

## **2010 Communities of Opportunities – Americus-Sumter County**

### **Community Improvement Strategy:**

Acknowledging that appointed boards, commissions, and authorities are empowered to address some of the community's most pressing challenges and needs around the issue of persistent poverty, Americus-Sumter County will better prepare the citizens appointed to its local authorities, boards and commissions by providing customized training and technical expertise.

### **Issues to be addressed:**

Americus-Sumter County is located in Southwest Georgia, and lies within the 91-County region of persistent poverty as designated by the Study on Persistent Poverty in the South. The poverty that persists in Americus-Sumter County has direct impact on how the community develops economically, socially, and culturally. Over 20 authorities have been created in Americus-Sumter County over the years to help facilitate positive development in the community. Each of these authorities with their own specific missions (e.g., industrial recruitment, downtown development, arts and tourism) generally has anticipated outcomes of alleviating persistent poverty in Americus-Sumter County. Moreover, these authorities are served by boards of directors comprised of dedicated and well-intentioned community volunteers. These volunteers are asked to serve by elected officials and often do not have sufficient time and resources to become "experts" for the authority to which they have been appointed. Hence, training of authority members in Americus-Sumter County is needed (beyond what is already required by state statute). Through DCA's Co-Op program, Americus-Sumter County will develop customized, issue-specific curriculum for authority/board/commission training, and then implement the training to authority members. The training will provide the community with well informed decision makers as it looks to grow and prosper in the future.

### **Strategy:**

Over the two year period, Americus-Sumter County will accomplish the following:

1. Identify members and key players of authorities, boards, and commissions as appointed by the local governing bodies.
2. Survey authority/board/commission members and key players, to assess training needs.
3. Develop customized, issue-specific curriculum to meet the identified training needs.
4. Implement customized training to authorities/boards/commissions.

**Measures of Success:**

1. Development of a database that contains pertinent contact information and data on appointments and training needs for each authority/board/commission in Americus-Sumter County.
2. Development of a survey instrument to assess the training needs of all authority/board/commission members in the Americus-Sumter County community.
3. Development of training manuals for each authority/board/commission in Americus-Sumter County.
4. Implementation of annual training sessions for all authority/board/commission members, beyond what is already required by statute for specific authorities/boards/commissions (e.g., economic development authority training).

Implementation Plan for Americus – Sumter County:

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Source	Starting and Ending Dates for Completion of Action Item
Identification and Tracking of Authority, Board, and Commission Members	Identify currently serving board members and terms.	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway	DCA Office of Research	\$0	N/A	February 2010
Identification and Tracking of Authority, Board, and Commission Members	Develop database to track members' contact information and training status.	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway	N/A	\$500	City, BOC, DCA	February - April 2010
Assessment of Training Needs	Meet with authority, board, and commission chairs to assess training needs	Chairpersons of each authority, board or commission, City, BOC, Archway (Local Representative)	N/A	\$0	N/A	February - April 2010
Assessment of Training Needs	Develop survey instrument. Target population: all authority, board, and commission memberships.	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway	DCA	\$0	N/A	May - July 2010

Assessment of Training Needs	Administer survey instrument. Target population: all authority, board, and commission memberships.	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway, (Local Representative)		\$2,000	City, BOC, DCA	May - July 2010
Curriculum Development	Develop curriculum as needed for each authority, board or commission.	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway, (Local Representative)	DCA. Other state partners with expertise in board development, and content expertise in the different functions of the specific authority, board, and commission	\$2,500	City, BOC, DCA	July - December 2010
Training Implementation	Implement training sessions for memberships of all authorities, boards, and commissions	City Council and Clerk, Board of Commissioners and County Clerk, Archway, (Local Representative)	DCA, other state partners who can provide the customized training.	\$5,000	City, BOC, DCA	January 2011 - until completed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto agree to adopt the Americus – Sumter County Community Improvement Strategy.

FOR THE RECIPIENT

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

By: 

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair, County

By: 

Mayor, City