

What is SPLOST?

A special-purpose local-option sales tax (SPLOST) is a financing method for funding capital outlay projects. It is an optional 1% sales tax for the purpose of funding the building of parks, schools, roads, and other public facilities. Voters will decide on a 5 Year, 1% sales tax on November 5, 2013.

SPLOST - Did You Know?

- At least 1/3 of SPLOST revenues are generated from people who live outside Floyd County.
- SPLOST funding keeps the burden from falling 100% on Rome and Floyd County residents.
- SPLOST is the most efficient and effective way of funding community projects.
- SPLOST projects cannot be voted on individually. Georgia law dictates the rules and does not allow projects to be voted on individually.
- SPLOST has proven to be a great investment in Rome-Floyd County since the very first referendum held in 1986. Many of the assets within our community would not have been possible without this funding source.
- All of the proposed SPLOST projects were submitted to a citizen volunteer committee that vetted each project submittal and made the final recommendation.
- Some question the need to pay for SPLOST when they already pay property taxes. Both Rome and Floyd County have ongoing project needs such as repair and replacement of equipment and facilities; however, the annual allotment for capital expenditures cannot facilitate the ongoing needs as well as increasing demands without a large increase in funding from property taxes.
- There is a misconception that local governments threaten to raise property taxes if the SPLOST vote is not passed. This is not the case; however, a close look at local tax rates over the past several years demonstrate the impact SPLOST has had by allowing local government to maintain property taxes at a very steady level over the past 10 years.

PROJECTS

Airport Runway Extension

Challenge: Many corporate aircraft operators are restricted from landing due to minimum runway length requirements set by insurance companies or corporate companies.

Solution: Extend the runway to 7,000 feet to provide relief from limitations and requirements placed on aircraft operations by insurance underwriters or aircraft owners.

Cost: \$5,761,000

Community Benefit: The extension will enhance the safety of the airport by giving more runway length to aircraft taking off and landing; it will increase fuel sales and revenue; the extension will make the airport more appealing to potential aviation prospects who desire to base their business in Rome and Floyd County and at the airport.

FAQ

What do the costs of the project cover? Engineering costs, environmental assessment and mitigation, if any, construction, grading and paving along with installing runway and taxiway lights and signage.

Will the extension bring in larger, noisier aircraft? No. The extension project is intended to create a safer runway for the current type of aircraft already using the airport. The current runway weight limitation prevents aircraft larger than what currently lands at the airport. The intent with the runway extension is to increase traffic and fuel sales, provide a safer runway system for potential prospects and customers and create a safer airport for the larger corporate aircraft that already utilize the airport.

How much will it cost to maintain the additional runway per year and who is responsible for paying for the future maintenance? The yearly cost on maintenance and upkeep is estimated to be \$1,500 per year. The majority of the expense would be replacing blown light bulbs in the additional runway and taxiway. The FAA will fund 90% of any future maintenance, GDOT will pay 5% and the airport will be responsible for 5%.

Animal Control Facility

Challenge: The current facility is small, inefficient, and poorly designed for sanitation - leading to cross contamination of sick and healthy animals and incidental transmission by visitors. The current inadequate shelter environment is uninviting to visitors and potential pet owners.

Additionally, the community's interest in pet ownership is on the rise currently supporting 30 veterinarians. A separate dog park facility is needed to help support our responsible pet owners.

Solution: Acquire land and build a new animal control facility to include the following: an infrastructure that provides a sanitized environment; and a separate dog

park with separate entry used solely by the public.

Cost: \$5,700,000

Community Benefit: The department wants to lead the community in displaying the worth of responsible animal ownership by making an investment in a proper facility with tools that assist the community. Building a family-friendly, inviting shelter will change the face of Animal Control from a place where unwanted animals are collected to a center and resource for responsible pet ownership.

FAQ

Why does an animal control facility cost so much? An adequate shelter design and construction differs greatly from typical construction. Specialized infrastructure includes water flushing systems, waste removal, air sanitation, cage runs and configuration, materials that can be disinfected. The price per square foot is more comparable to a medical environment.

Why would I bring my animal to the dog park if it is connected to the shelter where stray, sick animals will be housed? The public dog park would not be used in any way for the animals housed at the new shelter. There will either be a physical barrier between the public dog park and shelter complete with separate parking and entry or the park will be located off-site from the shelter. The dog park will be managed by a non-profit group.

Burnett Ferry Road Improvements

Challenge: Improve safety for motorists and pedestrians

Solution: Widen to standard two-lane road, eliminate ditch section, add lateral drainage with curb and gutter, add sidewalks with ADA accessibility section to include curb and gutter.

Cost: \$2,721,000

Community Benefit: Improves general motorist safety with wider pavement and improves roadside drainage with elimination of ditch section and addition of curb and gutter. Enhancements will compliment potential service demands created by connectivity to Southwest Bypass and sidewalks will increase pedestrian safety.

Chulio Hills Back Entrance for Bus

Challenge: Improve safety on Honeysuckle Ridge for residents and school transportation. Improve secondary access for buses and emergency responders via Shady Lane.

Solution: At Honeysuckle Ridge: Construct retaining wall and guardrail between split-level roadway, rebuild split-level roadway with wider travel lanes and curb and gutter, improve intersection with Mockingbird Circle. At Shady Lane: Widen to standard minimum width with curb and gutter; improve alignment as necessary

Cost: \$800,000

Community Benefit: Improves access and safety for residents, buses and emergency responders.

City Hall Auditorium Modernization

Challenge: Completely modernize the existing stage, and enhance the auditorium and meeting spaces of this historical building; a central meeting place for Rome's community gatherings.

Solution: Add the following auditorium upgrades: new motorized stage rigging system; new storage area for existing stage equipment; new sound system, lighting and wiring to the tech room; reupholster seats; resurface stage, add new stage curtains, renovate Sam King Room, upgrade to energy efficient lighting and HVAC.

Cost: \$1,700,000

Community Benefit: Creates a higher level of comfort and technology to enhance community gatherings for local performances and meetings.

City Police Training Facility Upgrade

Challenge: City police training facilities are in need of upgrades to better prepare officers in a safe training environment.

Solution: Update the training room, indoor range, outdoor range, training equipment, and add a firearms simulator.

Cost: \$396,000

Community Benefit: Updates will create a safer training environment and better prepare officers for varied scenarios, to help reduce liability.

City Street Milling and Paving

Challenge: Many city roads are in need of milling (or grinding) to remove old pavement in order to maintain road profile and good drainage.

Solution: Mill and pave additional streets in Rome (excluding State Routes).

Cost: \$500,000

Community Benefit: Better roads improves general motorist safety

County Case Management Software

Challenge: The Floyd County Clerk of Superior Court is currently utilizing outdated software implemented 20 years ago. Cases cannot be published online which prompts massive phone calls to the clerk's office daily. The state no longer supports the old outdated software leading to long down times.

Solution: Implement new software supported by the state impacting all aspects of the judicial process.

Cost: \$500,000

Community Benefit: The return on investment for the new software is anticipated to be enormous. Cases can be processed more efficiently and published for online viewing.

County Infrastructure Improvements

Challenge: Many county roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutters are in need of repairs and are outpacing the amount of funds allocated in the annual budget.

Solution: Repair curb, gutter, sidewalks and roads

Cost: \$1,400,000

Community Benefits: Improves road and pedestrian safety and will allow us to play "catchup" in funding repairs.

FAQ

Why are Lindale and Riverside getting so much of the infrastructure money? These old mill villages have curb and gutter and sidewalks, in addition to paving, that has not been budgeted in the past few years.

What will the repairs include? Repair and upgrade 2,000 feet of sidewalk, upgrade storm water systems by replacing pipe and inlets, and paving roads.

How much more paving will the county receive? Currently the projection is 15 miles of paving per year. If approved, 5 miles will be added per year for the first 3 years SPLOST.

County Public Safety Range/Special Ops

Challenge: This multi-agency facility supports over 375 public safety employees who use the firing range annually for required certification. The range is outdated and much of the equipment is more than 30 years old. Millions of dollars worth of equipment are exposed to the elements daily. Appropriate supplies and protection equipment is needed for SWAT and special operations.

Solution: Update the firing range to replace old, outdated equipment to ensure police, prison and sheriff public safety employees have the equipment needed for training. Purchase supplies and protective equipment, including coverings to protect millions of dollars worth of exposed equipment, for Special Operations and SWAT.

Cost: \$900,000

Community Benefit: Our public safety employees will have the right equipment to receive the essential training needed. SWAT operations will be equipped with the necessary equipment in a central location to respond to bomb related operations, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive operations.

Public Works & Public Safety Equipment

Challenge: Budget cuts have deferred purchase of routine maintenance equipment and law enforcement vehicles needed for public safety.

Solution: Purchase public works equipment to include right of way tractors with mowing attachments and rollers used for street paving. Replace law enforcement vehicles.

Cost: \$1,400,000

Community Benefit: Ensures public works and law enforcement employees have the equipment and vehicles needed to maintain public safety.

County-wide Sewer Improvements

Challenge: Portions of the Sanitary Sewer System need to be replaced to allow for storm and flood water drainage and to alleviate weather related, unintentional discharges of raw sewage.

Solution: Increase sewage capacity for the following areas: Old Calhoun/Kingston Road, 4th Street/Etowah River. The project will include the replacement of 9,000 feet of sewer main as well as one new lift station.

Cost: \$1,000,000

Community Benefit: Directly benefits all residents of the community who rely upon reliable sewer services for residential, commercial and industrial uses. The upgrades will benefit the environment by preventing wet weather related Sanitary Sewer Overflows as well as discouraging consent orders and building moratoriums from the Environmental Protection Division. A well-functioning Sanitary Sewer System will ensure ample capacity for wastewater services to accommodate future growth.

Downtown Visitor Information Center

Challenge: Downtown Rome continues to grow by attracting new business, expanding green space and hosting events. Plans for hotel developments, construction of the Roman Holiday dock, and event facility upgrades will draw more tourists who need a place to get information on what to see and do in Rome.

Solution: Incorporate an official Visitor Information Center at the History Museum by renovating existing space in the downstairs portion of the building that would front Tribune Street adjacent to the Town Green.

Cost: \$50,000

Community Benefit: Supports and encourages tourism in downtown Rome which is beneficial to our local economy.

Energy Efficiency in County Buildings

Challenge: The County Health Department & Law Enforcement Center HVAC systems are old, inefficient and costly to maintain.

Solution: Replace HVAC systems and control systems at the Law Enforcement Center and Health Department with new, energy efficient systems. Recent outages at the Health Department have forced the cancellation of appointments.

Cost: \$1,700,000

Community Benefit: Replacement units are nearly 50% more efficient translating to thousands of dollars in savings annually.

FAQ

Why can't the county pay for this out of the normal maintenance budget and is this the most cost effective solution?: The price of this project far exceeds what is available in the budget each year. County engineers and vendors have evaluated all options and have determined the best option to give the county the most value for the price is to replace the HVAC at the Law Enforcement Center. The Health Department system does not to be replaced entirely and some parts can be reused.

Who will maintain the equipment and at what cost? The County will maintain the new equipment. The only cost associated with this maintenance for the first five years will be preventive to include air filters, grease and belts. Any equipment installed by a contractor will be covered for any repair work during a warranty period.

Everett Springs Water Line Extension

Challenge: Everett Springs does not have a safe and reliable water source. The area relies heavily on well water where testing has shown high levels of bacteria contamination.

Solution: Install approximately 17 miles of ductile iron pipe, 59 new fire hydrants, a one million gallon concrete storage tank and pump station.

Cost: \$5,800,000

Community Benefit: Provides safe and reliable water for the Everett Springs Community; distribution system will meet higher water pressure and flows required for fire fighting; expanded service will provide an option to citizens who are currently using well water.

FAQ

Are there alternatives to funding? Not at this time. The water department does reinvest money back into the system; however, a project of this size on it's own is not economically feasible.

Facility Upgrade for Forum Civic Center

Challenge: After nearly 20 years in operation, the facility is outdated lacking the amenities and ambience expected from today's meeting and event planners. If updates are not made, the facility cannot compete with other venues across the country that offer a higher level of comfort and technology; the Forum will not be able to attract the events it has hosted in the past that have helped to stimulate our local economy.

Solution: Install many technological upgrades including comprehensive audio/visual and wi-fi system to provide clients a better experience with high quality presentations; refresh lobby and common areas with a new look that is inviting, warmer and visually appealing; install energy efficient lighting and water fixtures and repair roof to protect against leaks and damage.

Cost: \$1,400,000

Community Benefit: Facility upgrades and improvements will make this facility attractive to large trade shows, community events, concerts, weddings, multi-cultural events, indoor sporting events, conferences and more. Local businesses including restaurants, stores, hotels, and motels all benefit from the patrons that attend Forum events. Additionally, Forum improvements will help complete a package of downtown Rome enhancements including the town green, hotel developments, boat dock, and visitor center that all serve to encourage tourism and stir economic development.

FAQ

Sounds like the Forum needs major renovation. How will these upgrades and renovations impact the facility's bottom line? There are many motels, hotels and convention centers that are either changing or under construction all over the country. These new facilities all offer a higher level of comfort, current technology, and are very user friendly. The Forum is subject to competition. The business traveler of today expects to feel invited, expects the experience of faster service, and expects access to restaurants. The impact not only affects the Forum, but the local economy as well. Forum upgrades are geared toward attracting more business, which in turn fuels the local economy. If the Forum is unable keep up with current trends, some other community will take the event business.

If the funds are made available, how will construction effect current clients and events? It will be the Forum's task to accommodate clients and events during the upgrades. Staff are committed to customer service and will do everything possible to minimize disruption to clients.

How will the Forum market and promote the upgrades? The Forum is already in the process of developing a new marketing package to showcase the facility once the upgrades are complete. The event facility is an essential part of downtown Rome and intends on staying "The Venue For It All!"

Fire Tankers, Trucks & Facility Upgrade

Challenge: Fire training facility and fire safety education trailer are in need of upgrades. In the event of a fire emergency, many areas of the city and county have either low or no positive water supply. There are numerous areas within Floyd County that do not have fire hydrants where access to water could enhance public safety.

Solution: Make needed improvements to fire training facility. Upgrade the Fire Safety Training Trailer to allow for greater flexibility in delivering the county-wide Fire Safety Education programs within schools and around the community. Purchase a 2,500 gallon tanker truck to allow for added water supply in areas of the City and County that either have low or no positive water supply.

Cost: \$750,000

Community Benefits: Ensures local fire fighters have the needed training and equipment to perform their duties essential to our public safety. Fire safety education within the school and community is a proactive way to help save lives; teach appropriate emergency response procedures and fire prevention.

Historic 1848 Fannin Hall Rehabilitation

Challenge: The historical building serves as City Hall for Cave Spring. Employees who work in the building and citizens who visit are being exposed to hazardous materials and conditions. Additionally there is no accessibility and there is structural deterioration to the point of collapse in some areas.

Solution: Renovate the building to restore the original chapel, a large meeting room and dining area, and commercial kitchen.

Cost: \$2,591,000

Community Benefit: All the spaces of the building can be used by the public and the public will have access to view and enjoy one of the oldest, historical buildings in Floyd County.

FAQ

What is the historical significance of this building? It was constructed in 1848; and served as a hospital for Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. It was

visited by noted Americans such as Helen Keller.

Why wouldn't Cave Spring build a new City Hall instead of spending the money to renovate an old building? The cost per square foot to renovate Fannin Hall is less than the cost to build a new building of similar size. Also, considering the historic significance of the building, Cave Spring moving out would leave the building abandoned with no other entity able to maintain it.

Will the city be able to make the building structurally sound and comply with current codes and ordinances? Yes, this is largest part of the project scope.

Is the building larger than the needs of City Hall for Cave Spring? The building appears much larger than it actually is due to it's linear front facade. The third (attic) level will house new mechanical equipment and systems. The usable square footage on the first and second floors is approximately 16,000 square feet to facilitate council meetings and house city offices, police department, and utility offices.

Industrial Property for Job Creation

Challenge: The community can attract new industries to Rome by creating "shovel ready" sites to be competitive. The community would like to repeat the success of attracting Lowe's Regional Distribution Center which added 600 new jobs.

Solution: Fund land and infrastructure improvements for shovel ready sites.

Cost: \$8,000,000

Community Benefits: Large tracts of land that is already developed for building will attract new industry and bring more jobs to our community.

Jackson Hill Tourism Development

Challenge: Jackson Hill was the location of Fort Norton, an earthen fortification system, which defended Rome during The Civil War. The City of Rome has a wealth of rich history, and seeks ways to provide tangible historic features that locals and visitors can go out and physically interact with and be educationally enlightened.

Solution: Renovate the historic water works building atop Jackson Hill and the adjacent clear well structure. The building and clear well would be converted to open air gathering areas that would be utilized by the entire community as part of the newly created multi-purpose trails on Jackson Hill.

Cost: \$200,000

Community Benefit: Helps Rome preserve it's Civil War history, allowing for more than just the community's storytelling, but would allow for people to experience the history and culture, first hand.

Jail Improvements

Challenge: Approximately 2 million inmate jail movements occur annually at the Floyd County Jail. Jail staff relies on thousands of electronically controlled devices for security which are mostly all outdated effecting the security of the jail.

Solution: Improve security by adding or replacing: jail locks, intercom and paging systems, access control systems, perimeter lighting and a second elevator.

Cost: \$1,900,000

Community Benefit: The jail will be secure protecting our community from the liability of an insecure system.

FAQ

What will happen if the project is not completed? The seven control towers that operate the jail will eventually become inoperative. If the ability to control inmates becomes suppressed, it opens the county to serious liability.

Jail Medical/Mental Health Facility Expansion

Challenge: The jail's capability to provide medical/mental health beds for chronically ill and mental health inmates is severely inadequate considering the number of inmates at the jail. National Standards dictate a minimum of thirty-seven beds for the current capacity; the jail has four.

Solution: Add additional beds for a total of forty beds allowing nurses to provide proper medical treatment to the mentally and physically ill.

Cost: \$2,200,000

Community Benefit: The jail can decrease cross contamination of contagious illness and disease due to overcrowding. Jail nurses can safely meet the increased volume of mental health inmates.

FAQ

Why weren't the limited medical facilities addressed when the jail was expanded in 1998? The jail did not consider that the Northwest Regional Hospital would close when the jail expansion was completed. The hospital closure has significantly increased the volume of mental health inmates.

Playground Improvements

Challenge: Several parks throughout Rome and Floyd County have outdated playgrounds or damaged play structures that have been removed due to safety concerns.

Solution: Install new playground units at 10 parks to include: Lower Alto, Banty Jones, Ridge Ferry (Toddler Play Unit), Cave Spring, Parks Hoke, Walking Trail at Etowah Park, Garden Lakes, Lock & Dam, Tolbert, and Floyd County Softball Complex at Alto.

Cost: \$1,100,000

Community Benefits: Improves the safety, accessibility and aesthetics of the playground and park experience for all.

Road Improvements Barron & Calhoun Road

Challenge: Traffic backs up to more than 1,000 feet due to difficulties in vehicles turning left onto Calhoun Road at this congested intersection.

Solution: Re-align intersection; add turn lanes and install a traffic signal

Cost: \$130,000

Community Benefits: Improve traffic flow, improve safety and save time for commuters crossing the intersection that serves as primary access to Model Elementary, Middle and High Schools.

FAQ

How heavy is the traffic at this intersection? During peak times it is not unusual for 1,000 vehicles per hour to cross the intersection. More than 20% of those vehicles are making a left turn.

Rome-Floyd Recycling Center

Challenge: Currently the center is operating at more than 100% capacity. Enhancements are needed to keep up with current volume. The facility is in need of repairs to the roof, better fire suppression systems and additional security.

Solution: Add additional sorting and bailing equipment to increase capacity by 50%, secure the property with perimeter fencing, repair the roof and install fire suppression systems.

Cost: \$1,379,000

Community Benefit: Recycling saves money by diverting materials from landfills. The facility repairs and new equipment will allow the center to keep up with current recycling volume and future demands.

FAQ

Will the additional equipment require more money to operate annually? There will be an increase in efficiency to off-set additional expenses.

Tennis Center of Georgia

Challenge: Build the Tennis Center of Georgia at Berry College to be the world's largest tennis facility for amateur play.

Solution: Build an 82-court facility through the combination of public and private partnerships and SPLOST funding to allow a debt free operation.

Cost: \$11,400,000

Community Benefit: Rome will benefit from economic impact of bringing a large number of state, regional and national tennis tournaments that take place year-round in the south in addition to creating immediate and long-term jobs.

FAQ

What is the exact location of the TCG? The site is located at the southeast intersection of Old Dalton Road and the Armuchee Connector. The property is a 30 acre parcel that is part of Berry College land referred to as the River Farm, which is adjacent to Mt. Berry Square Mall. In general, Rome would prove to be at a great advantage as being centrally located within the USTA southern region of 9 states.

Who will own and/or operate the TCG? The City of Rome will own the facility. The current By-Laws contemplate the creation of a Board of Directors that will include members from the partners involved with the project as well as other at-large positions.

Will my city/county property tax be used to operate the TCG?

No, the pro-forma does not anticipate use of any local property tax for operations. The current proposal is to possibly increase the hotel motel tax from 6% to as much as 8% utilizing the additional revenue for promotion, operation and maintenance of the facility.

What role will Berry College have in TCG? Berry has donated 30 acres of their off campus property to the project and plans to incorporate student labor into the operation of the facility. Berry does not plan to utilize the TCG as their primary college tennis facility as they have tennis courts on campus. Berry College will have representation on the Board of Directors.

Will the existing 16 court tennis facility on West 3rd be closed after construction of the TCG? Closing the courts is not part of the TCG proposal. Currently, the City of Rome has no plans to close the existing 16 court facility.

What will the cost be for daily play at the new TCG? The proposed fee to play is the same as the Rome-Floyd Tennis Center on West Third, \$3.00.

Isn't Rome an existing tennis community that hosts multiple tournaments, why should we build a new TCG? Yes, but our community can host more and larger tournaments if we have a larger facility capable of hosting larger numbers of players and

spectators. Additionally, by constructing the TCG, Rome is taking a proactive stance to ensure the existing tournaments held in the community are not wooed to other communities offering better facilities. Bartow County is a close competitor in sports tourism and has indicated they will seek a tennis facility if Rome fails to capitalize on the TCG.

What happened to the other SPLOST dollars for tennis courts?

The 2006 SPLOST included a \$600,000 allotment for tennis courts. Two additional courts were added at Etowah Park and the remainder of the money, \$500,000, was earmarked for 10 tennis courts to be located within the City of Rome. Once the decision was made to pursue a larger TCG, the \$500,000 allotment has been earmarked to go towards the larger facility. Effectively, the TCG will double the inventory of courts available to the public for play.

Trail Connectivity Expansion

Challenge: Rome-Floyd's systems of trails have been developed to provide opportunities for physical activity for bike and pedestrian traffic, but lack connectivity. Connecting these trails would offer safer and easier passage between the network of trails.

Solution: Upgrade the existing network of trails including Mount Berry, Redmond and Heritage by creating more connections between these existing trails.

Cost: \$1,800,000

Community Benefit: Provides easier access for bikes and pedestrian traffic between existing trails. For example, having a trail on the western bank of the Oostanaula River would allow for potential connectivity to Berry College where students could access downtown Rome by bike. The Redmond Trail would connect the existing downtown trail system to Technology Parkway, the Simms Mountain Trail and the Pinhoti Trail.

Unity Point/South Broad Bridge

Challenge: Unity Point is located at the confluence of our rivers and was built as a part of the 1996 Olympics preparations. It serves to anchor the popular public Heritage Riverway Trail at the Robert Redden Footbridge. Flooding has caused extensive damage making the feature safely inaccessible to the public.

The historically designed South Broad Street Bridge is a vital transportation link to Myrtle Hill and South Rome for pedestrians and vehicles. It also spans across the Kingfisher Trail entrance.

Solution: Repair Unity Point by constructing river walls and installing drainage inlets to address fluctuating river levels and flooding; re-install pavers on terraces and reconstruct wall and staircase.

Rehabilitate South Broad Street Bridge and sidewalks and historical appearance and structure; add ornamental bridge lighting, and relocate overhead utilities underground.

Cost: \$1,800,000

Community Benefits: Protect and preserve valuable community resources and landmarks that are historically significant.

Improving
Rome Cave
Spring &
Floyd
County
One penny
at a time

Vote on SPLOST November 5