



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority / Main Street Program Work Session Agenda

February 20, 2025, 8:30 AM

McCullough Council Chambers – City Hall

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision – Dahlonega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability, in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

Vision Statement

Downtown Dahlonega will retain its role as the heart of the region and the center for community and economic development. It will have an inviting appearance, highlighted by historic architecture. It will enhance the civic, cultural, and economic vitality of the entire community.

Mission Statement

The purpose of Downtown Dahlonega is to stimulate and sustain economic development in downtown area by encouraging cooperation and building leadership; by advancing a positive image of downtown and promoting it as an exciting place to live, shop, and invest; by sustaining and improving the appearance of downtown; and by strengthening and expanding the economic base of downtown.

Call to Order

Approval of Agenda

Organization

- a. Review of 2025 Draft Work Plan
Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

Partner Agencies

1. City of Dahlonega
2. University of North Georgia
3. Chamber of Commerce/DALC
4. Tourism/CVB
5. Downtown Dahlonega Business Association

Adjourn

Guideline Principles - The City of Dahlonega will be an open, honest, and responsive city that balances preservation and growth and delivers quality services fairly and equitably by being good stewards of its resources. To ensure the vibrancy of our community, Dahlonega commits to Transparency and Honesty, Dedication and Responsibility, Preservation and Sustainability, Safety and Welfare ...for ALL!

2025 Work Plan

Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control				
<i>Why? The Dahlenega DDA is aware of a perceived parking problem including both 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 to a community space to be used for live entertainment and a farmer's market. Additionally, the sidewalks throughout downtown need to be expanded, repaired, added, and connected.</i>				
Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Four Point Approach
Develop 147 North Park Street for community space Lead: Awtrey	Education of Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) Lead: Ariel	Develop Parking Facilities Plans Lead: Allison	Implement Housing Plan Lead: Ariel	Promotion: Marketing and Education of TADs and new projects Economic Development: Developing and implementing plans to create new community space and add parking Organization: re-structuring of processes, collaborative initiatives with community partners and business owners Design: Visioning, working together to design desired downtown area



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

Friday, January 31, 2025 9:00AM



Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control					
Goal 1: Develop 147 North Park St for Community Space for entertainment and a farmer's market			Define Success: Will have the TAD legislation on the May 2026 ballot and will have a public relations campaign to implement for the community space		
Partners: DDA, City Council, City Administration, Downtown Business Owners, Private Investors					

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. At least one board member present at every city council meeting	All participants	Ariel	February	Not Started	Time
2. Ask City Council to deed 147 North Park Street to DDA	Awtrey		February	Not Started	Time
3. Determine and develop list of funding resources			March	Not Started	Time
1. Apply for or commission consultant (CES!) to apply for grant funding			July	Not Started	\$95 per hour
2. Commission and work with UGA design services to create concept rendering			Have product by September	Not Started	\$6,000
3. Engineering services to develop cost estimate			February 2026	Not Started	TBD
4. Develop construction schedule			March 2026	Not Started	Time
5. Create and implement public relations campaign for project			March 2026	Not Started	Admin costs
6. Develop RFP and put project out for bids			April 2026	Not Started	Admin Costs
7. Perform NEPA and environmental requirements			April 2026	Not Started	TBD
8. Begin Construction			July 2026	Not Started	TBD



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal 2: Education of Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)	Define Success: Will have the TAD legislation on the May 2026 ballot and will have a public relations campaign to implement for the community space
Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, CVB, Downtown Business Owners, Private Investors	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Research TAD, read law, determine how law could best suit the city and county.	Awtrey/Zach	Ariel	March	Not Started	Time
2. Work with city to agree to apply for legislation and determine what areas would be best suited			April	Not Started	Time
3. Research and include list of best practices and other communities using TAD for projects			March	Not Started	Time
4. Work with Economic Development Partnership and create collaborative efforts to help educate the public			April	Not Started	Time
5. Ask State representatives to consider passing legislation for redevelopment powers			December	Not Started	Time
6. Create presentation and ask to speak at civic club meetings and other key organizations			February 2026	Not Started	Time
7. VOTE!	Everyone		November 2026	Not Started	Time



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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal #3: Create a parking facilities plan	Define Success: New properties identified and grant funding applied for
Partners: DDA, City Council, City Administration, Downtown Business Owners	

Task	Board Member	Staff	Due Date	Progress	Budget
	Responsible	Responsible			
1. Identify potential parking opportunities	Deb	Allison	April	Not Started	Time
2. Determine how to work with state and private agencies to eliminate and/or create on-street parking off the square		Allison	July	Not Started	Time
3. Work with business owners and state agencies to work toward pedestrian-only square	All participants	Ariel	July	Not Started	Time
4. Finish and implement existing parking facilities plan	Deb	Allison/Ariel	November	In Progress	\$500K



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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal #4: Implement Housing Plan	Define Success: Recruitment of developer
Partners: DDA, City Council, City Administration, Downtown Business Owners, Private Investors	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Finish existing Housing Plan	Awtrey/Zach	Ariel	April	Not Started	Admin Costs
2. Work to educate Planning Commission on goals for housing plan			April	Not Started	Time
3. Work with City Council to ensure new zoning ordinance allows for goals in housing plan	Everyone		August	Not Started	Time
4. Research and contact developers who have experience in building desired developments and schedule meetings			August	Not Started	Time
5. Get at least one developer agree to build			April 2026	In Progress	Time



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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown

Why? The Dahlonega DDA is very concerned about preserving the historic character of downtown. Because the square is so successful, the DDA is also interested in expanding its vitality into the blocks leading up to the square. There are also some vacancies and infill properties that are ripe for redevelopment.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Four Point Approach
Finish and advertise business expansion plan considering opportunities for DDA to acquire spaces or find buyers for redevelopment of spaces Lead: Ariel & Zach	More cohesion, improved relationships, and collaborative decisions between the community, the DDA, and city leaders Lead: Ariel & Deb	Promotion: public relations, community engagement Economic Development: Collaborative initiatives with partners and business owners, recruitment of new investors, acquisition of space Organization: Partnerships, collaborations, volunteerism Design: placemaking, beautification, code enforcement, creating functional space out of underutilized properties



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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown	
Goal 1: Finish and advertise business expansion plan	Define Success: Will have acquired or sold spaces outside of square
Partners: Dahlongega DDA, Dahlongega City Council, Downtown Business owners, city council, investors	

Task	Board Member Staff		Due Date	Progress	Budget
	Responsible	Responsible			
1. Identify and create list of potential investors with contact information	Zach	Ariel	March	Not Started	Time
2. Educate investors about incentives offered such as DDRLF (Downtown development revolving loan fund)	Zach & Awtrey	Ariel/Skyler	July	Not Started	Time
3. Develop spreadsheet with vacancy inventory (address, owner, sq ft, condition)	Zach	Skyler	April	Not Started	Time
4. Revisit 2008 Downtown Master Plan to determine which features can still be utilized	Everyone	Ariel	May	Not Started	Time
5. DDA to research and explore ways to fund property acquisition for redevelopment	Zach	Ariel	November	Not Started	Time
6. Work with Code Enforcement to begin having property owners bring blighted properties to code		George	October	Not Started	Time
7. Recruit one new high-end, fine dining restaurant		Ariel	December	Not Started	Time



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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown	
Goal 2: Increased engagement of community members, increased capacity for more goals to be implemented	Define Success: The City of DahlongeGA has increased community engagement and more educated public
Partners: City of DahlongeGA, DahlongeGA DDA, Chamber of Commerce, CVB, City Council	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Reach out to each individual board member at least once per 1-2 weeks to make sure they are keeping up with assigned deadlines for tasks	Awtrey	Ariel	Weekly/ bi-weekly	Not Started	Time
2. Delegate tasks that can be done by someone else to a board member	Team Leads		Weekly and/or as needed	Not Started	Time
3. Quarterly meetings with all participating agencies and organizations to update progress on work plan	All participants/Deb	Deb	January, April, August, December	In progress	Time
4. Create a task list for each board member so that it is easier for each person to know exactly what is expected of them for that time period		Ariel	Monthly	Not Started	Time



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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances

Why? The DDA realizes that the ordinances adopted by 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.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Four Point Approach
<p>Write, amend, and/or establish mural ordinance and add one or more installations of public art</p> <p>Lead: Melanie & Ariel</p>	<p>Make downtown more appealing by removing barriers for entertainment and increasing foot traffic in businesses</p> <p>Lead: Deb & Skyler</p>	<p>Promotion: creation of social media content, tourism marketing</p> <p>Economic Development: placemaking, historic preservation, addressing housing needs</p> <p>Organization: Partnerships, collaboration, volunteerism, public engagement, ordinances</p> <p>Design: beautification, historic preservation, aesthetic consistency</p>



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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances	
Goal 1: Write, amend, and/or establish mural ordinance and add one or more installations of public art	Define Success: New ordinance adopted and new public art installation
Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses, Lumpkin County and/or UNG students, CVB, City Council	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Identify places and create spreadsheet of potential spaces to install public art	Melanie	Skyler	April	Not Started	Time
2. Research other communities' mural ordinances and best practices		Ariel	April	Not Started	Time
3. Draft proposal to present to City Council to adopt mural ordinance	Everyone	Ariel/Doug	June	Not Started	Time
4. Identify artists (preferably local) to install public art	Melanie/Deb	Skyler	June	Not Started	Time
5. Design public art and include design in council proposal			May	Not Started	Time
6. Apply for \$5,000 grant from Georgia Council for the Arts		Ariel	July	Not Started	Time
7. Reveal and dedicate new public art installation	Everyone	Ariel/Skyler	November	Not Started	Time



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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances

<p>Goal 2: Make downtown more appealing to investors and consumers by removing barriers for entertainment and increasing foot traffic in businesses</p>	<p>Define Success: Adoption of alcohol ordinance amendments and adoption of new zoning ordinance</p>
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Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses, CVB, City Council, Community members, Planning Commission, Local Health Department, State Representatives

Task	Board		Due Date	Progress	Budget
	Member Responsible	Staff Responsible			
1. Enhance First Friday by lifting restrictions on alcohol sales and make it like the other festivals	Deb	Allison/Ariel	April	Not Started	Time
2. Research other communities and how they work around state partners for entertainment districts		Skyler	May	Not Started	Time
3. Collaboratively investigate draft of Zoning Ordinance and recommend changes before adoption process begins	All partners	Allison	April?	Not Started	Time
4. Create proposal and present it to city council to amend alcohol ordinance including recommended changes (% ratio, places, hours, etc.)	Zach & Deb	Skyler	August	Not Started	Time
5. Work collaboratively with the local health department and state representatives to improve relationships, work together, and make progress on downtown initiatives involving food service		Ariel	October	In Progress	Time
6. Research blight tax ordinances and consider adopting one to help incentivize redevelopment		Ariel	November	Not Started	Time



DAHLONEGA 2025 DDA/MAIN STREET PLANNING RETREAT AND WORK PLAN

BY: CIVIC ENHANCEMENT
STRATEGIES, LLC

JANUARY 31, 2025
A Comprehensive report of
planning retreat facilitation and
development of Main Street
approved Work Plan for 2025



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TOPIC	PAGE NUMBER
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WHERE YOU STARTED

Your Stats

The Dahlongega DDA/Main Street Board conducted a survey that resulted in 343 responses. Though a small sample of the population, the results were interesting. Some information from the U.S. Census Bureau contradicts what was found in the survey. Some things to note include:

SURVEY SAYS!	CENSUS SAYS!
Age of respondents: 69% over age 55	Median Age: 22; GA = 38
73% of respondents do NOT work in Lumpkin Co.	Employment rate = 41%; GA avg = 61%
56% say Dining is biggest driver to downtown	Median HH income = 59, 144
58% say downtown is HIGH quality	Poverty rate = 34%; GA avg = 14%

4 key patterns from survey free-form answers. Respondents repeated:

1. Pedestrian- only square
2. More high-end dining
3. Fear of losing small-town feel to tourists
4. Parking problem

It is interesting that some said there is a parking problem and some would like a pedestrian-only square. More about this later in the report.

Other notable census information includes:

78% voted Republican	75% affiliated with NO religion
85% residents are Caucasian	Median house value= \$475k; GA = \$297k
62% residents never married; GA avg= 35%	220 (12%) homes are vacant
34% all housing units are rented	46% (approx. 292) rentals are presumably to college students

www.city-data.com

www.census.gov

The data shows that there are two distinct groups living in Dahlongega. Residents are either college students or who are generational, possibly undereducated in comparison, possibly underemployed, and living below the poverty rate. This group is seeking options in downtown of a lower price point, and more options during the week and slow seasons. The second group of people are those who are retired with a disposable income, highly active older residents and tourists. This group is seeking more fine dining and more diverse, but high quality, shopping and eating options.

The City of Dahlongega and the Dahlongega DDA must navigate both and attempt to incorporate something for both groups.



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WHERE YOU ARE

Changes for 2025:

The board chair began with welcoming the participants. He briefly reviewed some of the new initiatives that he would like the DDA to tackle in 2025. They are as follows:

1. Meeting attendance for participants is going to be imperative. If there is a good excuse, that's okay, but if a board member continuously misses meetings, he or she will be excused from the board.
2. The DDA will begin meeting twice per month. This is an additional meeting per month. Awtry feels like this is necessary to keep the momentum going and to make sure the work plan stays on track.
3. There is a business recruitment and expansion plan currently being developed. Awtry would like for this to be completed and implemented. (More about this in Work Plan)
4. Housing Development- these discussions will need to be prioritized throughout the year to determine what kind of developments need to go where.
5. The board needs to work on obtaining new sponsorships for the Main Street First Friday concerts and work to retain the current sponsorships.
6. Mondays on Main event need to be revamped. Since those are geared more toward the local community, the board needs to think of ways to get residents to come to downtown for those events.



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What is Main Street and how does it work?

The Dahlongega DDA/Main Street board operates under the Main Street program. Therefore, the planning retreat was conducted in a way that provides a “road map” to success using the Main Street program’s 4-point approach. Each strategy requires participants to strive to achieve specific initiatives in that category. Below is a table that displays each strategy, and the efforts of participants that fall into that category.

<p>PROMOTION</p>	<p>The goal is to position the downtown as the center of the community and the hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community’s unique characteristics. This can be done through highlighting cultural traditions, celebrating and preserving important architecture and history, encouraging local businesses to market cooperatively, offering coordinated specials and sales, and hosting special events aimed at changing perceptions of the district and communicating to residents, investors, businesses, and property owners that this place is special. – www.Georgiamainstreet.org</p>
<p>Economic Vitality</p>	<p>Revitalizing a downtown requires focusing on the underlying Economic Vitality. This work is rooted in making the most of a unique sense of place and existing historic assets, local economic development opportunities and creating a supportive business environment with entrepreneurs, innovators, and localists alike. With the nation-wide growing interest in living downtown, supporting downtown housing is also a key element of building Economic Vitality. www.georgiamainstreet.org</p>
<p>Organization</p>	<p>A strong foundation is key for a sustainable Main Street. The focus is on ensuring that all organizational resources (partners, funding, volunteers, etc.) are mobilized to effectively implement the Transformative Strategies. www.georgiamainstreet.org</p>
<p>Design</p>	<p>Design supports a community’s transformation by enhancing physical elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set it apart. Main Streets enhance appeal to residents and visitors with attention to public space through the creation of pedestrian friendly streets, public art, merchandising, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, more efficiently-designed buildings, transit oriented development, etc. www.georgiamainstreet.org</p>



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2035 Vision

The planning portion of the retreat began with a visioning exercise. Everyone was provided with a blank card. Each person was asked to answer three questions regarding what he or she would like to see in the downtown boundary in 2035. Most all of the answers from all participants were very similar. Some of the answers are as follows:

In the year 2035,

Question 1: Who lives in Dahlonega?

Increased metro transplants	Increased college students	Retirees
Young Families	UNG faculty, students, & alumni	Upper/Middle class couples (double income w/ 0-2 kids)
Young locals born in Lumpkin	Workforce for local businesses	Decrease in generational residents

Question 2: Where do they live and what kind of housing is it?

Downtown mixed-use	Apartments and Townhomes near 400 Corridor	Condos, townhomes, and tiny home communities in or near downtown
Single-family high-end homes outside of downtown (hwy 60, Hamp Mill, Wimpy)	ALL new construction outside downtown boundary	Planned Unit Developments with smaller footprints and smaller lot sizes within the downtown boundary

Question 3: Commercial spaces in downtown are filled with _____:

Outdoor stores	Entertainment Venues
Corner Market (grocery/farmers market)	Restaurants (more high-end)
Mixed-use (retail on main, living on top)	Locally-owned business
Family-friendly entertainment (bowling, putt-putt, movie theater)	Tasting rooms





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SWOT Analysis

The participants discussed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the city of Dahlonega. The following table shows what the participants listed under each category:

STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive-thinking community • Awareness of issues • Brand and Reputation • Leadership- meetings like this • Outdoor activities and opportunity to grow them to bring in tourists • Vibrant downtown with potential to get even better • So much potential in downtown • Great foundation- a lot of the work has already been done • Natural beauty and amenities; Outdoor spaces • Relationships with state, federal reps and partnerships with other agencies • Southern Hospitality • Volunteerism • Small- town charm • Various resources (UNG, USFS, Lumpkin Co.) • UNG- Workforce education, contacts, continuous ed and cultural programming • History and valued Historic Preservation • Community- Collaboration with community and other partners
WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough free events or activities for locals and families • Lack of collaboration • Infrastructure needs (water, sidewalks, highway) • Social media rumor mills • Tourism can clash with locals • Uncooperative property owners • Lack of affordable restaurant options • Redevelopment is cost prohibitive • Lack of planning for smart growth • Geographic limitations/developable land • No nightlife/entertainment • Public lack of education
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract higher income consumers • Redevelopment • Annexation Plan • Alignment with new programming at UNG • Education/Development/Succession of Public Servants • Infill Development/Zombie lots • Marketing and educational opportunities about city development • We have time to implement change if we collaborate • Pocket communities to meet affordable housing need • Real estate/property acquisition • Great people who can provide a plan for the future



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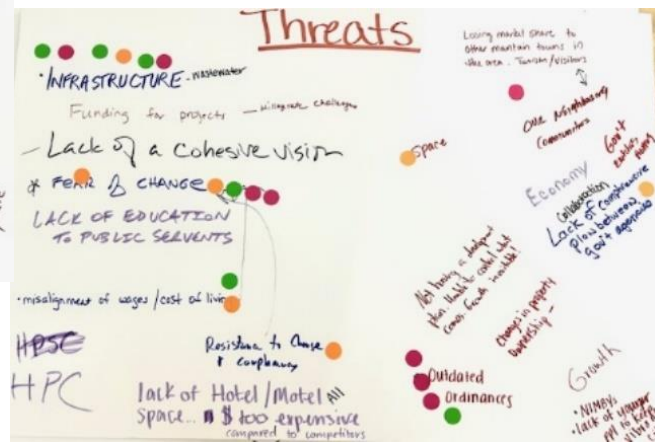
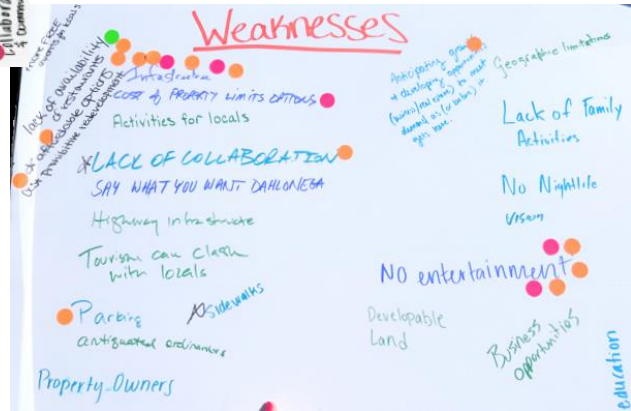
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing city property to develop community greenspace for entertainment/farmer’s market • Younger generation • Corner Market Downtown • Incentivize existing property owners to improve or revamp • Collaboration • Capitalize on foot traffic on the square
THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Funding for projects- millage rate challenges • Lack of cohesive vision • Fear/resistance to change- complaining • Lack of education to the public • Misalignment of wages/cost of living • Historic Preservation • Lack of hotel/motel space- too expensive compared to competitors • Outdated Ordinances- Zoning ordinance from 1992 • Lack of space • Not having a development plan- unable to control what comes- Zoning ordinance from 1992 • Changes in property ownership • Unstable economy • Comparable Neighboring communities (Ellijay, Blue Ridge, Clayton, Helen) • Lack of collaboration (gov’t entities fighting, lack of planning) • Growth (NIMBYS, lack of young people to keep vibrance)





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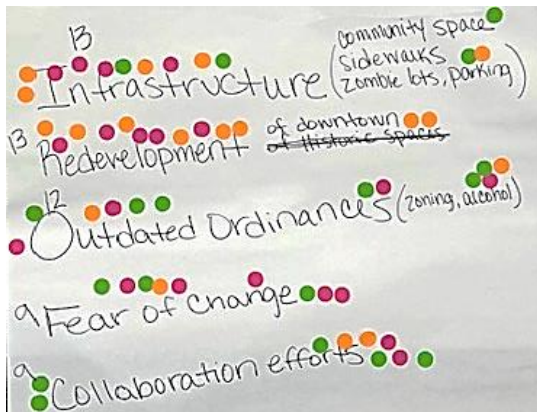
WHERE YOU'RE GOING

What are your priorities?

The participants took a few minutes to discuss the SWOT analysis, asked questions, and gave input. They then began to identify the priorities of the members. Each person was provided with a number of dot stickers and was asked to place a sticker over one item of each category that the person believes is the most important item to focus on in 2025-2026. The priorities that were listed are as follows:

- Infrastructure (community space, sidewalks, zombie lots, parking)
- Redevelopment/Expansion of Downtown; not just square
- Outdated Ordinances (zoning, alcohol)
- Fear/resistance to change
- Collaboration efforts

Of the above priorities listed, each participant was asked to rank each category using a slate of stickers. The Transformation Strategies will be developed from the top three priorities chosen.



1. Both Infrastructure and Redevelopment received 13 votes. Those will be the first two transformation strategies.
2. Outdated Ordinances received 12 votes, so it will be the third strategy
3. Though the other priorities are imperative to a successful downtown and a DDA, some of them can be incorporated into the three transformation strategies as an action step, and without needing its own strategy.



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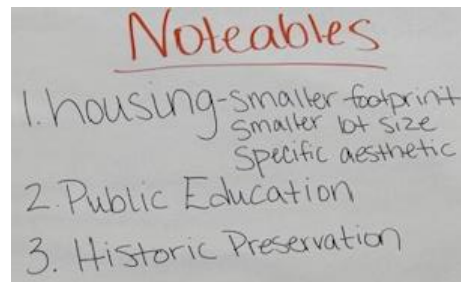
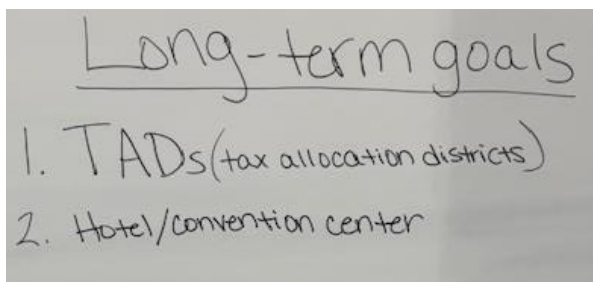
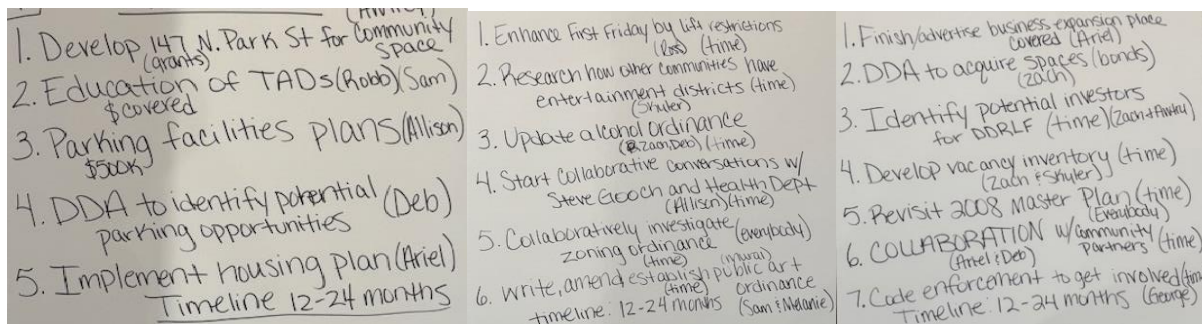
HOW TO DO IT

Plan your work!

Once the participants agreed to the three transformation strategies. They began putting together the task list to achieve the goals they stated they wanted to achieve. This made up the work plan, which is displayed in the next section.

The Dahlongega DDA will need to review the work plan and fill in the blanks about who the task leads will be on the action items. Additionally, the tasks that have been placed in each goal are merely suggestions of action items that can be done. These items have been placed there based on the goal, the topic, the budget, and the achievability.

Brain Dumping Exercise



Work your plan!

The pathway to success for the Dahlongega DDA is to plan the work and work the plan. The participants have created some very achievable, but aspirational goals for themselves. These objectives can be achieved without requiring a lofty budget. In fact, most of what the board plans to do costs only time. However, the time commitment to complete these tasks is very intensive. It will take dedication to the mission of the DDA, and disciplined scheduling by each board member to finish the work plan. The work plan, therefore, is very ambitious, but still achievable and realistic. The 2025 Work Plan is as follows:



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2025 Work Plan

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3. Determine and develop list of funding resources			March	Not Started	Time
4. Apply for or commission consultant (CES!) to apply for grant funding			July	Not Started	\$95 per hour
5. Commission and work with UGA design services to create concept rendering			Have product by September	Not Started	\$6,000
6. Engineering services to develop cost estimate			February 2026	Not Started	TBD
7. Develop construction schedule			March 2026	Not Started	Time
8. Create and implement public relations campaign for project			March 2026	Not Started	Admin costs
9. Develop RFP and put project out for bids			April 2026	Not Started	Admin Costs
10. Perform NEPA and environmental requirements			April 2026	Not Started	TBD
11. Begin Construction			July 2026	Not Started	TBD



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal 2: Education of Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)	Define Success: Will have the TAD legislation on the May 2026 ballot and will have a public relations campaign to implement for the community space
Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, CVB, Downtown Business Owners, Private Investors	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Research TAD, read law, determine how law could best suit the city and county.	Sam	Robb	March	Not Started	Time
2. Work with city to agree to apply for legislation and determine what areas would be best suited		Robb	April	Not Started	Time
3. Research and include list of best practices and other communities using TAD for projects			March	Not Started	Time
4. Work with Economic Development Partnership and create collaborative efforts to help educate the public		Robb	April	Not Started	Time
5. Ask State representatives to consider passing legislation for redevelopment powers			December	Not Started	Time
6. Create presentation and ask to speak at civic club meetings and other key organizations			February 2026	Not Started	Time
7. VOTE!	Everyone		November 2026	Not Started	Time



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal #3: Create a parking facilities plan	Define Success: New properties identified and grant funding applied for
Partners: DDA, City Council, City Administration, Downtown Business Owners	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Identify potential parking opportunities	Deb	Allison	April	Not Started	Time
2. Determine how to work with state and private agencies to eliminate and/or create on-street parking off the square		Allison	July	Not Started	Time
3. Work with business owners and state agencies to work toward pedestrian-only square	All participants		July	Not Started	Time
4. Finish and implement existing parking facilities plan	Deb	Allison	November	In Progress	\$500K



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 1: Improve infrastructure; implement small infrastructure projects with the DDA's control	
Goal #4: Implement Housing Plan	Define Success: Recruitment of developer
Partners: DDA, City Council, City Administration, Downtown Business Owners, Private Investors	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Finish existing Housing Plan	Awtry	Ariel	April	Not Started	Admin Costs
2. Work to educate Planning Commission on goals for housing plan			April	Not Started	Time
3. Work with City Council to ensure new zoning ordinance allows for goals in housing plan	Everyone		August	Not Started	Time
4. Research and contact developers who have experience in building desired developments and schedule meetings			August	Not Started	Time
5. Get at least one developer agree to build			April 2026	In Progress	Time



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown

Why? The Dahlonega DDA is very concerned about preserving the historic character of downtown. Because the square is so successful, the DDA is also interested in expanding its vitality into the blocks leading up to the square. There are also some vacancies and infill properties that are ripe for redevelopment.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Four Point Approach
Finish and advertise business expansion plan considering opportunities for DDA to acquire spaces or find buyers for redevelopment of spaces Lead: Ariel & Zach	More cohesion, improved relationships, and collaborative decisions between the community, the DDA, and city leaders Lead: Ariel & Deb	Promotion: public relations, community engagement Economic Development: Collaborative initiatives with partners and business owners, recruitment of new investors, acquisition of space Organization: Partnerships, collaborations, volunteerism Design: placemaking, beautification, code enforcement, creating functional space out of underutilized properties



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown	
Goal 1: Finish and advertise business expansion plan	Define Success: Will have acquired or sold spaces outside of square
Partners: Dahlongega DDA, Dahlongega City Council, Downtown Business owners, city council, investors	

Task	Board Member Staff		Due Date	Progress	Budget
	Responsible	Responsible			
1. Identify and create list of potential investors with contact information	Zach	Ariel	March	Not Started	Time
2. Educate investors about incentives offered such as DDRLF (Downtown development revolving loan fund)	Zach & Awtry		July	Not Started	Time
3. Develop spreadsheet with vacancy inventory (address, owner, sq ft, condition)	Zach	Skyler	April	Not Started	Time
4. Revisit 2008 Downtown Master Plan to determine which features can still be utilized	Everyone		May	Not Started	Time
5. DDA to research and explore ways to fund property acquisition for redevelopment	Zach		November	Not Started	Time
6. Work with Code Enforcement to begin having property owners bring blighted properties to code		George	October	Not Started	Time
7. Recruit one new high-end, fine dining restaurant			December	Not Started	Time



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 2: Redevelopment of Downtown	
Goal 2: Increased engagement of community members, increased capacity for more goals to be implemented	Define Success: The City of Dahlongega has increased community engagement and more educated public
Partners: City of Dahlongega, Dahlongega DDA, Chamber of Commerce, CVB, City Council	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Reach out to each individual board member at least once per 1-2 weeks to make sure they are keeping up with assigned deadlines for tasks	Awtry		Weekly/ bi-weekly	Not Started	Time
2. Delegate tasks that can be done by someone else to a board member	Team Leads		Weekly and/or as needed	Not Started	Time
3. Quarterly meetings with all participating agencies and organizations to update progress on work plan	All participants/Deb	Deb	January, April, August, December	In progress	Time
4. Create a task list for each board member so that it is easier for each person to know exactly what is expected of them for that time period			Monthly	Not Started	Time



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances

Why? The DDA realizes that the ordinances adopted by 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.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Four Point Approach
<p>Write, amend, and/or establish mural ordinance and add one or more installations of public art</p> <p>Lead: Sam & Melanie</p>	<p>Make downtown more appealing by removing barriers for entertainment and increasing foot traffic in businesses</p> <p>Lead: Deb & Skyler</p>	<p>Promotion: creation of social media content, tourism marketing</p> <p>Economic Development: placemaking, historic preservation, addressing housing needs</p> <p>Organization: Partnerships, collaboration, volunteerism, public engagement, ordinances</p> <p>Design: beautification, historic preservation, aesthetic consistency</p>



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances	
Goal 1: Write, amend, and/or establish mural ordinance and add one or more installations of public art	Define Success: New ordinance adopted and new public art installation
Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses, Lumpkin County and/or UNG students, CVB, City Council	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Identify places and create spreadsheet of potential spaces to install public art	Sam & Melanie		April	Not Started	Time
2. Research other communities' mural ordinances and best practices			April	Not Started	Time
3. Draft proposal to present to City Council to adopt mural ordinance	DDA		June	Not Started	Time
4. Identify artists (preferably local) to install public art			June	Not Started	Time
5. Design public art and include design in council proposal			May	Not Started	Time
6. Apply for \$5,000 grant from Georgia Council for the Arts			July	Not Started	Time
7. Reveal and dedicate new public art installation	DDA		November	Not Started	Time



DAHLONEGA DDA PLANNING RETREAT

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Transformation Strategy 3: Update Ordinances

Goal 2: Make downtown more appealing to investors and consumers by removing barriers for entertainment and increasing foot traffic in businesses	Define Success: Adoption of alcohol ordinance amendments and adoption of new zoning ordinance
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Partners: DDA, Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses, CVB, City Council, Community members, Planning Commission, Local Health Department, State Representatives

Task	Board	Staff	Due Date	Progress	Budget
	Member	Responsible			
	Responsible	Responsible			
1. Enhance First Friday by lifting restrictions on alcohol sales and make it like the other festivals	Ross	Allison	April	Not Started	Time
2. 2. Research other communities and how they work around state partners for entertainment districts			May	Not Started	Time
3. 3. Collaboratively investigate draft of Zoning Ordinance and recommend changes before adoption process begins	All partners		April?	Not Started	Time
4. 4. Create proposal and present to city council to amend alcohol ordinance including recommended changes (% ratio, places, hours, etc.)	Zach & Deb		August	Not Started	Time
5. Work collaboratively with the local health department and state representatives to improve relationships, work together, and make progress on downtown initiatives involving food service		Allison	October	In Progress	Time
6. Research blight tax ordinances and consider adopting one to help incentivize redevelopment		Allison	November	Not Started	Time