

## WHAT ARE THE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES?

An approximate 28 Block area has been identified for the Downtown Business Improvement District  
The specific boundaries of the Downtown Business Improvement District are as shown on this map

The District includes all properties within a boundary of:

The Western boundary is:

Oostanaula River to First Avenue to West Third Street to North Fourth Avenue to West Fifth Street to North Fifth Ave, East to Parcel J13Y130 to Ave A to Parcel J13Y114 to J13Y107 to J13Y102 to Bale Street to the intersection of North Fifth Avenue and all parcel fronting North Fifth Avenue from the intersection to the Oostanaula River

The Northern boundary is:

Beginning at East First Street, West to Broad Street to West Eight Avenue to West Second Street and all parcel adjacent West Eight Avenue from Broad Street to West Second Street, to Riverside Parkway to Parcel J13Y078 to Oostanaula River.

The Eastern boundary is:

From the Etowah River to East Third Street to Second Ave to East Second Street to East First Street to Parcel J14C133 to J14C149 to East Second Street North to East Sixth Avenue, West to East First Street to Turner McCall Blvd

The Southern boundary is:

Etowah River from East Third Street to the West Third Street



## GOVERNING THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Consistent with business improvement district (BID) legislation throughout the nation, Georgia's BID law establishes a BID governance framework that allows property owners who pay assessments to determine how the assessments are used. The following components are required within a BID governing structure.

**CITY COMMISSION** Following the submission of petitions from property and business owners representing more than 51% of the assessed value and/or more than 51% of the total property owners, the City Commission holds a public hearing and then may form the BID. The BID is established by an ordinance of the Commission, with the power to levy assessment on property.

**MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION** The BID District budgets and policies will be refined annually, within the limitations set forth in the district management plan by the Rome DDA Board of Directors. The Board is made up of property and business owners, (or eligible designee) paying assessments within the district and representing all of the property owners and reflect the assessments being paid.

**CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES** In order to supply the highest level of qualified services at the most reasonable cost, the District may contract for services with public agencies, with non-profit public service agencies or with for-profit organizations. When it is determined to be in the best interest of the District, the District may contract with non-assessment paying property owners to provide District services to those owners.

**CONTINUATION OF CITY SERVICES** Throughout the process to establish the Rome Business Improvement District, business and property owners have voiced concerns that the City of Rome maintains existing services at verifiable "baseline" service levels. A formal baseline level of service policy ensures that existing City services are enhanced and not replaced by new BID improvements and activities.

## Business Improvement District

### PROGRESS & PRESERVATION The Next Decade 2026-2035 Management Plan



The purpose of the Downtown Business Improvement District is to renew and expand an established equitable funding process that supports the ongoing development of the city center as a valued economic and historic resource. In 2006, the Business Association and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) convened business and property owners to establish another business improvement district (BID). The BID and DDA have assisted development with advocacy, funding, marketing, and other support. The current BID will end on December 31, 2025. Today, BID and the Authority are working together to renew and expand the established and successful process for ongoing economic development within the city center.

**WHAT IS A BID?** It is a special assessment levied against properties and businesses within a defined service area. It enables local property and business owners to finance enhanced services and improvements beyond those already provided by the City. Although funds are collected by the City, they are passed directly to the District, to be used for BID purposes. The Authority, primarily comprised of property and business owners, will be responsible for administering the BID. The Rome BID represents a continued movement by property owners and business leaders to provide a well funded organization working to ensure a positive image, supplement services, promote businesses, and market events to respond to challenges from other competitive developments within the region.

**WHY A BID?** Research shows that there is a positive correlation between the presence of a BID and area property values, retail sales and market perception. According to the International Downtown Association, there are more than 1,200 property based Business Improvement Districts currently in operation throughout the United States. Within Georgia, there are numerous BID communities with varied purposes. BID played a major role in the continued excitement and remarkable growth of the downtown area, just as the original assessment did in the mid 1980s. At that time, the original BID funded Streetscape improvements that included new sidewalks, landscape and a beautiful median for Broad Street. This project was a major catalyst in the revitalization of downtown, contributing to an enthusiastic sense of pride and economic renewal.

The second BID has continued to contribute to the tremendous growth and vitality of downtown. The approximate \$50,000 per year has funded façade grants, advertising, special events, parking, and marketing. BID is critical in maintaining the momentum, attracting new investment and expanding the customer base.



A quality of life that is second to none makes downtown a great place to grow a business, enjoy the cultural and entertainment of the region, move into a new apartment, shop in a very unique atmosphere, stroll along the river, or dine in a fine restaurant while enjoying a clean, safe and friendly environment in historic downtown Rome. To keep this momentum, attract new investment and protect and maintain the existing investment, property and business owners desire to establish a Business Improvement District. Property owners will assess themselves in order to maintain a private sector management district, which under Georgia law is termed a City Business Improvement District. Downtown property and business owners are taking this action because they desire to:

**Provide consistent funding** for services to be provided by the BID and maintain the positive image the citizens of the community have for the downtown area. It is important to maintain this image in order to compete economically. The value of a single piece of property is not determined solely by the investments made in that property. Rather, a major

portion of that property's value is derived from how investors, businesses, and visitors view the entire downtown area as a business and cultural center.

**Maintain Private Sector Management and Accountability** The Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors that is representative of the property and business owners paying assessments, will refine and approve the annual work plan and budget based upon this management plan. The Board is accountable to those property and business owners paying into the District and will ensure the services provided are subject to very high private sector performance standards.

**Market, Promote, and Attract Investment** The District competes with shopping centers, malls, office parks and managed areas in the region that also compete for tenants, visitors and investors. To remain competitive and viable as the place to go in the region, we must finance the BID to maintain a proactive strategy to retain business and tenants as well as attract new business and investment. The events, programming and publication of promotional materials all contribute significantly to the continued enhancement of the downtown image.

**WHO IS A BID?** The establishment of a BID is entirely the decision of property and business owners who desire additional services and improvements. Once established, payment is mandatory, guaranteeing that everyone within the District contributes. Non-payment results in the same penalties as failure to pay real property tax. BIDs are fundamentally a legal mechanism to raise funds to enhance the management of the area.

**WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES?**

Designed, created, and governed by those who pay the assessment through a Board of Directors of property and business owners (or eligible designee) that supervise operations, review activity reports, and approve and monitor the annual budget.

Administered through the Downtown Development Authority, a management organization of dedicated professionals, of those who pay.

Authorized for a 10-year term, scheduled to end in December 2025, and can be renewed through the petition process. That same petition process can end the BID should property owners decide it is no longer needed.

The managing organization has years of experience providing a wide range of services including special events, marketing, promotion, business recruitment, maintenance, and hospitality, as well as numerous awards for accomplishments over their 34 years of existence.

Everyone benefits and everyone pays!

**STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Taye-há Lyle
- Kelli Duncan
- Megan Watters
- Jamie Baker
- Elaine Abercrombie
- DJ Rickman
- Jay Shell
- Amanda Carter
- Pam Powers-Smith
- David Thornton
- Wayne Robinson
- Kevin Dillmon

**WHAT WILL IT DO?** BID will provide the following Programs and Services:

**Economic Development** The program will tell the story of change and improvement in Downtown Rome and is one of the most important parts of the improvement plan; as well as continue to build upon the reinvestment and business growth. The program will include several tools to support efforts to attract and retain tenants and visitors. Some of the elements are: business directory, business development and public improvements

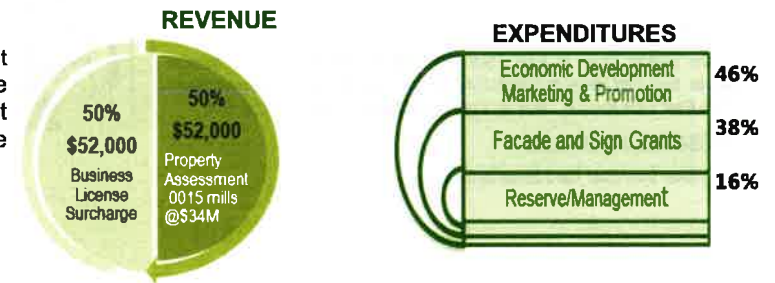
**Marketing & Promotion** Each year funds will be allocated to marketing efforts and special events. The program will include several tools to support efforts to attract visitors. Some of the elements are: special events, consistent advertising, banner program, community awareness (safety, preservation), and to build upon the positive changes in both perception and reality that have been developed

**Façade & Sign Grants** Each year funds will be allocated to individual projects within the district on a first come first served qualifying basis. This program will directly return a portion of the budget to the property and business owners. Policies and procedures for distribution of grant funds are in place

**Contingency & Management** A portion of this allocation will go into reserve for unexpected projects, programs and improvements that may arise during the year. In order to manage the day-to-day operations, funds will be allocated for administrative support to achieve the improvements and activities.

**WHAT IS THE BUDGET?**

The anticipated total improvement and activity plan budget for the first year is projected at \$104,000.00; consisting of the following components:



**ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Property owners and business owners have emphasized that the assessment formula for the Management District must be balanced fairly and have a direct relationship between benefits received and costs. The preceding methodology is applied to a database that has been constructed by the staff, reviewed by the committee and approved by the Authority. The process for compiling the property database includes the following steps:

- Property data was first obtained from the Assessor's Office and Clerk's Office
- Assessor property data was cross checked with reliable data sources
- City Business License data was cross checked
- A site survey was undertaken to verify data

Based upon the methodology as set forth above, property data compiled, who represent the property owners, the BID budget will yield the following assessments for the district.

**ASSESSMENT RATE:** \$0.0015 (Per Dollar of Assessed Value) Assessments may change, up or down, if value information changes, however assessments will not exceed the limit of one and half mills.

**BUSINESS LICENSE SURCHARGE RATE:** An annual maximum rate of \$150 per business license will be assessed.

**BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:** Any annual budget surplus or deficit will be rolled into the following year's BID budget.

**TIME AND MANNER FOR COLLECTING:** As provided by state law, the BID assessment will appear as a separate line item on annual property tax bills. Existing laws for enforcement and appeal of property taxes apply to the assessments.

**RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENTS:** Single-family residential that is used exclusively as a residence will not be assessed.

**NON-PROFITS:** Property held in a non-profit status that does not currently pay Ad Valorem taxes is not required to pay BID assessments.

**GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENTS:** The plan does not assume that the City of Rome, Floyd County, or properties owned by the Federal Government will pay assessments for property owned within the boundaries of the BID.