

City of LaFayette, Georgia

Downtown Development Director/ Main Street Director

Job Summary:

The City of LaFayette and the LaFayette Downtown Development Authority (LDDA) are seeking a full-time Downtown Development and Main Street Director to lead the economic development and revitalization efforts of the city. LaFayette is a city amidst revitalization. As the largest city in Walker County, we are a welcoming community that attracts outdoor enthusiasts, rural entrepreneurs, and those who appreciate small-town living with easy access to downtown Chattanooga and outdoor recreation. The Director will support the DDA and Main Street Program and assist city staff with downtown community development activities. The Director's main responsibilities will include asset-based economic development, short and long-term strategic planning, project management, marketing (including branding and events), and downtown advocacy through the Main Street™ approach.

In the coming years, the city will add hundreds of new housing units, and several hundred new jobs, marking important milestones in its growth. The Director will work with multiple City Departments to advance the City's efforts in downtown redevelopment, cultivating a diverse business mix, growing arts and culture programming through downtown placemaking, and creating high-impact programs through public private partnerships. The Director will also be the principal on-site staff person responsible for coordinating all downtown program activities locally and representing the City of LaFayette regionally and nationally on Main Street and Downtown Development related matters.

Consider this position, if you are: self-driven, well-organized, creative, entrepreneurial, and have a passion for fostering the creation and revitalization of downtown business, arts, and recreation districts. You should also be skilled in executing projects and creating programs that catalyze redevelopment, build partnerships, and prioritize placemaking. Apply if you are interested in working with an innovative leadership team in an entrepreneurial, dynamic, and inclusive environment.

Essential Competencies and Responsibilities:

Public Administration:

- Developing excellent working relationships with the DDA Board, City Council, City staff, County Commissioners, County Staff, community development partners, civic clubs, business and industry stakeholders, educational institutions, along with other public/private or nonprofit groups and associations interested in downtown development.
- Knowledge of basic laws and regulations affecting the operation of municipal government and public entities. Maintaining a level of knowledge about Local, State, and Federal legislation and regulations relating to downtown development and development authorities. Ability to learn and work with the Planning Department on zoning ordinance regulations.
- Participate in professional state and national organizations and associations that support place-based economic development strategies and other key aspects of the work plan.
- Overseeing administrative aspects of DDA operations, including record-keeping, digital file organization, monthly DDA meeting agenda package, correspondence, annual DDA financial registration with DCA, meeting minutes, and posting notices of meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

- Track Main Street Program progress, prepare monthly reports, annual assessments and implement program strategies and goals.

Finance:

- Manage budgets and financial resources for downtown development initiatives, including grant programs and capital projects. Submits purchase orders and check requests.
- Facilitate connections to financing partners, local lenders, and other potential resources for acquiring capital necessary for first-floor leases and new property acquisitions.

State + Federal Program Knowledge:

- Knowledge of State of GA and Federal economic development programs, incentives, and funding opportunities
- Knowledge of State and Federal Placemaking programs or funding opportunities
- Educates colleagues, stakeholders, and prospective investors on these State and Federal incentives through workshops, presentations, or marketing collateral.
- The Director must stay current on Local, State, and National downtown economic development trends and programs.

Technology + Data Collection:

- Knowledge of computers and Microsoft Office programs. Ability to research and utilize demographic data (i.e. Census, American Community Survey, Tax Assessor, ESRI etc) for presentations or grant development.
- Conduct market research and analysis to identify trends and opportunities for growth in the downtown area.

Marketing + Communications:

- Assist in developing a marketing plan for the City + DDA. Managing and coordinating all marketing and promotional efforts including advertising, social media management, experiential downtown events, and website development.
- Knowledge of a variety of print and online communications media; must have demonstrated experience with new media technologies such as varied social media platforms, A.I platforms, and Canva, or related graphic design platforms.
- Skill in oral & written communications, public speaking and public presentations that can engage diverse audiences including co-workers, elected officials, members of the community, and State + Federal stakeholders.
- Works closely with local media to assure maximum coverage; encourages design excellence in all aspects of promotion in order to advance an image of a quality downtown.
- The Director will help develop and execute messaging and strategy for all downtown business-related marketing that align with downtown's value proposition, while focusing on business retention, expansion, and recruiting new business to the DDA district.
- Ability to keep City Manager and DDA board fully and accurately informed concerning work progress, including present and potential work problems and suggestions for new or improved ways of addressing such problems by communicating effectively internally.

Project Development + Management:

- Capable of being an implementer, thriving on managing a variety of key projects simultaneously, often under tight deadlines. Optimize for efficiency and effectiveness.
- Knowledge of municipal and/or downtown development methods, practices and procedures.

- Ability to work in coordination with Planning Department staff to support City Codes, Ordinances and Zoning regulations, along with Public Works staff, will be vital to the success and development of Downtown projects.
- Oversees DDA investment portfolio and project development of public/private partner projects on DDA-owned property.
- Enhance community engagement in the planning and execution of both the public and private projects developed in the University of Georgia RSVP plan. Refine, update and execute the RSVP Action Plan as needed.
- Track and report on the progress of development projects and initiatives, and provide regular updates to the city council and other relevant stakeholders

Planning:

- Leading and managing the development of short- and long-range DDA strategic plans; aligning plans with City leadership, Main Street annual workplans, and County comprehensive plans.
- Assist the DDA Board of Directors and committees in developing an annual work plan for implementing a downtown revitalization program focused on the four points of the Main Street™ approach: Design, Promotion, Organization, and Economic Vitality.
- In coordination with the City Manager and Planning Department, work with contract engineers, landscape architects, and city planners on design plans to help execute implementation on downtown revitalization capital projects.

Technical Writing and Funding Development:

- Strong technical writing skills are required for grant writing and tracking, preparation of DDA Board meeting packets, meeting minutes and the like. Creative writing skills for content on promotional materials, newsletters, press releases and other online presence sources.
- Work with appropriate public agencies at the local, state, and federal levels to obtain necessary funding for critical elements of the downtown revitalization plan. These include design assistance, promotional publications, building rehabilitation, business development, real estate development projects, outdoor recreation, pedestrian infrastructure, and public space improvements.
- Procuring revenue enhancements through grant writing, events, sponsorships, and fundraising.

Business + Investment Recruitment and Business Retention:

- Develop strategies for building from the community's human and economic resources. Relationship building is a must.
- Provide tours of available buildings and keep a current DDA district property inventory.
- Assisting in site selection information and other resources for prospective businesses interested in moving to or growing in the DDA district.
- Fostering and seeking ways to address the common needs and interests of businesses, understanding the needs of each business, and ensuring that businesses are aware of and
- Actively use the Small Business Development Administration (SBA) resources including the Small Business Development Center resources.
- Network with programming partners, local + regional entrepreneurs in the startup community, identifying commercial real estate needs and connecting them with potential solutions downtown.
- Project and program development that has an emphasis on creating greater equity for minority and under-represented populations for economic opportunities downtown.
- Developing and implementing programs and procedures regarding business recruitment, retention and expansion—activities may include working with area brokers, cold calling prospective businesses, acting as an advocate and counselor to prospective businesses

(including waking them through the city development and licensing process) and suggesting local incentive programs for the DDA for formalization to entice business recruitment and retention. Build strong relationships with downtown commercial property owners, regional commercial real estate agents, and state economic development partners.

Certificates (Desired, but not required. Must have a willingness to obtain these within the first six months of hire if offered within that time frame)

- Downtown Development Authority (Basic)
- Creating a Downtown Renaissance: Advanced DDA Training
- Main Street 101
- DCA Georgia Academy for Economic Development

Minimum Qualifications:

- Knowledge and level of competency commonly associated with the completion of a bachelor's degree in a course of study related to this field of work.
- 3-5 Year's Experience in the same or related field. Education or experience in as many of the following areas as possible: marketing, finance, business development, economic development, grant writing, historic preservation, entrepreneurship, project development, community planning.
- Administrative ability to manage staff, budgets, marketing, public relations, planning and reporting.
- Innovative thinker with a track record for translating strategic thinking into action plans and output with a proven track record of achieving objectives.
- Ability to self-start, work independently, maintain an entrepreneurial spirit, and look for opportunities to work collaboratively to build relationships with others to meet shared objectives.
- Ability to demonstrate integrity, ingenuity, and inventiveness in the performance of duties and responsibilities
- Excellent judgment and creative problem-solving skills, including negotiation and conflict resolution skills with co-workers, business stakeholders and residents

The qualifications listed above are intended to represent the minimum skills and experience levels associated with performing the duties and responsibilities contained in this job description. The qualifications and responsibilities should not be viewed as expressing an absolute employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

Supervision:

- The City Manager assigns work in terms of general instruction. City Manager spot checks work for compliance with requirements and goals.
- Program, project guidance, and oversight are also received from the DDA Board of Directors through the Board chair.
- The DDA and Main Street Director functions with considerable independence in job-related activities and is held accountable for results by both the DDA Board and City Manager. The work is typically reviewed through monthly DDA Board meetings along with monthly Department Head meetings with City Manager.

Physical Demands Work Environment:

- **Physical Ability:** Tasks require the ability to exert light physical effort in sedentary to light work, but which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials of light to moderate weight. Tasks may involve extended periods of time at a keyboard or workstation.
- **Sensory Requirements:** Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate visual cues or signals. Some tasks require that ability to communicate orally.
- **Environmental Factors:** The work is typically performed in an office and outdoors, occasionally in cold or inclement weather
- **Flexible Availability:** Must be available to work some nights and weekends based upon events, programs or meeting schedules. Some travel will be required due to professional development and conferences.

Salary + Benefits

Salary Range: Based Upon Qualifications

Benefits:

- Full Health, Dental, and Vision
- 11 paid Government Holidays, with 1 floating holiday
- Paid Vacation: accrue at 6.667 hours / month
- Sick Leave: accrue at 8 hours / month
- Open to 4:1 hybrid WFH schedule- based upon performance, achievement, and event schedule

EOE STATEMENT We are an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.

Please send inquiries and applications to the City Manager's office at dhamilton@lafga.org