

To: Members
Dunwoody City Council

From: Michael Starling
Director of Economic Development

Re: Create Dunwoody Alliance Proposal

Date: 2/14/2022

Action

Authorize the mayor, city manager, or designee to execute all documents necessary and proper to support the formation of the Create Dunwoody Alliance with annual funding not to exceed \$35,000 to be funded from the CARES II Budget for 2022.

Summary

The Dunwoody Development Authority, Discover Dunwoody and City of Dunwoody are partnering to re-launch Create Dunwoody as the Create Dunwoody Alliance with a 5-year commitment from each organization.

Details

Place-making has become an integral part of Economic Development for local communities and *Pop-Up Concerts, Yoga in the Park, Cornhole Tournaments, Interactive Art Installations, Festivals, etc.* are increasingly used by local communities to drive economic development and brand recognition. The “experience economy” that has been driving the retail market for the past decade is now crossing over into the office market as well, transforming how employers view their office space to help recruit and retain talent.

Place-making (experience-making) is not about buildings or development, it’s about bringing the space between and around buildings to life so it adds to people’s quality of life. Many of the new mixed-use projects like High Street and Campus 244 will create these events for their properties, which is great for Dunwoody, but we need an organization to coordinate these events and spread them across the entire community.

Most communities our size have a single downtown that is the focus of place-making activities and they typically have a Downtown Development authority or other organization that drives the experience economy for the City. Dunwoody is different because we have multiple “Downtowns”, the Village is the acknowledged center of Dunwoody for most residents, but we also have Georgetown, Jett Ferry/Williamsburg, Winters Chapel and of course Perimeter Center. We need a unique partnership to match our unique geographic circumstances.

Furthermore, numerous initiatives in the City are on-going relating to place-making and it's important that these activities and investments are coordinated, supported and amplified. Our challenge is how to bring it all together and elevate what our partners are under-taking.

The Dunwoody Development Authority recently approved a commitment for a five-year \$175,000 investment to support experience-making in Dunwoody, contingent on equal participation from Discover Dunwoody and the City of Dunwoody.

Obligation for the remainder of this year is \$35,000. Funding is available in the CARES II Budget. Future year obligations are estimated to be \$140,000 and are subject to available annual funding.

- \$35,000 – 2023
- \$35,000 – 2024
- \$35,000 – 2025
- \$35,000 – 2026

Recommendation

Staff requests authorizing the mayor, city manager, or designee to execute all documents necessary and proper to support the formation of the Create Dunwoody Alliance with annual funding not to exceed \$35,000 to be funded from the CARES II Budget in 2022.

“Create Dunwoody Alliance”

**City Council
February 14, 2022**



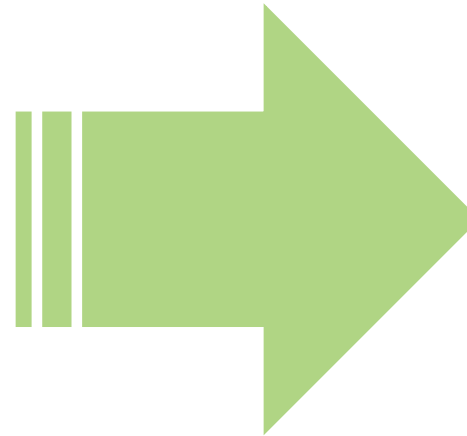
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Creating an economic landscape for a **better and brighter future**. Dunwoody is truly in the middle of it all, offering an array of advantages that make **exploring, living, working and doing business** here a wonderful and rewarding **experience**.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Nurturing and assisting the **community** to enhance our **quality of life**. The Community Development Department is responsible for working with City Council, Boards and Commissions, the development community, and the citizens of Dunwoody to **guide growth** and achieve the city's vision **for the future**.



PLACEMAKING

The process of creating quality places where people want to live, work, play and learn

EXPERIENCING



- Objective of Placemaking: Make people love where they live/ work so they stay and invest
- 7 person staff for Economic & Community Development (2 are event managers)
- Three types of events:
 - City Events – funded by the city,
 - Co-Sponsored Events – city waives fees in exchange for media coverage; sponsor pays all else
 - Private Events – WineFest/5K Races, etc.
- Total of 40 events per year
- Entities apply via event manager

- Placemaking is part of overall Master Plan with associated “Approach Sheets”
- Economic Development & Community Development are one Department
<https://www.suwanee.com/government/city-hall/economic-community-development-department>
- Has ongoing budget of ~\$150K for city events not inclusive of police and staff
- Only promote events that use parks/buildings



- Placemaking is part of “Visit Decatur”
- Goal of placemaking is for quality of life
- Has Event Planner on staff to handle logistics
- Events are grassroots/community generated and benefit non-profits
- Entities file application for event consideration (Decatur Book Festival/Beer Festival/Wine Festival/Beach Party)
- Most events are sponsored by a local business



Has ongoing budget funded from DBA, DDA and Tourism Board



Events are centrally located in Decatur Square, but Legacy Park recently opened and is another area for events



Only events requiring city logistics are on the calendar



- Placemaking is informed and guided by the city's overarching Master Plan
- The Master Plan touches on development and activation of about 12 nodes throughout Greenville and answers the questions: what is unique about us, who do we want to be?
- Greenville's "placemaking" grew up in Economic Development. Events have an economic purpose for the business districts and are designed to be predictable and over early to drive people into the restaurants and businesses in the area
- Events can be conceived anywhere but are brought before council for vetting
- Once an event is decided upon and tested, sponsors are sought
- Event activation has migrated to Parks & Recreation
- Parks & Rec executes City Events (e.g.: ice rink); partners with other entities (e.g.: Art Festival contractor); contracts with other 501c3s or non-profits (e.g.: road race for children's hospital)
- Keys to success: time (this effort started in the late 70s); master plan that is refreshed every two years with sub master plans for connecting nodes; emphasis on density in and around nodes; continuity of and commitment of leadership; \$ through tax allocation districts; \$ via public bonds for street and parking improvements (Main Street was taken from 5 lanes down to 2); deliberate infrastructure planning for accessible parking—parking garages (!); defining and building on a unique quality (Mice on Main); a predictable calendar of events, Mar thru Sep, in business districts, especially on Th and Fr nights that ppl can count on and that wrap up early to drive economic activity
- Metrics: full parking garages (!); restaurant receipts; hotel/motel receipts; events are self-supporting

Leadership is crucial for execution, both the leadership by elected officials and the business community

Merle Johnson and Mary Douglas Hirsch - City of Greenville

Packet page:...

Create Dunwoody Alliance

- Dedicate funding to support a 5-year Experience-Making program
- Leverage Funds: Partnership between the Development Authority + Discover Dunwoody + City of Dunwoody
- Redefine the existing Create Dunwoody non-profit
- Focus on activating our commercial districts that create reasons for people to “linger longer”
- Amplify existing events, co-coordinate new events

INITIAL THINKING: ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

The “Create Dunwoody Alliance” works to improve and promote the City of Dunwoody to cultivate the creativity, energy and economic vitality that make the area a vibrant center of commerce, community, and culture.

The Alliance:

- Promotes local businesses*
- Encourages economic development*
- Co-coordinates events and activations*
- Curates and presents public art projects*
- Advocates on behalf of its constituents with respect to a host of public policy, planning and quality-of-life issues*

The Alliance is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization and is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors consisting of representatives from the city’s Economic Development Authority, Discover Dunwoody, corporate partners, and community leaders. The Alliance’s mission is guided and informed by the City of Dunwoody’s Strategic Plan.

THANK YOU

Dunwoody Development Authority