



# Rochester, NY

## Financial Empowerment

### KEY OUTCOMES

#### Long-term

Increased **financial stability**, increased **savings**, decreased **personal debt**.

#### Short-term

Enrollment in **year-round EITC disbursement**, increased **short-term savings**, engagement with financial counseling and other opportunities for **financial education**, decreased **financial stress**, increased **access to formal financial institutions** (i.e. access to bank accounts), decreased **housing disruptions**.

### BARRIERS

- Low or inconsistent incomes and lack of access to credit make it difficult for many residents to weather financial shocks.
- Historic disinvestment has fostered low trust in government and financial institutions.
- Rochester has a rich service provider landscape but residents may struggle to navigate it.

### INTERVENTION

Develop a **year-round EITC program informed by behavioral science** that will provide a matching incentive to residents who save a portion of their EITC refund. The refund would be paid out in quarterly installments throughout the year alongside a percentage match—thereby increasing savings and income stability.

ALIGNMENT TO FIVE CRITERIA



**Evidence base**

Builds on evidence of the importance of income stability and year-round EITC disbursement as a way to facilitate income stability (thereby decreasing borrowing in the long term, lowering financial stress, and lowering the likelihood of missing bill payments).



**Mayoral priorities**

This is a confirmed Mayoral priority that also builds on work done by the newly-established Office of Community Wealth Building.



**Scalability**

If successful, year-round EITC disbursement is a strategy that is applicable across city contexts. Further, it addresses issues like income and expense volatility and lack of access to banking institutions, which are prevalent across many cities.



**Feasibility**

The intervention will be administered by CASH, with support from the Office of Community Wealth Building, Office of Innovation, and Financial Empowerment Centers, and has the necessary buy-in and resources to implement and evaluate it in the timeline given.



**Leverage taxpayer resources**

The project team is working with a range of city partners and using existing relationships to ensure that the intervention makes full use of the rich-yet currently siloed-existing service provider landscape.