Abstract: Participatory budgeting is internationally revered by development agencies and citizens alike as a municipal budgeting model founded on the belief that governing decisions should be steered by community members. Radically changing how cities operate, participatory budgeting revolutionizes the decision making process for funding allocation and municipal spending by increasing democratic representation on the side of residents. PB has shown to increase infrastructure investment, citizen representation, and quality of life for residents. Particularly noteworthy, municipalities that have implemented participatory budgeting have shown to decrease chronic health concerns in dense urban communities, including infant mortality rates. This project will study how participatory budgeting can be used in Rochester, NY to address the city's high rate of infant mortality.

PB Across the United States

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations
Based on my qualitative and quantitative research findings, reducing infant mortality in Rochester, NY will take a holistic policy based approach that can be helped by implementing participatory budgeting. PB can be a useful tool in increasing monetary spending in areas such as human health services, infrastructure, transportation and arts and culture. Based on my interviews with community stakeholders in Rochester, the high infant mortality rate is not simply a health issue but an intersectional issue. Housing conditions, concentrated poverty, access to reliable transit and stress levels of the mother and the family unit all contribute to high levels of infant mortality in Rochester, NY. For this reason, PB can be an effective way to increase spending on citizen services while decreasing infant mortality in the metropolitan area.

Sources Cited:
- ACT Rochester: Infant Mortality by Race, Monroe County, New York State Department of Health