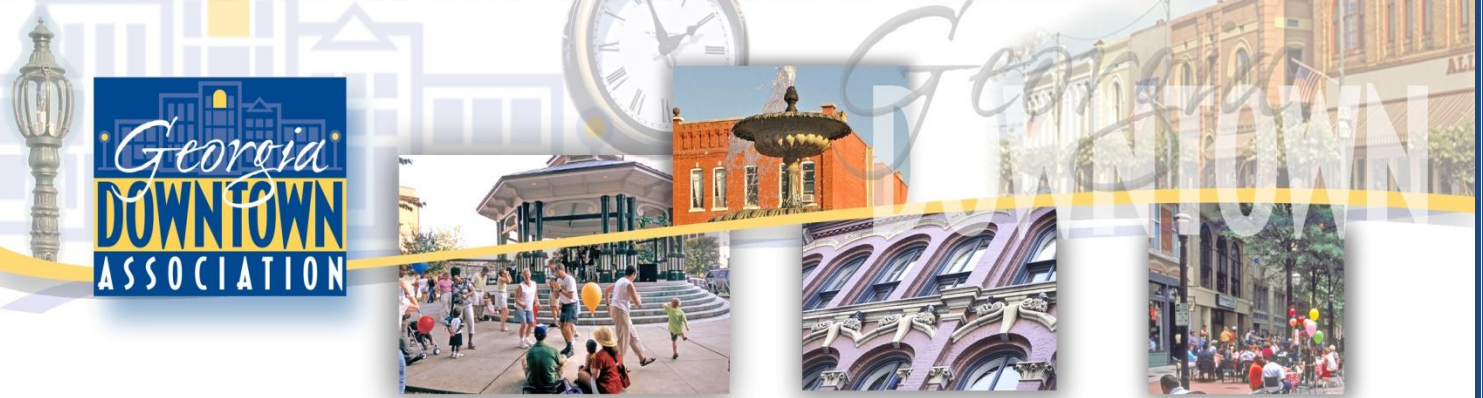


# SidewalkTalk Newsletter



February 2012



2012 GDA President, Billy Peppers

## A Word from our New President: Billy Peppers

On behalf of the Board of Directors, let me first thank you for your hard work in making Georgia Downtowns one of the best industries in our state. In 2011 our Main Street and Better Hometown programs created over 3,200 jobs for this state and at a fraction of the costs that our state normally spends to create jobs. You are the reason we are successful and the basis for our organization. Our priorities for this year are to assist you in becoming smarter, better networked and more appreciated public servants in the race to bring Georgia back to the forefront of economic development. I believe that we are poised for greatness in 2012 and you are vital to making that hope come true. Thank you in advance for your trust in me as your 2012 President. Your investment in GDA in time, dues, and participation will result in a return of greater opportunities and possibilities for the many communities that are in our collective care throughout this state.

## Board of Directors News

### New Officers Elected

During the November 15, 2011 GDA Board of Directors meeting, the Board voted to elect the following Officers for 2012:

- Billy Peppers, President
- Liz Hood, Vice President
- Connie Tabor, Secretary
- Tommy Lowmon, Treasurer

The new Officers assumed their positions on January 1, 2012. In his role as Immediate Past President, Joel Cordle, will join the other four Officers on the GDA Executive Committee.

### New Board Members

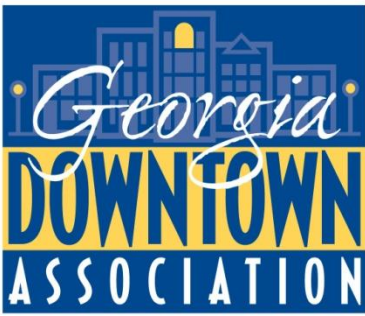
The GDA membership recently voted to accept the Nominating Committee's Slate of Board members to serve a two-year term beginning in 2012 and concluding at the end of 2013. New Board Members include:

- Stephanie Aylworth – Douglasville
- Leigh Burns – Dept. of Natural Resources- Historic Preservation Division
- Vicki Davis – Hinesville
- Paul Kreager – The Heart of Town, Inc.
- Chantel Morton – Tybee Island
- Paul Simo – jB+a Community Advantage, LLC



Immediate Past President, Joel Cordle

Marcia Hampton and Karen Smith rolled off of the Board of Directors at the end of 2011. The GDA Board thanks Marcia and Karen for their many years of dedicated service to the Board.



## Georgia Downtown Development Professional Program

Downtown success depends upon many things: a safe and clean streetscape, ample building stock and savvy enterprises, a custom mix of land uses, perhaps a dash of tourism and special events, and a downtown professional. The Georgia Downtown Association (GDA) recognizes that downtown professionals – Main Street, Better Hometown, and Downtown Development managers– bring to a community a unique and extremely varied skill set.

Downtown managers focus on economic development exclusively in the downtown arena, which benefits directly from an ever-changing mix of best practices, financial and legal tools, and public-private partnerships. Georgia's downtown managers have an opportunity to measure their downtown professional expertise and achievement through the **Georgia Downtown Development Professional (GDDP) Program**. Formally unveiled at the Georgia Downtown Conference in October, 2006, the GDDP program is sponsored by GDA.

**Why is professional development essential for downtowns?** People come to the downtown development profession from a variety of backgrounds. Downtown development is a very dynamic venture with an ever-changing mix of best practices, programs of assistance, allies and laws. GDA's professional development program is designed to provide a systematic approach for basic training and continuing education that encourages and recognizes a well rounded professional practice for the benefit of Georgia's downtowns. Professional development is an investment in a roadmap of success to establish and sustain a community's central business district and its "sense of place".

### What are the benefits of the program?

- The professional benefits by having a system of progressive, structured improvement in professional practice and by receiving peer recognition for distinct levels of achievement.
- The employer benefits by having evidence of the employee's professional growth.
- The community benefits by having progressively valuable expertise that an increasingly successful professional brings to bear on the dynamic challenges of downtown development.
- The profession benefits by having in place credible standards of excellence and by the increasingly valuable contributions of those actively engaged in the professional growth of their peers.
- Designated Georgia Downtown Development Professionals are eligible to apply for GDA's Annual Scholarship to the National Main Streets Conference.

**What is the process?** The program is open to anyone in a profession related to downtown management, whether a development authority director, Main Street or Better Hometown manager, city planner/manager, economic development service provider, etc. The program structure includes three designation levels. Candidates who successfully pass the written exam and oral presentation requirements will be formally recognized at the awards ceremony during the Annual Georgia Downtown Conference.

**What are the three levels of designation and how are they attained?** Each level requires and recognizes more professional success than the preceding level. On-the-job achievement, participation in professional activities and formal instruction are central elements of each designation level.

- **Level 1: Georgia Downtown Development Professional** – the professional demonstrates a thorough working knowledge in the professional practice of downtown development in Georgia, generally attainable within 2 to 3 years of on-the-job experience.
- **Level 2: Senior Georgia Downtown Development Professional** – the professional demonstrates proficiency in the application of critical knowledge, skills and tools in the professional practice of downtown development in Georgia. A minimum of 5 years of experience is required for this level.
- **Level 3: Master Georgia Downtown Development Professional** – the professional demonstrates mastery in the professional practice of downtown development in Georgia and significant contributions to the profession. This level requires a minimum of 10 years in the profession.

**What is the cost?** The cost to participate in this program is a minimal part of the investment normally made in professional development. The application fees are \$100 for Level 1, \$200 for Level 2, and \$300 for Level 3.

**When?** The application deadline for 2012 is **April 13, 2012**. Exams will be conducted on June 12, 2012 in Atlanta. Newly designated professionals will be announced at the Annual Georgia Downtown Conference, which will be held August 22-24, 2012 in LaGrange, Georgia.

**Application Deadline is  
April 13, 2012**

**Who are Georgia's certified downtown professionals?** Currently, Georgia's designated professionals represent select downtown professionals who have achieved credible standards of excellence and are committed to continuing professional growth. Active Georgia Downtown Development Professionals include:

**Master Georgia Downtown Development Professional – Level III - Designees**

Ann Arnold  
Joe Burnett  
Connie Tabor

**Senior Georgia Downtown Development Professional – Level II - Designees**

Monica Callahan	Marcia Hampton
Joel Cordle	Josephine Kelly
Lequrica Gaskins	Billy Peppers

**Georgia Downtown Development Professional– Level I - Designees**

Stephanie Aylworth	Ann Huff
Hilda Boykin	Trish Jared
Catherine Edgemon	Denise McKay
Cail Hammons	Mary Ann Norris
Matthew Hill	Rebecca Shirley
Liz Hood	

As a reminder, the application deadline for 2012 is April 13<sup>th</sup>. To obtain a copy of the application please visit [GDA's website](#). For questions or additional information please contact GDA Professional Development Committee Chair, [Ann Arnold](#) at (706) 236-4520 or [Alan Dickerson](#) at (678) 686-6213.

**Making Your Downtown a Dining Destination**

By Billy Peppers  
GDA President  
Director of Economic Development Services, City of Woodstock

If your household is like mine, one of the biggest weekly battles we have is where we are going to eat. I imagine that most of you have similar discussion and even possible arguments amongst the family core when it comes to dining out. While doing some recent demographic studies for an industrial recruitment project, I came across a figure that astounded me. Looking at a five-mile ring around my city, I noted that the average household spends \$4,061 per year on food away from home ... or dining out. In total, the report showed expenses of \$207 million in dining out among the households within that five-mile ring of Woodstock. Your community's numbers may differ, but the bottom line is Georgians enjoy eating out!



Canyon's Burger Company in downtown Woodstock

When I began with the City of Woodstock in 2005, we had a modest four eateries downtown. A drive around town on a weekend night would reveal mostly Cherokee County license plates and restaurants typically had either a good Friday or Saturday night, but rarely multiple great nights each week. Downtown was far from a dining destination, as customers simply chose an establishment and then came downtown. Changes in local policies, such as prorating alcohol licenses based on the month of the year purchased, allowing alcohol licenses to be paid for in installments rather than a lump sum in January (which tends to be a horrible month for the restaurant industry nationally), and discounted sewer tap fees downtown were useful tools to assist in luring in restaurants and making start-ups more successful.



Ribbon Cutting at Fire Stone Wood Fired Pizza and Grill

Today's downtown Woodstock is a dining destination. We now have fifteen food-based establishments offering casual to fine dining, desserts to martinis, breakfast to dinner, and domestic to international fare. The restaurant scene lends itself to families choosing downtown first then settling on a selection based on

nightly specials and waits. A view of the license plates reveals that our downtown is hosting visitors from Cobb, Fulton, Forsyth, Pickens, and Bartow counties as well as our own locals. By-products of the restaurant growth include retail start-ups, the establishment of a local theatre that draws nightly crowds, a growing music scene, and local shops extending their hours on nights and weekends. The lunch crowds have also increased for many places.

Woodstock now has a bar hopping crowd, culinary delights and is home to multiple top 100 restaurants in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Most importantly, making downtown a dining destination has kept our local tax dollars from slipping to other downtown areas that offered more dining selections. Most new restaurants also bring with them 20-30 jobs, a heavy investment in equipment, and longer leases for property owners. I would venture to say that you can rate the health of your downtown core by the mix of dining pleasures it offers your community. It sure is gratifying for our community to know that we're keeping a little more of that \$4,061 a year per household in downtown. ***Bon Appetit!***



Hasco Craver

## Encouraging Collaborative Leadership

By Hasco Craver  
GDA Board Member  
Business Development Director, City of Newnan

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been a challenging one for our national economy. Two recessions, one brought on by a heinous and cowardly terrorist attack in 2001 and the second being the longest and deepest since the Great Depression. Both have led to the loss of jobs, declining home values, incomes and personal and corporate wealth.

Until more recently, the recession's effect has been felt primarily by the private sector, but with the public sector now facing falling tax revenues, soaring joblessness and widespread cuts in budgets; it has become apparent that a greater need for public sector leadership now exists.

Healthy public sector leadership requires confirming a clear vision through greater civic communication and consensus-building, establishing priorities and policies aimed at achieving that vision, building the right team, aligning the organization and accounting for results.

Amidst the concerns brought on by the current recession, strong public sector leaders recognize that increased financial pressure may provide real opportunities for improving practices. In particular, developing more creative solutions to delivering public services through improving collaboration, teamwork and communication, dealing with inefficiency and managing out poor performers may dispel many of the myths about the public sector – the belief that it will remain untouched by the economic downturn. Greater innovation and more effective performance measurement can lead to major savings without drastic cuts to vital day-to-day services.

With all of that being said, the public sector alone cannot and will not repair or restore our nation's economy.

The healthy public sector leaders described above will need to partner with the private sector to accomplish a true economic recovery. Existing relationships must be transformed. Many have attributed the current increase in interaction between public and private sectors as a direct result of recent regulations placed on the financial systems. But the nature of the interaction between public and private sectors need not be limited to regulation alone. Our country's future is predicated on innovation and the public sector should focus its efforts on incentivizing private sector entrepreneurship.

Dane Stangler and Robert E. Litan, authors of the Kauffman Foundation for Entrepreneurship's 2009 publication "Where Will The Jobs Come From?", argue that new and young companies, those less than 5 years old, and the entrepreneurs that create them are the engines of job creation and vital to our nation's long-term economic recovery. In addition, the authors contend that the data reinforces the need for policymakers (healthy public sector leaders) to focus on establishing priorities and policies that encourage new business creation, thereby removing the roadblocks that will lead us out of pessimism and into optimism.

In order to rescue our economy and our American way of life, we must work together – public and private – where each sector plays an equally important role in recruiting healthy public sector leaders that will encourage innovative private sector entrepreneurs interested in creating new companies and jobs.



## 2012 Downtown Renaissance Award

The Georgia Cities Foundation is currently accepting nominations for the 2012 Downtown Renaissance Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the revitalization of one or more downtowns in Georgia. Individuals and organizations from the private sector, non-profit, civic, philanthropic and academic communities are eligible to receive the award. *Governmental agencies and their staff are NOT eligible.*

### Criteria for selection:

- ❑ The recipient has demonstrated a passion for vibrant, healthy downtowns or activity centers within the city and through his or her leadership efforts have played an integral role in the redevelopment of one or more Georgia communities.
- ❑ The recipient has committed significant financial or in-kind resources to projects that have stimulated quality development and investment in one or more downtowns in Georgia.
- ❑ The recipient has led innovative and forward-thinking approaches to planning, development, preservation, smart growth, quality of life, citizen participation, philanthropy or financing that have stimulated reinvestment in Georgia's cities.
- ❑ The recipient has partnered with municipal officials to create a vision for a city/cities and has actively worked with all elements of the community (business, civic, government, neighborhoods, etc.) to build community consensus and support for the vision.

All nominations must be received by **Friday, March 23, 2012, at 5:00 p.m.** The winner will be notified during the first week of May, 2012. The Renaissance Award will be presented in Savannah during the Georgia Municipal Association's Annual Convention, which will be held June 23-26, 2012.

The Renaissance Award recipient will be chosen by a Selection Committee consisting of members from the Foundation's Board of Directors.

### Previous Award Recipients include:

2003 - Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD)  
2004 - Ira and Libby Levy  
2005 - Hal and Priscilla Carter  
2006 - NewTown Macon  
2007 - Callaway Foundation  
2008 - Emory Morsberger  
2009 - Ron Goss, Jr.  
2010 - Jane and Everett Royal  
2011 - Historic Development Ventures, LLC

To download a copy of the Renaissance Award Nomination Form, please visit the [GCF website](#) or contact [Perry Hiott](#) at (678) 686-6207 or [Alan Dickerson](#) at (678) 686-6213.



The 2011 Renaissance Award was awarded to Historic Development Ventures, LLC for their work in Downtown Senoia



## Mark Your Calendars for the 2012 Georgia Downtown Conference

The 2012 Georgia Downtown Conference will take place in LaGrange, Georgia August 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The Annual Georgia Downtown Conference is sponsored by the Georgia Downtown Association in partnership with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and is the premier downtown development training networking event in the state.

Stay tuned for more details.

## Georgia Cities Foundation Assists with Downtown Project in Rome

The Georgia Cities Foundation (GCF) recently provided a low-interest loan to the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Rome (DDA) to assist with the acquisition and renovation of a former residence located at 512 East First Street in downtown Rome. The DDA provided a simultaneous loan to the project's owner/developer, David F. Guldenschuh, P.C. The completed project contains 1,960-square-feet of professional office space, which will serve as the law office for Mr. Guldenschuh's practice. The total project cost was \$128,526. GCF provided a loan of \$48,000 for the project. Other project funding included a bank loan of \$56,625 and \$23,901 in borrower's equity.

Since March of 2002, the Foundation has closed seventy-nine loans totaling \$13,565,328 for projects in forty-one cities. Additionally, the Department of Community Affairs has provided loans totaling \$7,658,236 through its Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund for thirty-seven of the seventy-nine projects. The estimated costs for these projects are \$78,860,329.



Before project



Completed project



### Downtown Development Day at the State Capitol

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

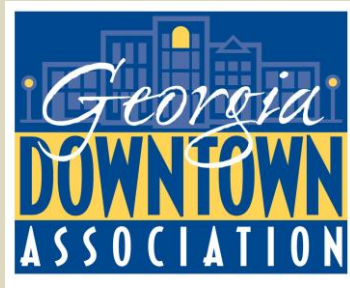


Please make plans to join the Georgia Downtown Association at the State Capitol as we promote the importance of Georgia's downtowns to our State's economy.



Last year, approximately 50 downtown practitioners, board members, local elected officials and GDA partners participated in Downtown Development Day at the State Capitol.

**Stay tuned for more details, including schedule of activities and specific meeting locations.**



### **GDA Board of Directors**

Billy Peppers - President, Woodstock  
Liz Hood - Vice President, Cartersville  
Connie Tabor - Secretary, Toccoa  
Tommy Lowmon - Treasurer, Blackshear  
Joel Cordle - Immediate Past President,  
Dahlonega

Ann Arnold - Rome  
Stephanie Aylworth - Douglasville  
Leigh Burns - DNR- Historic Preservation Div.  
Monica Coffin - Conyers  
Hasco Craver - Newnan  
Vicki Davis - Hinesville  
Lequrica Gaskins - Tifton  
Paul Kreager - The Heart of Town, Inc.  
Chantel Morton - Tybee Island  
Paul Simo - jB+a Community Advantage, LLC

### **GDA Board Partners**

Odessa Archibald - Georgia Power  
Danny Bivins - UGA's Fanning Institute  
Cindy Eidson - GA Dept. of Community Affairs  
Jason Fritz - Electric Cities of Georgia  
Perry Hiott - GA Municipal Association  
Jim Lenahan - GA Economic Developers Assoc.  
Pat Merritt - Georgia EMC  
Trevor Quander - AGL Resources

### **Dues Notices**

GDA Membership Renewal Invoices for 2012 were mailed out to current members in November. If you did not receive a renewal notice, please contact GDA at (678) 686-6296 or email [GDA](mailto:GDA@GDA.org).

### **Not currently a GDA Member?**

If you are interested in becoming a member of GDA for the first time, please download and complete the [GDA Membership Form](#).

### **Sidewalk Talk**

is a publication of the Georgia Downtown Association. Articles can be e-mailed to [GDA](mailto:GDA@GDA.org). You may contact GDA at (678) 686-6296.



## **Green Communities Fund**

During 2011, the Georgia Cities Foundation, through its Green Communities Fund, closed eleven loans totaling \$1,081,725 for energy efficient improvement projects. For more information on

the Green Communities Fund visit the [Georgia Cities Foundation website](#).

## **Downtown Development Authority Basic Training**

The next Georgia Municipal Association sponsored Downtown Development Authority Basic Training classes will be held on the following dates. To register, visit the [Georgia Municipal Association's website](#).

March 2, 2012  
Tifton, Georgia  
*(In conjunction with GMA Newly Elected Officials Training)*

June 23, 2012  
Savannah, Georgia  
*(In conjunction with GMA's Annual Convention)*

August 21, 2012  
LaGrange, Georgia  
*(In conjunction with Georgia Downtown Conference)*

## **Job Postings:**

- 1) Downtown Development Authority/Main Street Executive Director - Stone Mountain, GA** - The City of Stone Mountain is seeking a dedicated, responsive, and experienced individual to serve as the Main Street and Downtown Development Authority Director.
- 2) Community Development Director - Harris County** - This position reports to the County Manager and will manage the Community Development Department which includes building inspection, code enforcement, and planning & zoning.
- 3) Planner - Columbus Consolidated Government** - The Planner will help organize and monitor planning activities that involve the proper determination of sustainable land use and development activities; maintaining and updating the comprehensive plan; participating in regional air quality programs, regional water resource planning, and efforts related to sustainable land use and greenspace conservation; monitoring and updating demographic information; and developing and instituting redevelopment plans and neighborhood plans in accordance with federal, state and local regulations, codes and ordinances.