

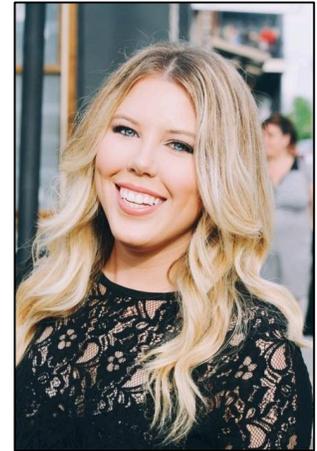
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Augusta Economic Development Authority Names Cheney Thomasson Existing Industry Coordinator

(For Immediate Release – July 2018) The Augusta Economic Development Authority continues to build their team for retaining and growing businesses in the Augusta region. Cheney Thomasson has been named existing industry coordinator for the EDA and will begin her new role this month.

“Identifying the right professionals for each position is a strategic decision for the organization and the community,” according to Cal Wray, president and chief executive officer of the EDA. “When I joined the authority in January, my commitment to the board was to build a team of qualified individuals who will play a major role in moving our mission forward. I believe we are on the right track to accomplish this goal with Cheney being our newest addition.”

Thomasson comes to the EDA from the Lower Savannah Council of Governments in South Carolina. As a planner for the organization, she worked with and on behalf of local governments to develop, implement and administer plans, programs and projects in cooperation with local, state and national stakeholders.



Cheney Thomasson

The existing industry coordinator is responsible for developing relationships with key leaders of every industry sector in Augusta. Nurturing those connections will be top priority for Thomasson in order to identify needs of the companies and their team members. The ultimate goal is to facilitate expansion and retention of jobs and a solid tax base for the community. Existing businesses account for an average of 75% of new jobs created in a community each year.

“The AEDA Board of Directors recognizes the importance of listening and providing services to existing industries in the Augusta-Richmond County area,” says Thomasson. “I appreciate the opportunity to work with the EDA team, local governments and existing industry leaders to serve as a liaison for solutions to issues that may be impacting the local economy. I believe my experiences with the Lower Savannah Council on comprehensive economic development strategies and my education provide me with the tools necessary for the position.”

Wray was named to the top economic development post in January of this year. Michael Norris was named project manager for the EDA in April and now Thomasson will move into the existing industry role. The next position, a collaboration between the Augusta Commission and the EDA, is a retail recruiter. A search is expected to begin later this month.

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The Augusta EDA’s mission is to seek new investments and jobs for Augusta and to aide existing businesses undergoing capital expansions and job growth. The organization provides bond financing, tax abatement and other incentives for businesses based on certain guidelines. The EDA is Augusta’s key contact for the Georgia Department of Economic Development, and statewide economic development partners like Georgia Power Company and Georgia EMC. The EDA also works with other stakeholders including industry leaders, developers and site selection consultants.

The Chason Group, an executive search firm specializing in economic development, chambers of commerce and foundations, has assisted the EDA with all three searches.