

Downtown Director

We're hiring a Downtown Director to join our Downtown Mainstreet Inc. (DMI) Team to take our organizational excellence, stakeholder services, and impact on the Community to the next level. We're accepting applications until November 12th, 2020, with a start date expected around the end of the year.

We strongly encourage candidates of all different backgrounds to apply. Why? Empathetically, we care about what is right. We treat people fairly, in and out of our organization. We want to grow by utilizing the strengths of current and future people of the Community. Additionally, we know that our Community is changing, so let's change with it to better serve it.

ABOUT THE JOB: Our DMI Team is comprised of three staff, 20 Board members, dozens of volunteers, and hundreds of members. We are a Main Street Community within the [Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's \(WEDC\) Main Street Program](#). We follow the [Mainstreet America Four Point Approach](#) of Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization.

Our Board Past-President is Kelsey Williams, who with her husband Drew, owns and operates Fayze's Restaurant and Bakery in Downtown La Crosse. You will also work with Board President Will Kratt. Will is a transportation engineer with ISG in Downtown La Crosse with a passion for urban design and cities. Mary Larson is our recently elected Board President-Elect. She and her husband Josh own Larson's General, providing consciously curated bulk, beauty, baby, and home. You will be supported by Deb Lash, our current Interim Director, Past President, and Owner of The Wedding Tree and The Court Above Main, and fantastic interns from our three local universities and colleges. In addition, you will be introduced to other Board Directors, Work Group volunteers, and countless members and other stakeholders. As our Downtown Director, you'll work closely with all these great people.

Our Downtown Director is responsible for the following:

- Working with the Board, Work Groups, and other key stakeholders to create an annual action plan to drive implementation of the major development concepts identified and recommended in DMI's strategic plan and in-process Imagine 2040 La Crosse Downtown Plan.
- Coordinating all Board and Work Group meetings and activities. Per the Wisconsin Main Street program guidelines, the major committees are: Design, Promotions, Organization, and Economic Vitality.
- Building & maintaining strong and productive working relationships with Downtown merchants, partners, sponsors, donors, civic and governmental organizations.
- Recruiting and managing an active volunteer force, including Board and Work Group members.
- Providing advice and assistance to individual tenants or property owners regarding property improvements.
- Assisting in the retention, expansion, and development of existing businesses in Downtown.
- Assisting new and start-up businesses.
- Attracting new retail and service businesses that meet the vision of downtown revitalization efforts.

- Maintaining high visibility in the community and positive public relations through various marketing channels.
- Taking a leadership role in downtown promotion – marketing, special events, sponsorship, volunteer involvement, parking management, beautification, etc.
- Managing all administrative aspects, including maintaining an appropriate record keeping system, developing and monitoring budgets, preparing reports, documenting all physical changes, retaining information on job creation and business retention, maintenance of a downtown property database, and submitting information to the Wisconsin Main Street program as required.
- Developing and implementing fundraising campaigns to support the goals of DMI.
- Administering partner projects with the City of La Crosse and other partners.
- Other duties as assigned.

As a member of the DMI team, you will continue to grow in your career. You'll learn from us and we'll learn from you. You'll have the freedom and autonomy to do your best work with plenty of support along the way.

Here are just a sampling projects we've worked on recently that might give you a better sense of what you'll be doing day to day:

- DMI Annual Meeting
- Saturday Art Market
- Summer Days Sidewalk Sales
- Picnic on the River
- Hot Cocktail Trail | Winter Days
- Small Business Saturday
- Historic Downtown Days

ABOUT YOU: We're looking for someone who is a dynamic self-starter with management experience and strong administrative skills. Being energetic, entrepreneurial, well-organized, and capable of working independently and in a group are important traits. Exceptional written and oral communication skills are a must. Because you will be working closely with staff, volunteers, members, local officials, and the public, highly-developed interpersonal skills are used every day in this position. Knowledge of economic development, business planning, real estate development, and downtown (re)development are key skills. Knowledge of historic preservation is desired. You should have a high degree of professionalism, fantastic customer service ethic, and share our high expectations for quality.

You might have a degree; you might not. What we need is someone with the experience to lead self-directed work independently, with minimal supervision. We want you to build community around you by sharing your passion, knowledge, and experience with others. We want someone who has strong customer relationship skills and can adapt to work with people of many different backgrounds. A strong track record of recent project and/or event management with good references speaks volumes.

Winter is coming, so a passion for creating innovation and comfort during our seasonal cold climate is a must. Our main goals for 2021 are: to be more outward facing, make more frequent small events feel big, improve and make permanent our outdoor café program, and find quick wins to kickoff implementation of our Imagine 2040 plan. We are seeking someone who is very adaptable and willing to take on tasks that may be outside their comfort zone.

ABOUT THE BENEFITS: DMI pays competitively in order to attract passionate people. It is based on experience and value returned to our members and community.

Benefits at DMI are all about helping you have a healthy life/work balance. We don't micromanage your productivity. Quality time to focus on work starts with quality time to think, exercise, cook a meal, be active, be with family -- time to yourself. While some nights and weekends are required, we let you manage your schedule. We have also implemented tools such as Microsoft Teams to allow for remote connections with staff and volunteers and for everyone to engage when it's convenient for them.

MORE ABOUT US: We are focused on strengths, using those talents to guide personal development and team collaboration. We are heavily involved in our community and manage through empowerment. We are entrepreneurial.

Downtown Mainstreet Inc. was created in 1990 to oversee, coordinate and facilitate the revitalization of La Crosse's central business district. DMI is a private, non-profit organization founded by businesses and financial institutions to help restore the Downtown district's role as the center of the Coulee Region. It originated because of a need for an organization to bring various groups together to complete the City Vision 2000 Downtown Master Plan, which outlines a vision and strategy for Downtown La Crosse. The City Vision 2000 Downtown Master Plan was adopted in 1992 and was the impetus for much of the public and private investment that has taken place since. We are now creating the 3rd of these plans with the Imagine 2040 plan.

Led by a board of directors, staff and hard-working volunteers, DMI manages and works to enhance, revitalize, and redevelop La Crosse's original central business district. In 2002, Downtown La Crosse was awarded the prestigious Great American Main Street Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the community's efforts at revitalizing and growing the central business district. Today, Downtown La Crosse is the center of the region, a major destination, and an important corporate and human resources recruitment advantage.

HOW TO APPLY: Please send a cover letter to will.kratt@isginc.com that speaks directly to this position. Show us your role in DMI's future and DMI's role in yours. Address some of the work we do. Tell us about how you like to provide unexpected value to your partners so they keep collaborating with DMI year after year.

There's no benefit to writing a novel. Keep it sharp, short, and get across what matters to you. We value great communicators, so take your time with the cover letter. We're giving you our full attention.

If your response aligns with the role, we will contact you for an interview. Our interviews are typically 30 to 60 minutes, can be remote, and on your schedule. We'll talk through your experience, your ideas for growing DMI's positive impact, and some of ours. We aim to make an offer by early-December with a start date around the end of the year. We look forward to hearing from you!