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RETAINED EXECUTIVE SEARCH



DOWNTOWN LONG BEACH ALLIANCE

OUR DOWNTOWN. ONE DOWNTOWN.

President & Chief Executive Officer Position Narrative

The Opportunity

For the first time in over 25 years, the [Downtown Long Beach Alliance](#) (DLBA) is seeking a new President & Chief Executive Officer. This leadership transition comes at a pivotal moment as DLBA is celebrating its 85th year of exceptional service to the Downtown Long Beach community. While the organization has achieved significant growth and maintains an exceptional reputation, it also faces challenges to sustaining and building on its success. These include recent shifts in retail shopping, increased complexity connected to homelessness, and on-going economic and real estate recovery challenges relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address these issues and help realize its goals, DLBA undertook an extensive strategic planning process in 2021. As part of this inclusive process, DLBA Board and staff engaged a wide range of Downtown and community stakeholders to better understand the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in Downtown Long Beach. This involved virtual and in-person engagements including over 50 interviews, roundtable discussions with dozens of participants, workshops with the Board of Directors and project Steering Committee, and an online survey that collected 500 responses. Stakeholders included property owners (both commercial and residential), merchants, developers real estate professionals, City leadership and staff, representatives from the arts and nonprofit sectors, and numerous other partners.

The feedback was used to inform the strategic planning process. The result is a Board-approved strategic plan which refreshes the DLBA work program, organizational culture, and operations to ensure it continues to provide an enhanced value proposition to all Downtown stakeholders over the next five years and beyond. The Plan addresses both near-term economic recovery and longer-term improvements.

To help realize the goals set forth in the strategic plan and to better position DLBA and the Downtown Long Beach community for the future, the organization is seeking a visionary and transformative leader to serve as its next President and Chief Executive Officer. The successful candidate will bring a genuine interest and deep commitment to DLBA's mission and will embody a caring, inclusive, and facilitative leadership style that inspires and empowers staff and volunteers, encourages collaboration, and fosters innovation to further develop and drive strategies to:

- a. enhance the fundamentals, ensuring a first-class clean and safe program for Downtown Long Beach that improves outcomes that further elevates standards for clean services and maintenance, and enriches services to enhance the perception and reality of safety in Downtown, and services for people experiencing homelessness;
- b. strengthen existing businesses and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in Downtown by assisting new and existing businesses in accessing resources, working with property owners, developers, and the leasing community in support of retail and office tenants, and activating vacant or underutilized storefronts and help to prevent future vacancies;
- c. showcase the beauty, creativity, and unique sense of place in Downtown for all to enjoy by continuing open street concepts and expanded outdoor dining options, and activating key locations with green space, art, music, and culturally responsive place management, as well as developing comprehensive wayfinding throughout Downtown to engage the community;

The Opportunity (CONTINUED)

- d. market and promote Downtown as a whole and as a collection of unique neighborhoods, elevate visibility and awareness of DLBA’s services, and create a clear value proposition for the organization among key audiences; and
- e. serve as a leading voice in shaping the future of Downtown, partnering with public and private leaders throughout Long Beach, and participating and advocating for projects, policies, and initiatives that will impact and benefit the communities DLBA serves.

Long Beach is a high energy, culturally diverse community, described by many as a big city with small town charm. Centrally located between Los Angeles and Orange County, Long Beach is the 7th largest city in California and the 3rd in Southern California behind Los Angeles and San Diego. Despite its size, it has been voted consistently as one of America’s “Most Walkable Cities,” known for its unique oceanfront setting.

With upcoming global events such as the Summer Olympics and Paralympics in 2028, and local events such as the Long Beach Grand Prix, the City’s largest annual event, there will be tremendous opportunities for the business and residential communities of Long Beach and all Southern California to come together to create positive change. DLBA will have an opportunity to play a critical role in leading this change.

DLBA has an engaged board of directors, a skilled leadership team, and a passionate, caring, and knowledgeable staff committed to serving the Downtown Long Beach community. With the search for a dynamic new President and Chief Executive Officer, DLBA is entering a transitional period, inviting new opportunities for innovative and collaborative partnerships, and fresh leadership with the advantages of a strong foundation.

This is an exceptional opportunity for a proven leader to build on the organization’s rich history, foster mission and community alignment, inspire and enact collaborative change, and help the Downtown Long Beach community realize DLBA’s vision of Downtown as the “thriving urban center of Long Beach, embodying and celebrating the region’s diversity, innovation, and adaptability.”

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

Downtown Long Beach Alliance and Berkhemer Clayton, Inc. are committed to a process of diversity and inclusion. We welcome all qualified candidates for consideration.

Downtown Long Beach is a high energy, culturally diverse environment. Board members, property owners, staff, and business owners reflect this diversity. The Downtown Long Beach Alliance is an Equal Opportunity employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic which may be specified by law or organizational policy.

For additional information, please visit [DLBA’s Organizational Equity Commitment Statement](#).

Position Summary

The President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will serve as DLBA’s lead executive and, in partnership with the Board of Directors and staff, will be responsible for the overall success of the organization. This includes leading and supporting the Board and staff through the refinement of its strategic plan to articulate a holistic, shared vision and actionable plan for its future.

Reporting to the 32-member Board of Directors, which includes 21 voting members, the CEO will work closely with the Board Chair and 9-member Executive Committee. In collaboration with DLBA’s leadership team, the CEO will lead all DLBA’s internal staff and manage outside vendors. Read more about DLBA’s [Board of Directors](#) and [Staff](#).

Externally, the CEO will serve as a lead spokesperson and advocate for DLBA to all audiences and will work to strengthen and expand relationships important to the organization, including, but not limited to, those with property and business owners, residents, elected officials, city agencies, local nonprofit organizations, and community leaders. Internally, the CEO will work closely with the Board, Board Chair, and leadership team, establishing policies, providing clear direction, and ensuring effective implementation of the mission, strategic plans, and programmatic goals by engaging, inspiring, and supporting staff.

To accomplish this, DLBA’s next CEO will demonstrate a high level of professionalism and integrity; a transparent, team-oriented, and collaborative style; an enthusiasm for the mission of the organization; and a commitment to identifying and embracing opportunities for sustainable growth and change to move DLBA and the Downtown Long Beach community forward.



Key responsibilities for the next CEO will include the following six priority areas:

1. **Providing Visionary and Strategic Leadership to Sustain and Grow DLBA:**

- Provide overall strategic leadership and vision for DLBA; serving as a champion for innovation, navigating issues, and increasing the organization’s reach and impact on the Downtown community.
- Establish an inclusive and transparent planning process with both the Board and staff to develop a unified vision for the future of DLBA and build on its on-going strategic plan to move toward actualizing that vision.
- Partner with the Board to determine the pace at which priorities can be advanced, decide which projects deserve primary attention, and monitor the rate at which decisions are implemented.
- Monitor trends in nonprofit and business management, economic development, community engagement, and overall city and place management to assure DLBA’s plans and services reflect best practices and anticipate potential challenges.

Position Summary (CONTINUED)

2. Sustaining and Supporting a Vibrant Staff Culture:

- Recruit, retain, and support highly qualified staff to carry out DLBA's programs and mission.
- Provide consistent leadership and clear direction to members of the leadership team and staff at all levels. Define organizational and individual goals, specify responsibilities and accountabilities for management personnel, and evaluate staff performance regularly.
- Deploy resources efficiently and effectively, working with the leadership team to balance staff workload and effort, and provide regular feedback and development opportunities so staff can continuously grow and improve.
- Inspire and mentor staff, and promote a caring, professional, and efficient work environment that actively prioritizes diversity and inclusion, encourages innovation, supports professional development, and promotes and celebrates the success of all staff in establishing, executing, and achieving goals that further the vision of DLBA.
- Promote a culture that facilitates cross-functional collaboration and strengthens communications throughout the organization.

3. Supporting and Enhancing Program and Service Delivery and Development:

- Ensure effective implementation of all programs and services by meeting regularly with leadership to review policies and outcomes, staff performance, and feedback from external constituents and the Downtown community.
- Elevate program and service quality through regular assessment of service portfolio for efficiency and effectiveness, alignment with mission, potential for impact, sustainability, and funding.
- Promote programs, services, and events that are produced in a cost-effective manner, employing economy while maintaining a high level of service and responsiveness.
- Provide guidance and leadership in exploring new services and pilot projects consistent with DLBA's mission and goals.

Public Safety and Maintenance

- Provide leadership and support staff to refine strategies, further enhance standards, and develop and implement tracking and reporting systems to ensure an effective, responsive, and efficient clean and safe program for the Downtown community.
- Maintain productive working relationships with relevant agencies and organizations including Long Beach Police Department (LBPD), Long Beach Fire Department (LBFD), City Attorney's office, Public Works, City Manager's office, City Council, the Mayor's office, Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau, Homeless Services, and nonprofit organizations serving those experiencing homelessness to advance DLBA's clean and safe objectives.

Position Summary (CONTINUED)

Public Safety and Maintenance (Continued)

- Ensure the city is providing DLBA with its share of services including LBPD, street sweeping, trash pickup, curb painting, etc.
- Encourage LBPD to have a coordinated plan involving LBPD, DLBA, and private security in dealing with emergency measures within Downtown.
- Proactively partner with the city's homeless services bureau and local nonprofit organizations to improve outcomes and services for people experiencing homelessness.



Economic Development and Place Management

- Provide leadership and support staff to develop and prioritize programming that reflects the needs of local business and residents, strengthens existing businesses, encourages entrepreneurship and innovation, and recruits new businesses by showcasing the beauty, creativity, and unique sense of place in Downtown Long Beach.
- Implement programs and strategies to retain and attract businesses from a diverse range of segments and industries, including, but not limited to, tourism, hospitality, entertainment, retail, personal services, healthcare, technology, and nonprofit. Prioritize strategies to address vacant or underutilized storefronts and help to prevent future vacancies.
- Position Downtown as a compelling destination for businesses and visitors through strategic ongoing investments in place management, urban planning, capital improvements, and beautification.
- Coordinate or lead special projects to address beautification and capital projects, including but not limited to tree planting and landscape projects; mobility and wayfinding; infrastructure improvements (e.g., streetlights and sidewalks).
- Identify grant opportunities to bring additional resources into the community to support pedestrian safety, arts and culture, and micro-mobility efforts (crosswalks, public art, street activation, etc.).



Position Summary (CONTINUED)

4. Representing and Marketing Downtown Long Beach Effectively with External Constituents:

- Serve as chief spokesperson, advocate, and relationship developer for DLBA's brand on all issues important to the organization and the Downtown community; and represent DLBA with various media outlets and at important functions such as community events, public meetings, and professional conferences.
- Facilitate further integration of DLBA into the fabric of Downtown Long Beach, expanding and strengthening its reach and impact through proactive marketing and direct involvement with business, political, and community leaders.
- Partner with the Board and staff to develop and implement comprehensive, targeted, and proactive marketing and branding strategies to promote local projects and positive developments within Downtown, and to raise awareness of DLBA and communicate the value of its programs and services to external audiences.
- Increase exposure of Downtown Long Beach to drive economic investment and visitor traffic by nurturing and expanding Downtown's reputation as an authentic, diverse, culturally significant, and forward-thinking district, fostering its identity and brand through a robust marketing plan inclusive of communications, public relations, advertising, partnerships, and special events.
- Build and nurture cooperative external relationships to strengthen DLBA and expand its reach to best serve the Downtown community. Constituents could include, policy makers, corporate, community, and civic leaders, travel and tourism leaders, the chamber of commerce, other business improvement districts, other nonprofit leaders, and media (traditional and digital).
- Foster productive relations with members of the Long Beach City family, including the mayor's office, city council, LBPD, LBFD, city attorney's office, city prosecutor, city manager's office, public works, and other city departments to maximize city services to Downtown and reduce DLBA costs and dependencies.
- Seek to optimize relationships and communications with all stakeholders and businesses in Downtown to promote, support, and ensure ongoing use and satisfaction with services provided by DLBA.
- Make stakeholder problem solving a priority, seeking to connect stakeholders with appropriate city or community resources, or facilitating neighbor-to-neighbor problem solving, where appropriate.
- Actively engage with the community to identify opportunities and needs and proactively advocate for policies and solutions at all levels that positively impact the Downtown community and Long Beach as a whole.

Position Summary (CONTINUED)

4. *Representing and Marketing Downtown Long Beach: (Continued)*

- Elevate the influence of DLBA and create advocacy capabilities that are more proactive, as opposed to reactive. Build coalitions around advocacy objectives to create a stronger voice for resource allocation or policy changes that will further DLBA’s mission. Seek collaboration with like-minded organizations and leverage these resources, when appropriate, to reduce cost and dependency on DLBA.
- Encourage and empower the Board and staff to also serve as external ambassadors and relationship developers to further DLBA’s mission.

5. *Strengthening DLBA’s Financial Health, Infrastructure and Operations:*

- Provide overall leadership and direction of all DLBA activities, including operations, finance, HR, IT, etc., to ensure the organization is operating in an effective, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner.
- Maintain the financial health of the organization, including developing long- and short-range financial plans, monitoring the budget and ensuring sound financial controls are in place; set financial priorities to support the needs and goals of DLBA’s programs, services, and staff.
- Ensure that DLBA contract obligations are fulfilled in a timely and professional manner.
- Assess the condition and usage of existing facilities, technology, and resources, and develop strategies to meet future facility and resource needs.
- Analyze current operating practices and costs and identify and explore opportunities to increase efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and impact; using data and research to inform key decisions.
- Stay informed of best practices and innovations in finance, human resources, revenue development, and overall management and governance, and as appropriate, adapt these to create maximum impact within DLBA and for the communities it serves.
- Work with the City to generate funding, maximize tax revenues, and increase City services within Downtown.
- Partner with the Board and staff to pursue additional revenue generating programs and activities, including grant writing and events, to augment the organization’s assessment revenues.



Position Summary (CONTINUED)

6. *Facilitating Governance and Board Development:*

- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board and ensure open and regular communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact effectiveness against stated milestones and goals.
- Partner with the Board Chair to enable the Board to fulfill its governance functions and facilitate the optimum performance by the Board, its committees, and individual members.
- Collaborate with the Board and staff to maintain strong relationships with current strategic partners, members, and funding sources and engage and empower board members to participate in efforts to build new relationships to benefit DLBA and its mission.
- Work toward the creation of a more diverse, engaged, and committed board, helping to identify and recruit effective board members who represent a diverse range of demographics, including age, gender, ethnic and cultural background, industry, and area of professional expertise.



Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be a collaborative, transparent, and proactive leader with the professional experience and leadership attributes to inspire respect and shared vision among DLBA's leadership, staff, and board, and among the communities DLBA serves. This leader will bring a servant leadership approach that prioritizes the needs of the Downtown community and staff, as well as an understanding and appreciation for DLBA's rich history and core mission, along with a vision for its future.

The CEO will have demonstrated ability in organizational administration with ten or more years of relevant leadership and management experience. The ideal candidate will bring an interest in the economic and cultural climate of Downtown Long Beach and should have a strong knowledge base and appreciation of the opportunities and challenges facing the community. The incumbent should also understand the structure and mission of a property-based improvement or assessment district (PBID/PBAD). Prior PBID/PBAD and/or nonprofit experience is helpful, but not required.

DLBA seeks candidates with the specific qualities, characteristics, and experience listed in the following six priority areas, which match those listed in the Position Summary section, understanding that each candidate brings relative strengths and weaknesses and that no single candidate will be equally strong in every area:

1. Visionary and Strategic Organizational Leadership:

- A creative, action-oriented leader, with proven success driving unified vision, change, and growth within an organization and translating broad goals into achievable steps.
- Exceptional deductive reasoning, critical thinking, analytic, strategic planning, and synthesis skills, with the intellectual curiosity and willingness to encourage and champion innovation, and the ability to generate buy-in and develop consensus and excitement for new ideas, while maintaining a sense of urgency and commitment to results to keep initiatives on track.
- An entrepreneurial, self-motivated, confident and influential style that is coupled with sensitivity and flexibility. A leader who is an advocate for growth and change and achieving results collaboratively.
- A forward-thinking strategic outlook that embraces diversity, inclusivity, sustainability, technology, wellness, and a wide range of progressive pedagogies.
- Character and substance: a person with the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as the ability to manage the most sensitive and challenging issues with tact, diplomacy, and discretion.
- Authentic appreciation - and even a certain humility, wonder, and awe - at what the Long Beach community means to people, provides them with, takes from them, and demands in the way of collective action when challenges - be they naturally occurring or human-caused - grow large and opportunities for making positive change arise.
- A humble, trustworthy, accountable leader, with a genuine interest, strong alignment, and commitment to DLBA's mission.

Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

2. Staff Management and Support:

- Demonstrated success managing and motivating staff across a range of functional disciplines, with experience recruiting, developing, leading, evaluating, and retaining a productive team.
- An accessible, caring, facilitative leadership style, with the ability to mentor, inspire, and empower staff with respect and kindness; a commitment to transparency, collaboration, and fairness; and the ability to balance these with occasional needs for expediency, decisiveness, and accountability. Ability to demonstrate a strong sense of personal accountability and requires the same discipline from staff.
- Success building a unified organizational culture, with collaborative, cross-functional teams.
- A leader who acknowledges and celebrates individual and collective staff success.
- Track record of prioritizing and promoting the professional development of staff, leadership, and of self.



3. Program and Service Delivery and Development:

- Track record of leading high-quality, productive, efficient, and service-focused programs highly desired.
- Success partnering with program leadership and the Board in assessing efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services and developing new programs to further an organization's mission and meet the needs of its clients.
- An understanding of the importance of customer service to an organization, along with a client-centered approach that prioritizes responsiveness and consistent high-quality service.
- Experience developing and implementing strategies that drive commerce highly desired.

Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

4. Communications and External Relations:

- Strong written and oral communications skills, as well as listening, and interpersonal skills to serve as an enthusiastic, charismatic, and credible ambassador for DLBA. Must be comfortable with public speaking and being interviewed by a range of media outlets.
- Proven ability to build and nurture meaningful, lasting relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels, and to educate, influence, and motivate key audiences, including staff, board, elected officials and civic leaders, key business leaders, peer organizations, or other individuals who have an interest in the mission of DLBA.
- Demonstrated success building and leveraging relationships for the benefit of an organization. Experience building coalitions, orchestrating grass roots community relations programs, driving consensus, and rallying support around strategic priorities highly desired.
- Deep experience and connections across a variety of sectors within Long Beach, Los Angeles, and Southern California, including local political, civic, and corporate leaders preferred, but not required.
- Track record of success partnering with staff and/or board members in developing and implementing strategies to increase visibility and awareness, and/or advocate for an organization, program, or individual desired. Direct experience, skill, and ability in advocacy, government relations, marketing, public relations, and/or social media marketing preferred.
- Experience guiding and enabling staff and board members to serve as external voices and connectors for the organization.
- Cultural humility and a commitment to equity and social justice. Must be comfortable with diversity of all kinds and respectful of a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.



Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

5. Operational and Administrative Leadership:

- Demonstrated success integrating and coordinating diverse areas of management. Knowledge in the following areas is highly desired: finance; human resources; advocacy; marketing and communications; licensing; facilities management and development, fund development; data analytics; and governance. Working knowledge of general business operations in a nonprofit organization preferred.
- A financially savvy leader with strong business acumen, solid financial grounding, and a track record of effective budgeting and resource allocation, with the ability to identify and explore opportunities to increase operational efficiency and impact.
- Demonstrated success increasing efficiency of current revenue sources and/or developing and implementing new revenue-generating strategies. Experience in one or more of the following areas is desirable: sponsorships; licensing; large-scale events; experiential activations.
- Strong understanding and demonstrated track record of success utilizing technology, along with an appreciation for research and analytics and how data can inform and educate decision-making.
- Attention to detail with excellent organizational, administrative and project management skills, including the ability to diagnose critical areas that require attention, and then translate strategies into concrete action. Prior experience successfully leading an organization through growth and/or change highly desired.



6. Governance and Board Development:

- Experience partnering with a board in leading organizational change, including the skill and ability to deal effectively with demanding situations, assessing all factors, and developing and implementing successful solutions is highly desired.
- Prior success identifying and recruiting effective and engaged board members that represent a diverse range of demographics is preferred.

Education and Certifications

Bachelor's degree or equivalent combination of relevant education and experience required. An advanced degree is preferred. Bilingual or multilingual a plus.

Downtown Long Beach Alliance

Formed in 1937 as Downtown Long Beach Associates by a group of Pine Avenue merchants, DLBA operates on behalf of commercial and residential property owners and tenants in Downtown Long Beach and surrounding areas. DLBA's mission is to cultivate, preserve, and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown for all.

DLBA is dedicated to the management, marketing, security, maintenance, advocacy, economic and community development of its two assessment districts in cooperation with the City of Long Beach and the private sector. The assessment districts include the 70-square block Property Based Improvement District (PBID) and the Downtown Parking Improvement Area (DPIA), shown on the map below.



DLBA has evolved over the years to reflect the changing physical development and priorities of the Downtown community. The organization is committed to improving and promoting Downtown Long Beach through a wide range of programs and services that include the following:

[Clean & Safe and Community Outreach](#)

Maintains a clean, safe, and secure Downtown is integral to DLBA's mission and to the quality of life in Downtown. Provides residents and stakeholders with ombudsmen services that inform and encourage participation in the organization's Board of Directors, programming committees, events, and programs.

[Economic Development and Research](#)

Guides and increases investment in Downtown Long Beach through various business recruitment, retention, and expansion programs.

Downtown Long Beach Alliance (CONTINUED)

Public Realm and Place Management

Promotes a safe, vibrant, and beautiful Downtown by developing and supporting programs and policies that foster a transit-, pedestrian-, and bicycle-friendly environment.

Marketing & Communications

Manages a wide range of marketing, communications, and promotional activities, raising awareness, driving consumer spending, enhancing the overall image, and telling the story of Downtown Long Beach.

Advocacy

Serves as the leading voice for businesses, advocating at all levels of government on policy issues that impact employers and support the area's economic vitality. Specific advocacy efforts include supporting private-sector job creation, business recruitment and retention, and improvements in the region's economic vitality.

DLBA is a well-regarded, tax-exempt 501(c)6 nonprofit organization with 12 full-time staff, approximately 35 contract employees, and an overall budget of \$4 million. For more information about DLBA, visit <https://downtownlongbeach.org/>.

Procedure for Confidential Candidacy

Submit resumes or nominations, with assurance of confidentiality, to Berkhemer Clayton, Inc.:

Ben Lambert
Senior Vice President
Head of Higher Education, Healthcare, & Nonprofit Practice
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