

# From Main Street to High Street

## Georgia Downtowns 2019 UK Tour



### Introduction

Georgia Downtowns works with Main Street programs 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 25 cities, partnering with clients all over the state - on the coast, in the mountains, and across the piedmont, including metro Atlanta. Georgia Downtowns was honored to represent the Georgia Main Street state program at the 2018 National Main Street Conference in Kansas City. We focus on the preservation and prosperity of Main Street. Our goal for this campaign is to learn the similarities and differences between the two national programs – Great British High Street Awards and the National Main Street Awards. Additionally, we seek success stories to share with main street programs in the US and to promote the high street program and its award winners and heroes.



### Joel Cordle

Joel has 35 years of experience 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. He 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 continues to serve on the board as a corporate member. Georgia leads the US in downtown revitalization, and Joel is proud to be a partner with Georgia's local and state leaders for downtown preservation and prosperity.



### Alice Sampson

Alice has a Ph.D. in education from the University of Georgia and is a former faculty member at the University of North Georgia (UNG) where 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 the university president as the project manager for the REED (Regional Education and

Economic Development) Initiative, producing and facilitating a yearlong series of community meetings, focused on economic development trends and community needs. 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.