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Clayton County Board of Commissioners



PRESS RELEASE

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Clayton County Neighborhood Stabilization Program Recognized in 6th Annual County Excellence Awards

Jonesboro, GA – Clayton County is among six Georgia counties that were selected as Georgia County Excellence Award recipients by the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG). The counties were recognized for developing innovative programs designed to make county government more effective and efficient, improve services for county residents and enhance the quality of life in Georgia communities. Now in its 6th year, the Georgia County Excellence Awards program is co-sponsored by the ACCG and *Georgia Trend* magazine.

Clayton County was recognized for leveraging a \$9.7 million grant in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development into 1,300 new work opportunities in the county, a \$68 million stimulus to the local economy and the full rehabilitation of 115 homes in just eight months.

Programs recognized with County Excellence Awards are often those that notice a need in the community and address it creatively and cost-effectively. Clayton County administrators noticed the growing problems associated with the foreclosure crisis as well as the more systemic issue of steeply declining levels of homeownership within the county. "We knew that the \$9.7 grant would be a great start in addressing the issues, but alone, it wouldn't be enough in tough economic times like these. We needed to get innovative," said Chairman Eldrin Bell.

The plan devised by the Clayton County NSP office emphasizes collaboration between for-profit, non-profit, civic and government entities; active communication with key stakeholders; a holistic focus on communities rather than individual properties; affordability and smart location of NSP homes; education of stakeholders, vendors and homebuyers to ensure compliance and quality; and the systematization of routine tasks to increase program efficiency. Rather than allocate a specific portion of the NSP grant to individual organizations, funds are distributed on a deal-by-deal basis to encourage rapid production and to maximize the use of scarce resources.

"County Excellence Awards provide an opportunity to showcase programs developed by local government that are having a positive impact on the community," says ACCG Executive Director Ross King. "In using the grant money strategically to bring jobs, opportunities for affordable homeownership, and a tremendous economic stimulus to the community, Clayton County designed a successful model for doing more with less that other counties might do well to emulate."

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