



The Partner Connection

The Newsletter of DCA

July 2013



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**Welcome Gretchen Corbin -
DCA's New Commissioner
Beginning August 1, 2013**



The August issue will carry a full introduction.



The Georgia Main Street Program is now on Facebook! Like us and see what's happening in downtowns from Blairsville to Brunswick.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Commissioner Mike Beatty: Ten Years of Leadership



After a decade as the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, Mike Beatty is moving on to become the President and CEO of Georgia's **Great Promise Partnership**. We sat down with him to hear his perspective on these last ten years.

Ten years is a long time to lead a state agency. What would you most like to be remembered for as the Commissioner of Community Affairs?

I want to be remembered as the commissioner who always tried to do what was right, and who had compassion for the people that we serve and the people that make up this agency. I'm very proud of the folks who work here, who I've come to know so well over the years, and maybe most proud of their commitment to excellence in every area of the agency. We've been on the community development playing field for the long haul, and have always said that if we were going to do something, we were going to do it all the way.

You guided the agency through the worst recession in most people's memory. How did you manage that? How did you help the agency adapt to meet a different set of needs?

Not just DCA, but government in general had to become more nimble over the last several years. We were forced to make some very hard, sometimes very painful decisions, and we had to be sure to focus on our core missions of community and economic development and housing. We had to bring value to every single thing we did. We watched our budget get smaller and smaller, but we - my staff and I - still had the needs of Georgia to meet. We worked to stay focused on what we were doing - on our mission. We've had to do more with less - state employees haven't had raises in a long time - but we've managed to keep working on touching the lives of Georgians in positive ways. We have some great managers and lots of folks that are more than just proficient in their jobs - they're dedicated and committed to their jobs.

What's a little known fact about DCA that you would like more people to know?

I'd love for people to really see just how extensive our programs are - a lot

Georgia's SSBCI a National Model



At the national **State Small Business Credit Initiative** conference at the Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas, TX, U.S. Treasury staff commended the State of Georgia for developing a creative **SSBCI** program that is responsive to the needs of Georgia's small businesses and lenders. SSBCI Program Manager Holly Hunt showcased some of Georgia's businesses and employees that are benefitting from increased access to capital and credit. As of June 30, the Georgia SSBCI has funded or assisted with 100 loans totaling \$11.8 million in SSBCI funding. For more information about the program, contact Holly Hunt at holly.hunt@dca.ga.gov.

KGB Foundation Director in the News



Congratulations to **Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation** Executive Director, Sarah Visser! The **Atlanta Business Chronicle** named her to its inaugural **Who's Who in Sustainability List**. Her work with the

of folks don't understand how diverse this agency is. We deal with just about every aspect of a community's existence. From low income housing tax credits to financing world-famous projects like Baxter Pharmaceuticals and Caterpillar, we run the gamut. Then we've got programs like WaterFirst, helping local governments be good stewards of natural resources, and Main Street, where we're focusing on our great downtowns. Really, we are the state agency that does a little bit of everything.

You're leaving to take over as the President and CEO of the Great Promise Partnership, an organization that you founded as Commissioner. How did being Commissioner lead you to this next step? Where would you like the GPP to be in five years?

When we were working with the Communities of Opportunity - those counties in Georgia with historically persistent poverty - I came to the realization that if you were going to break that cycle of poverty you had to provide a ladder up and out for the youth of the community. We saw so many communities losing population because there were so few jobs for their best and brightest. Even worse, though, we saw that so many kids had already given up hope before they'd even gotten their drivers' licenses. We wanted to reach out and provide opportunities for these kids to participate in the American Dream. The GPP helps young people by mentoring them, teaching them career skills, and helping them earn a paycheck while they're in high school. We reach out to kids that would be dropping out without real help and encouragement to look forward. It may take longer than five years, but I'd like for GPP to be part of the fabric of every community in the state. I hope that we'll have tens of thousands of kids, who may have otherwise dropped out of high school, either in college, or engaged in meaningful work, or part of the military. I want the Great Promise Partnership to make a real difference in Georgia, and am excited to have the opportunity to lead this effort.

Finally, do all DCA Commissioners leave a letter in their desk drawer for the next Commissioner?

In lieu of a letter, I want to work with Commissioner Corbin to be sure there's a seamless transfer of leadership. I want to pass on to her the culture of DCA and confirm for her the impact this agency has on all the people of Georgia. It is always a great honor to be selected by your Governor to lead a state agency, but being the DCA Commissioner is an honor that's not bestowed on many people. This is a special agency - we have a responsibility to work with every community in Georgia, to help them succeed and provide opportunities for businesses and families to succeed. I'm looking forward to watching new leadership build on a strong past.

All of us at DCA wish our Commissioner, Mike Beatty, a very fond farewell and wish him much continued success as he takes the Great Promise Partnership program to the next level!

For more information about the Great Promise Partnership, go to www.gpppartnership.org/

Housing Counseling Receives

\$1.2 Million to Help Georgia Citizens

The Housing Counseling Program has received three grants totaling \$1.2 million. "Since 2008, many Georgia residents have dealt with job losses and other financial emergencies that have threatened their ability to stay

Foundation and Georgia's seventy-plus Keep Georgia Beautiful Affiliates has made business leaders take notice. Thanks, Sarah - we're proud to be a partner with the Foundation.

Opportunity Zone

Three new **Opportunity Zones** were designated in June:

- The City of Doraville (expansion)
- The City of Union Point
- The City of Valdosta (expansion)

Opportunity Zones provide significant tax credits to businesses locating in these areas that communities have designated for redevelopment. For more information about the OZ program, contact Joanie Perry at joanie.perry@dca.ga.gov.



As of June 30th, **HomeSafe Georgia** has assisted over 3,700 individuals and families, committing over \$77 million in U.S. Treasury funding to help keep homeowners from foreclosure.

current in their mortgages. We want to provide as many options as possible for our citizens to stay in their homes while they regain financial stability," says Carmen Chubb, Deputy Commissioner of Housing for the Department of Community Affairs. "Others may be looking forward to purchasing their first home, which has been difficult in this economy, so we'll be working with lenders and counselors, too, helping people meet their goal of homeownership. This increased funding helps us help as many of our fellow citizens as possible through trying times and we're working to get the word out in Georgia that help is available for homeowners in need. "

- From **Neighborworks®** and the **National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Program**: \$716,000 to provide counseling to homeowners in danger of foreclosure.
- From Neighborworks® under the Making Home Affordable Outreach and Intake Project: \$62,000 to promote foreclosure prevention options.
- From **HUD Housing Counseling** Grant: \$509,000 to support 23 housing counseling agencies across the state to provide pre- and post purchase, foreclosure prevention, and reverse mortgage counseling in group or individual counseling sessions for Georgia residents.

For more information about housing counseling contact Karen Young at Karen.young@dca.ga.gov.

Georgia's Classic Main Street

Effective July 1, 2013, the two signature programs of downtown development, Better Hometown and Main Street became **Georgia's Classic Main Street** program.

Georgia's Classic Main Street program is a community-based development initiative that encourages public and private partnerships to create successful central business districts using the nationally-recognized **4-Point Approach**(TM) for downtown revitalization.

Working in the program areas of organization, design, promotion and economic development, Main Street communities work with local business owners, property owners, citizens, non-profit organizations, and local governments to build a comprehensive approach to sustainable downtown development.



The Main Street program has been a statewide coordinated downtown development initiative since 1980, initially geared toward communities with populations of at least 10,000. In 1997, the Department launched the Better Hometown program, a Main Street oriented initiative for communities with a population under 5,000. Combined, the former 28 Better Hometown communities and 58 traditional Main Street communities become one of the largest Main Street networks in the country.

Georgia's 96 current Classic Main Street communities have netted over 56,000 new jobs in Georgia, over \$2.9 billion in public and private investment, and nearly 12,000 new small business starts since 1980.

Main Street is a program of the **National Main Street Center**, a subsidiary of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**.

For more information about Georgia Classic Main Streets please contact



It's summer and what could be better than fresh Georgia produce? Support your friends, neighbors, community, and the Georgia economy by buying locally whenever you have the chance. The **Top Five Ways to Support Georgia Grown** offers ideas for everyone from families to businesses help grow our Georgia economy. How does your community focus on growing its own - from jobs to food to products? **EMAIL** us with some details and we will highlight the best ideas here in future months.



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The Partner Connection: An All Star Award Winner



Thanks to you, our readers, **Constant Contact** named The Partner Connection one of its 2012 All Star Award Winners! We work to share the most current information about the Department of Community Affairs with you each month. If you have ideas or requests for information about DCA that you'd like to read here, send an **email** to share them with us. We're here to partner with communities to create a climate of success for Georgia's families and businesses!

UPCOMING DEADLINES, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES

Main Street Georgia Applications Due August 31, 2013

The **Office of Downtown Development** is pleased to announce the competitive selection process of the **Georgia Main Street Program**.

The Georgia Main Street Start-Up Program is a competitive selection process that allows communities to demonstrate their abilities to enter the Georgia Classic Main Street network and successfully achieve National Accreditation on an annual basis. We encourage interested communities to complete the **application online**. Applications are due by August 31, 2013. The Start-Up Program will be offered every two years, and the next application round will be held in 2015.

For questions about the program, please call our office at 404-679-3101 or email mainstreet@dca.ga.gov.

Georgia Land Bank Authority Workshop: July 31 in Valdosta

Make plans to attend this workshop for local officials, non-profit organizations, government staff, and others interested in learning about the opportunities provided by the 2012 Georgia Land Bank legislation.

Presented by the Georgia Land Bank Association, this three-hour workshop will feature nuts-and-bolts training and focus on creative land bank partnerships that foster community redevelopment. Participants will receive a copy of the newly-released Georgia Land Bank Resource Manual. The workshop is free, but please register by sending contact information to developmentdtr@bellsouth.net. More information is available on the **Georgia Municipal Association Calendar**.

Georgia Initiative for Community Housing: Applications Due September 6

access to affordable housing options and we can help! Whether you are searching by price, number of bedrooms, or even proximity to work, school or transportation, finding a home that meets your needs is easier with GeorgiaHousingSearch.org - the key to linking tenants with landlords. We offer FREE property posting, bilingual assistance, and a toll-free number (877-428-8844) available to those without internet access.

Landlords can register in a five-minute process or work with DCA staff to register large-scale listings. For more information, please contact Ron Pounds at 404-327-6864 or ron.pounds@dca.ga.gov.



The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing is now accepting applications for participation in the three-year program. **Applications are available [HERE](#) and are due by September 6, 2013.**

Interested cities must submit a letter of intent by July 31st. For questions, contact Karen Tinsley at 706.542.4949 or klt@uga.edu.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

June Financial Awards

Region 6

City of Jeffersonville

- \$47,876 in Immediate Threat and Danger funds
- Benefits 920 people
- Replaces a portion of the 6" PVC water main, the storm drain culvert, and installs Filter Fabric and Rip Rap to control erosion on Watson Road.

Region 10

City of Barwick

- \$11,020 in Immediate Threat and Danger funds
- Assists 386 people
- Assists the City in installing a new well pump and motor in the City's primary well and making needed adjustments.



For previous issues of **The Partner Connection**, click on our logo or [HERE](#).