

Regional Assistance Program (RAP)

RAP Awards Competition in the first year of the Regional Assistance Program (RAP), a joint effort of the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), was intense. Governor Miller created RAP to encourage and support multi-county and regional collaboration for economic development. Thirty-five applications requesting a total of \$8.8 million for a wide variety of projects were submitted in December of 1997. 123 local governments were involved as joint applicants and 61 of these provided matching funds totaling \$17.47 million. This response demonstrates both the need and the enormous opportunities for state support of regional economic development efforts. A review panel of nine staff members from DCA and GEFA identified six projects to receive the \$1.731 million available this year for RAP.

- The **Southeast Georgia Regional Development Authority** (Appling, Bacon, and Jeff Davis Counties) will receive \$482,442 from GEFA and DCA for sewer facilities for a regional industrial park located near the Cities of Baxley and Hazlehurst. Local governments will contribute \$677,672 in matching funds for this project. The park is owned by the RDA and participating governments have agreed to share in the revenue generated from employers located in the park.
- The **Crisp-Dooly Joint Development Authority** will receive \$480,000 for construction of 50,000 square foot incubator for commercial and light industrial firms. Local governments will contribute \$542,788 in matching funds for this project and the U.S. Economic Development Administration has committed an additional \$1,161,408.
- **The Brooks-Colquitt-Mitchell-Thomas Joint Development Authority** will receive \$480,000 for development of a regional technology and training center for food processing industries, also known as the Genesis Food Park, to be located in Thomasville. Local governments will contribute \$1,890,000 in matching funds for this project and the private sector has committed \$640,000. The center will be owned by the JDA and participating governments have agreed to share in the revenue generated from employers located in the park.
- **Montgomery County** will receive \$201,450 on behalf of Montgomery and Toombs County and the City of Vidalia for the construction of a jointly owned building suitable for industrial use to be located in Vidalia. The local governments will contribute \$165,500 in matching funds for this project and will share in the revenue generated from the project.
- **Northeast Georgia RDC** will receive \$37,500 on behalf of Jasper, Morgan, Newton, and Walton Counties for a feasibility study for the development of a 2200-acre research/industrial park. Local governments will contribute \$12,500 in matching funds for this project. Following completion of the feasibility study, the participating local governments plan to jointly own and operate the park.
- **Georgia Mountains RDC** will receive \$50,000 on behalf of Hall, Rabun, and White Counties for a feasibility study for site development of tourism attractions in the three counties. Local governments will contribute \$14,000 in matching funds for this project and will work together to develop and market the sites.

These projects represent new partnerships and significant long-term financial commitments by local governments to stimulate economic growth in their regions. In addition, the regional projects will provide greater public benefit at a lower per capita cost than similar projects proposed by local governments working independently of their neighboring cities and counties.