



## **“Heart & Soul Tour” to stop in Downtown Toccoa**

Toccoa is one of nine Georgia Cities to be visited by some of the state’s most influential leaders.

The Georgia Municipal Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation will again be exploring the “Heart & Soul” of nine Georgia cities on a three-day bus tour in April. The bus tour, April 15-17, 2009, will show state agency heads, business leaders, downtown developers and philanthropists ways in which cities are revitalizing and capitalizing on their downtowns.

“We are thrilled to be a part of the 2009 Heart and Soul Tour,” said City of Toccoa Community Planning and Downtown Development Director Connie Tabor. “This will be an ideal time for downtown Toccoa to promote itself to potential developers and investors.”

The tour participants will be in Toccoa on Friday, April 17, 2009. Participants will also learn about downtown programs in Dallas, Rockmart, Rome, Calhoun, Cartersville, Canton, Dahlonega, and Duluth.

“The Foundation’s goal is to help cities through successful public-private partnerships,” said Georgia Cities Foundation President Mike Starr, “and we will show nine very good examples of cities that have been successful in creating wonderful downtowns and vibrant communities through such partnerships.”

The tour is part of an overall effort to educate and inform state leaders on the importance of successful downtown development and its role in supporting overall economic development efforts for regions and communities.

Georgia Cities Foundation is a non-profit subsidiary of the Georgia Municipal Association and was created to make Georgia’s downtowns more livable and economically prosperous. Through public-private partnerships, the Foundation will facilitate the redevelopment and reuse of downtown areas throughout Georgia. The Foundation will provide funding for capital projects through a revolving loan program.

“The Foundation has a proven track record of downtown development,” said Starr. “In fact, the Foundation will be soon closing on four new loans that clearly demonstrate our partnership with the state and the possibilities that exist in our cities around the state.”

“A Toccoa property located in the historic district was the recipient of a Georgia Cities Foundation loan in the fall of 2008,” said Tabor. “They were able to take advantage of a low, 3 percent interest rate.”

“Plans are underway to make the downtown Toccoa stop one of the most memorable destinations along the Heart and Soul Tour,” said Tabor.

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