

Georgia Downtowns

Introduction

Georgia Downtowns works with Main Street programs and Downtown Development Authorities to revitalize downtowns in the state of Georgia. Since founding the firm in 2016, Joel Cordle and Alice Sampson have used the economic development tools of strategic planning and community input sessions to plan with more than 25 cities, creating over 40 strategic plans. The team partners with clients all over the state, from the mountains to the coast and across the piedmont, including metro Atlanta. In 2018, *Georgia Downtowns* was honored to represent the Georgia Main Street state program at the National Main Street Conference in Kansas City. And, in 2019, Joel and Alice traveled to Wales and England to visit UK villages that were designated as Great British High Street Award winners. Using knowledge gained abroad and at home, *Georgia Downtowns* continues to focus on the preservation and prosperity of Georgia's Main Street cities.



Joel Cordle

Joel Cordle is proud to partner with local and state leaders for downtown preservation and prosperity. He has 35 years in economic development, city government, and cultural arts program management. For ten years he was the Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority and Main Street Program for the City of Dahlonega.

Joel is proud to have led Dahlonega in winning the ultimate national honor, the 2016 Great American Main Street Award, from the National Main Street Center, and the 2010 Award for Excellence in Downtown Development from the Georgia Downtown Association. For 16 years, Joel served as the Arts Division Administrator for Athens-Clarke County Government. Joel is a certified senior downtown professional and a past president of the Georgia Downtown Association, where he has served several years on the board as a corporate member. Joel currently serves as a member of the Dahlonega City Council.



Alice Sampson

Alice Sampson has a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Georgia and is a former faculty member at the University of North Georgia (UNG). There she served 15 years as professor, director, and associate dean in the College of Education. For ten of her 15 years, she was the founding director of the Georgia Appalachian Studies Center, a community engagement center. Alice also served as the university's project manager for the REED Initiative, producing and facilitating a year-long series of community meetings focused on economic development trends and issues and the economic needs of the North Georgia community. Alice is a professionally trained meeting facilitator and process planner. As a lifelong educator and now downtown advocate, she believes that healthy downtowns are key to community vitality and place-making.