

# ROME

New York State | Mohawk Valley Region

# DRI

DOWNTOWN  
REVITALIZATION  
INITIATIVE

strategic investment plan

March 2018

ROME  
the copper city



## Local Planning Committee

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**FOREWORD**

## FOREWORD

“A thriving downtown can provide a tremendous boost to the local economy. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will transform selected downtown neighborhoods into vibrant places for people to live, work and raise a family, which will also help attract new investments and business for years to come.” ~ Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

Nationally and globally, business and development leaders recognize that the creation of new downtown communities with public amenities and a high quality-of-life can provide a catalyst for increased economic development, re-population (particularly by young professionals) and urban vibrancy. Governor Andrew Cuomo recognized this potential and launched a major new initiative in the spring of 2016 – the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

The Governor’s ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) each identified one community in which to invest \$10 million to improve the vitality of those urban centers. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding supports a community planning and implementation process where each community develops the key ingredients needed for successful downtown revitalization: a clear vision for the downtown; goals and strategies to accomplish the vision; and a strategic plan to implement catalytic projects identified in the plan.

Communities selected in Round One included:

- Elmira (Southern Tier Region)
- Geneva (Finger Lakes Region)
- Glens Falls (Capital Region)
- Jamaica (NYC Region)
- Jamestown (Western NY Region)
- Middletown (Mid-Hudson Region)
- Oneonta (Mohawk Valley Region)
- Oswego (Central NY Region)
- Plattsburgh (North Country Region)
- Westbury (Long Island Region)

In 2017, the enacted state budget included another \$100,000,000 for downtown revitalization. DRI Two is again supporting a community planning process, conducted by staff from the Department of State Office of Planning, Development, and Community Infrastructure and the NYS Homes and Community Renewal. This multi-agency effort, led by Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, also includes staff from Empire State Development and assistance from other agencies like the state Department of Transportation and state Department of Labor based on projects identified by the communities.

Communities selected in Round Two included:

- Watkins Glen (Southern Tier Region)
- Batavia (Finger Lakes Region)
- Hudson (Capital Region)
- South Bronx (NYC Region)
- Olean (Western NY Region)
- Kingston (Mid-Hudson Region)
- Rome (Mohawk Valley Region)
- Cortland (Central NY Region)
- Watertown (North Country Region)
- Hicksville in Oyster Bay (Long Island Region)



The program emphasizes using DRI investments to reinforce and secure additional public and private investment within and near downtown neighborhoods, building upon growth supported by the REDCs. To fully leverage the impact of the DRI, Local Planning Committees identified projects that totaled in excess of the available DRI funds to ensure a continued pipeline of projects ready for funding within the community in the event that alternate funding sources are identified for projects; additional State funds become available; or projects drop from consideration. The most transformative and catalytic projects from those identified for each downtown will receive DRI funding.

With the assistance of the State, leadership from within the communities, and public and private investors, these communities will become vibrant communities where people will want to live, work and raise families.



**Downtown  
Revitalization  
Initiative**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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*DRI Boundary*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Rome was selected in 2017 to receive \$10 million through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). The DRI is a statewide effort to improve the urban vitality of city centers across New York State. The goal of the DRI is to fund priority projects that transform downtown neighborhoods into vibrant communities where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live, work, and raise a family. The New York State's Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) nominated 10 DRI communities after evaluating each downtown's potential for significant transformation. The DRI is an innovative and comprehensive approach to the revitalization of downtowns. The DRI is chaired by New York Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, along with a specialized team of planners from the Department of State and the private sector, with support from the Empire State Development, the Division of Homes and Community Renewal and other state agencies.

Rome's DRI goals are focused on:

- Providing a sustainable and diverse range of uses in the downtown area
- Developing a high quality public realm that seamlessly connects all aspects of downtown, promoting both walkability and vibrancy
- Creating an environment that attracts and fosters economic opportunity and celebrates diversity
- Celebrating and leveraging existing historic and cultural resources to establish downtown as an arts and cultural hub.

The City of Rome was selected as a DRI community for the Mohawk Valley Region. Rome's compact, walkable downtown has all of the pieces necessary to become a thriving retail, dining, cultural, and entertainment destination and a vibrant place to live and work. The City's DRI goals are focused around providing a sustainable and diverse range of housing, developing a high quality public realm, creating an environment that attracts and fosters economic opportunity and celebrates diversity, leveraging existing historic and cultural resources, and establishing downtown as an arts and cultural hub. The Downtown Rome Strategic Investment Plan Area (DRI Area) encompasses the central business district of the City, and extends 160 acres from Madison Street to the west, Court Street to the north, Black River Boulevard to the east, and Ridge Street to the south. The DRI Area encompasses a number of the City's tourist attractions, key corridors, and public services including: historic Fort Stanwix, the Capitol Theatre, the West Dominick Arts and Cultural District, City Hall, and the Erie Boulevard commercial corridor.

## CHALLENGES

The DRI Area faces challenges that hinder enhanced economic and community vitality:

- **Lack of vibrant and animated public spaces**
- **Limited housing choices**
- **Unwelcoming streetscapes**
- **Lack of diverse economic / employment opportunities**
- **Limited private investment**
- **Unattractive commercial facades**
- **Lack of retail options and modernized spaces**
- **Few attractions for young professionals**
- **Challenging demographics**
- **Aging infrastructure**

## OPPORTUNITIES

The DRI Area has a number of unique assets and opportunities:

- **Close proximity to employment centers**
- **Prime development parcels**
- **Defined street grid**
- **Trail connections**
- **Abundance of parking**
- **High-traffic commercial transportation corridor**
- **Shopping center - grocery, department and specialty stores**
- **Streetscape improvement opportunities**
- **Mixed-use potential**
- **Urban setting that appeals to a wide demographic including young professionals, down-sizers and retirees**

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is critical to the long-term success and revitalization of the DRI Area. Input from community members helped the consultant team identify Rome's unique needs and priorities. To maximize participation from the community, multiple opportunities for feedback were provided, including public workshops, a student engagement session, and a website presence. The project team was also informed and advised by existing planning documents, a community needs assessment, and a DRI Local Planning Committee (LPC).

Key elements of the community engagement strategy are summarized below:



### **PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS:**

Three public meetings were held at each of the three key phases of the process- Visioning, Preliminary Project Prioritization, and Final Recommendations.



### **LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (LPC) MEETINGS:**

The LPC met six times over the course of the five-month planning process. The LPC acted as an advisory group, guiding the identification and prioritization of projects for recommendation to the State through the DRI process.



### **PROJECT WEBSITES + ELECTRONIC SURVEY:**

The project team created a page on the City's "Rome Rises" website to feature DRI-specific information. Interested residents were encouraged to submit comments and take an electronic survey to share their ideas.



### **STOREFRONT DROP-INS:**

The consultant team used a donated storefront in the DRI Area as an accessible location for special events and meetings to engage and inform the public and the LPC regarding the DRI process.



### **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:**

Students from the Rome City School District were invited to learn about different careers and were encouraged to provide feedback related to the DRI.

## VISION

The vision statement for the DRI Area incorporates input from the community and the LPC. Ambitious yet realistic, the vision statement provides the framework for the DRI Strategic Investment Plan, broadly guiding decisions about future downtown development and investment.

## DOWNTOWN ROME IS...

a **welcoming** and **walkable** destination activated by  
**arts, culture** and **entrepreneurism**

a place where businesses **thrive** and **grow**

a place where people of all ages want to  
**live, work, play...** and stay



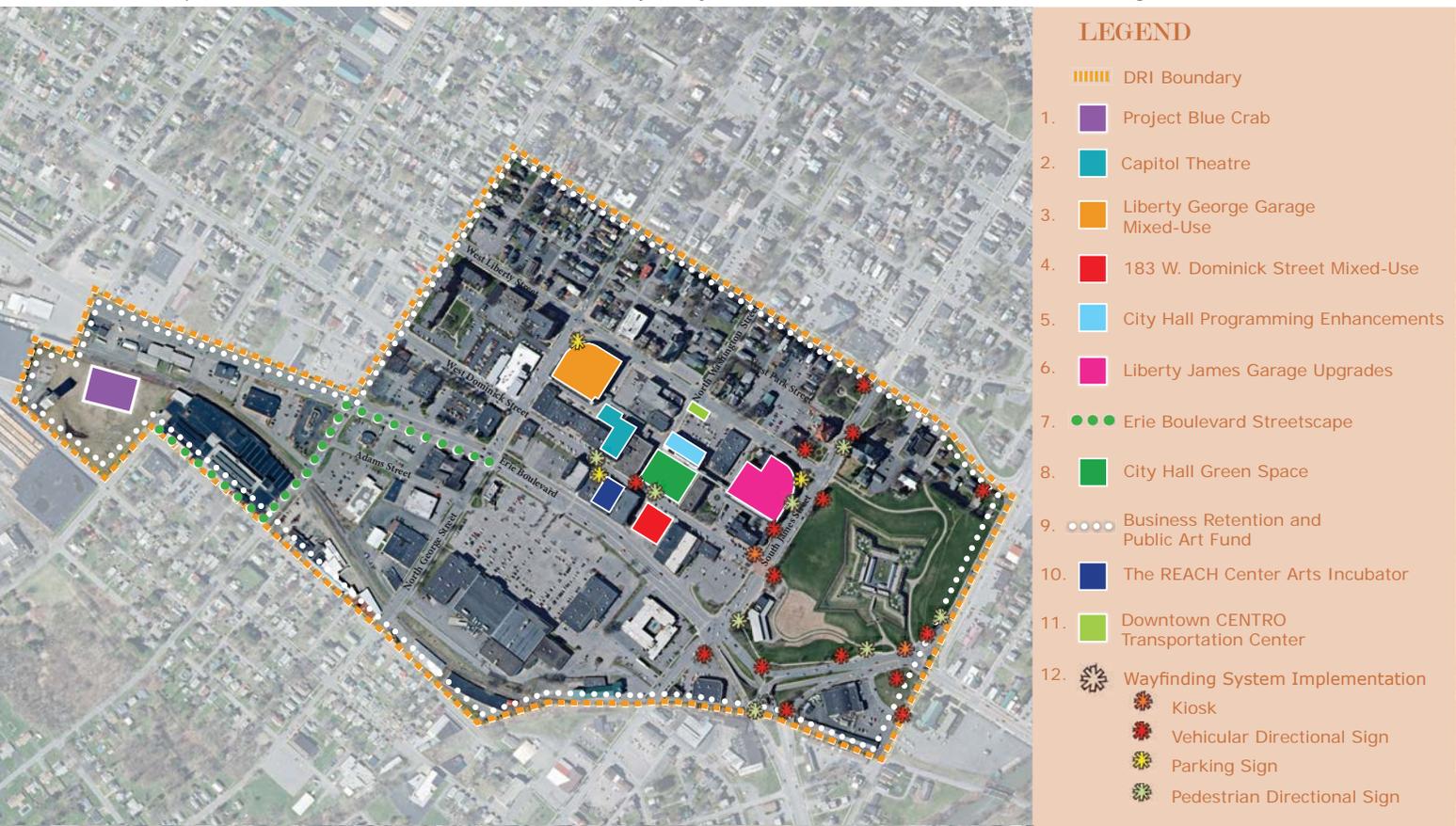
## LPC SELECTED PROJECTS

Extensive community input assisted the LPC in identifying projects that closely align with and advance the revitalization strategies of the DRI. The LPC identified 19 preliminary projects, 12 of which were chosen as priorities. Catalytic projects that can quickly help jump-start revitalization and investment in downtown were prioritized.

For each project, the LPC considered specific criteria to determine priority for funding through the DRI. Below are key criteria the LPC looked for in each project.

- Catalytic potential
- Estimated community and economic benefits
- Estimated impacts on tax revenue
- Transformative potential - elements that fundamentally change the downtown and how it is perceived
- Capacity to leverage private or public sources of funds
- Public support
- Readiness and timeframe required for implementation (in coordination with other programs, projects, initiatives, or capital improvements)
- Market demand and economic feasibility
- Employment and workforce development potential
- Any regulatory challenges that would need to be addressed
- Capacity of responsible impact in the downtown
- Operating arrangements to ensure that the project is successful, including ongoing maintenance

The map below shows the location of Priority Projects recommended for DRI funding.



## PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY

### PROJECT BLUE CRAB



This project includes the construction of a 50,000 sf advanced manufacturing facility on the former Rome Cable Complex 3 brownfield site.

Total Project Cost:	\$4,720,000
DRI Funding:	\$ 900,000

### CAPITOL THEATRE



This project will restore the existing, historic Capitol Theatre to its origins, circa 1928.

Total Project Cost:	\$4,000,000
DRI Funding:	\$2,500,000

### 183 WEST DOMINICK STREET MIXED-USE



This project includes the construction of a new mixed-use structure on an existing, undeveloped site.

Total Project Cost:	\$3,400,000
DRI Funding:	\$ 500,000

**PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY**

**LIBERTY GEORGE PARKING GARAGE**



This project involves the demolition of the existing George Street Garage to construct an interim surface lot and ready the site for future redevelopment.

Total Project Cost: \$1,800,000  
DRI Funding: \$1,500,000

**CITY HALL PROGRAMMING ENHANCEMENTS**



This project involves the renovation of portions of City Hall to address failing conditions of its structural elements, while enhancing public space.

Total Project Cost: \$2,880,000  
DRI Funding: \$1,880,000

**LIBERTY JAMES GARAGE UPDATES**



This project includes major aesthetic and operation improvements to the existing Liberty James Garage.

Total Project Cost: \$2,100,000  
DRI Funding: \$1,350,000

# PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY

## ERIE BOULEVARD STREETScape



This project involves streetscape and pedestrian improvements at the Erie Boulevard and George Street intersection.

Total Project Cost: \$1,200,000  
DRI Funding: \$1,200,000

## CITY HALL GREEN SPACE



This project involves improvements to the existing City Hall green space to facilitate enhanced, year-round programming and special events.

Total Project Cost: \$450,000  
DRI Funding: \$400,000

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND PUBLIC ART FUND



This project involves the establishment of two funds to provide grant monies to: 1) Leverage private investment in buildings to facilitate business retention, expansion and adaptive reuse. 2) Catalyze installation of public art in the downtown core.

Total Project Cost: \$600,000  
DRI Funding: \$600,000

## PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY

### THE REACH CENTER ARTS INCUBATOR



This project involves the renovation of 10,000 sf of vacant space on the existing building's ground floor and improvements to the Erie Boulevard facade.

Total Project Cost: \$525,000

DRI Funding: \$250,000

### DOWNTOWN CENTRO TRANSPORTATION CENTER



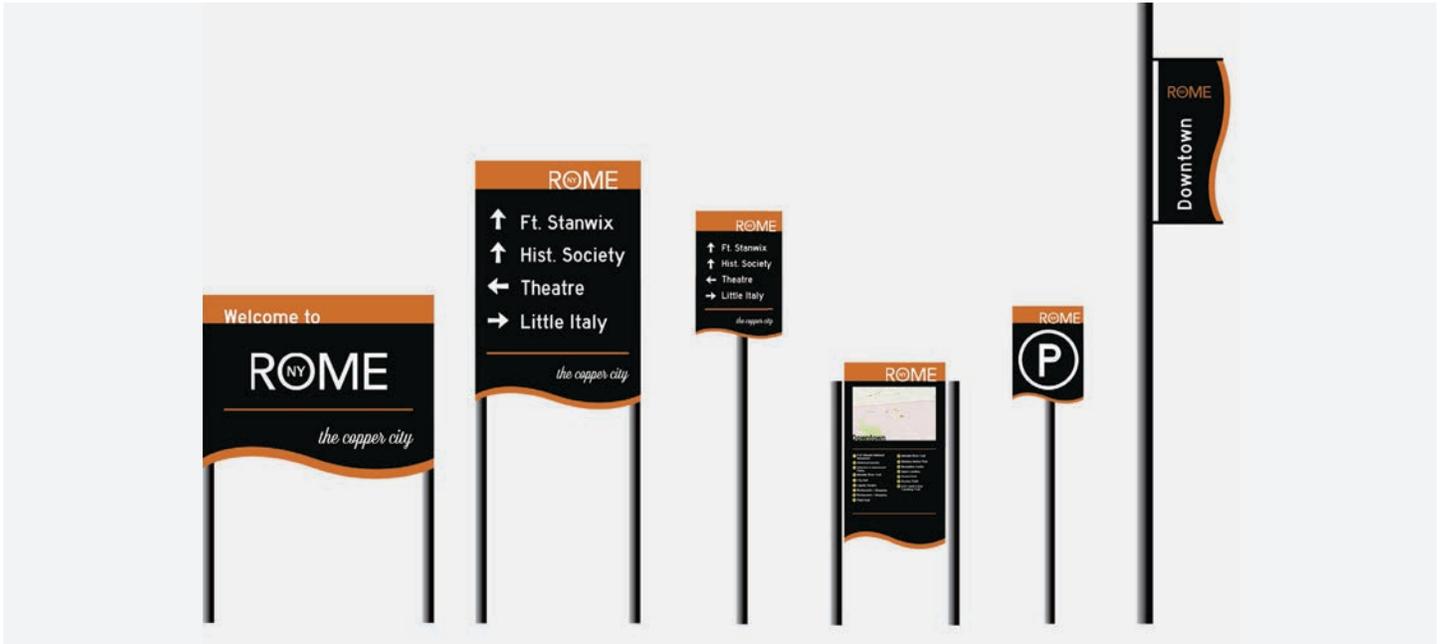
This project involves the construction of a new transfer building and surrounding site improvements.

Total Project Cost: \$450,000

DRI Funding: \$400,000

## PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY

### WAYFINDING SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION



This project involves the implementation of a comprehensive wayfinding system for vehicles and pedestrians.

Total Project Cost: \$180,000

DRI Funding: \$150,000

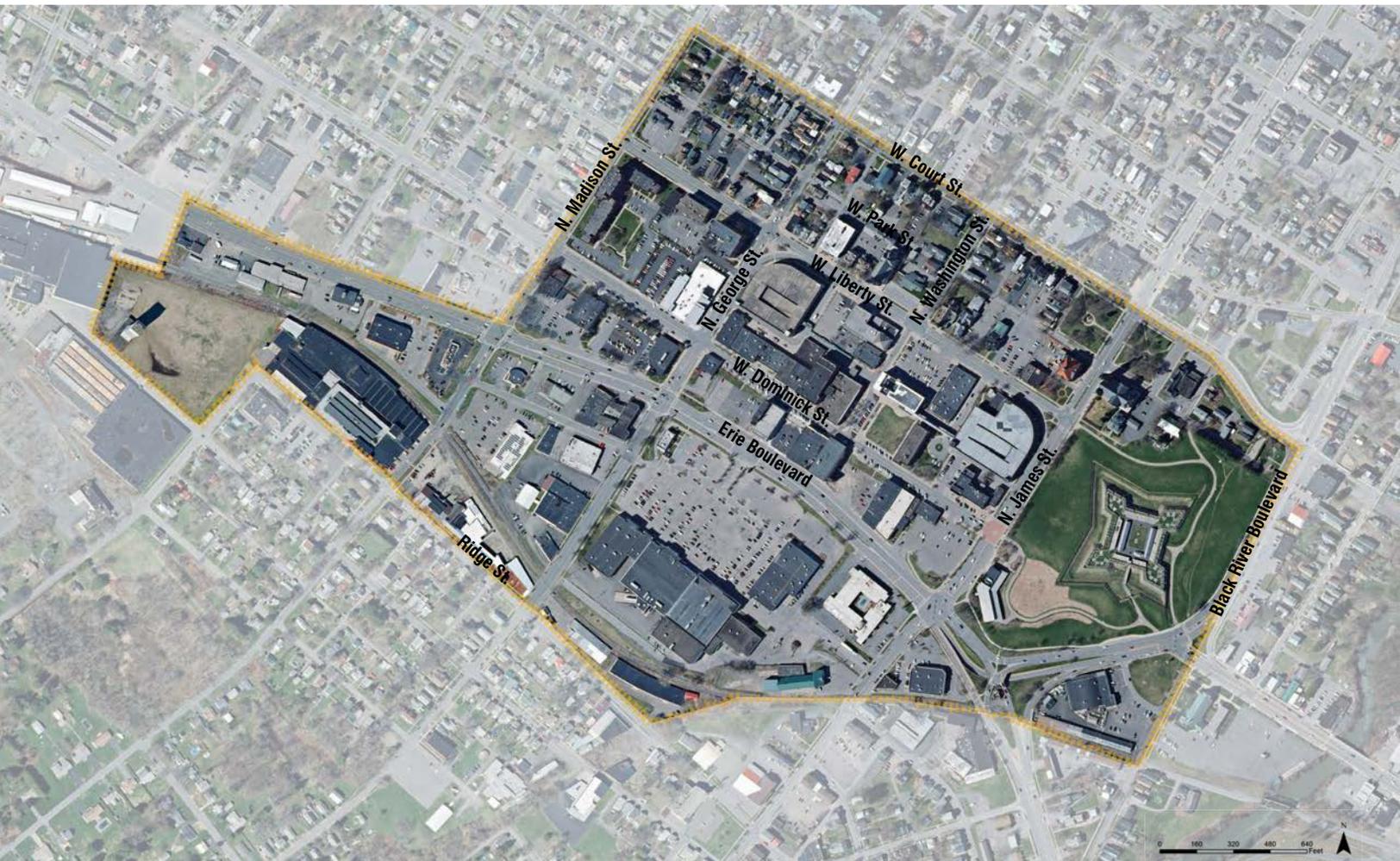


SECTION  
**1**

**DOWNTOWN PROFILE  
AND ASSESSMENT**



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# DRI AREA

## BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The DRI Area includes the central business district and extends 160 acres from Madison Street to the west, Court Street to the north, Black River Boulevard to the east, and Ridge Street to the south – including tourist attractions, a key high-traffic commercial corridor, civic, financial and community services, passive City parks, churches, and an emerging arts district. Fort Stanwix National Monument, Capitol Theatre Complex, Reach Center Arts Incubator, Rome City Hall, Rome Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Freedom Plaza shopping complex, as well as a variety of small businesses and services, help contribute to the fabric and potential of the DRI Area.



## REGIONAL CONTEXT

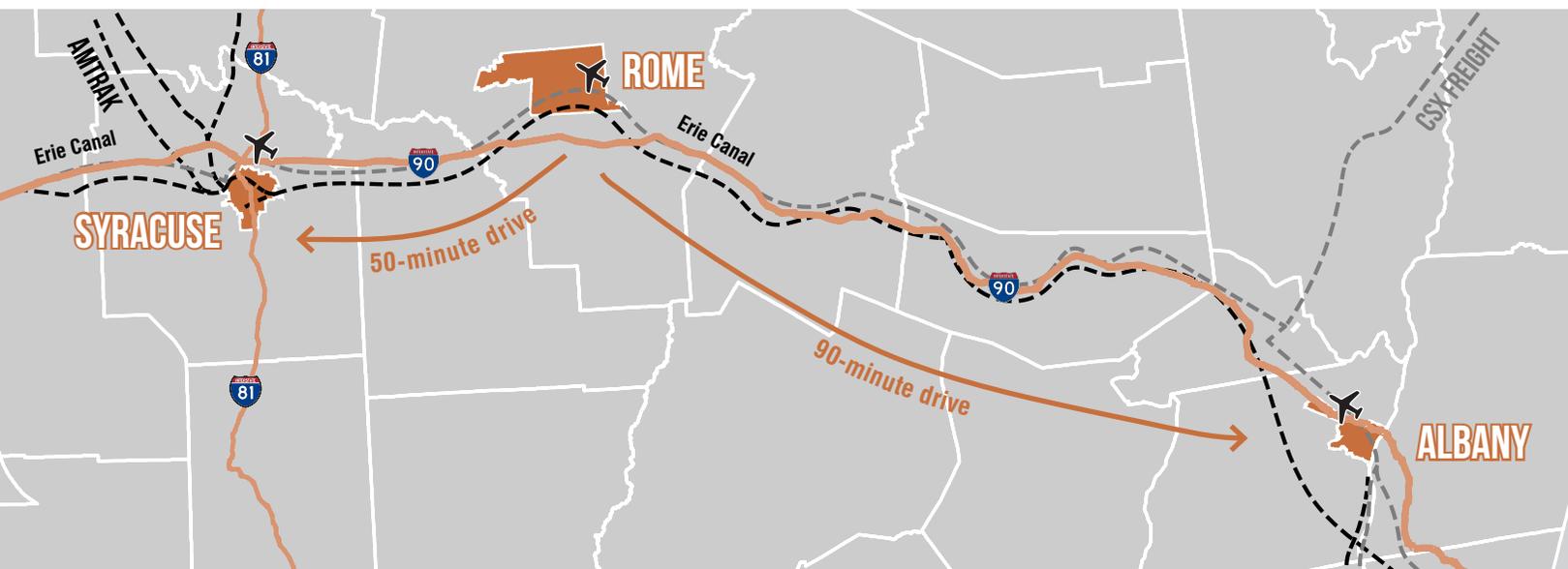
The DRI Area is within a 90-minute drive of the state capital of Albany, within a 50-minute drive of Syracuse's Central Business District, and is a gateway to the foothills of the Adirondacks. The DRI Area's proximity to other metropolitan areas, coupled with its convenient access to major transportation corridors and regional airports, is a key asset when attracting new businesses and residents.

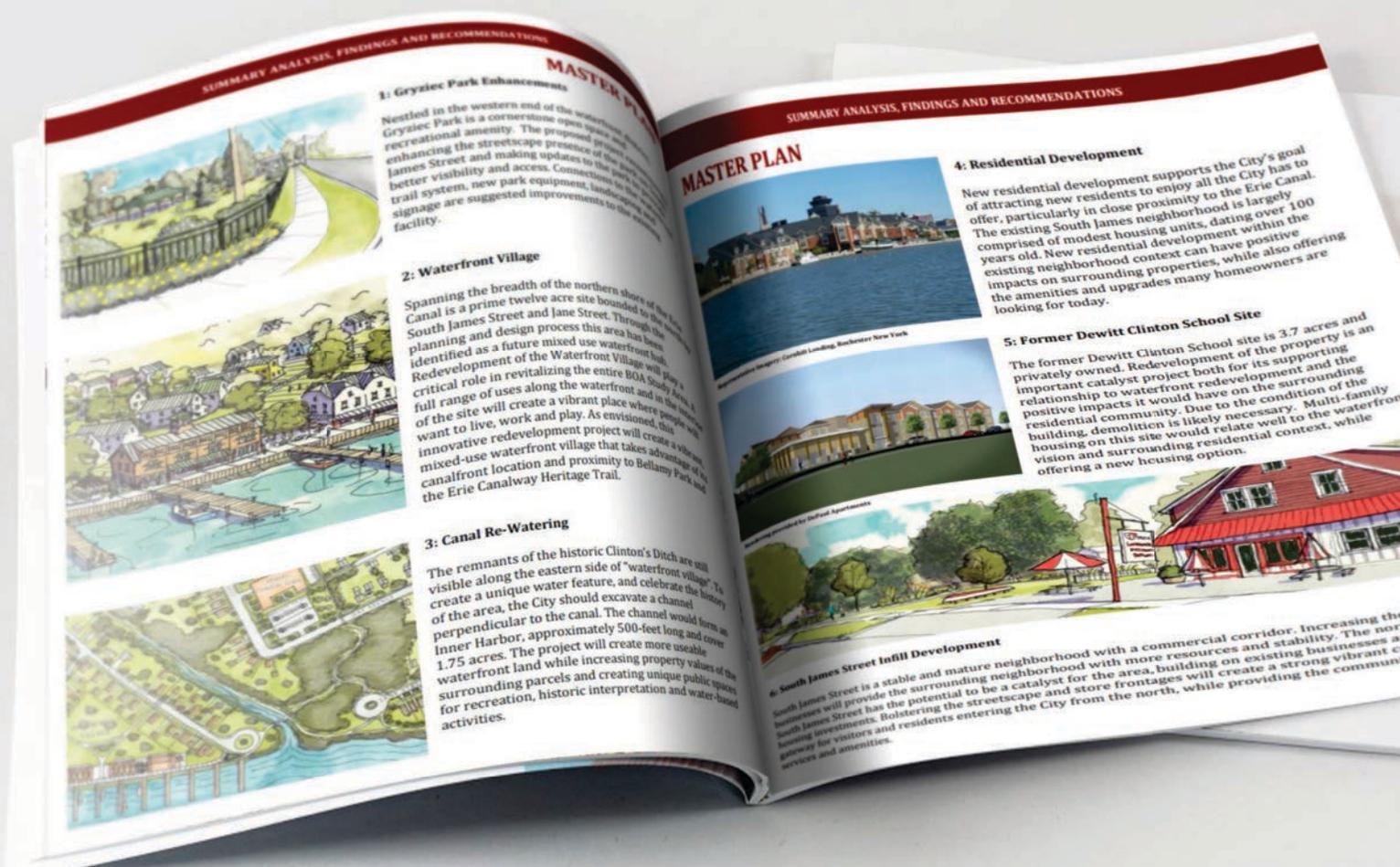
The City of Rome is one of two anchor cities in the Utica-Rome New York Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The City has three interchanges on the NYS Thruway System (I-90) and convenient access to Interstate 81. The County Airport at Griffiss Business and Technology Park features a 12,000-foot international runway providing commercial air service. Currently, passenger air service is available at Syracuse Hancock International Airport and Albany International Airport. Amtrak provides passenger rail service from Rome to New York City, Chicago, Toronto, and other major cities via the newly renovated historic train station. CSX and Susquehanna rail freight service is available to area businesses in Rome's downtown and at Griffiss Business and Technology Park. Rome has the potential for growth using the DRI as a catalyst to transform the City into a regional hub for residential growth, business retention and attraction, and tourism.

## Rome's History

The construction of the Rome Canal in 1796 created a connection from Lake Ontario through Wood Creek to the Mohawk River, in turn enabling the City of Rome to become one of the most important transportation points in Central New York for both people and goods. The City continued to develop into a major manufacturing site for metal. Geographic features, including the Mohawk River, the Erie Canal, and its location in the center of New York State, have had a significant impact on the evolution of the City.

The closure of the Griffiss Air Force Base, which was a major institution in the area from 1950 to 1995, also had a significant impact on Rome and the greater region, resulting in notable economic and demographic declines. However, the departure of the Air Force provided the City an opportunity to rediscover and diversify itself, while identifying a new course for the future. Leveraging the City's unique roots will ensure the continued success of the area's downtown through sustainable design, collaborative placemaking, and public-private partnerships in and around the target area.





# RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

## PAST PLANS

The City of Rome has been actively and strategically engaged in multiple, inter-related planning activities over the past decade, focused on how to position itself to leverage the many assets and opportunities that exist today. Many of the goals, values, and principles of this Downtown Revitalization Initiative can be traced to a series of foundational planning projects the City has undertaken over the past 15 years.

## Planning in Rome

The Department of Community and Economic Development carries out strategic planning, neighborhood development, and revitalization throughout the City of Rome. The Planning Board provides community input and advice to the Department of Community and Economic Development, and also reviews site plans and proposed zoning changes.

## Rome Main Streets Assessments (2002)

With funding from NYS, the National Main Street Center, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, worked with City staff and community stakeholders to develop a Comprehensive Main Street Approach for downtown revitalization. For several years they worked with local residents to provide technical assistance which resulted in the establishment of the existing Rome Main Streets Alliance, a 501c-3 organization and a National Main Street recognition from the Trust. As part of the process, three “Main Street” commercial corridors were identified as priorities: East Dominick Street, West Dominick Street, and James Street. The latter two streets run through the DRI Area, with West Dominick Street acting as the “Main Street” for the DRI Area.



## City of Rome Comprehensive Plan (2005)

At the core of this plan are two catalytic projects, each of which are pertinent to the DRI:

- Gateway development initiatives, including “spaghetti intersection” of Erie Boulevard and Black River Boulevard located in the southern corner of the DRI Area.
- A focused plan for downtown development that is intended to create a cohesive vision for the downtown core of the City, which includes the DRI Area.

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan identified seven key goals for Rome:

- Provide a stable and productive tax base.
- Become the most business-friendly community in New York State.
- Train and educate a modern workforce.
- Offer higher quality, market-appropriate housing choices.
- Develop 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure.
- Support a healthy community and environment.
- Build and protect rich urban amenities.

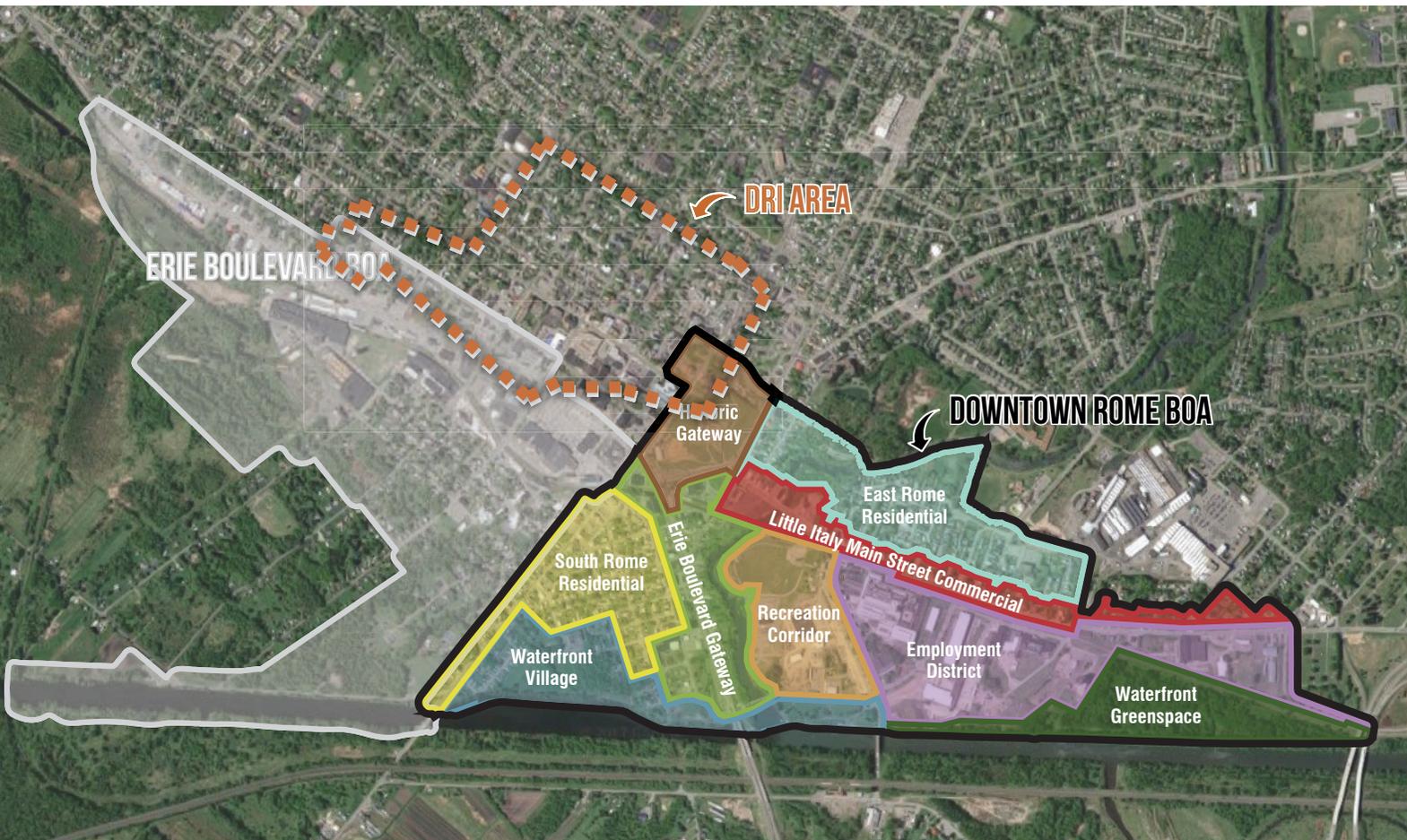


## From Brown to Green: A Revitalization Strategy for the Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area (2008-2018)

The Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area (referred to as **From Brown to Green: A Revitalization Strategy for the Downtown Rome BOA**) combines planning, economic development, and marketing to rebuild the former industrial and manufacturing core into a sustainable community with high-quality neighborhoods, diverse job opportunities, and accessible recreation alternatives. The Downtown Rome BOA is a 513-acre site, divided into nine subareas, with the northwest corner of the BOA area, including Fort Stanwix, overlapping with the DRI. Within the nine subareas, 16 strategic sites were identified based on community feedback, review of existing plans, field assessments, existing conditions, and the potential to catalyze further investment.

### Goals of the Downtown BOA Step 3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Provide safe, enjoyable, and accessible neighborhoods.
- Enhance connectivity and accessibility of goods, services, and recreational options.
- Ensure a strong base of good-paying jobs.
- Provide incentives to attract and retain small businesses.
- Improve quality of life by providing varied leisure opportunities.
- Promote downtown Rome as a destination for families, businesses, and tourists.



## **Rome Rental Housing Market Summary (2014)**

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The Rental Housing Market Report, which was completed for a targeted development in 2014, also identified needs and opportunities for rental housing in the City as a whole. The plan determined that there is a need for rental housing at various levels of income and bedroom mixes in the City due to numerous factors including: population growth, declining vacancy rates, aging housing stock, expanding economy, and rising home sale prices.

Initial strategies identified through this process are consistent with the vision for the DRI, including:

- Bringing more housing into the downtown.
- Stabilizing existing residential neighborhoods.
- Identifying market-based end uses for vacant and underutilized sites.

## **Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 1 Pre-Nomination Report (2016)**

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In 2016, the City completed a Pre-Nomination Study for the Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area. Similar to the Downtown BOA, this DRI area has some overlap with the DRI Area. The City is currently advancing the project through Step 2 of the BOA Program, with completion anticipated in 2018.

Initial strategies identified through this process are consistent with the vision for the DRI, including:

- Enhancing key connections and gateways, such as Erie Boulevard.
- Strengthening the Erie Boulevard streetscape, including aesthetic and pedestrian safety improvements.
- Bringing more housing into the downtown.
- Leveraging the Capitol Theatre and Fort Stanwix as major cultural nodes.

- Stabilizing existing residential neighborhoods.
- Identifying market-based end uses for vacant and underutilized sites.

## **HUD Community Needs Assessment (2017)**

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The City of Rome worked with the Department of Urban and Economic Development (HUD), Cornell Rust2Green Urban Studio and Federal funding to complete a Community Needs Assessment that identified two priorities that directly relate to the DRI:

- Upgrade Infrastructure - Identify and coordinate actions and available resources for infrastructure upgrades to support the growth of existing businesses and to attract new economic activity.
- Revitalize Downtown: Engage stakeholders to design and implement programs to beautify streetscapes; enhance facades; fill vacancies; provide business incentives; and strengthen connections to the waterfront.

## **Citywide Zoning Update (2018)**

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The City of Rome is currently in the process of writing a new zoning code. It is anticipated that the new code will be adopted by May 2018.

## **Woodhaven Revitalization Plan (2018)**

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The City of Rome is currently progressing a plan to regenerate +/- 100 acres of former military and multifamily housing into the east Rome neighborhood. A market analysis was completed for the plan that included economic and real estate findings that are applicable to the DRI plan and strengthen the need for residences downtown to create a 24/7 vitality.

## RELATIONSHIP TO REDC PRIORITIES

The DRI Area is well-positioned to advance the strategic investment priorities identified by the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council (REDC). The REDC Strategic Plan has identified general strategies and specific opportunities within the City of Rome, including investment in the Griffiss International Airport, Griffiss Business and Technology Park, Erie Boulevard BOA, Downtown Rome BOA, Rome Cable Brownfield Remediation Project, Rome Capitol Theatre Historic Preservation Master Plan, and the Erie Canal Canalway Trail.

Critical regional strategies that will be advanced through the Rome DRI include:

- Tourism - The Mohawk Valley is a top state tourism destination, accounting for \$1.87B/yr.
- Opportunity Agenda - job training and workforce development initiatives, especially those aimed at hard-to-place workers.
- Vibrant Communities - Safe, appealing, livable communities and healthy urban areas are essential to attracting and retaining talented workers.
- Within each of the individual project profiles (Section 5) there is a detailed description of how that project relates to key regional strategies.

## What are the REDCs?

To ensure that New York State funding is effectively distributed, Governor Cuomo established ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) so that local officials could address the most pertinent needs in their communities. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. In 2011, each Council developed a long-term strategic plan for economic growth in its region.

The Mohawk Valley REDC encompasses the geographic center of Upstate New York and includes the urban centers of Rome, Utica, and Amsterdam. In September 2017, the Mohawk Valley REDC nominated the City of Rome as the region's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) community. Rome was chosen because of its strong public-private partnerships, planned and ongoing investment, opportunities for development, and potential to capitalize on recent momentum.





# SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

## INTRODUCTION

Understanding local and regional population trends, age characteristics, educational attainment, and other demographic factors is necessary to make thoughtful recommendations for revitalization. The recommendations included in this Strategic Investment Plan were informed by this analysis and tailored to the unique needs and vision of the DRI Area.

### What is the Study of Demographics?

Demographics uses statistical data such as age, race, and sex to study a certain population. Data for this analysis is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau and the American Community Survey. Decision makers use demographic analysis of existing trends to make projections while planning for the future.

## TOTAL POPULATION

Only 492 residents live within the DRI Area, representing approximately 1.5% of Rome’s 33,530 residents.

**The relatively small population of the DRI Area suggests that residential opportunities may be limited in terms of type or quality.**

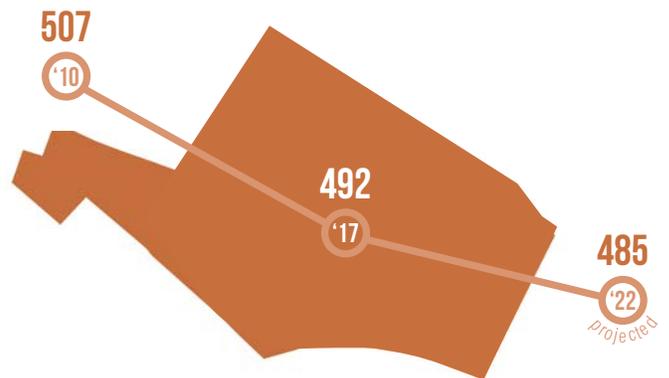


2017 Population

## POPULATION TRENDS

Since 2010, total population in the DRI Area has declined by almost 3% while the population of the City of Rome has declined by 0.6%. In the same time period, Oneida County’s population has grown by almost 2%. From 2017 to 2022, population levels are projected to remain relatively unchanged, decreasing by less than 1% annually in both the DRI Area and the City of Rome, and increasing by less than 1% annually in Oneida County. These projections do not account for interventions or transformational events, such as projects advanced through the DRI process, which could significantly alter population trends within the DRI Area.

**Though population is slowly declining in both the DRI Area and the City of Rome, the projects implemented as part of the DRI may have the potential to reverse the downward trend.**



DRI Population Trends

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

While the City of Rome and Oneida County both have household sizes that average above 2 people, the average household size in the DRI Area is 1.5 people.

**The DRI Area's small average household size suggests that more singles than families live in the DRI Area today.**

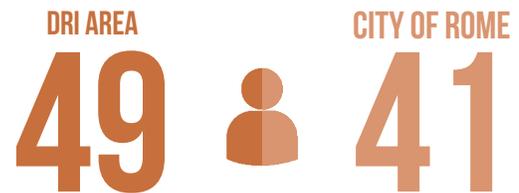


### 2017 Average Household Size

## AGE

Compared to the City of Rome and Oneida County, which have median ages of 41 and 42 years-old, the DRI Area is generally older with a median age of 49. The DRI Area also has a higher concentration of residents over the age of 65 than does the City of Rome, with 28% of residents in this age cohort. However, those younger than 18 years old constitute only 17% of the DRI Area's population, and the 15 to 19-year-old age group has been steadily decreasing by about 2% annually since 2010.

**To help retain young families in the DRI Area and to cater to the existing concentration of seniors, the DRI aims to increase the number of residents in and around downtown by developing desirable housing opportunities geared to serving the needs of millennials, young families, and retirees. Having a diverse housing stock will ensure a varied and diverse downtown population.**



### 2017 Median Age

## EDUCATION

Educational attainment levels in the DRI Area are low when compared to the surrounding region. While 83% of DRI Area residents have achieved a high school degree or higher, only 4.2% of the population has a bachelor’s degree or higher. In the City of Rome, 20.2% of the population holds a bachelor’s degree or higher.

**The DRI aims to attract and leverage the skills of the highly educated population that presently lives just outside the DRI Area.**



**2017 Educational Attainment**

## RACE AND ETHNICITY

About 86% of DRI Area residents identify as “White Alone.” The next most populous racial or ethnic groups are “Black Alone” at 7% and “Hispanic Origin” at 6%.

The racial and ethnic makeup of the DRI Area is similar to that of the City of Rome and Oneida County, with the majority of residents self-identifying as “White Alone.” In the City of Rome, the population identifying as “Hispanic” increased by 33% since 2010, with the DRI Area experiencing a similar trend during the same time period.

**Attracting and providing services for a diverse population is important to creating a vibrant downtown.**

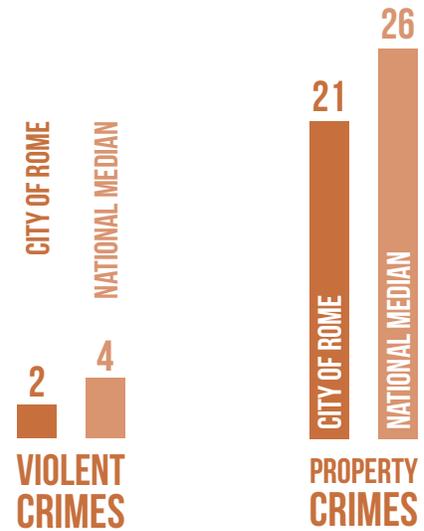


**2017 DRI Racial Make-Up**

## CRIME

According to a metric known as the “crime index” – which is based on all crimes, including both property and violent crimes – the City of Rome is safer than many of the cities in the surrounding region. While Rome is safer than 29% of U.S. cities according to the index, Utica, Oneida, and Syracuse are safer than less than 11% of U.S. cities.

**Crime rates in the City of Rome are considerably lower than the national median, and Rome is one of the safest cities in the region.**

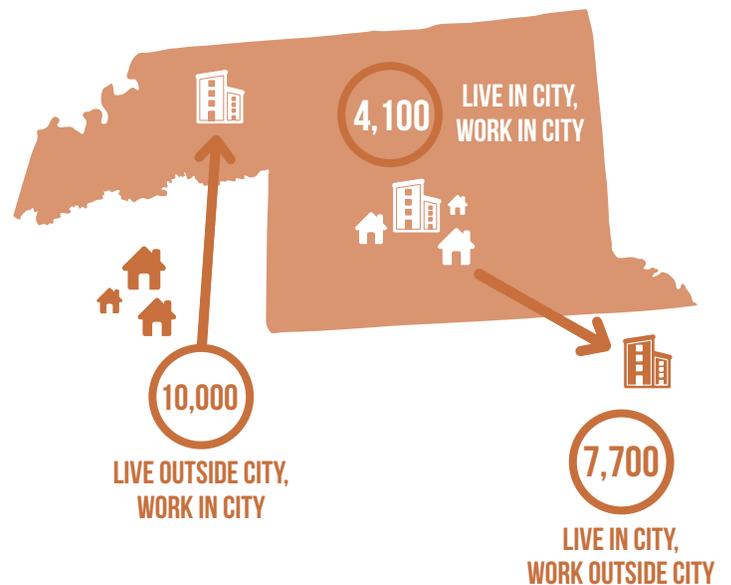


**2016 Crime Rates** (per 1,000 residents)

## COMMUTING PATTERNS

Commuting patterns play an important role in the dynamics of growth and economic development in a community. About 10,000 workers are employed in the City of Rome, but reside outside City boundaries. In other words, these individuals commute into the City for work. Another 7,700 workers live in the City but commute elsewhere to work. Approximately 4,100 people are employed and live within the City boundaries.

**These commuting patterns reveal that there is an untapped market of people employed in the City of Rome who choose to live elsewhere. Attracting some of these people to live in the DRI Area is a key goal of the DRI.**

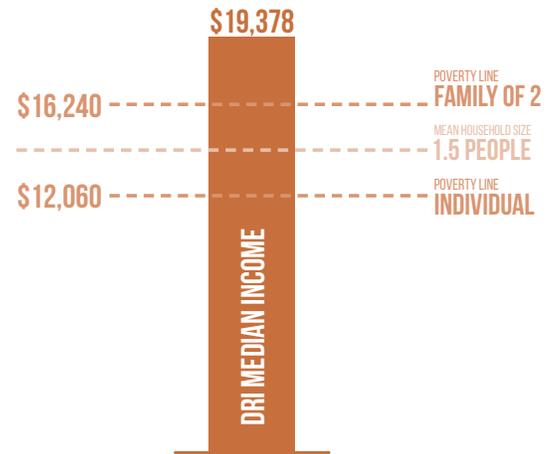


**2015 Rome Commuting Patterns**

## INCOME

Income is considered a key economic indicator as changes in both personal and household income can reflect economic growth or decline in an area. Median household income in the DRI Area is significantly lower than the City of Rome and the surrounding area. In the DRI Area, the median household earns \$19,378 per year, less than half of the median household income in the City of Rome, which is \$44,479 annually.

**The median household income in the DRI Area would enable both an individual and a family of two people to live above the poverty line.**



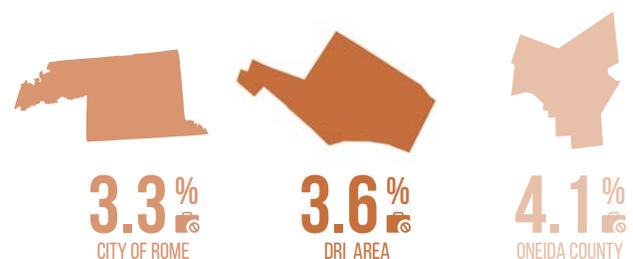
**2017 DRI Income and Poverty Levels**

## EMPLOYMENT

904 people are employed within the DRI Area, some of whom live in the DRI Area and some of whom commute. Of the 416 DRI Area residents who are over the age of 16, more than 96% (400 people) are employed but may not necessarily work within the DRI Area.

The largest employment sectors in the DRI Area include "Retail Trade" (27.8%), "Accommodation and Food Services" (16.9%), and "Administration and Support, Waste Management and Remediation" (14.4%). However, the City of Rome's largest employers, which include Defense Finance and Accounting Services (950 employees), Birnie Bus (923 employees), and Rome Memorial Hospital (791 employees) are not located within the DRI Area boundaries.

**The DRI aims to attract more employers to the DRI Area, bringing jobs, employees, and investment downtown.**

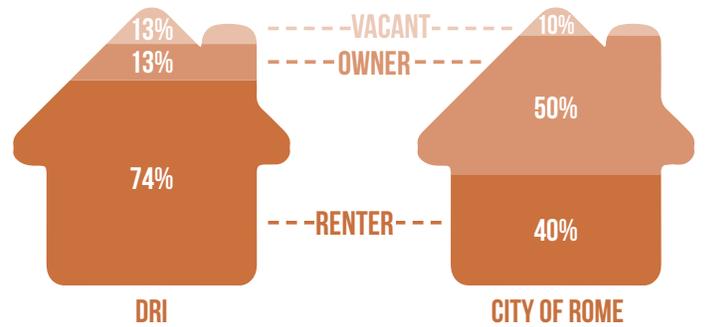


**2017 Unemployment Rates**

## HOUSING TENURE

Housing units in the DRI Area are primarily renter-occupied, with 74% of units being renter-occupied and only 13% of units being owner-occupied. In the City of Rome, only 40% of units are renter-occupied and 50% of units are owner-occupied. Vacancy rates in the DRI Area and the City of Rome are comparable at 13% and 10%, respectively. However, vacancy rates in the DRI Area are projected to increase at a rate of 3% annually through 2022, while the rate of increase in the City of Rome is expected to be only 2%.

**Increasing home ownership and reducing vacancy rates are important objectives of the DRI, as both outcomes encourage residents to be invested in their community.**



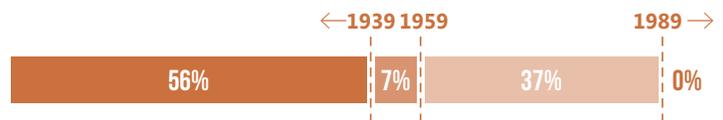
**2017 Occupancy Rates**

## AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

The majority of the housing stock in the DRI Area was built prior to 1939, while no new houses have been constructed since 1989. Relatively few new residential buildings have been built anywhere in Rome since 2010; only 25 new units have been constructed in the City during this time, none of which were located in the DRI Area.

Older housing is generally more expensive to maintain and may require significant investment to update with modern amenities.

**The DRI projects will attempt to address the lack of modern housing in the DRI Area by providing new options with modern amenities, making the DRI Area a more attractive residential location for millennials, families, and seniors.**

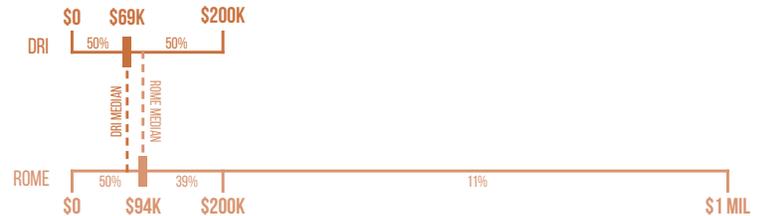


**2015 DRI Housing Units by Year Built**

## HOME VALUES

Home values of the 46 owner-occupied units in the DRI Area range from under \$50,000 to \$199,999, with the median home value being \$69,000. For comparison, the median home value is \$94,000 in Rome, \$122,000 in Oneida County, and \$311,000 in New York State.

**Housing prices in the DRI Area contribute to the region's overall affordable standard of living. The DRI intends to retain this affordability, while also providing attractive housing options for more income ranges.**



### 2017 Home Values

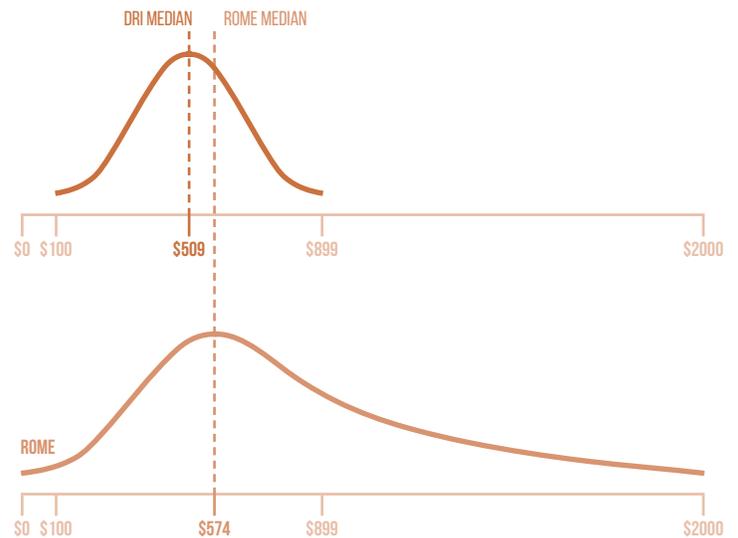
## RENTAL MARKET

Of the 290 housing units in the DRI Area, only 58 (or 20%) are single-family homes, with the remaining 80% being rental units in structures containing two or more units.

Rents in the DRI Area are comparable, if not slightly less than, rents in the City of Rome, with the median rent in the DRI Area being \$509 per month. However, City rents range from under \$100 to over \$2,000 per month while rents in the DRI Area range from \$100 to \$899 per month, suggesting that options in the City of Rome are more varied than those in the DRI Area.

The 2014 Rome Rental Housing Market Summary report indicated that there is a need for rental housing units at different income levels. This demand is partially driven by the age of the housing stock, and the increased costs associated with updating older properties.

**Overall, there is a market for both rehabilitating existing vacant units in the DRI Area, as well as creating new housing options that could appeal to a broad audience, including young professionals, families, and retirees.**



### 2015 Rent of Renter-Occupied Units

**The City of Utica has seen a recent influx of new rental units, with a median rent of \$719 and ranges between \$650 and \$1,350.**



# PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

## INTRODUCTION

Understanding and evaluating the physical characteristics in the DRI Area will help identify how redevelopment opportunities best fit into the existing built environment and where regulatory changes might be required to achieve a certain vision. Zoning districts also impact where and how future development and investment should occur. The purpose of reviewing zoning is to determine whether the existing regulations should be modified to better facilitate redevelopment.

## What is Zoning?

Zoning is the regulatory tool by which municipalities control the physical development of land and the uses appropriate for each property. Typical zones include residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational. Aside from regulating land use, zoning can also be utilized to regulate building and streetscape design.

## LAND USE

Land uses in the DRI Area are predominantly commercial in nature, ranging from restaurants and retail to cultural and service-oriented. The most important aspect of the DRI's land use and design patterns is the area's walkability. The north side of the DRI Area's inherently walkable streets and historic, neighborhood-scale buildings are conducive to creating a lively downtown. This compact, grid formation of the DRI Area creates an excellent foundation for growth and development. The south side of the DRI Area is separated by Erie Boulevard and is dominated with large big-box stores and industrial uses. There is limited connectivity between the northern and southern portions of the DRI Area.

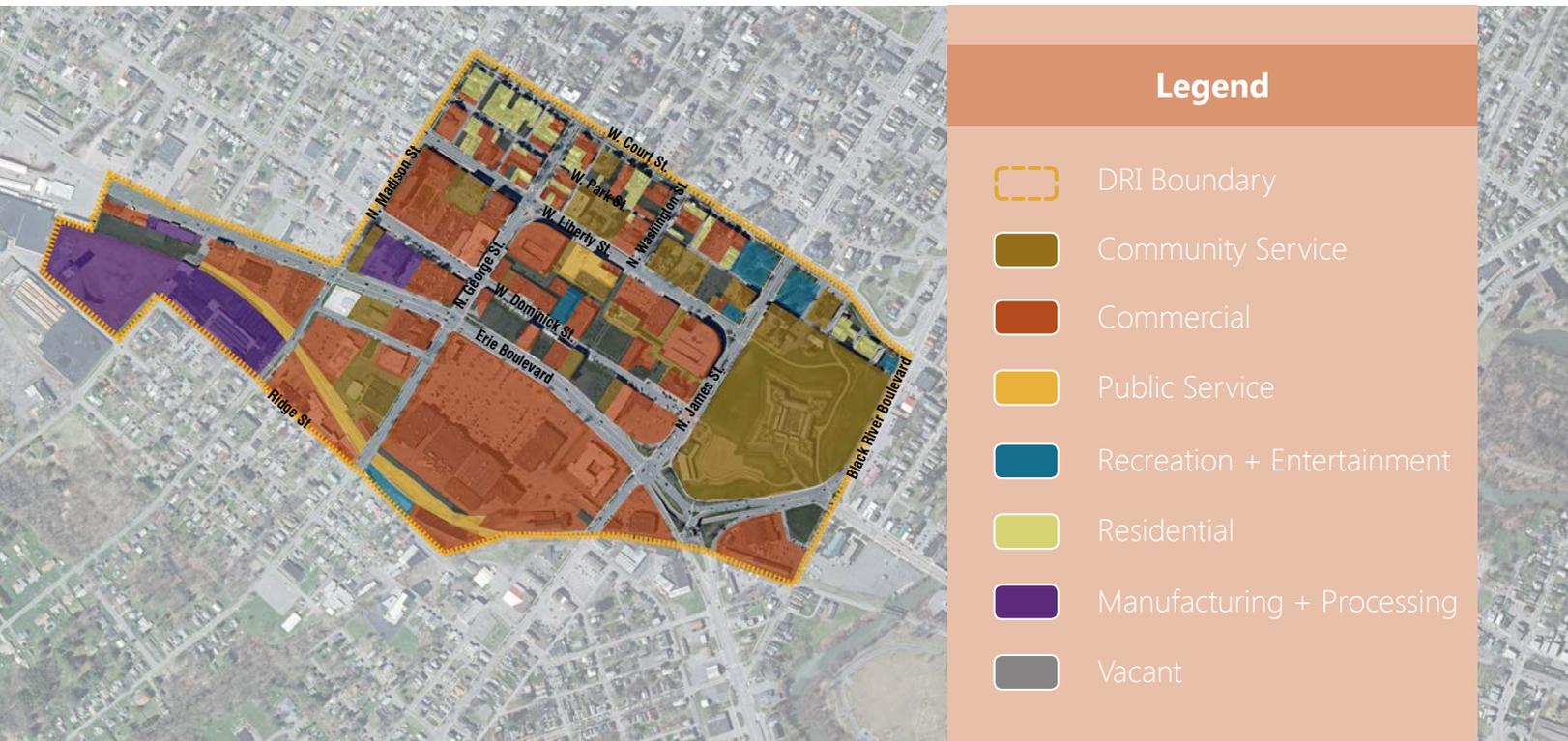
### West Dominick Street Corridor

West Dominick Street, running east to west through the center of the DRI Area is the City's "Main Street." This major corridor has one lane in each direction and provides residents and visitors with access to the Capitol Theatre, restaurants, cafes, and art studios. The land use pattern, urban design,

and architectural character of this corridor can be traced back to the historic development patterns of the City. The commercial area along West Dominick Street is lined with brick and masonry mixed-use commercial buildings ranging from one to four stories in height. These structures have ground level storefronts and office or residential space above. Many of these structures have potential for redevelopment and much of the vacant lands along this corridor are ripe for development.

### Erie Boulevard Corridor

Erie Boulevard runs parallel to West Dominick Street. The corridor is a major vehicular thoroughfare with limited to no pedestrian accommodations. The businesses surrounding the boulevard are major, single-story, big-box stores that have front-loaded parking lots which abut the road. This commercial corridor lacks character but provides the area with necessary services and a variety of retail options. Its land use and design characteristics are fundamental to the community's vision to establish a 24/7 downtown environment.



## ZONING

The DRI Area is divided into five zoning districts which allow for a range of uses:

### **Mixed Commercial/Residential (C-2):**

to provide for mixed-use development that combines commercial, office, entertainment, public, and residential uses on a single site or corridor.

### **General Commercial (C-3):**

to provide for a broad range of commercial development including a full range of retail, office, and service uses with a local or regional market.

### **Central Commercial (C-4):**

to provide for commercial and some residential development within Rome's central business district that allows a broad range of uses to reflect the central business district's role as a cultural, office, and governmental center.

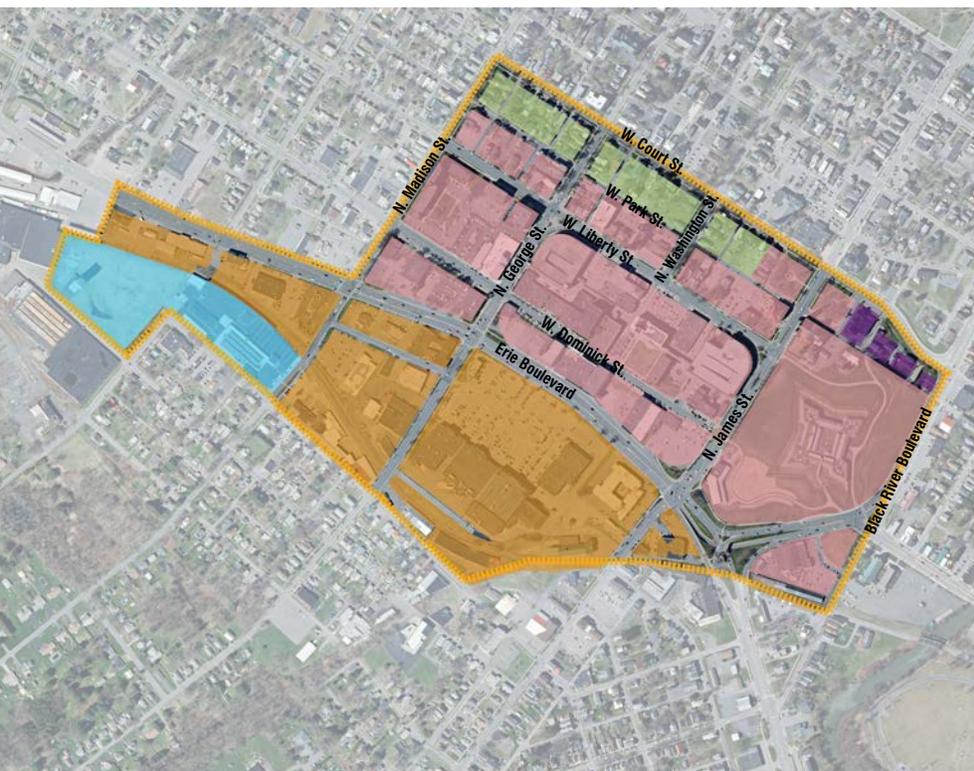
### **General Industrial (E-3):**

to provide areas that are suitable for light industrial uses and also for a wide range of heavier manufacturing and processing activities.

### **Residential/Professional (R-P):**

to provide for a mix of residential and small professional office uses.

The City is currently updating their zoning code to facilitate their vision for downtown and ensure user-friendliness. To accomplish this, the City re-evaluated the downtown zoning code, recognizing that the current zoning standards do not stress the importance of building design and interaction with the public realm, and parking requirements are not consistent with achieving a walkable, pedestrian-oriented downtown core. The types of uses permitted also required additional attention in order to ensure downtown could attract a wide range of uses that can work together to promote vibrancy and a live, work, play environment.



## Legend

- Mixed Commercial + Residential (C-2)
- General Commercial (C-3)
- Central Commercial (C-4)
- General Industrial (E-3)
- Residential/Professional (R-P)



# TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

## INTRODUCTION

A community's transportation network plays a crucial role in any revitalization effort. The interaction of land use and transportation can enhance overall livability in numerous ways. Improving safety, walkability, convenience, and connections within the transportation network can support private sector development. Improvements to the DRI Area's transportation network are a central component of the Downtown Rome Strategic Investment Plan strategy.

## Why are Streetscapes Important?

Whether driving, walking, or cycling, residents and visitors experience communities at street-level. An uninviting or inaccessible street creates a poor experience for users and impacts their image of the community. Vibrant, lively, accessible, and safe streets, however, encourage people to explore and keep them coming back. Many of the current DRI Area streetscapes have the connectivity but lack the intimate details that create a vibrant experience.

## STREET NETWORK

The DRI Area’s street network is organized on a modified grid and is made up of local, collector, and arterial roads.

Erie Boulevard (NY Route 46) carries the highest annual average daily traffic (AADT) volume through the DRI Area at 27,329 vehicles per day. (For comparison, the mean AADT on the NYS Thruway is 52,810 vehicles per day.) In fact, this stretch of Erie Boulevard is the most highly traveled road in the entire City of Rome. When compared to North James Street, which has the next highest AADT in the DRI Area at 6,859 vehicles per day, the relatively high AADT along Erie Boulevard suggests that a significant number of vehicles travel through downtown each day. High volume traffic has the potential to contribute to the commercial nature of the corridor if that volume is captured. However, these volumes may make the roadway less welcoming for pedestrians.

$$\text{AADT} = \frac{\text{total volume of vehicular traffic for 1 year}}{365 \text{ days}}$$

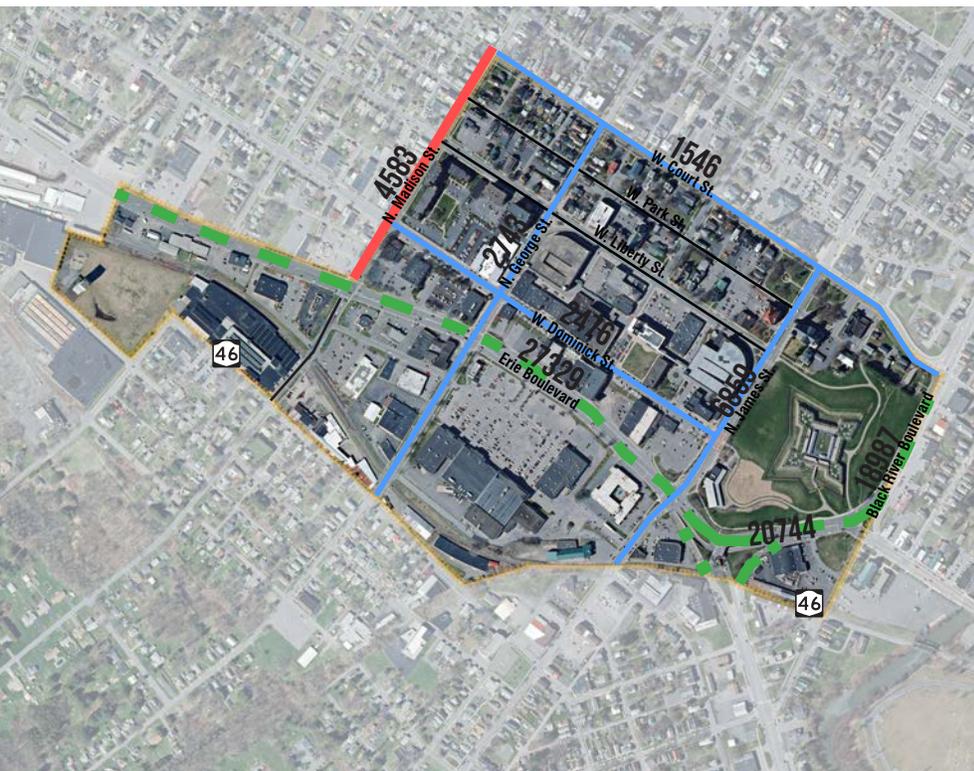
## Roadway Classifications

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) classifies roadways into three categories based on speed of travel and level of accessibility:

**Arterial Roads.** These roads are designed for long-distance travel, with high rates of speed, and limited access from neighboring roads.

**Collector Roads.** These roads provide connections between arterial and local roads, with more access but lower speeds than arterial roads.

**Local Roads.** These roads are designed for high accessibility, and are low speed. Local roads are the most common type of road, followed by collector roads.



## Legend

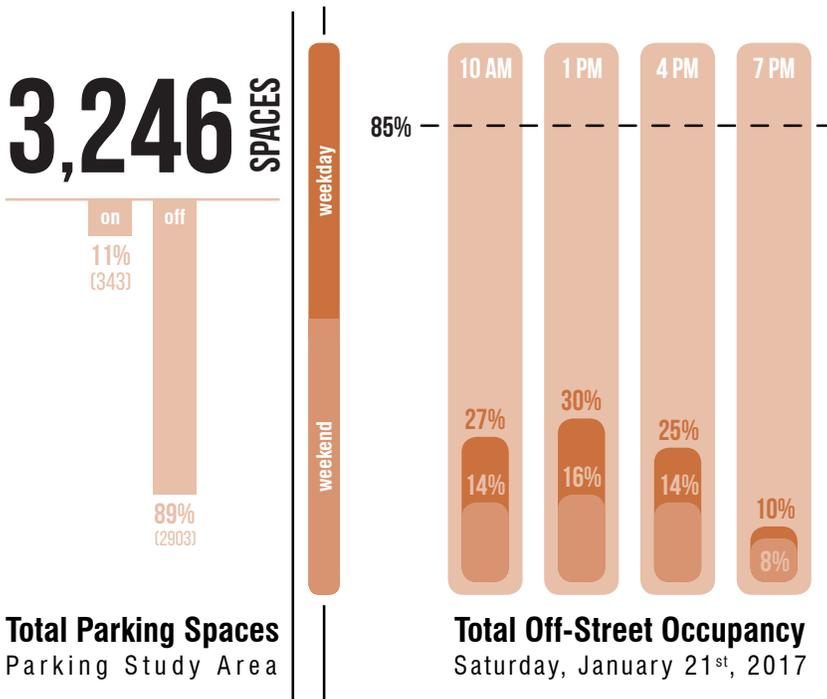
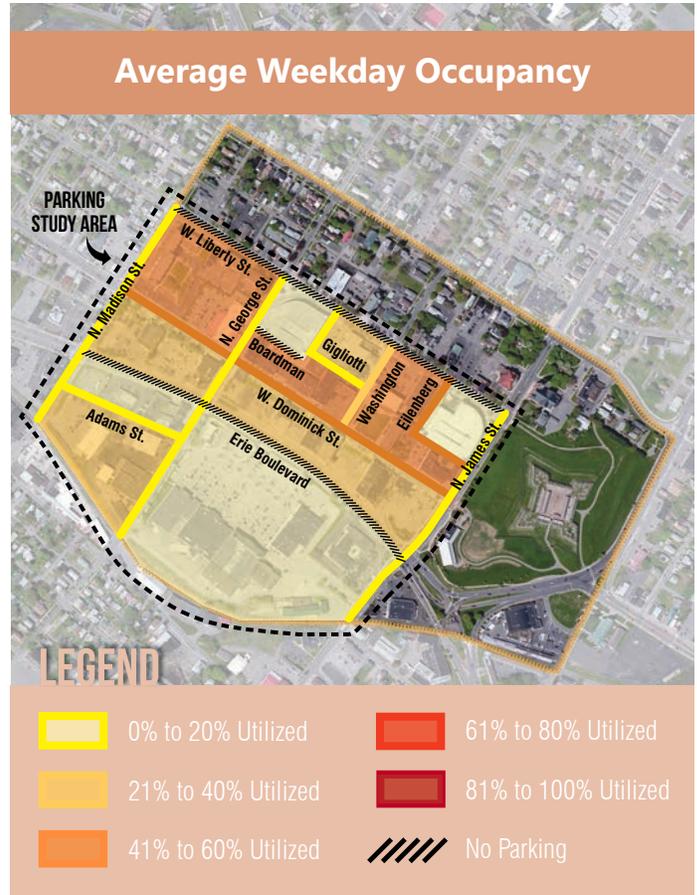
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local Road
- 1546** AADT (vehicles per day)

**PARKING**

Occupancy data shows that parking is underutilized, both on- and off-street, during morning (10AM), midday (1PM), afternoon (4PM), and evening (7PM) time periods. This underutilization suggests that there is adequate parking availability in the DRI Area, with room for significant additional growth.

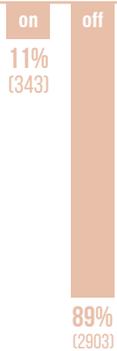
As shown below, occupancy counts in the DRI Area never approach or exceed the optimal 85% occupancy target at which most spaces are full but arriving drivers can easily find an open space. At lower occupancy, there is more parking than necessary, taking up space that could be more productively used for other purposes. At higher occupancy, it is difficult for drivers to find an unoccupied space, causing them to circulate and generate excess traffic, or leave the area altogether.

Although occupancy data suggests that parking is underutilized, residents' perceptions of parking can differ. Many residents noted that parking can be challenging, especially when events are taking place downtown or there are major productions at the Capitol Theatre.



Parking utilization includes available spaces at Liberty George Parking Garage. Should the garage demolition move forward, utilization percentages would rise. The City could recoup additional spaces on the top level of Liberty James Parking Garage with the relocation of the existing solar panels.

**3,246 SPACES**

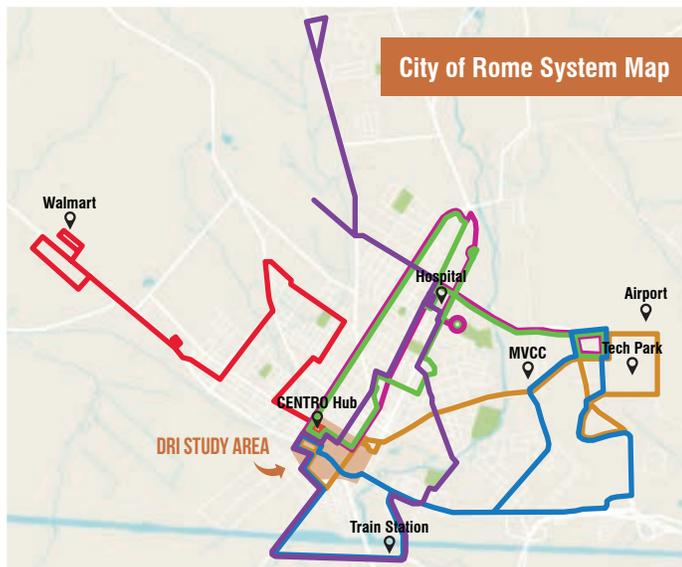


**Total Parking Spaces**  
Parking Study Area

**Total Off-Street Occupancy**  
Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017

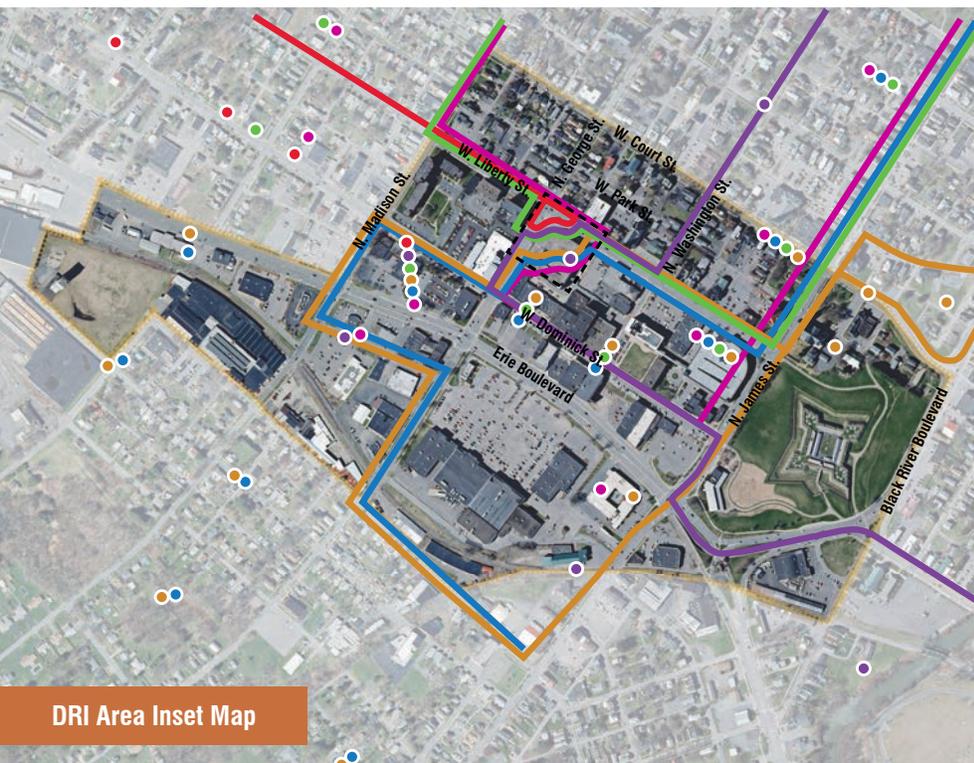
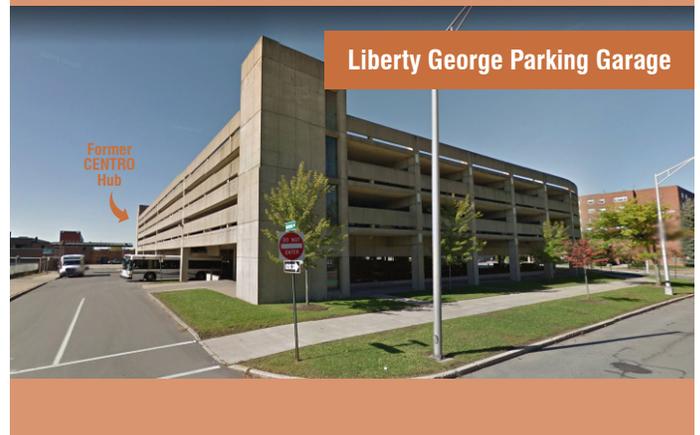
## PUBLIC TRANSIT

CENTRO's 237-bus fleet serves Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga, and Oneida Counties, transporting 33,000 passengers on a daily basis. The City of Rome is served by six routes, all of which make stops in the DRI Area. CENTRO's former hub was located within the DRI Area, at the Liberty George Parking Garage. Due to the structure being condemned, the hub was moved outside of the downtown, to the Rome Train Station.



## CENTRO Hub Relocation

The planned demolition of the Liberty George Parking Garage necessitated the relocation of the CENTRO hub to the Rome Train Station, on the south side of the Erie Canal. A transfer station in the downtown has been identified as an immediate need.



### Legend

- Route 2 - Walmart
- Route 4 - James Street
- Rome 5 - Mohawk Acres
- Rome 6 - Griffiss
- Rome 7 - Freedom Plaza
- Rome 9 - Rome Hospital
- CENTRO hub

## RAILROAD

Passenger rail service is provided by CSX rails through Amtrak on the Empire and Maple lines, linking Rome with major regional and international cities, including Toronto, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and New York City. The newly refurbished station is located on the south side of the Erie Canal, just outside of the DRI Area.

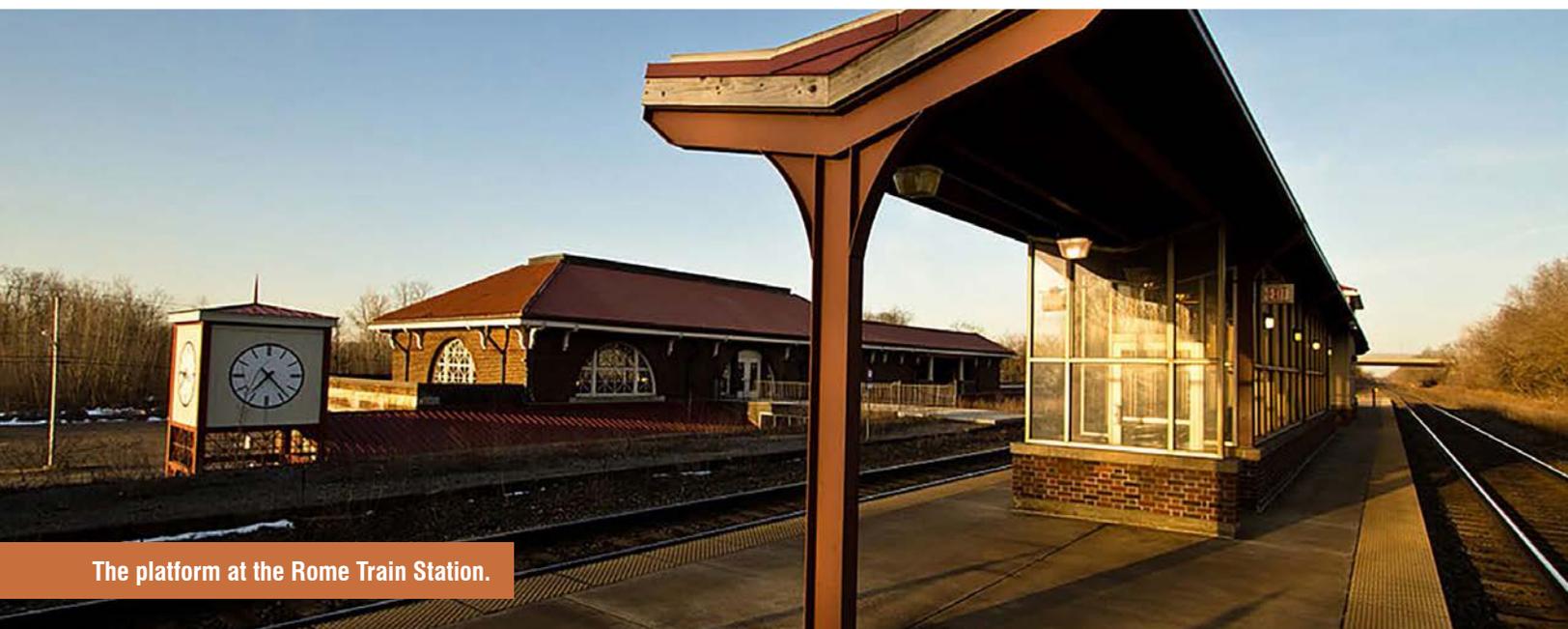
The Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern Railroad currently operates an industrial rail spur that services the Revere Copper facility and the current American Alloy Steel facility on East Dominick Street. An additional siding is proposed to service the new American Alloy Steel facility located on Harbor Way. This stretch of track is classified as Class 1 and is thus limited to traveling speeds of no more than 10 miles per hour for freight traffic and 15 miles per hour for passenger traffic. Although passenger service has been discontinued along this portion of the corridor, the track does connect to the CSX approximately two miles southwest of the DRI Area. The Chicago Line provides passenger service with direct connections to Chicago, Cleveland, Erie, Buffalo, Syracuse, Amsterdam, Hoffman, and Albany among other locations.

### The Rome Train Station

The Rome Train Station, located on Martin Street just south of the DRI Area, is an Amtrak station that is served by six trains daily and has a yearly ridership of 8,580.

Originally built in 1914, the station was renovated in 2004 to repair windows, the roof, and the tunnel, and to construct a new platform. Internal improvements were also made to the bathrooms and offices.

CENTRO recently relocated its hub to the station.



The platform at the Rome Train Station.



# ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Anchor institutions are a critical component to urban revitalization. They are typically non-profit organizations, such as universities and hospitals, or major employment generators whose buildings, mission, customer base, or employees make relocation difficult. By virtue of these characteristics, they are typically rooted in the community and employ a relatively large proportion of the area's workforce. The geographic rootedness makes some anchor institutions well-suited to become

essential partners in community revitalization. Their significant resources can be leveraged to promote economic development within the community by creating jobs, capital investments, procuring goods and services locally, improving public education, providing workforce training, and developing real estate.

## REGIONAL ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

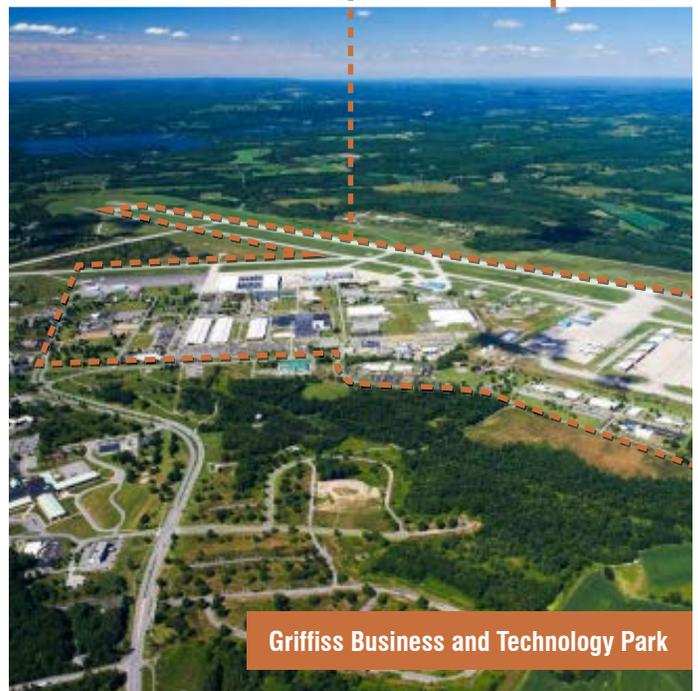
Rome is home to multiple anchor institutions with major economic and cultural significance. Some of the identified anchor institutions are located outside of the DRI Area, but these institutions still play a pivotal role in the City's vibrancy.

### Griffiss Business and Technology Park

Griffiss Business and Technology Park is one of the most successful business and technology parks in the United States. This technology park is a redeveloped Air Force base that houses 76 business which employ 5,800 people. The park covers approximately 3,500 acres and is the center for public and private enterprise in the City of Rome. The park focuses on technology, manufacturing, aviation, education, and recreation developments. The park is also one of six FAA designated Unmanned Aerial Systems Test Sites in the United States. The Griffiss test site is a pioneer in research and development for innovative industries. The park's partners include government entities, such as the FBI, NASA, and the Department of Defense. The Park is also home to the Griffiss International Sculpture Garden and Nature Trail, a regional asset with art pieces from 22 globally recognized sculptors.

### Marcy Nanocenter

The Marcy Nanocenter is located at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Marcy, NY, 17 miles east of the DRI Area. The Nanocenter is a premier 450-acre greenfield site, developed for manufacturing facilities. This mega-project, which is predicted to create approximately 1,000 to 2,000 new jobs, will be a major anchor for the City of Rome. Studies have found that the development of the Marcy Nanocenter will create a significant demand for new housing development, with most of the initial demand being for high-end luxury apartments.



Griffiss Business and Technology Park



Rendering of Nanocenter Campus

## DRI AREA ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

Multiple anchor institutions are also located within the DRI Area, providing significant civic, historical, and cultural resources.

### Fort Stanwix National Monument

Fort Stanwix, located on the eastern border of the DRI Area on James Street, is an international tourism attraction that provides visitors with an experiential tour and reenactment of important events in American history. A National Park Service (NPS) report found that Fort Stanwix attracted 94,006 visitors in 2016. These 94,006 visitors spent approximately \$5.2 million in communities surrounding the fort. Tourism and the visitors' spending power supported 68 local jobs. All told, Fort Stanwix had a cumulative benefit of \$6.4 million to the local economy. The NPS study also found that, for every \$1 invested in national parks, \$10 is returned to the community. This ratio currently plays a key role in the local economy.

### The Capitol Theatre Complex



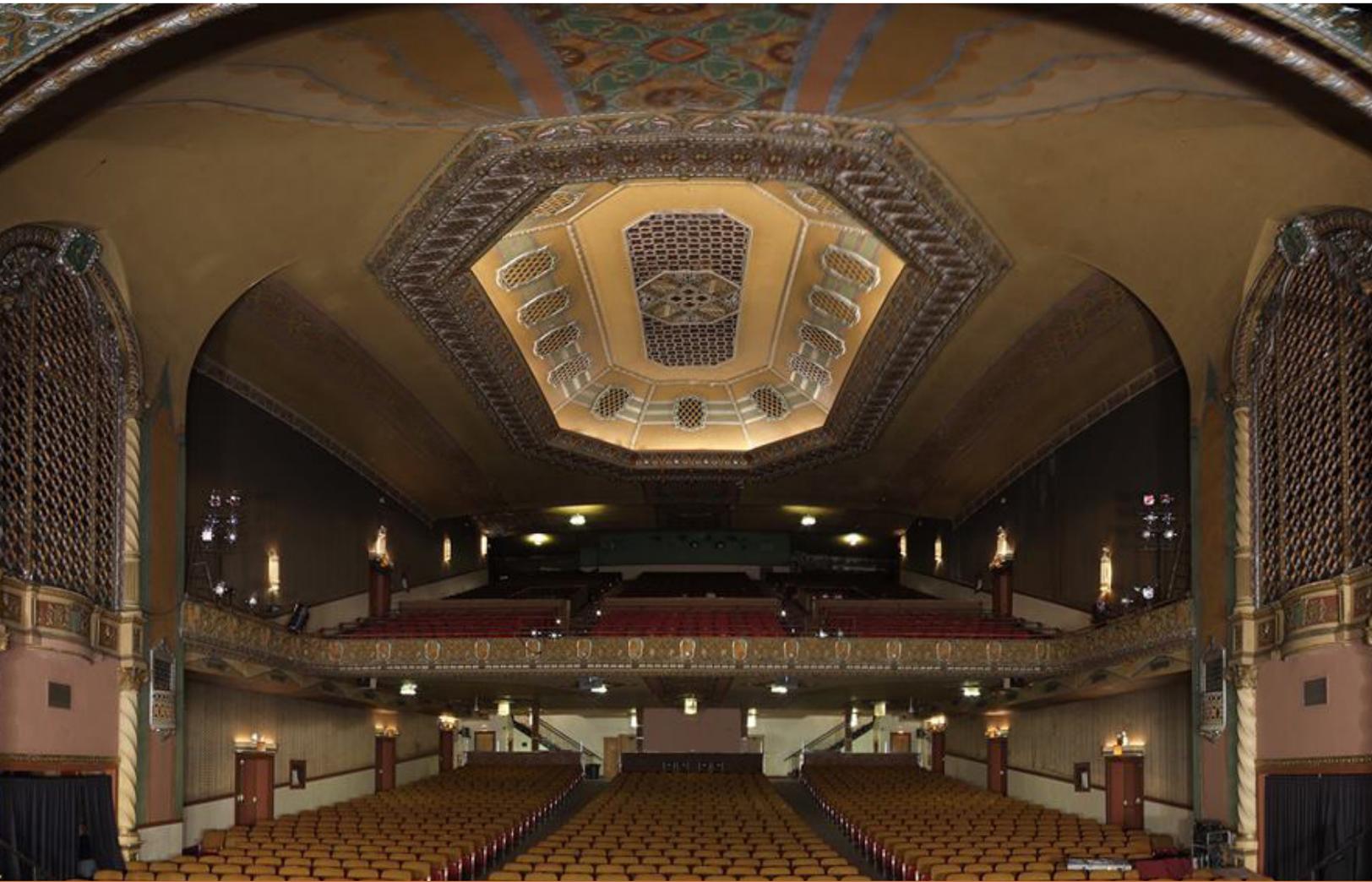
The Capitol Theatre, located in the heart of West Dominick Street in the center of the DRI, attracts visitors from throughout the region. The theatre has over 100 shows annually, in addition to offering daily film screenings and hosting a variety of other events.

### Rome City Hall

Both the current and former City Hall buildings are located within the DRI Area. Municipal government services, one of the larger employers in the DRI area, currently operate out of 198 North Washington Street, after relocating from the Old City Hall building at 207 North James Street. The Old City Hall, built in 1894, is currently undergoing restoration and is intended to be redeveloped as apartments.

### Other Anchor Institutions that are important to the Rome community include:

- Mohawk Valley Community College
- Rome Art & Community Center
- Jervis Library
- Rome Chamber of Commerce
- Rome Historical Society
- Rome Community Theater
- Rome Family YMCA



# CULTURAL + HISTORIC RESOURCES

## INTRODUCTION

Leveraging creative talent, heritage, and cultural assets can help stimulate and enhance economic growth and vibrancy. Cultural and historic resources are essential components of a healthy local economy; they help strengthen and sustain a community's common vision and identity. These assets also bring numerous economic benefits, such as jobs, tax revenues, and tourism dollars.

The DRI Area offers a variety of important cultural resources that play a unique role in the community's economic ecosystem by offering spaces for people and organizations to connect, learn, and create. Rome has a number of active organizations and has established an arts base that includes the historic Capitol Theatre and the REACH Center Arts Incubator. Efforts within the arts community have attracted several arts organizations to collaborate with the City to expand arts programs and funding.

## The Capitol Theatre Complex

The Capitol Theatre provides cultural experiences, while increasing livability and quality of life of residents. The theatre opened on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1928 as part of a chain of movie houses. The theatre closed in 1974 and reopened in 1985 as the non-profit Capitol Civic Center, offering classic films, live theatrical performances, and concerts.

The theatre's auditorium seats 1,788 people and has a 20-by-40-foot movie screen, one of the largest in the area. The theatre regularly screens silent films with the option for a live theatre organ accompaniment, creating a true-to-the-era experience. Currently, there are over 100 performances a year at the historic Capitol Theatre, ranging from films to plays to musicals. Recently, an intimate two-screen movie theater, Cinema Capitol, was added to the operation, showing primarily independent films, totaling approximately 1,300 screenings annually.

## Zion Church

Zion Church is a historic Episcopal church located on Liberty Street. The church was designed and built in 1850 by nationally acclaimed architect Richard Upjohn, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. The building continues to function as a church, and also makes use of its newly updated full-size commercial kitchen by facilitating community events.

## Gansevoort-Bellamy Historic District

The Gansevoort-Bellamy Historic District Rome is a nationally recognized historic district partially located in the DRI Area. Contributing structures within the historic district include the Old City Hall building, the Post Office, Oneida County Courthouse, and St. Peter's Catholic Church.

## Fort Stanwix National Monument

The 16 acre National Monument, established in 1935, draws in over 84,000 visitors annually. It is a reconstructed revolutionary war fort that has strong regional visitation and has national draw. The monument reconstruction was part of an urban revitalization strategy for the City of Rome. The success of this effort can be measured by the \$1.68 million spent by visitors which is a direct impact on the City's economy. Parking for the fort is located at the Liberty James Parking Garage. The garage is structurally maintained but would benefit from architectural facade improvements that would relate to the monument visitor center.

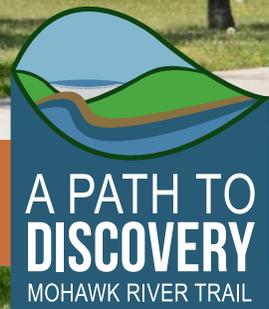


### Other important cultural and historic resources within or near the DRI Area include:

- Old City Hall (Historic Preservation)
- Rome Historical Society
- The REACH Center - a Rome-Utica Creative Arts Incubator
- Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



# RECREATION RESOURCES



## INTRODUCTION

Parks and recreational resources play a major role in economic development and growth by increasing property values and boosting tourism. Parks and open spaces are also critical for establishing and maintaining quality of life and improving the health of the community. The City of Rome offers three municipal parks within the DRI Area as well as a 16-acre national monument, Fort Stanwix.

## The Importance of Proximity to Parks

Those who live within one-quarter mile of a park – which is generally accepted as the longest distance most people are willing to walk to use a park facility – are more likely to engage in higher levels of physical activity. In fact, creating new or enhancing access to existing park facilities can increase the percentage of people exercising on three or more days per week by 25%.

## Trail Network

The DRI Area acts as a terminus along the Mohawk River Trail network, with trails converging at Fort Stanwix. The Mohawk River Trail takes users north to south along the Mohawk River to the Griffiss International Sculpture Garden and Nature Trail, ultimately leading to Delta Lake State Park.

In 2014, construction began to complete a gap section of Erie Canalway Trail. The final gap in the Canal Trail will be completed in the coming years through Governor Cuomo's Empire State Trail Initiative. This will connect the downtown area with the historic Erie Canal towpath and original canal at Erie Canal Village.

These trail systems provide integral connections to downtown Rome and the DRI Area. Through these recreational resources, visitors and users are able to explore and enjoy the surrounding community. Alternative transport options are also available to residents and visitors, with three bike-sharing stations located along the trail network.

## City Hall Center Square

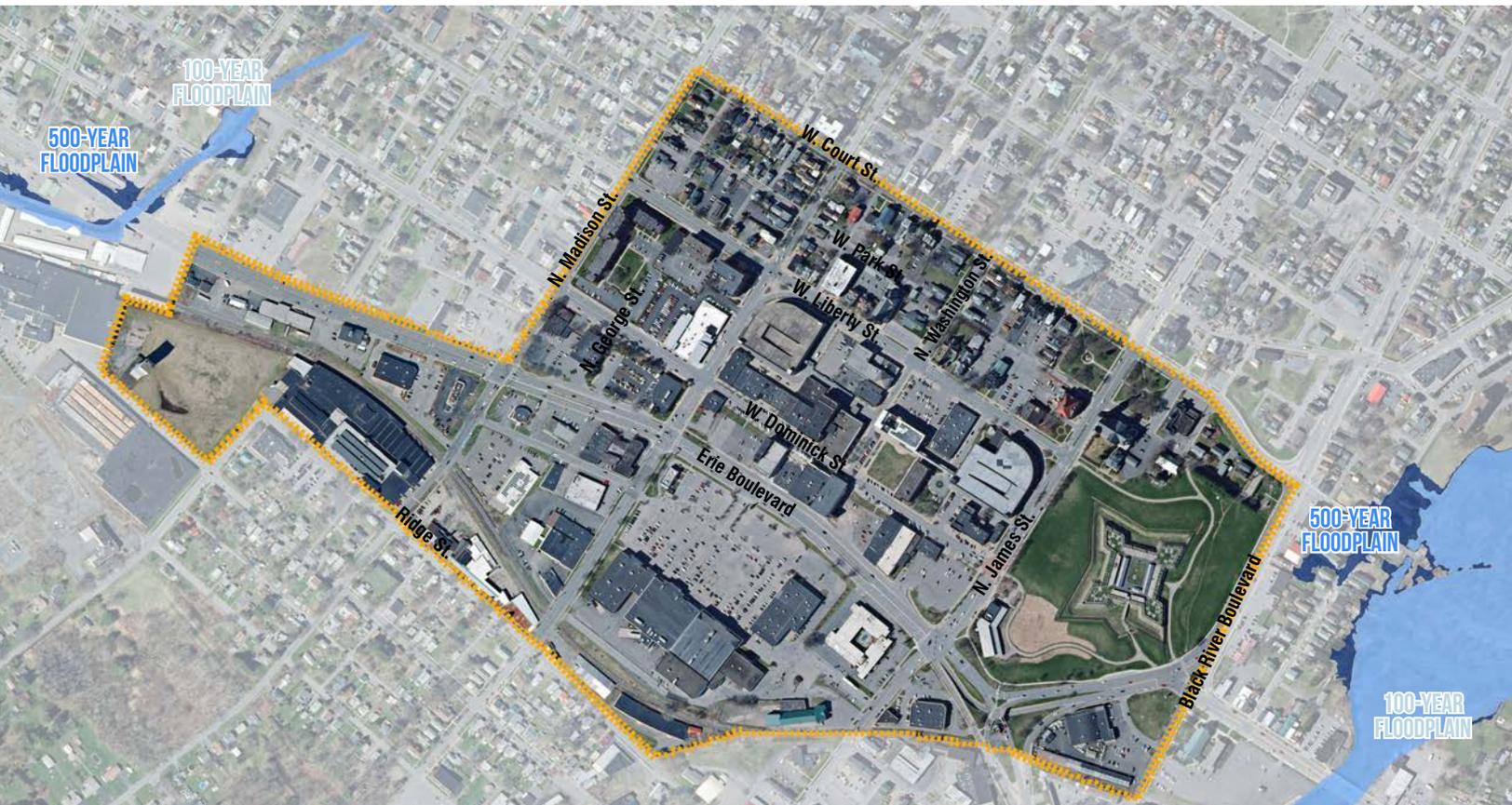
Center Square at City Hall is a large grassy lawn with benches and planters, which hosts a variety of events including the Summer in the Square Concert Series and the YMCA annual outdoor basketball tournament.

## Veterans and Gansevoort Parks

Both Veterans and Gansevoort Parks are designed around a central monument, with radiating diagonal walkways that are lined with benches. Veterans Park also features a display of the flags of the U.S. armed services.

These parks are passive, ceremonial spaces which host periodic services such as Honor America Days and the annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony.





# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

A number of resources were reviewed to identify natural resources and potential environmental constraints within the DRI Area. These analyses determined that there are no 100-year or 500-year floodplains, known wetlands, or natural habitats within the DRI Area that may impact future redevelopment.

## Floodplain Boundaries

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) creates flood zone maps to identify areas where flooding is likely to occur based on historical records. Properties located within floodplains are required to purchase flood insurance.

Zones are delineated based on their level of risk:

**100-Year Floodplain Boundary:** 1% chance of flood in any given year.

**500-Year Floodplain Boundary:** 0.2% chance of flood in any given year.



# CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES

## INTRODUCTION

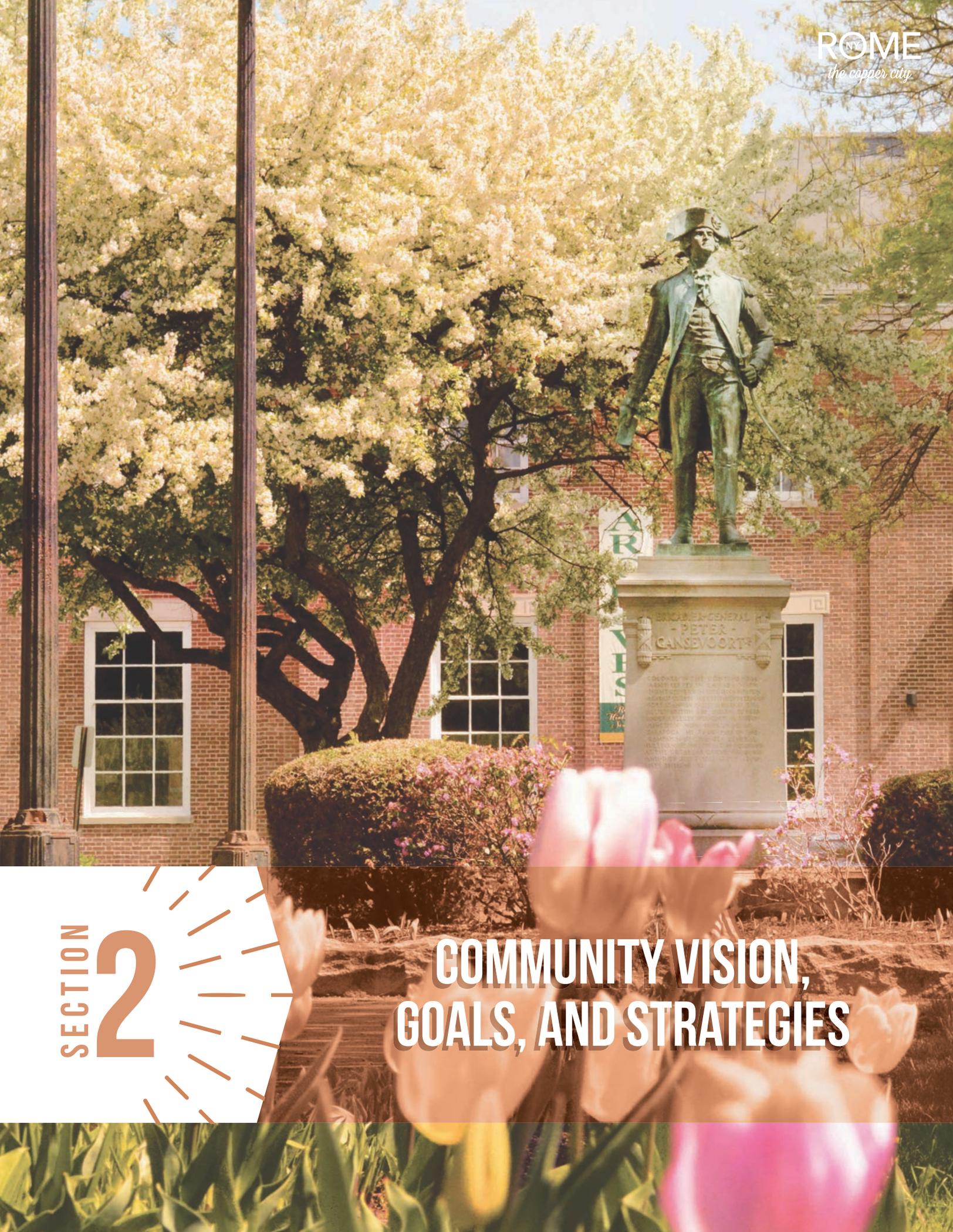
Based on the previous analysis of existing conditions, the following challenges and opportunities were identified that may affect future development of the DRI Area:

### Challenges

- Downtown lacks vibrancy and character.
- Aging housing stock and infrastructure.
- Lack of diversity in housing stock.
- No “draw” for young professionals.
- Limited private investment.
- Poor connectivity.
- Limited job opportunities.
- Lack of quality of life amenities.
- Unwelcoming streetscapes.

### Opportunities

- Close proximity to Griffiss Business and Technology Park as well as other regional employers.
- Compact and walkable downtown environment.
- Multiple available development parcels.
- Abundance of cultural and historic assets, including Fort Stanwix and the Capitol Theatre.
- Defined street grid.
- Concentration of existing retail establishments.



SECTION  
**2**

**COMMUNITY VISION,  
GOALS, AND STRATEGIES**



# COMMUNITY VISION

## INTRODUCTION

The vision statement for the DRI Area was conceived through an extensive visioning process, and was refined with feedback from the Local Planning Committee. The vision is intended to provide a vivid mental picture of the DRI Area as transformed by the future implementation of DRI projects. This ambitious yet realistic vision for the DRI Area's future acts as the framework for the DRI Strategic Investment Plan, broadly guiding decisions about future development and investment in downtown.

## DOWNTOWN ROME IS...

a **welcoming** and **walkable** destination activated by **arts, culture** and **entrepreneurism**  
 a place where businesses **thrive** and **grow**  
 a place where people of all ages want to **live, work, play...** and stay



# GOALS + STRATEGIES

## INTRODUCTION

To complement the DRI Area’s vision statement, goals and strategies were developed to provide more detailed, action-oriented guidance for decision-making. Goals are conceptual ideas that the Strategic Investment Plan should address, while strategies are specific outcomes that the plan should achieve. As such, priority projects must address at least one goal area, and their impact will be measured against that goal area’s strategies. Tracking the impact of priority projects is critical to ensuring that the plan is working toward achieving the vision.

### Goal Areas

- Goal #1 Mixed-Use Downtown
- Goal #2 Vibrant Public Realm
- Goal #3 Economic Opportunity
- Goal #4 Arts + Cultural Hub

## GOALS

# 1 Provide a sustainable and diverse range of uses in the downtown area.



**Strategy #1:** Increase the availability of housing options in the downtown core.



**Strategy #2:** Support mixed-use development programs. Typical mixed-use configurations include retail, commercial, or professional uses on the first floor and residential on upper floors.



**Strategy #3:** Retain existing business mix while filling gaps in services that will allow downtown to function as a 24/7 center.

# 2 Develop a high-quality public realm that seamlessly connects all aspects of downtown, promoting both walkability and vibrancy.



**Strategy #1:** Provide a variety of public spaces that allow for year-round and flexible events and programming.



**Strategy #2:** Strengthen pedestrian connections and walkability.



**Strategy #3:** Enhance placemaking through the integration of amenities and unique identifiers, including public art.

## How Does Goal #1 Support the Vision?

The age and lack of diversity constrain the housing stock in the DRI Area ability to attract new residents, especially those who desire a more urban lifestyle. Retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, creating opportunities for living in downtown, and incorporating 'play' opportunities will resolve gaps in the urban fabric of downtown.

## How Does Goal #2 Support the Vision?

A city's public realm is integral to its sense of place; well-maintained and well-programmed public spaces reflect positively upon the image of a city. The DRI Area should capitalize on its existing public resources – like the City Green – by offering year-round programming. These events, in combination with other unique identifiers – including signage and public art – have the potential to make the DRI Area a vibrant visitor destination. A strong pedestrian environment and unique downtown spaces will encourage people to explore all that downtown Rome has to offer.

## 3 Create an environment that attracts and fosters economic opportunity and celebrates diversity.



**Strategy #1:** Work with local institutions and non-profit organizations to provide workforce development programs.



**Strategy #2:** Support small business development and encourage entrepreneurship.



**Strategy #3:** Create new job opportunities by supporting business retention and attraction.

### How Does Goal #3 Support the Vision?

Creating an environment where businesses and entrepreneurs are encouraged to innovate is an important consideration for attracting businesses and jobs to the DRI Area. For those who have difficulty or are unable to secure employment, adequate support services should be available to help them achieve their goals and experience the positive changes occurring in downtown.

## 4 Celebrate and leverage existing historic and cultural resources to establish downtown as an arts and cultural hub.



**Strategy #1:** Leverage existing historic and cultural institutions to bolster tourism and generate spin-off business opportunities.



**Strategy #2:** Partner with Fort Stanwix, Capitol Theatre, and the REACH Center to identify strategic opportunities for collaboration.



**Strategy #3:** Support grassroots arts and cultural initiatives and art-based business growth.

### How Does Goal #4 Support the Vision?

Arts and cultural institutions have been the foundation of downtown for over a decade. These resources should be further celebrated and leveraged to enhance downtown as an arts and cultural hub, with significant opportunities for related, spin-off business development. Collaborating with existing businesses and developments, and encouraging grassroots arts and cultural initiatives will define the future of downtown Rome.



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SECTION  
**3**

**DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT AND  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**



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# MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

## INTRODUCTION

Local capacity and leadership are integral to the successful implementation of DRI-funded projects. The management structure for both public and private sector projects is a critical guiderail to ensure that each project can move forward in a manner consistent with what is outlined within this Strategic Investment Plan. The following is a summary of City management for DRI projects and additional support needs.

## Public Projects

The City of Rome will be the lead grantee for all public projects, with management and responsibilities interwoven into the City's existing government structure. The Mayor of Rome, who has served as the co-chair of the Local Planning Committee, will continue to be a strong leader of the DRI. The Mayor will work closely with the City of Rome Common Council to ensure projects are seamlessly and effectively integrated into the downtown landscape, for the betterment of the community. DRI projects being administered by the City of Rome benefit from well-staffed departments with extensive experience in overseeing comparable projects. The City's Department of Community and Economic Development (CED) staff includes 8 full-time professionals, including 5 planners and 1 community development specialist. CED will be supported by the City's Department of Public Works, lead by the DPW Commissioner and supported by 3 engineers, an inspector and support staff.

The CED will serve as the primary day-to-day administrator of all public projects, working closely with designated NYS agencies. The CED has a successful history and track record of overseeing and implementing state, local, and federal funding resources, some of which are located within the DRI boundaries.

The CED will be supported by the following City departments:

- Code Enforcement
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works
- Purchasing
- Treasurers' Office

The City of Rome has established several boards, commissions, and committees that help City government run efficiently, effectively, and in a fiscally responsible manner. Each of these boards may provide insight and support for various DRI-funded projects.

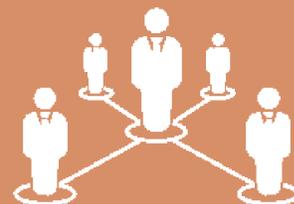
- Board of Estimates and Contracting
- Planning Board
- Common Council and Sub-committees
- Real Property Committee

Specifically, projects overseen by the City would include all funded efforts on City-owned property, including the Liberty George Parking Garage, the Liberty James Parking Garage, CENTRO bus station, City Hall site and building enhancements, and wayfinding. In addition, the City would be the responsible party for overseeing the administration and distribution of funds, such as the business retention fund and public arts fund.

### Management

**Leadership**

- Mayor
- Local Planning Commission
- City of Rome Common Council
- Department of Community and Economic Development



## Support for Private Projects

Projects that involve the rehabilitation or construction of privately owned properties will be managed by the project applicant. Contracting agencies, such as Empire State Development, Homes and Community Renewal, and Department of Transportation, will contract directly with project sponsors. All private development projects will be required to meet local regulations and obtain any required local or state permits and approvals. The City of Rome will offer technical support to assist with facilitation of private sector projects.

## Project Implementation

Each project has a different timeline for implementation. Projects that are ready to begin within 1-6 months include:

- Capitol Theatre
- City Green
- Liberty James Garage Improvements
- Business Retention and Public Art Fund
- Reach Center Art Incubator Space
- Downtown Wayfinding
- Project Blue Crab

Projects ready to begin within 6-12 months include:

- Mixed Use Development at 183 West Dominick Street
- City Hall Programming Enhancements
- Streetscape Enhancements
- CENTRO Downtown Transportation Center

Projects ready to begin in 12-18 months include:

- Liberty George Garage site

Many of the projects have inter-related components, as noted in the project profiles, and implementation of each project must be closely coordinated.





SECTION  
**4**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**



# OVERVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

Community engagement and support are critical to the long-term success of the revitalization of the DRI Area. Community members, landowners, elected officials, and local organizations must have a vested interest in the success of the corridor, and – most importantly – must become partners in implementing the projects included in this Strategic Investment Plan. To maximize involvement from the community, multiple, engaging feedback opportunities were provided including: public workshops, a student engagement session, and a website. The project team was also advised by a Local Planning Committee.

## Engagement Activities

- 6 | Local Planning Committee Meetings
- 5 | Storefront Drop-in Sessions
- 4 | Public Workshops
- 2 | Project Websites
- 1 | Student Engagement Session



# LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

## PURPOSE

The Local Planning Committee (LPC) acted as an advisory group, guiding the identification and prioritization of projects. During the planning process, the LPC met regularly to discuss feedback on project specifics and to resolve comments resulting from review of project documents and public input. Feedback from the LPC was critical to tailoring projects to the DRI Area, as its members included stakeholders with different perspectives and varying levels of community experience.

## Who are Stakeholders?

Stakeholders are those in the community with a keen interest or concern in some component of the Strategic Investment Plan. Members of the LPC included stakeholders representing various institutions in the DRI Area such as the Rome Main Street Alliance, Fort Stanwix National Monument, the Capitol Theatre, the REACH Center, and Mohawk Valley EDGE.

MEETINGS

**Meeting #1 (October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**

As a kick-off to the DRI project, the first LPC meeting provided an introduction to the planning process, identifying the project team, delineating the responsibilities of the LPC, and providing contextual information related to the DRI program, the project scope, and the anticipated timeline. At the end of the meeting, LPC members were asked to identify Rome’s greatest assets and challenges as well as the project they believed would have the most significant impact on downtown Rome. The most common answers are noted below.



**ASSETS**

- history
- Fort Stanwix
- theatre
- accessibility
- people



**CHALLENGES**

- economics
- investment
- lack of retail



**SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS**

- more housing
- Capitol Theatre upgrades
- streetscape enhancements
- additional restaurants

**The LPC’s Vision for Rome**

To help refine the vision and direction for the Strategic Investment Plan, LPC members were also asked to identify how they would like to be able to describe downtown Rome in five years. By far, the most common answer was “vibrant.”



## Meeting #2 (November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017)

The second LPC meeting reviewed the feedback provided at Public Meeting #1, introduced the selection process and criteria for priority projects, and described some potential projects. This meeting also included a preliminary visioning session. LPC members indicated that the vision statement should be relatively short, and should address key ideas like transportation and connectivity.

## Meeting #3 (December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

Based on the projects identified to date, attendees at the third LPC meeting were asked to prioritize investment. Each attendee was given \$10 million "Rome dollars" to spend on the projects he or she supported, all of which were priced according to preliminary cost estimates.



## Meeting #3 Project Prioritization

The projects most often prioritized by the LPC are summarized below. In total, the top 14 projects would cost \$11,450,000 to implement. It should be noted that the projects receiving the lowest level of LPC support were those involving improvements to the Erie Boulevard, George Street, and Black River Boulevard intersections.

Liberty George Garage Demolition

Capitol Theatre Improvements

W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use Infill

The REACH Center

Adaptive Reuse Fund

233 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use\*

Wayfinding Signage

Keystone Non-Profit Center

CENTRO Downtown Transportation Center

City Hall Building Improvements

Park Enhancements

Community WiFi

Public Art Fund

Liberty James Garage Enhancements

**Total Implementation Cost: \$11,450,000**

\* Early in the planning process the LPC was considering a project at 233 W. Dominick Street which was reviewed by the public but ultimately replaced with the mixed use project at 183 W. Dominick Street

## Meeting #4 (January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

Prior to meeting #4, LPC members were provided drafts of the project profiles for all potential projects identified to date over the planning process. LPC members discussed each project in detail and a 'strawman' vote was undertaken to identify which projects the LPC thought warranted consideration of DRI funding, versus which were longer-term pipeline projects that should be considered utilizing alternative funding resources.

Based on the discussion at the meeting, the following projects were identified as Priority DRI projects that should be advanced to the state for funding consideration:

- Adaptive Reuse and Business Support Grant Fund
- REACH Center Arts Incubator Build Out
- Programming and Site Improvements at City Green
- Development of Downtown Transportation Center
- Capitol Theatre Facade and Interior Enhancements
- City Hall Programming and Structural Improvements
- Liberty James Garage Improvements
- Liberty George Garage Demolition and Mixed-Use Development
- Implementation of Downtown Wayfinding Signage
- Public Arts Grant Fund
- Mixed-Use Development at 183 West Dominick Street

The following projects were identified by the committee as 'pipeline' projects. It was noted these projects could leverage alternative funding resources, or in some instances, were not advanced enough to move forward at this time.

- Complete Street Enhancements along Erie Boulevard and Liberty Street
- Improvements to the Erie Boulevard / George Street intersection
- Improvements to the Erie / Black River Boulevard intersection
- Enhancements to Veterans and Gansevoort Parks
- Implementation of Community WiFi
- Mixed-Use Development at 233 West Dominick Street



## Meeting #5 (February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

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LPC Meeting #5 focused on final refinement and acceptance of the Priority Project list.

LPC members were provided status updates on previously discussed projects, including:

- Liberty George Parking Garage site: The LPC discussed modification to this project to include garage demolition and the construction of an interim use consisting of surface parking and small green spaces. The LPC voted in favor of this modification.
- Keystone Non-Profit Incubator: The project sponsor noted there were some issues in securing match funding within the abbreviated timeline of the project and withdrew the project for consideration as a priority project for the DRI, noting that it still remained a high priority for implementation through other funding sources. The LPC agreed to remove the Keystone project from the DRI Priority Project list.
- City Hall Programming enhancements: The project team noted modifications had been made to the proposed design of the City Hall enhancements in response to LPC comments. The LPC confirmed they were in agreement with the revised changes.

A new project opportunity was also introduced for consideration by the LPC. An advanced manufacturing project on the Rome Cable site was identified (Blue Crab), which would provide a concentration of workforce proximate to the downtown core. It was noted that a slight adjustment to the DRI boundary would be required to accommodate the project. After hearing additional information on the project, the DRI request, and project boundary modifications, the LPC voted to include the project as a Priority Project for DRI funding consideration. In addition, a related project was introduced for consideration – streetscape enhancements to connect the Rome Cable site to the downtown core. This project was also approved by the LPC.

The meeting wrapped up with a discussion of next steps, primarily LPC review of the draft Strategic Investment Plan.

## Meeting #6 (March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018)

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The final DRI Local Planning Committee Meeting was held on March 22, 2018. The meeting agenda included a final review of Priority Projects, as well as official ballot completion by LPC members to approve the slate and identify any recusals. Bergmann began the meeting with a recap of Priority Projects, noting minor changes and amendments to projects as budgets have undergone further refinement. Following the brief presentation, the meeting was opened for questions or comments by LPC members. LPC members then completed the hard copy ballots and returned to Bergmann for compilation. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mayor Izzo (co-chair) thanked the LPC members for their efforts and hard work in making the process a successful one.



# PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

## PURPOSE

Engaging community members – whether they be residents, business owners, or property owners – is especially important to the success of this planning effort, as it is these people who will be impacted by the projects identified in the Strategic Investment Plan. Community members' local knowledge and experience is invaluable to the project team, and was used to inform and tailor recommendations to Rome's unique needs and vision. Three public workshops were held throughout the planning process to gather such feedback.

## Why a Workshop and Not a Meeting?

Public workshops use innovative approaches to encourage participation in an engaging, interactive, and inviting setting. As opposed to traditional public meetings where planners present what they have learned about the community, public workshops encourage residents and business owners to educate the planners about their community, as they are indeed the experts.

## Rooted in Rome Workshop (October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

Prior to the first DRI-sponsored public workshop, the project team tabled interactive activities at the Rooted in Rome event sponsored by the City, RCSD, Rome Memorial Hospital, MVCC, and Griffiss Business and Technology Park. The event was a showcase of Rome's recent development related to education, healthcare, business, and recreation, with the DRI being an example of ongoing progress in all areas. Participants at the event were presented with multiple stations, both informational and interactive, and were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback on the planning process.

## Public Workshop #1 (November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017)

At the first public workshop, participants were invited to participate in four, interactive stations, each aimed at determining how the awarded \$10 million should be invested.

- **Station #1: Investment Prioritization.**  
Participants most often indicated that they wanted to see investment in arts and culture (20 votes) and small business development (18 votes).
- **Station #2: Project Identification.**  
Participants noted that a seasonal farmer's market, a skating rink, a bowling alley, and mixed-use developments should be implemented with DRI funds.
- **Station #3: Public Space Improvements.**  
To improve public spaces in the DRI Area, participants suggested public art, signage for historical locations, public wifi, and street trees.
- **Station #4: Public Realm Improvements.**  
When asked to choose from various images representing public realm improvements, participants most often chose images displaying bike lanes, dog parks, colorful benches and crosswalks, park improvements, and splash pads.

## Public Workshop #1 Visioning Activity

Participants were asked to describe Rome as it is now and how they would like to see it in 5 years. Some of the responses are shown below:

NOW	potential revival stuck almost there	FUTURE	prospering destination active hub
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## Public Workshop #2 (December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

After a brief presentation detailing the DRI process and explaining the projects identified to date, attendees were asked to participate in the same prioritization exercise undertaken by the LPC in Meeting #3. Each attendee was given \$10 million "Rome dollars" to spend on the projects he or she supported, all of which were priced according to preliminary cost estimates. The results from Public Workshop #2 are shown below and are compared to those from LPC Meeting #3.



### Workshop #2 Project Prioritization

The projects most often prioritized by the public are summarized below. In total, the top 13 projects would cost \$11,250,000 to implement.

233 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use

Liberty George Garage Demolition

Wayfinding Signage

Adaptive Reuse Fund

Capitol Theatre Improvements

Park Enhancements

Liberty James Garage Enhancements

W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use Infill

Community WiFi

Public Art Fund

City Green

The REACH Center

City Hall Building Improvements

**Total Implementation Cost: \$11,250,000**

### LPC + Public Prioritization Results

Support for the projects among the public and the Local Planning Committee was compared. The five projects receiving the greatest level and least level of support are listed below.

#### Top Five

Liberty George Garage Demolition  
233 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use  
Capitol Theatre Improvements  
Adaptive Reuse Fund  
Wayfinding Signage

#### Last Five

Keystone Non-Profit Center  
Erie Blvd / George St. Intersection:  
Option 1 - Enhancements  
Erie Blvd / Black River Blvd:  
Option 1 - Aesthetic Improvements  
Erie Blvd / George St. Intersection:  
Option 2 - Raised Table  
Erie Blvd / Black River Blvd:  
Option 2 - Two Lane Roundabout

## Public Workshop #3 (March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018)

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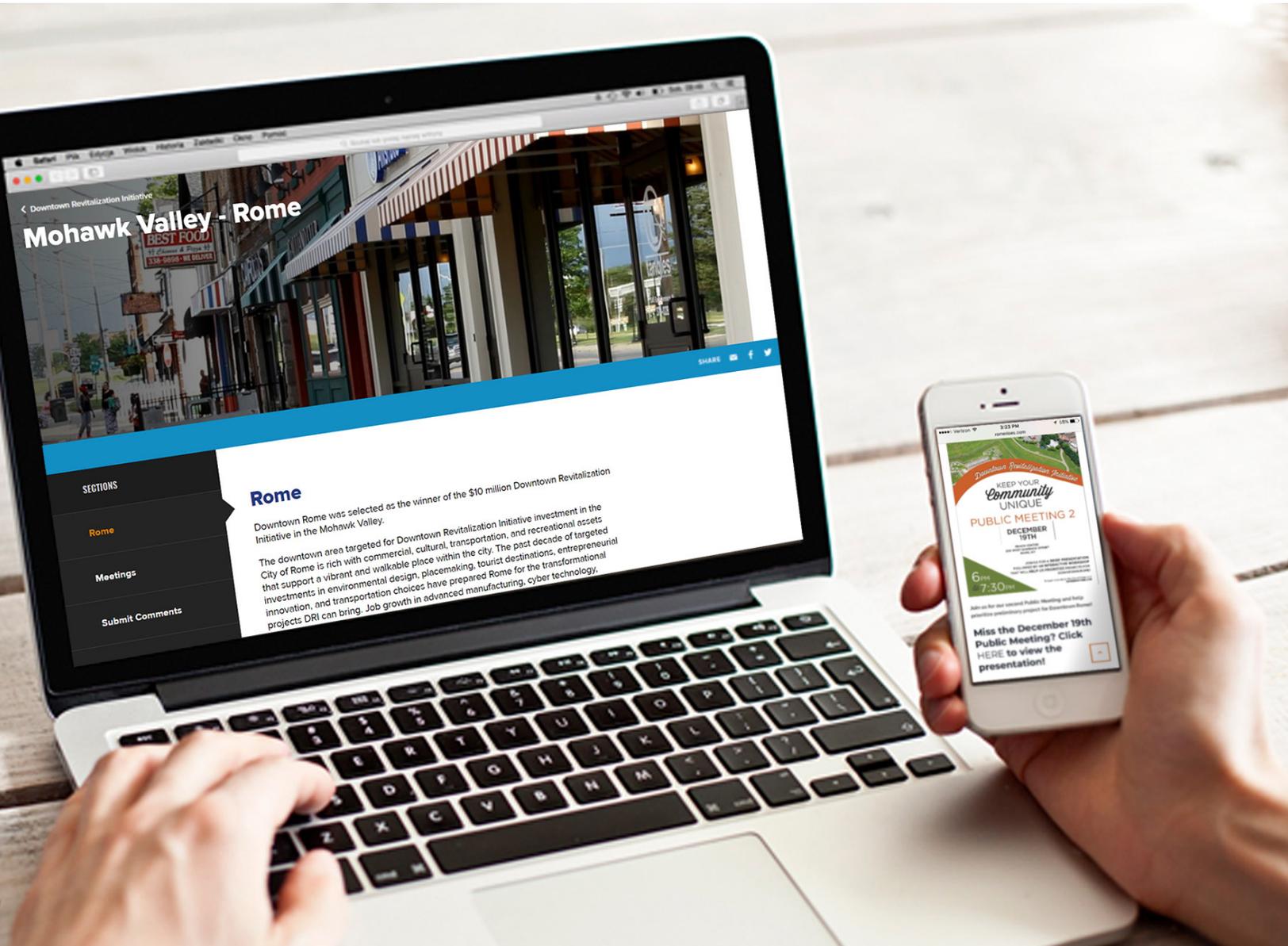
A final public workshop was held to share the LPC recommended list of priority projects with members of the community. The presentation was well-attended, with approximately 40 members of the public participating. Highlights from the presentation included:

- Brief overview of DRI process
- DRI Boundary
- Snapshot of Local Opportunities and Constraints
- Review of 12 Priority Projects
- Next Steps

Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and share feedback.

Key themes from the question and answer period are summarized below:

- From perspective of millennials, very exciting to see project list
- CENTRO transportation center a must with heat and air conditioning
- CENTRO transportation center must be carefully designed to address sightlines and traffic flow
- All projects should consider snow removal in final design
- More money should be focused on business and job growth
- Farmers market in City Green
- Need for more permanent downtown parking
- Erie Boulevard streetscape should focus on safety and less on providing amenities



## OTHER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

### PURPOSE

In order to provide as many opportunities as possible for community members to provide feedback, the project team offered additional engagement opportunities, some of which were available online – such as websites and a survey – and some of which were in-person events – such as drop-in hours at the project storefront located in the REACH Center at 209 West Dominick Street.

## Project Websites + Electronic Survey

In addition to a project-specific website created by the New York State Department of State (<https://www.ny.gov/downtown-revitalization-initiative/mohawk-valley-rome>), the project team created a page on the City's "Rome Rises" website <http://www.romerises.com/dri/> to feature DRI-specific information. Both websites acted as portals of information for the general public, providing draft deliverables and upcoming meeting notifications, and ensuring 24/7 access to project information. Interested residents were encouraged to submit comments and take an electronic survey to share their ideas.

## Storefront Drop-Ins

From November 2017 through February 2018, the project team staffed a local storefront one day per month to allow for residents to stop in and learn about the DRI when it was convenient for them. Residents who came to the storefront were encouraged to ask questions about the planning process, and provide their own input.



## Student Engagement (December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017)

Students from the Rome City School District were invited to learn about different careers directly from practicing planners, landscape architects, and developers, and were also encouraged to provide feedback related to the DRI. Students participated in the same investment prioritization activity used at LPC Meeting #3 and Public Workshop #2 and the results are compared below.

### LPC + Public + Student Prioritization Results

Combining the support among students, the public, and the LPC resulted in the following list of projects receiving the highest level of support and lowest level of support among the three groups:

<b>Top Five</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liberty George Garage Demolition</li> <li>Capitol Theatre Improvements</li> <li>Wayfinding Signage</li> <li>233 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use</li> <li>Adaptive Reuse Fund</li> </ul>
<b>Last Five</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CENTRO Transfer Hub</li> <li>Erie Blvd / Black River Blvd: Option 1 - Aesthetic Improvements</li> <li>Erie Blvd / George St. Intersection: Option 1 - Enhancements</li> <li>Erie Blvd / George St. Intersection: Option 2 - Raised Table</li> <li>Erie Blvd / Black River Blvd: Option 2 - Two Lane Roundabout</li> </ul>

Including student expressions of support simply reordered the top five projects, and swapped the Keystone Non-Profit Center for the CENTRO Transfer Hub in the last five projects.



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SECTION  
**5**

**PROJECTS PROPOSED  
FOR DRI FUNDING**



LEGEND

- ▬▬▬▬ DRI Boundary
- 1. ■ Project Blue Crab
- 2. ■ Capitol Theatre
- 3. ■ Liberty George Garage Mixed-Use
- 4. ■ 183 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use
- 5. ■ City Hall Programming Enhancements
- 6. ■ Liberty James Garage Upgrades
- 7. ●●● Erie Boulevard Streetscape
- 8. ■ City Hall Green Space
- 9. ○○○ Business Retention and Public Art Fund
- 10. ■ The REACH Center Arts Incubator
- 11. ■ Downtown CENTRO Transportation Center
- 12. ☼ Wayfinding System Implementation
  - ☼ Kiosk
  - ☼ Vehicular Directional Sign
  - ☼ Parking Sign
  - ☼ Pedestrian Directional Sign

# DRI PROJECT LOCATION MAP

## PROJECT SYNERGY

The downtown DRI projects are largely concentrated within a one city block area that encompasses the downtown core of the City, and generally extends from North George Street to the west, West Liberty Street to the north, North James Street to the east, and Erie Boulevard to the south. The tight clustering of the projects creates a cohesive, holistic downtown revitalization strategy. Each of the priority projects build off and leverages other investments in the downtown. The diversity of project types - cultural, residential, public realm, recreational, jobs, and commercial - offers optimism for project success. It is anticipated this comprehensive approach to revitalization will help to sustain downtown Rome over the long term.

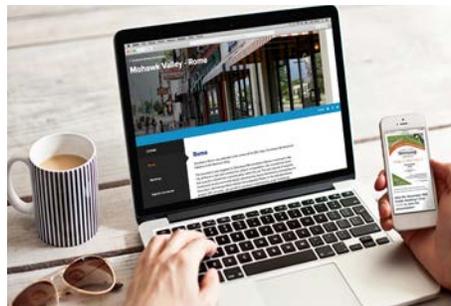
In addition to the 12 recommended Priority Projects, the LPC identified a series of pipeline projects they viewed as integral to the long-term viability of downtown, but may be better suited for funding consideration outside of the DRI. Each of these projects have inter-connected relationships with the DRI projects, vision, and goals and will be considered and advanced by the City through partnerships, collaboration, and other funding resources.

Pipeline projects include:

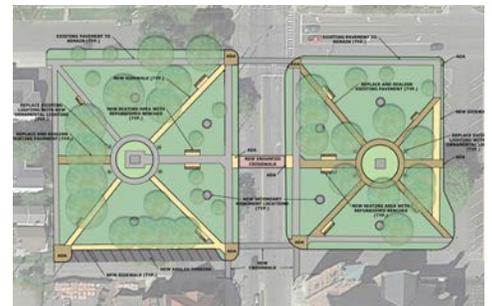
- Complete Streets enhancements throughout downtown. This project includes the incorporation of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to make downtown friendly, safe, and accommodating for all modes of transportation.
- Intersection enhancements at Erie Boulevard and Black Creek Boulevard. The LPC evaluated multiple intersection improvement options / treatments, noting a double roundabout achieved the goals for safety improvements and aesthetic improvements but was cost-prohibitive through the DRI.
- Veterans and Gansevoort Parks. The LPC noted the importance of enhancing these historic park spaces but recognized other funding sources and City resources would allow this project to move forward outside of DRI funding.
- Keystone Non-Profit Center. While a highly ranked project that was considered as a Priority Project, it was noted during project development that required match funding could not be solidified during the DRI planning process timeframe. The LPC noted this project will provide much needed services and support for local residents and should be further evaluated under other funding resources.
- Community WiFi. The LPC felt this was an important project but the City was not yet in a position to fully move forward with its implementation.



**COMPLETE STREETS**



**COMMUNITY WIFI**



**VETERANS AND GANSEVOORT PARKS**

**Zion Non-profit Center Proposed Plan**



**KEYSTONE NON-PROFIT CENTER**



**ERIE BOULEVARD AND BLACK CREEK BOULEVARD**

# PROJECT PROFILE LIST

## LPC Selected DRI Projects

The following projects were identified as Priority Projects to be considered for DRI funding by the City of Rome Local Planning Committee:

#	Project Name	Page
1	Project Blue Crab	V-64
2	Capitol Theatre	V-70
3	183 West Dominick Street Mixed-Use	V-78
4	Liberty George Parking Garage	V-84
5	City Hall Programming Enhancements	V-92
6	Liberty James Garage Upgrades	V-99
7	Erie Boulevard Streetscape	V-105
8	Business Retention and Public Art Fund	V-113
9	City Hall Green Space	V-121
10	The REACH Center Arts Incubator	V-127
11	Downtown CENTRO Transportation Center	V-134
12	Wayfinding System Implementation	V-141



# PROJECT PROFILES

## INTRODUCTION

Through extensive community engagement, the Local Planning Committee (LPC) defined projects that they felt align with, and advance, the revitalization strategies of the DRI. The Committee identified 19 preliminary projects, 12 of which were chosen as priorities. The LPC prioritized catalytic projects that presented the strongest likelihood of jump-starting revitalization and investment in downtown Rome.

For each project, the LPC considered specific criteria to determine priority for funding through the DRI. Below are key criteria the LPC looked for in each project.

- Catalytic potential
- Estimated community and economic benefits
- Estimated impacts on tax revenue
- Transformative potential - elements that fundamentally change the downtown and how it is perceived
- Capacity to leverage private or public sources of funds
- Public support
- Readiness and timeframe required for implementation (in coordination with other programs, projects, initiatives, or capital improvements)
- Market demand and economic feasibility
- Employment and workforce development potential
- Any regulatory challenges that would need to be addressed
- Capacity of responsible impact in the downtown
- Operating arrangements to ensure that the project is successful, including ongoing maintenance

The following Priority Projects will ultimately allow for the City of Rome's downtown to become a more active, desirable, and diverse downtown while aligning with existing local and regional plans.

## PROJECT 1

# Project Blue Crab

**Project Title:**

Construct an Advanced Manufacturing Facility in Downtown Rome

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$4,720,000

DRI Funding: \$ 900,000

**Project Description:**

The overall project includes the construction of a 50,000 square foot advanced manufacturing facility on the former Rome Cable Complex 3 brownfield site. The company is currently located in the City of Rome, with approximately 38 employees. The company has identified the need for a new facility to facilitate growth and the addition of a new manufacturing line and warehouse space. The new facility will house a more efficient industrial layout, add at least one additional manufacturing line, double warehousing and distribution capacity, and create up to 15 additional jobs in the near term.

The proposed project site has been the focus of major state agency partnerships and funding assistance. Empire State Development, the City of Rome, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Rome Industrial Development Corporation, National Grid, and Rome Community Brownfield Restoration Corporation partnered in 2008-2009 to complete a \$3 million brownfield remediation and restoration effort on the Complex 3 site. Project Blue Crab would be the revitalization capstone to a decade-long community-led brownfield redevelopment effort.

**Strategies:**

In addition to supporting local goals and objectives for downtown development – including the creation of a center where people can live, work, and play – Project Blue Crab also supports multiple regional strategies as identified in the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan.

In particular, the proposed project will help to attract talent and a 21st century workforce to downtown Rome by establishing an advanced manufacturing facility with more than 50 employees within a 5-minute walk to the downtown core. When considered in concert with proposed streetscape enhancements along Erie Boulevard, Project Blue Crab will help to promote Downtown Rome as a destination for a diverse range of small business, entertainment, and restaurant uses.

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

Enhance regional concentrations - This project will have a transformative impact on downtown through the reuse of a remediated brownfield as a job-generating business. Rome has sustained a strong nucleus of traditional and advanced manufacturing – ranging from copper products to custom aerospace components – which comprise a significant percentage of the region’s interstate commerce and international exports. Project Blue Crab presents an opportunity to expand the region’s growing global footprint through strategic investment in the downtown core. The implementation of the project will enhance the market reach of Project Blue Crab, optimizing industry clusters to catalyze economic growth. One of the key goals in the regional plan for measuring success is “facilitate expansion of existing employers to foster sectoral growth”. This project is a critical first step in achieving the vision for creating a business and technology district on the former Rome Cable site that will focus on advanced manufacturing and high technology business attraction with strong connections to housing, services, and recreational assets in the downtown core.

Workforce alignment and education – Project Blue Crab, through a unique internal workforce development program, will ensure employee skills meet the needs of the employer while improving the skillsets and knowledge base of employees as regional assets. The advanced manufacturing skills to be taught on-site are aligned with workforce needs identified at the regional level and will help to address future employer demands in the labor market. Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) has been engaged to work with the employer to develop specific skill sets that meet current and future production needs.

This project also addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

Revitalize downtown – Stakeholders recognize that downtown needs an infusion of a variety of uses to be truly viable, including employment opportunities. Project Blue Crab creates a direct link to stable, well-paying advanced manufacturing jobs in direct proximity to the downtown core and marks the return of manufacturing to downtown Rome after decades of blight, decay, and disinvestment.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

### Public Support:

"Jobs, jobs, jobs" is the recurring theme of nearly every stakeholder and public engagement session since the inception of the Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area planning process in 2008. Even outside of the BOA – whether talking about tax policy, zoning updates, Griffiss Business and Technology Park, educational programs, or the economic future of the Mohawk Valley Region – our elected officials and community leaders tout jobs as their [perennial] top priority. The public has provided indirect feedback throughout the DRI process that job creation and employment opportunities are critical to the overall sustainability of the City of Rome, and downtown.

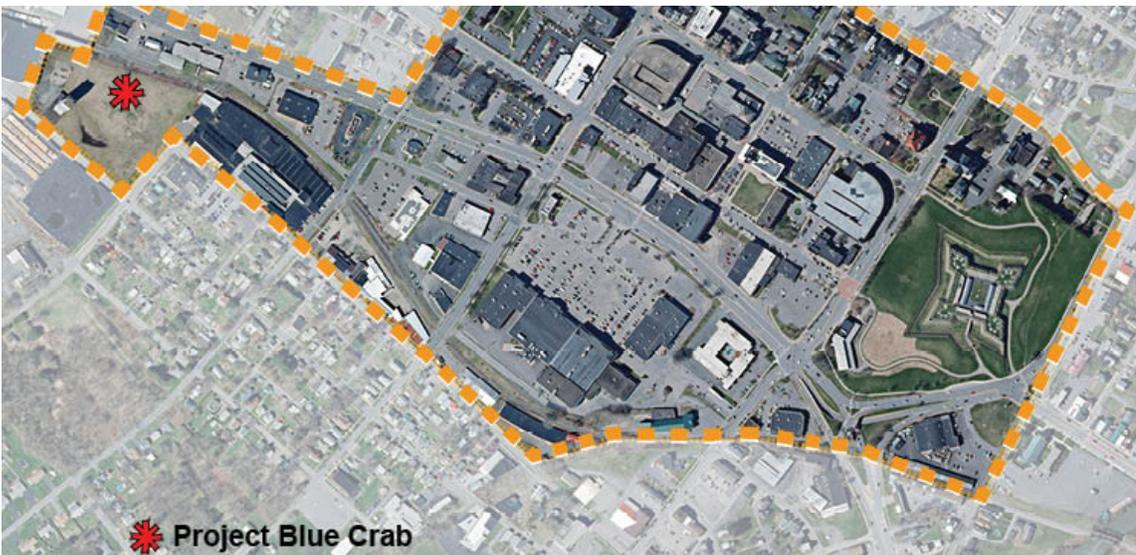
The former Rome Cable manufacturing complex, one parcel of which is the subject of this project, has been continuously identified as targeted locations for investment, redevelopment, and job creation. Ten years ago, the public threw their support towards the demolition and remediation of Complex 3 (the subject area); this enthusiasm was galvanized in 2017 with the prospect of finishing the job at Complex 4. With this renewed momentum, the BOA team began developing a conceptual redevelopment plan for the entire site in 2017 – the fundamental component of which is the re-establishment of a clean manufacturing district on the former brownfield – to provide expansion opportunities for local manufacturers and to attract new investment. Project Blue Crab embodies, if not exemplifies, the community's vision for a local manufacturer to attract outside investment, create new value, and expand employment opportunities in the urban center; proximal to housing, shopping, and transportation alternatives.

### Jobs Created:

Project Blue Crab would result in the retention of 38 jobs within the City of Rome, and the creation of 15 new jobs within two years. The site provides additional opportunities for future expansion, Project Blue Crab also provides opportunities to work with MVCC and the Workforce Investment Board to provide on-site skills training for new employees.

### Project Location:

The site is located at the northwest corner of Henry and South Jay Streets. The proposed facility will be constructed adjacent to the Owl Wire Corporation and Worthington Industries.



### **Site Ownership/Legal Jurisdiction:**

The property is currently owned by the Oneida County Industrial Development Corporation (OCIDC) with a Payment In Lieu of Tax (PILOT) lease-back agreement to Rome Community Brownfield Restoration Corporation (RCBRC). The property is currently enrolled in the NYSDEC Environmental Restoration Program, which provides technical assistance, oversight, indemnification, and grant assistance for the remediation and restoration of brownfields in NYS.

### **Acquisition of Real Property:**

OCIDC intends to subdivide approximately 5 acres of remediated/restored property, adopt a Site Management Plan (with environmental easement in place), and enter into a ground lease with Project Blue Crab. The ground lease will serve two purposes: 1) to allow the company to take advantage of a Payment In Lieu of Tax (PILOT) agreement with potential for a PILOT Increment Financing (PIF) district to be established; and 2) to keep the property enrolled in the Environmental Restoration Program until such time the parcel may be released – at which time the company may opt to purchase the parcel with full environmental indemnification.

### **Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:**

In the immediate term, the construction of the manufacturing facility will show progress being made within the former Rome Cable Industrial Complex site. The larger footprint has been abandoned and deteriorating for decades, negatively impacting surrounding residential neighborhoods, property values, and the general perception of downtown Rome. The infusion of investment, new construction, and jobs into the DRI area will create positive buzz within downtown, showing progress and signifying that the City of Rome is open and attractive to new investment.

Specific benefits associated with Project Blue Crab include:

- Increasing utilization of the site. Presently, the Rome Cable Complex 3 site is vacant, underutilized, and has a negative impact on the character of downtown Rome, surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the Erie Boulevard corridor. The proposed development project will bring new jobs, investment, and people into the downtown core.
- Significant downtown investment. A project of this scale will have a significant impact on downtown, as it will quickly become one of the largest employers downtown. The employees of Project Blue Crab will bring new spending power into the downtown core.
- Better utilization of urban land. At present, the Complex 3 site is underutilized. The City and its partners at the regional and state level have created a long-term vision for the Rome Cable site to become a business and technology park. They have already invested and continue to invest significantly in creating parcels of land that are attractive to outside investment, so businesses do not look at greenfield sites in surrounding suburban areas.
- Economic returns. The investment on the Complex 3 site has the potential to catalyze other investment on surrounding development sites within the Rome Cable footprint. Complex 4, across the street, has a pending RESTORE grant application for work to be completed in 2018. If awarded, that site will be well positioned for development and investment within 18 months.

### Future Use of Structure:

The proposed structure will be the Northeastern manufacturing facility for Project Blue Crab, an advanced manufacturing company. The building will include approximately 6,000 sf of office space, 24,000 sf of manufacturing space, and approximately 20,000 sf of warehouse space.

### Project Budget:

Total Project Cost:	\$ 4,720,000
DRI Funding:	\$ 900,000
Other Funding:	\$ 3,820,000

A breakdown of project costs and funding sources is noted below:

Construction & Site Work	\$3,810,000 (Bank Financing + DRI)
Soft Costs	\$ 50,000 (Cash, Private Equity)
Equipment	\$ 850,000 (Cash, Private Equity)
Furnishings & Fixtures	\$ 10,000 (Cash, Private Equity)

### Feasibility and Cost Justification:

Preliminary architectural and engineering estimates are in line with recent construction figures – at roughly \$60 per square foot for 44,000 sf of manufacturing space and \$120 per square foot for the office space – for the facility. Equipment makes up the bulk of the remaining budget – the cost of adding a third manufacturing line.

The company also owns facilities on the Eastern seaboard with excess space, and has explored construction of a new facility out of state. The loss of this business to another facility or an out of state location would have a significant impact on the local manufacturing sector, both today and when considering future expansion opportunities. The company has identified a \$900,000 funding gap for the site work, which will be filled with DRI funding. The company is also working with Empire State Development to apply for approximately \$400,000 in Excelsior Tax Credits to facilitate hiring of at least 15 new full-time employees in the next two years.

### Regulatory Requirements:

The proposed project is in conformance with existing zoning regulations. The construction and site work will require local site plan approval, construction permits, and compliance with state purchasing requirements if awarded (presumably, a minimum of \$300,000 in Minority & Women-Owned Enterprise participation as well as \$60,000 in Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Enterprise participation).

Additionally, construction activities must comply with the NYSD Record of Decision, issued in March 2011, which outlines Institutional and Engineering controls in the form of an environmental easement and Site Management Plan. The proposed project conforms to the commercial/industrial use restriction, is served by a municipal water source, and will comply with procedures for testing, managing, and restoring the disturbed soils. Additionally, OCIDC will continue periodic certification of institutional and engineering controls.

Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

## Rendering of Completed Project:



## Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:

Project Blue Crab intends to begin design and engineering in April 2018, in order to be operational by Q1 2019. This is an aggressive schedule, and each of the team members is committed to adhering to the project timeline to ensure that the company meets increased demand and penetration of new domestic and international markets.

## Project Reporting:

Project Blue Crab will be the recipient of DRI funding and will be responsible for monitoring project progress.

Metrics used to determine the success of the project may include:

- Construction commencement
- Construction completion
- New jobs created
- New sales revenue

## PROJECT 2

# Capitol Theatre

**Project Title:**

Complete Exterior and Internal Building Projects at the Capitol Theatre

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost (current phase): \$4,000,000

DRI Funding: \$2,500,000

**Project Description:**

The Capitol Theatre is a 1,788-seat auditorium opened in 1928 that is used for live stage performances and movie screenings. The theater has a 20'x40' movie screen, shows movies with carbon arc film projection (and also has digital capabilities), shows silent movies with live theater organ accompaniment, and has a full pit for live orchestras to accompany stage performances. In 2014, the Cinema Capitol was opened next door to the Capitol Theatre, with two smaller theaters, seating 51 and 73 people. The Cinema is open 365 days per year to showcase independent, foreign, and documentary films, as well as special events

The project entails improvements to the existing Capitol Theatre to advance restoration of the historic theater to the period of its most recent renovation, circa 1939, and improve the primary building electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems. DRI funds will be used for replacement of the front entry doors, other storefronts, and other façade restorations, purchase and installation of a new marquee sign to match one from the original installation, seating restoration, and other decorative restorations. Additionally, separate fundraising will be generated to improve landscaping around the theater, improve the electronics systems in the theater, purchase furniture, and renovate the back building (owned by the Capitol Theatre) to create a black box studio for rehearsals, performances, and community / private events.

The proposed project elements in the main theater include:

- Replace existing HVAC and ductwork
- Upgrades to plumbing
- Restore paint, fabric, carpet, lighting, plastering
- Refurbish Seats
- Replace entry door
- Restore lower façade
- Install marquee sign
- Purchase theatre equipment
- Install Code / Safety upgrades

The following project elements are proposed for the multi-purpose building renovation:

- Construct dressing rooms / restrooms
- Repair plumbing and replace fixtures
- Demolish existing roof and structure to raise it 8'-0"; raise wall structure and construct new roof
- Install tension grid and steel framing
- Construct small elevated stage in new black box theater and install sprinkler system
- Purchase and install portable telescoping seating for 150

The current project is Phase II of planned capital improvements. A future Phase III will include additional facility improvements and the construction of a covered arcade to connect all of the Capitol Theatre complex buildings and create a new usable outdoor space.

### **Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1: Enhance Regional Concentrations:

- As one of the major arts and cultural tourism destinations in the City and region, an improved and enhanced Capitol Theatre has the potential to attract more visitors and offer more programming, thereby increasing the theatre's potential to catalyze surrounding spin-off development such as restaurants and cafes.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increase Spatial Efficiency:

- Maximize collaboration benefits – In tandem with the REACH Center, the Capitol Theatre is the backbone of the arts and cultural district. The proposed enhancements would both support and be supported by additional DRI projects, including the public art fund and streetscape improvements as well as the City Green and West Dominick Street mixed-use developments. These projects, when considered together, create a strong and vibrant downtown built on a foundation of arts and cultural programming.
- Leverage physical assets – The historic Capitol Theatre is a primary physical asset in downtown Rome. Promoting the theatre and assisting in its capacity to grow and facilitate economic development opportunities is one of the core principles of the DRI.
- Leverage unique historic character – Urban renewal had a significant impact on downtown Rome. Luckily, the Capitol Theatre was spared but its historic and architectural features have been damaged over time. This project will help to restore historic elements of the theatre, while simultaneously creating an opportunity for the theatre to add unique architectural features such as a marquee.
- Promote investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization – Investments in the Capitol Theatre – which has already seen significant growth in recent years – will capitalize on its potential to increase visitation and programming, thereby attracting additional visitors to the area and promoting business patronization and downtown revitalization.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project also addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Revitalize downtown
- Make Rome a walkable city
- Promote Rome's downtown as an arts hub
- Support arts programming, education, and public art

### **Public Support:**

This project was highly supported by all groups. See attachment for a summary of quotes from residents and visitors to the Capitol Theatre, which highlight the community's support for this important downtown asset.

The Capitol Arts Complex is a beloved facility in the Rome community, as evidenced by the strong reviews shared by local residents and visitors posted on social media sites. Revitalization will only stand to increase the support of the patrons of the theater, both locally and as a destination in the greater region.

### **Jobs Created:**

The proposed DRI project is anticipated to create 10+ construction jobs. Depending on future programming and increased events scheduled after construction, additional jobs are anticipated. Additional non-direct jobs associated with performances and spin-off economic development are also expected.

### **Project Location:**



### Site Ownership/Legal Jurisdiction:

The project is owned, and will be executed, by the Capitol Arts Complex nonprofit arts organization.

### Acquisition of Real Property:

Not Applicable

### Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:

Revitalization of the buildings will re-establish the Capitol Theatre as the premier venue for stage and screen presentations for the residents of Rome and surrounding communities. The new marquee sign will draw more activity to the downtown area, and increased attendance at shows will increase economic opportunities for surrounding businesses. The residents and attendees will have access to more and better quality entertainment experiences.

### Future Use of Structure:

The Capitol Theatre intends to continue use as a stage and projection theater, and expand the existing complex to include other performance venues.

### Project Budget:

Total Project Cost:	\$4,000,000
DRI Funding:	\$2,500,000
Other Funding:	\$1,500,000

### Project Items:

DRI-funded improvements:

• Front entry door restoration	\$ 90,000
• Lower façade restoration	\$ 75,000
• Marquee sign installation	\$ 496,000
• Seat refurbishment	\$ 403,000
• Storefront restoration	\$ 150,000
• Decorative restoration to the theatre	\$ 496,000
• Electrical upgrades	\$ 100,000
• HVAC system upgrade	\$ 270,000
• Plumbing upgrades	\$ 30,000
• Permitting, contingency, and construction fees	\$ 390,000
<b>Total costs:</b>	<b>\$ 2,500,000</b>

Additional improvements to be paid for by the Capitol Theatre with funding raised through that organization's capital campaign:

• Landscaping improvements	\$ 100,000
• New electronics equipment	\$ 100,000
• New furniture – historic auditorium	\$ 150,000
• Multi-purpose space construction	\$ 436,000
• Dressing rooms / restrooms	
• Raise roof and wall structure	
• Install tension grid and steel framing	
• Stage construction and sprinkler system	
• Portable telescoping seating for 150	\$ 550,000
• New furniture – miscellaneous	\$ 164,000
<b>Total costs:</b>	<b>\$ 1,500,000</b>

### Feasibility and Cost Justification:

The project budget, which is based on standard construction estimating methods, was prepared by a licensed architect familiar with the proposed design improvements associated with this project. The costs of the project are justified by its expected economic development and community revitalization benefits.

- **Economic Development:** Commercial theatre is a complementary sector of the arts industry, in that it benefits from and contributes to a broad range of other sectors in the economy. It is estimated that the economic impact multiplier for this industry is 2.2, which means that for every dollar of direct spending, an additional \$1.20 of economic activity is generated. Thus, the state investment of \$2.5 million will generate an additional \$3 million of economic activity throughout the region, while the Capitol Theatre itself is expected to generate over \$1 million annually.

Some of this increased economic activity comes from arts and cultural tourists, who often spend more on average than other visitors. Out-of-county tourists often spend twice as much as locals when attending arts events, thereby making public art a viable method to increase the City of Rome's share of the regional tourism market.

Investment at the Capitol Theatre will also have reciprocal benefits for nearby properties and other arts facilities throughout the City. Increased activity at the Capitol Theatre will increase patronization of restaurants, bars, and hotels, and may increase demand for other arts and cultural entertainment options. By increasing the quality and frequency of performances and by bringing high-profile talent to the City, the Capitol Theatre has the potential to continue transforming downtown Rome into a regional hub for the arts and culture, thereby strengthening the region's national and international reputation for tourism.

- **Community Revitalization:** The Capitol Theatre is an amenity that makes Rome special – it is a unique asset that few communities, especially the size of Rome, possess. Major events – whether they be theatre productions or concerts – bring an upbeat, lively atmosphere to the streets of the City, and are essential to creating and continually fostering a vibrant community. The arts are also effective in improving quality of life, which is an important consideration for residents and business owners.

Community theatres can also spur revitalization by attracting people downtown and supporting other ancillary businesses. In Pittsburgh, for example, the restoration of multiple underutilized theatres helped to transform the declining Rust Belt city into a vibrant arts scene.

### Regulatory Requirements:

The proposed project will require local approvals and building permits.

### Rendering of Completed Project:



*New Marquee Sign and Landscape Improvements*



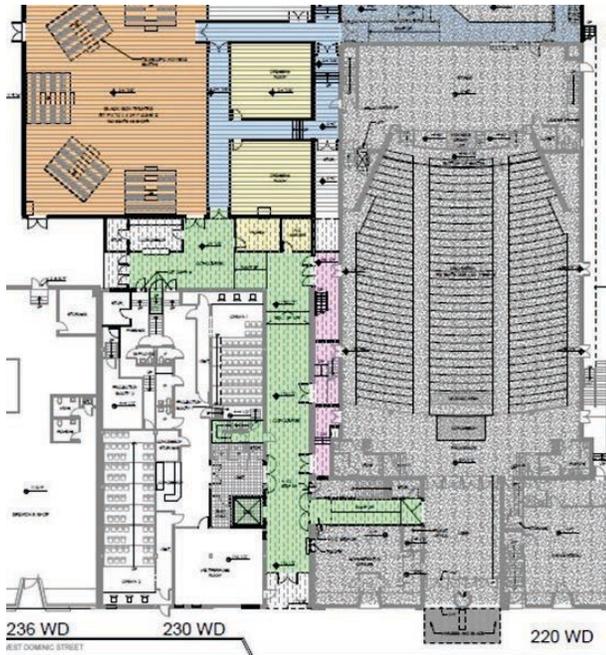
*Multi-Purpose Building Renovation – Exterior*



*Capitol Arts Complex Build Out Plan – Street Level*



*Representative Images of Black Box Theatre*



*Capitol Arts Complex Build Out Plan – Second level*



*Box Theater Precedent Imagery*

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

The Capitol Theatre has been planning for facility improvements and is positioned to begin work in Summer 2018, or at the time DRI funding is announced.

Conceptual design package	Summer 2018
Final design and construction documents	Summer/Fall 2018
Permits and approvals	Winter 2018
Construction	2019

### **Project Reporting:**

The Capitol Theatre will be responsible for project oversight and monitoring of project advancement. The Capitol Theatre will hire an architectural firm to oversee all technical aspects of the design, permitting, approvals, and construction administration.

Metrics used to determine the success of the project may include:

- Visitor satisfaction determined through intercept surveys
- Increase in net revenue
- Increase in number of annual performances
- Increase in total visitor numbers
- Increase in new business development in downtown core

## PROJECT 3

# 183 West Dominick Street Mixed-Use

**Project Title:**

Construct Mixed-Use Infill Development at 183 West Dominick Street

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$3,400,000

DRI Funding: \$ 500,000

**Project Description:**

The proposed project includes the construction of a new mixed-use structure on the existing, undeveloped site. The building would total 30,000 square feet +/- including a parking garage on the lower level and build-out of the second and third floors.

The building program includes:

- First floor (fronting Erie Boulevard): Common space for rental units, laundry, and structured parking.
- Second floor (fronting West Dominick): Commercial units (approximately 4,000 sf) facing West Dominick, with approximately 5 residential units.
- Third floor: Ten to twelve residential units.

Total square footage of the new construction is approximately 30,000 sf. Residential units would be a combination of one- and two-bedroom market rate units.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increase Spatial Efficiency, specifically:

- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization – The West Dominick Infill project at 183 West Dominick Street has the potential to promote further investment by bringing new businesses and residents into downtown. When considered in tandem with other DRI priority initiatives including City Green (immediately across the street), the CENTRO Transfer Station, Capitol Theatre, streetscape improvements, and the REACH Center, this project has the potential to help transform downtown into an active, 24/7 center. Allowing workers, such as those at Project Blue Crab, to live in close proximity to their employment can also lower transportation costs.

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Revitalize downtown – The introduction of new commercial space and market rate residential units into the downtown has been identified as a top priority in multiple local plans and is considered the key to establishing a strong, vibrant downtown core. The Comprehensive Plan specifically notes the CBD is intended to become a high-density sustainable residential and commercial district; this project directly supports that critical goal.
- Make Rome a walkable city – The location of the project in the downtown core in conjunction with other DRI projects, such as the CENTRO Transfer Station and other pedestrian-oriented projects, creates synergy and promotes a healthy walkable city.

### Public Support:

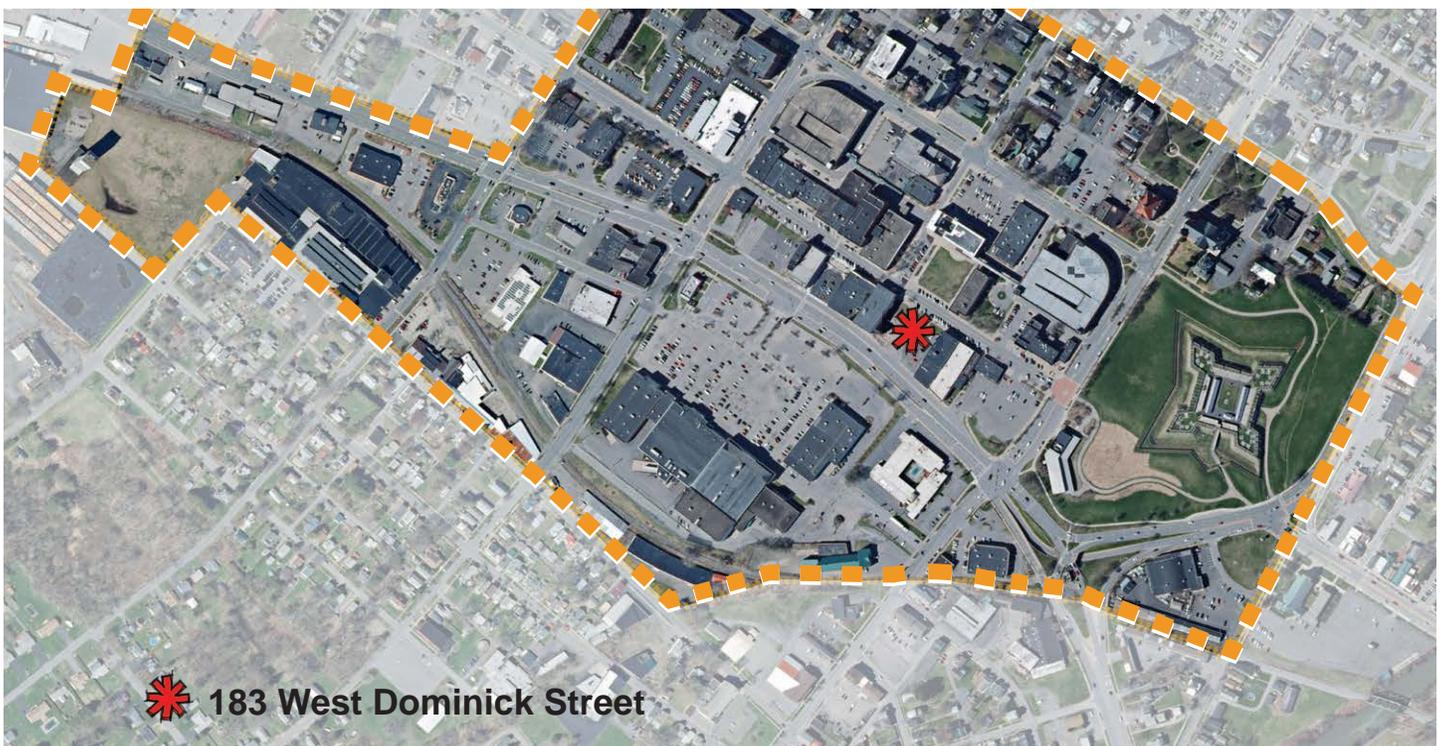
The city has been working to attract local developers to invest in the downtown through the ongoing Brownfield Opportunity Area and DRI processes. Several projects are currently underway and have had positive impacts on the community. The public, students, and the Local Planning Committee had a high level of support for the project.

### Jobs Created:

The 183 West Dominick Street Mixed-Use project would result in up to 5 jobs, dependent on the final use of commercial space. Construction jobs would also be created.

### Project Location :

The proposed project location is 183 West Dominick Street.



### **Project Ownership:**

The project site is owned by the City of Rome. The city will sell the property to a private developer (developer's name is confidential).

### **Acquisition of Real Property:**

The project will require land acquisition of property currently owned by the City of Rome. The City of Rome has expressed a desire to sell the property to a developer, with whom the city is currently working, to advance this project.

### **Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:**

Infill development has multiple benefits, and would be especially effective for the West Dominick Street site, as it is located in the heart of downtown Rome. These benefits include:

- Better utilization of urban land. At present, the West Dominick Street site is underutilized. Its prominent location across from the City Green could be put to better use than simply a parking lot. Likewise, redeveloping this site would take advantage of its existing water and sewer infrastructure and its proximity to transit.
- Creating a continuous commercial corridor. Infilling this site would provide opportunities for new commercial units fronting West Dominick Street and would create a more continuous streetwall, thereby enhancing West Dominick's identity as a human-scale commercial corridor.
- Promoting sustainable land use practices. Redeveloping an underutilized site, rather than developing a new site, reduces sprawl and preserves greenfield sites. Infill development also contributes to the compact feel of downtown, increasing the perception of walkability and reducing the reliance on automobiles for short trips.
- Diversified housing options. Creating a mixed-use residential building at the West Dominick Street site would provide more small-scale, urban housing options in the City of Rome. These units, which would be located in close proximity to retail, service, and transit options, are likely to attract individuals, young professionals, and empty-nesters – demographics that have been driving demand in the market in recent years.
- Economic returns. Studies have shown that compact, mixed-use infill developments often raise property values at adjacent sites, and can bring vacant or neglected properties back onto the tax rolls. Likewise, investment at the West Dominick Street site could catalyze investment at other properties throughout the corridor, thereby spurring a sort of reciprocal revitalization.

### Future Use of Structure:

The new structure proposed on this site would include:

- Structured parking
- Fifteen residential units (rental)
- Commercial frontage along West Dominick Street

### Project Budget:

Total Project Cost:	\$3,400,000
DRI Funding:	\$ 500,000
Other Funding:	\$2,900,000

See a detailed breakdown of anticipated development costs below.

The balance of funding through this project will be financed by the developer and NBT Bank.

### Feasibility and Cost Justification:

This project will leverage \$2,900,000 of local private investment, resulting in overall community quality of life benefits.

### Regulatory Requirements:

This project will require local approvals and building permits. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

### Rendering of Completed Project:



Concept Rendering



**Project Reporting:**

The City will be responsible for site plan approvals and the developer will be responsible for the design, bidding, and construction of the project.

Potential metrics include:

- Number of people visiting the downtown
- Improved attractiveness of the downtown
- Increased foot traffic in the downtown
- Improved quality of life for Rome and area residents

## PROJECT 4

# Liberty George Parking Garage

**Project Title:**

Demolish the Liberty George Parking Garage and Develop an Interim Public Use

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$1,800,000

DRI Funding: \$1,500,000

**Project Description:**

The Liberty George Parking Garage demolition includes the removal of a 40-year-old parking structure that sits on a strategically and highly visible 2+ acre site in the downtown core of the City. The City completed a structural analysis of the garage that concluded that the structure is unfit for reuse. The existing parking structure is a detriment to downtown, as it is a large eyesore and is widely recognized as a safety hazard due to the structural disrepair. The extent of structural damage within the garage makes reuse of the existing structure unfeasible.

The proposed DRI project includes the demolition of the structure to facilitate a short-term use on the site as a surface parking facility and public open space. Once demolition funding is secured, the City will commence an active Developer Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify and secure a developer for the site. The Developer RFP will stipulate the minimum requirements for future development on the parcel, which will be sold by the City to the preferred development team. This approach ensures a thoughtful and considerate developer selection process, guaranteeing the City gets the best possible redevelopment project on the site.

As determined through the DRI process, the desired end use for the site will include:

- Market rate residential units
- Parking for residents as well as additional spaces designated for public use
- Value-add amenities for tenants such as fitness facility and business center
- Commercial uses along street-level facade

**Strategies:**

This project exemplifies the City's key goal for downtown as defined in its Comprehensive Plan, DRI Application, and Brownfield Opportunity Area Program - to create a high-density sustainable residential and commercial center. The proposed project will ultimately facilitate new commercial space and modern, residential housing units. The long-term viability of downtown as the City's center of activity is not sustainable without a mix of uses, including market rate residential units that will help to attract new residents, activity, and spending into the downtown core.

In addition to supporting local goals and objectives for downtown development, the demolition of the Liberty George Parking Garage to facilitate new mixed-use development also supports regional strategies as identified in the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan.

In particular, the proposed project will help to attract talent and a 21st century workforce to downtown Rome through the creation of a new, unique, and distinctive residential offering that is within a 5-minute walk to major arts and cultural destinations, restaurants, theatres, shopping, and recreation.

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increase Spatial Efficiency:

- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization – The proposed mixed-use project is the single largest redevelopment project proposed in downtown Rome since urban renewal changed the downtown landscape. The execution of this project will have a large and direct impact on downtown revitalization, creating a significant development parcel in the heart of downtown.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment:

- Revitalize downtown – The realization of the vision to attract mixed-use development to the site will facilitate downtown revitalization by bringing new residents and businesses into the downtown core. Numerous studies completed for the City in recent years have identified the need for introducing new, modern, market-rate housing into downtown to attract millennials and young professionals. When considered in conjunction with other projects that help to promote a vibrant, unique, and desirable place to live – such as streetscape improvements, the Capitol Theatre, City Green, CENTRO, and the Reach Center, this project becomes intricately connected to the long-term success of multiple projects.
- Make Rome a walkable city – The location of the project in the downtown core is within walking distance to the West Dominick Arts and Cultural District and multiple downtown projects also included within the DRI Plan, including but not limited to City Green, the REACH Center, and the Capitol Theatre. A concentration of diverse uses will enhance opportunities for residents and visitors to walk to a variety of destinations in a targeted area.

### **Public Support:**

Anecdotal feedback and comments received throughout the process indicate there is significant support for replacing the existing, deteriorating parking garage structure with a new development project. The development envisioned for the site would further meet the identified need of providing new, market rate housing into the downtown.

Throughout the City's related planning efforts, including multiple BOAs and the recent zoning update, the desire to see new mixed-use development introduced into the downtown core has been emphasized by residents as the single, greatest need to revitalize downtown.

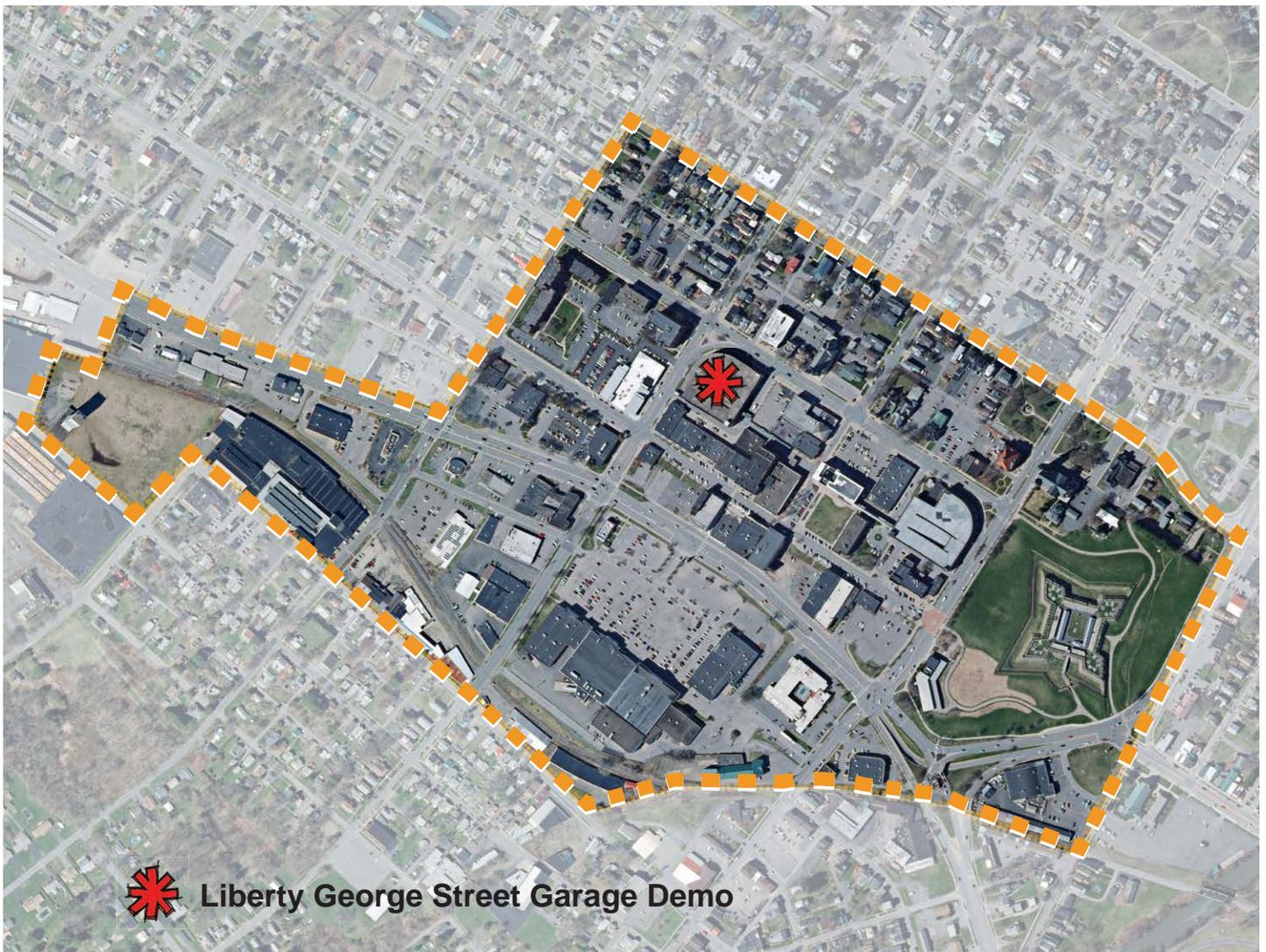
The Liberty George Parking Garage demolition was a highly supported project during the DRI prioritization meetings, reflecting strong support for the site preparation to facilitate a new development project.

### **Jobs Created:**

Up to 40 construction jobs would be created for this project, including the proposed demolition and redevelopment project. Additional jobs would be created with the completed build out of the site, in association with new commercial spaces.

### **Project Location:**

The site is located at the southwest corner of Liberty and George Street intersections.



### **Site Ownership/Legal Jurisdiction:**

The property is owned and maintained by the City of Rome.

### **Acquisition of Real Property:**

The City is the current owner and sponsor of this project. Upon completion of the demolition project, the City will solicit and identify a preferred team for the development of a mixed-use project. Upon identification of a development team, the City will sell the land.

### **Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:**

In the immediate term, the demolition of the parking garage will remove visual blight and eradicate a safety hazard in the downtown core. Ultimately, the site will be redeveloped as a mixed-use development project, enhancing the mixed income, mixed-use nature of downtown Rome. The development project is consistent with the growing trend and shifting preferences of Americans, particularly young professionals, who prefer rental units in downtowns that are rich with amenities.

Specific benefits associated with the mixed-use project envisioned for the site include:

- Increasing utilization of the site. Presently, the Liberty George Garage site is underutilized and has a negative impact on the character of downtown Rome. In the short term, the visual character of the downtown will be improved through the removal of the unsightly and deteriorating garage. The proposed mixed-use project will bring new residents and businesses.
- Significant downtown investment. A project of this scale will be a game-changer for downtown, bringing new spending power, interest, and investment into the downtown core.
- Better utilization of urban land. At present, the Liberty George Garage site is underutilized. As one of the largest potential development parcels in the downtown core, the site is the best option to bring a significant and large-scale mixed-use project into the City.
- Diversified housing options. Notably missing from the downtown core today are market rate residential units that might appeal to young professionals interested in an urban setting and modern amenities. Ultimately, the site of the Liberty George Garage is envisioned to be a new option in the local marketplace, offering a type of residential unit that does not exist in the downtown today.
- Economic returns. Studies have shown that compact, mixed-use infill developments often raise property values at adjacent sites, and can bring vacant or neglected properties back onto the tax rolls. Investment at the Liberty George Garage site is likely to catalyze investment at other properties throughout the downtown.

### **Future Use of Structure:**

The proposed demolition project on the project site would result in a cleared 2+-acre site in the heart of downtown, ready for redevelopment. The proposed new development that is envisioned for the parcel would be a mixed-use building consisting of office, commercial, and residential space.

**Project Budget:**

Total Project Cost:	\$1,800,000
DRI Funding:	\$1,500,000

**Demolition Costs \$1,135,000**

Mobilization	\$ 120,000
Demolition	\$ 700,000
Site Stabilization	\$ 315,000

**Interim Parking Lot \$ 665,000**

The requested DRI funding is for demolition of the parking garage and site preparation for the interim parking lot. The local funding match will include design and site work for the interim parking lot use.

**Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The anticipated redevelopment cost is based on industry standards for comparable development programs in the City of Rome.

The City will ultimately seek to identify a developer to build a market rate residential project on the site. The Real Estate and Market Analysis completed for the Downtown Rome BOA found that 1) Housing is affordable, but quality is lacking, and 2) There is demand for more modern housing in Rome, especially in downtown, driven by:

- Employees at high tech, regional businesses coming into the Rome-Utica marketplace, particularly high-tech workers at Griffiss Business and Technology Park. Many of these employees do not live in Rome due to the lack of modern housing options.
- Pent-up demand from local residents and workers. The study noted existing housing offerings do not align with current preference and needs. The Utica/Rome market has a backlog of demand for modern apartment units.

The Real Estate and Market Analysis showed the greatest demand for housing will be for apartments with mid-level to upscale finishes and fixtures that are located downtown and are walkable to retail, services, and entertainment options. The achievable rents for a two-bedroom unit in Rome are projected to be between \$1,200 and \$1,500 per month, according to the study.

Each of the key findings above directly supports the program envisioned for the demolition of the parking garage and the redevelopment of the site for a mix of commercial and residential uses.

**Regulatory Requirements:**

The demolition of the site will require local permits and compliance with state requirements. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

### Rendering of Completed Project:

The immediate completed project will include the demolition of the existing parking garage, resulting in a vacant site that can serve as interim surface parking. Interim parking will be developed as parking and open green space.

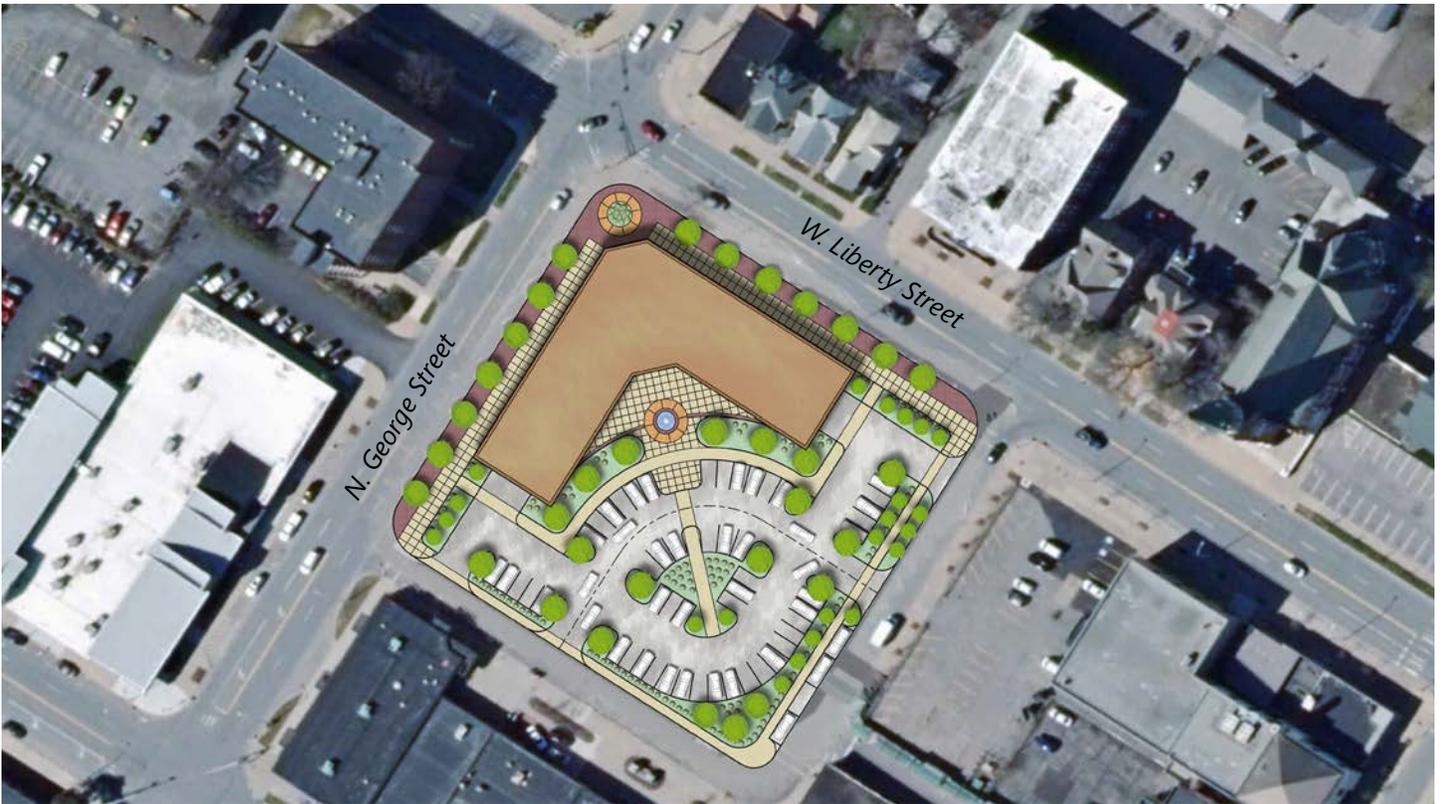
The site plan and rendering below represent the potential redevelopment that could be constructed on the site by a future development team.



*Concept Rendering*



*Concept Rendering*



Final Concept Site Plan



Interim Surface Concept Site Plan



*Interim Surface Concept Site Plan*

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

The City is prepared to move forward with the demolition of the garage upon receipt of DRI funding. The demolition project can be completed within six months. Upon award of DRI funding for the demolition, the City will advertise a Developer RFP for the project.

The proposed redevelopment would commence upon completion of the site demolition project and upon successful completion of property acquisition from the City.

Developer RFP	Summer 2018
Garage demo bidding	Summer 2018
Garage demolition and site preparation	Summer / Fall 2018
Interim Use construction	Spring 2019

### **Project Reporting:**

The City will be responsible for overseeing the project and monitoring its progress and success against the project proposal. Metrics used may include:

- Cleared site within 12 months
- Developer RFP advertised within two months
- Improved public realm

## PROJECT 5

# City Hall Programming Enhancements

**Project Title:**

Expand City Hall to Improve Programming and Safety

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$2,880,000

DRI Funding: \$1,880,000

**Project Description:**

This project includes an addition to the City Hall Building, filling in the existing open air segment and creating an expanded publicly accessible space on the side fronting City Green to provide additional community programming. Specific project elements include:

- Construct new one-story infill structure of approximately 3,000 sf, to be used for additional programming, ADA accessible restrooms, and enhanced safety features.
- Construct north and south infill walls to create a new secure entry to City Hall, connecting the tenant spaces at the ground floor.
- Demolish existing curtainwall and excavate the plaza for new foundations and floor slab.
- Construct new accessible restrooms, located within the existing building footprint, accessed from the new addition. Restrooms to include approximately three stalls each.
- Construct roof assembly over new gathering space. Roof assembly to be membrane or "green" roof, with waterproof layers below growing media and plantings.
- Install new curtainwall to replace existing along existing atrium; new curtainwall to extend vertically to above the third-story roof (currently slopes back to meet the roof), with a new roof sloped to the east to tie into the existing roof. Will require structural modifications.

The proposed project assumes no environmental abatement will be required. The long-term maintenance costs of the green roof are not included the total design fee. The City of Rome has committed to absorb all future maintenance costs.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increase Spatial Efficiency:

- Promoting sustainability – The proposed project will improve the efficiency of the existing structure through wall and window updates. The proposed green roof will reduce stormwater run-off and serve as a model for green development in the downtown.
- Make key investments that improve critical infrastructure assets – City Hall, and the adjacent City Green (a second DRI proposed project), represent key municipal assets in downtown Rome. The implementation of this project will enhance the long-term sustainability of the City Hall building, including addressing existing building issues.
- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization and tourism – Considered in conjunction with City Green, both projects represent the opportunity to enhance programming and increase visitation to downtown Rome, fostering community pride, and promoting community revitalization.

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy Key Drivers of Economic Growth:

- Promote a business climate – At the root of all communities is a strong municipal building that showcases how the City government interacts with businesses, residents, and stakeholders. For the business community, City Hall is often the front door to the City. The proposed City Hall upgrades and improvements will help the City in promoting the community as a desirable place to invest and grow a business.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Upgrade infrastructure
- Revitalize downtown

#### **Public Support:**

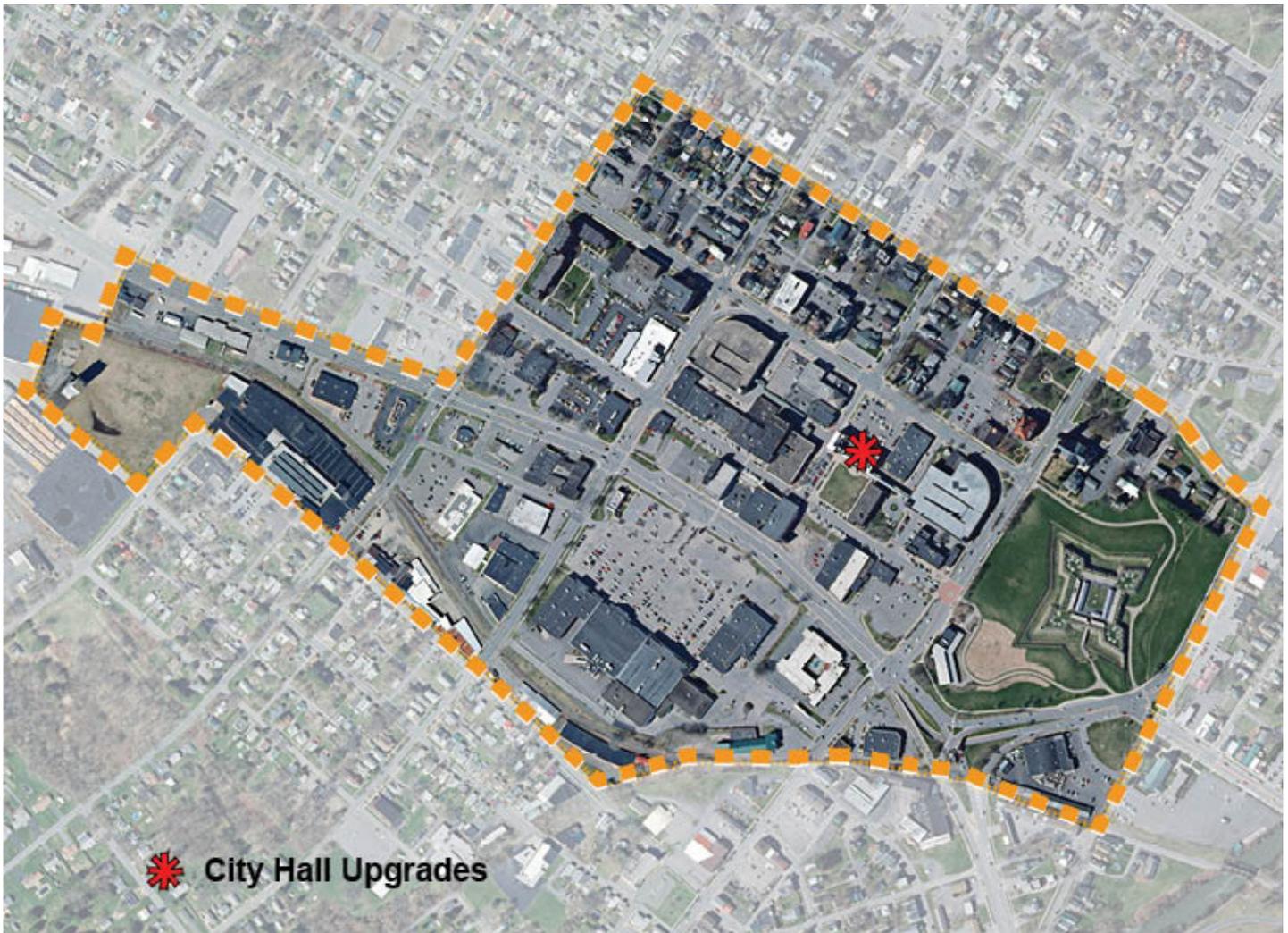
This project has a moderate level of community support but directly complements improvements to the City Green, which is highly supported by the public. The LPC highly supported this project as a priority project. The City has identified this as an important community project due to the failing condition of structural elements at City Hall, the recognition that City Hall is in the heart of downtown and needs to fill a larger community role, and the desire to spearhead sustainable building design practices.

**Jobs Created:**

Approximately 10+ construction jobs may be created as part of this project. It is not expected that any permanent full-time employment jobs would be established. However, additional programming and special events that could be held as part of the City Hall and City Green enhancements could directly result in job creation for businesses, event vendors, and performers.

**Project Location:**

City Hall is located at 198 North Washington Street.

**Project Ownership:**

The City of Rome will retain ownership of City Hall during and after construction of this project.

**Acquisition of Real Property:**

None required.

### Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:

The public will benefit greatly from the addition, as it will provide a place to gather within the community. With the relation to City Green, it will provide a shelter from the weather, a place to rest from activity, and a place to get warm during winter activities. Public restrooms will be available during normal hours and events.

City of Rome government employees that work at City Hall will have a more secure, fully enclosed entrance with secure access to various parts of the facility. Employees and visitors to City Hall will have access to restrooms and enter into a safe, secure, and welcoming environment that seamlessly transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces. Also, the ground floor tenant at the west end of the building will now have fully enclosed interior circulation to the restrooms. Currently their tenant space does not have restrooms so they have to exit the building and re-enter into the City Hall portion.

The project, in conjunction with the City Green project, will promote the business climate by providing programs that will strengthen the area as a destination for visitors and residents, which will generate more pedestrian traffic, providing indirect support to local businesses.

### Future Use of Structure:

The improvements will provide a place to gather within the community, in addition to providing functional improvements associated with day-to-day operations at City Hall. With the relation to the proposed City Green improvements, it will provide a shelter from the weather, a place to rest from activity, and a place to get warm during winter activities. The restrooms will be available to the public during normal hours and events, and small vendors will participate in strengthening the economy. Internally, it will provide greater security and define circulation in the City Hall building.

Today, entry to the City Hall is free flow and unregulated. The proposed design will limit unapproved access into the main building where City employees work.

### Project Budget:

Total	Project Cost:	\$2,880,000
	DRI Funding:	\$1,880,000
	Other Funding:	\$1,000,000
		Secured DASNY funding - \$250,000 and Oneida County funding - \$350,000
		Anticipated City Bond \$400,000

### Addition / Infill Project Cost Breakdown:

• Demolition of curtain wall, excavation for foundations	\$ 100,000
• New restrooms / plumbing	\$ 140,000
• New structure	\$ 150,000
• New curtainwall	\$ 300,000
• New roofs / green roofs	\$ 150,000
• Finishes	\$ 80,000
• Contingency to allow for scope adjustments (approximately 20%)	\$ 180,000
• Contractor fees (management, profit, and overhead – approx. 20%)	\$ 180,000
<b>Total addition / infill project cost:</b>	<b>\$1,280,000</b>

### Building Rehabilitation Cost Breakdown:



### Feasibility and Cost Justification:

The City Hall improvements will provide multiple benefits to the community by providing public amenities that support City Hall users while allowing four seasons of support to the City Green project. The City Hall enhancements will include ADA accessible restrooms, warming areas, and vendor areas.

The addition of a green roof to the building provides cost savings over time and may encourage the implementation of other sustainable practices in and around Rome. Though the installation and maintenance costs of green roofs are higher than those of traditional roofs, the increased longevity, reduced expenditures on storm water management, and enhanced carbon dioxide sequestration capabilities of green roofs more than outweigh these costs over a 50-year period, according to the U.S. General Services Administration. The adoption of such sustainable practices by the City government may also encourage other property owners to implement similar technologies, thereby enhancing sustainability throughout the broader community.

The proposed improvements are intended to support the long-term sustainability and continued occupancy of the building so that, like its predecessor at 207 North James Street, it too can house the municipal government for more than 80 years. Addressing deficiencies now will prevent structural issues from worsening over time, thereby lessening rehabilitation costs and lengthening the life span of the building.

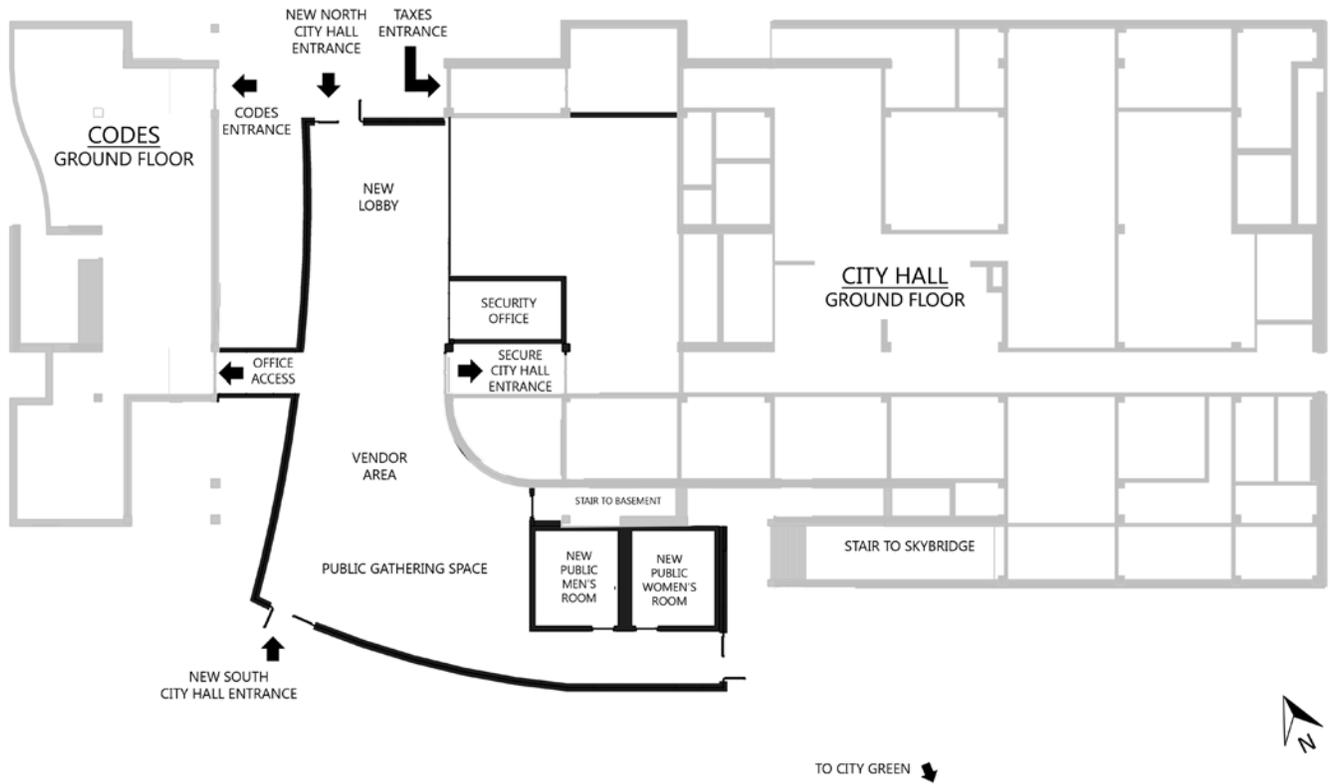
Improving the outward appearance of City Hall will also reflect positively upon Rome, as City Hall is an important face of the community. An attractive and accessible building will welcome residents, visitors, and potential investors to the City, creating a meaningful first impression.

The project budget, which is based on standard construction estimating methods, was prepared by a licensed architect familiar with the proposed design improvements associated with this project.

### Regulatory Requirements:

The proposed project will require local approvals and permits.

### Rendering of Completed Project:



Rome City Hall Ground Floor Plan With New Addition



Rome City Hall Addition View From Griffon Green





*Rome City Hall Concept Model*

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

The City is prepared to move forward with the full project upon receipt of DRI funding. A general timeframe for project advancement is included below:

Refined conceptual design	Summer 2018
Final design and construction documents	Summer / Fall 2018
Permits and approvals	Winter 2018
Construction	Summer 2019

### **Project Reporting:**

The City of Rome will be responsible for project oversight and monitoring of project advancement. The City of Rome will hire an architectural firm to oversee all technical aspects of the design, permitting, approvals, and construction administration.

Metrics used to determine the success of the project may include:

- Visitor satisfaction determined through intercept surveys
- Increased visitation to publicly accessible areas
- Success of green roof in reducing stormwater runoff
- Reduction in heating and cooling bills
- Staff satisfaction determined through intercept surveys

## PROJECT 6

# Liberty James Garage Upgrades

**Project Title:**

Enhance the Liberty James Public Parking Garage

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$2,300,000

DRI Funding: \$1,350,000

**Project Description:**

The Liberty James Garage is the main parking facility for Fort Stanwix National Monument and the primary public parking structure in downtown Rome. This project entails major aesthetic and operational improvements to the existing parking garage owned and operated by the City of Rome. Today, the garage is limited in its capacity to serve the parking needs of downtown residents and visitors as it is regularly closed in the evening and on weekends.

The proposed project includes:

- Rehabilitate the existing enclosed elevated walkway connecting the Fort Stanwix Garage, Rome City Hall, and Rome Mall Apartments.
- Replace storefront glazing, brick repair, and structural reinforcement.
- Install wayfinding signage, improved lighting, updated elevators, and stairwells to improve safety and accessibility.
- Repair concrete decks, ramps, and drainage systems, and improved security camera monitoring in parking areas.
- Install automated ticketing and card access system.
- Reface the facade to make the garage more inviting, tying into the context of the adjacent Fort Stanwix site, Old City Hall, Zion Church, and St. Peters Church.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #3: Tourism:

- Improve linkage among region's tourism assets – The garage serves as an important resource for multiple downtown destinations, including Fort Stanwix National Monument, businesses along West Dominick Street, and City Hall. Enhancements to the garage, particularly façade improvements and ticketing modernization, will significantly improve the City's ability to use and leverage this parking infrastructure.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Key Drivers of Economic Growth: Vibrant Communities:

- Leveraging physical assets, Maintaining infrastructure assets, Investing in critical infrastructure, and Promoting investment in downtown core – Owned by the City of Rome, the parking garage is an existing asset that provides needed downtown parking, provides office space and revenues from rent, and provides revenue from parking. Enhancements will allow the City to better leverage the existing structure, maximizing its physical and financial benefits for the City, residents, and visitors. The benefits will not be recognized by the City alone. Fort Stanwix and businesses will benefit from the opening of the garage on weekends and evenings. Physical improvements to the exterior will improve the aesthetic character of this prominent building that is highly visible within the downtown core. Residents and visitors will also benefit from structural and stabilization improvements and enhanced access and use of the garage.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Upgrade infrastructure
- Revitalize downtown
- Make Rome a walkable city

**Public Support:**

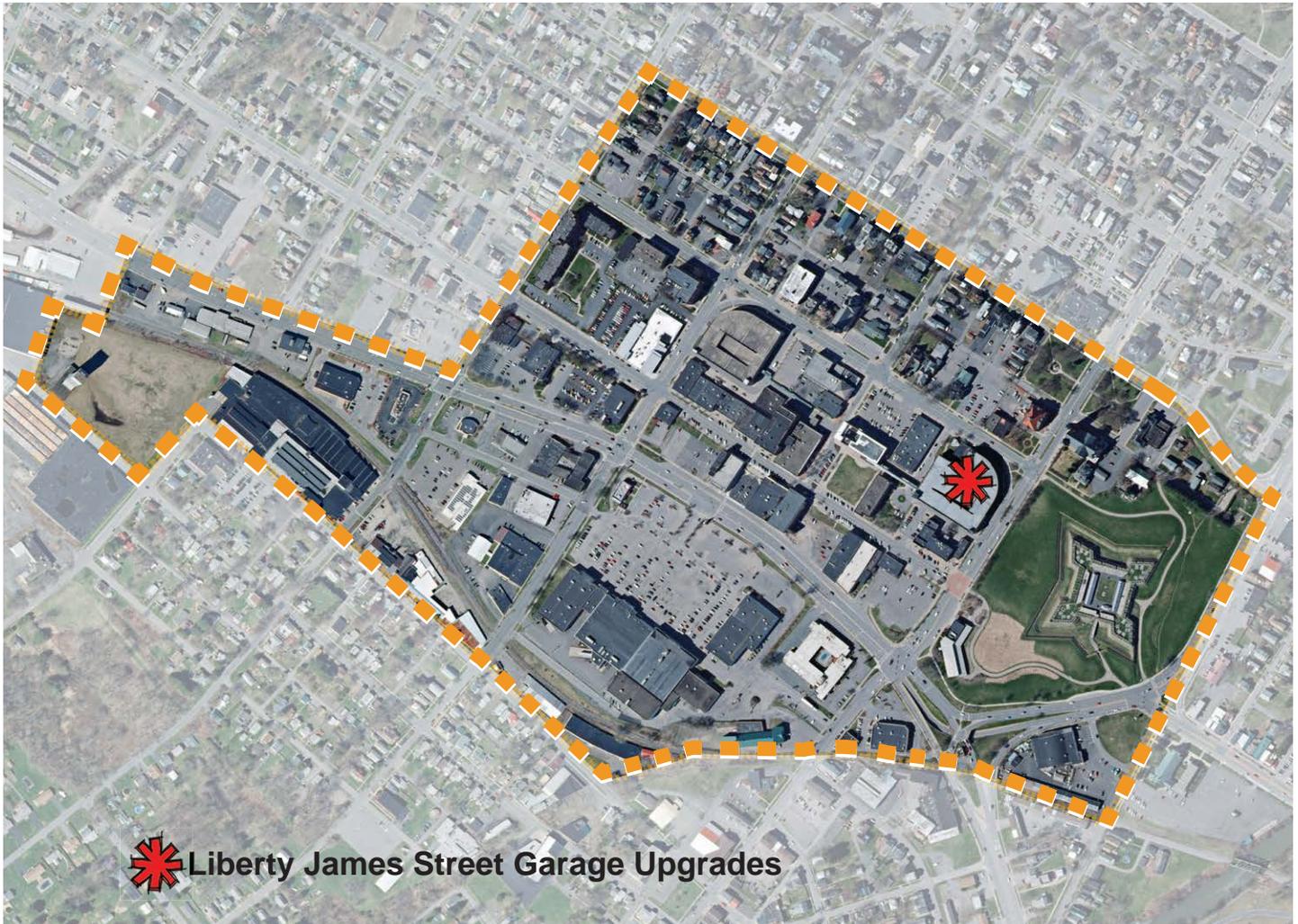
The DRI prioritization found that the project has moderate support based on prioritization completed by the LPC and community at large. The project is fully supported by Fort Stanwix and the City of Rome.

**Jobs Created:**

With the exception of construction jobs (+/- 15), no additional jobs are anticipated in conjunction with this project.

**Project Location:**

The parking garage is located at 117 North James Street.

**Ownership of Property:**

The garage is owned and maintained by the City of Rome.

### Acquisition of Real Property:

The garage is owned, operated, and maintained by the City of Rome. No property acquisition is associated with this project.

### Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:

Enhancing the Liberty James Garage is important for both functionality and aesthetic quality, and would have multiple benefits, including:

- Allowing for 24/7 access. At present, the Liberty James Garage is only open during daytime hours. Modernizing the garage's facilities to include automated access and pay stations would allow the garage to operate during the evenings and on weekends. Additional operating hours would be particularly convenient during evening events at the Capitol Theatre and for weekend visitors to Fort Stanwix.
- Providing additional parking availability to supplement the demolition of the Liberty George Garage. If the Liberty George garage is demolished as part of the DRI, the City will see a reduction in its supply of parking spaces. Likewise, redevelopment at that site may create spaces that are reserved only for those who patronize or live at the new development. Increasing the Liberty James Garage's hours of operations would help mitigate the impacts of this reduction in spaces.
- Improving aesthetic appearance. The Liberty James Parking Garage is prominently situated on a high-traffic corner across from one of Rome's most popular attractions, meaning that the garage is often seen by residents and visitors. Like many parking garages, the Liberty James garage is rather stark in its appearance. Enhancing the garage's aesthetic appearance would make it more inviting and will give visitors a more positive first impression of Rome.
- Improving accessibility. This project also includes enhancements to the garage's elevators, stairwells, and elevated walkway that would ensure safety and accessibility for all ages and abilities – an important factor since many users are seniors or children.

### Future Use of Structure:

The structure will continue to function primarily as a public parking garage with some commercial office space located at ground level.

### Project Budget:

Total Project Cost:	\$2,100,000
DRI Funding:	\$1,350,000
Preliminary Engineering	\$ 35,000
Construction Engineering	\$ 65,000
Lighting, Elevators, and Stairwell improvements	\$ 650,000
Security Upgrades	\$ 25,000
Wayfinding Signage	\$ 41,000
Façade Treatments	\$ 484,000

<b>Garage Improvements</b>	<b>\$1,300,000</b>
<b>Walkway Rehabilitation</b>	<b>\$ 800,000</b>

The City of Rome will submit an application to the Federal Land Access Program for a grant to improve state and local transportation facilities used to provide access to and through federal lands for visitors, recreationalists, and resource users. This application will be used to conduct preliminary engineering, design, and construction of improvements to the garage, including design and fabrication of wayfinding signage, improved lighting, updated elevators and stairwells, and improved security measures.

Exact timing of the next round of funding is undetermined. The City is prepared to allocate municipal funding to ensure completion of this project if federal funding is not available in a timely manner.

The balance of the funding is requested through the DRI, and will be used to provide for design and construction of structural and façade repairs and upgrades, and to replace the access-controlled ticketing system within the garage.

### **Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The cost estimate for this project was prepared by a NYS registered landscape architect and is based on standard project estimating, as well as coordination with manufacturers for new equipment.

Potential economic impacts of this project within the downtown include:

- Providing additional amenities for downtown residents. Several developments proposed for downtown include residential components, indicating that Rome may soon see an influx in residents living in urban-style apartments. 24/7 access at the Liberty James Garage would enable residents to park nearby, without having to worry about moving their cars to comply with on-street parking regulations.
- Increasing revenue. Extending the garage's hours of operation will mostly result in increased revenue for the City, as the facility will be used more frequently. Likewise, residential parking at the Liberty James Garage would create an opportunity for the City to implement a residential parking permit program – a monthly or yearly fee-based program that allows residents to park in the garage. This program, in addition to providing an amenity to residents, would also create an additional revenue stream for the City.
- Encouraging business patronization. The availability of parking figures prominently into the decision about whether to patronize a certain business. If off-street parking is located too far from the business or if on-street parking is already full, patrons may be deterred from visiting the business altogether. The proximate location of the Liberty James Garage provides nearby parking for most businesses within the downtown core and 24/7 access would provide additional parking options for businesses – like restaurants, the Capitol Theatre, and Fort Stanwix – that have evening and weekend hours.

**Regulatory Requirements:**

Implementation of this project will require local building approvals for new façade improvements. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

**Rendering of Completed Project:**

*Liberty James Garage Existing*



*Liberty James Garage Updates*



*Liberty James Garage Updates*

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

The City of Rome is prepared to initiate work immediately upon award of DRI funding. As part of the match is anticipating federal funding (exact timing unknown), the City is prepared to put City funding towards the project to ensure project advancement in a timely fashion.

Final design	Summer 2018
Approvals and permits	Summer / Fall 2018
Construction documents	Fall / Winter 2018
Bidding	Winter 2019
Construction	Spring / Summer 2019

### **Project Reporting:**

The City of Rome will be responsible for project monitoring during and after implementation, assessing progress, performance, and impact on downtown revitalization.

Potential metrics that may be used to judge overall project success include:

- Increase in number of users to the garage
- Increase in revenue
- Visitor satisfaction (as determined through intercept surveys)
- Increase in business sales and visitorship to local business and destinations

## PROJECT 7

# Erie Boulevard Streetscape

**Project Title:**

Implement Streetscape Enhancements on Erie Boulevard from James Street to Madison Street, Madison Street from Erie Boulevard to Ridge Street, and on Ridge Street from Madison Street west to Project Blue Crab Site.

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$1,200,000

DRI Funding: \$1,200,000

**Project Description:**

This project includes the design and implementation of streetscape and pedestrian improvements on Erie Boulevard from James Street to Madison Street, Madison Street from Erie Boulevard to Ridge Street, and Ridge Street from Madison Street west to the Blue Crab site. The project includes intersection enhancements at the Erie Boulevard / George Street intersection. In its current configuration and design, the intersection of Erie Boulevard / George Street presents barrier and safety hazards for pedestrians. Currently the intersection experiences a high traffic accident rate per NYSDOT. Improvements to the Erie Boulevard / George Street intersection would include the installation of enhanced crosswalk treatments, curb replacement where needed, and new ornamental lighting and planters on each corner of the intersection. Improvements on Erie Boulevard, Madison Street, and Ridge Street include enhanced crosswalk treatments, sidewalk replacement where needed, and pedestrian lighting.

The proposed improvements would slow traffic, allow for safer pedestrian connections, strengthen the connection between the north and south sides of Erie Boulevard, and encourage alternative modes of transportation helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project will improve connections for residents and visitors to the City of Rome, and provide better connectivity for the DRI area overall. The project includes detailed design and implementation of the enhancements.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1: Enhance Regional Concentrations by:

- Improving linkages among region's tourism assets. Intersection enhancements - consisting of both safety and aesthetic improvements - at the Erie Boulevard / George Street intersection create the potential to strengthen the connections between destinations for all modes of transportation. This is a widely used intersection for vehicles and pedestrians today, connecting downtown north of Erie Boulevard (Capitol Theatre, City Hall, Fort Stanwix, the Reach Center, etc.) to the waterfront and shopping destinations on the south side of Erie Boulevard. Streetscape enhancements on Erie Boulevard, Madison Street and Ridge Street are in alignment with existing local plans including the

Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area study. The improvements will help to strengthen the pedestrian realm connecting downtown to Project Blue Crab at the Rome Cable site.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC #4: Increasing Spatial Efficiencies by:

- Minimizing transportation costs - This project will encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation including walking, and minimize the need for vehicle use. Specific focus is on improving connections from employers at the Rome Cable site, including Project Blue Crab and the downtown core.
- Leveraging physical assets - Streetscape enhancements will transform the public realm to a more humanized scale. Physical assets will be enhanced by improving the character, safety, and usability of the Erie Boulevard / George Street intersection that is noted by DOT as having a high level of traffic accidents. The streetscape enhancements will also provide a physical connection to Project Blue Crab.
- Promoting sustainability - This project promotes sustainability by encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the city of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

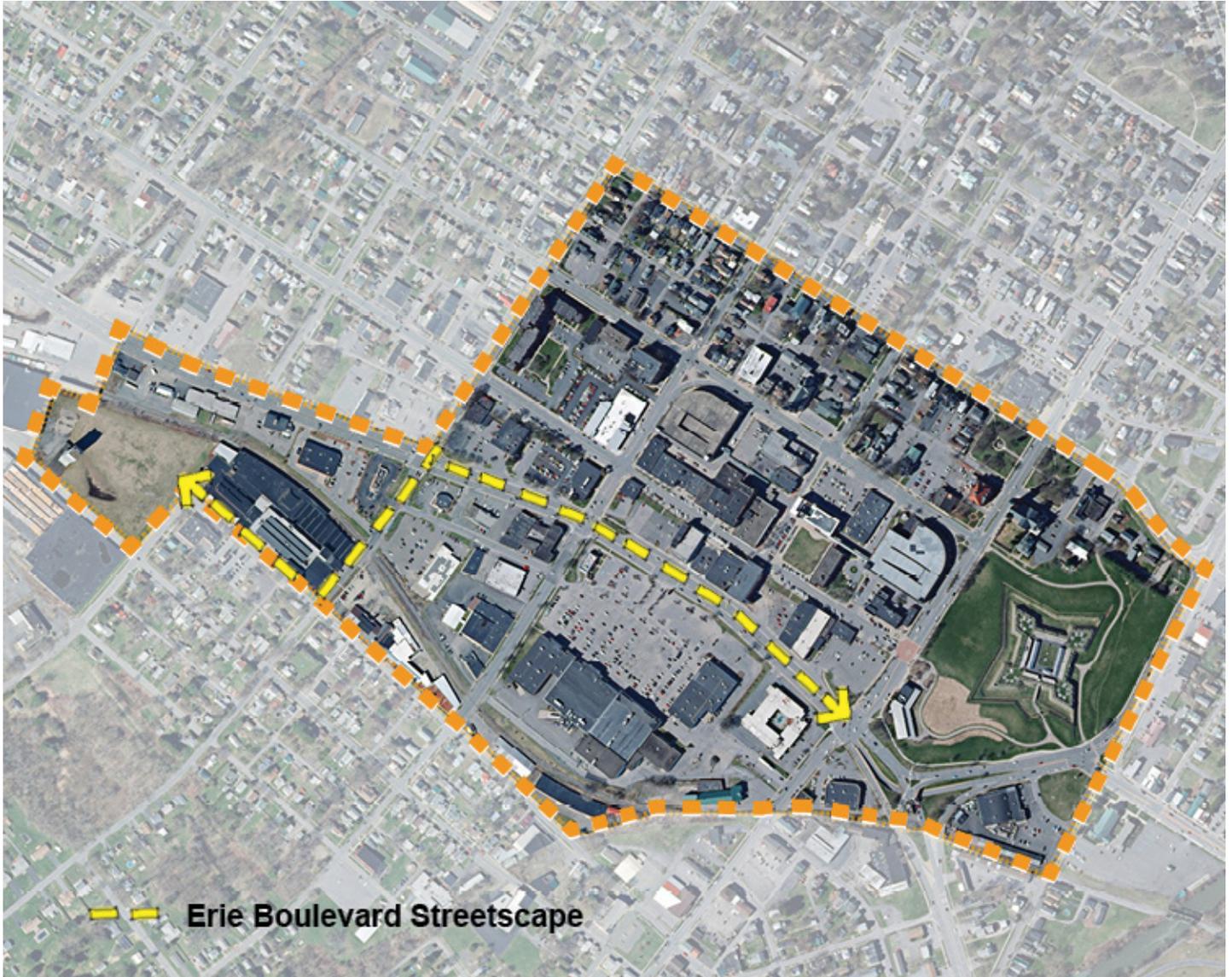
- Upgrade infrastructure. This project will have a transformative impact by making physical and aesthetic improvements to Erie Boulevard from James Street to Madison Street, Madison Street from Erie Boulevard to Ridge Street, and on Ridge Street from Madison Street west to Project Blue Crab Site. These improvements will create an environment that is more comfortable and safer for pedestrians. Improvements will include enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, pavement replacement where needed, and the inclusion of pedestrian-level lighting and amenities including benches and planters.
- Revitalize downtown. Creating an environment that is safe and welcoming for pedestrians will increase activity on the street, which can have a direct impact on the local economy through increased visitorship and spending. The project will not only improve the pedestrian connectivity in the DRI area, but will also create synergies between other DRI projects including Project Blue Crab at the Rome Cable site.

### **Public Support:**

During the Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area study and the DRI community engagement process, streetscape enhancements and safe pedestrian crossings on Erie Boulevard were identified as a priority, particularly when considered in tandem with the wayfinding and public art projects.

**Project Location:**

Erie Boulevard from James Street to Madison Street, Madison Street from Erie Boulevard to Ridge Street, and Ridge Street from Madison Street west to Project Blue Crab Site.

**Project Ownership:**

The City of Rome currently maintains Erie Boulevard, Madison Street, and Ridge Street. Erie Boulevard is a state roadway owned by the NYSDOT.

**Project Partners:**

The NYS Department of Transportation would be a primary partner in reviewing and approving design plans.

## Capacity:

The City of Rome currently maintains Erie Boulevard, Madison Street and Ridge Street. Additional maintenance required as a result of this funding would be the responsibility of the City of Rome.

The City has a successful track record of overseeing streetscape enhancement projects funded by various NYS grant resources, from project inception to long-term maintenance and oversight, including state-funded projects along East and West Dominick Streets.

## Project Budget:

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price (2015 \$)	Cost
<b>Erie Boulevard , Madison Street, and Ridge Street Streetscape Enhancements</b>				
Concrete Sidewalk Replacement (Including excavation and subbase)	SY	1094	\$125	\$136,750
Decorative Concrete Sidewalk Replacement (Including excavation and subbase)	SY	1094	\$135	\$147,690
Curb Replacement (Including excavation and subbase) - Assume 50% Replacement	LF	1000	\$60	\$60,000
Decorative Crosswalk (Including milling and resurfacing) - 10' wide	SF	4020	\$35	\$140,700
Accessible Curb Ramp	EA	6	\$3,200	\$19,200
Pedestrian Light Poles (Including foundation conduit excavation and backfill, conduit and cable) - Assume 75' o.c. spacing, south side of road	EA	20	\$10,000	\$200,000
Street Lighting with Roadway and Pedestrian Luminaires (Including foundation conduit excavation and backfill, conduit and cable) - Assume 4 at Erie/George Intersection	EA	4	\$15,000	\$60,000
Ornamental Steel Bench	EA	7	\$3,500	\$24,500
Trash Receptacle	EA	7	\$2,200	\$15,400
Tree Planting	EA	25	\$600	\$15,000
Raised Planter (Including planting soil and plant material)	EA	15	\$2,500	\$37,500
			<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$856,740</b>
Basic Work Zone traffic Control (5%)	LS	1		\$42,837
Mobilization (4%)	LS	1		\$34,270
Survey Operations (2%)	LS	1		\$17,135
Erosion and Sediment Control (0.5%)	LS	1		\$4,284
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$955,265</b>
			<b>Design (15%)</b>	<b>\$143,290</b>
			<b>Construction Contingency (15%)</b>	<b>\$143,290</b>
			<b>GRAND TOTAL COST</b>	<b>\$1,241,845</b>
			<b>SAY</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>

## Funding Sources:

No other funding sources are currently identified for this project. This project may be eligible for consideration from other state or federal funding resources.

## Feasibility and Cost Justification:

The Erie Boulevard streetscape enhancements project was identified because of the specific benefits associated with the project. These benefits include:

- Stronger connection between Rome Cable Business Park (Project Blue Crab) and the downtown core (shopping, culture, and entertainment)
- Improved pedestrian safety
- Improved mobility and ability to access nearby businesses and cultural amenities
- Reduced number and impacts of traffic incidents
- Savings in public health costs

### Regulatory Requirements:

DOT acceptance of design and approvals would be required to implement this project. City permits for construction would be required. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

### Rendering of Completed Project:



Existing View of Erie Boulevard / George Street Intersection Looking West (Image from Google Streetview)



Proposed View of Erie Boulevard / George Street Intersection Looking West



Existing View of Erie Boulevard Looking West (Image from Google Streetview)



Proposed View of Erie Boulevard Looking West

### Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:

The timeframe for preliminary and final design, including public engagement, is approximately 10 months and can commence upon the award of DRI grant funding.

Concept design and public engagement	Summer 2018
Engineering design	Summer / Fall 2018
Review and approvals	Fall / Winter 2018
Final design	Winter 2019
Bidding	Winter / Spring 2019
Construction	Fall 2019

### Project Reporting:

The City of Rome will hire a project engineer and landscape architect to oversee the implementation and construction of the streetscape enhancements. The city will continue to monitor the economic impacts and perceived benefits of the project after construction completion.

Potential metrics include:

- Increased number of pedestrians using Erie Boulevard
- Reduced number of traffic crashes
- Reduced number of pedestrian incidents
- User feedback
- Increased number of downtown businesses

## PROJECT 8

# Business Retention and Public Art Fund

**Project Title:**

Create an Adaptive Reuse, Business Assistance, and Public Art Fund for Downtown Rome

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$600,000

DRI Funding: \$600,000

**Project Description:****Business Assistance:**

A number of downtown properties were identified as vacant or partially vacant and in need of investment to allow an appropriate adaptive reuse. The \$500,000 requested for the Business Retention Fund will be used to leverage private investment in such buildings to allow for their adaptive reuse with a preference for mixed-use, historic preservation, and other goals.

Improvements covered under the fund would include:

- Capital improvements, including purchase of machinery and equipment
- Interior and exterior renovations, including façade improvements

The Business Retention Fund will cover no more than 75% of the cost for each project with at least 25% of the project cost made up of private contributions. Total project cost for each project will vary based on individual projects and private equity contributions. Up to 10% of the Business Retention Fund will be used for administration. Site acquisition costs are not eligible under this fund.

The City will form a Program Committee to oversee the funds and will use an existing City staff member as the program Coordinator. The Coordinator will create final guidelines (based on the principles listed below) that will be formally approved by the Committee. The Coordinator will then solicit applications from downtown property owners that meet the basic criteria of the program. Public information meetings will be held within the community where the Coordinator will be available to answer questions and review draft applications as appropriate.

Final guidelines will be drafted should this request be awarded, but will include the following criteria:

- Location
- Historic preservation
- Mixed-use
- Private match
- Job creation

### **Public Art:**

This project would establish a dedicated source of funding to solicit and incorporate public artwork in the Downtown Arts District, which is defined as any site or property within the DRI area. Funded projects could include, but are not limited to, the following media:

- Paintings and murals
- Landscapes and earthworks
- Sculptures, statues, and monuments
- Photographs, drawings, and collages

Funds would be distributed in a competitive manner, and proposals for funding would be solicited through one of the following methods:

- Open Request for Proposals. Artists submit proposals in response to a public advertisement. After reviewing the responses, interview invitations will be extended to a small number of the artists, and one will be selected for the award.
- Limited Invitational/Curated Pool of Artists. A select group of artists submits proposals in response to a direct invitation. After reviewing the responses, interview invitations will be extended to a small number of the artists, and one will be selected for the award.
- Blind Request for Proposals. Artists submit proposals in response to a public advertisement. Submissions will not contain any artist information; each submission will have an identification number for evaluation purposes. After reviewing the responses, interview invitations will be extended to a small number of the artists, and one will be selected for the award.
- Direct Invitation. A single artist submits a proposal in response to an invitation. The artist will present his or her work at an in-person interview.

In addition to the Public Art Fund, financial support for grants could be solicited from private donors or from New York State's Council on the Arts, which supports individual artists as well as local arts councils. Maintaining the fund could prove challenging, though diligent fundraising on the part of the Public Arts Fund would ensure that the Fund can continue to provide much-needed support for the arts over the long term.

### **Strategies:**

This project addresses items identified as part of the DRI Strategy, specifically:

- Improvements to the downtown built environment
- Increasing housing options
- Increasing the downtown population
- Increasing spending at downtown businesses

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1: Enhancing Regional Concentrations:

- Improve linkage among region's tourism assets – The fund will be a transformative vehicle to promote and implement various public art initiatives within the downtown core. A strong public art program

will draw in regional visitors while providing a cohesive streetscape connection between the other downtown amenities. In conjunction with other arts and cultural draws, such as the Capitol Theatre and Fort Stanwix, public art placed in key locations throughout the downtown core contributes directly to placemaking and establishing the downtown as an Arts District. Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between public art installations and increased visitation, resulting in direct positive impacts to local businesses. Public art installations contribute to a welcoming, unique, and attractive public realm. The REACH Center project will provide a central base for the arts projects for the projects that are funded by the Public Art Fund. This will create a natural synergy within the arts community that will further promote art in the DRI area.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increasing Spatial Efficiencies, specifically:

- Leveraging physical assets – This project will assist small business owners in making key investments in their properties, including interior and exterior renovations or improvements and capital purchases, such as machinery.
- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization – This project will leverage private investment to advance the reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings in downtown Rome.
- Leveraging physical assets - This project will align existing organizations, specifically the Rome Art and Community Center (REACH) and the Capitol Theater. In addition, this project directly ties to streetscape enhancements considered through the DRI.
- Maintaining infrastructure assets – A strong public art presence is made up of many components and involves projects as diverse as the people creating them. Public Art can involve street amenities, signs and information, landmarks, symbols, maps, environmental enhancements and, more recently, electronic media. Utilizing art to unify infrastructure creates a synergy by bolstering the other infrastructure programs.
- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization - Increased frequency of public art would be catalytic in nature, helping to establish downtown Rome as a regional hub for arts and culture. In addition to improving the public realm and engaging community members, public art also attracts investment and spurs economic development. Arts and cultural tourists, for example, spend more and stay longer than other tourists. With existing cultural resources such as the Capitol Theatre and the REACH Center, the community already has a strong foundation in the arts, which is further strengthened by the support and patronization of locals and regional visitors.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome 2017 Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Filling vacant buildings - The Business Fund could be used in conjunction with other investments to repopulate existing vacant buildings.
- Building reuse - The Business Fund could be used in conjunction with other investments to rehabilitate and remodel existing buildings.
- Small business development - The Business Fund could be used in conjunction with other investments to foster development of small businesses in downtown Rome.
- Upgrade infrastructure – The Public Arts Fund could be utilized in conjunction with other streetscape improvement initiatives to develop an art competition to create street amenities.
- Revitalize downtown – The fund will have a transformative impact, by creating a unique and marketable brand for the City and enabling it to become a hub for regional arts and cultural activities.
- Make Rome a walkable city – Arts and cultural displays in the public realm promote pedestrians to stay longer and spend more money. A strong public arts fund will bolster the existing downtown public amenities further creating an inviting pedestrian experience.
- Promote Rome’s downtown as an arts hub – This fund will promote the introduction of art displays in the public realm. Increased frequency of public art will help to establish downtown Rome as a regional hub for arts and culture.
- Support arts programming, education, and public art – This fund will promote the introduction of art displays in the public realm. This project is in direct alignment with other arts and cultural projects in the DRI, specifically the Rome Art and Community Center and the Capitol Theater.

### **Public Support:**

As indicated by engagement activities to date through the DRI process, the public has identified the adaptive reuse of downtown properties as a high priority. The Community Needs Assessment determined that the public has a high level of support of “Fill Vacant Buildings & Housing” for the City of Rome to address. Additionally, “Commercial Building Reuse” is highly supported as the number one priority for downtown Rome among the public and “Address Vacant and Abandoned Housing” was also highly supported. The DRI prioritization also found that the public, students, and the Local Planning Committee highly supported the Arts Fund. Public art has been a focal point of downtown revitalization for over a decade.

## Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:

### Business Assistance:

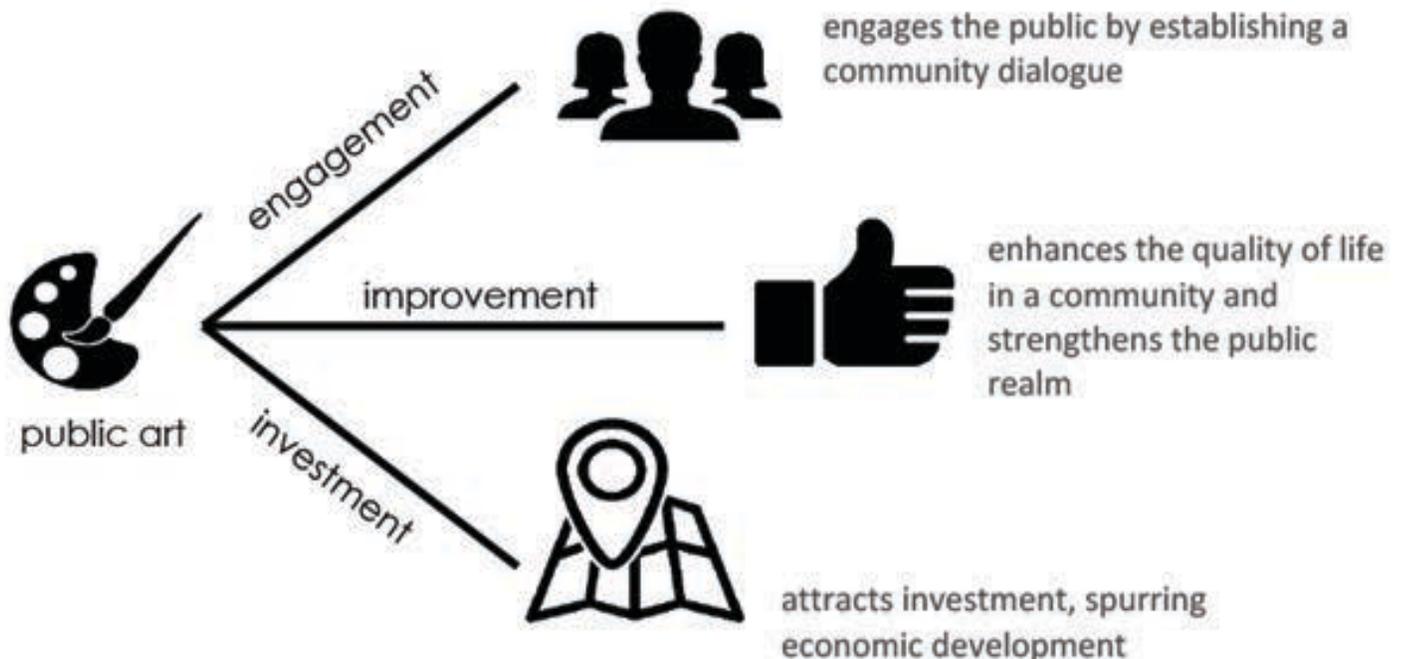
The anticipated benefits of revitalization will be dependent on the exact nature of the adaptive reuse projects ultimately selected but will likely include new jobs (both from the construction phase and jobs in new commercial spaces), increase in downtown residents, increase in tax revenues, and downtown spending.

Vacant and/or underutilized buildings contribute little economic benefit to the community. Vacant buildings in deteriorating condition are assessed at lower values than occupied buildings (thus limiting tax revenue potential). Furthermore, vacant storefronts do not contain businesses, provide jobs, generates taxes, or generate income to the City and property owners through rent and fees.

Renovation, restoration, and reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings will result in an overall net benefit to the community through a net increase in property tax revenues, rental income, customer spending, residential occupants, and increased spending by new residents. The specific economic benefit of individual projects funded through the Business Retention Fund will vary based on a variety of factors, including the type and size of the project. The number of jobs created, total tax revenue, and other financial benefits of investments through the Business Retention Fund will be identified on an individual project basis.

### Public Art:

Representative revitalization benefits associated with public art are summarized below:



- **Engagement:** By including the public in the proposal review and/or installation process, the Public Art Fund would encourage residents to be involved in and committed to the revitalization of their community. Encouraging the public to enter open competitions or provide feedback on submitted designs would create a sense of community ownership and pride over public art projects. Likewise, allowing residents to participate in the installation process (ex: painting murals, planting flowers) can make public art into a community-building event.
- **Improvement:** Public art can be effective in activating streetscapes, creating visual interest, and enhancing building aesthetic. Public art is also widely recognized as a strong component of place-making. For instance, art that has a consistent theme can help unify the area by reflecting and promoting its identity. Art in public places also provides psychological and physiological benefits (ex: stress reduction, crime prevention) to citizens and visitors, thus improving overall quality of life. An effective Public Art Fund would also provide synergy with other DRI initiatives as public art can be infused with other projects, including private sector initiatives, public realm projects, and public streetscape and wayfinding projects.
- **Investment:** Research has shown that the arts foster economic development and improve the local business climate by increasing programming and pedestrian traffic. The Urban Land Institute supports this concept: "There is growing evidence that thoughtful investment in arts initiatives can generate significant economic benefits [for small cities]."

The Public Art Fund would also be an important component of the tourism market as public art is integral to creating a unique visitor experience. In combination with the strong foundation provided by cultural resources like the Capitol Theatre and the REACH Center, the Public Art Fund would help establish downtown Rome as a regional hub for arts and culture. Tourists who seek out arts and cultural performances often stay longer and spend more on average than other recreational visitors. Out-of-county tourists often spend twice as much as locals when attending arts events, thereby making public art a viable method to increase the City of Rome's share of the regional tourism market.

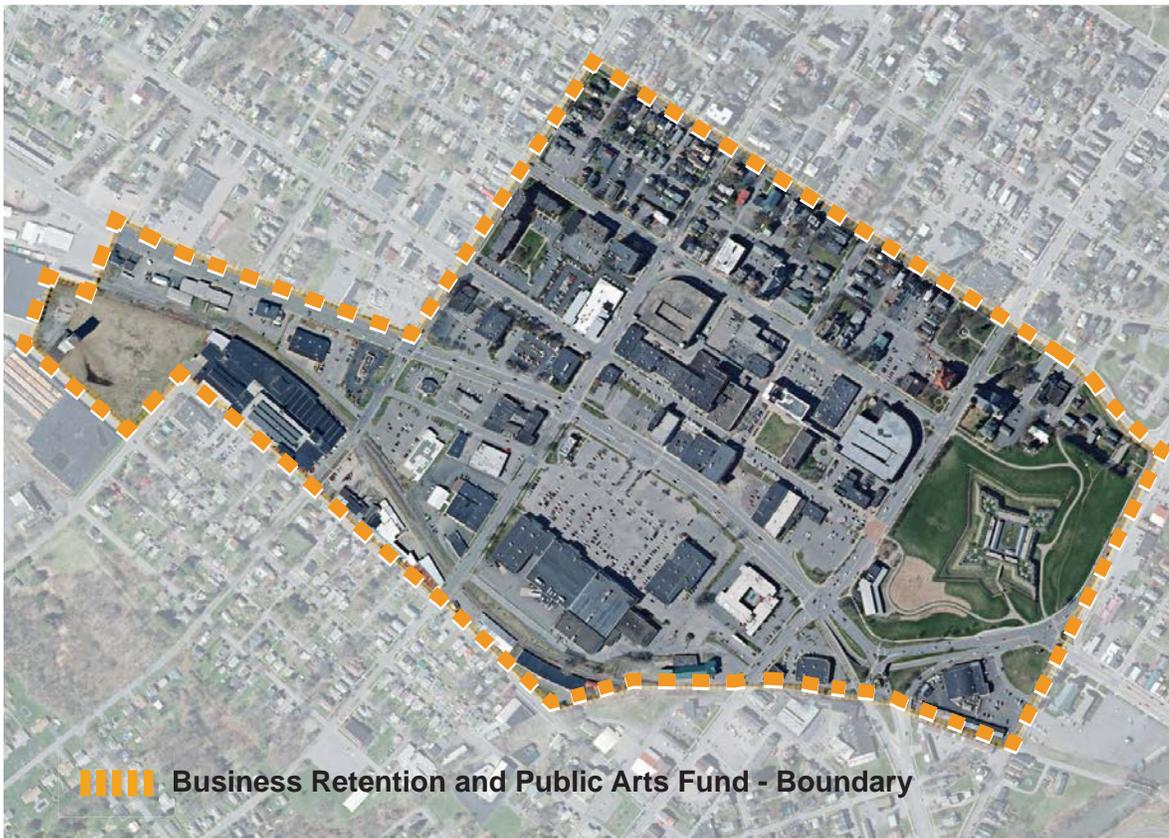
Public art has also been shown to increase property values, as evidenced by Rochester's Neighborhood of the Arts, where the public art "ARTWalk" project contributed to increased housing values.

Change in Housing Prices			
	Median Sale Price		
	2000-2002*	2004-2006*	Percent Increase
<u>ARTWalk 1 Project Area</u>			
Atlantic Ave. - University Ave.	\$69,450	\$112,000	<b>61%</b>
<u>Surrounding Neighborhoods</u>			
Park Avenue	\$145,000	\$186,500	29%
Browncroft	\$92,000	\$111,750	21%
East Avenue	\$176,000	\$178,000	1%
Highland	\$110,000	\$139,000	26%

\* Data taken from the City of Rochester Bureau of Assessment, Estimated Median House Sale Prices by Neighborhood for One, Two, and Three Family Houses.

### Project Location:

The Business Retention and Public Art Fund will be distributed within the DRI area.



### Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:

Because of the City's long history of administering adaptive reuse programs and the fact that the City has already identified a number of property owners willing to participate, we believe the business retention fund request has a very high degree of readiness and can be implemented immediately upon award.

Funds will be dispersed on a rolling basis as applications are received and funds are awarded and dispersed. Completion of Public Art Fund projects will occur when all funds have been dispersed.

Given the existing capacity within the City of Rome and strong support from established arts organizations within the community, the City could begin implementation of the Public Arts Fund upon receipt of the DRI funding award.

### Project Budget:

Business Retention Fund:	\$500,000
Public Arts Fund:	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>

### **Organizational Structure/Responsible Parties:**

The City of Rome will serve as program administrator and will receive applications from interested property owners. The City has a long and successful history of administering and delivering grants, including planning and capital projects that have resulted in true transformation of the community, including managing over 80 state and federal grant projects over the past 10 years. As with previous grants (NYS Main Street, CDBG, etc.), the City will establish a Program Committee that will review applications and determine awards. The City's Program Coordinator will distribute applications, work with applicants and provide documentation to the Committee for its use. The Program Coordinator will also process payment requests on a reimbursement basis for the projects awarded.

The partners on this project will be the property owners in downtown Rome. Currently, the City of Rome has identified the following potential applicants based on outreach and discussion with property owners:

- Garys Music
- Boys From Italy
- Brendas Natural Foods
- Capitol Mall
- Rome Hospital Building
- Brosters Coffee
- Capitol Commons
- Local Artists

### **Project Reporting:**

The City will monitor the following metrics during and after implementation of the Adaptive Reuse, Public Art and Business Assistance Fund:

- Amount of Business Retention and Public Art Fund used to date
- Amount of private-sector investment leveraged
- Number of buildings rehabilitated through the Business Retention and Public Art Fund
- Number of art projects implemented through the fund
- Number of jobs created as a result of this fund
- Number of new businesses attracted to downtown utilizing this funding
- Number of ground floor spaces renovated through the fund that are leased by businesses within one year of obtaining a certificate of occupancy

## PROJECT 9

# City Hall Green Space

**Project Title:**

Enhance the City Hall Green Space into a Four-Season Destination

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$450,000

DRI Funding: \$400,000

**Project Description:**

This project includes improvements to the existing City Hall green space to enhance four-season programming and special events in the heart of downtown.

Highlights of the projects include:

- Creating a formalized concert stage for spring and summer events
- Installation of a winter ice skating rink
- Flexible programming areas for special events and themed activities
- Temporary vendor support such as food trucks as deemed necessary

The improvements and enhancements to the green space are intended to provide community-related seasonal activities and supporting infrastructure. Some supporting structures and apparatus may be permanent or semi-permanent such as the ice skating rink, stage, lighting, festival tents and their accessories. As a long-term programming element the ice skating rink will be set up and torn down each season for storage and has a life cycle expectancy of twenty years or more.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1: Enhance Regional Concentrations by:

- Enhancing regional tourism offerings - Public parks and recreational offerings have the capacity to spur tourism both at the local and regional levels. In downtown Buffalo, for instance, the creation of a four-season recreation and entertainment destination on a portion of the former Erie Canal has served to effectively revitalize both the waterfront and the downtown area. Transforming the City Green into a comparable destination could reap similar benefits, attracting visitors to downtown Rome, and further strengthening the region's unique concentration of recreational offerings (i.e., Mohawk River Trail, Fort Stanwix, Erie Canal, etc.).

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC #4: Increasing Spatial Efficiencies by:

- Optimizing the use of urban green space - Urban green space is a key physical asset and natural resource that should be leveraged as often as possible. Many cities would be overjoyed to have such a large green space so near to their municipal center and commercial corridor. As such, the potential of the City Green should not be overlooked, and the space itself is deserving of much more than occasional programming. Establishing a regular schedule of year-round, four-season recreational programming (such as a summer concert series and a winter ice skating rink) would activate the City Green, increase its utilization, and prevent it from lying dormant.
- Revitalizing Rome's urban center - Creating a centrally located, public amenity as unique as a four-season City Green, with supporting amenities in the City Hall project, would attract people to downtown, would encourage patronization of nearby businesses on the West Dominick Street corridor, and would make downtown a more attractive place to live. Urban parks have also been shown to reduce crime, encourage exercise, and contribute to overall quality of life – which is an important consideration for potential residents and for employers who are considering relocating to Rome. Proximity to green space is particularly important for urban dwellers, suggesting that enhancements to the City Green could act as a significant amenity in the retail market and may also strengthen the feasibility of the multiple, proposed mixed-use residential developments on the opposite side of West Dominick Street.
- Promoting reinvestment in downtown - Public investment in downtown will signal to property owners that progress is happening in Rome and may encourage them to invest in their own properties. Such a synergistic effect could also be seen among various DRI projects. The City Green would benefit from and contribute to the effects of other projects – including aesthetic enhancements to City Hall, Capitol Theatre upgrades, streetscape improvements, and multiple infill developments on West Dominick Street – which, when considered together, would work collaboratively to transform West Dominick Street into a popular commercial and entertainment corridor.
- Facilitating placemaking - As Canalside has done for Buffalo, the transformation of City Green could strengthen and reinforce downtown's sense of place and could instill pride in the community. This project also has the potential to enhance downtown's existing concentration of recreational offerings, turning Rome into a hub for recreation and entertainment. Turning the City Green into a viable venue for art and music festivals would also reinforce Rome's status as a regional hub for arts and culture. With supporting DRI projects like City Hall and CENTRO on the same property providing transportation and ADA accessible restrooms and vendor areas, the City Green project will enhance and engage the community. Likewise, because this project is adjacent to City Hall, its implementation would positively impact visitors' first impression of Rome, as City Hall is an important face of the community. It is quite possible that, after this project has been implemented, people will associate Rome not only with the Capitol Theatre or Fort Stanwix, but also with the City Green.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

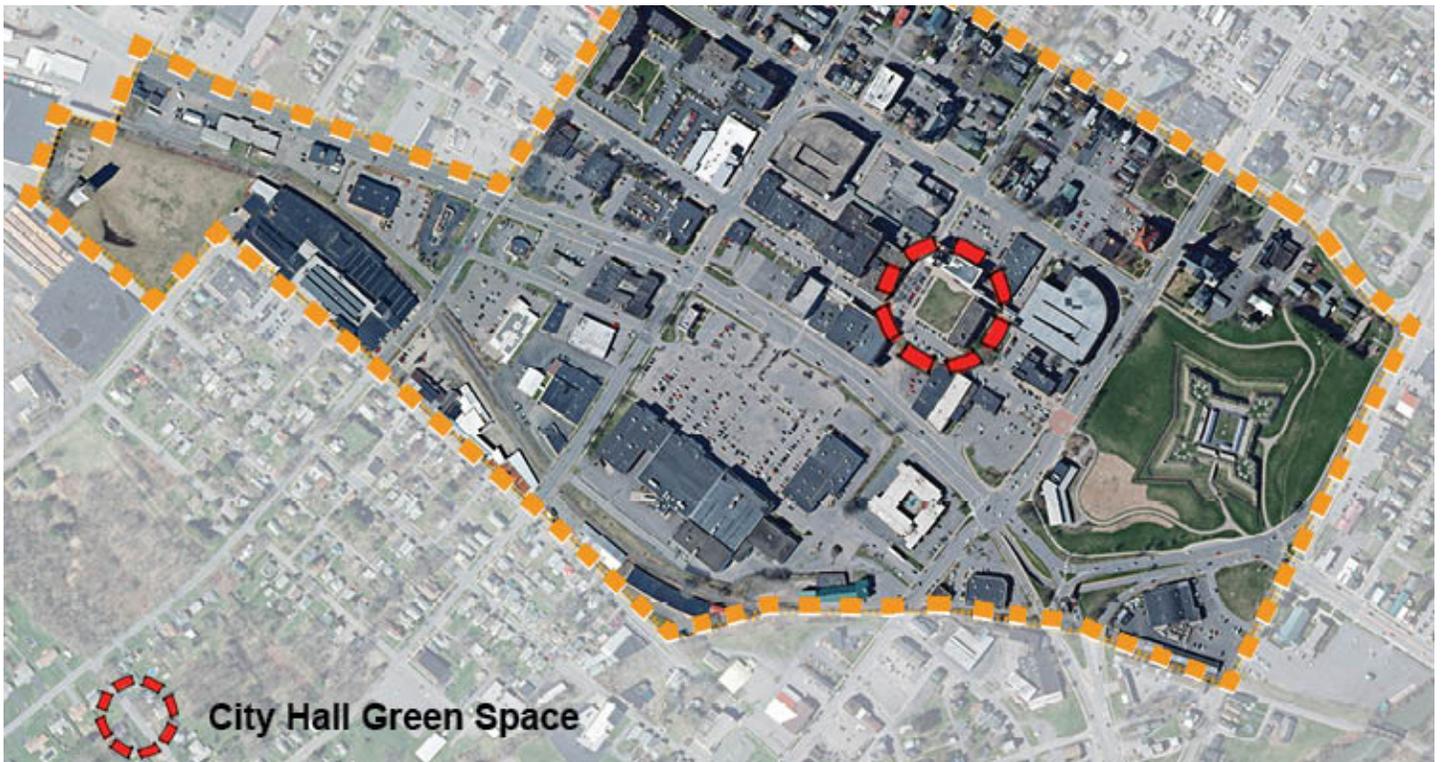
### Public Support:

The DRI prioritization found that the public, students, and the Local Planning Committee highly support this project.

Enhancements to City Green has been identified in city planning efforts for several years. Anecdotal comments from community members and students indicate support for enhancements to the space that bolster four-season programming. An ice rink has been specified as a preferred amenity in this space through various community engagement efforts.

### Project Location:

City Hall is located at 198 North Washington St. Rome, NY 13440. The property is fronted to the north by West Liberty Street, to the West by North Washington Street, to the south by W. Dominick Street, to the east by Eilenberg Lane. The Green Space is located on the southern portion of the property fronting W. Dominick Street.



### Project Ownership:

The City of Rome will be responsible for the project and owns the property on which the project will be implemented.

### Project Partners:

The City of Rome will be responsible for oversight of this project. Contractors, vendors, performers, and other users will be project partners that help to make this project successful on an annual basis.

**Capacity:**

The City of Rome Department of Public Works currently maintains the green space and has the capacity to maintain and oversee the seasonal activities, implementation, and assembly and dismantling of the seasonal equipment. The City currently provides programming for city events and will continue to expand these community services as improvements are made. The City is to ensure capital funding and provide ongoing maintenance in its annual budget.

DRI projects the City of Rome is involved with include:

CENTRO, City Hall, Fort Stanwix Garage, Adaptive Reuse and Business Fund, Public Art Fund, and Wayfinding.

**Project Budget:**

Total Project Cost:	\$450,000
DRI Funding:	\$400,000
Local Match:	\$ 50,000 (From the City's CED contract services)

## Project Items (DRI):

Seasonal Ice Skating Rink:	\$300,000
Rental Kiosk:	\$ 30,000
Plaza/ Stage /ADA Walk:	\$ 50,000
Seasonal Amenities:	\$ 20,000 (Tents, tables, seating ect.)

## Project Items (Local Match):

Design:	\$ 50,000
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Cost estimates are based on estimated quantities, as well as an estimate provided from product manufacturer.

**Funding Sources:**

This project will be DRI funded for the upfront design and construction. Ongoing maintenance funding will be provided by the City, including annual storage of the rink materials when not in use.

**Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The City Green project will provide a venue for seasonal events that the city will promote to highlight City Green as a regional tourism destination. These types of public amenities and programming have been shown to keep visitors in the downtown core for a longer period of time, encouraging them to spend more money at local businesses.

### Regulatory Requirements:

This project will require local approvals and permitting.

Additional insurance may be required by the City of Rome to host additional community events and in association with the management of the ice rink.

### Rendering of Completed Project:



Summer



Fall



Winter



Existing Conditions

Seasonal Events		
	<b>SPRING</b>	Easter Egg Hunt Concerts Art Festivals Farmers Market
	<b>SUMMER</b>	Concerts Art Festivals Farmers Market
	<b>FALL</b>	Harvest Fest Halloween Fest Farmers Market
	<b>WINTER</b>	Ice Skating Farmers Market Holiday Festivities

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

Contingent on approvals, the project has the ability to start immediately, beginning with final design and the development of construction documents.

Design	Summer 2018
Construction documents	Summer 2018
Construction	Fall / Winter 2019

### **Project Reporting:**

The City will monitor the design and construction of the project. They will also provide seasonal programming for events and ongoing maintenance of the property.

The City of Rome will be responsible for the monitoring of progress and performance to assess impacts.

Potential metrics include:

- Increased downtown visitation
- Number of annual visitors to programs
- Number of annual visitors to ice rink
- Increased foot traffic in the downtown
- Improved quality of life for Rome and area residents
- Customer satisfaction

## PROJECT 10

# The REACH Center Arts Incubator

**Project Title:**

Improvements to The REACH Center – A Mohawk Valley Creative Arts Incubation Model

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$525,000

DRI Funding: \$250,000

**Project Description:**

REACH Center owner Rome Up & Running (RUR) is partnering with 4 Elements Studio of Utica and is being assisted by Cornell Rust to Green (R2G) to provide arts and cultural collaborations via a unique Utica-Rome Creative Arts Incubator Model that is being designed to occupy the upper level of the 28,000 sf REACH Center located at 201-211 West Dominick Street. To accommodate expected growth, RUR requests DRI funding for capital expenses required to renovate additional vacant space (10,000 sf) on the building's ground floor along with two important downtown exterior façade renovations. The proposed renovated ground floor footage will provide affordable and flexible rental maker spaces (10-15) for artists to create, market, and make a living from their skills and art. Additional space will be used for an Arts Legacy Studio and arts and cultural business development services provided by a myriad of agencies and organizations including the MVCC thINCubator.

Programming already underway on the upper level includes 6,000 sf of gallery space (with a December 16 REACH Gallery Grand Opening) and an Artist Legacy Initiative that is preserving, showcasing, and cataloging the historic and current works of local artists for new generations. Interactive on-site and Utica-Rome remote classes and workshops for all ages and abilities will begin in February (2018). Other REACH programming will enable new and existing Utica-Rome artists to produce, present, and exhibit temporary works and cultural activities on- and off-site and will provide on-the-job experiences for new creative art entrepreneurs serving as art instructors, gallery aides, fine art consultants, and merchandisers.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1- Enhance Regional Concentrations:

- Arts District and Regional Arts Hub - Recognizing that artists and the arts are a proven catalyst for cultural and economic growth and a vital part of a community's infrastructure, the development of an arts district and an arts incubator were key implementation projects identified by Rome's 2005 Main Street Initiative and both were included in the City's Comprehensive Masterplan. The intent in developing an arts district along West Dominick Street district is to strengthen the efforts of the street's already successful arts organizations and businesses while providing focused opportunities to nurture, market, and develop new entrepreneurs and enterprises in and around Rome's downtown

and serve as a model for other creative arts incubation hubs in Utica and beyond. This project will help connect and market a healthy cultural environment to attract visitors, retain graduates, welcome creative professionals, and enhance the local and regional economy.

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #3- Innovation Enabling Infrastructure:

- Innovation Enabling Infrastructure - This project stimulates new business investment and entrepreneurialism in partnership with the City and with funds from the New York State, Rome Up and Running (RUR) has developed a business plan to use the building to incubate cultural entrepreneurs to “graduate” into vacant and underutilized buildings in Rome’s downtown. RUR has established a partnership with the Rust to Green Urban Studio (a program of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County) and 4 Elements Studio, both located in Utica, to transform the REACH Center into the first regional Utica-Rome Creative Arts Incubator HUB. With input from CNY Arts, they are developing the framework for a Phase 3 build-out which will provide an additional 8,000-10,000 sf of maker space on the Erie Boulevard ground floor to accommodate more artists and to provide enhanced arts and incubation programming.

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4 - Innovation Enabling Infrastructure:

- Increase Spatial Efficiency – This project leverages physical and natural assets to promote sustainability and preserve unique character of the City. With an arts district in mind, in 2005, Rome Up and Running (RUR), a 501c3 all-volunteer, non-profit organization, purchased 201-211 West Dominick Street - a vacant and abandoned 28,000 sf building located just across the street from Rome City Hall and the Capitol Theatre Complex and a block away from the Fort Stanwix National Monument. The building’s two vast floors of space, large storefront showcase windows, a loading dock, and two entrances - one on West Dominick Street and one on Erie Boulevard – sat vacant, dark, and neglected until RUR saw their potential as prime real estate for the right use – the REACH (Rome Entertainment, Arts, Culture and History arts incubator) Center. Years of extensive renovation work, made possible by a myriad of public and private support, transformed one floor of the once-derelict building. Renovations included a new HVAC system, roof, façade, electrical, and the Phase I (Dominick Street level) interior buildout, which includes shared restrooms, kitchen, and five market-rate commercial rental units (which support affordable spaces for arts incubation and cultural production in the rest of the building). The Phase 2 buildout of a REACH special event venue space can now accommodate over 200 people for cultural productions, workshops, and classes, positioning the REACH Center as a potential regional arts incubation destination. Serving as a catalyst for the growth in Rome’s downtown arts district.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

#### **Public Support:**

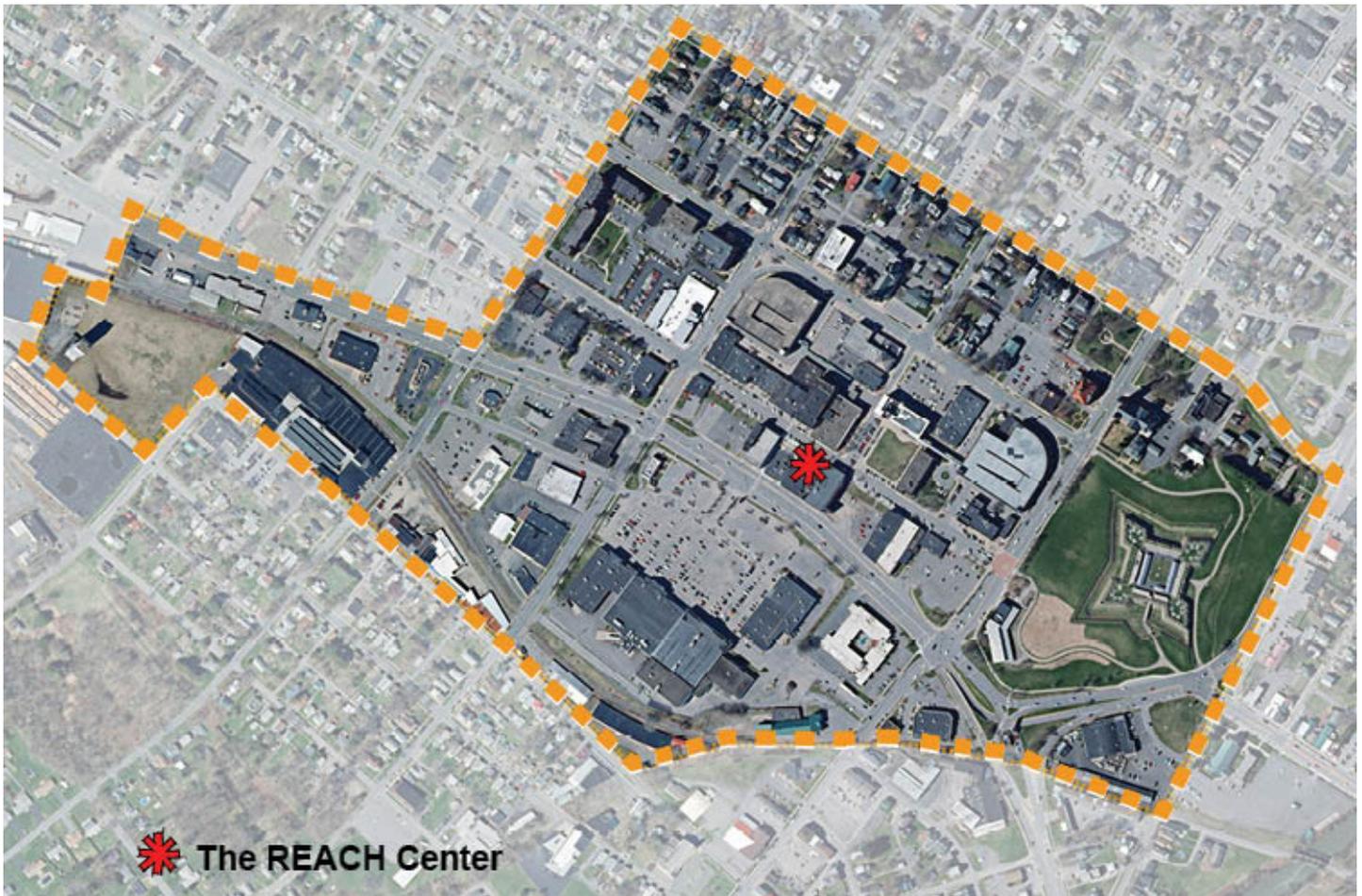
In 2017, the Cornell Rust to Green (R2G) Urban Studio completed a HUD Community Needs Assessment for the City of Rome. Community stakeholders indicated downtown development as a priority for the City. The project also had a high level of support as indicated during the DRI process.

### Jobs Created:

A creative and innovative environment in downtown Rome will help enhance cultural experiences and create jobs (especially for new entrepreneurs) and will stimulate other downtown activities during the day and night. An estimated 10-12 jobs will be created over the next two years including facility, programming and new artist employees and small business owners.

### Project Location:

201-211 West Dominick Street, Rome



### Ownership of Property:

The REACH Center is owned and maintained by Rome Up and Running (RUR) – 501c3.

#### RUR Board Members:

Ted Cupp – President, Business Owner

Kim Cook – Treasurer, Business Owner

Barb Chilluffo – Retired Bank Officer

Wes Cupp – Business Owner

Orrie Destito – Business Owner

Toni Olejarczyk – Retired Business Owner

Diane Shoemaker – Retired Planning Director, Strategic Development Consultant

## Acquisition of Real Property:

Not Applicable

## Anticipated Revitalization Benefits:

The physical, social, and economic impact of revitalization resulting in community cultural spaces for artists along with placemaking activities create job opportunities before, during, and after construction. The REACH project also provides the following benefits to the City of Rome and the region:

- Cottage industries. Every independent REACH artist is the owner/operator of a cottage industry, generating economic activity by selling products and services, purchasing equipment and supplies, paying taxes, and contributing to the local economy.
- Downtown collaborative creative cluster. Affordable presentation and maker spaces at REACH will help create and sustain an authentic and collaborative community of artists who will attract new local, national, and international artists.
- Neighborhood stabilization. The continued revitalization of the REACH once-abandoned underutilized property will help to eliminate blight and stabilize the neighborhood.
- Cultural heritage and experiences. The REACH Center will help preserve Rome's cultural heritage by providing a place where cultural art forms can be passed from one generation to the next - increasing and enhancing cultural offerings and experiences for residents and visitors and diversifying a low-income neighborhood.

## Future Use of Structure:

The future use of the structure will include commercial space (existing), medical facility (existing), artists studio and gallery (existing), and artist maker space (proposed).

## Project Budget:

Total Project Cost:	\$525,000
DRI Funding:	\$250,000
CFA Funding: (Awarded)	\$200,000
CDBG/Façade Funding:	\$ 75,000

Project Items (DRI)	\$250,000
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- Install wiring for kilns
- Remove stairwell wall 2nd floor
- Add steel railing and seal floor
- Install storefront glass and double doors at base of stairs
- Upgrade electrical service to accommodate tenants needs
- Add lighting per tenants needs

Project Items (Other funding sources) \$ 275,000

- Installation of Erie Boulevard commercial facade
- Installation of restrooms
- 10x10 movable workspaces
- Framing and code work for kiln rooms
- Electrical and life safety per code

### **Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The cost estimate for the project was based on contractor estimates for the proposed build-out of the lower level-space and façade improvements. The DRI work will focus on connecting the lower level and first floor, resulting in improved connections between West Dominick Street and Erie Boulevard.

Potential impacts on the overall economic health of downtown Rome include:

- **Catalyst for Other Investments:** The revitalization of the REACH Center will be a catalyst for other new private and public investment including façade improvements and general beautification – increasing real estate values.
- **New Commercial/Retail Space:** The renovated REACH Center will give artists opportunities to interact with the public through gallery events, demonstrations, performances, and installations that showcase and sell their work.
- **New Entrepreneurs:** A renovated REACH Center will provide an outlet for progressive arts programming and on-the-job experiences for new creative art entrepreneurs serving as art instructors, gallery aides, fine art consultants, and merchandisers.

Both public and private funds have been invested in the West Dominick Street neighborhood at the REACH Center. Six new businesses (legal, financial, healthcare, language interpretation and retail services) were created in the building as market-rate tenants and jobs have been created. Currently, four of the five market-rate spaces are leased with a recently vacated space being used as Rome's DRI headquarters. Two additional businesses - the new REACH Center Gallery and Sweet Escapes opened in December, to date, creating three additional new jobs.

The REACH Center has successfully leveraged public funds from:

- NY Main Street
- NYS Quality Communities
- NYS Dormitory Funding
- NYS Senate Appropriation
- Oneida County Arts Funding
- NYS Wired Building

**Regulatory Requirements:**

The project will require local building permits.

**Rendering of Completed Project:**



*Existing Concept Rendering - Erie Boulevard*



*Proposed Concept Rendering - Erie Boulevard*



*Existing Concept Rendering - 10,000 sf Interior*



*Proposed Concept Rendering - Classroom and Maker Spaces*



*Existing 4 Elements Galley - Interior*

## Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:

Expanded programming and the Erie Boulevard façade work is underway. Other façade improvements and interior renovations will commence upon finalization of CFA contract and award of DRI funding.

Final construction documents for interior	Summer 2018
Permits	Winter 2018
Construction	Summer 2019

## Project Reporting:

RUR will be responsible for the monitoring of progress and performance and for assessing impact.

Quantitative measures that may be tracked include:

- Number of new jobs created by the working artists
- Growth of artist revenues
- Number of incubating entrepreneurs
- Number of on-site makers
- Number of artists moved into vacant spaces
- Number of classes, workshops, and cultural offerings
- Artist attendance at events
- Number of website and social media hits
- Increases in new donor contributions
- Growth of customer base
- Number of press releases and other mentions per month
- Number of people visiting the downtown on evenings and weekends
- Number of attendees for classes, workshops, and events
- Reduction of vacancies in the downtown
- Increased revenues for the Center

Qualitative measures that may be tracked include:

- Development of an enhanced arts district
- Improved attractiveness of the downtown
- Increased foot traffic in the downtown
- Increased contributions to a creative, innovative environment
- Improved quality of life for Rome and area residents
- Customer satisfaction
- Staff satisfaction

## PROJECT 11

# Downtown CENTRO Transportation Center

**Project Title:**

Create a Downtown CENTRO Transportation Center

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$450,000

DRI Funding: \$400,000

**Project Description:**

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CENTRO) is the public transportation provider for Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga, and Oneida counties, which includes the cities of Syracuse, Oswego, Fulton, Auburn, Rome, and Utica. CENTRO's mission is to be responsive to the transportation needs of the Central New York community by providing services which are safe, convenient, reliable, and environmentally responsible with a goal of maximizing the taxpayers' return on investment.

The proposed project would include design and construction of a new CENTRO Transfer Station and surrounding site improvements adjacent to the City Hall parking lot on Liberty Street. The new transfer station will provide new services that promote sustainability through mass transit, bike commuting, and pedestrian connectivity with the pedestrian-oriented downtown.

Specific elements of the project include:

- Development of a +/- 360 sf building along Liberty Street, including a heated/cooled shelter location with space for people waiting for buses, a small office, and a ticket kiosk. Materials would include a glass storefront for high visibility, architectural metal building envelope, and masonry lower walls to protect the structure against snow and water damage.
- Heated sidewalks will be provided immediately surrounding the new structure to improve safety and reduce maintenance.
- Landscape improvements along North Washington and Liberty Street to create a more attractive streetscape environment.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #1: Enhance Regional Concentrations:

- Improve linkage among region's tourism assets – The CENTRO Transfer Station is in alignment with existing local plans, including improvement plans within the city core. The proposed project is strategically located adjacent to City Hall, proximate to Fort Stanwix, and proximate to West Dominick Street. The CENTRO project will bring people from outside the DRI area into a walkable downtown.

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #2: Workforce Alignment and Education:

- Meet employer demands - CENTRO is a service that provides transportation to students and workers. Having a centralized hub in the downtown will increase access to employment opportunities and businesses, such as Project Blue Crab, which will provide employment opportunities in the DRI area.

#### 2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Increase Spatial Efficiency:

- Minimizing transportation costs – Public transportation is a low-cost alternative to driving and reduces parking demands within the city.
- Maximizing collaboration – The City and CENTRO are collaborating on this project to provide better service and opportunities for customers.
- Promoting sustainability – Public transportation reduces emissions, parking demands, and congestion within the downtown core.
- Maintaining infrastructure assets – CENTRO currently has lines and stations along West Liberty Street. The proposed Transit Station would keep those lines intact while improving services.
- Make key investments that improve critical infrastructure assets - CENTRO currently has lines and stations along West Liberty Street. The proposed Transit Station would keep those lines intact while improving services. The closest station was moved to the train station which is outside of the downtown core.
- Promoting investment in downtown core to foster community revitalization - The CENTRO Transfer Station is in alignment with existing local plans, including improvement plans within the city core. The proposed location is strategically located adjacent to City Hall, proximate to Fort Stanwix, and proximate to West Dominick Street.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

This project addresses items identified as part of the City of Rome Community Needs Assessment, specifically:

- Upgrade infrastructure - CENTRO currently has lines and stations along West Liberty Street. The proposed Transit Station would keep those lines intact while improving services. The closest station was moved to the train station which is outside of the downtown core.
- Revitalize downtown - The CENTRO Transfer Station is in alignment with existing local plans, including improvement plans within the city core. The proposed location is strategically located adjacent to City Hall, proximate to Fort Stanwix, proximate to West Dominick Street, and across from the Zion Church.
- Make Rome a walkable city - The CENTRO Transfer Station is in alignment with existing local plans, including improvement plans within the city core. The proposed location is strategically located adjacent to City Hall, proximate to Fort Stanwix, proximate to West Dominick Street, and across from the Zion Church.
- Remove employment barriers - CENTRO is a service that provides transportation to students and workers. Having a centralized hub in the downtown would increase access to employment opportunities.
- Support school to work pipelines - CENTRO is a service that provides transportation to students. Having a centralized hub in the downtown would increase access to educational opportunities.

### **Public Support:**

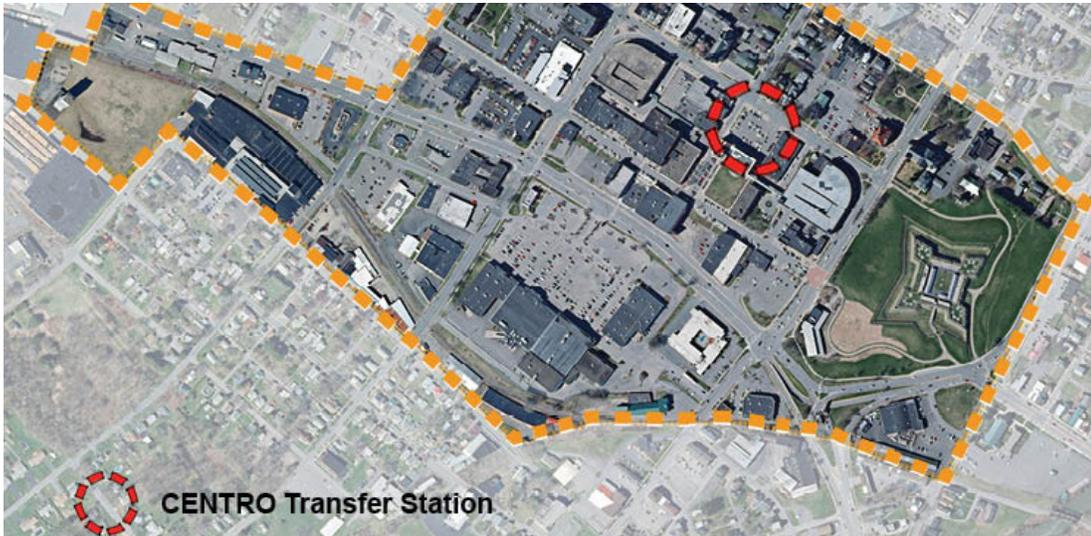
The DRI prioritization found that the public, students, and the Local Planning Committee highly support this project.

### **Jobs Created:**

It is possible this project may have one full or part time employment opportunity.

**Project Location:**

City Hall is located at 198 North Washington Street with parking lot access at West Liberty Street. The CENTRO project will be located along West Liberty Street with restroom services provided by the City Hall project.

**Existing Conditions:**

*Existing Conditions Along West Liberty Street*

**Project Ownership:**

The City of Rome will be responsible for the project and owns the property on which the project will be implemented.

**Project Partners:**

CENTRO – Regional public transportation provider

**Capacity:**

The City of Rome has the capacity to oversee the construction and maintenance of the CENTRO Transfer Station and grounds through the Department of Public Works. CENTRO will pay all utility costs associated with on-going maintenance of the facility.

CENTRO currently operates transportation lines and multiple bus stops along West Liberty Street including stops at the intersection adjacent to the proposed Transfer Station. CENTRO has the capacity to provide a ticketing kiosk and day-to-day transportation to and from the transfer station.

**Project Budget:**

Total Project Cost:	\$450,000
DRI Funding:	\$400,000
Local Match:	\$ 50,000 (From City's CED contract services)

## Project Items:

Bus Station:	\$250,000
Heated Sidewalk:	\$ 40,000
Standard Sidewalk:	\$ 60,000
Bike Storage:	\$ 30,000
Landscaping:	\$ 20,000
Design:	\$ 50,000

Design and ongoing maintenance will be budgeted for and funded by the City of Rome.

**Funding Sources:**

This project will be fully DRI funded for the implementation of the CENTRO Transfer Station project. Ongoing maintenance funding will be provided by the City.

**Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The CENTRO hub was moved outside of the downtown core (at Liberty George Garage site) to the train station, which is not within walking distance to downtown. There is demand for an enclosed shelter and ticket kiosk in the downtown core. The proposed facility expands on an existing bus line that is strategically located in the downtown core and will increase foot traffic to downtown stores and events. This station will provide synergy with other DRI efforts such as the City Green project by providing easy access for pedestrians. Heated sidewalks will greatly reduce snow removal maintenance efforts while increasing pedestrian safety. Landscaping will create an attractive and welcoming environment that will promote the new user friendly transfer station.

Benefits associated with increased public transportation use include, but are not limited to:

- Improved mobility and ability to access nearby businesses
- Reduced traffic volume
- Savings in public health costs
- Higher property values associated with a higher quality public realm

- Household savings associated with lower vehicle ownership and usage resulting from transit-friendly and walkable design.

*\*Source: The Economic Benefits of Sustainable Streets, New York City Department of Transportation, 2015*

### Regulatory Requirements:

Implementation of this project will require local approvals and permitting. Additional insurance may be required by the City of Rome to house this project on City property. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation. CENTRO will be required to review design and approve.

### Rendering of Completed Project:

The plan view depicts the conceptual layout and site improvements associated with this project.



*Proposed Concept Rendering*



*Proposed Concept Perspective*

### **Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:**

Contingent on approvals, the project has the ability to start immediately, beginning with final design and the development of construction documents.

Preliminary concept designs have been created.

Finalize conceptual design	Summer 2018
Reviews and approvals	Summer 2018
Final design	Winter 2018
Construction	Spring / Summer 2019

### **Project Reporting:**

CENTRO will provide transportation services and the City will monitor the design and construction of the project. The DPW will provide ongoing maintenance for the property.

The City of Rome will be responsible for the monitoring of progress and performance to assess impacts.

Potential metrics include:

- Number of people visiting the downtown
- Number of users riding the buses
- Improved attractiveness of the downtown
- Increased foot traffic in the downtown
- Improved quality of life for Rome and area residents
- Customer satisfaction

## PROJECT 12

# Wayfinding System Implementation

**Project Title:**

Implement the Downtown Wayfinding System

**DRI Funding Request:**

Total Project Cost: \$180,000

DRI Funding: \$150,000

**Project Description:**

This project will include the implementation of a comprehensive wayfinding system for vehicles and pedestrians that will provide needed directional information. This project fulfills a goal identified in the 2006 City of Rome Wayfinding Plan and ongoing Downtown Brownfield Opportunity Area plan. Once implemented, the Downtown and Waterfront Wayfinding Strategy (created through the Downtown BOA) will improve navigation, improve overall aesthetics of the streetscape, and create dynamic and vibrant downtown and waterfront districts. Implementation of this wayfinding plan will create a unified design strategy that outlines specific standards for signage based on location, type, and intended user. This project will provide a consistent wayfinding system that will guide residents and visitors to highlighted locations throughout the city making the City of Rome an easily navigable destination place.

Wayfinding signage will have a cohesive design aesthetic with individual details that will target specific user groups.

- Vehicular Directional - This sign type is designed to be readable by a moving vehicle. Large easy to read lettering will provide information to travelers as they navigate through the city.
- Pedestrian Directional - This sign type is intended to be viewed by people walking, running or riding bikes. The pedestrian sign system will convey information and reinforce the city's commitment to being walkable.
- Kiosk - The Kiosk is designed to be a comprehensive wayfinding resource located at high pedestrian traffic nodes. A map with corresponding attraction list will convey information in an easy to use format. This information will provide a welcoming lay-of-the-land and educate visitors to other city attractions.
- Parking - Parking signs are designed to be easily identifiable to usher visitors to quick parking options.

**Strategies:**

This project addresses the strategies identified in the 2011 Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan.

2011 Mohawk Valley REDC Strategy #4: Leveraging Physical Assets:

- Leveraging Physical Assets - Cities are complex and often confusing to the visitor. When it comes to helping people get from place to place, a wayfinding system helps make the journey and experience more manageable and enjoyable by creating order.
- Maintaining Infrastructure Assets - A wayfinding system is made up of many components. It involves signs and information, landmarks, symbols, maps, environmental enhancements and, more recently, electronic media. These all work together to create a system that helps direct people to their destination, helps them understand when they have arrived, and shows them how to exit.
- Promoting downtown community revitalization - Currently the City of Rome is lacking a consistent and easy to follow vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding system. Providing a welcoming user-friendly wayfinding system will help people feel more comfortable in the downtown area and they will know where to find areas of interest.

In addition, this project is consistent with the updated strategies and economic drivers identified in the 2016 Mohawk Valley progress report including:

- Tourism
- Vibrant Communities

**Public Support:**

The DRI prioritization found that the public, students, and the Local Planning Committee strongly support this project, indicating this is a high priority implementation project for the community. The City recently completed a wayfinding design study and plan for the Rome downtown BOA that served as the foundation for this implementation project request. Wayfinding has been identified, through engagement conducted as part of the BOA, to be an important component of downtown revitalization efforts.

### Project Location:

Erie Boulevard, Black River Boulevard, Court Street, James Street, West Liberty Street, North George Street, and Ace Place within the DRI area.



### Site Ownership/Legal Jurisdiction:

The wayfinding signs and kiosks would be owned and maintained by the City of Rome.

### Project Partners:

For projects located within the right of way of NYS roadways. NYS Department of Transportation will be required to review and sign-off on proposed signage.

### Capacity:

The City of Rome is currently responsible for the maintenance of each of the identified streets and existing signage. Additional maintenance would be the responsibility of the City of Rome. Some additional maintenance would be required in conjunction with improvements and the City has the ability to accommodate any additional maintenance requirements through the Department of Public Works.

Other DRI projects the City of Rome is involved with include: CENTRO, City Green, City Hall, Fort Stanwix Garage, General Adaptive Reuse Fund, and Public Art Fund.

**Project Budget:**

Total Project Cost:	\$180,000
DRI Funding:	\$150,000
Local Match:	\$ 30,000 (From City's CED contract services)

## Project Items (DRI):

Kiosk (2):	\$ 20,000
Vehicular Directional Sign (15):	\$100,000
Parking Sign (3):	\$ 10,000
Pedestrian Directional Sign (8):	\$ 20,000

## Project Items (Local Match):

Design, permitting, approvals:	\$ 30,000
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**Funding Sources:**

Fabrication of signage and installation will be DRI funded, with the City providing design funding. Ongoing maintenance funding will be provided by the City.

**Feasibility and Cost Justification:**

The cost was determined by a licensed landscape architect utilizing standard estimates based on preferred sign designs established in the City's Wayfinding Strategy for the Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area.

Wayfinding and gateways create a sense of arrival and are often the first impression visitors gain of a city. The use of unique arrival signage can create a positive and coherent identity, improve navigation and connectivity, and facilitate business activity by providing better access to local businesses.

There are direct economic benefits of branded wayfinding and gateways, including but not limited to:

- Increased spending by local and regional visitors - With an easy to use wayfinding system, visitors will stay longer, visit more frequently, and spend more money during each visit.
- Attract and direct visitors through the downtown area - The current navigation system is inadequate. A cohesive wayfinding system will provide a smooth transition through downtown.
- Increased sales tax revenues - As visitorship increases, spending increases which will generate more taxes.
- Increased awareness of recreational, cultural facilities and events - The wayfinding system will help inform visitors about other destinations within the downtown.

## Regulatory Requirements:

All proposed signs should be compliant with the manual on Uniform Traffic Downtown Control Devices (MUTCD) for Streets and Highways. Work in the state right-of-way will require a highway work permit with potential project mitigation.

The following regulatory requirements must be met for implementation of the wayfinding project:

- NYS DOT Approval/Permitting
- City Approval/Permitting.

## Renderings, Site Plan, and Graphics:

Proposed City of Rome sign design and hierarchy



Proposed Wayfinding Signs

## Existing Conditions



*Signage in the DRI Area*

### Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness:

Preliminary designs have been created for the signage.

Finalize conceptual design	Summer 2018
Reviews and approvals	Fall 2018
Final design	Winter 2018
Fabrication	Winter 2018
Installation	Spring 2019

### Project Reporting:

The project will be monitored through installation of the signage system. Progress associated with the full implementation of the project may be measured by:

- Increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the DRI Area after installation of signage
- Community visitor response received through intercept surveys conducted once annually

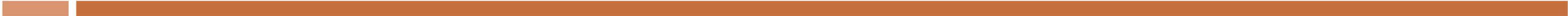


# PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

SUMMARY

# Project Summary Table

Project Number	Name of Project	Project Description	Responsible Party	Estimated Total Project Cost (\$)	DRI Funding Request (\$)	Funding Sources	Proposed Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Jobs Created
1	Project Blue Crab	The project proposes the construction of a 50,000 sf. advanced manufacturing facility to meet the expansion needs of an existing business located in Rome. Upon relocation, the business will add a manufacturing line and create 15+ new Jobs.	Rome Community Brownfield Restoration Corporation	\$ 4,720,000	\$900,000	DRI, Private Investment	Summer 2018	Winter 2019	Jobs: 15 Construction: +/-10
2	Capitol Theatre	The project entails improvements to the existing Capitol Theatre to advance restoration of the historic theatre to its origins, circa 1928. DRI funds will be used for the replacement of doors, façade restoration, the purchase and installation of a new marquee sign, seating restoration, and other decorative restorations.	Capitol Arts Complex nonprofit	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 2,500,000	DRI, Fundraising, Private Investment	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Jobs: 1 Construction: +/-10
3	183 W. Dominick Street Mixed-Use	The project proposes the construction of a new mixed-use structure on an existing, undeveloped site. The proposed development includes parking on the first level, commercial space on the second level, and up to sixteen residential units on the third and fourth stories.	City of Rome, Private Developer	\$ 3,400,000	\$ 500,000	DRI, Private Investment	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Spin off: 5 Construction: +/-20
5	City Hall Programming Enhancements	The project proposes the renovation of portions of City Hall to address failing conditions of its structural elements, while also enhancing public spaces, including security enhancements, ADA accessible restrooms and vendor areas to complement City Green and CENTRO DRI projects.	City of Rome	\$ 2,880,000	\$ 1,880,000	DRI, City of Rome	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Construction: +/-10
6	Liberty James Garage Upgrades	The project entails major aesthetic and operational improvements to the existing Liberty James Garage. DRI funds will be used to rehabilitate an existing walkway, replace storefront glazing and brick repair, add wayfinding signage, repair garage infrastructure, install an automated ticketing system, and to re-face the façade to promote its presence as a gateway to downtown.	City of Rome	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 1,350,000	DRI, City of Rome, Grants	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Construction: +/-15
4	Liberty George Parking Garage	The DRI funded project is to demolish the parking garage and site preparation for the interim parking lot.	City of Rome,	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 1,500,000	DRI, City of Rome	Summer 2018	Spring 2019 (Interim Use) 2020 (Final Use)	Spin off: Construction: +/-40
7	Erie Boulevard Streetscape	The project proposes streetscape and pedestrian improvements at the Erie Boulevard and George Street intersection and along the south side of Erie Boulevard between George Street and Arsenal Street.	City of Rome	\$ 1,200,000	\$1,200,000	DRI	Summer 2018	Fall 2019	Construction: Varies
8	Business Retention and Public Art Fund	The project proposes the establishment of a fund to provide grant funding to leverage private investment in buildings to facilitate business retention, expansion and adaptive reuse. Improvements covered under the fund would include capital improvements and interior and exterior renovations. The establishment of a grant fund would also be dedicated to soliciting and incorporating public art in the Downtown. The funds would be distributed in a competitive manner, and proposals for funding would be solicited through one of four methods: an open request, limited invitation/curated pool of artists, blind invitation, or a direct invitation.	City of Rome	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	DRI, Private Investment	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Spin off: 7-15 Construction: Varies
10	The REACH Center Arts Incubator	The project proposes the renovation of 10,000 SF of vacant space on the existing building's ground floor. The proposed renovations would facilitate the creation of affordable and flexible maker spaces for artists to create and market their skills and arts.	Rome Up & Running	\$ 525,000	\$ 250,000	DRI, CFA, CDBG City of Rome	Summer 2018	Fall 2018	Jobs: 10-12 Spin off: Varies Construction: +/- 15
9	City Hall Green Space	The project proposes improvements to the existing City Hall green space to facilitate enhanced, year-round programming and special events in the heart of downtown. Elements would include an ice skating rink, concert area with a stage, temporary vendor support areas, and seasonal event space.	City of Rome	\$ 450,000	\$ 400,000	DRI, City of Rome	Summer 2018	Winter 2019	Spin off: Varies
11	Downtown CENTRO Transportation Center	The project proposes the construction of a new transfer building and surrounding site improvements. The center will be a heated/cooled enclosure with a ticket kiosk. Exterior improvements will include a heated sidewalk surrounding the structure, bicycle storage, and landscape enhancements.	City of Rome, CENTRO	\$ 450,000	\$ 400,000	DRI, City of Rome	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Construction: +/- 10
12	Wayfinding System Implementation	The project proposes the implementation of a comprehensive wayfinding system for vehicles and pedestrians. The project would provide a consistent wayfinding system that will guide residents and visitors to highlighted locations throughout the City.	City of Rome	\$ 180,000	\$ 150,000	DRI, City of Rome	Summer 2018	Spring 2019	Spin off: 1 Temporary Construction: +/-2
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$22,305,000</b>	<b>\$ 11,630,000</b>				



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