



NEWS RELEASE

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Cleveland Better Home Town Recognized at Annual Mayor's Day Luncheon in Atlanta

Cleveland, Georgia (January 26, 2009) – Cleveland Better Home Town has again been "nominated" for National Main Street Accreditation and was recognized at a Main Street luncheon on Monday, January 26, 2009 during the Georgia Municipal Association's Annual Mayor's Day. Over 200 people from all over the state were in attendance.

Ninety-two Georgia Main Street and Better Home programs were honored by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Office of Downtown Development for their commitment to downtown revitalization and historic preservation in Georgia. The National Accreditation designation process evaluates established commercial district revitalization programs according to 10 basic performance standards. These standards provide benchmarks and guidelines on the way an organization should be functioning and serve as incentives for improvement.

In 2008, Georgia Main Street and Better Home Town cities reported \$268 million in total public/private investment in downtown with 580 net businesses created and a net total of 3,018 jobs created. Cleveland Better Home Town is one of the participating communities using the Four Point Approach to downtown revitalization, Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring. "It's through the support of the City of Cleveland and the White County Board of Commissioners that we continue to see success in the program," said Garrison Baker, Chairman of Cleveland Better Home Town. "With the economy in such a fragile state, communities need programs like this to keep downtowns alive, which is critical to our tax base and job growth," he went on to say. As a result of the National Accreditation, businesses in the Better Home Town area can now apply for low interest loans through the Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Cities Foundation. Individuals can contact Cleveland Better Home Town for more information on both programs.

Cleveland Better Home Town's Executive Committee comprises of Garrison Baker, Chairman of the Board; Jeff Hunt, Vice Chairman and Judy Lovell, Secretary, joined their Executive Director, Maria Jurado-Flynn for the Mayor's Luncheon in Atlanta. Councilwoman Annie Sutton from the City of Cleveland along with former State Senator Carol Jackson and Henrietta Sutton also attended in support of Cleveland Better Home Town. At the luncheon, the Department of Community Affairs once again recognized Cleveland Better Home Town for winning two state awards last year, Best Downtown Event in the State and Volunteer of the Year. The Cleveland Better Home Town program received its National Accreditation two years ago under the leadership of Maria Jurado-Flynn. "We've had a great two years and we owe our success to Maria," said Baker. "This program is all about bringing a community together to help itself and without a doubt Maria has worked diligently with the business owners on the Square who respect her and the countless volunteers she coordinates for projects and special events in the downtown. It's not an easy job, but she has made it happen."

Cleveland Better Home Town is a non-profit organization that receives support from the City of Cleveland, the White County Board of Commissioners and the public. The mission of the program is to be the catalyst for change in the downtown through revitalization, new businesses and creating jobs.

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