



# Dahlonaga Downtown Development Authority / Main Street Board Agenda

March 04, 2021 8:45 AM

McCullough Council Chambers – City Hall

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## **Zoom Meeting Link**

<https://zoom.us/j/98756789489?pwd=RXk1TIA3clMxbkiUYnFZV2VZQUVCUT09>

### **Call to Order**

### **Amendment to the Agenda**

### **Meeting Minutes**

### **Continuing Business**

- [1.](#) Ordinance 2021-01 – Regulations for Formula Businesses  
Bill Schmid, City Manager
- [2.](#) 147 North Park Street Demolition Discussion  
Bill Schmid, City Manager

### **New Business**

- [3.](#) Paid Parking Review  
Bill Schmid, City Manager
- [4.](#) MS/DDA Staffing  
Bill Schmid, Acting DDA Director
- [5.](#) Financials - February 2021  
Bill Schmid, City Manager
6. Discussion of March 15th joint meeting with Council  
Bill Schmid, City Manager
7. EnterTextHere

### **Main Street / DDA Monthly Report**

- [8.](#) GEMS Presentation Overview Draft  
Bill Schmid, City Manager
- [9.](#) Main Street – March 2021  
Ariel Alexander and Skyler Alexander, Main Street/DDA Admin Assistants

### **Announcements from Partner Agencies**

- A. City of Dahlonaga
- B. University of North Georgia
- C. Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Office
- D. Historic Preservation Commission
- E. Planning & Zoning Commission
- F. Dahlonaga Downtown Business Association

### **Adjourn**



# DDA/MAINSTREET BOARD AGENDA MEMO

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**DATE:** February 1, 2021  
**TITLE:** Ordinance 2021-01 – Regulations for Formula Businesses  
**PRESENTED BY:** Bill Schmid, City Manager

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## **AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

Discussion of the accompanying document. Staff and the City Attorney have drafted the attached document at the request of various members of the Dahlonega City Council and comments from downtown business and property owners. It will be discussed in their work session of February 15<sup>th</sup>, but no action will be taken. The Planning Commission will hear it in March with Council action either later in March or early April. It creates a “conditional use permit” process that requires Council approval for “formula businesses” to locate in the historic B-3 zoning district.

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## **HISTORY/PAST ACTION:**

The City has enjoyed a vibrant mix of unique stores in its downtown historic district for several years. Businesses that require very large premises and dedicated parking have tended to locate along or near the by-pass. Over time several communities in the US have adopted formula business/formula restaurant/formula retail or similar regulations to preserve the distinct character of their historic districts. Many of these are tourism-dependent communities similar in many ways to Dahlonega. Some forms of these regulations in other states go further, but are not suited to Georgia. Our version seeks to legally balance concerns of the community with those of commercial interests.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

None

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and discuss whether or not the DDA/MS Board wants to take a position in support of, against, or take no position on the question of regulating formula businesses in the manner described by Ordinance 2021-01.

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## **SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

I move the DD/MS Board...

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## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Ordinance 2021-01 – Regulation for Formula Businesses

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Ordinance 2021-01

(Note: Originally circulated as Ordinance 2020-24)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE 91-9 WHICH APPEARS IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF DAHLONEGA, GEORGIA, AND MORE PARTICULARLY APPEARS IN THE PUBLICATION OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF DAHLONEGA, GEORGIA AT: SUBPART B: LAND USE AND LAND DEVELOPMENT, APPENDIX B: ZONING, ARTICLE XVI: B-3 HISTORICAL DISTRICT, SECTION 1607: FORMULA BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS.

Short title: "An ordinance to establish regulations for formula businesses."

**WHEREAS**, the B-3 zoning district primarily surrounds the original Lumpkin County Courthouse constructed in 1836; and

**WHEREAS**, the former courthouse is now the State of Georgia owned and operated Gold Museum which attracts approximately 25,000 visitors annually; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important that the qualities of the natural business environment spawned by the historic Gold Museum in the surrounding B-3 District be respected so that the uniqueness of Dahlonega can flourish without inappropriate changes; and

**WHEREAS**, the City, its DDA and Main Street program have made a long term commitment to an economic development approach based on historic preservation developed and recommended by the National Main Street Center, which has resulted in the City achieving Great American Main Street Award designation, with such designation being shared with only approximately 100 communities in the country and three other cities in Georgia; and

**WHEREAS**, the success of the City's Main Street program is recognized among the top 20 in the state of Georgia by virtue of its designation as a Georgia Exceptional Main Street (GEMS) community; and

**WHEREAS**, the six blocks comprising the Public Square (the B-3 Zoning District) create one of the most engaging spaces in any Georgia city, and hold a building, the Gold Museum, that is one of the few in the state outside Savannah to date back to the post-colonial period; and

**WHEREAS**, unlike other Georgia county seats, Dahlonega's Public Square has architecture that is uniquely derived from the vernacular patterns and folkways that migrated south through the mountain valleys shortly after the War of 1812; and

**WHEREAS**, it is because of this highly individual context that the B-3 zoning district around the Public Square is considered a very specific design envelope that incorporates shops and other workplaces consistent with the unique character of the City center, the natural byproduct of which is to create a special business ambiance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dahlonega B-3 district is one of a very precious few traditional business districts still in existence much as the town was first designed, in which its shops, workplaces, parks and civic facilities co-exist in relative harmony, its streets invite walking and its architectural styles create a sense of timelessness that have contributed to a strong sense of community – a village atmosphere; and

**WHEREAS**, the B-3 zoning district is for open and inviting retail storefronts that impart a sense of streetscape continuity to pedestrians that enhances the village atmosphere; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dahlonega established its Historic District regulations in the year 1965, and later created an Historic Preservation Commission appointing committee members that represent the perspectives of business operators, property owners, and the residents at large, and charging its members with enhancing the economic and physical characteristics of the business areas of Dahlonega aimed at preserving and enhancing Dahlonega’s historical village atmosphere which occurs in the B-3 district; and

**WHEREAS**, the Downtown Development Authority, pursuant to a lengthy and inclusionary public participatory process, developed the Dahlonega Downtown Master Plan, the purpose of which was to provide a coherent framework to foster a vibrant commercial sector in the City that is economically sound for merchants and property owners, well-balanced in its appeal and aesthetically and environmentally suitable to the small-town, low-density character of the City of Dahlonega’s B-3 district; and

**WHEREAS**, notwithstanding the marketability of a retailer’s goods or services or the visual attractiveness of the storefront, an over-abundance of certain kinds of businesses can be counterproductive and otherwise detract from the appeal of the B-3 streetscape fostered by the work of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Downtown Development Authority and the City Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the addition of formula businesses in the B-3 district, if not monitored and regulated, will serve to frustrate the City’s primary goal which is to maintain a unique sense of community and village themes. Specifically the unregulated and unmonitored establishment of formula business uses will unduly limit or eliminate business establishment opportunities for other businesses, many of which tend to be non-traditional or unique, and unduly skew the mix of businesses towards national retailers in lieu of local or regional retailers, thereby decreasing the likelihood of a diversity of retail activity; and

**WHEREAS**, in light of the foregoing considerations, the City Council has determined that the public welfare of the City’s retail, business and tourist based community, as articulated in the previous paragraphs will best be served and advanced by monitoring and regulating the establishment of formula businesses in the B-3 district through the mechanism of special use permits issued by the City Council of the City of Dahlonega.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it ordained, and it is so ordained by the authority of the City Council of Dahlonega, that for purposes of describing the circumstances which warrant the adoption of an ordinance amendment regulating formula businesses, the City Council hereby adopts and makes the findings discussed in the "Whereas" paragraphs above the factual findings of the Council; and further ordains that Subpart B, Appendix B, Article XVI, Section 1607, shall be amended by adding a new section to read as follows:

Sec. 1607 – Formula Business Establishments.

- (1) Definitions. “Formula Business“ means a type of commercial business establishment, retail sales or rental activity and retail sales or rental establishment, including restaurants, hotels and motels, which, along with ten (10) or more other establishments, maintains two (2) or more of the following features: (i) standardized array of merchandise or standardized menu; (ii) standard façade; (iii) standardized internal décor or color scheme; (iv) uniform apparel; (v) standardized signage; or (vi) trademark or service mark; provided, however, a “formula business” shall not include an automated, standalone vending machine.
  - (a) “Standardized array of merchandise” means fifty (50%) percent or more of in-stock merchandise from a single distributor bearing uniform markings.

- (b) “Trademark” means a word, phrase, symbol or design, or a combination of words, phrases, symbols or designs that identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods from one party from those of others.
  - (c) “Servicemark” means a word, phrase, symbol or design, or a combination or words, phrases, symbols or designs that identifies and distinguishes the source of a service from one party from those of others.
  - (d) “Décor” means the style of interior furnishings, which may include but is not limited to, style of furniture, wallcoverings or permanent fixtures.
  - (e) “Color scheme” means selection of colors used throughout, such as on the furnishings, permanent fixtures, and wallcoverings, or as used on the façade.
  - (f) “Façade” means the face or front of a building, including awnings, looking onto a street or an open space.
  - (g) “Uniform apparel” means standardized items of clothing including but not limited to standardized aprons, pants, shirts, smocks or dresses, hat, and pins (other than name tags) as well as standardized colors of clothing.
  - (h) “Signage” means a “sign” as defined in Sec. 123-4 of the Code of the City of Dahlonega.
  - (i) “Standardized” does not mean identical but means “substantially the same.”
- (2) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to regulate the location of formula business establishments in order to maintain the village atmosphere, tourist attracting small town character of the B-3 zoning district of the City, the diversity of the community’s unique commercial areas and quality of life for visitors and residents.
- (3) Regulation.
- (a) A formula business may only be established on a site after obtaining a conditional use permit from the City for the operation of that use on such site, subject to the limitations of this section. Change of ownership, by itself, shall not require obtaining a conditional use permit pursuant to this section.
  - (b) In addition to the findings required by Sec. 2608 as a prerequisite to the issuance of a conditional use permit, the City Council shall make all of the following findings prior to the issuance of a conditional use permit for a formula business:
    - i. The establishment is compatible with existing surrounding uses, and has been designed and will be operated in a non-obtrusive manner to preserve the community’s character and ambiance;
    - ii. The establishment is consistent with the City’s comprehensive plan and other adopted planning documents;
    - iii. The establishment will contribute to an appropriate balance of local, regional or national based businesses in the overall community.
- (4) Applicability. This section is in addition to, and not in replacement of, any other regulations set forth elsewhere in this title. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this section and any other regulations in this title the provisions of this section shall prevail.
- (5) Existing formula retail establishments. Formula business establishments existing and/or permitted for construction on the date of adoption of this ordinance amendment are

nonconforming structures as such are defined and regulated elsewhere in the ordinances and regulations of the City of Dahlonega.

- (6) Burden of proof. In the event the City determines that a permit application or permit subject to this section is for a formula business, the permit applicant or holder bears the burden of proving to the City that the proposed or existing use does not constitute a formula business.

It is so Ordained this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sam Norton, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Csukas, City Clerk



# DDA/MAINSTREET BOARD AGENDA REPORT

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**DATE:** January 30, 2021  
**TITLE:** 147 North Park Street Demolition Discussion  
**PRESENTED BY:** Bill Schmid, City Manager

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## **AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

Update from the City Manager on action taken by the Council February 1, 2021, to authorize staff to advertise and receive bids for hazardous materials abatement and demolition of the structure at 147 North Park Street. The property has significant land value, but the building is a clear liability with no financially viable options for repurposing it as either a single-story or two-story structure. It is a blight on the neighborhood and poorly represents the community when compared with other City-owned properties. If it was in private hands, code enforcement staff of the City would have required it to be improved, cited it multiple times or threatened with demolition by condemnation, if need be, by now.

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## **HISTORY/PAST ACTION:**

The parcel was owned by the City, transferred to the BOE, then purchased by the City from the BOE in 2006. The former school has sat idle since 2015, or earlier. The City Council took bids in 2018 and 2019 for its demolition. Budgets of the city for FY2019-FY2021 have carried this item on the books and represented to the public the building would be demolished. The building continues to attract vandals and deteriorate. Despite effort to attract redevelopment that would retain the building in an improved form, no viable proposals from third party interests have been received.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

To be determined – roughly \$130,000 from City funds

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

There is no clear public purpose served by retaining the site and its building in its current configuration. Either the building should be fenced and lit to discourage vandalism, entry by unauthorized persons, and reduce risk from threat of injury, or it should be demolished to facilitate the site's redevelopment and use in the short-run as additional parking for the Square area.

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## **SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

I move to support the City's efforts to prepare the site for redevelopment purposes by demolishing the structure at 147 North Park Street.

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## **ATTACHMENTS:**

147 N Park Building Demo

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# RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES

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**DATE:** February 1, 2021  
**TITLE:** 147 N Park Building Demo  
**PRESENTED BY:** Bill Schmid, City Manager

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## **AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

Staff seeks Council confirmation of intent to proceed with hazardous material removal and demolition of the former kindergarten building at 147 N Park. This item was approved as part of the budget in 2019 and has been carried forward into 2020 and this year. Contractor bids were previously secured, but Council chose not to proceed. The site is increasingly the target of vandals and negatively impacts other properties through its neglect. Architectural review of the structure in late 2020 shows it is not feasible for second- or multi-story construction. Repurposing of the single story structure is estimated at \$750,000 or more.

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## **HISTORY/PAST ACTION:**

The City built an economical special purpose building as a school which it later gifted to the LC Board of Ed. When it became functionally obsolescent and uneconomical for them to operate the city repurchased it as a possible site for a new City Hall in 2006. It has had limited use since then and has been unoccupied for over five years. Its foundation and walls were not designed or constructed to handle loads of a second floor. Costs of renovation to other use likely exceed the value of the current structure and the value of the structure after renovation. Demolition to facilitate economic redevelopment opportunities was previously considered.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Approximately \$130,000 – current bids are not in hand, but \$130,000 is approved in the budget

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval for staff to proceed with bidding for demolition.

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## **SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

I move to approve demolition of the structure at 147 North Park Street to prepare the site for redevelopment.

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## **ATTACHMENTS:**

None

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# RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES

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**DATE:** February 5, 2021  
**TITLE:** Paid Parking Review  
**PRESENTED BY:** Bill Schmid, City Manager

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## **AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

Staff seeks to update Council on paid parking results in 2020. We also seek to confirm Council's support for recommended changes and their intent to proceed with parking management approaches, including additional paid parking, elsewhere in the downtown. We recommend working with the DDA/Main Street Board to do so. Increased demand for downtown parking is anticipated as we return to a post-COVID environment. Also, loss of on-campus parking spaces will occur in conjunction with construction of the new Cottrell College of Business building.

A range of management approaches is warranted as we work to encourage a positive visitor experience and improve economic activity downtown through frequent parking space turnover. Doing so reduces driver frustration caused when easily identifiable open spaces cannot be found within a block or two. Our aim is to provide a positive experience by adding convenient options, using existing parking spaces better, and improving sales per square foot without losing buildings or constructing expensive parking, except where warranted.

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## **HISTORY/PAST ACTION:**

Dahlonega has a limited number of shared public and private on- and off-street parking lots. It had metered parking on the Square post WWII until the 1970s. As a pilot project, in January 2020 thirteen coin/card parking meters were installed on Martin Street (8) and West Main (5) at the fringe of downtown to gather data. They operate 8 am-5 pm Monday through Saturday at \$1/hour year-round.

Despite location of the meters and COVID, 2,275 hours of parking was paid. \$1,066.50 was by coin and \$1,293.50 was by credit card. Peak usage occurs on Saturdays and Fridays and peak paid usage occurs between 12 pm and 2 pm. Evening activity is not registered, because metered hours end at 5 pm. The spaces are often occupied after 5 pm and on Sunday afternoons.

Additionally, \$37,400 was collected from reserved parking spaces, primarily adjacent to the new hotel. \$10,124 in parking fines was collected from time limited 3-hour and non-limited metered spaces. Parking enforcement expenses were \$12,264.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Varies depending on combination of methods chosen and when implemented.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Convert a second space per block face to 15 minutes – nominal – recommended for immediate implementation

Increase metered hours to be 8 am to 7 pm Monday through Saturday and 1 pm to 7 pm Sunday. Nominal cost to implement.

Encourage parking and walking by downtown business owners and their employees from the school lot – additional lighting and signage is warranted, costs are otherwise nominal – recommended

Convert some all-day (23 hour) spaces to time limited 3-hour and/or 3-hour spaces to non-limited but metered – ex. Meaders Street between East Main and Choice, North Meaders between East Main and Warwick Street, North Park between Warwick and North Square, etc. – nominal for signage or \$1,400 per additional meter –evaluate central kiosk system as option for individual space meters.

Extend business hours – requires merchant support which will be based on the number of downtown visitors after dark – beneficial impact to merchants and the City

Consider varying reserved spaces and metered space pricing based on the general seasonal demand – ex. January-March, April-December. Nominal cost, but no specific recommendation.

Work with UNG and others to improve access/signage to/from nights and weekend spaces generously provided by them in the BB&T lot and Rec Deck - TBD

Dedicate net revenues from parking to further parking improvements in the downtown area: acquire and construct additional on-street or surface lot parking spaces - \$4,000 - \$8,000 per space, finance and construct additional deck parking - \$20,000 - \$25,000 per space

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**SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

I move to implement second 15-minute spaces on each block face and to have the City Manager work with the Downtown Development Authority to develop specific further recommendations.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

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# DDA / Main Street Board Agenda Memo

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**DATE:** February 26, 2021  
**TITLE:** MS/DDA Staffing  
**PRESENTED BY:** Bill Schmid, Acting DDA Director

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**AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

Informational item - Update on staffing to support the mission of the Dahlonega Main Street/DDA program.

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**HISTORY/PAST ACTION:**

The Georgia Main Street program requires a qualified full-time manager to maintain our certification as one of only 17 Georgia Exceptional Main Street (GEMS) programs in the state. A full-time director for the DDA is not required and traditionally one person has served the dual role of MS Manager/DDA Director. Since September 2020 Mary Csukas, City Clerk, has also functioned as Acting Main Street Manager, and I have served as Acting DDA Director in addition to my City Manager functions. Additional staff work to support the many events and programs of the Dahlonega Main Street program and DDA initiatives. Lucas Cheney was being trained for the MS Manager role. Luke gave notice between DDA meetings and terminated employment February 26, 2021 to relocate, take a new position and marry. We wish him well!

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**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

None – less than budgeted payroll for year

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Skylar Alexander and Ariel Alexander began part-time January 1 and are being made full-time with benefits effective March 1, 2021. Both are Main Street 101 Certified. Council and MS/DDA Board meet March 15<sup>th</sup>. Outcome from joint discussion will determine what education, qualifications and experience will be sought in potential candidates for hiring as the new Manager/Director.

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**SUGGESTED MOTIONS:**

None needed at this time.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

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PERIOD ENDING 01/31/2021

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	2020-21 AMENDED BUDGET	YTD BALANCE 01/31/2021 RMAL (ABNORMAL)	ACTIVITY FOR ONTH 01/31/2021 EASE (DECREASE) RMAL	AVAILABLE BALANCE (ABNORMAL)	% BDGT USED
Fund 230 - DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY					
DAHLONEGA 2000	800.00	0.00	0.00	800.00	0.00
CHARGES FOR SERVICES	200.00	144.00	0.00	56.00	72.00
TRANSFERS IN FROM OTHER FUNDS	284,434.00	94,811.32	23,702.83	189,622.68	33.33
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>285,434.00</b>	<b>94,955.32</b>	<b>23,702.83</b>	<b>190,478.68</b>	<b>33.27</b>
DDA ADMINISTRATION	195,298.00	31,305.52	9,292.54	163,992.48	16.03
TOURISM	56,472.00	1,539.47	0.00	54,932.53	2.73
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT	33,664.00	283.47	5.99	33,380.53	0.84
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>285,434.00</b>	<b>33,128.46</b>	<b>9,298.53</b>	<b>252,305.54</b>	<b>11.61</b>
Fund 230 - DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:					
TOTAL REVENUES	285,434.00	94,955.32	23,702.83	190,478.68	33.27
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	285,434.00	33,128.46	9,298.53	252,305.54	11.61
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES	0.00	61,826.86	14,404.30	(61,826.86)	100.00

Dahlonega Main Street Program/  
Downtown Development Authority

March/April 2021 Overview – Draft of February 26, 2021 - Subject to Change

March 4<sup>th</sup> MS/DDA Meeting

Formula Business Ordinance

147 N Park Update/Discussion

Council-requested MS/DDA role in downtown parking recommendations

Staffing plan/schedule

Financial Report

Discussion of March 15<sup>th</sup> joint meeting with Council

Updates:

Holly Theater

GEMS Presentation

Wimpy Mill Park

Comprehensive Plan Update – will recommend Ryan or designee on committee

Update of Trail and Parks Master Plan with sidewalk plan

Alcohol ordinance changes

Historic district survey

Ground floor retail ordinance

Lucas new job

Council / DDA joint meeting 3 pm March 15<sup>th</sup> – way ahead discussion for filling key position

March 15 - Council/MS/DDA meeting:

Downtown property values

DDAs generally

Main Street programs

Comparison with other MS/DDA

Chamber as Main Street

Main Street as Tourism Bureau

Roles of Board for Main Street Program/ Real estate development

MS/DDA, DDA/MS or separate MS and DDA with budgets for each

March 18-19 Council Retreat

Separate agenda

April 1<sup>st</sup> MS/DDA Meeting

Housing Distribution by Type –

State, County, City, Downtown - Joint Housing Inventory/Market Study with UNG?

State/Region/County Sales Tax per capita rankings

City Capital Improvement Program FY21-FY25

East Main/North Grove Beautification

Post-March 15 joint meeting recommended changes to By-Laws

Post-March 15 recommended changes to FY21 budget

Post-March 15 Five-Year Downtown Strategic Plan and Annual Work Plan development

Revised job description for MS/DDA Director/Manager

Updates: TBD



## Department Report

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Report Title: Main Street – March 2021

Report Highlight:

Name and Title: Lucas Cheney, Main Street Project Coordinator

Recently Completed:

- Celebrated the annual Dahlonega Arbor Day observance on February 24. 15 Kousa Dogwood trees have been planted on S. Park St. this year and 15 more are on the way.
- Skyler and Ariel have completed Main Street 101 training and passed their Georgia Main Street certification tests.

Underway:

- (EVENT) The Baseball Opening Day Parade will be held on March 20.
- Main Street Assistants are preparing for DDA 101 training.

Near Term:

- (EVENT) Art in the Park will be held on Saturday, April 17.
- (EVENT) The North Georgia Chamber Symphony Concert will be held on Saturday, May 8.