

Traverse City Downtown Development Authority

Executive Director Job Description

Supervised by: Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors

Supervises: DDA Staff

Job Type: Full-time Exempt

General Summary:

The Executive Director of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) serves at the pleasure of the DDA Board of Directors and plays a pivotal role in realizing the vision for downtown Traverse City. The Executive Director is entrusted with the development, execution, and implementation of DDA activities within the city. This role involves collaborating closely with the Board, overseeing all DDA staff, and ensuring the successful implementation of strategic and operational plans, which may include contractual work for other entities. The ideal candidate for this position is adept at fostering relationships with city staff, and other various stakeholders, and demonstrates a passion for community development. Strong and regular communication with all stakeholders will be an important focus of this position.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

The Executive Director serves as a leader, visionary, champion, and bridge builder for Traverse City's downtown and related operations. The Executive Director is responsible for engagement with community interests in fulfilling the annual goals and priorities of the DDA. General responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Build and sustain relationships with community partners and stakeholders, and most importantly, provide services and programs valued by businesses and organizations within the DDA District.
- Partnerships and collaborations ensuring all stakeholders are engaged through effective communication that focuses on consensus building.
- Strategic leadership that will advance the goals and the priorities of the DDA and provide forward thinking, innovative, and actionable recommendations. This position will prioritize annual goal setting, strategic planning, governance, and leadership development for the DDA Board and staff, aligning priorities of the DDA and the City whenever possible.
- Ensure close and consistent communication and coordination with the City of Traverse City's leadership team including, but not limited to, regular participation in city staff meetings, collaboration with the City Engineer on all capital projects, and actively engage with public safety and emergency management on all events programmed within the Downtown.
- Board management through the coordination of meetings, agenda coordination and regular communications ensuring the board is kept abreast of operational and project progress, challenges, successes, and related community relationships.
- Provide oversight of all DDA staff including hiring, training, performance management, team building and day-to-day oversight, which may include contract employees.

- Responsible for supporting the prudent fiscal management of the DDA, affiliate non-profit organization(s) and ancillary functions including budgeting, expenditure oversight, and financial reporting. Monitor revenue streams, seek revenue enhancement opportunities through grants and sponsorships, and exercise responsible fiscal decision-making. Ensure accurate financial records, prepare comprehensive financial reports, and foster open communication with the DDA Board, staff, and stakeholders regarding financial matters.
- Create and manage Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plans to support the strategic objectives of the organization and community, ensuring effective utilization of financial resources for infrastructure and economic revitalization and development efforts. The incumbent will oversee the implementation and execution of TIF plans, monitoring their impact and compliance with regulatory requirements to achieve desired outcomes.
- Supervise the development of marketing and promotional strategies aimed at enhancing the visibility and reputation of Downtown Traverse City, including traditional methods as well as maximizing social media and other digital platforms associated with the Traverse City DDA.
- Efficiently manage parking facilities within the DDA with the focus to optimize usage and ensure smooth operations. Responsibilities include overseeing maintenance, implementing effective traffic flow strategies, and addressing any issues to enhance the overall parking experience for visitors.
- Actively attract and retain businesses within Downtown Traverse City by fostering a dynamic and thriving economic environment, including developing strategies to attract new businesses, nurturing relationships with existing businesses, and providing support to ensure continued business success and growth.
- Facilitate and manage economic development and infrastructure projects within the DDA District of Downtown Traverse City, overseeing various stages from inception to completion. Responsibilities include coordinating with stakeholders and city staff, overseeing project timelines and budgets, and ensuring alignment with the district's goals and regulations.
- Manage all contractual relationships to ensure commitments and obligations are met by all parties.
- Additional responsibilities as directed by the Board of Directors.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS:

- Deliver engaging, clear, and informative presentations to officials, boards, commissions, civic groups, and the public to effectively convey the DDA's vision, initiatives, and accomplishments.
- Keep abreast of local, state, and federal legislation and regulations related to downtown development, ensuring adherence, and adjusting strategies proactively to align with changing legal landscapes.
- Actively engage in professional development activities, including workshops and conferences focused on downtown development, to facilitate ongoing learning and to stay updated on emerging trends, best practices, and innovative methodologies.
- Represent the DDA at key city/DDA functions, events, and ceremonies such as business openings, groundbreaking ceremonies, and other significant gatherings to foster strong relationships and community involvement.

Required Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Minimum Qualifications

- A bachelor's degree with major course work in business or public administration, non-profit management, urban and regional planning, historic preservation, tourism, marketing, or a closely related field; and
- Five to seven years of administrative experience in the same or related field with strong foundations in communications, marketing, strategic planning, economic development, grant writing, community planning and public relations. Experience working with a board of directors preferred, but not required. An equivalent combination of education and progressively responsible experience may be considered.
- Exhibited strength in leading and adapting to change, organizational development, team building, the capacity to balance short-term needs versus long-term strategy/vision, and the ability to delegate to and empower employees, volunteers, and board members culminating in a mission driven and outcomes motivated environment.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of downtown development principles, community engagement, collaborative partnerships, professional management, and outreach.
- Strong communication skills are required for this position, including relationship development, emotional intelligence, and political acumen.

Use of Technology

This role necessitates familiarity with diverse software applications, including Microsoft Office and G Suite. Additionally, proficiency in utilizing email and other communication tools such as Teams, Zoom, and video conferencing is essential. Mastery of social media platforms and other communication channels is also a requirement for this position.

Physical Demands and Work Environment

The Executive Director position requires a combination of office work and time outside within the DDA District. While most tasks are performed in an office setting, occasional outdoor activities may be required. This position will participate in various physical activities, including setting up event spaces, moving equipment and supplies, and coordinating with vendors and staff. The Executive Director may be required to lift and carry objects of moderate weight, such as event signage, decorations, and equipment. Standing and walking for extended periods may be necessary during event setup, coordination, and execution. Some tasks may involve bending, stooping, kneeling, or reaching to access materials or adjust event setups. Manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination are important for handling event materials, assembling decorations, and operating equipment.

This position is often dynamic and operates in fast-paced environments, including offices, event venues, construction sites and outdoor spaces. Flexibility in work hours is often required, including evenings, weekends, and holidays, to accommodate event schedules and the needs of the DDA. The work environment may involve exposure to loud noises, crowded spaces, and unpredictable situations, especially during large-scale events or festivals.

This description outlines the physical demands and work environment typical for this position and ensures compliance with ADA regulations by offering reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities.

Please Note: This job description is intended to outline the general nature and level of work expected of the Executive Director. It is not exhaustive and may be supplemented in the future, as needed.