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Seven New Communities Designated as Rural Zones

ATLANTA (Oct. 31, 2019) – The cities of Adel, Douglas, Eatonton, Forsyth, Rossville, Villa Rica, and Washington have been designated as Rural Zones by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and were recognized at the agency’s annual Fall Conference in October.

The 2017 legislative session marked the creation of the Rural Zones program. The General Assembly tasked DCA and the Georgia Department of Economic Development with implementing and overseeing this initiative which provides tax credits to individuals creating jobs and making qualifying investments within historic downtown areas.

Each Rural Zone designation lasts for five years, and activities to begin earning tax credits within these seven new zones begins Jan. 1, 2020. Communities are encouraged to develop strategies and share information about the benefits to businesses and investors, including the program’s three tax incentives:

- Job Tax Credit, which offers \$2,000 per new full-time equivalent job created
- Investment Credit, which is equivalent to 25% of the purchase price of the building
- Rehabilitation Credit, which is equivalent to 30% of qualified rehabilitation costs.

Each of the three tax credits is dependent upon the creation of at least two new full-time equivalent jobs.

General criteria for designation include communities with a population of less than 15,000; a core downtown area with structures older than 50 years; evidence of blight or disinvestment in the downtown area; implementation of a strategic plan in the downtown area; and a completed market analysis, which indicates gaps within the local business makeup. For more information, visit dca.ga.gov.

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About the Department of Community Affairs

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) partners with communities to build strong and vibrant neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas through community and economic development, local government assistance, and safe and affordable housing. Using state and federal resources, DCA helps communities spur private job creation, implement planning, develop downtowns, generate affordable housing solutions and promote volunteerism. DCA also helps qualified Georgians with low and

moderate incomes buy homes, rent housing and prevent foreclosure and homelessness. For more information, visit www.dca.ga.gov.

