



November 18, 2014

Ms. Monica Callahan
Planning Director
City of Madison
132 N. Main Street
Madison, GA 30650

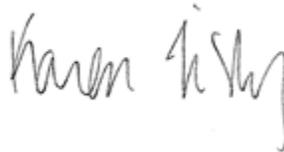
Dear Ms. Callahan:

On behalf of the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Partnership, congratulations! Madison has been selected to participate in the GICH program. Other communities in the 2015 class include: Cedartown, Liberty County, Trion, and Pine Mountain.

The first retreat is scheduled for February 23-26 in Macon; please make sure your entire team is aware of this date. We are offering a pre-retreat orientation meeting to be scheduled on one of the following days: January 26-30. The purpose of this meeting is to visit with your housing team to ensure that everyone knows what to expect and will be prepared to fully participate in this important event. Please let me know if you would like to schedule this meeting.

We look forward to working with the City of Madison's housing team over the next three years. This will be a time for your housing team to make great strides in fashioning solutions to the housing needs unique to your community. If you have any questions or concerns now or at any time during the three years, please feel free to contact me at 706.542.4949 or by email at klt@uga.edu.

Sincerely,



Karen Tinsley
GICH Program Coordinator

cc: Teresa Concannon, Beth Spears



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Five Georgia communities selected for housing assistance

Housing-related changes already implemented by 50 GICH communities

ATLANTA (Nov. 17, 2014) – Five Georgia communities have been newly selected to receive assistance with their housing needs through the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH), a public-private initiative focused on helping communities strategically grow their economies through housing-related solutions.

Cedartown, Madison, Pine Mountain, Trion and Liberty County will begin the three-year program in February. Through training and technical instruction during a series of retreats, community housing teams design and implement strategies to enhance their economies as well as the quality of life for their citizens. During these work sessions, each team will work with and receive continuous feedback from a facilitator or housing professional, as well as engage in cross-community collaboration.

“Assistance with housing works best when communities are an active part of the process,” said Gretchen Corbin, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), a partner in the initiative. “This program brings together and empowers the decision-makers who can and do make a difference in their communities.”

The teams consist of about twelve members and include representatives from local government, business, nonprofit housing organizations and the public housing authority. Other groups may include faith-based organizations, churches, development authorities, chamber of commerce, school systems, major employers and law enforcement.

Since the program’s inception in 2005, 50 Georgia communities have benefited from the GICH program. The communities currently enrolled in the program are **Albany, Dalton, Douglasville, Greensboro, Lithonia, Perry, Pembroke, Porterdale, Rincon and Roswell**.

Some of the resulting strategies undertaken by communities include revitalizing distressed neighborhoods and subdivisions, developing multi-family apartments through tax credits,

updating codes and ordinances, creating a land bank authority, writing an urban redevelopment plan, conducting a housing assessment, and launching community clean-up programs.

Up to five communities are selected through a competitive process each year to participate in the initiative. Communities are selected based on need and their demonstrated commitment to community improvement. Any city, county, or public housing authority in Georgia is eligible to apply on behalf of a community housing team. Applications are due each September.

GICH is a collaboration of partners including: the University of Georgia's Housing and Demographics Research Center, a unit of the Department of Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences; UGA's Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach; the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and the Georgia Municipal Association, a voluntary, non-profit organization based in Atlanta that provides legislative advocacy, educational, employee benefit and consulting services to its 521 member cities. The GICH program is funded by Georgia Power as well as the USDA, through a Rural Community Development Initiative grant. Additional in-kind services are provided by UGA's Archway Partnership, and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, both units of the UGA Office of Public Service and Outreach, and the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation. For more information, visit the DCA website at <http://www.dca.ga.gov/>

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (GDCA) partners with communities to create a climate of success for Georgia's families and businesses through community and economic development, local government assistance, and safe and affordable housing. Using state and federal resources, GDCA helps communities spur private job creation, implement planning, develop downtowns, generate affordable housing solutions and promote volunteerism. GDCA also helps qualified low- and moderate- income Georgians buy homes, rent housing, and prevent foreclosure and homelessness. For more information, visit www.dca.ga.gov.

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Learn more about our commitment to [fair housing](#).