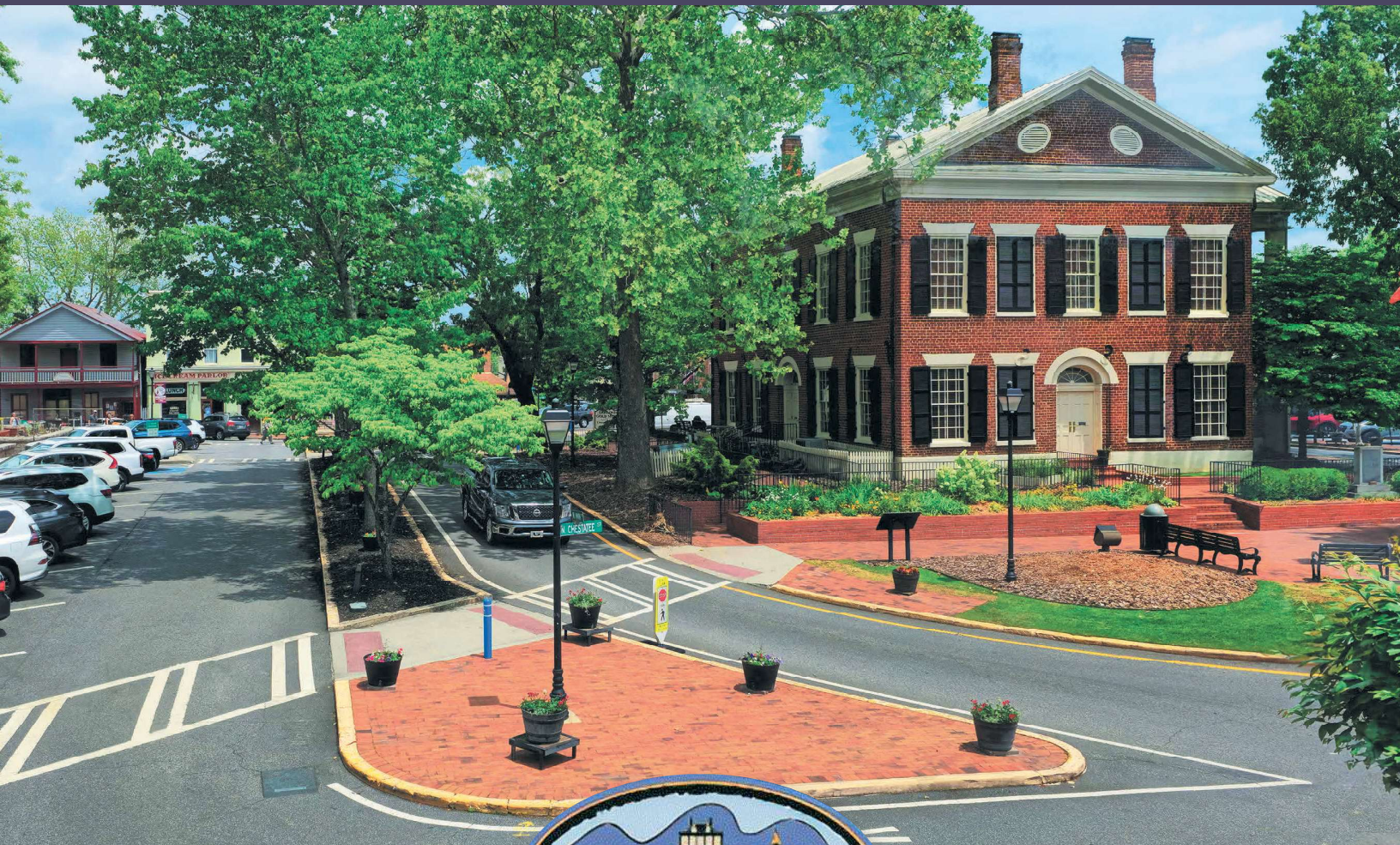


The city of Dahlonega invites your interest in the position of

PLANNING AND ZONING DIRECTOR

Dahlonega, GA



The City of Dahlonega is seeking a highly qualified professional to serve as its Planning and Zoning Director. This is a rare opportunity to drive operational excellence and innovation in a historic city, ensuring the continued well-being and sustainable growth of the Dahlonega community.



WELCOME TO DAHLONEGA

Dahlonega offers a strategic “gateway” location that balances the serenity of the Blue Ridge Mountains with the economic and logistical advantages of the accessible major metropolitan hubs of Atlanta and Chattanooga. Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Dahlonega is often recognized as one of the most desirable places to live and work in the Southeast. That quality of life is woven into the historic architecture of our vibrant Public Square, the scenic vistas of our award-winning vineyards, and the welcoming spirit of a community that prides itself on safety, security, and a deep sense of belonging.



Our community is a regional hub for the arts, anchored by the Historic Holly Theater and a thriving network of local galleries and music venues. Residents enjoy a year-round calendar of events, from the sounds of traditional mountain music to the Appalachian charm of the Bear on the Square Mountain Festival and the festive glow of our “Hallmark-style” Old Fashioned Christmas. Dahlonega offers a breathtaking landscape of mountain vistas and rushing water in the heart of the Chattahoochee National Forest. Residents enjoy immediate access to world-class hiking on the Appalachian Trail and at Amicalola Falls State Park, home to the Southeast’s tallest cascading waterfall. The Chestatee and Etowah Rivers provide ideal settings for kayaking, tubing, and trout fishing, while the Jake and Bull Mountain trail systems offer premier terrain for mountain biking and horseback riding.



Our families are served by the Lumpkin County School System, boasting a 97.8% graduation rate and SAT/ACT scores that frequently outpace state and national averages. Complementing our K-12 system is the University of North Georgia (UNG), a federally designated Senior Military College. The City and the Lumpkin County Development Authority are committed to smart growth, ensuring that housing remains accessible and that the cost of living stays reasonable. With a pro-business climate, exceptional infrastructure, and a focus on workforce development, Dahlonega provides the perfect environment to build a career of service to community.





CITY GOVERNMENT:

A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

The City of Dahlonega operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The legislative powers of the city are vested in a City Council consisting of a Mayor and six Council members, all elected at large for four-year staggered terms. The Council is responsible for enacting ordinances, resolutions, and regulations. The City Council appoints a professional City Manager who serves as the chief administrative officer. The City of Dahlonega operates under a mission to provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability. As a designated "City of Excellence," the municipal government functions in full partnership with its residents, business owners, and visitors to ensure that Dahlonega remains the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia.

THE DEPARTMENT AND POSITION

The Planning and Zoning Director is responsible for administrative and technical work related to city planning, zoning, land development activities, comprehensive planning, land use, and permitting. Responsibilities also include working with the City's Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission, and preparing recommendations on matters that require Planning Commission, Historic Preservation, and City Council action. The Planning and Zoning Director is also tasked with special projects, as well as assisting with the city's long-range planning and development goals. The Planning and Zoning Director reports to the City Manager and supervises one full-time professional position and a part-time administrative role. Key responsibilities include but are not limited to the following (full job description available upon request):

- Function as City Planner/ Zoning Administrator.
- Responsible for the enforcement of the city's Zoning Code.
- Review applications and detailed site plans for new development; coordinate with developers for required and recommended modifications to ensure compliance with city ordinances and planning documents.
- Analyze and make recommendations on policies and regulations related to planning, zoning, and land use, based on changing community needs. Make recommendations on requests for conditional use permits, site plan approvals and rezoning requests to the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Inspect new developments for compliance with city site plan approvals.
- Routinely review and recommend amendments to city ordinances as needed.
- Supervise and assist with the issuance of building permits and coordinates inspections with the county.
- Prepare the annual department operating and capital budget.
- Coordinate the city's Development Review process which includes site plans, plats, and land use amendments.
- Act as liaison to the city's Planning Commission.
- Act as a liaison with state, regional and county planning agencies.
- Supervise and coordinate comprehensive plan implementation and amendments process, including intergovernmental coordination with state and local agencies.
- Meet with residents, contractors, architects, engineers, developers and property owners concerning interpretation and application of codes during planning and construction.
- Work with the city clerk to ensure all businesses are in properly zoned districts.



BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Knowledge and a level of competency commonly associated with the completion of a bachelor's or higher degree in city, urban or regional planning, public administration, economic development, or related field.
- Five years prior planning and zoning experience is required.
- Must possess and maintain a valid Georgia driver's license or the ability to obtain one by date of employment.
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification or the ability to obtain AICP certification is preferred.
- Or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this position.

EXEMPLARY CANDIDATES

The city seeks candidates who bring not only an excellent technical background but also highly developed communication, leadership, and interpersonal relationship skills needed for success in a tightknit organization that values the care of people and teams, as well as the hard-won trust of the public, City Council, and employees. An exemplary candidate will be comfortable with a variety of roles in the hands-on, front-line management of daily operations, projects, and consultant relationships. This will necessitate the ability to effectively communicate highly technical information at the appropriate level to professionals and lay persons to ensure understanding of issues, problems, and decision points.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Dahlonega is experiencing a period of ongoing change as a desirable place to live and a hub for regional travel. The city was recently accepted into the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing cohort and is developing a new housing plan, alongside several other plans and plan updates currently in motion. The incoming Planning and Zoning Director will join a talented team to refine and execute these plans—embracing the rewarding challenge of guiding Dahlonega's future growth while honoring and preserving its distinct local character.



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The expected starting salary range for this position is
\$90,000 - \$112,000 depending on experience and qualifications.

The city prioritizes employee well-being through high-quality insurance plans and active wellness initiatives:

*Medical Insurance • FSA • Voluntary Dental & Vision Insurance
Employer Paid Short-Term and Long-Term Disability • Defined Benefit Plan (Pension)
457 Deferred Compensation • Life Insurance & AD&D • Paid Time Off (PTO)
Paid Holidays • Wellness Program • Tuition Reimbursement*

TO APPLY

Interested candidates are invited to apply by emailing the following items to
Jeff Hale, Senior Associate, **Mercer Group Associates at jeffhale@localgovhrs.com**
by 6:00 PM EST on August 13, 2026:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- List of five job related references with email and phone contact information
- Adobe (.pdf) format is preferred.

The City of Dahlonega is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.



For questions, please contact:
Jeff Hale, Mercer Group Associates jeffhale@localgovhrs.com, (706) 371-6126
or Alan Reddish, Senior Associate, Mercer Group Associates, (706) 614-4961.