



Roxborough Development Corporation  
2018 Board of Directors

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Fiscal year 2018 marks several significant milestones for the Roxborough Business Improvement District. In July of 2017 Roxborough was recognized as a Classic Town of Greater Philadelphia by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. In August of 2017 the Night Market street festival welcomed over 28,000 visitors to Ridge Avenue. In April of 2018 our multi-year public space project, the Roxborough Pocket Park, officially opened to the public. Through these initiatives and many others, the Roxborough Development Corporation continues to reposition Ridge Avenue's economic potential.

This past fiscal year also marks a paradigm shift in our approach to development within the Roxborough District. Following the passage of a demolition moratorium on Ridge Avenue, the Philadelphia Historical Commission established and adopted the largest historic district in over a decade along Ridge Avenue. The establishment of such a district renews an opportunity to advance Ridge Avenue's historic assets as competitive advantages. At the same time, historic preservation presents challenges that will require committed and thoughtful planning to be successful.

Our commitment to enhancing the Roxborough District would not be possible without your support. As we enter the third year of our strategic plan, Roxborough 2020, we are eager to expand our impact and leverage your investment to seize new opportunities and overcome the challenges ahead. We invite you as part of this annual report to reflect on our work and join with us to advance the heart and hub of the Roxborough community, Ridge Avenue.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann Desper  
President

James Harry Calamia  
Executive Director





# ROXBOROUGH

A PLACE WITH ROOTS



Roxborough  
Development Corporation

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

ROXBOROUGH DISTRICT • YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2018

# SUMMARY

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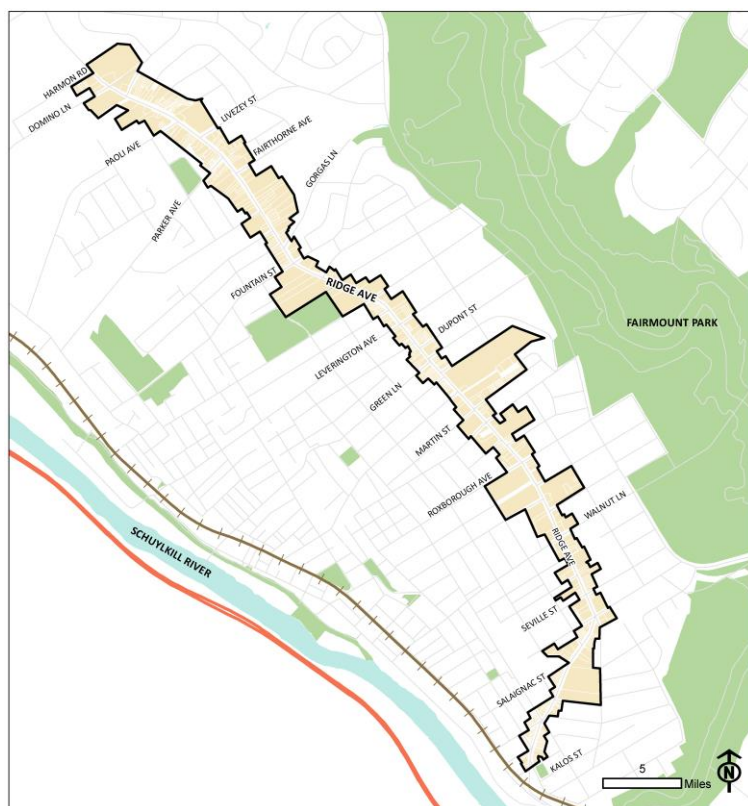
## The organization at a glance

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Ridge Avenue is the neighborhood commercial corridor for the Roxborough community. The Roxborough Development Corporation's (RDC) board, volunteers, and staff have been working hard since 1992 to enhance Ridge Avenue by promoting special events, beautifying and cleaning, helping existing businesses to expand while recruiting new ones, and marketing the corridor throughout the year.

As one of 13 Business Improvement Districts (BID) in the City of Philadelphia, since 2003 the RDC has collected a yearly assessment from property owners to pay for additional services that benefit every member of the district.

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## ROXBOROUGH DISTRICT

**Date Established:** 2003

**Type of BID:** Neighborhood Improvement District

**Properties:** 307

**Total Assessment:** \$322,000

**Governance:** 10 Directors

**Management Association:** RDC

**RDC Fiscal Year:** July 1 to June 30

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The RDC's mission is to provide Roxborough residents with high quality shopping, dining and entertainment experiences. More information on the RDC and the Roxborough Business Improvement District is available at [www.roxboroughpa.com/about](http://www.roxboroughpa.com/about).

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# PROGRAM INFORMATION

## How are we impacting Ridge Avenue?

On June 23, 2015 the Roxborough Development Corporation (RDC) adopted its five-year strategic plan Roxborough 2020. By 2020, the RDC seeks to advance Ridge Avenue as the heart and hub of the Roxborough neighborhood where residents find a thriving commercial district. To accomplish this vision the RDC will focus in four primary areas: Asset Enhancement, District Improvements, Marketing and Advertising and Special Events.

### Asset Enhancement Highlights

***Roxborough 2020 Goal:** The RDC seeks to encourage a diverse business mix on Ridge Avenue by working to stimulate the expansion of existing business and recruit new business to locate here.*

The **Roxborough Pocket Park** project at 6170-72 Ridge Avenue opened to the public on Saturday, April 21, 2018 as part of the annual **Art Is Life** street festival on Ridge Avenue. This new public space has transformed a once vacant lot into a plaza for pedestrian access and passive recreation. With the launch of **First Fridays at the Roxborough Pocket Park**, the RDC has piloted its first special event series at the site with a goal of drawing visitors to Ridge Avenue. Future programming this year will include holiday decorations as well as a holiday tree lighting ceremony.

The RDC secured a group of professional local brewers who are advancing plans to redevelop the RDC's **Allison Building** located at 6168 Ridge Avenue into a brewpub. The brewing company's vision for the property includes a 50 seat space to house a 7 barrel brewery and restaurant. The RDC developed a lease agreement for the property and the tenant plans to begin construction in the spring of 2019. To date, the tenant has secured zoning approvals, liquor licensing and is finalizing their construction permits.

### District Improvements Highlights

***Roxborough 2020 Goal:** Ridge Avenue will be clean and safe thus adding to the neighborhood's quality of life. Our district's canopy and seasonal flower displays add visual interest and welcome shoppers year round. We encourage merchants to restore historic buildings and undertake quality facade renovations.*

The **Storefront Improvement Program** for the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor was secured by the RDC through the **Philadelphia Department of Commerce**. The program reimburses owners of commercial buildings and businesses up to 50% of the total cost of facade improvements, for a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000 for a single commercial property or \$15,000 for a multiple address or corner business property. This past fiscal year, two storefronts, **Nail Art Bar at 6121 Ridge Avenue**



and **Basement Board Game Cafe at 6111 Ridge Avenue** were allotted grant funding as part of the program. Street cleaning efforts by the RDC were expanded through the hiring of a seasonal street sweeper, subcontractors and volunteers this past fiscal year. This has advanced the work of the **Ridge Avenue Ambassador, Anthony Cleveland**. The RDC's cleaning efforts assist property owners with their legal obligation to keep their sidewalks free of litter and debris. During the past fiscal year, over **60,000 gallons** of rubbish and debris were removed from Ridge Avenue. In addition, the RDC invested in a new electric **Utilitruck**. This machine greatly assists the Ridge Avenue Ambassador with street cleaning and replaces a previous vehicle which had been in use for 10 years, well beyond its expected life cycle.

**Graffiti Removal Services** the RDC employs improve the aesthetic of Ridge Avenue by actively removing graffiti, illegal signage, stickers, posters and yard signs from the corridor. Large graffiti and markings unable to be removed by RDC staff are reported to the **City of Philadelphia's 311 Contact Center**. This past fiscal year, RDC staff filed **65 service requests** with Philly 311 on issues including graffiti removal, illegal dumping and broken traffic lighting/signage.

Approximately **140 street trees**, **75 Pennsylvania Avenue** planters and **50 Basix Collection** planters are maintained by the RDC along the 2.5 mile stretch of Ridge Avenue. The RDC contracts with a landscape design and maintenance firm to assist with Ridge Avenue planter maintenance. This investment in greening adds visual interest to the corridor and contributes to a more attractive commercial district.

As part of ongoing street tree maintenance efforts, the RDC partnered with **the Schuylkill Center For Environmental Education** and contracted to have **23 street trees pruned and elevated** in the **Central & Lower Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor**. In partnership with the **Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation**, **4 replacement trees were also installed** along Ridge Avenue. Approximately **5 miles of sidewalks** were treated to control unwanted vegetation as part of the RDC's **Weed Control Program**. Area's treated for weeds by RDC contractors include all Ridge Avenue sidewalks and curb lines from **Main Street to Domino Lane** as well as several intersecting streets.

In coordination with the **Philadelphia Parking Authority** the **MeterUP** payment system has been scheduled for installation on Ridge Avenue in October of 2018. The **MeterUP Application** will allow Ridge Avenue Shoppers to pay for and extend parking times at parking meters from a mobile device. Information on how to download the free application will be distributed to business owners following installation.

The RDC holds lease agreements and management responsibilities for city-owned parking lots at **514 Dupont Street Shopper's Parking Lot** and **465 Leverington Avenue Shopper's Parking Lot**. These lots enable the RDC to provide **165 safe and convenient parking spaces** to Ridge Avenue customers. As part of ongoing **maintenance and snow plowing** at the parking lots, the RDC recently upgraded parking lot lighting at Dupont Street Shopper's Parking Lot. The project involved the conversion of high pressure sodium lights to **6 LED light fixtures**. Future conversions are also planned for the Leverington Avenue Parking Lot.





In partnership with the **Philadelphia Streets Department**, the RDC has committed funding for the **conversion of approximately 40 street lights** along the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor from high pressure sodium to LED. This conversion, which was piloted with two light poles at the intersection of Ridge Avenue and Green Lane, will greatly increase visibility, deter crime and encourage pedestrian activity. LED conversion is scheduled for the **winter of 2018** and will convert all street lights from the intersection of **Shurs/Walnut Lane to Hermitage Street**. Following this initial phase of conversion, additional lights will be reviewed in the spring of 2019.

The RDC also serves in partnership with local civic associations as a **Registered Community Organization** for the Roxborough Business Improvement District. This status grants the RDC notice regarding zoning appeals that have an impact on the commercial corridor. In the past year, the RDC **reviewed seven zoning appeals** in addition to a range of by-right projects. Supported projects included **new signage at the recently renovated Acme Supermarket**, located at 5951 Ridge Avenue; the redevelopment of the vacant bank building at **6128 Ridge Avenue** into a **co-working space** anchored by **Vaughan Buckley Construction**; and the redevelopment of the vacant church and lot at **5900 Ridge Avenue** into office space for engineering firm **Ruggiero Plante Land Design**.

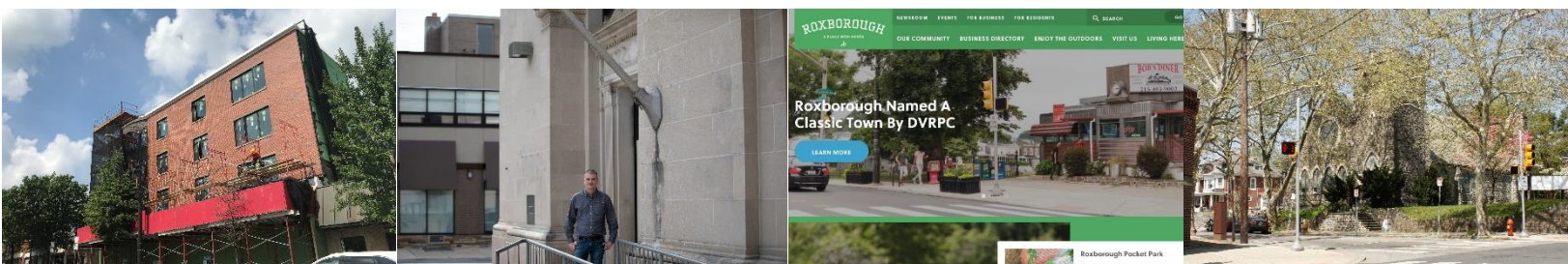
The RDC installed seasonal holiday wreaths, garland, ribbon and decorations for the holiday seasons as part of the **Happy Holiday's From Roxborough** promotion. Holiday lights were also distributed to all Ridge Avenue storefronts to encourage a festive and decorative feel during the holidays.

On December 20, 2017, **Historic Preservation Bill No. 170821**, introduced by **Councilman Jones Jr.** and signed by **Mayor Kenney**, established a moratorium on the total demolition of buildings along Roxborough's Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor. The purpose being to preserve historically significant buildings and structures amidst a strong interest in development. Following the moratorium the **Philadelphia Historical Commission** nominated and approved 188 properties along Ridge Avenue as part of the **Ridge Avenue Thematic Historic District**. During this process the RDC focused on securing financial incentives for historic renovation, evaluating new construction development standards and communicating with property owners.

## Marketing & Advertising Highlights

***Roxborough 2020 Goal:*** *Aggressively communicate good news about the Ridge Avenue commercial district as the heart and hub of the Roxborough neighborhood using traditional and social media.*

Through the RDC website, [www.roxboroughpa.com](http://www.roxboroughpa.com), @RoxboroughPA social media handles, and Roxborough PA newsletter, we have built a new way to communicate with Ridge Avenue customers. Roxboroughpa.com, which includes a listing of all local businesses, has received close to **150,000 page views** and over **55,000 users** since its launch in November 2016. As part of Roxboroughpa.com's **Newsroom Section**, RDC staff and special guest writers have authored and published over **50 Newsroom Articles** on local businesses, special events and neighborhood happenings. In addition to content



generated through the website, the RDC also employs its monthly **Residential and BID member e-newsletters** with close to **4,000 subscribers** to date.

The RDC has secured strategic media placements and appearances for the corridor with **6ABC, Fox 29, Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Magazine, PHL17, Roxborough Review, Roxborough Patch, Uwishunu, Visit Philly and WHY?**. The RDC has developed a strong partnership with Philadelphia's #1 radio station **WBEB-FM More 101.1**, securing over **190 On-Air Promotional Announcements, 26 @MoreFMPhilly Social Media Posts, and 6 MoreFM Station Events** for the district representing a **Minimum Promotional Value of \$97,000**. Through the RDC's growing social media channels during the past fiscal year, we have received over **25,000 engagements on Facebook, 7,800 engagements on Instagram and 975 engagements on Twitter**. This past fiscal year the **Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission** welcomed Roxborough into its **Classic Towns of Greater Philadelphia Program**. As a Classic Town, Roxborough and the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor join the region's unique communities in both the city and suburbs as destinations to live, work and shop. The partnership secured by the RDC includes the development of **promotional videos, stories, blogposts and social media content** promoting Ridge Avenue and local business owners along the commercial corridor.

### Special Events Highlights

***Roxborough 2020 Goal:** Maintain our year-long calendar of fun retail and special events to drive customers into stores. We work closely with our partners to add appropriate shopping components to their events.*

In partnership with **The Food Trust** the RDC was successful in securing the **2017 Night Market Roxborough** event which brought a total of over **28,000 people** to the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor on a Thursday evening in August of 2017. The event highlighted the positive changes taking place on Ridge Avenue and showcased the neighborhood as one of Philadelphia's best places to live. One of Night Market Philadelphia's main goals is to support the immigrant business owners who make our city's food scene so delicious. **Lina and Vincenzo Algieri of Roma's Pizza** were highlighted leading up to the event.

The RDC also organized the **Art Is Life** and **Roxtoberfest** street festivals, as well as the **Roxborough Solstice Music Festival** in collaboration with the **Friends of Gorgas Park**. These special events connect local residents and the Roxborough business community, grow our digital influence and attract millennials and families to the commercial corridor. The **Happy Holidays From Roxborough** series was also organized and brought close to **150 families** to Ridge Avenue through three retail events. Since the RDC began organizing special events, it has leveraged close to **\$250,000 in funding** and attracted over **85,000 visitors** to the district.



# FINANCIALS



The numbers, gauging the organization's financial health

The RDC's financial statements are independently audited and submitted to Local, State and Federal representatives. The following summary provides highlights from the audit findings for the year ended June 30, 2018. A summary of the RDC's Statement of Activities and Balance Sheet is shown below. For the full audit and additional information on our programs and initiatives visit [www.roxboroughpa.com/about/financials](http://www.roxboroughpa.com/about/financials).

## Statement of Activities Summary

For The Year Ended June 30, 2018

### Revenue

Business Improvement District	\$	392,921
Real Estate Programs	\$	86,134
Grant Income	\$	314,098
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>793,153</b>

### Expenses

Business Improvement District	\$	507,850
Real Estate Programs	\$	95,387
Grant Expenses	\$	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>603,237</b>

## Balance Sheet Summary

For The Year Ended June 30, 2018

### Assets

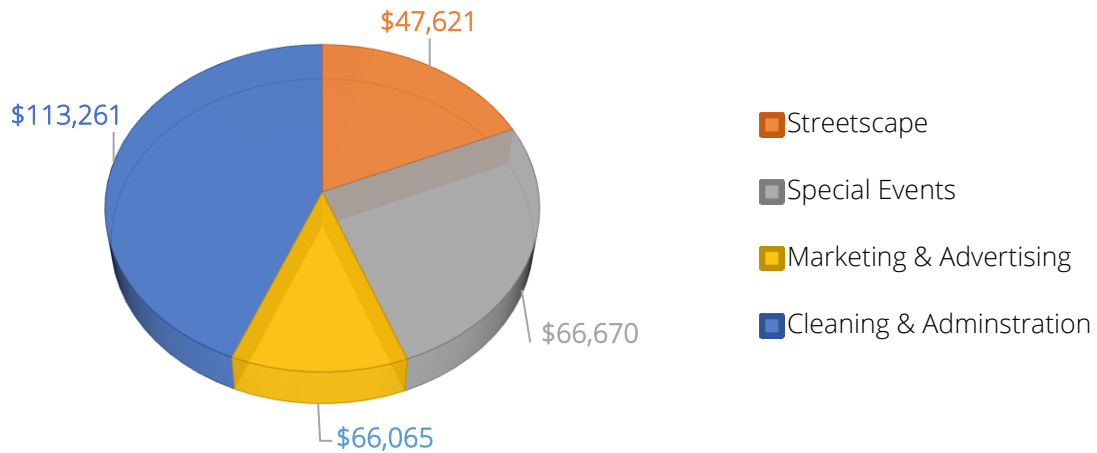
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,464,004</b>
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### Liabilities & Owner's Equity

<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Owner's Equity</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,464,004</b>
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## Major BID Program Expenses



The RDC leverages Business Improvement District funding to grow additional income for capital improvement projects, special events and real estate programs that improve the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor.

## Special Event Income



## Asset Enhancement Income



## Grant Income

