

PATERSON ONE SQUARE MILE

AN INITIATIVE OF MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Communities thrive when lofty aspirations are embraced by passionate leaders, committed institutions and engaged citizenry. Over the past two years, One Square Mile (OSM) – a hyper-local, community-driven collective impact initiative spearheaded by Montclair State University – has provided the essential framework needed to turn this vision into reality in the City of Paterson, New Jersey. Community advocates have collaborated with local organizations, government officials, business leaders, and others to identify and co-create solutions for Paterson’s most pressing challenges. This focused effort has resulted in a robust, community-driven framework designed to foster long-term economic and social growth in Paterson’s 1st, 4th and 5th wards.

Phase I of the OSM Initiative launched in January 2022. Transform Consulting Group (TCG) – a highly accomplished independent consulting agency with experience in collective impact, community engagement and strategic consulting – helped guide our initial work with the community. Under the guidance of an OSM Advisory Committee composed of Paterson stakeholders, public research and community feedback sessions were conducted and analyzed to produce a detailed *Community Data & Feedback Summary Report* outlining the top concerns of Paterson residents. Advisory Committee members utilized the findings of this report to select housing as the initiative’s primary focus, and together we developed a *Housing Strategic Action Plan and Implementation Roadmap* which will guide One Square Mile’s future efforts and outcomes. The next phase of the initiative – One Square Mile in Action – is expected to launch in November 2024.

One Square Mile builds on more than two decades of collaboration and partnership between Montclair State University and the City of Paterson. Additional achievements realized to-date in the OSM include: 1) Transforming Eastside High School into a University-Assisted Full Service Community School; 2) Increasing access to ESL classes; 3) Developing new hiring pipelines for Paterson residents; and 4) Introducing a rapid-response community re-granting program, which has provided more than \$300,000 grant funding for Paterson community organizations. The University is currently spearheading the development of an Anchor Collaborative for Paterson to oversee and guide the socioeconomic development of the One Square Mile and greater Paterson for generations to come.

OSM is made possible by the visionary support and leadership of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, which provided the initial funding for the project as well as strategic guidance, collaboration and commitment to the collective impact framework that guides the planning process. Together with the OSM Advisory Committee and greater Paterson community, we are working toward accomplishing a shared vision to realize equitable outcomes in Paterson.