

GICH Informational Webinar



Georgia Initiative for
Community Housing

Presentation Outline

- **Program Overview**
- **Application Procedures**
- **DCA Incentives & Requirements**



PROGRAM OVERVIEW



GICH began in 2004 as a cooperative partnership of:



**Financial Planning, Housing
& Consumer Economics**

College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Housing and Demographics Research Center

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Public Service & Outreach

**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**



Founding Sponsor and continued financial support is provided by:

**WELLS
FARGO**



**Georgia
Power**

In-Kind Program Partners

- UGA Archway Partnership
- UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- UGA Extension

The program is also partial funded by a USDA Rural Development RCDI grant



GICH Communities

- 100 communities have benefitted from the GICH Program.
- GICH communities are both large and small, rural and urban.



The GICH Initiative:

Helps communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through the development of locally based housing and revitalization strategies.



Participating Communities will:

- Create a community housing team
- Network with other communities and housing experts
- Develop new ideas about meeting local housing needs and enhancing community development
- Learn about approaches and resources to improve housing stock
- Produce and implement a community housing plan



Program Overview

Three-year program which includes:

- Retreats with facilitated work sessions
- Informative workshops provided by experts
- Reports from communities
- Networking & Collaborating with other GICH Communities



Retreats



- Held twice each year where all 15 participating communities meet to plan and learn while sharing ideas
- Retreats are held in different locations within the state
- Attend for 2-3 days during their first year and 1 ½ to 2 days the second and third years
- Beginning in Fall of 2026 current GICH housing team members will be charged a \$50 registration fee to cover retreat expenses.

Informational Sessions

- Code Enforcement
- Urban Redevelopment
- Housing Assessments
- Land Bank Authorities
- Heir Property
- Fair Housing
- Blight
- Neighborhood Revitalization
- Tax Credit Properties



Facilitation



Facilitated Work Sessions

A facilitator is assigned to each community to assist with drafting a strategic housing plan



Reports from communities

Communities will learn from the others as they share their plans and progress in report back sessions.

GICH APPLICATION PROCEDURES



How Can My Community Participate?



- Assemble a community housing team
- Identify housing needs within your community
- Identify funding source(s) for team's travel expenses
- **Submit**
 - Letter of Intent
 - Application

Eligible Applicants

- Incorporated municipality
- County government
- Public Housing Authority
- Joint City/County



On-Line Application & LOI Submission

- For the 2026 application cycle, all letters of intent and GICH applications must be submitted electronically via link on GICH website (<https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-how-to-apply>)



Application Submission

- Applicants will be able to start and revisit their applications without losing progress.
- All attachments must be uploaded to the application as pdf documents where indicated.
- Signatures can also be uploaded as a pdf document.
- A printable version of the application can be found on the GICH website (<https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-how-to-apply>)



4 Sections of GICH Application

- Application instructions
- Section A: Applicant Information
- Section B: Community & Housing Information
- Section C: Certification & Acknowledgement of Responsibilities.



Application

Section A — Applicant and Financial Information

- Name of Applicant: _____
- Address: _____
- Primary Contact Person: _____
- Email Address: _____
- Telephone: _____ Fax: _____
- Secondary Contact Person: _____
- Email Address of Secondary Contact: _____
- Telephone of Secondary Contact: _____
- Indicate who is the Team Leader: Primary or Secondary Contact listed above



Application

10. Funding Source(s) and Amount Allocated for Travel and Lodging Expenses:
Include cost information

	Funding Source(s)	Amount	Status (Requested or allocated)
Year 1			
Year 2			
Year 3			

Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

11. Community Housing Team Members: (page 2-3)

Housing Industry Groups	Name	Title	Affiliation	Signature Indicating Agreement to Participate
Government official				
Lender, Real Estate, Developer				
Nonprofit, housing authority, faith based				
Others				



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

Other Important Team Members

Housing Authority

Habitat for Humanity

Churches

Colleges/school system

Non-profits

Regional Commissions

USDA

Foundations

Private Sector, etc.

Major Employer



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

12. Evidence of **local government support** and other local support (attach letters, local government resolutions, and other actions)
13. & 14. Describe the primary **housing issues** facing the community and **housing activities** in the community currently underway or successfully completed



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

15-16. Does the City/County government have the following:

- 1. Building Inspection Staff No Yes
- 2. Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan
- 3. Code Enforcement Staff
- 4. Zoning Ordinance
- 5. Subdivision Ordinance
- 6. Urban Redevelopment Plan (O.C.G.A 36-61-1)



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

17. Has your community participated in the following programs?

1. Georgia Main Street
2. Archway Partnership
3. Georgia Downtown Renaissance
4. DCA PlanFirst Program
5. Georgia Economic Placemaking Collaborative



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

18. Does your community have a land bank authority?
19. Has your community completed a housing needs assessment in the past three years?
20. Has your community worked with your Regional Commission on community development activities in the past 5 years?



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

21 & 22: If this application is being submitted on behalf of a City/County government, has the City/County government collaborated with each other on a housing project in the past five years?



Application

Section B — Community Housing Information

23. Briefly describe why the **community wishes** to participate in GICH and what you expect as an outcome from your community's participation

24. Briefly describe **activities and efforts** that you have taken to build dedicated and sustainable team leadership and to work together as a collaborative group **since your last application** or site visit. **This section does not apply to first-time applicants.**



Application

Section C — Certification & Acknowledgement of Responsibilities

Organization - The housing team must include broad community representation.

Attendance & participation - Dedicated team member participation on the housing team at the biannual retreats and local meetings is vital for meaningful facilitated discussion and developing and implementing an effective housing plan.

Product - The GICH program partners with communities to improve their quality of life and economic vitality through the development of locally-based housing and revitalization strategies.



Application

Section C — Certification & Acknowledgement of Responsibilities

Section C — Certification & Acknowledgement of Responsibilities

To the best of my knowledge the information in this application is true and correct. By checking the “Yes” box, the official representative of the applicant certifies these statements.

Date: _____

Yes

Name of official representative (please print):

Title: _____



Application Scoring

Team: Number and appropriate representation from groups	10 pts
Evidence of Support: Appropriate financial support; resolutions; dedicated staff)	10 pts
Housing Issues: Clear, detailed description	10 pts
Past Housing Activities: Steps taken to address housing needs	10 pts
Expectations of Participation: Clear, detailed description	10 pts
	50 Total

Application Tips

Cohesiveness: preparation is key (the team should meet at least once prior to site visit)

Diversity: show that multiple people are actively working

Team sized-right: have enough team members to be effective

Project sized-right: housing initiatives need to be large enough to address in 3-5 years but should not be too large.



Planning Committee Site Visits

- After the application process is complete a group of finalist communities will be chosen.
- Site visits will be scheduled with each finalist community.
- Include presentations from housing team, discussion session, and tour of community.
- After site visits are complete, the next cohort of GICH communities is selected.



Schedule of Events 2026-2027

Event	Date(s)
Application Released	Monday, May 4
Informational Webinars	Friday, May 29, / Wednesday, June 17 / Friday, July 24 (Q & A)
Letter of Intent Due	Friday, July 10
Application Due	Thursday, July 31
Site Visits to Finalist Communities	Late August
GICH 2025 Fall Retreat & Selection Announcement	Wednesday, November 16
Pre-retreat Orientation Meeting	January 2027
First Retreat	April 13 – 15 2027 (Cartersville, GA)
Second Retreat	(dates TBD)

DCA POLICIES AND SUCCESS STORIES



DCA Incentives

Current GICH Communities

- Extra points on the CHIP application
- Extra points on LIHTC application
- Exemption from the “every other year” rule in CDBG

Certified Alumni GICH Communities

- Extra points on LIHTC application
- Exemption from the “every other year” rule in CDBG
- Extra points on CHIP application

DCA Incentives: Participation

- GICH teams are required to attend two (2) retreats per year during the duration of the three-year program.
- GICH teams should ensure that at least four (4) team members are in attendance during the scheduled retreats.
- **ACTIVE** GICH communities are eligible to receive special consideration in DCA program applications
 - An **ACTIVE** GICH community is defined as one who has been accepted into the GICH program and who, at the time of application for a DCA program, has had adequate attendance at the two (2) most recent GICH retreats.



DCA Incentives: Participation

- An **INACTIVE** community is defined as one who has been accepted into the GICH program and who, at the time of application for a DCA program, has had adequate attendance at only one (1) of the two (2) most recent GICH retreats.
- An **INACTIVE** community is ineligible for special consideration in DCA program applications.
 - For example, a community who applies for CHIP in January 2024, but has failed to attend either a Fall 2023 or Spring 2024 retreats will not be eligible for special consideration during that application cycle.

The Takeaway

Be sure to attend each GICH retreat 😊

For More Information

Contact

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Application forms are available on-line at:

www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich



Questions?

