

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

OPPORTUNITY IN JOHNSON CITY

An Informational Guide

Prepared for the
Village of Johnson City and
Broome County, New York

January 2021

*This project is prepared for Broome County and the New York State
Department of State with state funds provided through the Brownfield
Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program.*



Business Improvement District Opportunity in Johnson City

An Informational Guide

Prepared for the Village of Johnson City and Broome County, NY



Prepared by Bergmann Associates and Sustainable Planning Design



About the Guide

This informational guide was developed as part of the Endicott-Johnson Brownfield Opportunity Area project and provides a detailed introduction to Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). It is based on a presentation to property owners, business owners and community stakeholders conducted on January 20, 2021.

BIDs are an implementation tool that is available property owners, tenants and community stakeholders to improve their business district. They serve as the foundation to an organizational structure that works to provide improvements and services within a designated area. Village property owners, tenants and community stakeholders are invited to use this guide to learn more about how BIDs function and to begin a discussion about the formation of a BID in Johnson City's downtown area.

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Johnson City Downtown Area

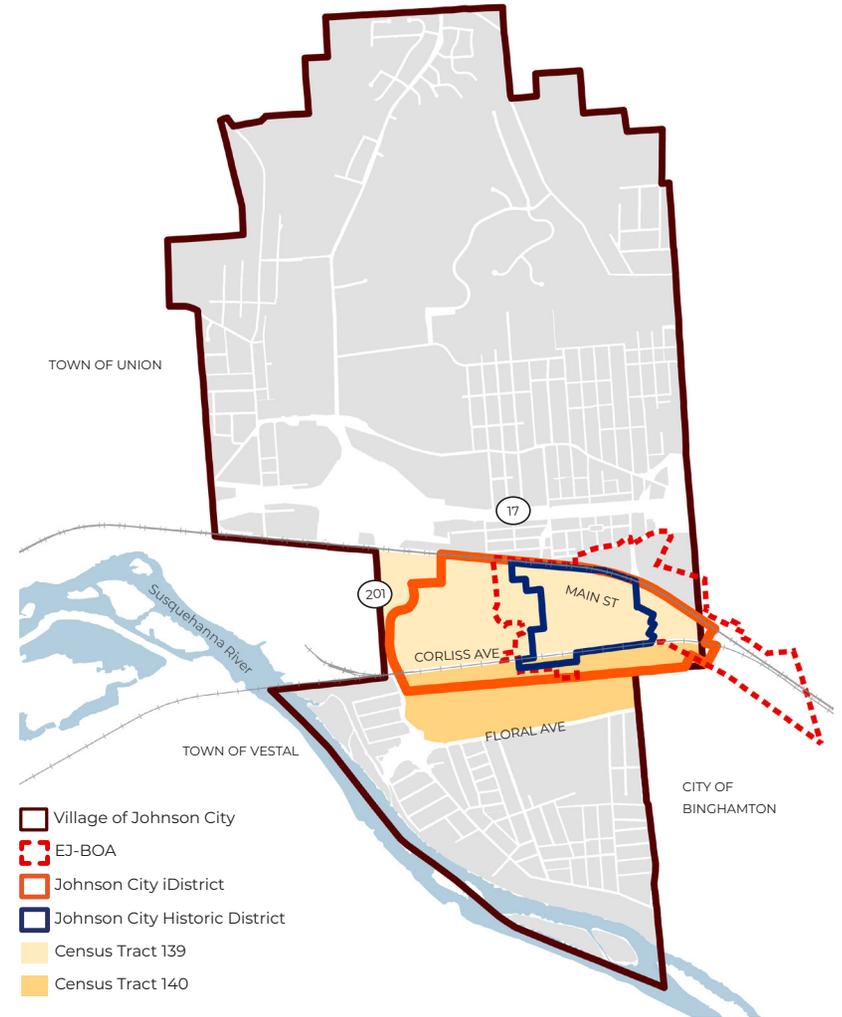
The downtown area of the Village of Johnson City is located west of the City of Binghamton along the Main Street commercial corridor. This area has seen significant recent investment from Binghamton University, the Goodwill Theatre, and UHS Wilson Medical Center. In addition, the area is part of several programs and designations, such as:

- **Endicott-Johnson Brownfield Opportunity Area (EJ-BOA)**, a designation that makes the area more attractive for private investment.
- **Johnson City i-District**, one of three innovation districts that are part of State's Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI) to transform i-Districts into vibrant centers of commerce, innovation, and shared community spaces.
- **Johnson City Historic District**, a designated district on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.
- **Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone)**, Census Tract 139 and 140 are part of this Small Business Administration (SBA) program that helps small businesses gain preferential access to federal procurement opportunities.
- **Opportunity Zone**, Census Tract 139 is part of this federal program that encourages private investment in low-income communities.

These investments, initiatives and designations help to position the downtown area for continued investment momentum.

Village of Johnson City

REFERENCE MAP



1. Introduction to BIDs

Key to successfully forming a Business Improvement District is community support. To build this support there needs to be a clear understanding of what a BID is and what it can provide. This chapter details what it means to be a Business Improvement District.

A BID Definition

The New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS), which oversees and supports all BIDs in NYC, states:

“A Business Improvement District (BID) is a geographical area **where local stakeholders oversee and fund** the maintenance, improvement and promotion of their commercial district.”¹

¹ www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bids.page

Key Features

Elaborating on the definition of a BID, there are three important features that characterize Business Improvement Districts: that they are funded, they have a board of directors and they apply to a designated area.



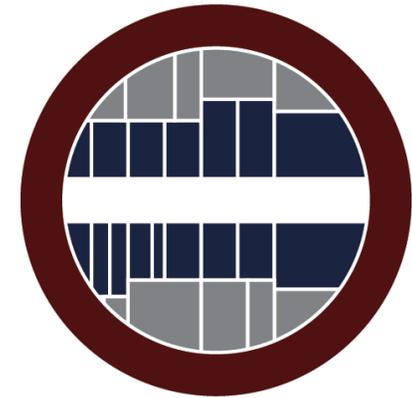
Funded Organization

→ A special assessment, or BID Assessment, on property owners within the district provides a **sustainable-funding** source for improvements and services within the district.



Board of Directors

→ A BID is managed by a **Board of Directors** composed of representatives of owners and tenants within the district.



Designated Boundary

→ A BID has a **designated boundary** that is determined as part of the formation of the district.

Where are BIDs Used?

The use of Business Improvement Districts began in 1970 in the City of Toronto, Canada. Since then, BIDs have been used in communities across the globe. According to the International Downtown Association there are over 4,000 place management organizations, often called Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), globally.¹ In the United States there are over 1,000 BIDs² and in New York City alone there are 76 BIDs.³ In New York State they are in a variety of communities, including: Elmira, Troy, Albany, Buffalo, Hornell, Ithaca, Geneva, Auburn, Scotia, Glens Falls, Canandaigua, Poughkeepsie, Syracuse, and Corning.

State Legislation

The authority to establish a BID is granted through state-level enabling legislation.⁴ In New York State, Article 19-A of the General Municipal Law (GMU) provides the ability to create a BID. This

legislation includes requirements such as:

- » A District Plan with specific contents
- » A District Management Association
- » A review by the State Comptroller

In addition, Article 19-A identifies specific regulations for BIDs, such as:

- » Tax and debt limitations
- » Local legislative powers

¹ <https://downtown.org/about-the-industry/>
² www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/fact_sheets/value_cap_bid.aspx
³ www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bids.page
⁴ www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/fact_sheets/value_cap_bid.aspx

Property Owner Support

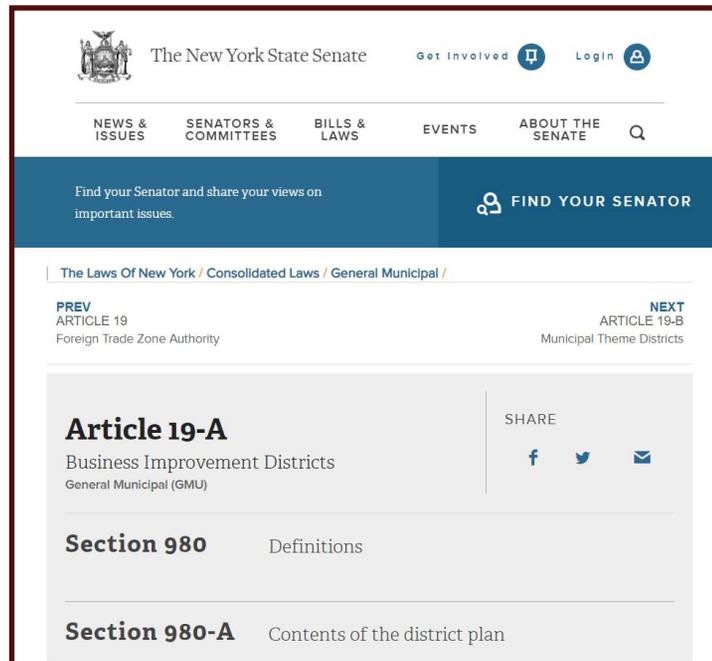
As part of the notice and hearing process, the district will not be established if there are objections from either:

→ **51% of the assessed valuation of all the taxable real property within the District**

OR

→ **51% of the property owners in the District.**

With this legislation, ensuring that there is property owner support is an imperative to BID formation.



The New York State Senate website: nysenate.gov

BID Improvements & Services

BIDs in New York State have the authority to provide a variety of improvements and services within the district, which generally include the following four types:

1 District Improvements

Construction or installation of improvements on or within municipally or district owned or leased property that will restore or promote business activity within the district. Such as:

- » Beautification Improvements (e.g. landscaping)
- » Streetscape Improvements
- » Safety Improvements
- » Parking Lots or Parking Garage Facilities



Spring Street Park Hudson Square BID, NYC
StreetLab.org

2 Operation and Maintenance of District Improvements

Ongoing operation and maintenance of a district improvements is a key service that BIDs can provide. For example, a municipality may construct or install a district improvement, such as a park, and a BID may provide the ongoing operation and maintenance.



Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District
<https://www.mplsdid.com/> / Rochestersubway.com

Services provided by a BID are in addition to existing municipal services, they do not replace municipal services.

3 Additional Maintenance or Other Additional Services

Supplemental services that a BID may provide include:

- » Enhanced Sanitation Services
- » Marketing, Promotion and Advertising
- » Seasonal Decorations
- » Services for Security of Persons and Property

4 Accessibility Improvements

Increasing access for all from public areas to adjacent businesses within the district.



Downtown Toms River BID Harvest Festival
<https://downtowntomsriver.com/harvest-arts-festival/>



Hyannis Main Street BID
<http://www.hyannismainstreet.com/photo-gallery/>



Impact of BIDs

Business Improvement Districts can provide the capacity to make real impacts within an area. Annual reports of all different BIDs show what can be achieved. This is particularly evident in New York City where there are a total of 76 BIDs. According to the NYC Department of Small Business Services, these NYC BIDs account for:

- \$167 million invested in neighborhoods each year
- 93,000 businesses served
- 129 public spaces maintained
- 4.05 million bags of trash collected¹

¹ <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bids.page>

Increase in Property Values

The overarching benefits of Business Improvement Districts can be difficult to measure because they enhance things like the sense of place or pedestrian comfort-level. Still, efforts have been made to show the overall impact of a BID by looking at property values. According to a Study by Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy, BIDs have a large positive impact on the value of commercial property. On average the value of commercial property within a BID increases by approximately 15 percentage points than comparable properties in the same neighborhood outside the BID. While smaller BIDs did not have a discernible impact, the study did not find that the formation of small BIDs leads to a reduction in commercial property values.¹

¹ Amy Armstrong, Ingrid Gould, Ellen, Amy Ellen Schwartz, Ioan Voicu. "The Benefits of Business Improvement Districts: Evidence from New York City." Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy, New York University. July 2007. <https://furmancenter.org/files/publications/FurmanCenterBIDsBrief.pdf>

The Furman Center study of property values showed, for small BIDs:

**COSTS =
BENEFITS**

Compare to Other Organizations

There are a variety of other types or organizations that focus efforts on promoting, supporting or enhancing commercial areas, these include:

- Voluntary Downtown Organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Business Association
- Local or Community Development Organizations

Each of these types of organizations serve as capacity building for the business community and there is opportunity to partner with existing local organizations. The differences between these organizations and a BID is that they:

- Don't require the same level of property owner buy-in
- Are not necessarily bound to a specific area
- May not have a self-sustaining funding source

Challenges to BID Formation

While there are many benefits and opportunities that BIDs provide, when communities look to form a BID, there are a couple common concerns.

→ Concerns regarding property owner requirement to pay a special assessment

Opponents worry about an extra expense on district property owners. In addressing this concern, it should be emphasized that BIDs provide services that are supplemental to municipal services. The BID Assessment provides a method of pooling resources for the benefit of the district. BID services can provide more substantial impacts than just one property owner investing in additional services. For example, an individual property owner may provide an extra service by making sure when it snows the sidewalk in front of their building remains clear throughout the day, but the individual property owner isn't likely to provide that service for the entire downtown. A BID can provide extra services, like snow removal, on a district level.

→ Concerns regarding how the district is managed

Opponents worry about who is in control of the BID. An important part of the state legislation for BIDs is that it requires a district management association and has specific requirements for representation of owners and tenants within district on the Board of Directors. The BID is also required to have Board members appointed by certain members of municipality. These requirements create a public / private partnership for the district.

2. Comparable Case Studies

Looking at existing BID's in other communities can help illustrate how these districts are applied to a specific area and can serve the community.

How Communities with BID's Compare to Johnson City

Communities that were selected as comparable case studies were those with specific criteria:

- **Located in New York State:** Since BID's follow state-level legislation, it was important to use NYS communities as case studies.
- **Have an existing BID:** Not all communities have established a BID.
- **Relatively similar demographics:** The selection targeted communities with similar population size and median household income.
- **Presence of higher education institutions:** The selection targeted communities that were proximate to colleges and universities.

The adjacent table shows the three comparable case studies and the respective characteristics.

Table 1: Community Comparison

	VILLAGE OF JOHNSON CITY	CITY OF TROY	CITY OF GENEVA	CITY OF ITHACA
Population	14,448	49,458	12,787	30,569
Median Household Income	\$42,299	\$45,728	\$44,050	\$34,424
Colleges & Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Binghamton University School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences ↪ Binghamton University Decker School of Nursing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, ↪ Russell Sage College, ↪ Hudson Valley Community College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Hobart and William Smith Colleges, ↪ Cornell AgriTech, ↪ Finger Lakes Health College of Nursing & Health Sciences, and ↪ Finger Lakes Community College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Cornell University, ↪ Ithaca College, ↪ Tompkins Cortland Community College

Source for Demographic Information: US Census, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Downtown Troy BID

Key characteristics of the Downtown Troy BID:

- ➔ **BID Established: 2009 (Vote to Continue in 2014)**
- ➔ **Staff Positions: Executive Director, Communications Admin, P/T Special Events & Programs Assistant, and Beautification**
- ➔ **Size: 301 BID Parcels**

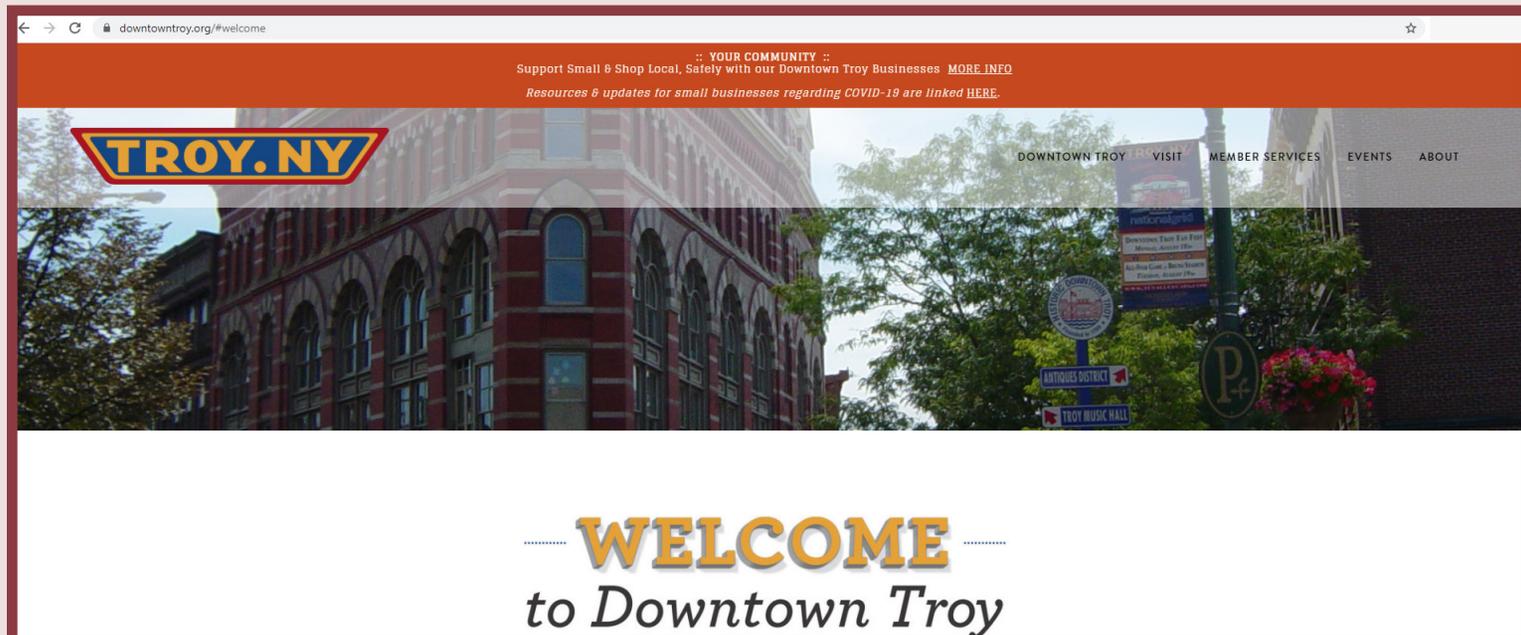
Established relatively recently, the BID website provides extensive information on how the district organization was set up including the Organizational Plan that was completed in 2008. Interestingly, it is noted that there was a failed effort in 2003, showing that the formation of a BID may be a more long-term investment.

The organization has a small staff and a variety of objectives, including:

- » Marketing and Member Services;
- » Special Events;
- » Business Development and Retention; and
- » Public Services / Beautification

According to the Downtown Troy Annual Report, accomplishments in 2018 include 26 new and expanding businesses, upgraded directional signage, new holiday decorations, small business learning sessions, and more.

Downtown Troy Website



→ **How is the Downtown Troy BID Funded?**

The Downtown Troy BID Assessment is 5% of City Tax Charge. This amount averages approximately a total of \$100,000 annually. What this means for an individual property owner is if, for example, you pay \$1,000 in City Taxes, you will pay \$50 in BID Assessment, annually. The formula for the BID Assessment is shown as follows:

Example Amount of City Taxes	x	5%	=	Example BID Assessment	EXAMPLE BID ASSESSMENT FORMULA
↓		↓		↓	
$\$1,000 \times (5 \div 100) = \50					

→ **This BID Assessment applies to all vacant parcels and properties in commercial use, and residential properties that are comprised of three or more dwelling units, whether or not they are owner-occupied.**

In 2008, the total BID Assessment for all properties was \$84,655, with a minimum BID Assessment of \$4 and a maximum BID Assessment of \$3,913.

→ **Additional Funding: Supplementing the BID Assessment is approximately \$400,000 in sponsorship and special events.**

→ **Tips for a Successful BID from Troy**

A conversation with the Executive Director for Downtown Troy provided some helpful advice for starting up a BID, such as:

- Arrange for the fullest tax assessment for consistent income
- Make the BID boundary larger if you think there will be expansion of businesses
- Establish a Contract / MOU with Municipality for a clear understanding of services provided
- Communicate with other NYS BIDs



Photo Credit: Daniel Case

Geneva BID

Key characteristics of the Geneva BID:

- ➔ **BID Established: 1985, 2nd BID in NYS**
- ➔ **Staff Positions: Executive Director, BID Coordinator and P/T Maintenance**
- ➔ **Size: 150 BID Parcels (18.5 acre designated area)**

The Geneva BID was the second BID established in New York State. It has a small staff that works to provide services within the BID. Its initial goal was to create a “self-taxing entity” for a more desirable place to work and visit. The BID recently celebrated its 35 year anniversary, demonstrating the longevity these organizations can have in a community.

Today the services provided by the BID include:

- » Beautification: Christmas lights and holiday decorations, adopt-a-planter and adopt-a-bed programs, floral baskets and planters
- » Ongoing Maintenance: watering, snow removal, salting crosswalks and sidewalks, trash collection event set-up, clean-up of public areas, etc.
- » Work with the City of Geneva to maximize City programs
- » Promotes businesses via social media, earned media and an electronic kiosk downtown
- » Provide Information on Downtown Vacancies
- » Special Events

Geneva BID Website



→ **How is the Geneva BID Funded?**

The Geneva BID Assessment is 3.25% Per Thousand/Unit of Taxable Value. This provides a total BID assessment of approximately \$100,000 annually. What this means for an individual property owner is if, for example, your property has a taxable value of \$100,000, you would pay \$325 annually. The formula for the BID Assessment is shown as follows:

Example Taxable Value	x (3.25 ÷ 1,000) =	Example BID Assessment	EXAMPLE BID ASSESSMENT FORMULA
↓	↓	↓	
$\$100,000 \times (3.25 \div 1,000) = \325			

→ **This BID Assessment applies primarily to commercial properties, including apartments, as well as some vacant commercial properties and one industrial manufacturing property.**

→ **Additional Funding: Supplementing the BID Assessment is a Grant from City of Geneva**

→ **Tips for a Successful BID from Geneva**

Communication with the Executive Director for the Geneva BID provided some helpful advice for starting up a BID, such as:

- A strong Board of Directors and strong staff leadership is critical
- Maintain a relationship with local municipality
- Establish partnerships with other organizations

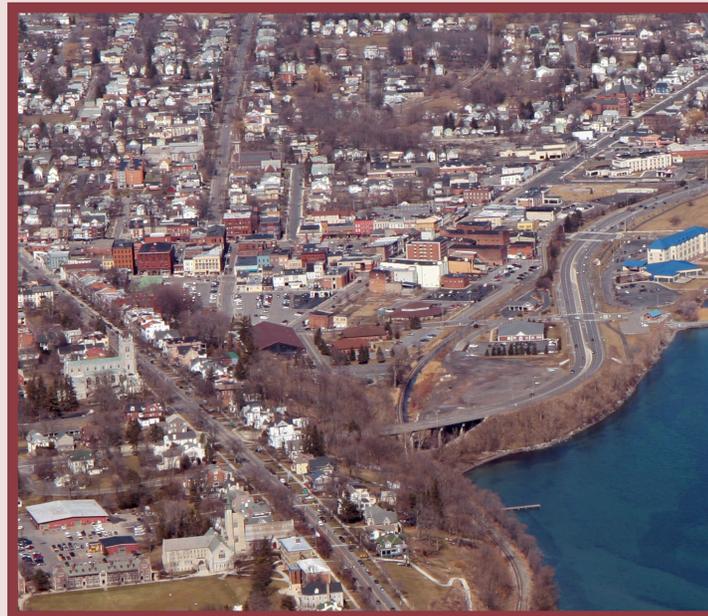


Photo Credit: VisitFingerLakes

Downtown Ithaca BID

Key characteristics of the Downtown Ithaca BID:

- **BID Established: 1997**
- **Staff Positions: Managed by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. Staff of 8.**
- **Size: 157 Total Parcels**

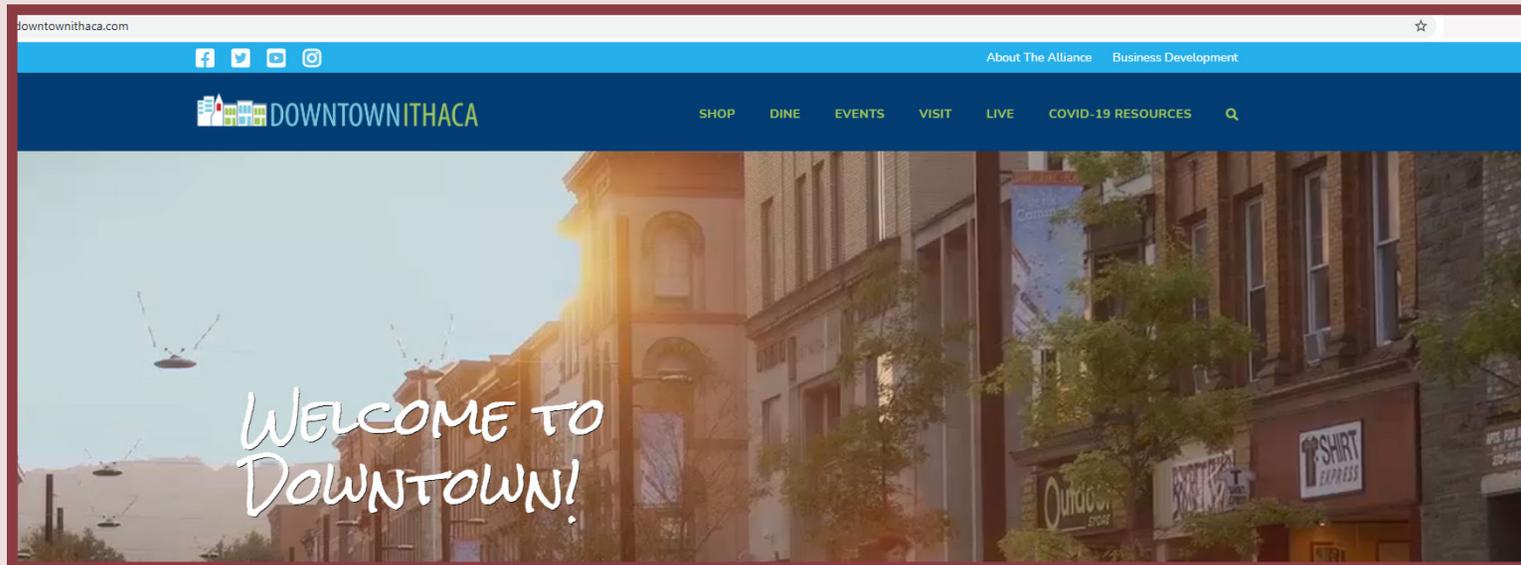
The Downtown Ithaca BID is larger than the other two case studies with a staff of eight. As such, the BID is able to facilitate development efforts as well as more typical services, including: business retention and development, marketing and membership services, government relations, environmental infrastructure, special events, and transportation services.

Other services the BID provides includes:

- Grant Writing
- Downtown Ithaca Gift Cards
- Downtown Ambassadors

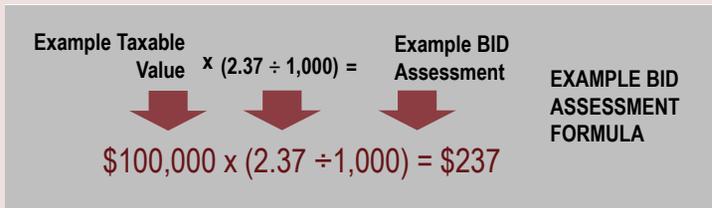
Downtown Ithaca is also involved in efforts to assist businesses dealing with COVID-19 impacts. This is a key service that this, and other BIDs, are able to provide that shows how having this organizational structure established can help the local business community cope with current challenges.

Downtown Ithaca Website



→ **How is the Downtown Ithaca BID Funded?**

The Downtown Ithaca BID Assessment is 2.37% Per Thousand/Unit of Taxable Value. What this means for an individual property owner is if, for example, your property has a taxable value of \$100,000, you would pay \$237 annually. The formula for the BID Assessment is shown as follows:



→ **This BID Assessment applies primarily to commercial properties, including apartments, as well as some vacant commercial properties and recreation / entertainment property.**

→ **Accomplishments**

According to the Downtown Ithaca Annual Report, in 2019 Three Major Projects Completed: Canopy by Hilton Hotel, 202 The Commons Bank Building Renovation, and City Centre Residential and Commercial Project. Combined the projects add:

- \$90 million of total new investment
- 75,000 total SF of new office space
- 15,000 total SF of new retail space
- 192 total units of new housing
- 132 total new hotel rooms

→ **Tips for a Successful BID from Ithaca**

A conversation with the Executive Director for Downtown Ithaca provided some helpful advice for starting up a BID, such as:

- Ex officio positions on the Board of Directors provide an opportunity to engage educational institutions and other community organizations
- Districts evolve and so do the district needs. Ensure when establishing the mission for the BID it is broad enough to accommodate changing needs.



Photo Credit: Kenneth C. Zirkel

3. Steps to Creating a BID

In considering how Johnson City would go about creating a Business Improvement District, the process includes building community support and following the requirements of New York State legislation.

In general there are six steps to forming a Business Improvement District (BID), as shown in the figure below. While all of these steps are critical, the initial focus is on establishing a steering committee, identifying the area and need and creating a district plan. These steps provide the foundation to build strong community support for a BID. The following provides guidance for completing each of these initial steps.

Organize a Steering Committee

During the formation of a BID there are many decisions that need to be made regarding how the BID will be structured. Engaging a steering committee and a champion or champions to move the process forward is critical. When creating a steering committee, be sure to involve:

- A Mix of Property Owners and Tenants
- Municipal Representatives
- Cultural and Educational Institutions
- A Champion to Move the Process Forward

BID Formation Process Steps



Identify Area and Need

A primary question the Steering Committee will need to address is what the BID will do once established. To answer this question there will need to be detailed information, such as a database of properties based on the potential BID Area. This database together with local knowledge should define the following:

- What commercial area should be included in the BID?
- What area would most benefit? Where would it be most effective?
- What is the vision for the area?
- Is there a need for additional programs and services?

Create a District Plan

Once the Steering Committee starts to establish the need and service area for the BID, it should start to create a District Plan that is required as part of New York State legislation. Specific elements will need to be included, such as:

- Map with Defined boundaries of the District
- Report Describing the District
- Present and Proposed Uses
- Improvements Proposed
- Total annual amount proposed to be expended for improvements, maintenance and operation
- Proposed source of financing

- Proposed time for implementation
- Any proposed rules and regulations
- Identification of district management

As part of the District Plan, specific rules that adapt to the needs of the community can be identified. For example, in Troy the BID had a stipulation for a renewal vote after the BID was established to ensure effectiveness.

Funding & Operations

In developing the information for a district, two items that will need focused attention include funding and operations. When considering funding, the Steering Committee will need to identify a BID Assessment Formula that will be supported by property owners and provide enough funding for services. The BID Assessment should be primarily on commercial properties and may apply different rates to different types of property. When determining an appropriate formula, be sure that it is simple enough for people to understand.

The Steering Committee will also have to examine how the BID will function. The Committee should consider who will manage the BID, what staff is required, what the relationship with the Village will be and if there are potential partnerships with other organizations.

4. Feasibility in Johnson City

Before beginning the formation process, it is important to consider BID feasibility as it may not make sense for all communities or may need a long-term approach to establishment.

Potential for a BID in Johnson City

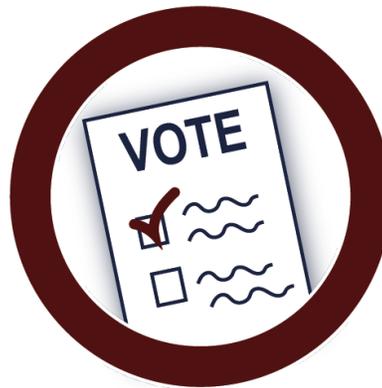
There are three main questions to consider when thinking about the feasibility of creating a BID in Johnson City:

- 1 Is there enough local support to vote for the establishment of a BID?
- 2 Is there the potential for investment in the BID?
- 3 Are there enough commercial properties to support a BID?

Elements that Support Feasibility:



Commercial Properties



Local Support



Potential For Investment

Commercial Properties in the Village of Johnson City

To begin to assess if there are enough commercial properties to support a BID in Johnson City, a review of land use was conducted. This review looked for concentrations of commercial properties, showing that the downtown has a clear concentration along Main Street and along the surrounding streets. While there are other concentrations of commercial property, particularly along Reynolds Road and Harry L Drive, they are separated from the downtown area by rail corridors and the Southern Tier Expressway.

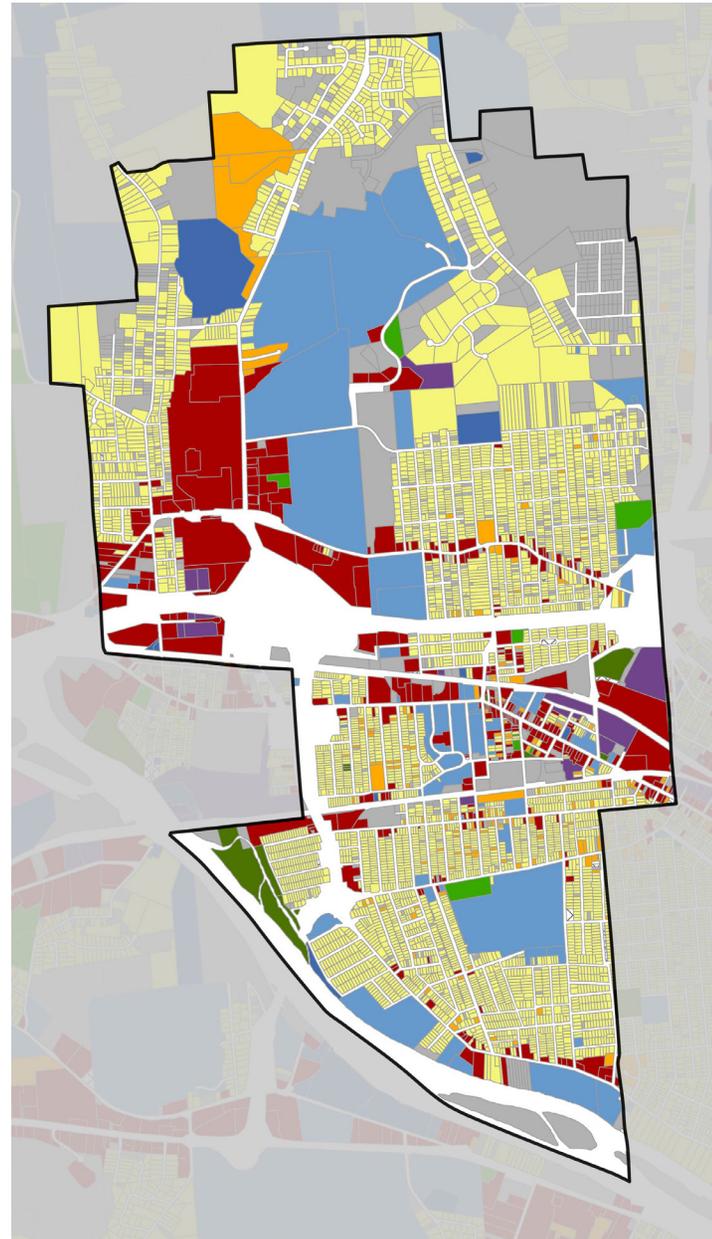
This assessment helped to identify three potential BID areas to evaluate:

- Main Street Commercial Properties
- Main Street & Historic District Commercial Properties
- i-District Commercial Properties

Land Use Categories

	Agricultural
	Commercial
	Community Services
	Industrial
	Mining
	Mobile Home Park
	Multi-Residential
	No Data
	Public Services
	Recreational
	Residential
	Vacant
	Wild/Forest

Village Land Use Map Using Parcel Data from Broome County



Potential BID Areas and Assessment Evaluation

To better understand what the existing commercial property would provide in a BID Assessment, an evaluation of three potential BID areas was conducted. For each area, the evaluation measured a BID Assessment based on a percentage of Village tax. Two different percentages were used, 5% and 20%. The 5% is consistent with the BID Assessment used in Downtown Troy, where it was capped at a level that would maintain property owner support. The 20% is consistent with Downtown Ithaca, where a larger percentage has been used to help facilitate specific improvement projects.

Main Street Commercial Properties

POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

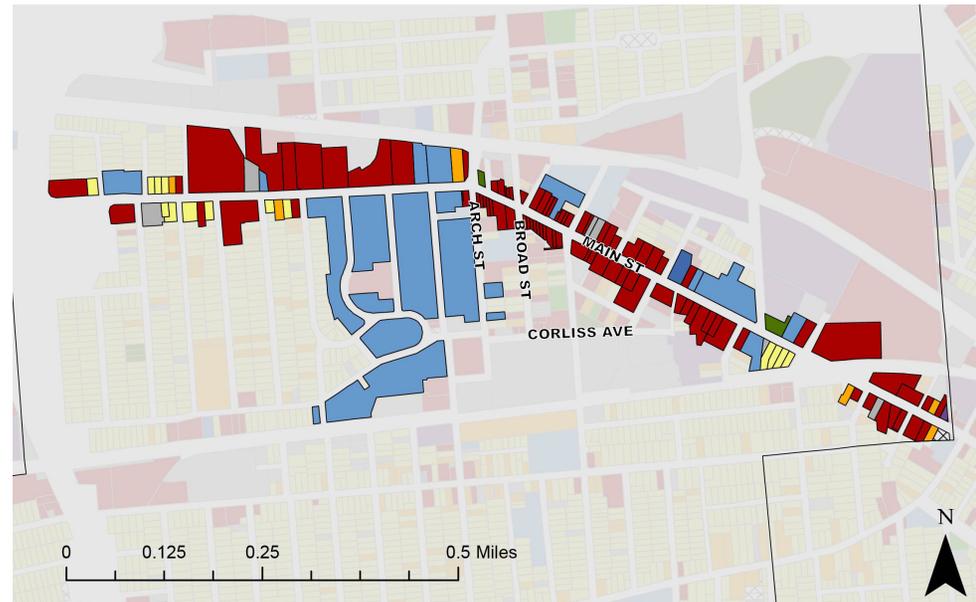
Acres: 60.95 acres;
Total Parcels: 129

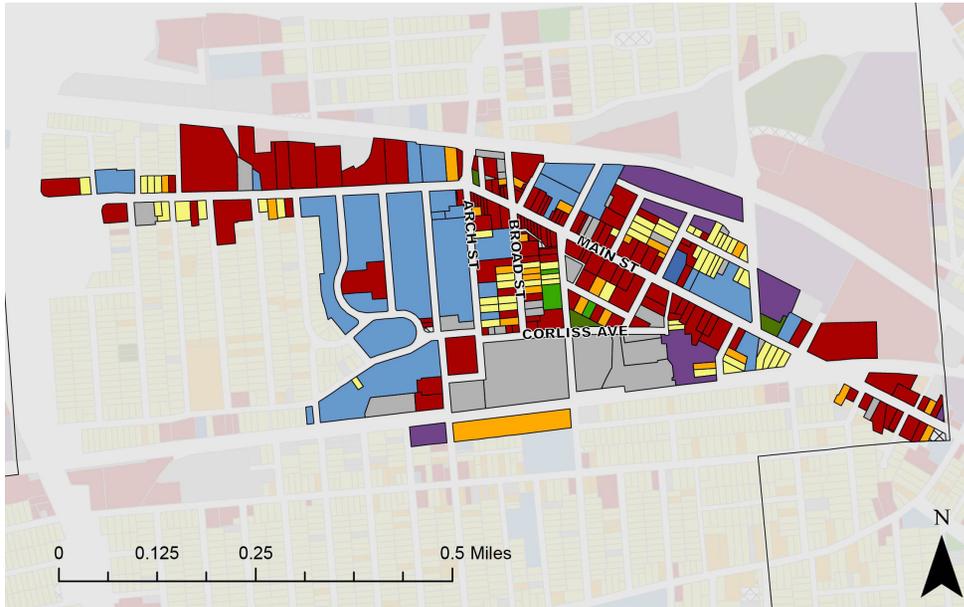
5% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$17,400
(Average BID Assessment of \$183, Minimum BID Assessment of \$11, Maximum BID Assessment of \$1,050)

20% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$69,601
(Average BID Assessment of \$733, Minimum BID Assessment of \$44, Maximum BID Assessment of \$4,199)

Evaluation Considerations:

- New York State Legislation limits the BID Assessment to 20% of the total general municipal taxes levied in that year against the taxable real property in the district.
- The areas evaluated were chosen based on land use and using existing planning areas as a starting point, but do not need to follow any existing boundaries. Instead the boundary should be adjusted to best fit the needs of the BID.
- Commercial properties included in the assessment included multi-residential properties and vacant commercial. All wholly exempt properties were excluded.



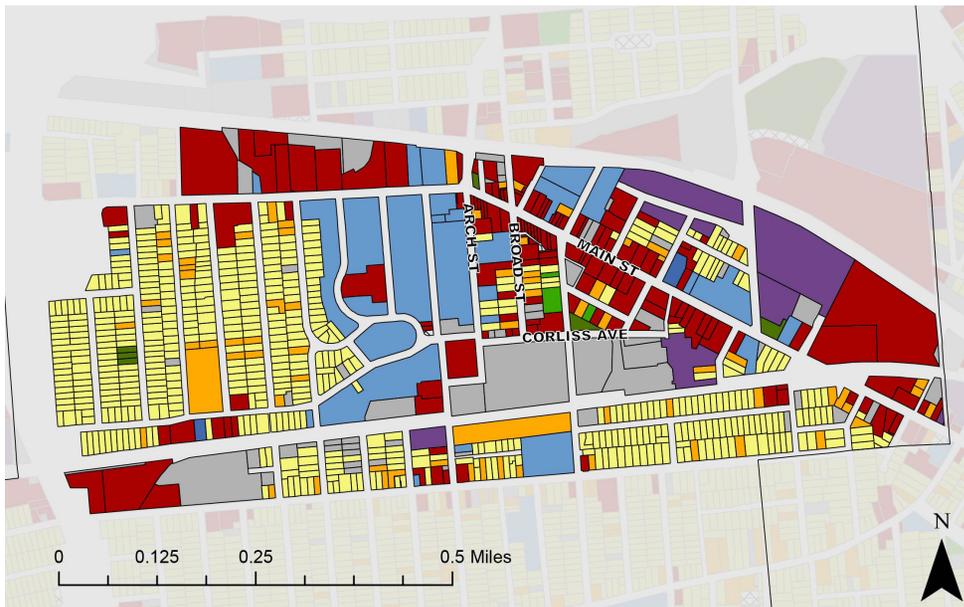


Main Street & Historic District Commercial Properties POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

Acres: 108.49 acres;
Total Parcels: 267

5% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$23,678
(Average BID Assessment of \$166, Minimum BID Assessment of \$7, Maximum BID Assessment of \$1,367)

20% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$94,712
(Average BID Assessment of \$662, Minimum BID Assessment of \$29, Maximum BID Assessment of \$5,468)



i-District Commercial Properties POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

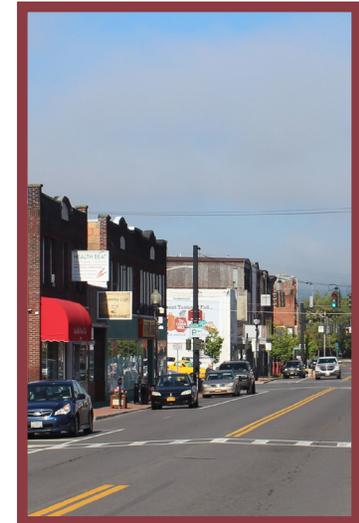
Acres: 205.53 acres;
Total Parcels: 841

5% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$34,771
(Average BID Assessment of \$167, Minimum BID Assessment of \$5, Maximum BID Assessment of \$2,823)

20% BID Assessment on Village Tax: \$139,084
(Average BID Assessment of \$669, Minimum BID Assessment of \$22, Maximum BID Assessment of \$11,292)

Results of the Commercial Properties Evaluation

The evaluation shows that how the boundary is adjusted can greatly impact the amount that the BID will be able to collect in assessment. The inclusion of the historic district in addition to the Main Street corridor in the BID area shifts from a 5% BID Assessment of \$17,400 to \$23,678. The evaluation also shows that a larger area does not make as much of an impact if there are not many commercial properties. The i-District property nearly doubles the acreage of the area, but does not do the same for the total BID Assessment. Finally, the evaluation demonstrates that an important consideration is how large the percentage of tax the BID Assessment should be based on services that the BID would like to provide. The higher the percentage of tax the BID Assessment is, the more funding the BID will have to provide improvements and services. The Steering Committee will need to establish a clear picture of what services are needed and connect those services to the necessary BID Assessment percentage.



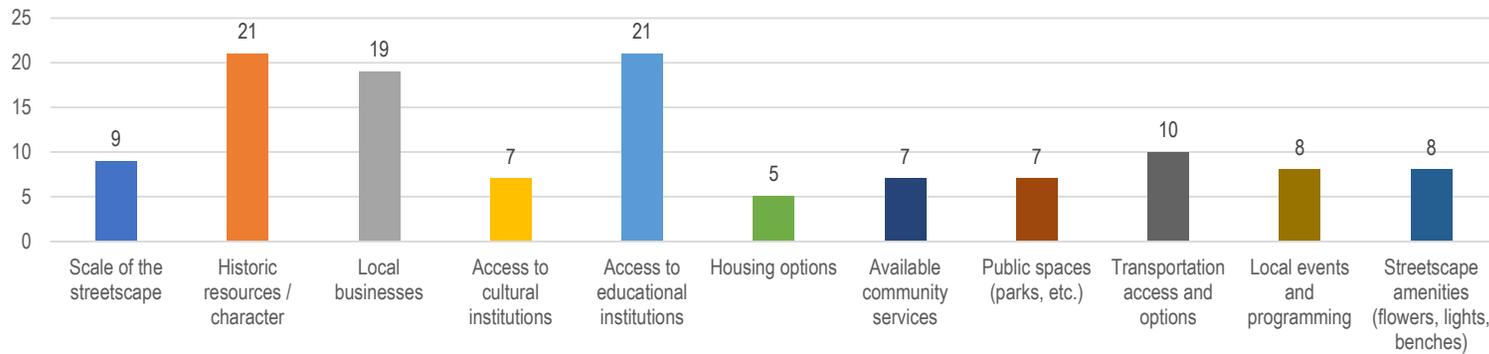
The Village of Johnson City Downtown Area

5. Summary of Initial Input

On January 20, 2021, two virtual informational meetings were held for the Village of Johnson City and Broome County regarding Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). The meetings outlined the opportunity for a BID in Johnson City to local property owners and other community stakeholders. Following a presentation, participants were asked a series of five questions using an interactive app to begin to gather input in the potential development of a Johnson City BID. The following summarizes this initial input:

The first question asked participants to identify the top five greatest assets in downtown Johnson City. The responses showed historic resources, access to educational institutions and local businesses were selected the most. This information is important as the community looks to develop a vision and mission for a BID in Johnson City. Detailed responses to the question are shown in the table below.

What do you see as the Top Five greatest assets associated with downtown Johnson City?



Participants were also asked about the importance of certain improvements and how they would prioritize services. Improvement participants were asked to rate were: additional beautification; streetscape and accessibility improvements; more wayfinding signage; public space improvements / expansion; and, addition of public art. In both meetings participants rated additional beautification as most important, followed by public space improvements / expansion. Services participants were asked to prioritize were: increased coordination among business owners; marketing and promotion of downtown / BID; streetscape cleaning and

maintenance; enhanced safety measures; more programming and special events; and, area ambassadors. In both meetings participants identified increased coordination among business owners as the top priority, followed by marketing and promotion of the downtown / BID.

In the final question, participants were asked if they would support the creation of a BID in Johnson City based on current information. With 14 people in support and 12 people unsure, the meeting participants showed a clear interest in the potential development of a BID in Johnson City!

Word Clouds Summarizing the Top Priorities for Downtown



Additional Involvement

To move forward with the development of a BID, the Steering Committee should work to gain additional involvement from the property owners, tenants and community stakeholders. This will help build needed support for a BID and better outline the needs of the community. As part of this project, two handouts were prepared as educational tools, an Introduction to BIDs and a Community Input Survey. These handouts can be used to help to further inform the community.

Introduction to BIDs Handout

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) OPPORTUNITY IN JOHNSON CITY

Prepared for the Village of Johnson City and Broome County, NY

This brief introductory guide provides key information for property owners and community stakeholders who may be interested in a Business Improvement District (BID) in Johnson City. For more information, contact Broome County to view a recording of a virtual meeting that provides a detailed introduction.

What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District or a BID is a geographical area where local stakeholders oversee and fund the maintenance, improvement and promotion of their commercial district.¹ A BID is an implementation tool for property owners to work together and pool resources by applying a special assessment within the designated area. Municipalities are allowed to form a BID through New York State legislation, which sets the specific requirements and regulations.

KEY FEATURES:

- A special assessment, or BID Assessment, on property owners within the district provides a **sustainable-funding** source for improvements and services within the district.
- A BID is managed by a **Board of Directors** composed of representatives of owners and tenants within the district.
- A BID has a **designated boundary**.

BIDs are used in communities large and small across the country and throughout the world. They have been an important tool for property owners since the 1970s.

BID IMPROVEMENTS & SERVICES: A BID can:

- **Construct or install improvements to promote business activity** (e.g. streetscape improvements, street fixtures, park areas, etc.)
- **Provide operation and maintenance of improvements**
- **Provide additional maintenance and services** (e.g. marketing, special events, enhanced sanitation, etc.)
- **Construct accessibility improvements**

Services provided by a BID are in addition to existing municipal services, they do not replace municipal services.

¹ <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/bsb/neighborhoods/bids.page>

Next Steps

Get together with other property owners and community stakeholders to support the formation of a BID in Johnson City! Discuss your vision for a BID in Johnson City, including a proposed designated area and the services that should be provided.

Tips from BID Executive Directors

Many other communities in New York State have taken advantage of the opportunities a BID can provide. Communication with other BIDs can offer first-hand knowledge, such as:

- ✓ Think long-term when determining the mission for the BID.
- ✓ Make sure you have enough properties and BID assessment to support the improvements and services proposed.
- ✓ Outline a clear relationship with the Village.
- ✓ Establish a strong board of directors and staff leadership.
- ✓ Partner with other organizations.
- ✓ Allow for flexibility as the organization evolves.



This document was prepared for Broome County and the New York State Department of State with state funds provided through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program.

Community Input Survey Handout

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) OPPORTUNITY IN JOHNSON CITY

Prepared for the Village of Johnson City and Broome County, NY

PROVIDE YOUR INPUT: To further investigate the potential for a Business Improvement District (BID), please describe what you think is important in downtown Johnson City and for the development of a Johnson City BID.

What do you see as the Top Five greatest assets associated with downtown Johnson City? (Select 5)

<input type="checkbox"/> Scale of the streetscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to educational institutions	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation access and options
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic resources / character	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing options	<input type="checkbox"/> Local events and programming
<input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Available community services	<input type="checkbox"/> Streetscape amenities (flowers, lights, benches, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Access to cultural institutions	<input type="checkbox"/> Public spaces (parks, etc.)	

Please identify on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being the least important and 10 being the most important) how important each of the following improvements are:

___ Additional beautification (holiday decorations, banners, etc.)	___ Streetscape and accessibility improvements	___ More wayfinding signage	___ Public space improvements / expansion	___ Addition of public art
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Please prioritize the following services as your 1st through 6th priority for a future Johnson City BID:

___ Increased coordination among business owners	___ Streetscape cleaning and maintenance (plantings, snow removal)
___ Marketing and promotion of downtown / BID	___ More programming and special events
___ Enhanced safety measures	___ Area ambassadors

What is your top priority for a BID in Johnson City?

Draw a line around the properties that you think should be included in the BID area:



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BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT — **OPPORTUNITY IN JOHNSON CITY**