




March 2012

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NEWS AND EVENTS

Governor Deal Declares March 6, 2012

Georgia Downtown Day



Georgia Downtown Association President Billy Peppers, Governor Nathan Deal, and Commissioner Mike Beatty recognize the value of Georgia's downtowns to our economy.

Georgia's downtowns are the heart and soul of our communities, according to the Governor's proclamation declaring Georgia Downtown Day. Not only are they full of history, art and culture, but they're economic drivers in our state, as well. Billy Peppers, President of **The Georgia Downtown Association** and Commissioner Beatty presented Governor Deal with a check for \$2.9 billion, representing the amount of private and public investment in the 100 **Main Street** cities across Georgia since the program started in 1980.

2012 GICH Retreat in Tifton

2012 Main Street Institute

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February CDFD Awards by Region



Congratulations to the Department's two newest WaterFirst Communities: the City of Loganville and the joint communities of Newton County, Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Oxford, Porterdale and Social Circle. We appreciate your commitment to water stewardship!



First Lady Sandra Deal, Commissioner Mike Beatty and Buster celebrate the **Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation's** kickoff of the 2012 **Great American Cleanup**. In 2011, our local Keep Georgia Beautiful programs cleaned more than 1.9 million pounds of trash off of Georgia roadways. We're looking forward to a successful spring 2012!

March is
National Peanut Month!



Gainesville, Garden City, Harlem, Wadley, and Warner Robins are the newest communities to join

the **Georgia Initiative for Community Housing**. Each community created a housing team of representatives from local government, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, school board members and concerned citizens to participate in GICH, where they'll work (over the next three years) to develop strategies to improve the supply of affordable housing in their communities. Our newest communities join Auburn, Eatonton, Nashville/Berrien County, Sylvania, Washington, Americus/Sumter County, Covington, Gray/Jones County, Thomson/McDuffie County, and Winder, which are in their second and third years of the GICH program.

The **City of Tifton** and **Tift County**, GICH alumni communities, hosted the February 27- March 1, 2012 retreat at the University of Georgia Tifton Campus Conference Center. The retreat included facilitated sessions for each community team to develop their housing work plans, speakers on current issues related to housing and community development, and an opportunity to see a **Net Zero Energy** house under construction by students from **Moultrie Technical College** in an historic district in downtown Tifton.

Since November 2004, the GICH program has offered communities a three-year program of collaboration and technical assistance to help them meet their affordable housing needs. The Department, the **Georgia Municipal Association**, the University of Georgia's **Housing and Demographics Research Center**, and **Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach** are the primary partners for the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. Georgia Power Company, Wells Fargo, and USDA Rural Development provide funding for the program. Georgia Electric Membership Corporation and UGA's Archway Partnership Program serve as GICH's facilitation partners.

GICH accepts applications from prospective program participants each year. For additional information, please contact Cynthia Harrison, DCA Community Initiatives Coordinator at (404) 502-6176 or **Cynthia.harrison@dca.ga.gov** or Program Director Karen Tinsley at (706) 542-4949 or **klt@uga.edu**.

Resource Team in Young Harris



If you've ever been to the **City of Young Harris**, you know that its small-town charm, high up in the mountains of Georgia, is worth preserving. The citizens and elected officials of Young Harris are proud of their

heritage and their tight-knit community and want to keep those important elements even as the city grows. **Young Harris College** is expanding its campus. The Georgia Department of



We all know that Georgia produces more peanuts than any other state in the nation, but did you know:

- Peanuts contribute more than \$4 billion to the US economy each year
- There are enough peanuts grown in one acre to make about 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches
- The average child will eat about 1,500 peanut butter sandwiches before he or she graduates from high school
- The average American consumes more than six pounds of peanuts and peanut butter products each year
- Peanuts flower above ground but migrate underground to reach maturity
- The majority of US peanut farms are family owned and operated
- The average US peanut farm is about 100 acres
- Two United States Presidents have been peanut farmers: our own President Jimmy Carter of Plains, and President Thomas Jefferson of Virginia

Many thanks to the **National Peanut Board** for these peanut facts!



What do these organizations have in common?

- Keep Georgia Beautiful
- Georgia Recycling Coalition
- SP Recycling Corp

Transportation is planning a Highway 76 Bypass to circumnavigate the city. In short, change is inevitable, but the city leaders and citizens want the changes made in concert with the community, rather than overwhelming the community.

To assist in that change management, the Department sent a Team Georgia **Resource Team** to the city to listen to community members express their concerns and desires for growth. After gathering as much information as possible during the two day visit, the team is constructing a series of recommendations for Young Harris to help it meet its goals of historic and cultural preservation in a time of change. The team will return to Young Harris in the spring to make its final recommendations and assist with implementing their recommendations.

Team Georgia provides Resource Teams to communities through an application process, found **HERE**. For more information on how your community may benefit from technical assistance through Resource Teams, please contact Jim Frederick at jim.frederick@dca.ga.gov

Three Task Forces to Review Codes and Make Georgia Recommendations

The Department's **Office of Construction Codes** will work with two task forces to review the 2012 International Building and 2012 International Residential codes. The groups will then make recommendations to the State Codes Advisory Committee (SCAC) regarding adoption of the 2012 codes and any Georgia amendments. In general, amendments are made to provide more flexibility at the local/builder level in implementing new codes.

A third, newly-created task force will be working on the development of two Disaster Resilient Building Codes Appendices, an optional set of appendices that may be adopted by local governments to provide for enhanced codes to address mitigating building damage due to natural disasters.

If you have questions or would like to be placed on the interested parties list for notifications about any of these task forces, please contact:

- 2012 IBC Review Task Force, contact Calvin Jordan at calvin.jordan@dca.ga.gov or 404-679-1739;
- 2012 IRC Review Task Force, contact Bill Towson at bill.towson@dca.ga.gov or 404-679-3109;
- 2012 Disaster Resilient Building Code Appendices Task Force, contact Dee Leclair at dee.leclair@dca.ga.gov or 404-327-7909.

UPCOMING EDUCATION, EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND DEADLINES

2012 Main Street Institute In Woodstock:

- American Chemistry Council
- Food Lion
- Georgia Food Industry Association
- Harvey's Supermarket
- JC Penney
- Kroger
- Lowe's
- Target
- Walmart
- Publix

They're all part of a Georgia-wide campaign to highlight the importance of the "Three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" especially as they relate to plastic bags. Click the bag to find out more!



March 15 - May 15, 2012: Soles4Souls is teaming up with organizations in Georgia in efforts to collect over 100,000 pairs of shoes to donate! Worldwide, more than 300 million people do not own a pair of shoes. Together, Soles4Souls, Keep Georgia Beautiful, The Georgia Recycling Coalition, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 1-800-Got-Junk? and Whole Foods will work together to collect shoes in celebration of Earth Day and the Great American Clean Up! Click **HERE** to find out how to get your community involved.



The **Georgia Dream Homeownership Program** makes purchasing a home more affordable for low-to-moderate income families and individuals by offering a fixed, low-interest rate mortgage

March 21-23



Join the Office of Downtown Development's Main Street Program for the 2012 Main Street Institute in the beautiful city of **Woodstock!** The Institute is ideal for new and experienced managers, board members and volunteers. New program managers must attend all three days to receive credit. Training specific for board members and a board member luncheon are available. Opening registration begins at 8 AM on March 21 and the final session ends at 12 Noon on Friday, March 23.

Click **HERE** for a registration form. For more information, please contact Kim Carter at kim.carter@dca.ga.gov.

Housing Choice Voucher Program Public Hearing: March 26, 2012

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs, in compliance with applicable U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations established by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, is updating the Annual Plan SFY2012 as a prerequisite to receiving federal funds for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The Annual Plan provides detail about DCA's immediate operations, program participants, programs, services, and addresses the needs of the communities we serve for the upcoming fiscal year.

A key component in the successful development of the Plan is the public input and direction provided by the citizens of Georgia. The Department of Community Affairs has scheduled a public hearing on **Monday, March 26, 2012 to solicit this input on the Housing Choice Voucher Program's Annual Plan at 2260 Northlake Parkway, Suite 300, Tucker, GA 30084 at 10AM in the Conference Room.**

All interested parties are encouraged to attend and participate in this process. For further information or directions to the facility, please contact the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Rental Assistance Department at (770) 414-3261 or toll-free at (866) 506-0949. TDD phone users may call (404) 679-4915 or (877) 204-1194.

In addition to the 2260 Northlake Parkway location the Housing Choice Voucher Program's Annual Plan is on display at the following:

Athens Regional Office
1061 Dowdy Rd. Suite 201
Athens, GA 30606-5700
706-369-5636

loans.

In addition, the Georgia Dream Homeownership Program offers down payment and closing costs assistance to eligible borrowers, which can greatly reduce the out of pocket expense to the buyer.

Rates Effective March 8, 2012:

- Georgia Dream (first mortgage only): 4.125%
- Georgia Dream combined with any Georgia Dream Down Payment Loan: 4.375%



The Department launched HomeSafe Georgia in April 2011 to assist homeowners affected by the recession. Since its inception, the program has:

- Received 5,514 completed applications
- Recruited 97 loan servicers to participate in the program
- Closed 647 loans
- Applications under review: 1,268
- Determined 3,599 applicants to be ineligible

For complete program information, including how to apply, see the [HomeSafe Website](#)



Georgia citizens need quick and easy 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

Carrollton Regional Office
185 Parkwood Circle
Carrollton, GA 30117-0609
770-838-2600

Eastman Regional Office
21 Industrial Blvd
Eastman, GA 31023
478-374-6962

Waycross Regional Office
500 Alice Street
Waycross, GA 31501
912-285-6280

CDBG Application Deadline: April 2, 2012

The Department must receive all applications for the FY 2012 State **Community Development Block Grant** (CDBG) Annual Competition by April 2, 2012. The Community Development and Finance Division (CDFD) will review the applications using DCA's HUD-approved **Method of Distribution** as the standard for evaluation and scoring. Funding announcements are anticipated in August 2012. Click **HERE** for the application manual, appendices, forms, and workshop presentations and the Revitalization Area Strategy (RAS) Manual.

For more information, contact Steed Robinson at **steed.robinson@dca.ga.gov** or at (404) 679-3168.

Housing Solutions for Cities: April 18, 2012



Discover how to address a variety of housing concerns at the **Georgia Municipal Association's** Spring Training, April 18, 2012, at the

Rainwater Conference Center in Valdosta.

This one-day course will provide information on available housing programs and showcase revitalizing areas of Valdosta during an afternoon bus tour. Participants may register **HERE**. Questions about course content may be directed to Cynthia Harrison at **cynthia.harrison@dca.ga.gov** or at (404) 502-6176.

Stronger Economies Together:

An Opportunity for Regions 8, 9, 10 and 11 - Applications Due May 4, 2012

home that meets your needs is easier with GeorgiaHousingSearch.org.

Landlords can register in a five-minute process or work with DCA staff to register large-scale listings. For more information, please contact Sheila Roberts at 404-679-4855 or

sheila.roberts@dca.state.ga.gov

[v](#)

GeorgiaHousingSearch.org is 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.



USDA Rural Development and Fort Valley State University Cooperative Extension Program are accepting applications

from current or newly formed multi-county teams seeking specialized technical assistance to accomplish their goals of moving their region forward through the **Stronger Economies Together** (SET) initiative. The SET initiative is designed to help regional teams develop and implement an economic development blueprint to strengthen and enhance regional economic development activities in rural Georgia's Regions 8, 9, 10 and 11. USDA Rural Development and Fort Valley State University Cooperative Extension strongly encourage USDA StrikeForce counties to apply.

For more information, contact Terry Dismuke, USDA Rural Development at terry.dismuke@ga.usda.gov or 706-552-2555 or Joy Moten-Thomas, FVSU Cooperative Extension, at thomasb@fvsu.edu or 478-825-6954.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE DIVISION

February Awards by Region

Region 5

Elbert County

- Loan guarantee to Pinnacle Bank for the expansion of La Fogata restaurant
- \$49,500 in loan guarantee
- Retains 5 jobs
- Creates 5 jobs

Development Authority of Elbert County, Elberton and Bowman

- \$300,000 EDGE grant to assist in the location of metal fabrication company.
- \$10MM in private investment
- Creates 125 jobs

Region 11

City of Nashville

- \$162,617 in Redevelopment CDBG grant funds
- The City will acquire and improve a blighted storefront, and stabilize other buildings in the downtown
- \$15,000 in private investment
- \$10,000 in public investment (non-DCA funds)

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