



NEW BUSINESS WELCOME PACKET

DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY & MAIN STREET PROGRAM

47 SOUTH PARK STREET
(706) 482-2707
WWW.DAHLONEGADDA.ORG

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!



The Dahlongega Downtown Development Authority and Main Street Program occupy the second floor of the Historic Head House, just a block behind the main square. We are dedicated to the revitalization of economic development in Dahlongega's downtown district. Our office is your point of contact for all things downtown: kickstarting your business, prospective development or rehabilitation projects, grant programs, promotion and marketing, and the list goes on. Our focus is on creating opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with our businesses in a way that will keep them coming back. Our office plans many exciting community events to draw crowds to downtown, including our First Friday Concert Series, 4th of July, and Main Street Movies, to name a few.

The Downtown Development Authority was established in accordance with Downtown Development Authority Law. The DDA powers include the ability to purchase and own property to rent or lease, to finance projects, to execute contracts and finance projects, and to receive tax monies. Dahlongega's DDA Board consists of seven community volunteers from varying backgrounds. This board meets every first Thursday at 8:30 a.m. and welcomes the public to join.

YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE

**2023
GEORGIA'S BEST
SMALL TOWN
-SOUTHERN LIVING**



**OVER 400
BUSINESS
LICENSES IN THE
CITY LIMITS**

**OVER 120 IN THE
DOWNTOWN
CORE**

**-CITY OF DAHLONEGA
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

**7,537 RESIDENTS
IN THE CITY LIMITS**

**7,397 UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS
IN THE CITY LIMITS**

**5TH FASTEST
GROWING
COUNTY
IN THE NATION**

-U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



YOU PICKED THE RIGHT PLACE

4,489

workers commute
into Dahlonega for
work



Population
7,537

69%

of Dahlonega residents
are aged 0-39

3.8%

unemployment rate
for 2020

2-3%

Steady
population
growth rate

47%

of median household
income is \$50,000 or
higher

Employment Share

37%

Educational
Services

24%

Accodommation &
Food service

14%

Entertainment &
Recreation



156,192,000
retail trade sales

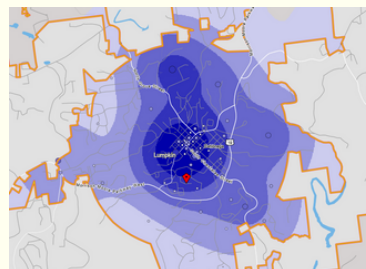
Over 120 Businesses
in downtown area

125 Events in 2021
131 Events in 2022



52,796,000
accommodation &
food service sales

Reported in 2021



>308,000 visitors
Permitted January
2021-September
2022

648
retail trade
employees



917
accommodation &
food service
employees



- 1 - 3 Jobs
- 4 - 36 Jobs
- 37 - 179 Jobs
- 180 - 564 Jobs
- 565 - 1,376 Jobs

N Analysis Selection

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

20

New Businesses
opened in the
downtown core

Dec. 2021 - Sep. 2022



1,319,044.37
invested in downtown
properties through Main Street
& DDA partnerships

2019-2022



9,396,000.00
commercial property sales in the
DDA boundary

2019-2022

WORKING THE WORK PLAN

**Housing
Initiatives**

**Smart
Redevelopment**

**Review of
Business-Related
Ordinances**

**Enhanced
Communication**

Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control Why? The Dahlonge DDA is aware of a perceived parking problem, including not enough parking and the desire to remove parking from the square. There is also a city-owned property that the DDA would like to convert into a community space for live entertainment and a farmer's market. Additionally, the sidewalks throughout downtown need to be expanded, repaired, added, and connected.

Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown Why? The Dahlonge DDA is very concerned about preserving downtown's historic character. Because the square is so successful, the DDA is also interested in expanding its vitality into the blocks leading up to it. There are also some vacancies and infill properties that are ripe for redevelopment.

Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances Why? The DDA realizes that the ordinances adopted by the city council are crucial for allowing specific things in specific places and, more importantly, NOT allowing uses that are not in alignment with the city and DDA's vision. The DDA must have the city's support to preserve and maintain the small-town, historic character of the downtown boundary.

VIEW THE FULL DETAILED PLAN AT DAHLONEGADDA.ORG

MEET OUR STAFF



Ariel Alexander
Downtown Development
Director

Ariel Alexander has worked for the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority since January 2021.

Ariel has lived in Dahlonega since 2011 and is a graduate of Lumpkin County High School. She attended the University of North Georgia to obtain her undergraduate degree in Political Science/Pre-Law Studies. Ariel's perfect day in Dahlonega would include breakfast at Picnic Café, enjoying the monthly Art in the Park event, and wrapping up with some live music at one of Dahlonega's many restaurants!

She is responsible for the operations of the authority.

Her focus lies in recruiting and retaining vibrant businesses and commerce downtown, facilitating incentives for small business development and historic preservation, and identifying areas for development, improvement, and beautification with the board of directors. Bring her your questions about property acquisition and rehabilitation, business development, and the downtown strategic plan.



Skyler Alexander
Main Street Manager

Skyler moved here in 2004 from Indiana and has loved every moment of her 20 years in Dahlonega. She graduated from Lumpkin County High School in 2016 and received her degree from the University of North Georgia in 2023. Skyler has worked for the City of Dahlonega since November 2018, beginning in the Community Development Department and then transitioning to DDA & Main Street in 2021. Skyler normally starts her weekends off with dinner at Spirits Tavern and ends the night with live music at one of the restaurants downtown.

As Main Street Manager, she develops, promotes, and implements programs like the First Friday Concert Series and the Fourth of July. She also maintains relationships with downtown business owners and staff. Bring her your promotional requests and downtown merchant questions!

MEET OUR BOARD

Awtrey Moore

Board Chairman, Altitude Benefits and Consulting

Zach Payne

Vice Chairman, Broker, Payne Co. Real Estate

Deb Rowe

Shenanigan's Irish Pub and Bourbon Street Grille

Melanie Dunlap

Wellness Coaching

Erick Jones

University of North Georgia, Dean of Students

Ryan Reagin

Dahlonega City Council

THINGS ARE HAPPENING

APRIL

**BEAR ON THE
SQUARE MOUNTAIN
FESTIVAL**

MAY

**DAHLONEGA ARTS
& WINE FESTIVAL**

MAY - OCTOBER

**FREE FIRST FRIDAY
CONCERTS
APPALACHIAN JAM
FARMERS MARKET**

JUNE - AUGUST

**FREE MOVIES IN
THE PARK**

JULY

**DAHLONEGA
4TH OF JULY
CELEBRATION**

OCTOBER

**GOLD RUSH DAYS
FESTIVAL
SCARES ON THE
SQUARE HALLOWEEN**

MARCH - OCTOBER

**ART IN THE PARK
MINI-FESTIVAL**

**NOVEMBER-
JANUARY**

**OLD FASHIONED
CHRISTMAS**

FIRST STEPS

Thank you for choosing the city of Dahlonega as the home of your business. We strive to make the process of opening as simple as possible, and are here to help every step of the way. Our mission is to uphold the history of our city, while further developing our economic vitality every chance we get. Of course, not all businesses are the same, and as such, based on location, type of business, or development of your space, there may be different steps to your process. This guide will serve as a resource as you navigate this exciting journey!

If you are moving forward with a new business venture in Dahlonega, please reach out to staff first! We want to ensure that you have everything you need to be successful:

- Appropriate Zoning
- Certificate of Appropriateness for historic structures
- Building Permits and Inspections
- Certificate of Occupational Tax
- Resources for Small Business Success
- Special Permits for food, alcohol, plants, etc.
- Sign Permits

Important Phone Numbers

City of Dahlonega Main Line.....	(706) 864-6133
Planning & Zoning.....	(706) 482-2708
Business Licensing.....	(706) 482-2718
Downtown Development.....	(706) 482-2707
Main Street.....	(706) 482-2726
Utility Billing.....	(706) 482-2703
Police Department.....	(706) 482-2716
City Engineer.....	(706) 482-2712
Chamber of Commerce.....	(706) 867-3762

BUSINESS RESOURCES

Façade Grants

- Available for exterior restorations/repairs
- Grant amount determined by available funds and number of requests under consideration
- Available for commercial property owners and business owners within the locally designated DDA area zoned B-3 and CBD
- Improvements are to remain in place and maintained
- Applicant responsible for the project and result in restorations appropriate for the building, contributing to the success of the current business and repair the building's façade to positively contribute to the appearance and vitality of Downtown

Projects must:

- Preserve architectural integrity of the structure and if possible restore the original façade
- Match preservation guidelines outlined by the US Secretary of the Interior Standards
- Meet all local governmental rules, regulations, and laws, including the Dahunega Historic Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines
- Use the gentlest methods available for exterior surface cleaning
- Consider the unique qualities of the individual building

Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund

- From the Georgia Department of Community Affairs: assists cities, counties and development authorities in efforts to revitalize downtown areas by providing below-market rate financing to fund capital projects in core historic downtown areas and adjacent historic neighborhoods where DDRLF will spur commercial redevelopment. The DDA may serve as a sponsor for qualified projects.

BUSINESS RESOURCES

Sprinkler and Wiring System Grant

- Zoned B-3 in the historic district. CBD properties may be considered based on the availability of funds
- Grant amount determined by available funds and the number of requests under consideration
- Commercial buildings 50 years or older
- Improvements are to remain in place and maintained.
- All property taxes and licenses are current
- Applicant responsible for the project

Monitored Fire Alarm System Grant

- Zoned B-3 in the historic district.
- Grant amount determined by available funds and number of requests under consideration
- Improvements are to remain in place and maintained
- All property taxes and licenses are current
- Applicant responsible for the project

Downtown Dahlonega Wayfinding

- Dahlonega's wayfinding signage is a system of signs that guides people by vehicle, bicycle, or on foot to important destinations downtown.

Bronze Dahlonega Stories Plaques

Incentive: 50% of the plaque cost.

Guidelines:

- Property is within the locally designated downtown development are within the historic central business district
- Available for commercial property owners and business owners. Government buildings and national franchises not eligible

BUSINESS RESOURCES

Small Business Improvement Grant

The Dahlonge Downtown Development Authority & Main Street Program wants to assist you with those small but essential expenses that can often make a big difference in getting a business started or growing your existing business.

For 2025, the DDA has designated \$12,500 to this program. This is a 50% matching grant, with a maximum award amount of \$1,000.00.

These funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis based on approval of each application by the board.

No repayment of the grant will be required or expected, although we do hope that you will consider supporting our program in the future, so that we can continue supporting our most valuable assets: our small businesses!

More Resources Available!

**Schedule an appointment with DDA Staff
to discuss other options to support your
new business.**

FAQS

How do I receive updates?

It's easy! Just fill out the form in the back of this packet and return it to us to receive updates from staff about downtown projects and events!

What do I do about city services?

All city services including trash, water, and sewer within the city limits are taken care of by Dahlongega Public Works. Please contact the City of Dahlongega for more information: (706) 864-6133.

How do I get on the website directory?

Our website currently has pages for restaurants, shopping, attractions, and hotels! If you fit into one of these categories, you will be added. Be sure to fill out the form in the back of this packet and return it back into us!

Do you have social media?

Definitely! We have Facebook and Instagram. Be sure to tag us in your Instagram photos. Don't forget to let us know when you have something special going on so we can share it!

FB: Dahlongega Main Street Program & DDA

IG: @downtowndahlongega

How can I contribute to downtown?

The Downtown Development Authority operates a sponsorship program for all events and initiatives we provide. If you are interested in donating to the promotion and vitality of our downtown, please visit dahlongegadda.org to fill out a sponsorship form! We also manage a downtown ambassador program, so if you are interested in volunteering to share news and information to locals and visitors, give us a call !

What if I have specific questions or concerns?

Both Ariel and Skyler hold Merchant Office Hours every Friday from 8:30 am to 10:30 am at the Head House. Please feel free to come by during these times to have a question answered, get help on a tough issue, or just rest a little! We are here to listen and support as much as possible. Of course, if you would like to schedule a private meeting with a staff member, that can be arranged as well.



BUSINESS CONTACT FORM

BUSINESS NAME: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT NAME: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

HOW MANY EMPLOYEES: FT _____ PT _____

WEBSITE: _____

WHAT FORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA DO YOU USE (CIRCLE): FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM TWITTER LINKEDIN OTHER

PLEASE LIST ANY OTHER EMPLOYEES E-MAIL ADDRESSES YOU WOULD
LIKE TO RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER:

ANY OTHER FACTS ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS YOU WOULD LIKE US TO
KNOW? (IMMEDIATE NEEDS, QUESTIONS)

HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO BE CONTACTED FOR IMPORTANT NEWS
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS?

EMAIL

TELEPHONE

PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUP

PLEASE SEND THIS BACK TO THE OFFICE OF DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT: AALEXANDER@DAHLONEGADDA.ORG
465 RILEY RD.
DAHLONEGA, GA 30533