



Abilene Chamber of Commerce
Abilene, Texas 79604
174 Cypress Street, Suite 200
Abilene, Texas 79601

Position Description

Downtown Development Manager

Revised November 2017

Basic Information

Title:	Downtown Development Manager
Hours Per Week:	40 (full time)
Salary:	Competitive and Negotiable
Reports To:	President & CEO
Begins Work:	As soon as possible after offer made and accepted
Location:	174 Cypress Street, Abilene Texas 79601

Nature of Position

It is the intention of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce to hire a Manager to work closely with management, the stakeholder advisory board, the City of Abilene, the Tax Increment Revitalization Zone (TIRZ) and others as appropriate to initiate and establish structure and function for the Downtown Abilene growth and development plan. A local approach combined with nationally-recognized best practices will be used as the organization's guide to this effort. Support will be provided by the Abilene Chamber of Commerce.

General Program Description

The purpose of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce effort is to develop and implement a strategy for economic development and revitalization that supports established goals and values for downtown Abilene. This position is hired by and reports to the President & CEO of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce. The President & CEO will conduct an annual review of the Manager.

Our general work elements that guide this approach to downtown revitalization include:

- Organization of downtown interests in a unified manner working towards common end objectives.
- Approaching real estate development and design issues as a means to create or preserve an attractive and sympathetic physical setting. Historic preservation of Abilene's historic assets is an important part of this approach. Establish and manage an impactful business recruitment program consistent with the interests and vision of downtown Abilene.
- Coordination of promotional activities to attract new economic life and develop new vigor in the community.
- Assist individual property owners and tenants with building improvement projects; create and manage incentive programs for interior and exterior investment through personal consultation or aiding with the involvement of professional design consultants and contractors.

- Provide information to downtown business and property owners regarding financial mechanisms as well as zoning and historic district ordinance information in order to facilitate improvements to individual properties within the defined downtown area as indicated in the established growth and development document.

Definition of Position

- The Manager will be principally responsible and accountable to the President & CEO of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce and secondly to the Downtown Abilene Advisory Board.
- The Manager is responsible for analyzing, synthesizing and developing revitalization strategies and recommendations in consultation with the appropriate official and advisory bodies and coordinating their implementation to achieve project goals.
- This process will be carried out by the manager with focus on local priorities utilizing nationally-recognized best-practices with modifications as seen to be important by the Manager and Downtown Abilene Advisory Board.

Required Duties to be Performed

The Manager will be expected to perform the following duties:

- Assist and coordinate downtown promotional events/activities through the planning, design and implementation stages.
- Develop and manage an annual budget process consistent with the interests of the role.
- Work in collaboration with the Downtown Advisory Board; committees as needed and with all persons directly or indirectly involved with the downtown, including the Abilene Downtown Association.
- Develop and assist downtown businesses and property owners with specific downtown issues and aid in the organization of how to address and solve those issues.
- Implement economic strategies that support improved business and living objectives for downtown.
- Work in cooperation with downtown restaurants & retailers to increase retail activity in the downtown and attracting new users to existing facilities and expanding market opportunities.
- Assist individual merchants and property owners with design and construction of physical new and renovation projects (architectural, design and construction skills are not required.)
- Interpret previous studies and reports that analyze community resources and develop a strategy for achieving revitalization goals.
- Promote the downtown revitalization effort through public relations outreach and targeted media to inform public officials, community groups and the general public with the nature and orientation of this effort.
- Develop and lead an effective recruitment strategy to attract commercial and residential developers and tenants to downtown Abilene.
- Establish and maintain a public presence and working relationship with all business owners, institutions, organizations and property owners, whether members or not. The Manager is the symbolic face of downtown and therefore must work closely with a variety of individuals and groups in this effort.
- Work with the Abilene Chamber of Commerce President & CEO and/or his staff as needed, to manage administrative aspects including developing and maintaining an appropriate data system for record keeping, developing and monitoring budgets,

accounting, purchasing, preparing reports, documenting all physical changes, retaining information on job creation and business retention and all other office activities.

- Prepare and maintain a continuing record of the Downtown Management Office activities through monthly reports highlighting key activities such as business retention & recruitment statistics, promotions, building renovation & new construction activities, etc.

Additional Duties as Needed

The Downtown Manager will work to perform the following duties, as needed as time and skill allow:

- Through an appreciation for historic preservation, work cooperatively with established entities who support and promote preservation for downtown and develop a preservation plan for the renovation and reuse of historic buildings in the downtown area.
- Act as the liaison between the downtown constituencies and all entities involved with downtown issues and solutions.
- Be responsible for developing with the President & CEO an annual strategic plan and reviewing the plan, with the Downtown Advisory Board and executive committee, for the implementation of the revitalization and enhancement of downtown.
- Work with appropriate private individuals and entities as well as public agencies at the local and state levels to obtain necessary funding for critical elements of the work plan (e.g., building rehabilitation and restoration and public improvements.)
- Work with appropriate public and private financial sources to assist in funding mechanisms for the retention, expansion and recruitment of downtown businesses.
- Develop and conduct public awareness and education programs through speaking engagements, media interviews and appearances, keeping the program highly visible.
- Help build strong productive working relationships with appropriate public agencies at the local and state level.
- Implement local objectives through the development of revitalization tools, such as rehabilitation programs, tax credit incentives, existing state and federal funding sources and grant opportunities, administrative procedures, political mechanisms, legal tools, etc. as appropriate.
- Act as a data and information source for Downtown Abilene.
- Work with President & CEO to assist in the development of an annual budget and funding process, which will maintain the fiscal viability of the organization.

Attributes of a Successful Coordinator

A successful Downtown Development Manager must:

- Have excellent interpersonal skills.
- Be accountable for results.
- Have strong teamwork and collaboration skills.
- Have a sense of entrepreneurship and be a self-starter.
- Understand and be able to work with all levels of government.
- Have an ability to communicate effectively with both individuals and groups.
- Have an appreciation and understanding of community involvement.
- Be success-oriented and a motivator.
- Be smart and humble enough to accept and overcome areas in his or her background that are weak.

- Be personable, persevering and patient.
- Understand that they represent the organization, including the Chamber at all times.

Qualifications

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Education and Experience

- A Bachelor's Degree or equivalent education/experience in at least one of the following areas: economic development, business, design, planning, historic preservation, public relations, marketing, finance, or retailing.
- A general understanding of the inherent challenges and opportunities that confront urban centers.
- Be entrepreneurial, enthusiastic, creative, well-organized and capable of functioning effectively
- Superior communication skills are essential.

Language Skills

- Superior verbal and written communication skills.
- The individual must be able to effectively communicate within large group presentations, leadership and advisory meetings, standing committee meetings, and one-on-one meetings with current and prospective downtown business owners.

Certificates, Licenses, and Registrations

- The Downtown Manager is encouraged to be a participating member of all relevant local, state and national organizations.
- Registration or certifications in their particular field of expertise is recommended but not required.
- Must be a citizen of the United States and have a valid driver's license.

Equal Opportunity

The Abilene Chamber of Commerce is an equal opportunity employer.

For More Information

Please contact: Doug Peters, President & CEO, Abilene Chamber of Commerce

DRAFT