

Choosing the Right Location

The location of your business can have a serious impact on your success. Location determines who will see your business, how easily they can find it, and whether or not they will even want to access it. Even manufacturing businesses, where customers normally do not visit the site, often rely on locations with major transportation arteries nearby. Because your business site may even become permanent, your decision to select the best site may need to be justified to your major investors, lenders, suppliers, and other business constituents.

Allen, Kathleen R. Launching New Ventures : An Entrepreneurial Approach. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2006.





Choosing a Retail Site

Competition and Character

Deciding on a location early on will allow you to gather more accurate and detailed information on the competition and your market.

Some tips for deciding on the best location:

1. Drive or walk through the area to find competing businesses. How big are they? How many are there?
2. Note how busy they are and at what times of day.
3. Are the competitors established in a shopping mall or shopping center? If so, look for clusters of stores that are similar to your new retail venture and have low vacancy rates.
4. Look at stores near your potential site. Are they compatible? Often, a location near your competition is beneficial because it encourages your market to comparison shop.
5. What is the overall character of the area? Is it compatible with the character you want for your new business?

Allen, Kathleen R. Launching New Ventures : An Entrepreneurial Approach. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2006.

Choosing a Manufacturing Site

If you are starting a new manufacturing business, your choices for a location will be more narrow than as for a new retail venture. In Rome and Floyd County, there are several specific industrial parks and industrial sites available for manufacturing. These sites are strategically located to provide the best access in the county to utilities and major transportation arteries. For more information on prospective manufacturing sites, the Director of Economic Development at the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce can provide more details and specifications. There are two development authorities that work closely with the City of Rome, Floyd County, and the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce to manage and promote existing industrial sites. These authorities include the Rome-Floyd County Development Authority (RFCDA) and the Development Authority of Floyd County.

Four Key Factors

As an entrepreneur seeking a manufacturing site, four factors will impact your decision to location the most:

- 1. The Labor Pool**
- 2. Access to Suppliers**
- 3. Access to Transportation, and**
- 4. Cost of Utilities**

The Labor Pool

In establishing your new manufacturing business, be very careful to consider the cost of labor and the availability of skilled workers. The “Workforce Issues” section of this guide contains more detailed information on finding an educated workforce. Wages and workers compensation laws will also drastically affect your bottom line. For more information on labor laws, see the “Workforce Issues” section of this guide.

Access to Suppliers

Locating within a reasonable distance from your major suppliers will create several advantages for your new business. A close proximity will cut your shipping time and save on transportation costs. The City of Rome is conveniently located at the center of a geographic triangle composed of Atlanta, Birmingham, and Chattanooga, making Rome a strategic location for manufacuters with suppliers in these three cities. The Chamber can help you identify potential suppliers in Floyd County and can help you connect to other businesses for which you may serve as a supplier.

Allen, Kathleen R. Launching New Ventures : An Entrepreneurial Approach. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2006.





Access to Transportation

As a manufacturer, you will want to locate as close as possible to major transportation arteries, whether that be railway, highway, or airport. Minimizing the distance between the plant and the modes of transportation will lower your overall production costs and make you more profitable. Rome and Floyd County have multiple sites located in close proximity to highways and the interstate. Several sites also have rail access. The Richard B. Russell Regional Airport is located just north of town and features a 6,000-foot runway.

Cost of Utilities

Utility rates will also vary depending on where you locate. If your new business will be heavily dependent a few specific utilities such as gas, electricity, or coal, you will want to research the cost of the utilities even more carefully. The Chamber's Director of Economic Development can provide specific information on the cost of utilities at each industrial site. For more information, see the "Utilities and Telecom Services" information within the "Choosing the Right Location" section of this guide.

Allen, Kathleen R. Launching New Ventures : An Entrepreneurial Approach. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2006.

Alternatives to Conventional Facilities

Temporary Tenant Agreements

To help maintain a steady cash flow, some landlords offer to rent or lease their empty spaces for a short period of time. This type of relationship works well for both the landlord and the tenant if certain elements are in place. Keep in mind that temporary tenant agreements work best in areas with high foot traffic and significant customer turnover. In general, a good temporary tenant often possesses some of the following characteristics to help draw customers:

- 1. Personalized Merchandise**
- 2. Opportunities to Sample the Product**
- 3. Products that can be Demonstrated**
- 4. Products that can be Used for Entertainment the Customers**

Mobile Locations

A less conventional way to introduce a business, a mobile store such as a pushcart or kiosk often serves as a better fit for new entrepreneurial ventures. A mobile location allows the company to expand while keeping overhead costs relatively low. These types of locations are best suited for retail locations like malls or airports.



Shared Space

One creative approach to securing the best location at a reasonable price involved shared space agreements. Often, a business start-up can find suitable space within the facilities of a larger company. On the other hand, you may opt to sublet a portion of your own space to another complimentary business.

Incubators

Similar to the purpose of an incubator for an infant, a business incubator helps a new start-up business to survive the first few critical years. An incubator provides a controlled environment that increases the chances of survival and growth as your business begins. There are incubators in every region of the country. Most offer space at below-market rates along with shared resources and services such as a receptionist or a conference room. After the first few years of the start-up phase, the incubator then assists the new business in striking out on its own.

Allen, Kathleen R. Launching New Ventures : An Entrepreneurial Approach. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College Division, 2006.

Business Expansion Center



Mission Statement

The GNTC Business Expansion Center exists to provide entrepreneurs of new and expanding businesses with an environment conducive to the start-up or expanding company's chances for success by providing low cost office and developmental space, professional and support services, and access to the College's and region's resources. GNTC Business Expansion Center fosters entrepreneurial ideas for manufacturing, information technology, and service industries from the earliest stage of development until the graduation stage of growth in the Floyd, Gordon, and Polk County area.



Services Offered by the Business Expansion Center

The Business Expansion Center desires to provide entrepreneurs with a unique environment which enhances their opportunity for success by providing low cost office and manufacturing space, professional support services, access to the resources of Georgia Northwestern Technical College, and access to the area's other resources through the fostering of entrepreneurial ideas from the early stage of company development until the graduation stage of growth can be accomplished. The College's commitment to this project will help start and expand these businesses by focusing on entrepreneurial education, training, facility availability, and management support.

The GNTC Business Expansion Center offers individualized space, flexible leasing, access to postage machine, fax machine, laser printer, copier, and small package shipping and receiving.

GNTC Business Expansion Center. Georgia Northwestern Technical College. 27 Jan. 2010. <www.gntc.edu>.



Business Expansion Center Services

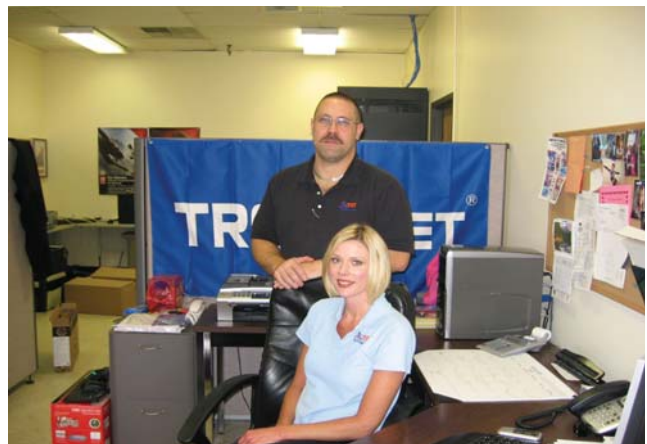
History

In June of 2001, Georgia Northwestern Technical College made a commitment to increase its very prominent role in the community's economic development efforts by the establishment of a Business Expansion Center. Having established a well known and successful economic development initiative, including Quick Start and Workforce Development, the creation of the Business Expansion Center was a natural addition.

This Expansion Center was created in order to provide for new industries and new jobs by encouraging the development of companies in its three-county service area (Floyd, Gordon, and Polk). The acquisition of a 38,500 square foot building for use in providing tenant space was accomplished in order to successfully attract manufacturing, service, and information technology start-ups as well as those involved in biomedical and biotechnical areas.

The concept of the Expansion Center was useful in that it provided the economic development tools necessary to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support services and resources. In that a business incubator's main goal is to produce successful firms that will leave the program financially viable and freestanding, the idea of a facility where rotation in and out of these firms was attractive. These graduates would create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, strengthen local and regional economies, and commercialize critical new technologies.

In addition to the economic goals, the Business Expansion Center desires to provide these entrepreneurs with a unique environment which enhances their opportunity for success by providing low cost office space and manufacturing space, professional support services, access to the resources of Georgia Northwestern Technical College, and access to the area's other resources through the fostering of entrepreneurial ideas from the early stage of company development until the graduation stage of growth can be accomplished.



Business Expansion Center

96 East Callahan Street
Rome, Georgia 30161
706-295-6283
Gail Johnson, Director
gjohnson@gntc.edu

GNTC Business Expansion Center. Georgia Northwestern Technical College. 17 Jan. 2010. <www.gntc.edu>.

Business Expansion Center Services

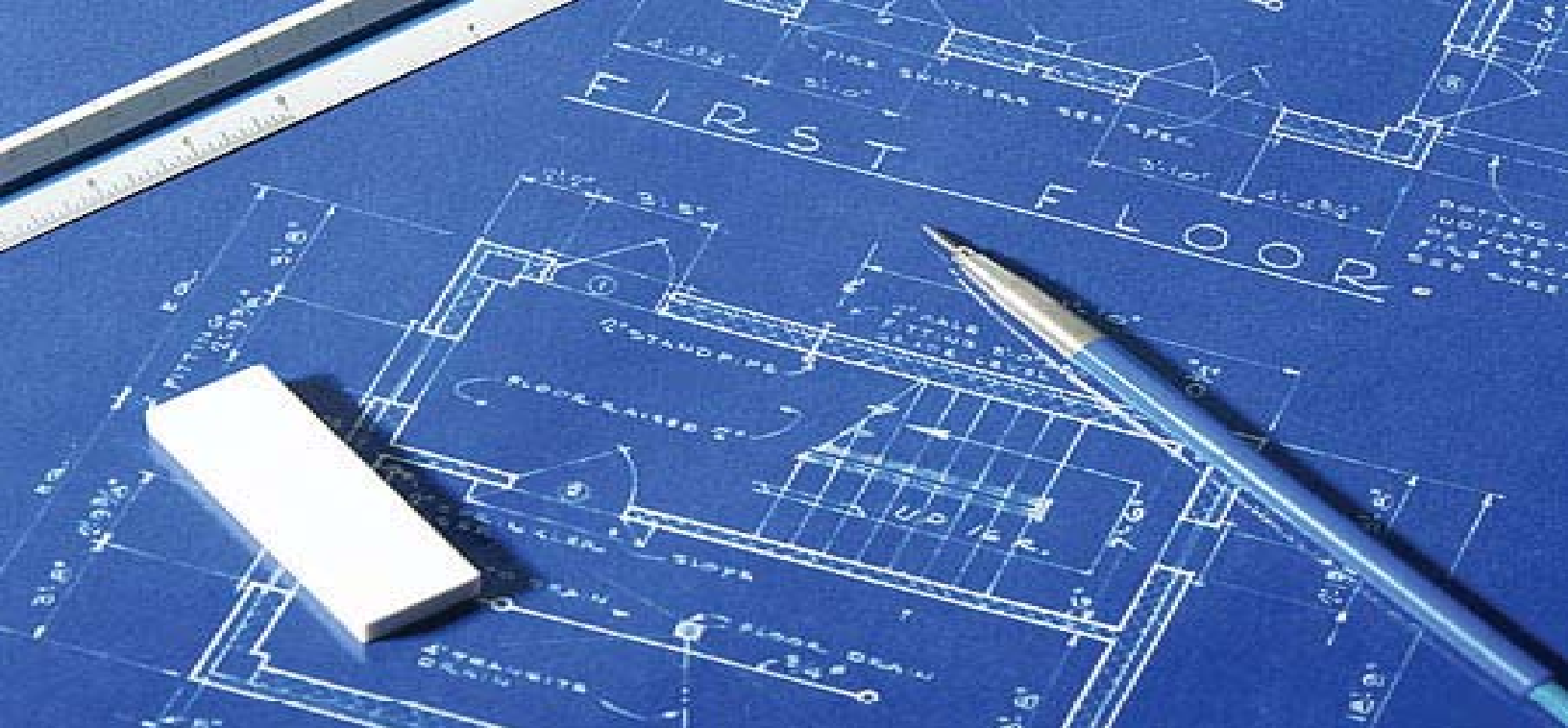
In addition to other services, the BEC staff can:

- Assist with business plan development, marketing strategies, and strategic planning.
- Help identify financing sources.
- Arrange panel meetings with accountants, lawyers and/or other professionals to discuss financial, legal, or other major business issues.
- Introduce you to board members who may be able to identify possible business opportunities.
- Help initiate contacts for strategic partnerships and other business alliances.
- Post your company on NBIA's Business Matchmaker Database, which profiles incubator companies and their strategic alliance interests.
- Assist in designing and printing marketing materials such as brochures, newsletters, ads.
- Assist in website development and identifying Internet Service Providers.
- Provide technical support and consulting for some computer software packages.
- Provide a business library with resources, including books, periodicals, and reference materials.
- Hold seminars on a variety of business topics.
- Advertise seminars and other functions outside of the Business Expansion Center focusing on small business issues.
- Coordinate newspaper articles on your business events.
- Help construct press releases.
- Provide literature on a variety of services available to small businesses.
- Bring you along as guests to civic club presentations.
- Assist in remodeling and expansion decisions to your office.
- Notarize documents.
- Perform word processing tasks.
- Provide a Resource Library.



Additionally, the Center has developed resource materials available to its tenants. Many books and periodicals have been purchased, thanks to a donation by the Georgia Power Company. These resource materials and software materials are available for use by the tenants to help them in their ongoing business successes.

GNTC Business Expansion Center. Georgia Northwestern Technical College. 27 Jan. 2010. <www.gntc.edu>.



Building Construction & Renovation

A building permit must be obtained for both new construction and renovations of and additions to existing buildings. Before you may construct a new facility or renovate an existing one, you must have this permit. Once you have obtained a building permit, complied with the regulations pertaining to the area you are in, and construction is complete, the facility will be inspected. You will then apply for a Certificate of Occupancy. Without this certificate, it is illegal for your business to reside in the facility.

For new construction, the Planning Department can provide you with a Zoning Verification Form before a building permit is issued and construction takes place.

Sign permits are required for erecting and placing any mounted or freestanding signs. Applications are filed through the Building Inspection Department. For specific information about signage, call the Rome-Floyd County Building Inspector's office in Rome.

Mandatory City of Rome Codes – (Effective January, 2007)

The Building Inspector's Office for the City of Rome adheres to the following construction codes:

International Building Code	2006 Edition
International Fuel Gas Code	2006 Edition
International Mechanical Code	2006 Edition
International Plumbing Code	2006 Edition
National Electrical Code	2005 Edition
International Fire Code	2006 Edition
International Energy Conservation Code	2000 Edition
International Residential Code	2006 Edition
International Property Maintenance Code	2003 Edition
International Existing Building Code	2003 Edition

**Rome-Floyd County
Building Inspection Department**
607 Broad Street
P O Box 1433
Rome, Georgia 30162-1433
www.rome-floyd.com
E. Cal Hicks, Permit Specialist
chicks@rome-floyd.com
706-236-4481

ZONING AND PLANNING

Once you have chosen a tentative location for your business, contact the Zoning Department to determine the permitted uses of that location. There might be special restrictions on that area.

DO NOT INVEST ANY MONEY IN A LOCATION UNTIL ZONING HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY RESEARCHED!!!

To verify that your business is located within the City of Rome's corporate limits, you can call the Zoning and Planning Office at 706-236-5025.

The Planning Department can help you determine if your location and type of business are in compliance with ordinances that adapt to current zoning classifications and building setbacks.

To locate your new business in an existing facility, the Zoning Department or City Clerk's Office can provide you with a Zoning Verification Form.

If your plans do not or cannot meet the specifications provided, you can discuss options with the Zoning Administrator. If you find the current zoning classification of your potential location does not allow for your business, you may also file an application for rezoning. In order to file this application, you should use the appropriate form the jurisdiction requires.

Rome-Floyd County Planning Department

607 Broad Street
PO Box 1433

Rome, Georgia 30162-1433
706-236-5025
www.rome.ga.us

Phil Helton,
Zoning Administrator
mplants@rome.ga.us

Sue Hiller,
Planner/Director
shiller@rome.ga.us





SPECIAL CASES: Historic Areas

Locating your new business within a historic district like Downtown Rome will require specific considerations. In Rome, no building permit within the historic district may be issued by the City Building Inspector until the project has been submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission and an approved Certificate of Appropriateness is issued. Work undertaken in the district without a Certificate of Appropriateness creates a legal risk of fines and/or having to reverse any work done for failure to follow proper procedures.

Work undertaken that is not done in accordance with an approved Certificate of Appropriateness shall be treated the same as work done without an approved COA. If work is initiated prior to approval of a COA application or to obtaining a building permit, a cease and desist order may even be issued.

Instructions regarding how to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness are available online at the City of Rome's website, www.rome.ga.us, or you may contact the Rome-Floyd County Planning Department. The Planning Department is located on the second floor of the Carnegie Building.

Rome-Floyd County Planning Department

607 Broad Street

P O Box 1433

Rome, Georgia 30162-1433

www.rome.ga.us

Delmos Stone, Planning & Historic Preservation

dstone@rome.ga.us

706-236-4476

Downtown Development Authority

History

The City of Rome created the Office of Downtown and River Development in 1994 and hired a full time director at the urging of the Development Authority. In 2000, the position was redefined as Downtown Development and Historic Preservation until 2003 when Preservation was moved to the Planning Department. The position is now devoted full time to the revitalization of the downtown district. The Director staffs the Downtown Development Authority and oversees the Main Street program and the parking program, as well as serving as a ready point of contact for prospects, project management, and administering the Downtown Revolving Loan Fund. Other staff members include and Administrative Assistant, the Parking Services Manager, two part-time Parking Attendants, and a part-time Parking Enforcement Officer

Mission

To foster an environment that encourages growth and development while enhancing the historic quality of the City and County Center.

Revolving Loan Fund

The purpose of the Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (DD RLF) is to assist cities, counties, and development authorities in their efforts to revitalize and enhance downtown areas and adjacent historic neighborhoods where DD RLF will spur commercial redevelopment.

Listed below are the criteria for financing through the RLF program in Rome, Georgia:

1. The business must be located within the corporate limits of the City of Rome.
2. The business must commit to create and retain jobs. A minimum of 51% of the employment opportunities must be filled by low income persons.
3. The business will be required to obtain at least 50% of project costs from a private lender or other source.
4. Personal equity injection of 5% will be required.
5. The business must demonstrate a reasonable chance for success to the Loan Review Committee using Market Study, Pro Forma, Business Plan, and other documentation.
6. Collateral may be required, as well as personal and/or corporate guarantees.
7. The applicant is responsible for all loan and legal fees associated with an approved loan.
8. The information that you provide must be truthful and accurate to the best of your knowledge. Failure to provide same constitutes fraud and will result in the immediate termination of the loan process.

The process requires that the applicant fill out completely the loan application and submit for all required information. Failure to provide any information requested may be grounds for denial.

Once all information is received, it will be forwarded to the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Loan Review Committee for review. For more information, contact the Downtown Development Authority.

Ann Arnold, Director

Jennifer Morgan, Administrative Assistant

607 Broad Street

PO Box 1433

Rome, GA 30162-1433

Phone: 706-236-4520

Fax: 706-236-4448

www.rome.ga.us





Utilities And Telecom Services

Establishing Water, Electricity, Gas,
Solid Waste, Recycling, Sewer, and
Telecommunications Services

Water

Depending on your physical address, you may receive water service from either the City of Rome or Floyd County. New accounts must apply in person at the office and have a legal picture ID such as a driver's license. Be prepared to pay a security deposit. One day's notice is required for all water turn-ons.

City of Rome Water Billing & Collection City Hall/City Auditorium

601 Broad Street
Rome, GA 30161-1711
Phone: 706.236.4400
Fax: 706.236.4438

Methods of Payment:

Bank Draft, Credit Card, Personal Check, Cash, Walk-In,
Drive-Through, Mail, or Night Deposit

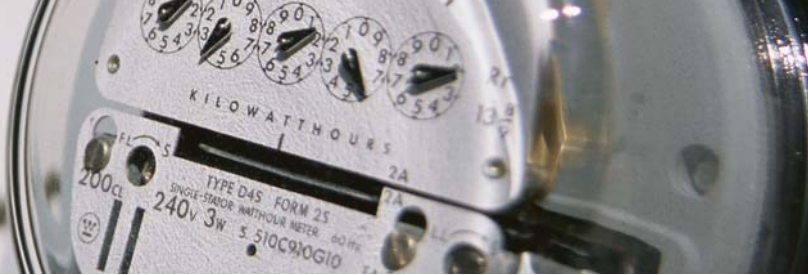
Floyd County Water Department

217 Calhoun Avenue
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 706-291-5130

Methods of Payment:

Bank Draft, Credit Card (Visa or MasterCard), Walk-In,
Drive-Through, Mail, or Night Deposit

From the 1st through 10th of the month bills may be paid at
Citizen's First and SunTrust Bank (all branches)



Electricity

The primary provider of electrical services for small businesses and residences in Rome and Floyd County is Georgia Power. Georgia Power strives to efficiently establish electric service for small businesses. Using an online application, you can submit a request to have the power connected at your new location. Simply visit their website at http://www.georgiapower.com/business_home.asp.

Georgia Power can connect your electric service every day except Sundays and holidays. Next day service is available for orders that are submitted before midnight. In most cases however, next day service is probably not available for new buildings due to installation and/or inspection requirements. A connection fee and a cash deposit (or other security) will be required to establish a new electric service account.

Georgia Power

800 Broad Street
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 1-888-660-5890
Fax: 706-236-1203

Gas

The Atlanta Gas Light Company is the primary distributor of natural gas for commercial and light industrial customers in Rome & Floyd County. AGL offers services for businesses ranging in size from the corner grocery store to the sprawling manufacturing plant. Services include programs for conversion to natural gas, gas equipment recommendations and incentives, energy efficiency programs, and customer information services.

Atlanta Gas Light Company

1515 Veteran's Memorial Highway, NE
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 706-238-8160
Fax: 406-232-3799

There are several marketers of natural gas in Rome and Floyd County. Two primary marketers in the area include Georgia Natural Gas and SCANA Energy. For a more detailed list of all the Georgia gas marketers, visit the Georgia Public Service Commission website at <http://www.psc.state.ga.us/>.

Georgia Natural Gas

1515 Veteran's Memorial Highway, NE
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 706-238-8160
Fax: 406-232-3799

SCANA Energy

504 Riverside Parkway, Suite 118
Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 706-290-9426
Fax: 706-802-0521

City of Rome Solid Waste Collections Department

200 Vaughn Road

PO Box 1433

Rome, GA 30162-1433

Phone: 706-236-4580

Fax: 706-378-3864

John Agan, Assistant Director

Allied Waste Services/ BFI Waste Services

14 Redmond Court

Rome, GA 30165

Allied Phone: 706-266-2861

BFI Phone: 706-235-8504

Waste Industries

2097 Buchanan Highway

Cedartown, GA 30125

770-748-8685

Riverside Garbage Service

PO Box 2067

Rome, GA 30164-2067

706-234-9926

Rome-Floyd County Recycling Center

405 Watters Street

Rome, GA 30161

Phone: 706.291.5266

Fax: 706-233-0027

Email: rfrecycl@roman.net

City of Rome Water and Sewer Division

City Hall & City Auditorium

601 Broad Street

Rome, GA 30161

Phone: 706-236-4560

Solid Waste

The City of Rome provides commercial waste collection for businesses within Rome city limits. Commercial garbage collection in Rome is accomplished by two front-loading garbage trucks, and one rear-loading garbage truck. The front loaders exclusively service dumpsters and are fully operated by a single driver. Businesses whose solid waste generation can be satisfied by several cans or bags are serviced by the rear loader garbage truck, which operates with a crew consisting of the driver and one laborer.

Floyd County operates six remote trash collection sites. These sites are designed as collection points for household garbage and recyclables. All sites are equipped with trash compacting units and recycle bins for paper, cardboard, cans, and glass. Each site has an attendant on duty during hours of operation. The remote sites are in operation seven days a week. **Many private waste management companies** serve Floyd County as well, including Allied Waste/BFI, Riverside Garbage, and Waste Industries.

Recycling

The Rome-Floyd Recycling Center offers several services for small businesses including confidential shredding, free office paper/corrugated box pick-up, and free waste auditing. For more details, visit the website at www.romefloydrecycles.org.

- **Confidential Shredding**

Many organizations are able to have the Recycling Center meet their legal shredding requirements by sending an employee to the Center to actually observe the shredding process.

- **Free Office Paper/Corrugated Box**

The Recycling Center has a Commercial Pick-Up Route for businesses and industries in Rome and Floyd County. This service is FREE. They pick up office paper and corrugated boxes on either a regularly scheduled or call-in basis.

- **Waste Audit**

The Rome-Floyd Recycling Center can help you determine just what is going out in your garbage as waste that could be diverted into a recyclable or reusable item.

Sewer

The mission of the City of Rome Water and Sewer Division is to provide safe, aesthetically pleasing drinking water to the public and to properly operate the sewage collection systems, transporting sewage to one of Rome's two wastewater treatment plants for processing.



Telecom Services (Broadband, Internet, Telephone, and Cable TV)

AT&T

AT&T offers many great solutions for small businesses including telephone, email, and television services. Other services include teleconferencing, email security, and networking solutions such as AT&T Multi-Protocol Label Switching service (MPLS).

Among a wide variety of services, AT&T offers a complimentary program exclusively for small business called “Exclusively Business,” that provides cost savings opportunities, 24/7 technical support, and mobile business solutions consulting. For more information on the “Exclusively Business” program, visit the AT&T website at www.att.com and click on the “Small Business Programs” tab.

In addition, AT&T offers many great services tailored to the needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs. At AT&T’s “Onward Small Biz” website, <http://smallbiz.att.com>, you can find expert business advice, free online seminars, free forums and articles, resources for women in business, and diversity resources.

AT&T

600 East 1st Street
Rome, GA 30161
706-291-8966

Comcast

Comcast offers a wide variety of products and services for small and medium businesses in Rome and Floyd County. In addition to internet, voice, and television services, Comcast offers business communication services, antivirus software, email marketing tools, and advertising sales tools at www.comcast.com. These products and services are backed by 24/7 priority business-class support.

Comcast

702 Broad Street
Rome, GA 30161
706-291-7288