Executive Director

Central City East Association

The Central City East Association (CCEA) is a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit business corporation. Since 1985, it has been the principal advocate for property owners, businesses, service providers, employees, and residents on 64 blocks in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles, spanning the area from San Pedro Street to Alameda Street, and 3rd Street to 8th Street/Olympic Blvd. This neighborhood is industrial and residential and encompasses a large portion of Skid Row, known to the city and the world as “the nation’s largest cluster of homelessness.” Members of CCEA produce things, sell goods, and store merchandise. In fact, the neighborhood hosts the city’s largest cluster of seafood, produce, and flower businesses, as well as the largest cluster of homeless service providers, shelters, missions, and affordable housing stock. Since 1998, CCEA has also administered the Downtown Industrial Business Improvement District (DID), which provides clean and safe services to the neighborhood.

With an 11 member board and an annual budget of approximately $4.2 million, CCEA/DID delivers programs in maintenance, public safety, and advocacy. Total of 3 staff including the CEO.

Few districts in America carry the complexity of Central City East — a neighborhood where working businesses, industrial employers, residents, and the nation’s largest concentration of homeless services and unhoused residents all share the same 64 blocks. The CEO who thrives here will find no shortage of challenge, and no shortage of impact.

The Opportunity

The new CEO will lead the next chapter. Working closely with an engaged Board, the CEO will guide strategic initiatives and provide advocacy for stakeholders with a fearless voice and strong character. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a visionary and entrepreneurial leader who understands the critical needs of the Skid Row neighborhood. The right candidate will be excellent at building relationships, an effective communicator, and fearless and steadfast in their leadership for the neighborhood.

This is not a typical downtown district. Skid Row’s density of unhoused residents, combined with a thriving base of industrial, wholesale, and residential businesses, makes Central City East one of the most complex — and consequential — urban environments in the country. The next CEO will operate at the intersection of business advocacy and one of America’s most pressing social challenges, with the opportunity to shape solutions that few other roles in the country offer.

Leading CCEA means working in a neighborhood where economic vitality and homelessness exist side by side, every day. This isn’t a role for someone who wants a

conventional BID. It's for a leader who sees complexity as the work worth doing — someone who can champion property owners and businesses while engaging thoughtfully and effectively with the realities of Skid Row.

The CEO reports to the CCEA Board of Directors and leads a talented staff and team of vendors and contractors. The CEO provides overall strategic direction, financial leadership, and organizational management.

Key Responsibilities

- Vision & Strategy: Lead the organization in defining and achieving a shared vision for the future of Central City East.
- Partnerships & Advocacy: Build strong, productive relationships with City leadership, property and business owners, cultural partners, and community organizations.
- Economic Vitality: Strengthen the economy through business development and advocacy support.
- Public Realm Stewardship: Maintain high standards for cleanliness, safety, and oversee beautification and capital improvement efforts.
- Organizational Leadership: Cultivate a high-performing staff culture rooted in collaboration, innovation, and accountability.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal CEO for this role is an inspiring and collaborative leader, possessing a balance of strategic vision and practical management ability — and the resilience to lead effectively in a neighborhood where progress is real but rarely linear.

Experience

- Senior-level leadership experience in downtown management, economic development, nonprofit, or related sectors.
- A track record managing a BID, downtown alliance, or similar place-based organization, including budget oversight, board management, and staff leadership.
- Experience navigating public-private partnerships with city agencies and elected officials.
- Knowledge of the factors involved with unhoused populations, and familiarity with homelessness policy and systems sufficient to engage credibly with service providers, advocates, and public officials.
- Knowledge of the unique challenges of Los Angeles, Downtown Los Angeles, and Skid Row.
- Knowledge of economic development and public-private partnerships.

- Strong financial acumen and experience overseeing budgets.

Relational & Political Skill

- Advocacy experience is a must.
- Proven ability to build trust and consensus among diverse and sometimes competing stakeholders — business owners, residents, service providers, and city officials alike.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and relationship-building skills.
- Comfort working in a highly visible, public-facing role with media, elected officials, and business leaders, including in moments of disagreement or scrutiny.

Character & Temperament

- Resilience and emotional steadiness, with the ability to stay effective amid conflict, incremental progress, and daily exposure to visible human suffering.
- A pragmatic empathy — genuine care for the neighborhood's most vulnerable residents, balanced with a clear-eyed commitment to the needs of members and businesses.
- Patience for the long, systemic nature of the work paired with urgency in addressing members' immediate needs.
- A fearless, steadfast, and confident public presence, with the thick skin to absorb criticism from multiple directions without losing warmth or credibility.

Compensation & Benefits

CCEA offers a competitive salary of $250,000 to $275,000 and a benefits package. Details will be discussed with qualified candidates.

About Urban Place Consulting Group

Urban Place Consulting Group (UPC) is a California corporation founded in 2001 and one of the original authors of California's PBID law. UPC specializes in BID formation, organizational development, placemaking, parking strategy, executive searches and interim executive management, and has directly managed 13 downtown districts on a day-to-day basis — giving the firm a rare, dual perspective on both the statutory requirements of districts and the practical realities faced by downtown businesses. Guided by its core purpose, facilitating the development of community in urban places, UPC brings decades of nationwide, hands-on district leadership to every engagement, including this search.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and résumé by September 10, 2026 in confidence to: Rena@urbanplaceconsulting.com