

ATHENS GEORGIA INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING

(GICH) POINT PROPOSAL

1/14/2026

To Whom it May Concern:

The Athens Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Committee has expanded efforts to support local affordable housing development projects applying for a 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) award from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

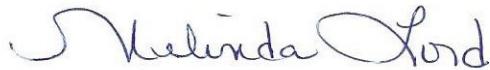
Applicants are judged by DCA using a highly competitive, point-based scoring system. The final threshold criteria deadline for the 9% Federal Credit set by DCA is **May 8, 2026**. While the criteria and ultimate decision regarding funding lies with the state, the Athens GICH Committee is afforded significant opportunity for input.

Should they so elect, the Athens GICH Committee, with agreement from the Athens-Clarke County Mayor and Manager, may forward a letter of support endorsing a single 9% LIHTC project within Athens-Clarke County in 2026. This highly coveted letter results in an additional point for the award submission. The Athens GICH Committee has established the attached “GICH Point” application criteria and associated timeline for applicants seeking this point.

To thoroughly review all materials, the Athens GICH Committee requests that proposals (required: one) be submitted no later than **4:30pm on Friday, February 20, 2026**. Submissions may be made in person at the Housing and Community Development office located at 133 E. Washington St., mailed to PO Box 1868 Athens GA 30603, or via the Athens-Clarke County file transfer service (ACCGov Dropoff Portal) located at <https://accftp.accgov.com:444/messageportal#/dropoff> (if using this method enter HCD in the “To:” box).

The Athens GICH Point Subcommittee will evaluate each application based on all criteria included in the attached scoring rubric (pages 6-10). Applicants must provide sufficient answers to all application questions included on pages 2-5 to be eligible. Final applications for the 9% Federal Credit are due to DCA **May 8, 2026**. Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to receiving and reviewing your application submissions.

Sincerely,



Melinda Lord
Chair, Athens GICH Committee
Director, Athens-Clarke County Housing and Community Development Department

Applicant Information

Developer Name: _____

Primary Contact Person: _____

Primary Contact Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

1. Proposed Development & Consistency with Local Priorities

Property Name: _____

Address: _____

Total Number of Units: _____ Number of Proposed Affordable Units: _____

Income Limit Distribution as Percent of Total Units:

Percent of units for <= 30% AMI households _____ Percent of units for 31-50% AMI _____

Percent of units for 51-60% AMI _____ Percent units for 61-80% AMI _____ Percent market rate units _____

Median Income in Proposed Area (include corresponding tract or block group ID) _____

Is the proposed development in NRSA (Census Track 6, 9, 301, or 302)? Yes No

What is the zoning district of the proposed development? _____

What is the proposed budget for the project? _____

Additionally, submit a thorough project narrative including the following:

- Project description
- Project budget (including funding sources) and timelines
- Use of land, site control, project designs

This narrative must clearly explain how the proposed LIHTC development supports local affordable housing priorities and needs. It does not need to be exhaustive but should directly reference at least one local plan or assessment. The highest scoring applications will demonstrate a thoughtful engagement with multiple of the following:

- [GICH Final Report](#) & [GICH Updated Work Plan](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Strategic Plan](#) & [ACC Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Affordable Housing Investment Strategy \(AHIS\)](#)
- [The Athens Wellbeing Project 4.0 Report](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Future Land Use Plan Updates](#)

- [Envision Athens Action Plan 2023](#)
- [Network for Southern Economic Mobility Report \(NSEM\)](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Workforce Housing Study](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Clean & Renewable Energy Plan](#)
- [Athens-Clarke County Missing Middle Housing](#)

2. History and Management Experience:

Did you apply for LIHTC credits in the previous year? Yes No

If awarded, where is the project located? _____

If not awarded, what was your application score? _____

Have you received a GICH point in the past? Yes No

If yes, list the community and year: _____

Do you currently have any developments in Georgia? Yes No

If yes, please list the property name and address(es):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Additionally, include a detailed narrative describing your organization's LIHTC project history and management experience. If your organization does not have long-term experience, you may also include resumes and/or descriptions for specific staff that will ensure success.

3. Local Organizational Partnerships

Describe all relevant local partnerships and involvement with institutions and/or organizations based in Athens-Clarke County. An effective narrative will describe how these partnerships demonstrate local support, how they will enable a successful project, and how they will benefit the broader Athens-Clarke County community.

Submit copies of any formal agreements with Athens-Clarke County affordable housing stakeholders or other entities.

4. Community Engagement

For this section, the applicant must submit a Local Community Engagement Plan describing how you have, or will, obtain Athens-Clarke County resident input from community members directly affected by your proposed LIHTC project. Relevant groups should include: current residents in the proposed site of development/redevelopment, residents of surrounding neighborhoods, community organizations, neighborhood associations, and any other stakeholders who will be directly affected due to proximity.

An applicant's community engagement plan should demonstrate commitment to creating and maintaining a two-way dialogue with local residents as partners involved in collaborative planning processes that empower communities to play a role in shaping the future development of their neighborhoods.

Successful community engagement should show active collaboration with neighborhood leaders and organizations early in the planning process, include co-created goals and outcomes based on what communities themselves identify as needs, and provide strategies for incorporating community members as ongoing participants throughout the life of the project.

The highest scoring applications will provide a plan documenting already started community engagement that goes beyond informing and consulting (Figure 1) as well as current support for the project from residents.

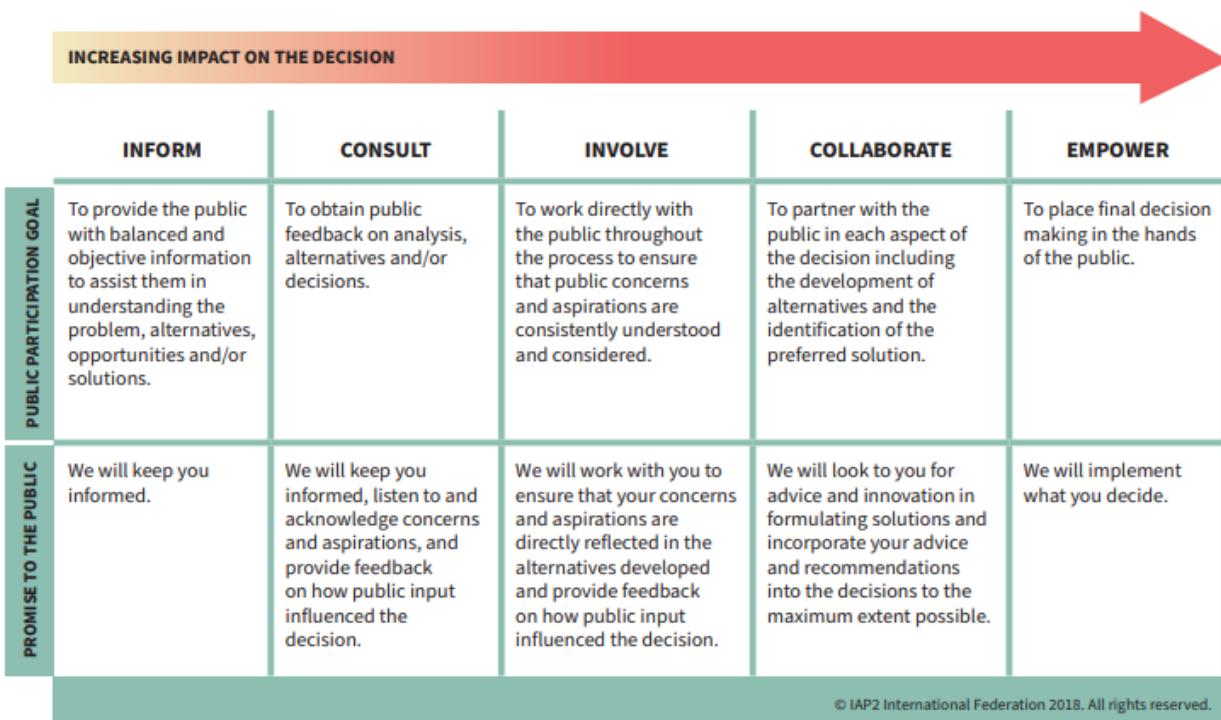


Figure 1- ACCGov Community Engagement Playbook (2023)

Additional community engagement resources for reference:

[Atlanta Community Engagement Playbook](#)

[Strategies for Community Engagement in Affordable Housing Initiatives](#)

Do you plan to claim points for a Community Transformation Plan (QAP: Section XIII Subsection B)? Yes No

If yes, provide a detailed plan and timeline for your Community Transformation Plan and include your completed Community Transformation Plan certificate.

5. Overall Location and Populations Served

Using qualitative and/or quantitative data, describe the need for affordable housing in the area of your proposed site. In this section, specify how the proposed development meets the needs of the existing community and/or generates pathways for economic integration by being located in areas that lack naturally occurring or subsidized affordable housing.

6. Accessibility and Area/Resident Benefit

Please describe your proposed site's proximity to public transportation and other amenities (e.g., *grocery, medical services, leisure, employment, education and job training, housing services, community centers*). Additionally, you may use this section to explain how your development will create needed amenities that will benefit residents and the surrounding area.

The highest scoring applications will be located in areas with high access and/or will bring in significant amenities to the area that will benefit the existing low-income population.

7. Commitment to Diversity and Local Economy

Describe the applicants affordable housing experience working with minority and women-owned businesses and Section 3 contracting experience. Include the specific steps that will be taken during this project to maximize contracting opportunities for locally owned MWBEs during construction and beyond.

This section should address questions such as: How will you conduct outreach for contracting opportunities? Are there any partnerships that will help you connect with local MWBE businesses? What proportion of jobs will you seek to fill locally and for what positions? How will the proposed project have a positive lasting economic benefit on the local economy?

8. Proposed Project Budget Summary

Please provide a detailed project budget summary and pro forma. These documents should clearly demonstrate how the project will remain solvent throughout the proposed period of affordability and ensure effective program delivery.

9. Long-Term Affordability Plan

Submit a long-term plan for this project, including the steps the applicant will take to ensure housing quality and affordability during, and beyond, the standard 20-year compliance period. This section should also clearly explain the actions the applicant will take if divestment or restructuring happens during the affordability period to maintain compliance and follow through with any local commitments.

Additionally, explain the plans for the proposed development following the end of the affordability period. Will affordability be extended? Will the units transition to resident ownership? Will the units become market rate rentals? Include the strategies you will take to ensure existing residents of the units will be notified and prepared for this eventuality.

Scoring rubric can be found on the following pages.

Athens GICH Committee: “GICH Point” Proposal Scoring Rubric

Primary Applicant/Organization:

Contact Person:

Name of Reviewer:

Date Reviewed:

1. Proposed Development & Consistency with Local Priorities

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
20	Project narrative cites multiple local plans and assessments to effectively make the case for how the development will support local affordable housing priorities and needs. Site plans and designs are consistent with the existing character of the surrounding area.	
10	The proposal is consistent with some local affordable housing priorities and needs. The narrative cites only one local plan/assessment and/or engages with them at a surface level. Site plans and designs would make incremental changes to the aesthetic character of the area.	
0	The proposal is not consistent with local affordable housing priorities and needs. Site plans and design show significant deviation from the surrounding area. Narrative does not cite a local plan or assessment.	
Total Points for “Consistency with Local Priorities”		/20

Comments:

2. History and Management Experience

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
20	Applicant has 5 to 10+ or more years successfully managing LIHTC-funded projects and demonstrated success managing LIHTC-funded projects in Georgia.	
15	Applicant has 5 to 10+ years of experience successfully managing LIHTC-funded projects and demonstrated success managing LIHTC-funded projects Nationally.	
10	Applicant has 1 to 5 years of experience successfully managing LIHTC-funded projects and provided documentation of employee experience that will ensure success of the project.	
0	Applicant has no experience managing LIHTC-funded projects.	
Total Points for “History and Management Experience”		/20

Comments:

3. Local Organizational Partnerships

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
10	Applicant has formal partnerships and involvement with affordable housing stakeholders in Athens-Clarke County. Applicant submitted evidence of formal partnerships and engagement.	
5	Applicant has partnerships and involvement with affordable housing stakeholders, but has no formal agreement describing partnerships.	
0	Applicant has no local partnerships.	
Total Points for “Local Organizational Partnerships”		/10

Comments:

4. Community Engagement

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
20	Applicant's Community Engagement Plan is thorough, identifies important and relevant stakeholders, utilizes best practices in community engagement by going beyond informing and consulting, and has a reasonable timeline of completion. Community engagement has already begun. Project already has documented buy-in from residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the proposed site.	
10	Applicant's Community Engagement Plan identifies relevant stakeholders, incorporates methods of community engagement that are primarily informing and consulting, and has a reasonable timeline of completion. Applicant has not started community engagement activities.	
0	Applicant's Community Engagement Plan lacks detail, has an unreasonable timeline, outlines ineffective methods of community engagement, or was not submitted.	
Total Points for “Community Engagement”		/20

Comments:

5. Overall Location and Populations Served

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
15	Proposed project is in high needs area (census tracts 6, 9, 301, or 302) and provides rents affordable to residents living in those tracts.	
10	Proposed project supports economic integration by serving high need populations in an area that lacks naturally occurring or subsidized affordable housing.	
0	Inadequate or no documentation was provided to establish how the project meets a specific geographic need.	
Total Points for “Overall Location and Population Served”		/15

Comments:

6. Accessibility and Area/Resident Benefit

10	Project is accessible by public transportation. Project is located within safe walking distance of multiple amenities and/or the project includes 1+ amenity or service the area lacks that will be accessible to surrounding residents (or project tenants if a specialized service).	
5	Project is, or will be, accessible by public transportation. Project is located more than two miles from multiple amenities, but only a few are within safe walking distance. The project includes an amenity/service that will have limited area benefit.	
0	Project is not accessible by public transportation. Project is not located within safe walking distance of most amenities. The project does not include amenities that will benefit low-income residents.	
Total Points for “Accessibility and Area/Resident Benefit”		/10

Comments:

7. Commitment to Diversity and Local Economy		
Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
10	Applicant has demonstrated experience working with women and minority-owned businesses. Applicant has demonstrated Section 3 contracting experience. Applicant demonstrates a commitment to diversity and has a clear plan for project specific local procurement and hiring for quality jobs.	
5	Applicant has some demonstrated experience working with women and minority-owned businesses. Applicant has limited or no Section 3 contracting experience. Plan for project specific local procurement and hiring is unclear, infeasible, or included only low-wage jobs.	
0	Applicant has no demonstrated experience working with women and minority-owned businesses. Applicant has no demonstrated Section 3 contracting experience.	
Total Points for "Commitment to Diversity and Local Economy"		/10
Comments:		
8. Proposed Project Budget Summary		
Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
10	Applicant has provided a detailed budget summary and Pro forma. The pro forma demonstrates reasonable development costs and documentation to support all costs is provided. Developer income is sufficient to cover expenses and debt services, expense cushion will not drop below the threshold, and adequate cash flow is documented to ensure project sustainability throughout the affordability period.	
5	The budget summary and pro forma demonstrates mostly reasonable development costs, but some are questionable and limited documentation is provided to support totals. Developer income is currently sufficient, but cash flow may be a concern in the future. More documentation would be required to ensure sustainability throughout the affordability period.	
0	The budget summary and pro forma lack adequate details, development costs are not reasonable, and/or capital stack is insufficient to cover development costs. Developer income and cash flow will not be sufficient to ensure sustainability throughout the affordability period.	
Total Points for "Proposed Project Budget Summary"		/10

Comments:

9. Long-Term Affordability Plan

Scale	Scoring Criteria	Score
10	The developer has a clear plan for either contributing to long term quality rental affordability or transitioning units to resident ownership following the mandated period of affordability. Plan shows thoughtful consideration of the impacts to residents when the affordability period concludes. Developer has a reasonable contingency plan in the event finances change or early exit becomes necessary.	
5	Developer's plan for the units following the period of affordability is unclear or lacks detail. Minimal consideration is shown for mitigating negative impacts on residents once when the affordability period ends. Unclear how the contingency plan will ensure smooth continuation of program delivery.	
0	The plan submitted shows a lack of future planning and no consideration of what will happen after the period of affordability or if the developer's financial situation changes.	
Total Points for "Long-Term Affordability Plan"		/10

Comments:

Total Score: /125