

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2022

Emily Herrin (Chair)  
Sarah Higgins  
Brentt Cody  
Lindsey Holt

Heath Barrett  
Hope Murray  
Jason Tanner  
Cagney Meads

## SPONSORS



Thank you!



2021

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Cornelia Main Street & Downtown Development Authority

The purpose of the DDA is to stimulate and sustain economic development in downtown Cornelia by encouraging cooperation and building leadership. Its mission is to continue developing a vibrant commercial base centered on tourism and strategic supported growth while maintaining the peace and tranquility of our small town charm. The DDA serves non-profit and public purposes and is an institution of purely public charity.

## A Note From Jessie

As 2021 comes to a close, I can't express how proud I am of my current downtown development board. We have a really good group of people who care about the community, where we are going, and who are ready to get involved and take the steps necessary to get there.

We have taken on huge tasks and signed ourselves up to make incredible accomplishments, and we have all done it for the sake of our future generations.

We are coming into 2022 with some new board members who have a fresh perspective and are ready to dive in and do the work necessary to see great change in our community.

In 2021, we saw huge transformations and revitalization in downtown. We were able to build new relationships, start new businesses, expand existing businesses, and work with prospects to find them a home in Cornelia.

Turning prospects into business owners, working on streetscape projects, redeveloping vacant properties, and improving the aesthetic of our downtown are all things that we are working toward in 2022 to help continue to reenergize Cornelia.

My hope is that Cornelia will continue to grow and begin to thrive under the leadership of this DDA. Let's keep it going!

Sincerely,  
Jessie Owensby

# IN 2021

**68**  
New Jobs

**12**  
New Businesses

**294**  
City Events

**575**  
Volunteer Hours

**6,518**  
Current Facebook  
followers

**\$6,313.13**  
Sign and Facade Grants  
Awarded

## HAPPENED IN 2021

- Completed construction on Appletree Alley Streetscape project
- Worked with new investors to transform buildings in downtown into workable spaces for future sustainability
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- Finished construction of South Fire Station
- We were designated a Plan First Community with the Department of Community Affairs
- Successfully adopted a new zoning ordinance that will make it easier to understand and recruit new businesses
- Getting the Fire Department moved in to the new South Fire Station
- Completed 6 public improvement projects in the downtown district totaling a \$4.2 million public investment
- Had private investment totaling \$2.4 million and sold \$2.5 million in real estate in the downtown district
- Opened 12 new businesses in the downtown district
- Had nine businesses eligible for Rural Zone Tax Credits
- Restored TF X5 Caboose through private donation and at no cost to the city
- Designated Historic District by National Register of Historic Places and created Historic Preservation



## HAPPENING IN 2022

- Begin discussions of creating a business incubator in downtown
- Work with the city to develop new incentives that help recruit new businesses
- Continue working to make the Historic Train Museum more kid-friendly
- Continue working on funding for Rails to Trails project
- Host business development classes for existing business owners in conjunction with the City of Clarkesville and the Small Business Development Center
- Continue beautification efforts in the Downtown District that includes the parks
- Implement public art project (mural) in the Downtown District
- Create a walkability plan
- Restoration of the Southern Railway Caboose at the Depot
- Restoration of Chenocetah Tower in conjunction with HistoriCorps and The Habersham County Historical Society
- Continue to build relationships and collaborations with community partners



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