



Director of Business Engagement and Development

Downtown Durham, Inc. is the nonprofit entity created in 1993 to serve as a catalyst for downtown's revitalization. Our organization works to ensure downtown is the diverse, unique and thriving heart of Durham, and that it is welcoming to all.

DDI's mission is to enhance the environment, economy and vitality of downtown Durham, while preserving and enriching its distinctive culture and strong sense of community.

We are seeking a Director of Business Engagement and Development. The successful candidate must align with our vision and mission as well as have experience in small business (especially street-level/retail) programs, support and assistance. Also critical is the ability to develop partnerships and relationships of influence with state, city and small business resource providers. Highly desired experience includes developing policies, plans and partnerships that foster small business growth and development. We are looking for a results-oriented individual who can coach and collaborate with others for the betterment of the public good in downtown. The ideal candidate must be outgoing and personable; comfortable meeting one-on-one and in-person on a regular basis with business owners, stakeholders and partners; able to work independently and as a member of the team; handle multiple projects at the same time; have excellent written and verbal communication skills; and be comfortable with technology and learning new technology, including Microsoft Office and CRM Salesforce.

A college degree or commensurate experience is required. The Director of Business Engagement and Development will be responsible for developing and implementing strategies that support the small business environment of downtown Durham in partnership with DDI's many partners and stakeholders. This position is full-time.

COMPENSATION: Salary commensurate with experience. BENEFITS: Vacation, holiday, and sick leave, retirement program, parking, travel allowance. TO APPLY: Please forward your resume and a cover letter detailing why you are interested in the position, what experience you will bring, and how you will add value to the organization and downtown Durham, with three references and their contact information, by December 30, 2021 to careers@downtowndurham.com

Director of Business Engagement and Development Job Description

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This position will act as DDI's primary contact for new, existing and potential street-level retail, restaurant and service businesses in the downtown area. The successful candidate is responsible for developing and managing robust relationships and communication with local businesses including retail and office, in downtown Durham. The selected candidate will work closely with the CEO to develop and implement sustainable economic development strategies that value diversity in all its forms. The individual will develop and advocate for public policies, programs and initiatives that attract, retain and support small and medium-sized businesses, with a special focus on minority and women-owned businesses in downtown Durham. The individual will also work in close cooperation and partnership with the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, the City of Durham Office of Economic and Workforce Development, Durham County Office of Economic Development, Discover Durham, property owners, real estate professionals and other small business resources and programs to support these goals and strategies.

Responsibilities:

- **Attraction and Retention:**
 - Develops and manages a robust business engagement, retention and attraction program for small businesses (street-level and office) throughout downtown Durham, thereby positioning DDI as the primary and definitive source for local business assistance information and referral in downtown.
 - Regularly communicates with local real estate brokers, property owners and potential investors as it pertains to commercial properties and/or local small business expansion opportunities.
 - Provides support to businesses interested in opening downtown, providing tours and information to help them find space and connect them with resources and technical assistance.
 - Pays particular attention to the active recruitment, retention and support of small, minority, women and locally-owned businesses to downtown. Identifies challenges preventing these businesses from locating, expanding or growing in the downtown area and creates programs to address these challenges. Maintains constant communication with these businesses to provide additional support and assistance as needed.

- Street-Level Business Engagement and Support:
 - Working with relevant and appropriate partners, identifies and creates new and innovative downtown business support programs and projects that support the continued growth, development and success of downtown’s local business community.
 - Develops a vigorous business engagement system by meeting and communicating regularly with businesses in downtown to identify challenges, signs of closing or downsizing, or other obstacles and provides assistance to businesses to address such challenges.
 - Maintains comprehensive knowledge and inventory of technical, workforce, financial and other business assistance programs available from all levels of government and other business support partners. Develops and maintains relationships with providers of these programs, ensuring that information available to businesses remains current and complete. Serves as a liaison between businesses and service providers to include regular follow-up to ensure that the business needs are being addressed by service providers.
 - Makes recommendations, tracks and follows up on regulatory processes like permit applications, and acts as an ombudsman and advocate to help with understanding and working through issues with local and state ordinances and policies and regulatory agencies, as needed.
 - Coordinates and arranges business trainings, roundtables, information sessions and public input/feedback events for local businesses on a regular basis to strengthen downtown’s business environment.

- Data Collection and Management:
 - Develops and maintains county business census, engages in data collection and reporting as it relates to local business demographics. Assists with compilation of statistics related to local business profiles and industry clusters, working in collaboration with the DDI’s Data and Research Analyst.
 - Maintains accurate and up-to-date records on business openings, closings and potential closings.

- Internal and External Collaboration:
 - Participates as DDI’s representative on relevant civic task forces, authorities and other entities.
 - Establishes and maintains contacts with business organizations and associations throughout Durham, the Triangle region, the state and elsewhere as appropriate.
 - Works with DDI’s marketing team to develop business-related web, print and social media marketing initiatives, and provides relevant information to keep website, publications, collaterals and social media up to date.
 - Assists CEO as needed with budget preparation and general administration.

Qualifications and Skills

- Strong personal alignment with DDI's vision and mission.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills. Demonstrated ability to communicate, collaborate, positively influence and work effectively across a broad sector of stakeholders, including senior municipal leaders, business owners, property owners, and real estate professionals.
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically about equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic development in a downtown district and successfully implement such strategies.
- Demonstrated proficiency with Microsoft Office. Ideally proficient using Salesforce CRM, Costar, Loop-net and other economic development databases and resources. Comfortable learning new technology systems.
- Demonstrated strong business writing skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to organize people and projects to achieve measurable results.
- Bachelor's degree in city planning, public administration, business administration or economic development preferred. Experience working with small businesses providing support and assistance is required.
- High level of follow-through and problem-solving skills are required.
- Ability to research problems and solutions to the degree necessary to develop effective solutions to identified problems.