



WATERFRONT DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE



Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative

Local Planning Committee Meeting #3

September 21st, 2026



Photo: EDR

Agenda

1. Welcome & Code of Conduct
2. DRI Program Updates
3. Public Engagement Updates
5. Vision, Goals, and Draft Revitalization Strategies
6. Downtown Roadmap
7. Open Call Projects
8. Boundary
9. Project Evaluation Process
10. Next Steps
11. Public Remarks





Welcome & Code of Conduct

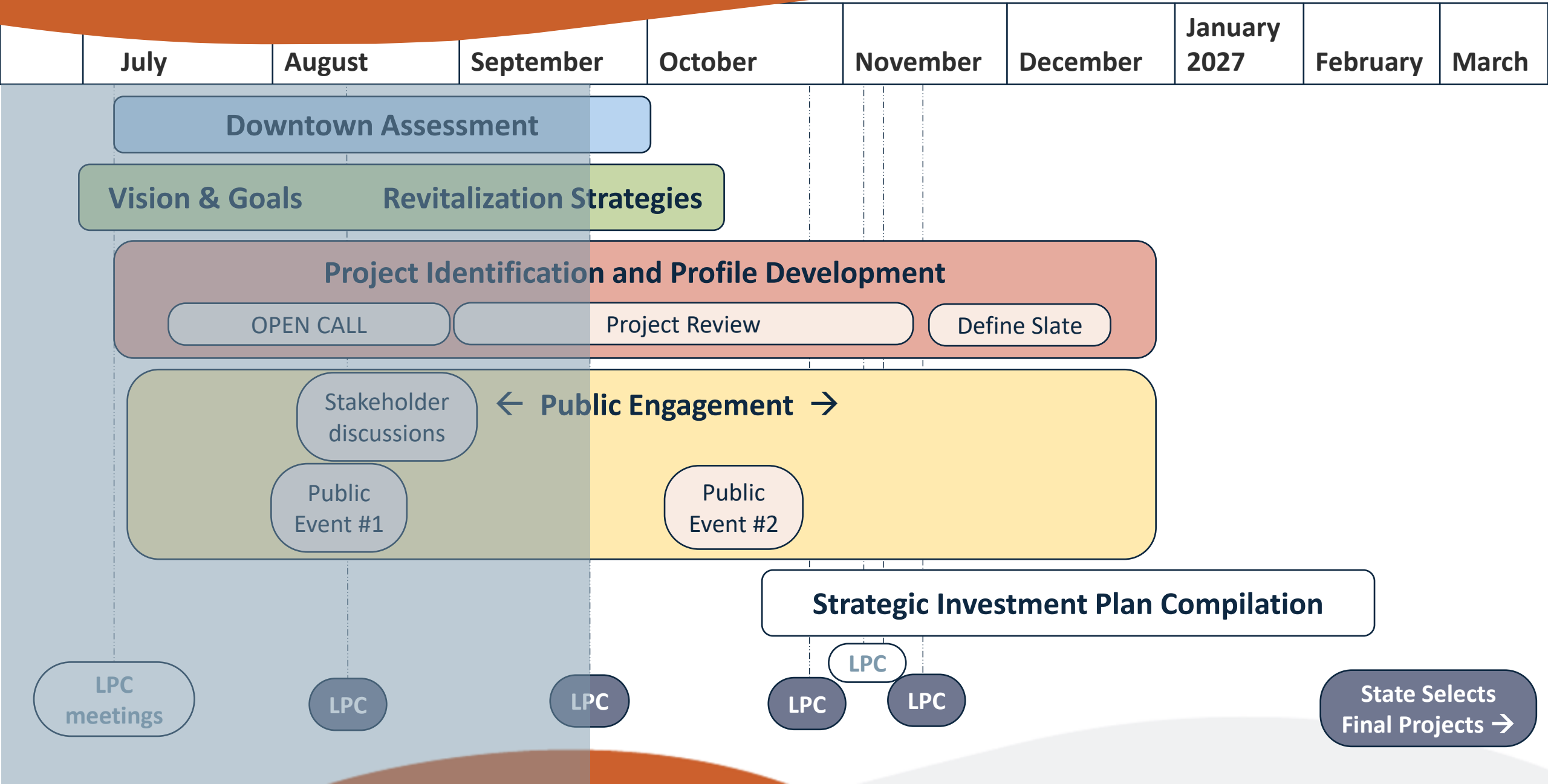
LPC Co-Chairs

DRI Code of Conduct

Preamble *“Each Local Planning Committee Member is reminded of their obligation to disclose potential conflicts of interest with respect to projects that may be discussed at today’s meeting. If you have a potential conflict of interest regarding a project you believe will be discussed during the meeting, please disclose it now and recuse yourself from any discussion or vote on that project. For example, you may state that you, or a family member, have a financial interest in the project, you are on the board of the organization proposing the project, or you are a member that believes you or any other member(s) are the subject of improper influence.”*

Please inform the LPC co-chairs during the meeting if the need to disclose a conflict arises, then recuse yourself from discussion or voting on the project. As we continue through the planning process, recusal forms will be required from anyone with an identified potential conflict to be kept on file with the Department of State.

General Schedule 2026





Public Engagement Updates

Aidan McKibbin, EDR

Public Engagement Events

Farmers Market Pop-up

August 12th, 2-4 pm

Open House #1

August 12th, 5-7 pm in-person

August 17th – 28th online survey

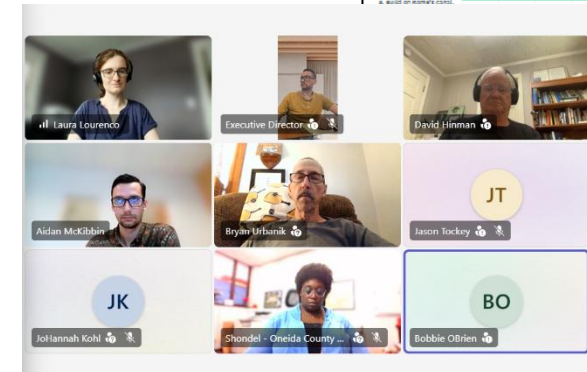
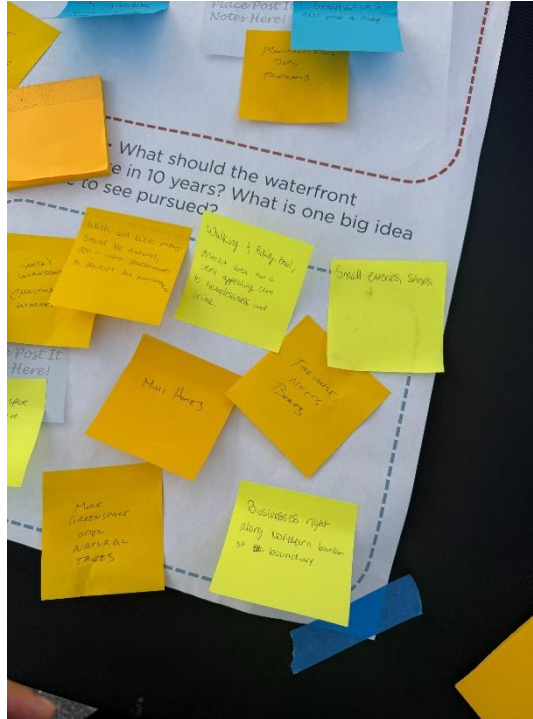
Focus Groups

September 2nd

- Nonprofits, Services, Housing, & Community Support
- Waterfront, Canal, Trails, Recreation, and Heritage
- Youth, Families, Education, and Older Adults

September

- Economy and Local Developers



Public Engagement Findings

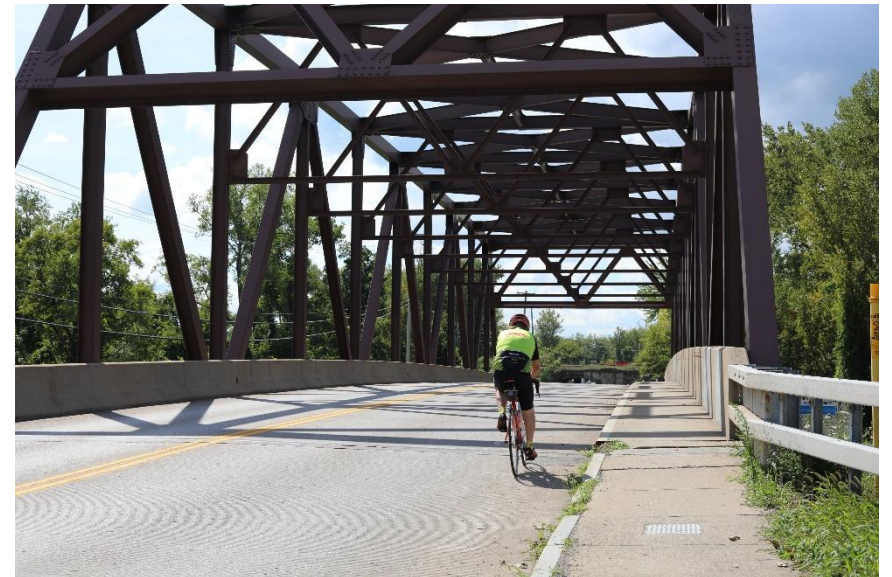
Waterfront and Recreation Themes

- Create more reasons to remain at the waterfront
- Improve facilities for boaters
- Build on existing recreational assets
- Expand recreation across ages and seasons
- Make public spaces more comfortable and functional



Connectivity and Access Themes

- Walking and bicycling connections remain incomplete.
- The train station, canal, and trail system offer a distinctive opportunity. Transportation affects access to more than recreation.
- Wayfinding could connect visitors with the rest of Rome.
- Accessibility should guide physical improvements.



Public Engagement Findings

Housing and Community Support Themes

- Participants described unmet housing needs across several groups.
- Housing and support services are closely connected.
- Childcare presents a barrier for working families.
- Food access and household affordability remain concerns.
- Investments that benefits existing residents.



Community Spaces and Programming

- Rome lacks accessible gathering spaces for different ages.
- Shared facilities could support several populations.
- Indoor and winter activities could sustain year-round use.
- Better coordination could increase participation.
- Partnerships will be necessary.





Rome Waterfront DRI Vision, Goals, Strategies

Aidan McKibbin, EDR

Vision

Current Vision

Rome's Waterfront District is transforming into a vibrant and welcoming, mixed-use destination. Building on its Erie Canal, Mohawk River, and industrial heritage, the district will connect recreation, housing, businesses, dining, and public spaces to support residents, employees, and visitors. By offering places to gather, live, work, and play year-round for all ages and abilities, the district will enhance community pride, quality of life, and Rome's appeal as a regional destination.

*Alternative Vision - **ADOPTED***

Rome's Waterfront District is transforming into a lively and welcoming destination shaped by the Erie Canal, Mohawk River, regional trails, rail connections, and the city's industrial heritage. The district reconnects the waterfront with East Rome and downtown through safe, walkable, bikeable, and accessible routes while bringing underused properties back into active use. New housing, local businesses, dining, recreation, and public spaces create more reasons for residents and visitors to gather, explore, and enjoy the waterfront throughout the year.

Goals

Original Goals

Goal 1: Create a safe, welcoming, and active waterfront district for all ages and abilities.

Goal 2: Grow multimodal connections between the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods and destinations.

Goal 3: Transform underutilized industrial and waterfront properties into catalytic, mixed-use destinations.

Goal 4: Expand housing options and strengthen nearby neighborhoods.

Goal 5: Build on Rome's waterway and recreation assets to grow tourism and improve quality of life.

Goal 6: Support local businesses, job growth, and private investment.

Goal 7: Celebrate Rome's waterfront, industrial, canal, and immigrant heritage through placemaking.

*Updated Goals - **Adopted***

Goal 1: Create a safe, welcoming, accessible, and connected waterfront district for all ages and abilities.

Goal 2: Celebrate Rome's waterfront history and cultural identity.

Goal 3: Reinvest in underutilized properties to expand housing and strengthen nearby neighborhoods.

Goal 4: Build on Rome's canal, river, trail, and recreation assets.

Goal 5: Support businesses, employment, and private investment opportunities in the DRI Area.

Draft Revitalization Strategies

ADOPTED as draft

Goal 1	Create a safe, welcoming, accessible, and connected waterfront district for all ages and abilities.
Strategy 1.1	Close gaps in sidewalk, bicycle, and trail networks connecting Bellamy Harbor, East Rome, Downtown, the Amtrak station, and regional trails.
Strategy 1.2	Improve streetscapes with safer crossings, accessible routes, pedestrian-scale lighting, traffic-calming features, and clear pavement markings.
Strategy 1.3	Establish a coordinated wayfinding system that directs people to waterfront amenities, trails, public parking, downtown businesses, historic sites, and visitor destinations.
Strategy 1.4	Improve comfort and safety through public amenities including restrooms, seating, shade, landscaping, trash facilities, and design that increases visibility and activity.
Strategy 1.5	Expand transit and shared transportation options that help residents without access to a vehicle reach recreation, employment, services, and community activities.
Goal 2	Celebrate Rome’s waterfront history and cultural identity.
Strategy 2.1	Preserve and adaptively reuse significant landmarks such as the Terminal Building, train station, industrial buildings, and other recognizable features.
Strategy 2.2	Incorporate public art and interpretative elements that celebrate Rome’s history and culture, including canal, industrial, military, Indigenous, transportation, and immigrant history.
Strategy 2.3	Establish a consistent waterfront identity through coordinated gateways, signage, landscaping, streetscape materials, and building design.
Strategy 2.4	Partner with local artists, historical organizations, educational institutions, and community groups on cultural programming.

Draft Revitalization Strategies

Goal 3	Reinvest in underutilized properties to expand housing and strengthen nearby neighborhoods.
Strategy 3.1	Advance environmental remediation, infrastructure improvements, and site preparation to make brownfields and underused properties ready for redevelopment.
Strategy 3.2	Encourage adaptive reuse and infill projects that introduce a compatible mix of housing, employment, commercial, recreational, and community uses.
Strategy 3.3	Expand housing choices for local workers, families, seniors, and residents including those with supportive or accessibility needs while addressing affordability and displacement concerns.
Strategy 3.4	Explore opportunities to incorporate community services such as childcare, community programming, nonprofit services, or shared facilities into redevelopment projects where appropriate.

Goal 4	Build on Rome's canal, river, trail, and recreation assets.
Strategy 4.1	Improve docking and boater facilities with safe tie-ups, utilities, restrooms, visitor information, fuel access, and other amenities and services that encourage overnight stays.
Strategy 4.2	Enhance the waterfront including Bellamy Harbor Park with accessible water access, event infrastructure, and amenities that support informal recreation and larger community gatherings.
Strategy 4.3	Expand indoor, outdoor, and year-round recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities including on public properties.
Strategy 4.4	Add trail-user amenities such as water-bottle filling stations, bicycle repair facilities, rest areas, maps, and improved connections between the Erie Canalway Trail and local destinations.
Strategy 4.5	Support recurring markets, performances, water-based activities, winter recreation, and community events that keep the waterfront active beyond major summer events.

Draft Revitalization Strategies

Goal 5	Support businesses, employment, and private investment opportunities in the DRI Area
Strategy 5.1	Attract restaurants, cafés, shops, equipment rentals, lodging, and visitor services that complement waterfront recreation and create more reasons to remain in the district.
Strategy 5.2	Support locally owned businesses to expand and to improve their buildings, facades, facilities, signage, and reactivate vacant commercial and industrial spaces.
Strategy 5.3	Create new and flexible spaces for markets, vendors, entrepreneurs, community organizations, and small businesses within existing or redeveloped properties.
Strategy 5.4	Connect waterfront investment with employment growth elsewhere in the region by supporting workforce housing, childcare access, job training, and connections to employment centers.
Strategy 5.5	Position the district as a regional destination while directing visitor spending toward local businesses and attractions.





Downtown Roadmap

Aidan McKibbin, EDR

What is the Downtown Roadmap?

- Identifies practical revitalization strategies for the DRI Area
- Focuses on activities beyond the DRI projects and provides a framework for carrying the Waterfront District vision forward over time
- Identifies planning, programming, coordination, maintenance, and funding activities
- Provides direction for continued public, nonprofit, and private investment



How the Roadmap Is Organized

Goal 1: Create a safe, welcoming, accessible, and connected waterfront district for all ages and abilities.

Action	Champion	Partners	Potential Funding	Timeframe
Conduct a walking, bicycling, and accessibility audit of routes connecting East Dominick Street, Bellamy Harbor Park, the Canalway Trail, nearby neighborhoods, and the traditional downtown. Maintain a prioritized list of crossing, sidewalk, lighting, signage, and accessibility improvements.	City DPW/ Engineering	DCED, Parks and Recreation, NYSDOT, NYS Canal Corporation, local disability advocates, bicycle and trail groups	City capital funds; NYSDOT Transportation Alternatives Program; NYSDOS Smart Growth Community Planning	Near-term (0–2 years)

What goes into the Roadmap

Goal 2 - Celebrate Rome's waterfront history and cultural identity.

- Partner with rotating public-art and creative placemaking programs

Goal 3 - Reinvest in underutilized properties to expand housing and strengthen nearby neighborhoods.

- Complete remediation and redevelopment preparation at 200 Railroad Street and City Yard
- Continue redevelopment efforts for priority vacant and brownfield sites
- Pursue Train station upgrades

Goal 4 - Build on Rome's canal, river, trail, and recreation assets.

- Expand public recreational assets at Pinti Field, City Yard, etc.

Goal 5 - Support local businesses, employment, and private investment

- Continue expansion of public infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.)





Open Call for Projects

Laura Lourenco, EDR and Cheyenne Steria, MRB

Selection Criteria

☐ **Aligns with Rome Waterfront DRI Goals (at least one)**

☐ **Aligns with New York State DRI Goals**

☐ **Project Readiness**

The project is well-developed, feasible, and poised to proceed in the near-term in a way that will jump start the redevelopment of the DRI area. The sponsor has the authority and capacity to implement and maintain the project. They have financing commitments largely secured or demonstrate a clear path to securing sufficient financing. They can break ground within 2 years of receiving funding.

☐ **Catalytic Effect**

The project is likely to have a significant positive impact on the revitalization of the downtown by attracting other public and private investment at a scale appropriate for the DRI community. The project is large enough to be truly transformative for the downtown area.

☐ **Co-Benefits**

The project will result in secondary benefits to both the community and project developer, beyond the primary goal of the project. These will generate additional economic activity, grow the local property tax base, improve quality of life in the neighborhood, and/or result in improved buildings likely to create healthier, more comfortable, and productive environments in which to live and work.

☐ **Cost Effectiveness**

Investment of DRI funds in the project would represent an effective and efficient use of public resources. There is a demonstrated need for these funds.

☐ **Public Support**

The project is supported by the community and in line with the Rome Waterfront DRI vision.

+ Within the boundary

Preferred Funding Match:

40% private, 20% nonprofit and public



Private Projects

Renovate 201 Mill Street for New Housing & Commercial Space

Total Project Cost
\$5,000,000

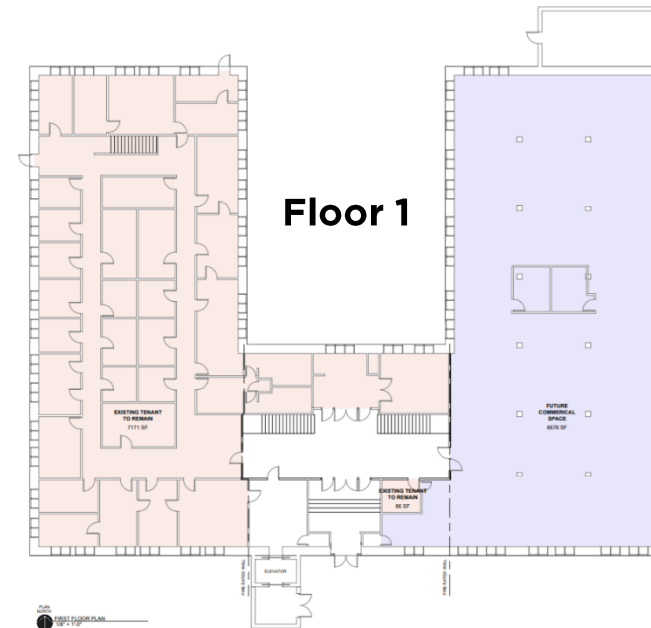
DRI Request
\$3,000,000 (60%)

Project Sponsor
201 Mill Street LLC

Project Location
199-201 Mill Street

Renovate approximately 16,459 sf of the under-utilized building at 201 Mill Street to create 8 residential units and additional commercial space while retaining existing tenants.

Improvements will include roof and exterior restoration, hazardous-material abatement, building-system upgrades, fire and life-safety improvements, accessibility enhancements, and residential buildout.



LEGEND
FUTURE COMMERCIAL SPACE
EXISTING TENANT TO REMAIN



Transform a Former Industrial Building into a Waterfront Destination

Total Project Cost
\$3,694,500

DRI Request
\$2,216,700 (60%)

Project Sponsor
Cayo Industrial LLC

Project Location
720 Railroad Street



Redevelop a vacant 26,000-square-foot historic industrial building at Bellamy Harbor into a mixed-use waterfront destination featuring a restaurant and entertainment venue, commercial space, and a film and creative-design studio. Building, accessibility, parking, landscaping, and waterfront connection improvements will activate the property and aim to support tourism, employment, and connections to Bellamy Harbor Park.

Revive 402 South Jay Street into a Mixed-Use Housing and Wellness Destination

Total Project Cost
\$12,000,000

DRI Request
\$4,000,000 (33%)

Project Sponsor
CastleRock Plaza
LLC

Project Location
402-406 South Jay
Street

Outside Boundary



Expand and redevelop the underutilized two-story office building at 402-406 South Jay Street into a three-story mixed-use destination with 40 apartments. The project will also include rehabilitation and fitness facilities, a restaurant and bar, and other commercial and community-serving spaces that support downtown housing, wellness, and economic activity.

Expand and Modernize Bliss Environmental

Total Project Cost
\$2,900,000

DRI Request
\$2,175,000 (75%)

Project Sponsor
Bliss Environmental
Services Inc

Project Location
730 Railroad Street

Match



Construct a new 9,600-square-foot facility with three drive-through service bays, including a combined truck-wash and service bay, as well as space for parts storage, offices, and employee training. The larger facility will accommodate taller trucks, improve operations, and enhance the property's appearance from the canal and surrounding area.

Renovate DeMatteo's Restaurant

Total Project Cost
\$547,100

DRI Request
\$410,325 (75%)

Project Sponsor
DeMatteo's
Restaurant

Project Location
705 E Dominick St



Renovate and modernize the 47-year-old restaurant through electrical, plumbing, HVAC, bathroom, flooring, and exterior siding improvements. The project will also replace the aging bar, furniture, tables, chairs, and deteriorated walk-in cooler to improve the building's safety, appearance, and functionality.

Match

Transform a Vacant Brownfield into Canal Square Mixed-Use Development

Total Project Cost
\$ 77,312,193

DRI Request
\$ 1,500,000 (2%)

Project Sponsor
Kearney Realty &
Development Group
Inc.

Project Location
107-109 Canal
Street



Redevelop a 2.2-acre former industrial brownfield at 107–109 Canal Street into Canal Square, featuring 120 mixed-income apartments across three brownstone-inspired buildings and approximately 24,000 square feet of commercial space. The project aims to transform vacant properties into a walkable mixed-use destination that expands housing options, attracts businesses, and strengthens connections between downtown Rome and the waterfront.

Residential Building Concept





Nonprofit Projects

Build a Daycare Center at Copper Village

Total Project Cost

\$ 2,731,950 - daycare
(\$155,157,308 - full project)

DRI Request

\$2,180,000 (80%)

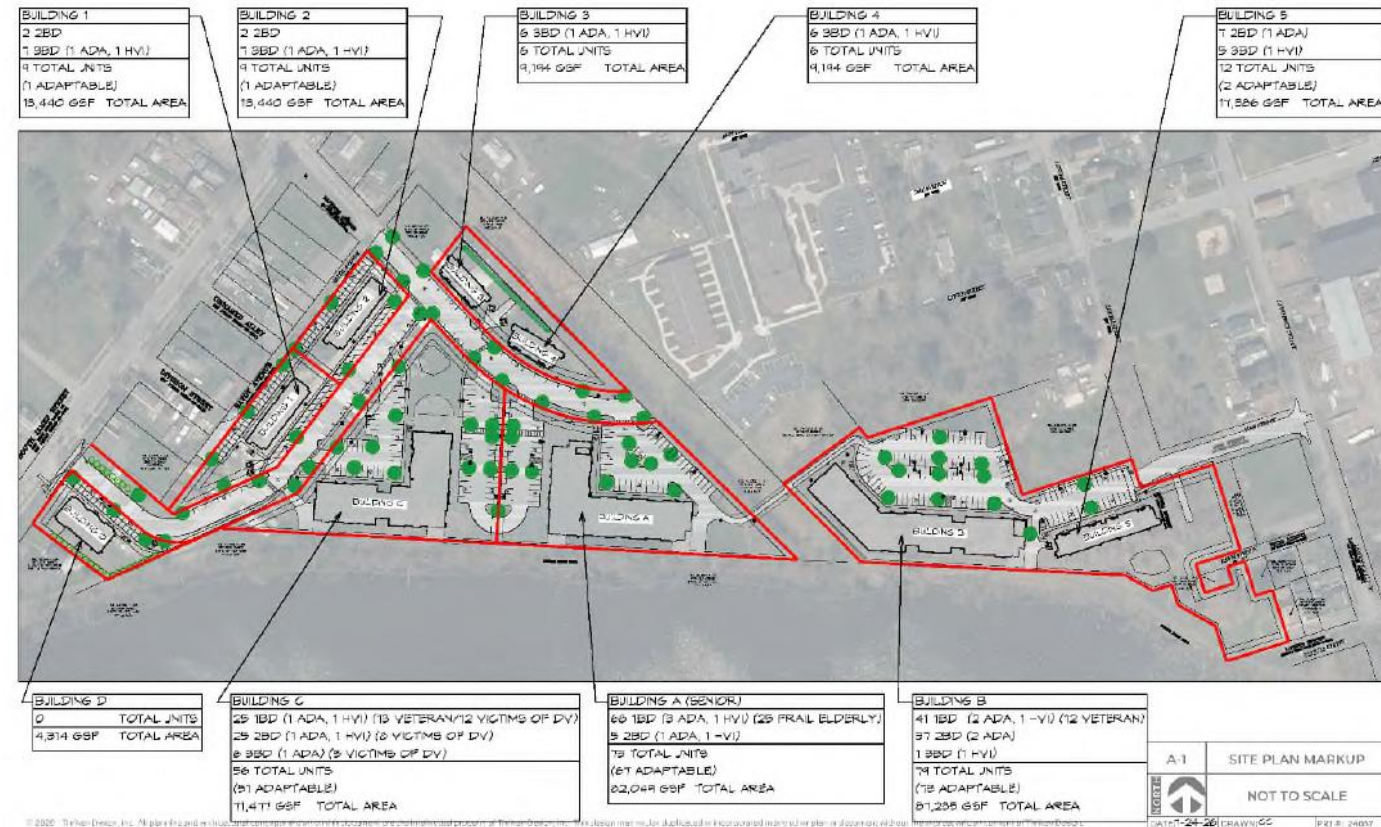
Project Sponsor

Human Technologies,
501(c)(3)

Project Location

Baptiste Ave and
Washburn Blvd

Outside Boundary



Construct and fit out a 4,327-square-foot daycare within the larger Copper Village mixed-use affordable and supportive housing development. The facility will provide permanent early-childhood services for residents and the surrounding waterfront neighborhood while supporting neighborhood revitalization and expanded community services.

Add a Waterfront Promenade with Seating at Bellamy Harbor Park East

Total Project Cost
\$4,096,432

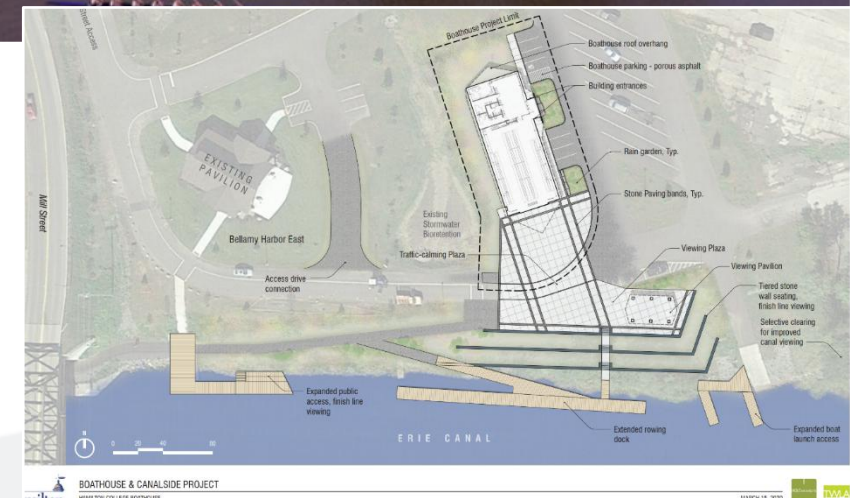
DRI Request
\$4,096,432 (100%)

Project Sponsor
Hamilton College
501(c)(3)

Project Location
Bellamy Harbor
Park East



Extend the Hamilton College boathouse site improvements along the canal frontage to create an accessible waterfront gathering and rowing-event destination. Improvements will include a new pavilion, universally accessible walkways and terraced viewing areas, docks, landscaping and lighting designed to complement the boathouse. The area will be a public amenity for passive recreation and informal gatherings, and a purpose-built regatta viewing area for semi-annual, multi-day events.



Match

Transform the Former Staley School into a Waterfront Park and Educational Site

Total Project Cost
\$4,519,000*

DRI Request
\$2,500,000* (43%)

Project Sponsor
Rome City School
District

Project Location
620 East
Bloomfield Street



Demolish the flood-damaged 134,327 sf former school building (phase 1) and transform the 47.3-acre property into a public waterfront park and educational site. Phase 1 work (\$3.5 m) will include environmental remediation, demolition, and site restoration. Phase 2 (\$1 m) aims to transform the site into a waterfront park in collaboration with the city and community, e.g., with historical and archeological placards and soft enhancements sensitive to the flood plain such as pervious pavement, creek wall access, pavilion, and native landscaping.

Modernizing Community Bocce Facilities at the Toccalana Club

Total Project Cost
\$450,000

DRI Request
\$270,000 (60%)*

Project Sponsor
Toccalana Club
501(c)(7)

Project Location
1412 E Dominick St



Expand and improve the existing bocce facility by extending and resurfacing 6 indoor courts to meet modern standards and by extending the outdoor pavilion and adding 3 new dirt courts. Additional work will include electrical and HVAC upgrades to the building and interior doorway modifications.

The improvements will update the facilities for the public, including the local community, youth leagues, and the World Series of Bocce events, helping to attract more players and visitors of all ages.

Outside Boundary



Public Projects

Expand Public Docking and Bellamy Harbor Facilities

Total Project Cost
\$3,270,000

DRI Request
\$2,620,000 (80%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
Bellamy Harbor
Parks West



Install 200 feet of floating public docking with ADA ramps along the canal wall and renovate the terminal building's east end to include a harbor master welcome lobby, restrooms, commercial kitchen, exterior deck, utility connections, and signage. The cargo and storage areas will be retained as flexible space for events, vendors, and community gatherings.

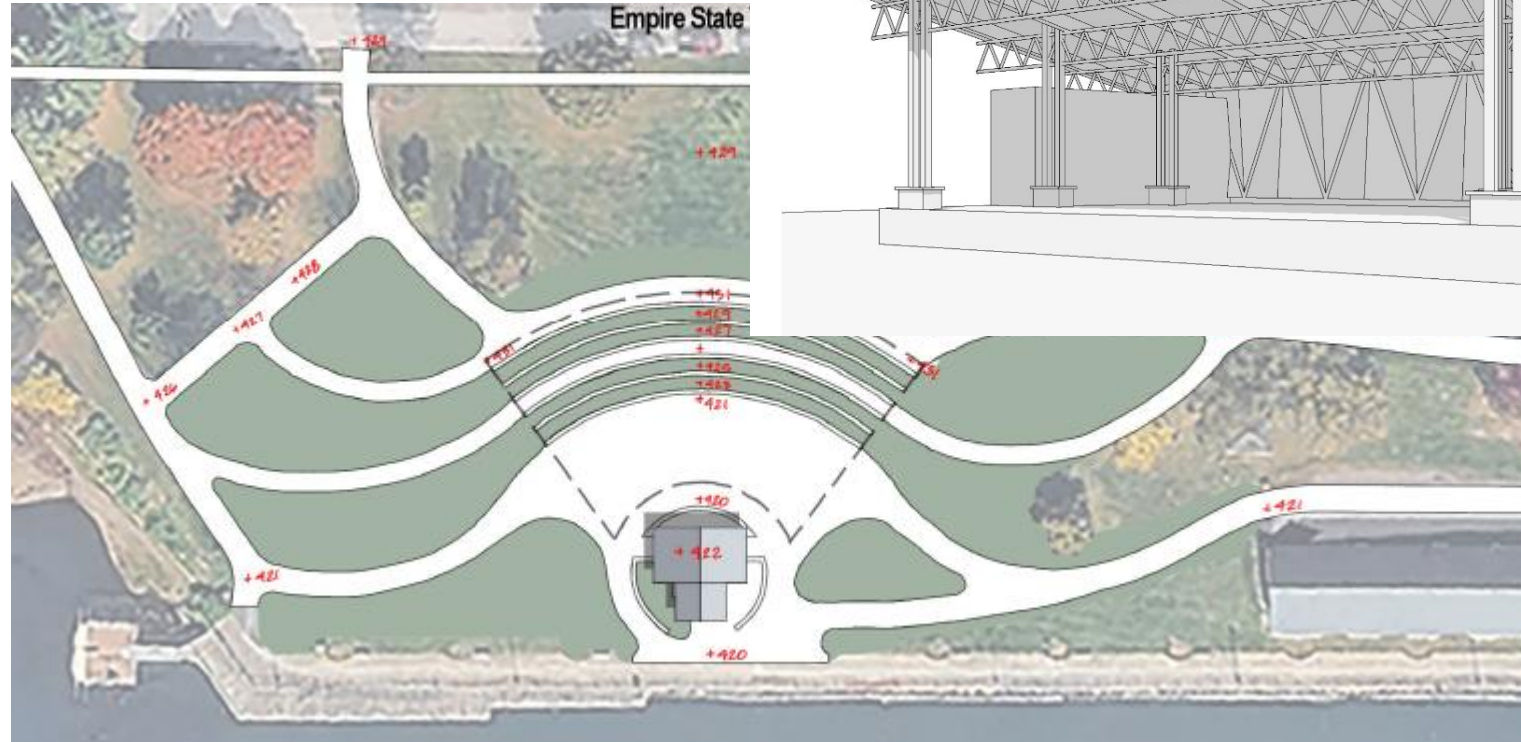
Construct a Covered Performance Pavilion and Outdoor Gathering Space

Total Project Cost
\$3,500,000

DRI Request
\$2,800,000 (80%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
Bellamy Harbor
Park West



**DRAFT
Concept**

The project would include the design and construction of a new covered performance pavilion and site regrading for natural seating and viewing areas. A second phase would add amenities to the pavilion.

Redesign Railroad Street as a Multiuse Complete Street

Total Project Cost
\$2,000,000

DRI Request
\$1,600,000 (80%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
Railroad Street
RoW



© Google Maps May 2026

The project will include design and construction of a new road utilizing complete street principles. The project will include sanitary and storm sewer, paving, sidewalks, lighting, and green space. The project will formalize the street connection to Railroad Street, support adjacent businesses, and provide flexible spaces for waterfront activities and events.

Expand the SFM Skatepark and Improve Access

Total Project Cost
\$1,300,000

DRI Request
\$1,040,000 (80%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
420 Harbor Way

Construction of the next phase of the SFM skatepark, including:

- bike park,
- pump-track expansion,
- skate mini-ramp,
- lighting,
- landscaping,
- Signage, and
- a new park vehicle access driveway.

The improvements aim to further expand a popular regional attraction on the waterfront.



SFM SKATEPARK MASTER PLAN PHASES



Enhance the Mill Street Gateway

Total Project Cost
\$750,000

DRI Request
\$600,000 (80%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
Mill St. CSX Bridge



The project would include design and construction of a visual buffer around the CSX concrete overpass, street lighting, Mohawk pedestrian bridge and Mill Street bridge lighting, and district monument signage.

Establish the Small Project Fund

Total Project Cost
\$900,000

DRI Request
\$600,000 (67%)

Project Sponsor
City of Rome

Project Location
DRI Area



The project will establish a small business project fund to assist with renovations and expansions of businesses under \$150,000 in total DRI support per project, as well as public art within the target area.

The maximum total fund amount is \$600,000. To be awarded the fund, Rome must demonstrate potential demand. To date, 2 letters of interest have been submitted with \$375,000 of potential demand.

Demand

Summary

Total	Category	Total Project Cost \$	Total DRI Ask \$
6	Private	\$101,500,000	\$13,300,000
4	Non-Profit	\$163,300,000	\$8,100,000
6	Public	\$11,700,000	\$9,300,000
16	All Categories	\$276,500,000	\$30,700,000
2	<i>Potential SPF Projects</i>	<i>\$375,000</i>	<i>\$281,000</i>

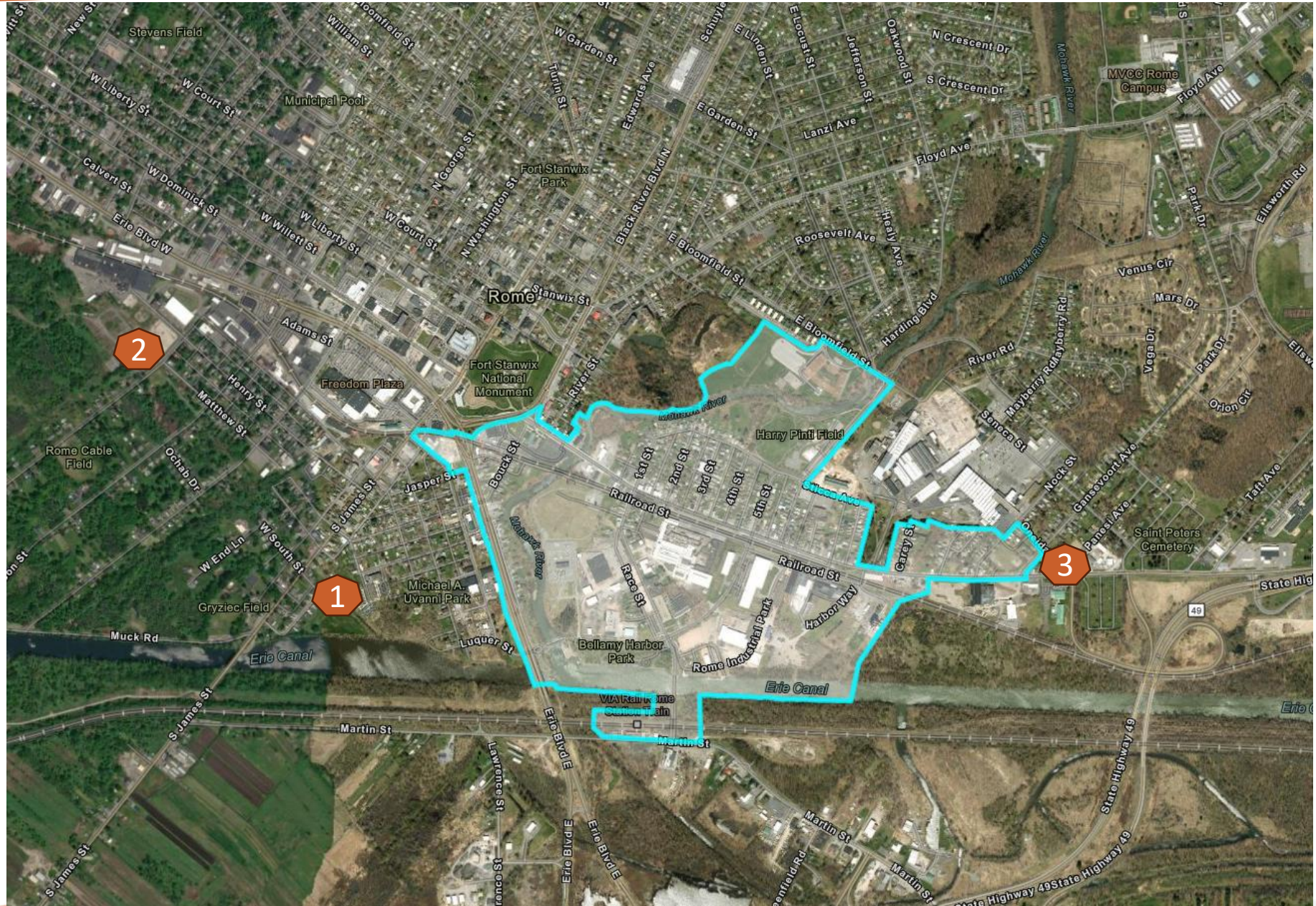
DRI Boundary Amendments?

Project Proposals Outside Boundary

1. Build a Daycare Center at Copper Village
2. Revive 402 South Jay Street into a Mixed-Use Housing and Wellness Destination
3. Bocce Facilities at the Toccalana Club

Decision: Amend boundary to include 1 and 3 (extend to James St).

Note: Allows projects to be considered with the others, does not indicate an endorsement.





Project Evaluation Process

Laura Lourenco, EDR

Selection Criteria

☐ **Aligns with Rome Waterfront DRI Goals (at least one)**

☐ **Aligns with New York State DRI Goals**

☐ **Project Readiness**

The project is well-developed, feasible, and poised to proceed in the near-term in a way that will jump start the redevelopment of the DRI area. The sponsor has the authority and capacity to implement and maintain the project. They have financing commitments largely secured or demonstrate a clear path to securing sufficient financing. They can break ground within 2 years of receiving funding.

☐ **Catalytic Effect**

The project is likely to have a significant positive impact on the revitalization of the downtown by attracting other public and private investment at a scale appropriate for the DRI community. The project is large enough to be truly transformative for the downtown area.

☐ **Co-Benefits**

The project will result in secondary benefits to both the community and project developer, beyond the primary goal of the project. These will generate additional economic activity, grow the local property tax base, improve quality of life in the neighborhood, and/or result in improved buildings likely to create healthier, more comfortable, and productive environments in which to live and work.

☐ **Cost Effectiveness**

Investment of DRI funds in the project would represent an effective and efficient use of public resources. There is a demonstrated need for these funds.

☐ **Public Support**

The project is supported by the community and in line with the Rome Waterfront DRI vision.

Project Review Schedule

September

- **LPC #3 – Present Potential Projects**
- **Consultant Initial Project Review**

October – Project Review

- Work with sponsors to clarify questions/missing info
- **Open House #2** – get public feedback on potential projects and Revitalization Strategies – October 13 – 5:00- 7:00 pm
- **LPC Meeting #4 (open)**- October 27, 4:00-6:00 pm – Updates on projects, public feedback, final strategies

November

- **LPC Work Sessions** – Project updates and review
- **LPC Meeting #5** - Project evaluation

December

- **LPC Meeting #6** - Dec 8, if needed





Next Steps

Laura Lourenco, EDR

Next Steps

LPC

- Next Meeting – Oct 27, 4:00-6:00 pm
Rome City Hall

Public Engagement

- Open House #2 – October 13, 5:00- 7:00 pm
Rome City Hall

Project Development

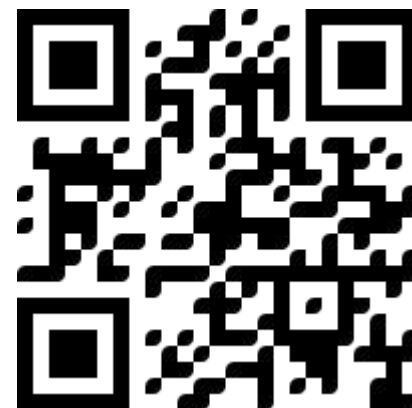
- Coordination with sponsors to advance project proposals



Public Remarks



Thank You!



romenydri.com