



The Partner Connection

The Newsletter of DCA



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A Message from the Commissioner...



Welcome to the new DCA communication tool- The Partner Connection. As our mission states, DCA is "Partnering with Georgia's communities to create a climate of success for Georgia's families and businesses," and part of the partnership process is staying in touch and communicating on a regular basis. I hope you enjoy this monthly synopsis of news, events, program announcements and other items we hope will help you keep up with the many programs and activities of your Department of Community Affairs.

Governor's Commendations to Two DCA Teams!



Two teams from DCA were selected to receive The Governor's Commendation for Excellence in Customer Service. The **Construction Codes & Industrialized Buildings Program Team** (Anthony Claffey, Ryan Meres Ted Miltiades, Max Rietschier, and John Watts - **below**) and **DCA's Disaster Housing Task Force** (Sheila Barry, Nan Maddux, Gary Moseley,



Raymond Noel, Ron Pounds, Beth Spears, and Phillis Thomas - **at left**).

The Governor's Commendation recognizes meritorious actions that enhance the public image of customer service or improve the way customer service is provided in Georgia. The teams received a certificate of commendation signed by Governor Perdue and were recognized at a ceremony on Capitol Hill on January 21.

Georgia Census 2010 Awareness

Governor Perdue appointed 43 influential leaders to a Georgia Complete Georgia[®] Count Committee in October, and the group is actively working to educate and motivate all Georgia residents to "fill it in and mail it back" during the upcoming decennial census. The General Assembly has recently adopted a resolution on

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HOW'S OUR SERVICE?

This week, DCA launched its new Customer Service Management System to capture feedback from you - our customers. This customer driven system provides partners, stakeholders, clients, and citizens 24-hour access to DCA via our website- www.dca.ga.gov

DCA works for you and we welcome your feedback!

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

behalf of the Georgia CCC that names the week of March 8 through 14 as Census Awareness Week, and March 11th as Census Awareness Day. The committee hopes you'll visit their website and do two important things: **Register your community's Complete Count Committee** if not already listed, and **check out the resources available and the plans listed** so we can all work together for a complete count. Co-Chairs Mike Beatty and Debra Lyons (Governor's Office of Workforce Development) remind everyone - it's **SECURE. SAFE. ESSENTIAL.** to get a complete count. Please **visit us at** www.census.georgia.gov.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CDFD "Gap Financing" Programs are paying Dividends!

As outlined in the presentation on the link below, the CDFD's "gap-financing" method is paying dividends by stimulating bank lending for new jobs and investments that otherwise would not occur. Some banks are currently reluctant to lend because of their need to protect, build and conserve capital, increase reserves and lower risks. In addition, the lowering of real estate values means less collateral for all lenders.

By using development authorities and non-profits, local governments can often obtain and apply relatively modest local and state resources as "soft second loans" to encourage a bank's investment in a local project. Examples abound; however, the projects funded through the Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (DDRLF) program are particularly good examples of such structures. In addition, check out the Employment Incentive Program (EIP), the Redevelopment Fund and the Appalachian Regional Commissions Loan Program for sources of "gap financing". Those links are listed below. Should anyone have questions, please call Brian Williamson, Assistant Commissioner at (404) 679-1587.

Links

The Gap Financing Presentation:

www.dca.ga.gov/communities/CDBG/publications/Bridging_the_financing_gap_presentation.pdf

The Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund

www.dca.ga.gov/economic/financing/programs/ddrlf.asp

The Employment Incentive Program

www.dca.ga.gov/economic/financing/programs/employmentincentive.asp

The Redevelopment Fund

www.dca.ga.gov/communities/downtowndevelopment/programs/redevfund.asp

Appalachian Regional Commissions Loan Program

www.dca.ga.gov/economic/financing/programs/appregion.asp

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

Four More Communities Designated as Communities of Opportunity

Recently, Thomas, Early, Randolph and Schley Counties were designated by DCA as Communities of Opportunity. At ceremonies attended by community partners, Commissioner Mike Beatty, along with the city and county officials from each community,

signed the Co-Op contract. Over the past year, the elected officials, the local champion, and their respective implementation teams have worked closely with DCA staff in creating their community improvement strategies. As participants of Co-Op, each community is required to choose 2-3 goals that can be implemented in a two year period that directly tackles persistent poverty.

"We're very excited about what these communities are doing and accomplishing through collaboration." Commissioner Beatty said. "We understand the commitment these community leaders are making to not only improve their communities for themselves and their children, but for generations to come. This is just the beginning for these Co-Op communities."

As one of several benefits of the Initiative, over the next two years, Thomas, Early, Randolph and Schley Counties will continue to work closely with DCA staff and other state and local agencies in receiving technical assistance to help accomplish the goals listed in their community improvement strategies. Additionally, these communities are now eligible to receive GEFA and Downtown Development Revolving Loans at a reduced rate, a \$5,000 grant to be matched by the communities -- 50% in-cash and 50% in-kind, and the ability to apply for CDBG funding for two consecutive years.



For more information on the Communities of Opportunity Initiative or to review the community improvement strategies, please visit DCA's website or contact Program Coordinator Patrice R. Williams at 770-968-6584 or patrice.williams@dca.ga.gov.

Georgia Main Street Program Celebrates 30th Anniversary!



On Monday, January 25, 2010, the Georgia Main Street Program hosted a luncheon at the Atlanta Hilton in downtown Atlanta to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the program. Sponsored by Georgia Power, the event was attended by over 150 guests and valued partners from Main Street and Better Hometown cities from across the state, the Georgia Downtown Association, Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Georgia Municipal Association/Georgia Cities Foundation. Commissioner Mike Beatty ensured communities that Georgia's economy would turnaround and stated that he believes that Main Street and Better Hometown cities would be a key element in establishing job creation.

Downtown development has proven to be an essential part of community's overall economic development strategy. It can be argued that a healthy and vibrant city or town center is one of the most important elements of an effective economic development program. To assist in telling the story of how the Main Street 4-point Approach to Downtown Revitalization™ has assisted cities large and small across Georgia, three keynote speakers were invited to address the audience. Speakers included Gary Fesperman, City Manager of Lavonia, Steve Sykes, City Manager of Thomasville, and Ronnie Wallace, former Mayor of Rome.

In 1980, Georgia was one of six pilot states to begin a statewide program of downtown economic development called Main Street. The Georgia Main Street Program is based on the simple but effective four-point approach originated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Main Street is a comprehensive revitalization process that improves all aspects of a commercial district. It successfully integrates the practical management strategy with the physical improvement of buildings and public spaces, aggressive promotion and image building, and the economic development of the area. Essential to the

successful Main Street is a professional program manager to coordinate the downtown revitalization program. Of the five original cities designated in 1980, Athens, LaGrange and Waycross are still active in the program. Currently, Georgia has 99 Better Hometown and Main Street cities that operate under the Georgia Main Street Program umbrella and 14 cities in the start-up process.

Public/Private Dollars Invested: \$2.6 Billion
Net New Jobs: 47,070
Net New Business: 9,841

The statistics compiled from Main Street and Better Hometown cities across Georgia show the success of the program. Investments and jobs are important tools in measuring the economic impact of a Main Street program. In an effort to measure the economic vitality of Main Street/Better Hometown cities, our program managers submit online reports on a monthly basis to let us know of progress being made in their communities. The cumulative figures represent some well-earned successes our communities have had since the programs inception.

We are committed to revitalizing Georgia, one Main Street at a time! For more information on the Main Street Program, visit our website at www.mainstreetgeorgia.org or contact Kimberly Carter, Georgia Main Street State Coordinator at kim.carter@dca.ga.gov.

2011 State Minimum Standard Codes for Construction

Upon appointment by the State Codes Advisory Committee (SCAC) at its January 2010 meeting, a SCAC Subcommittee has been formed to review the proposed amendments to the 2011 State Minimum Standard Codes for construction. The 2010 SCAC Subcommittee will be charged with reviewing the proposed amendments and making recommendations regarding possible adoption to the SCAC. The first meeting of the subcommittee will be held in May at the Department of Community Affairs. The subcommittee will consist of the following members:

2010 SCAC Subcommittee for Amendment Review

CHAIRMAN: Tim Williams (Home Builders)
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Bill Guinade (Plumbing Contractors)
Iby George (Local Fire Officials)
Gregg Johnson (Profession of Mechanical Engineering)
William Lusk (General Contractors)

For more information or to be placed on the interested parties list, contact Max Rietschier at (404) 679-3104 or max.rietschier@dca.ga.gov.

OPQG Deadlines are Approaching

February 28, 2010 is an Important Date for Many Georgia Governments

Please review your [LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING DEADLINES](#) to stay abreast of vital upcoming benchmarks. Local action may be necessary to maintain your community's eligibility for funding and permitting programs administered by the State. For additional community planning information you can access [Your Local Government Status](#) on our website or call the Office of Planning & Quality Growth at 404-679-5279.

SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Georgia Leads the Way in Green Affordable Housing

Georgia tied with Connecticut for the top slot in Global Green USA's green building rating

summary. Global Green USA is a leader in the industry and publishes its annual analysis and ranking of the Qualified Allocation Plans (QAPs) for all 50 states. DCA publishes the QAP annually which guides the annual distribution of federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) - a vital program that encourages developers to build affordable housing. Georgia has ranked at the top of the list for the past five years.

In 2009, DCA revised its QAP guidelines to encourage third-party verification by an independent green building program. This revision has made it possible for DCA to track whether developers follow through on their proposals.



The revision is an important factor in Georgia reaching the top of the QAP rankings as Global Green encourages verification of four key categories of green building: smart growth, energy efficiency, resource conservation, and health protection.

ESG/HOPWA Application and Balance of State Continuum of Care Workshops

DCA will be holding thirteen (13) application workshops on the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) and the Balance of State Continuum of Care. The statewide workshops will be held from February 15 - 23.

These programs are designed to deliver supportive housing and related services to persons strictly defined as either "homeless" under the ESG and HUD Continuum of Care programs, or as an "eligible person" (generally lower income persons with AIDS or related diseases) under the HOPWA program. Eligible ESG programs include a broad range of activities related to the provision of shelter, transitional housing and (limited) supportive services targeted specifically to persons experiencing homelessness. The overarching outcome for each ESG-assisted program is stable housing at program exit for each person served. Eligible HOPWA activities include community residential housing and services of any type, as well as short- and long-term rent and utility assistance. The deadline for application submission is April 5, 2010.

In addition, during these workshops, DCA will be seeking input on regional housing and associated service needs for individuals who are homeless. Information will be used as part of the Balance of State Continuum of Care plan submitted as part of HUD's national Continuum of Care competition for resources targeted to the homeless. For more information about these workshops, please visit our web site at <http://www.dca.ga.gov/housing/specialneeds/programs/emergencysHELTERgrants.asp>

Input Needed for State Consolidated Plan Update

DCA has released for public comment the draft of the State of Georgia Consolidated Plan 2010-2012 and Annual Action Plan Update for FFY2010 Consolidated Funds. The Consolidated Plan describes Georgia's existing housing conditions and how the state, local, private, and federal resources will be used to address the identified needs. The Action Plan is part of the State's Consolidated Plan that is prepared as a prerequisite to receiving federal funds through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); HOME Investment Partnership (HOME); Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG); and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA) programs.

A copy of the draft is available on DCA's web site at www.dca.ga.gov listed under the DCA News section in the Public Notices Subsection as the "Draft Consolidated Plan 2010-2012." A copy may also be obtained by contacting DCA at (404) 679-5293 or through the TDD line at 1-877-204-1194 or via email at housingplanning@dca.ga.gov.

The State encourages citizens and other interested parties to review the contents of the draft document and to submit their written comments no later than 5:00 PM on Wednesday, February 10, 2010. All written comments should be addressed and submitted to:

Consolidated Plan
Office of Special Housing Initiatives
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, NE
Atlanta, GA 30329-2231

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