



Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership

Executive Director Search

Job Description

September 2018



## Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership Executive Director Search

<http://www.downtownchapelhill.com/about-chdp/>

Applications will be accepted through October 8, 2018 or until the position is filled.

It is a new day for the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership; a time to raise its stature and status by taking a stronger role in leading downtown to a new level of excitement and prosperity. This is an excellent opportunity for a dynamic leader prepared to take the reins of an organization ready to make a greater impact. Its mission: To bring together the resources of the town, university and downtown community to maintain, enhance and promote downtown as the social, cultural, and spiritual center of Chapel Hill through economic development.

### Organizational Summary

Founded in 2005, the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership (CHDP) is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit agency tasked with leading and managing the downtown through partnership efforts; marketing and promotions; improving the visual appeal of downtown; and positioning downtown as a mixed-use center of retail, service, professional, governmental, institutional, and residential uses. It places an emphasis on enhancing and promoting the assets of downtown and developing programming to address the fundamental needs of downtown; all to foster an environment that supports economic growth and prosperity. CHDP replaced the town sponsored Downtown Commission, which managed events and conducted promotions for downtown businesses.

The top issues identified in its early years included panhandling, homelessness, safety and cleanliness. CHDP addressed these priorities with programs such as “Real Change from Spare Change” and street outreach to address panhandling and homelessness and the “Clean and Green” initiative and façade grant program to address safety and cleanliness. It also continued its traditional role of promoting downtown through cultural and community programming such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Art Walk, annual holiday parade and a summer movie series all of which continue to this day.

In 2011, under the leadership of its third executive director, the CHDP built on the success of its earlier work by placing a greater emphasis on advocacy and being an active participant in planning affecting downtown. One of its more recent accomplishments was the leadership role it played in 2017 in the ambitious Downtown Work Plan as part of the town’s Chapel Hill 2020 comprehensive plan which has already resulted in significant street improvements along Rosemary St. It has also become the trusted and neutral third party to several joint town and university projects such as Launch, an award-winning start-up accelerator, and the Campus & Community Coalition, addressing high-risk drinking, an important issue in this university town. And it continues to provide a range of business-specific services and technical assistance.

CHDP is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors (nine voting and six non-voting) representing the Town of Chapel Hill, the university, merchants, downtown residents, Orange County and other economic development organizations. The Executive Director supervises three other staff including the Programs Manager (FT), Director, Campus & Community Coalition (FT) and the Office Manager (PT). The organization’s budget for FY18/19 is divided into two parts: administrative support and project management funding.

Administrative support = \$285,540: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MSD tax = \$120,000 (42%),</li> <li>UNC = \$90,500 (32%)</li> <li>Town of Chapel Hill = \$70,000 (25%)</li> <li>Project management funding = \$5,000 (2%)</li> </ul>	Project management = \$468,000: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch: \$300,000 from Town of Chapel Hill, UNC and Orange County</li> <li>Campus &amp; Community Coalition: \$120,000 from Town of Chapel Hill, UNC and Orange County</li> <li>Valet parking &amp; fiscal agent funding: \$46,000</li> </ul>
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**Where CHDP is going:**

The search for a new executive director inspired the Partnership’s Board of Directors to take a close look at the organization; to regroup and to refocus. To assist in this process, in August 2018, the Board contracted with the International Downtown Association <https://www.ida-downtown.org/> to conduct an assessment of the Partnership. The four-person IDA review team had in-depth experience with university downtowns from across the country as well as expertise in data-based best practices. They spent three days in Chapel Hill evaluating the Partnership’s work, meeting with key stakeholders and taking tours of the downtown and surrounding area. IDA made four recommendations. 1) Establish a clear and compelling vision for the future of downtown Chapel Hill; 2) Reach a clarity of purpose by bringing stakeholders together to better understand the Partnership and how it fits into the larger Chapel Hill and downtown landscape and from this process create a bold strategic plan; 3) Be more strategic in its programming by determining where the Partnership can have its greatest impact with the resources available to it instead of trying to be all things to all people, and 4) Generate more revenues from existing funding sources and new sources in order to be more effective in the core functions of downtown management. The implications of the recommendations on the type of leader CHDP should be seeking and the skill set required are incorporated into this job description.

**The Downtown Community**

Downtown Chapel Hill is the heart of this innovative southern town with an identity intertwined with the University of North Carolina, the nation’s first public university. The two grew up together, side-by-side. When UNC beats its chief rival Duke or wins an NCAA championship, downtown is where everyone celebrates. Within the last decade more and more people are choosing downtown as a great place to live. Franklin Street is the spine of downtown, flanked on the north by Rosemary Street and the historically African-American Northside community and to the south by Cameron Avenue, the historic main road through campus. Chapel Hill is still a relatively small town where just about everything one needs is a 15-minute drive away but it is large in its impact across the country and globe as one of the three primary points of the world-famous Research Triangle along with Durham and Raleigh. It is a town rich in natural beauty, cultural activities and a well-earned reputation for high quality pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade schools. It is a town that alums and their families love returning to for games, alumni activities or for the memories.

The Chapel Hill community is a highly committed and engaged group of individuals who are interested in the future of the downtown. They are supportive of the Partnership and recognize the benefits that such an organization can provide. They are also candid and willing to become involved in deciding where CHDP should go next. Like many other towns, challenges exist. Improved on-campus facilities reduce the need for students to engage with retailers and restaurants on Franklin Street as they once did. New commercial/residential developments with free parking outside of the

district have been a draw for doctors, attorneys and other professionals while downtown has become a more attractive residential alternative. The key challenge for the Partnership will be to create a vision and plan leading to an environment that attracts a diverse demographic that wants to engage in the downtown scene on a regular basis.

<p>Downtown Business Mix (N=126)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service: 52 (41%),</li> <li>• Retail: 28 (22%),</li> <li>• Restaurants: 21(17%),</li> <li>• Bars: 15(12%), and</li> <li>• Cultural Destinations: 10 (8%)</li> </ul>	<p>Downtown Occupancy Rate = 93%</p> <p>Downtown Municipal Service District Tax (MSD) = 7.1 cents per square feet</p>
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<p>Chapel Hill Population = 59,246</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under (16%),</li> <li>• 18-24 (32%),</li> <li>• 25-34 (12%),</li> <li>• 35-44 (10%),</li> <li>• 45-54 (11%),</li> <li>• 55-64 (9%), and</li> <li>• 65 and up (10%)</li> </ul>	<p>Chapel Hill Demographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White (72%),</li> <li>• Asian (11%),</li> <li>• Black (9%),</li> <li>• Hispanic (6%),</li> <li>• Other (2%)</li> </ul>	<p>UNC = 29,911 students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18,862 (63%) undergraduates, and</li> <li>• 11,049 (37%) graduate students</li> </ul>
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**Position Highlights**

A top priority for the next leader will be working with the Board, staff and stakeholders to create a unified vision and a new ambitious strategic plan. Stakeholders have differing ideas on what the Partnership’s priorities should be, but they all agree that something must be done soon to address the challenges presented by regional competitors. The next executive director must be excited and optimistic about the future of downtown with a background in how other downtowns across the country have re-defined themselves and faced similar challenges successfully. Partnership leadership will need to seize this time of self-evaluation to define which activities and programs to dedicate its efforts to meet its true potential. A talented and effective facilitator, the new leader will inspire stakeholder participation, bringing together fans and critics to reach agreement on common goals. Experience with strategic planning and implementation will be essential. To be successful, downtown must be appealing to an eight-year-old and an eighty-year-old. CHDP’s next leader will drive the organization towards achieving this goal.

To be at its best, the Partnership must be perceived as independent from its key funders and as an effective organization within its own right while taking its relationship with the town, university and downtown businesses to even greater heights. It will require an executive director who is a skilled diplomatic advocate on behalf of the organization but also a politically savvy collaborator. This is also a time to forge relationships with an expanded constellation of new collaborators. There are other organizations in the community whose goals overlap with the Partnership’s with expertise and influence that would advance the Partnership’s goals. The next executive director must take the lead in seizing these opportunities while creating a new standard for excellence in collaboration.

The Partnership's revenue stream has been consistent but lean and the organization will not be able to raise the bar on its goals and services without raising the bar on its revenues. The Partnership's next leader must be a fearless fundraiser with a history of increasing an organization's revenues and diversifying its funding portfolio.

For downtown to grow and thrive, it needs to attract more people and distinguish itself as a destination offering residents, students and visitors a variety of activities, places to eat, meet, recreate and be entertained. Strategic marketing and increasing the number and type of events will be major priorities for the new executive director as will continuing to enhance the attractiveness and safety of downtown. Creating activities and attraction geared towards families with children was of great interest to many stakeholders in the IDA assessment.

## **Duties and Responsibilities:**

### Leadership

- Provide the visionary and creative leadership necessary to bring stakeholders together and to work with the Board to formulate a unified vision for downtown and the Partnership.
- Lead the organization in developing a new strategic plan and addressing priorities. Implement the strategic plan in conjunction with the Board and staff and ensure its monitoring and evaluation.
- Advocate for and represent the interests of the Partnership and downtown stakeholders by taking an active leadership role in community planning.
- Develop relationships with the town, university leaders, downtown businesses and other community leaders to ensure they are kept informed of the CHDP activities and engaged in its work.
- Serve as the "liaison-in-chief" between the Partnership and its key funders, constituents and collaborators; provide support and opportunities for staff and board members to serve as liaisons when appropriate.
- Be downtown's leading economic development cheerleader, working actively to seek the best businesses to downtown that will attract customers and add to the vitality of downtown.
- Become part of the fabric of the downtown community and the community at-large by participation and leadership in local events, panels and through speaking engagements.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with others in the community to assist in reaching CHDP strategic objectives.
- Keep abreast of and connected to local politics, leaders, and other people of influence who may impact the organization and its mission.
- Be knowledgeable and current about the issues facing Chapel Hill and downtown stakeholders and keep informed and knowledgeable about regional, statewide and national trends which could affect the work of the CHDP.
- Be the voice and face of the CHDP and raise the organization's status as a critical player in downtown's success.
- Develop a thorough knowledge of the organization's history, major accomplishments and challenges, key leaders since inception and important funders.

### Marketing, Events and Communications

- Ensure the creation of promotional opportunities and special events to encourage participation by people reflective of the town's diverse demographics.
- Develop marketing and branding strategies through social and traditional media to promote the assets of downtown Chapel Hill geared to specific audiences.
- Work with media outlets to regularly and strategically tell of downtown's successes and promote downtown as a destination.
- Communicate on-going programming and CHDP developments.
- Pursue beneficial partnerships with other community agencies through events and promotions.
- Support safe and clean programming that affect visitor's experiences and merchant operations.
- Create reports and data that are accurate, timely and easy to understand that promote the downtown to specific audiences and underscore the importance of the CHDP as a critical player in the success of downtown.
- Manage and grow the volunteer base that works with the CHDP, through the creation of work groups, committees, internships, and advisory boards as a means of building broader consensus and interest in downtown.

### Operations and Program Management

- Manage internal operations by creating a healthy, supportive, productive and safe work environment.
- Recruit, hire, and onboard new staff; evaluate and mentor staff; make hiring and retention decisions.
- Evaluate and monitor all programs, ongoing processes, operations and systems; identify critical needs; retire programs no longer part of the strategic direction and plan and implement strategies for addressing gaps and improving efficiencies.
- Lead and engage appropriate staff, Board and partners in program development and evaluation.

### Fundraising and Revenue Generation

- Work with the Board and staff to ensure that the CHDP has the necessary resources to fulfill its strategic agenda.
- Create an ambitious fundraising strategy to grow the revenue base that increases the commitment of current funders, utilizes events as revenue generators and identifies, cultivates and solicits support from new donors such as individuals, businesses and foundations.
- Work with Board and staff to encourage their engagement in fundraising activities.

### Board Relations

- Report to the Board of Directors; keep the Board informed of issues of importance to the organization and keep staff informed of Board decisions. Keep former Board members engaged.
- Play an active role in the recruitment and orientation of new Board members and seek ways to maximize each member's contributions.

- Keep the Board informed regarding all programs and operations at regular meetings and report as needed between regular Board meetings to the Executive Committee and/or appropriate Board committees.
- Prepare materials for regular Board meetings and appropriate Board committee meetings.

#### Financial Management

- Manage and report on the organization's budget and finances; reporting requirements to funders, auditors and the Board.
- Develop a strong and thorough understanding of the organization's finances and accounting methods and be able to effectively communicate and share financial information with Board, staff and others.

#### **Qualifications:**

##### Knowledge and Experience:

- 5 to 7 years in leadership position(s).
- Non-profit experience a plus.
- Experience with urban visioning, downtown development, downtown management or related skill set.
- Marketing, fundraising, event planning or related experience.
- Bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred.
- Knowledge of Chapel Hill and the surrounding region is a plus.

##### Skills and Abilities:

- Strategic and creative thinker with demonstrated leadership experience setting strategic direction, implementing strategies and monitoring progress.
- Seasoned organizational leader and manager with a reputation for integrity and a track record of creating and nurturing effective, collaborative work environments built on trust, clear expectations and accountability. Embraces and promotes innovation and change to enhance personal, team and organizational goals.
- Strong cultural competency with a history of working with all people irrespective of their history, economic status, challenges, race, gender, educational level or sexual orientation; believes in the importance of diversity and has a history of creating or involvement with diverse organizations.
- Exceptional planning skills with a results and action-oriented record of achievement. Able to set goals, prioritize, meet deadlines and evaluate results.
- Diplomatic, skilled facilitator and negotiator; comfortable with differing opinions and perspectives; history of inspiring engagement and bringing key players to the table.
- Politically savvy with the ability to be an advocate and collaborate with other leaders and organizations with common goals; experience working with community leadership.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills; a persuasive and passionate communicator, inspiring presenter.
- Skilled networker with the ability to listen, engage, inspire, educate and move people to action.
- Strong customer-service skills with internal and external contacts.

**Compensation:** Commensurate with experience and abilities and reflective of salary levels in nonprofit organizations.

**To apply:** Submit one document that includes your cover letter (providing your salary requirements and how you learned about the position), your resume and five references and send via email to:

Ms. Elizabeth Sasser  
Chair of the Board  
Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership  
[CHDPsearch@mossandross.com](mailto:CHDPsearch@mossandross.com)

**Applications will be accepted through October 8, 2018 or until position is filled.** The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce.

Writing samples and a short presentation will be required from finalists.

The consulting firm of moss+ross ([www.mossandross.com](http://www.mossandross.com)) has been retained to assist with the search.