

POSITION: Director, Letchworth Gateway Villages Program

The Villages of Perry, Mount Morris and Geneseo are three small villages in close proximity to each other and to Letchworth State Park. The population of the three villages combined is over 14,000 people, including SUNY Geneseo students. Letchworth State Park is the geographic magnet drawing over 800,000 visitors annually and growing.

The three villages seek a full-time Director of the Letchworth Gateway Villages Program, a collaboration aimed at addressing several underlying problems.

Underlying Problems to Be Addressed

First, lack of “critical mass” of customer base within each village alone, to support the small businesses they contain. None of the downtowns individually offer a full array of retail goods and services sufficient to satisfy the range of needs and wants of local residents, nor to convert significant numbers of the Letchworth Park visitors into customers. The circumstances surrounding the three communities lend itself to a common, united and coordinated approach to branding, marketing, promotion and business development and recruitment rather than the independent, splintered and ineffective approach currently being used. The communities have no experience collaborating in this regards and in addition, individually the various downtown associations and merchant groups lack the staffing needed to develop and implement a unified, cross-community approach.

Second, there is an absence of a network structure for such cooperation. While each community has laudable organizations supporting the community and its businesses, virtually no coordination occurs that cross municipal boundaries. The local associations have no experience working with each other, nor does a vehicle exist to bring these business associations together.

Third, Letchworth Park saw a 34% increase in attendance, to 850,000, last year after being selected as the #1 state park in the nation through a USA Today poll. Most visitors to the park travel through at least one of the three participating villages on their way to and from the park, and many visitors take up lodging in the park for weekend or week-long vacations. By and large, the local businesses have not been able to effectively tap into this large potential customer base. Letchworth Park represents a significant nexus connecting the three communities to be served by this program.

Fourth, small business entrepreneurs lack financial resources, technical skills and knowledge, from developing and maintaining a business plan, determining the best location, developing marketing and promotional programs, pricing goods and services, hiring and supervising employees, as well as financial and regulatory knowledge.

Fifth, the communities, while in close geographical proximity and to Letchworth, currently are not viewed as being connected with each other.

Scope of Work and Description of Work Program

The Director will be responsible for directly performing some of the program activities and tasks, assembling a team of technical consultants to coordinate business, marketing, legal, accounting, financial, leasing, employee, customer service, and design assistance, as well as manage SUNY Geneseo interns who will be employed as part of the LGV Program.

The following list identifies and describes the various project (program) activities that will be provided, the person(s) who will carry out the various project activities and the timeframe when the activities will be completed:

- **“One-Stop Shop” for Technical Assistance**

The Director will be responsible for assembling a technical assistance team comprised of CPAs, attor-

neys, marketing persons, and building maintenance persons who will provide technical assistance. The technical assistance team will actually provide the direct technical assistance to businesses and entrepreneurs using two (2) methods, i.e., (1) providing seminars open to groups of business owners/entrepreneurs and, (2) providing one-on-one technical assistance with would-be entrepreneurs and business owners/operators. The technical assistance to be provided may cover the following topics:

- o Developing a business plan and marketing plan
- o Legal structures and legal considerations to be weighed
- o Leasing options and purchasing commercial real estate and maintaining buildings
- o Financial record keeping and reporting, tax requirements and compliance
- o Business financing options and opportunities
- o Governmental permit and approval requirements
- o Recruiting, screening, hiring and supervising employees
- o Seasonality and business

- **Branding with a common theme and shared identity for the Letchworth Gateway Villages.**

A professional marketing consultant will be engaged to assist with developing the brand. Branding work will begin by the 4th month of the program year and will be completed by the 8th month of the program year.

- **Network Building and Strengthening / Cooperative Cross-Community/Cross-Promotional Strategies and Programs**

- The Director will be responsible for carrying out these activities and will work directly with the business owners and associations in each community to develop an inter-community network. This will provide the framework for developing and implementing a cross-promotional campaign using the brand developed by the professional marketing consultant during the first program year of this project.
- Network-building efforts will be implemented shortly following the appointment of the Director and will continue throughout the remainder of the program year.
- Development and implementation of the cross-promotional campaign using the new branding concept will begin after the branding work task has been completed in the 8th month of the program year and will continue through the remainder of the year.
- The cross-promotional activities will also involve identifying strategies and businesses across municipal boundaries that complement each other in ways that can be used to attract customers across municipal boundaries into the Main Street business districts of all three municipalities in ways that strengthen the branded identity. Cross-promotional planning and strategizing will begin in the 3rd month of the program year and will continue throughout the remainder of the program year.

- **Training and assistance for developing and using social media for marketing will be performed by SUNY Geneseo (college) Interns.**

The Director will be responsible for coordinating and overseeing a team of paid SUNY Interns who will work one-on-one with business owners/operators to train the owners/operators who to promote and market their respective businesses using social media. This activity will begin in the 3rd month and will continue throughout the remainder of the program year.

- **Serve as a clearinghouse and resource for identifying available storefront building spaces in the Main Street areas suitable for small retail merchandise and serve businesses and start-up businesses.**

The emphasis will be to fill vacant storefronts in the retail hubs within each community. Information on available space will be assembled and maintained by the Director.

- **Encourage and facilitate the start-up of new businesses within the downtown areas that will complement existing businesses in the three communities** or that increase clusters of similar types of businesses that tend to draw greater numbers of visitors (tourists) and locals into these areas.
- **Provide direct support of the efforts of each village's appointed volunteer association.**

Anticipated breakdown of monthly time commitments:

- 50% on collective marketing, branding, promotional, technical assistance efforts for the Letchworth Gateway Villages, scope of work items, meetings with the advisory group, and coordination of technical assistance consultants. ~80 hr/month
- 50% on individual village-specific efforts, split evenly between villages. This includes attendance at each village's monthly association meeting, efforts on behalf of each association as determined by its board, and visiting/working directly with small businesses in each of the three villages.
- Sample breakdown of hours:
 - Monthly committee meeting for each association: 2 hr/month/village x 3 villages = ~6 hr/month
 - Discretionary work for each association: 9 hr/month/village x 3 villages = ~27 hr/month
 - Business visits and direct assistance: 16 hr/month/village x 3 villages = ~48 hr/month
- Flexible hours

Job Knowledge and Skills Required

The Director should have education and/or experience in several of the following areas: marketing, economics, finance, public relations, design, journalism, planning, business administration, public administration, retailing, volunteer or nonprofit administration and /or small business development. The Director must understand the issues confronting downtown business people, property owners, public agencies and community organizations. A significant percentage of the Director's time will be spent building relationships among business owners, individuals and collaborating entities. The Director must be entrepreneurial, energetic, imaginative, well organized and capable of functioning effectively in a very independent situation. Basic mathematical and computer skills, excellent verbal and written communication skills are essential. Supervisory skills are desirable.

Other

- Must have a valid New York State Driver's License.
- Funding is in place for year one with USDA encouragement to re-apply for year two. In years three and beyond, it is expected that broader support from municipal partners such as the three Towns and Villages, plus additional Gateway communities, and the business associations and their membership will continue to fund the position and evolving services.
- This is a contracted position, will be administered by the Village of Perry, and supervised by an advisory group that includes a representative from each community association.
- Annual contract total will be \$45,000 - \$52,000 commensurate with qualifications.

Resumes

Please submit resumes and qualifications to Mayor Rick Hauser, rhauser@villageofperry.com no later than November 30, 2016. Please include professional references. Electronic resumes are preferred, however, you may mail your resume to Letchworth Gateway Villages Program, Village of Perry, 46 N Main Street, Perry NY 14530. Only electronically submitted resumes will receive an acknowledgement of receipt. Interviews of qualifying candidates will be held December 6 or 7 from 9-12 at Perry Village Hall.