

Battle Creek Downtown Partnership: *Creating Vibrancy*



Pictured Terry Lassen (left), Alyssa Jones and Kathleen Eriksen

The next time you are in Battle Creek, stop at 115 West Michigan Avenue. There you will find three women whose passion is creating vibrancy in Downtown Battle Creek. Kathleen Eriksen, Downtown Development Director; Alyssa Jones, Downtown Projects Manager; and Terry Lassen, Office Manager, are working hard to turn Downtown Battle Creek into a vibrant, livable urban center. They use their varied experiences and areas of expertise, to alter perceptions, inspire change and capture the passion of a live-work-play environment in the Battle Creek area.

With a staff of three, the Downtown Partnership often wears multiple hats to accomplish its goals. While each has a set of objectives to meet, they work well together, creating a seamless operation. Each has a strong identity of purpose, a passion, and a dedication to achieve the goals at hand. The culture they enable and curate is one of mutual respect, caring, dedication to team and enthusiasm for change.

Raymond Cattell, a pioneer in the field of personality assessment, developed an equation which defines the traits leaders must possess to help motivate others and lead in a new direction. The traits Raymond identified are easily seen in the Downtown Partnership staff...high energy, intuitiveness, maturity, team orientation, empathy, and charisma.

Kathleen's responsibilities include developing and implementing a five-year strategic plan, fostering collaborative relationships, implementing a marketing and communications program, encouraging residential and retail development through the creation of

new incentive programs and quality-of-life initiatives, acting as a liaison between the downtown property/business owners and the various departments of local government, and enhancing Downtown's overall physical appearance, safety and accessibility.

Kathleen co-owned three unique restaurants in Downtown Jackson, and served as the Downtown Development Director in Jackson before moving to Battle Creek. Her experience as a business owner and downtown developer has paved the way for change in Downtown Battle Creek. Kathleen received her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and Organizational Development from Spring Arbor University and currently serves on the boards of numerous non-profits in the Battle Creek area.

Alyssa's responsibilities include coordinating, marketing, and producing downtown events including the Post Band, Festival Market and Vibe@5 Music Series, and Spring (and Fall) into the Arts. She also coordinates downtown merchant meetings, writes, designs and coordinates distribution of a quarterly newsletter and weekly updates, manages the downtown advertising campaign, produces promotional literature and assists Kathleen with projects and programs. Alyssa has strong experience in customer service, event management and marketing. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Marketing from Davenport University and is a member of the Junior League of Battle Creek.

Terry has superior customer service skills! The moment someone walks through the door of the Partnership office, they are greeted with a smile. She is

willing to help, will remember you the next time you come in, will ask you how things are going and if there is any more staff can do to help. Her responsibilities include maintaining the Downtown Partnership website, managing downtown beautification projects including the merchant flower pot and building illumination programs, coordinating meetings, and assisting with programs and projects. Terry received her Bachelor's degree in English from Alma College and is currently enrolled at Western Michigan University pursuing her Master's degree.

So the next time you are looking for a place to live, a place to relocate your existing business or establish a new business, stop in the Downtown Partnership office. You will find a troop who is excited about your ideas and plans, and the potential impact your plans could have on Downtown Battle Creek. Experience first hand the dynamic relationship these three have, with each other as well as towards creating a vibrant Downtown.

If you are interested in being kept up to date on changes taking place in Downtown Battle Creek, sign up for the *Downtown Live* e-newsletter by sending an e-mail to alyssa@downtownbattlecreek.com.



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