



NEWS RELEASE

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Claiborne County Earns Three-Star Certification

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Matthew Kisber announced today that Claiborne County has achieved certification under the state's Three-Star program.

“I am proud to join with Claiborne County in celebrating their tremendous achievement,” Kisber said. “Consistent economic growth is built around strong community development. Claiborne County has demonstrated a well-thought-out plan and a determined initiative in taking on the challenges of the Three-Star program. The result has been, and will continue to be, distinct progress toward carefully decided economic development goals. By participating in the program, Claiborne County is preparing for greater economic success through improved education, leadership and infrastructure.”

Claiborne County and the cities of Cumberland Gap, Harrogate, New Tazewell, and Tazewell are now eligible to receive additional incentives under the guidelines of the Tennessee Three-Star program.

The Three-Star program has set high standards and incentives like no other state-run program in the nation. Governor Bredesen's five-year asset-based economic development strategic plan is the cornerstone of the program. In 2005, the Southern Growth Policies Board, a bipartisan public policy think tank devoted to strengthening the South's economy, recognized the Three-Star program as a best practices program and Southern leader in community certification programs.

Tennessee's Three-Star program helps urban and rural communities develop strategic economic and community development plans that meet the needs and challenges of an ever-changing economic environment. It helps communities preserve existing employment, create new employment opportunities, improve family income and develop a strong leadership base for economic development.

The Tennessee Three-Star Program, which is currently active in 86 counties and one city, represents 348 Tennessee cities, making this year's participation the largest ever.

“I want to offer my congratulations to Claiborne County for their successful effort to position itself for future growth by taking an honest look at the community's economic goals and how to realistically achieve them,” said ECD Assistant Commissioner of Community Development Rick Meredith. “Claiborne County is uniquely positioned for economic development, and ECD is proud to be a part of that initiative.”

In order to receive the certification, communities are required to meet criteria in organizational, community, business, education and work force development categories. Incentives for receiving the certification include identification on all FastTrack infrastructure and job training applications; eligibility for matching grants, if criteria set by ECD are met; and the advantage of earning points in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

To find out more information about the Three-Star program, visit www.tnecd.gov.

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