

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 31st, 2022

Contact: Beal St. George
Strategy Director, TGW Studio
(607) 339-1781
beal@tgwstudio.com

RDDC AND RDP ANNOUNCE NEXT STEPS IN EXPLORATION OF DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – With the August 16 vote by Rochester City Council to permit the continued exploration of forming a downtown Business Improvement District (BID), the Rochester Downtown Partnership (RDP) and Rochester Downtown Development Corporation (RDDC) have begun sharing planned next steps and opportunities for community members to share their voices.

The groups plan to conduct a collaborative, layered, and multi-year engagement process to listen and respond to community needs and preferences. The process overall will take at least two years. They have posted a [proposed timeline](#) and are encouraging stakeholders to provide feedback via email to rddc@rddc.org.

BIDs are public-private partnerships that leverage private dollars to provide supplemental and complementary services and programs in the public environment, ultimately with the goals of promoting and expanding local business activity, creating jobs, and furthering economic vitality. BIDs are led by local business leaders and guided by local governments, making them flexible, responsive, and focused on the needs of the community.

“BIDs are tried-and-true tools that help facilitate recovery for downtowns that have experienced challenges,” said Rochester Downtown Partnership Executive Director Galin Brooks. “I am excited at the opportunity we have before us to build on existing energy and enthusiasm and identify how best to be a strong steward for Rochester’s downtown.”

“I am very interested in watching these next steps take shape,” said Mayor Malik D. Evans. “The best Business Improvement Districts are strong partnerships that create powerful economic empowerment opportunities for diverse communities. With the targeted investments of the City, County and State in our Center City, it makes sense to consider how private investments can support the public sector and make Rochester even stronger.”

Local business owners and residents have begun raising their hands to participate in the process to explore a BID for Rochester.

Second Avenue Learning, located in Tower 280 on East Broad St., is a certified women-owned interactive media company that provides custom software and interactive gaming development for education. CEO Tory Van Voorhis relocated her small business to downtown Rochester several years ago, and is excited to take part in the BID formation process.

“I want to be part of revitalizing downtown,” Van Voorhis said. “Our business is at the intersection of culture and technology. In downtown Rochester, our team has access to local activities, dining options, and creative collisions that enhance our work and our lives.”

“As a downtown homeowner, I am incredibly excited for the upcoming BID discussions, and look forward to discussions about how to enhance programming in our downtown parks, increase beautification, and offer even more diverse events than we already have,” said Matt Denker, owner of LBLD Living. “As a downtown business owner, I will be focused on the increased marketing efforts that could be available to downtown businesses as part of a potential BID.”

RDDC and RDP organizers have made materials available to the public, including their proposed timeline, August 11 presentation to City Council, and several other project-related documents at www.rochesterdowntown.com/about-rddc-rdp/#BID.

###

About the Rochester Downtown Development Corporation: Established in 1977, RDDC is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization whose mission is to drive economic vitality in Downtown Rochester. RDDC accelerates downtown development by positioning and marketing the assets that attract businesses and investment, and catalyzes innovative ideas that make downtown a more vibrant and inclusive community. RDDC founded and operates The Commissary, the region’s first and only food business incubator and shared kitchen for small and local businesses.

About the Rochester Downtown Partnership: Established in 2021, the Rochester Downtown Partnership (RDP) is a public-private collaboration between New York State, Finger Lakes Empire State Development, Monroe County, the City of Rochester, RDDC, ROC2025, the Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Visit Rochester, and the Rochester Riverside Convention Center. RDP was created to lead placemaking efforts, coordinate marketing and programming, and lead promotion of activities throughout downtown Rochester and along the Genesee Riverway — with the goal of increasing private sector participation to better activate public spaces and help guide the revitalization of Rochester for the benefit of downtown stakeholders, visitors, and the overall community.