



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Philip Gilman, Deputy Commissioner for Housing, DCA
Wesley Brooks, Deputy Commissioner for Homeownership, DCA

CC: Denise Farrior, Division Director, Housing Finance Development, DCA
Kimberly Carter, Division Director, Office of Community Finance, DCA
Samanta Carvalho, Division Director, Homeownership
Jermaine Durham, GICH Director, UGA

FROM: Austin Chancy, Senior Housing Policy Analyst, DCA

RE: GICH Alumni Certification 2025 Approvals

DATE: April 9, 2025

Introduction

The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) is a three-year program that helps communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through locally driven housing and revitalization strategies. Upon graduation from the program, communities can apply for alumni certification to demonstrate their continued participation in GICH. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has designated 15 GICH certified alumni communities in 2025. The purpose of certification is to encourage GICH alumni to continue their efforts of addressing affordable housing issues and shortages within their communities by using the Housing Plan document developed while participating in the program. Certified alumni communities are eligible for additional incentives through DCA's Housing Tax Credit, Community HOME Investment Program, and Community Development Block Grant programs.

Note: Based on feedback from our alumni communities and DCA teams, we modified previous requirements to allow GICH teams to count retreat attendance towards continuing education requirements. Additionally, we will be making adjustments to the requirements for the 2026 cycle based on this feedback, to possibly include changing to a yearly cycle, increasing team meeting requirements, and removing continuing education requirements. These will be formalized and announced later this year.

Overview of 2025 Alumni Certification Process

This year, 17 GICH alumni communities submitted certification applications with relevant documentation. Each application was evaluated through a standardized scoring process requiring the completion of five key criteria, including:

1. Updating their GICH team roster
2. Attending GICH retreats in 2023 and 2024
3. Having at least three team members attend housing continuing education events (as defined by DCA) in 2023 and 2024.
4. Holding at least one team meeting with a majority of active team members in attendance in 2023 and one team meeting in 2024.
5. Updating their GICH housing plan within the last three years OR having their updated plan incorporated into a local planning document in the past three years

Approvals

In total, 15 GICH alumni communities were successfully certified in the 2025 cycle:

- Adel
- Americus-Sumter County
- Bartow County
- Cochran
- Dalton-Whitfield County
- Douglas
- Hartwell
- Liberty County
- Madison
- McRae-Helena
- Ocilla
- Pembroke
- Perry
- Rockmart
- Tifton

Currently Certified Alumni Communities

For DCA's purposes, the following is a comprehensive list of all communities who are currently certified as alumni. In all, there are currently 38 certified alumni communities and 8 recent graduates. Note that certification is valid for two years.

Certified in 2024 (expires on 1/1/2026)

Albany	Newnan
Athens	Rome/Floyd Co.
Centerville	Statesboro
Cordele	Sylvester
Douglasville	Thomasville
Dublin	Troup Co.
Eatonton	Union City
Gainesville/Hall Co.	Vienna
Griffin	Warner Robbins
Jonesboro	Washington
Lafayette	Waynesboro
Millen	

Certified in 2025 (expires on 1/1/2027)

Adel	Perry
Americus-Sumter Co.	Rockmart
Bartow County	Tifton
Cochran	
Dalton-Whitfield Co.	
Douglas	
Hartwell	
Liberty County	
Madison	
McRae-Helena	
Ocilla	
Pembroke	

Recent Graduates

2023 (Expires on 1/1/2026)

Blakely	East Point
Calhoun	Jonesboro
Covington	

2024 (Expires on 1/1/2027)

Gilmer County	Baldwin County
Chattooga County	