a 180-acre mixed-use site at 111<sup>th</sup> Street and I-94, a development with \$125 million of new investments and nearly 750 new jobs. Pullman Park is providing new retail goods and services to Pullman, Roseland, and the Greater Calumet Region, including a 150,000 square foot Walmart, featuring a full-service grocery with an additional 70,000 square feet of new retail space anchored by Ross Dress for Less, Planet Fitness, and Advocate Health Care.

[www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/](http://www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/)

### **Wal-Mart**

When CNI broke ground on the Pullman Walmart in 2011, the Pullman/Roseland area was described as one of the largest and most intractable food deserts in the City of Chicago. The Walmart now provides the community with access to fresh produce, bakery, deli, and packaged goods at affordable prices and has created 400 new jobs.

[www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/](http://www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/)

### **Method—South Side Soapbox**

In 2013, Method Home Products, Inc. selected CNI's Pullman Park site as the location of its first North American manufacturing facility. Designed by William McDonough + Partners, Method met its goal to build the world's first and only LEED Platinum certified plant in the industry. The manufacturing facility features a refurbished 230-foot wind turbine, combined with the solar energy from solar panels in the parking lot and on the building, which provide approximately half of the facility's electrical needs. Method's Pullman plant currently employs 100 people.

[www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/](http://www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/)

### **A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum**

The museum was founded in 1995 by Dr. Lyn Hughes. The facility is located in the Historic Pullman District in Chicago Illinois. The museum is named after men who made history—Asa Philip Randolph and Pullman Porters, the men who made up the membership of the

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) union. Randolph was the chief organizer and co-founder of the BSCP, the first African-American labor union in the country to win a collective bargaining agreement. Under Randolph's leadership, the Pullman Porters fought a valiant battle for employment equality with the corporate giant, the Pullman Rail Car Company.

[aprpullmanportermuseum.org](http://aprpullmanportermuseum.org)

### **Roseland Community Hospital Medical District**

Roseland Community Hospital remains committed to its original vision: providing healthcare service to the Greater Roseland Area. The hospital stands united with the residents of the Greater Roseland Area as partners in providing high quality services that are simultaneously tenacious, resilient and ever hopeful.

For its part, we expend more than \$20 million annually to ensure that uninsured and underinsured residents receive appropriate healthcare services. Further, we assist in improving the community's health by providing preventive and educational asthma, breast cancer, and diabetes initiatives; cholesterol and prostate screenings; mammograms; one-on-one health education sessions; cardiovascular fitness for women; and children's obesity reduction classes.

[www.roselandhospital.org/about/](http://www.roselandhospital.org/about/)

### **Gotham Greens**

Atop Method's South Side Soapbox sits the world's largest rooftop farm, operated by Gotham Greens. Gotham Greens' state of the art agricultural greenhouse facility on the roof of the plant produces up to 1 million pounds of fresh, sustainably grown, pesticide-free produce annually. The produce is distributed to local Chicago retailers, restaurants, farmer's markets and community groups. When compared to conventional agriculture, Gotham Greens' re-circulating irrigation methods use 10 times less land and 20 times less water and eliminates the need for pesticide use and fertilizer runoff, which is one of the leading causes of global water pollution. Gotham Greens employs 40 people.

[www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/](http://www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/)

### **Whole Foods Distribution**

In March 2016, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Alderman Anthony A. Beale, and Whole Foods announced plans to move its distribution center from Indiana to Chicago's Pullman Park. Expected to open in early 2018, the new 140,000 square foot Whole Foods Market distribution center will take advantage of the Pullman neighborhood's skilled workforce, close proximity to the interstate and diverse business climate to serve Whole Foods Market locations across the Midwest, including 25 currently in the Chicago area and the three new stores coming to the Chicago neighborhoods of Hyde Park and Englewood and the suburb of Evergreen Park.

[www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/](http://www.cnigroup.org/pullman-revitalization/pullman-park/)

### RedLine Extension Project

Chicago Transit Authority collaborated with Developing Communities Project to engage Chicago’s Far Southside in the Red Line Extension Project, and that relationship ended in 2011. CTA is the principle civic engagement organization, but it cannot have genuine engagement process because their interest is corporate, not community. It’s important to note that part of this expansion will displace families along the corridor. The Red Ahead program is a comprehensive initiative for maintaining, modernizing, and expanding Chicago’s most-traveled rail line. The program includes three major improvement projects on the Red and Purple Lines between Linden terminal on the north and the proposed 130th Street terminal on the south. All three projects are mutually beneficial; an improvement in one area of the Red Line benefits the entire Red Line.

[www.transitchicago.com/redeis/](http://www.transitchicago.com/redeis/)

The following chart identifies the strengths, opportunities, assets, and challenges that exist in Greater Roseland.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prominent community-based organizations</li> <li>2. Political position</li> <li>3. Geographic position</li> <li>4. Quality of housing</li> <li>5. Historic Pullman Park District</li> <li>6. Highway system</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Park Bank Entrepreneurial Development</li> <li>2. Shared resources</li> <li>3. Development of Regional Workforce Initiative</li> <li>4. Medical research</li> <li>5. Tourism</li> <li>6. Academic research</li> <li>7. Urban agriculture</li> </ol>
KEY ASSETS	CHALLENGES

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roseland Medical District</li> <li>2. Chicago State University</li> <li>3. Sherman Williams Factory</li> <li>4. Chicago Police Department</li> <li>5. Pullman Porter Museum</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of community cohesiveness</li> <li>2. Access to services</li> <li>3. Governmental representation</li> <li>4. Location of HRDI</li> <li>5. Ineffective zoning along Commercial Corridor</li> <li>6. Closed Chicago Public Schools</li> <li>7. Violence</li> <li>8. Infrastructure safety</li> <li>9. High unemployment</li> </ol>
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**Final Community Recommendations**

One must review the past in order to make the best of the present. I had to investigate old journeys to fully understand Greater Roseland’s forward trajectory. During this investigation, I was invited to the Roseland Business Development Council Board of Directors meeting to review a past initiative. In one meeting, a unanimous vote passed to introduce the 1999 Roseland-Michigan Avenue Strategic Plan. I did an intensive investigation of this report and found out that SB Friedman Development Advisors created the plan. I then contacted the organization and talked with Stephen B. Friedman, President, about the Roseland-Michigan Strategic Plan. During this conversation, Mr. Friedman said, “Roseland is sick and doesn’t even know it because the leadership does not invest in its human capital.”

Just as Friedman did for Roseland, many communities establish comprehensive plans, master plans, and strategic plans that local governments use to guide development and

investment decisions. Counties, cities, and towns rely on their adopted comprehensive plans to evaluate development proposals and to focus public resources such as infrastructure, schools, parks, and libraries to best serve the public. A health impact assessment (HIA) is a means of assessing the health impacts of policies, plans and projects in diverse economic sectors using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques.

My recommendations for UIC's Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement pertaining to implementing new methods of deliberate civic engagement practices in Greater Roseland are as follows: empower residents; unify organizations and institutions engaged in similar projects; create and implement a socioeconomic platform; and develop a framework for evaluation.

First, the researcher recommends that Greater Roseland community stakeholders empower residents through a public service announcement campaign. One challenge is the manner in which community leaders (governmental officials, religious leaders, institutions, organizations, and community activists) disseminate information. Concerned citizens and/or business owners must engage one another to develop Greater Roseland Communications Network (GRCNW), an information portal. In this network, members would work on projects that deal with the community's mental health, revitalization, public health and safety, and civic engagement. In collaboration with LISC Chicago (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) Quality of Life Plan, information throughout Greater Roseland would be disseminated with this technological civic engagement tool. To assure effective implementation, I suggest that Greater Roseland create a university/community partnership with Chicago State University's Communication, Media Arts and Theatre (CMAT) Department. A communication strategy of this magnitude will create career paths in broadcast, entertainment journalism, and creative

writing. Within this partnership, Greater Roseland Communication Network will design smart, measurable outcomes.

Secondly, with corruption, police brutality, and black-on-black crime flooding our media outlets, counterfeit community activists seize upon the opportunity to sensationalize black communities for personal gain. During this research, I contacted political and religious leaders for their input, none of whom responded to the request or expressed interest in providing input in a report like this. Greater Roseland constituents must re-engage with key institutions, organizations, and initiatives in the community. One such effort is the work of the South Area Civic League, which started as a voter education project focused on the incarceration of Jesse Jackson Jr, 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District Representative. Moving forward, this civic engagement initiative should not only educate citizens, but also empower and support emerging civic-minded individuals who would represent Greater Roseland's best interests. South Area Civic League would be a community organizing initiative by unifying organizations and institutions engaged in similar work in Greater Roseland to develop a community organizing certification program. In collaboration with Chicago State University, Greater Roseland, and South Area Civic League, a foundation could be created for broader community evaluation. In my conversation with Friedman, he suggested Greater Roseland stakeholders use the Building Healthy Places Toolkit, created by the Urban Land Institute, as a community-organizing framework.

This model fits Greater Roseland's needs, especially if community stakeholders take my advice and approach revitalizing Greater Roseland from a public health perspective. The public policies being implemented in Greater Roseland are counterproductive to its constituents. The majority of the community's infrastructure is in poor condition and causes problems to its citizenry. The Healthy Places Toolkit is a participatory community engagement model, which

relies on human capital to build a thriving community. By using the Building Healthy Places Toolkit, Greater Roseland stakeholders raise awareness of community's most critical issues through ten core principles. These ten core principles are as follows: put people first, recognize the economic value, empower champions for health, energize shared spaces, make healthy choices easy, ensure equitable access, mix it up, embrace unique character, promote access to healthy food, make it active (Urban Land Institute 2015, 5).

In addition to Greater Roseland's communication strategies and public policy initiatives, building a sustainability plan will give the region an opportunity to generate its own socioeconomic status by creating small businesses and becoming civic minded. When people develop their own social contract, they are better equipped to police, parent, and create expectations for future inhabitants. Greater Roseland currently has billions of dollars in urban economic development projects. An aspect of this study was to compare and contrast the feasibility of all of Greater Roseland's economic development to UIC's Great Cities Institute study on jobless and out-of-school teens and youth in Chicago and the U.S. Joblessness and deviant behavior correlate to the economic situation of the area. I believe that creating an environment where individuals can develop and cultivate new and marketable skillsets will increase the bottom line of all parties involved.

I further recommend that IPCE supports God's Gang, around urban agriculture. Urban agriculture is a multi-million dollar industry that could employ societies most difficult to employ. Finally, I suggest that community members vote out ineffective governmental representation and develop a genuine community process for elected officials.

If all of these recommendations come together, with support from IPCE, the potential is great for a new framework of civic engagement to emerge in Roseland. I believe that it is only

with a collaborative effort to empower residents; unify organizations and institutions engaged in similar projects; create and implement a socioeconomic platform; and develop a framework for evaluation that we can turn things around for Roseland.



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