



City of Eastman Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board Member Application

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Board of Directors for the City of Eastman's Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Please take the time to read this application thoroughly, it has important information for you to consider before applying.

Being a DDA Board member is a wonderful way to serve your community. It is not an easy job, but it is most definitely important, interesting, fulfilling, and exciting work. If you are selected to serve on the DDA Board, it is expected that you will attend one monthly board meeting (typically, 60-90 minutes), as well as dedicate 5-10 hours a month outside of the Board meeting conducting D D A business. The DDA Board members must also commit to the completion of a full day/8-hours of State mandated training on the Downtown Development Authority's operations, roles, and responsibilities within the first 12 months of appointment. All approved or mandated travel, training, and education expenses will be covered at no cost to the individual Board member. It is best if Board members have a somewhat flexible work schedule, as some DDA activities, meetings, and trainings may occur during normal business hours. Every effort will be made to alleviate inconveniences when possible.

If you are unable to devote the necessary time, energy, and enthusiasm to the DDA, please do not apply for Board membership. It is crucial that the DDA be a strong, committed, and viable organization-- we need a Board of Directors with that same character if we are going to achieve our goals. If you are unable to commit to Board service at this time, there are still *many other ways* in which you may help revitalize our Historic Downtown through numerous special projects and committee activities. We hope that you will still continue to be involved, be supportive, and volunteer... just let us know!

The first installment of the DDA Board will be appointed to staggered terms of 2, 4, and 6 years. The subsequent Board Members will serve terms of 4 years only. Staggering the terms initially ensures that we develop a healthy cycle of Board rotation. Applicants should be willing to commit to a 4-year term. If you would prefer to serve a 2 year or a 4-year term, please indicate your preference on the application.

The powers of the Downtown Development Authority were established by special State legislation. The DDA is an independent authority established for the purpose of planning, organizing, and financing projects that will revitalize and redevelop Eastman's commercial

business district. The DDA focuses on the historic commercial downtown central business district and works to market a positive image for the city. According to Georgia's State Law, a Director on the Board of the DDA must meet the following criteria:

- 1) You must be a taxpayer residing in the City of Eastman, *or*
- 2) You must be a taxpayer residing in Dodge County *and* an owner/operator of a business located within the Downtown Development area.

If you do not meet these criteria, you **MAY NOT** be a member of the DDA board. The DDA's revitalization strategies are structured around the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Four Point Main Street Approach.

Mission Statement The Eastman Downtown Development Authority works to assure the long-term economic stability of Downtown Eastman by maintaining the community character of the district and supporting the fundamentals that assure Eastman is a great place to live, work, play, invest, and do business.

Program Overview The Eastman Downtown Development Authority is composed of a seven (7) member Board of Directors, appointed by the Eastman City Council, to serve as advocates and advisors to the Council on issues related to economic growth and development in Downtown Eastman. The DDA works to attract business to the Downtown area and provides technical support to assure that existing businesses achieve their potential. The DDA actively markets the City of Eastman and works to strengthen the small town character of the community. The DDA works with its partners at Eastman City Hall and within the Eastman business community to provide a bridge between the business and residential communities for the benefit of the entire City of Eastman.

The DDA's daily operation is modeled after the National Trust for Historic Preservation's successful National Main Street Program. The Main Street Program provides a comprehensive approach to the economic revitalization of the historic commercial center of a community. While based upon a commitment to the preservation of historic commercial buildings, the Main Street Program is as much about preserving a strong sense of community as it is about preserving buildings. Main Street is based on four central elements that form the basis for the Eastman Downtown development program. These four points are Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring. The purpose of each is outlined below.

There will be one (1) DDA Board Member appointed to lead each of the four-points, including the professional and volunteer efforts involved to succeed.

Organization involves building a Downtown support group that is well represented by business and property owners, bankers, citizens, public officials, chambers of commerce and other local economic development organizations. Everyone must work together to renew Downtown. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

All segments of the community must be made to understand that Downtown needs a voice to speak out, telling the story of the historic central business area. They must know the importance of that voice in promoting Downtown as a center for retail and business and also for special events and celebrations.

That unified voice asks the County and City for help in problem solving on major issues, such as parking.

It establishes working relationships among Downtown merchants, property owners, and all other groups and offers management to the group. Egos and "turf" must be put aside as all stakeholder groups come together to work on an agreed upon set of goals for the Downtown district. Once the community becomes a cohesive, cooperative unit, the Downtown begins to solve its own problems and once again competes in the marketplace as a center for retail and business.

Promotion creates excitement Downtown. Street festivals, parades, retail events, and image development campaigns are some of the ways Downtown encourages customer traffic. Promotion involves marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

Calling the community's attention to Downtown and changing any negative attitudes requires promotional techniques designed to foster a positive image. Downtown must be shown as a vital, exciting place where things are happening. Advertising Downtown as a center of social and economic activity is one of our main objectives.

A schedule of events, planned well in advance and supported by all Downtown groups, will maintain the consistency needed to establish and maintain the Downtown credibility. Constant visibility is of vital importance.

There are three basic categories of Downtown promotion: image promotions, joint merchandising, and special events promotion. Image promotions include slide shows, institutional advertising, logos, business directories, calendars, and shopping bags. These should be done with professional quality. Joint merchandising promotions create activity and demand. They require voluntary participation by a majority of the merchants who should also adopt an advertising format. Special events have a community-wide impact. These events improve community attitudes and promote Downtown as a friendly place to return for other things. Creating community pride and connection to the Downtown district helps strengthen a sense of community and generates a market for Downtown business growth.

Design enhances the attractiveness of the business district. Historic building rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, colorful banners, landscaping, and lighting all improve the physical image of the Downtown as a quality place to shop, work, walk, invest in and live. Design improvements result in a reinvestment of public and private dollars in Downtown.

Because buildings have been altered in a variety of ways, particularly over the past 30 years, removal of the incompatible elements and enhancement of original ones can be a dramatic way of achieving visible results in a Downtown revitalization program. It is a common misunderstanding that because historic preservation is central to our approach, we propose to restore Downtown areas to the appearance of one particular earlier era. That is not the case. Downtowns have evolved over decades, one building at a time. It is important to maintain the vitality of Downtown inherent in the different styles of architecture and materials and the range of tastes and levels of prosperity they represent. *Our design philosophy is that good design can exist in any period, the past or the present. What is most important is that design is attractive and complements the existing architectural elements found in the historic district.*

Economic Restructuring Economic restructuring involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Recruiting new businesses, creatively converting unused space

for new uses, and sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants are examples of economic restructuring activities.

The economic restructuring segment of our Downtown program has as its goal to strengthen the Downtown economy to assure that existing businesses are retained and thrive and that new commercial endeavors are successfully recruited. The fundamental recognition is that for new money to come Downtown, or for old money to stay Downtown, there must be a way to both show a profit and be secure.

Merchant and shopper surveys, retail market studies, and other studies help to determine the strengths and weaknesses of Downtown. From this data collection will come a realistic idea of Downtown potential. A list of desired business types and a list of available buildings and spaces should be made and then put in order of importance. When we establish priorities, we look for businesses that will fill a gap in the tenant mix, occupy a key building, complement existing businesses and generate traffic Downtown. Having a solid plan and the necessary data to support business recruitment efforts allows us to take advantage of unanticipated opportunities.

Our economic restructuring includes a commitment to a well-balanced development strategy. A healthy Downtown should include commercial, retail, restaurant and residential uses. Private businesses should exist along with government services, non-profit organizations, institutions, retail and restaurant uses and Downtown residents. A well designed Downtown is one in which pedestrian connections are easily made and reliance on automobiles is minimized.

Once again, sincere thanks from the City of Eastman for your interest in assisting us as we strive to make the great City of Eastman even better! We look forward to your participation and feedback as we proceed. Complete revitalization success will take nothing less than the entire community working together. We can do it, but we need YOUR help! Join us!

Please contact April Sheffield, Clerk at City Hall should you have any questions or need further information.

1. Name _____
2. Are you a resident of the City of Eastman? _____
3. Address: _____
4. Phone: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____ (Cell) _____
5. E-mail: _____
6. Length of residency in the City of Eastman? _____ Dodge County: _____
7. Are you a licensed business owner in the City of Eastman? _____

8. Business Name: _____

9. Business Address: _____

10. How long has the business been licensed by the City? _____

11. Where are you currently employed? What is your current position? How long have you been with this company? *(A resume may be attached to provide further professional information)*

12. Either in the space below or on an attachment, please list any special skills or experience that you feel would be strengths for the Downtown Development Authority. *(Professional experience, previous Board experience, volunteerism, personality characteristics, etc.)*

13. The initial DDA board members have served staggered terms of 2, 4, or 6 years, in order to ensure a healthy Board rotation. If selected, are you committed to serving a 4 year term? What is your preference for Board tenure?

14. In the space below or on a separate attachment, please list your “vision” for the future of downtown Eastman, and how you think Eastman could work towards these goals. How can you help this process?

I have read and fully understand this application for the DDA board. I am willing to make a Board level commitment to the revitalization of Downtown Eastman.

Signature

Date

Please complete and return to April Sheffield @ Eastman City Hall, 333 College Street, PO Drawer 40, Eastman, GA 31023 or to april@cityofeastman.com. For questions call 478-231-5218.