Brooks and Duffy Acknowledge Foundation’s Commitment of $2 Million to Prevent Lead Poisoning

County Executive Maggie Brooks and Rochester Mayor Bob Duffy publicly thanked the Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF) for its commitment of $2 million over three years to eliminate lead poisoning in Rochester by 2010.

“Through the collective efforts of the County, City, Lead Paint Coalition and landlords, the number of lead poisoned children has been reduced from a high of 3,710 in 1995 to 571 in 2006”, said County Executive Maggie Brooks. “I applaud the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for this significant commitment to our children. This funding will enable us to expand our collaborative efforts and achieve our community’s goal of eliminating lead poisoning by 2010.”

According to GRHF president John Urban, this new funding supports the successful initiatives of the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning. “As a community, we know how to eliminate lead poisoning. The Foundation is pleased to advance the activities that the community has identified as important next steps to make Monroe County lead safe.”

GRHF’s funding will total $2 million over a three-year period and will support three components for which not-for-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, or public entities will be eligible to submit proposals for funding. More than $1.5 million will help property owners pay for repairs that will reduce the dangers of deteriorated lead paint. GRHF funds will be focused on a City of Rochester neighborhood with older housing, where the risk to children is greatest.

A one-stop lead resource center will be funded to guide families in identifying the appropriate resources to assess the risk in their homes and help them apply for grants to eliminate lead hazards for a total of $330,000.

A third component, at the $150,000 level, will fund communications initiatives to educate the public about the effects of lead poisoning on children and cost-effective prevention.

“I want to thank the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for their hard work and continued collaboration,” said Mayor Robert J. Duffy. “This funding will go a long way
towards helping us realize our goal of eliminating lead poisoning and helping to improve public safety. It is so important that we continue to work together to make Rochester’s homes safe for our children and families.”

“Children poisoned by lead paint dropped nearly 55% between 2002 and 2005 and further declined in 2006. These results show what can be achieved when community and health organizations, local government, educational institutions, funders and neighborhoods work together,” said Bryan Hetherington, GRHF board chair. “Through this united effort, Monroe County can be lead safe by 2010.”