

Submitted By: Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) - Athens Team
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Project Classification: Social Well-Being
Project Focus: Quality of Life
Project Type: Land Acquisition

Previously Submitted and Rejected: No
Continuation Project: No

Project Total Cost: \$ 44,485,000

Total Operating Cost: \$ -

Project Description: The Athens-Clarke County Team of the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) proposes mixed-income, mixed-use development(s) that may be inclusive of commercial and/or office retail spaces and/or market rate rental units but shall include affordable multi-family rental units (new construction and/or renovation) and may foster home ownership. The project(s) will leverage the county's relationships with private entities and institutional partners.

SPLOST funds will be used to support acquisition of land, and the construction/development of infrastructure improvements to accommodate affordable housing development. SPLOST funds will be used for design, construction, land acquisition, and/or other development expenses. It is the intent of the project, that the actual construction of the housing components

Project Mission Statement/Goals & Objectives: The mission of the GICH team is to increase access to affordable rental housing for Athens-Clarke County residents. For the past three years, working with partners from UGA College of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the GICH Team has studied the housing market in Athens and has concluded that the most pressing need is to address the significant gap between the supply of and demand for affordable rental housing units.

The evidence shows that the unassisted private market is unable to provide this type of housing. In addition, federal tax subsidies, while essential, simply do not create sufficient incentives for local developers to focus on the affordable rental housing market.

The Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County must create funding that it can leverage with local partners in the private and non-profit sectors to address this housing gap.

Projected Useful Life of Project: The useful life of the project(s) would be in perpetuity.

To meet the Project Goals & Objectives, when should this project be completed? The need for more affordable housing is urgent but also long-standing. The project goals must be funded earlier rather than later in the SPLOST funding stream in order to expedite completion.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building System compliance: Any resulting facilities will meet LEED standards or any other standards as required.

How will this project help meet the Public Safety, Basic Facilities/Infrastructure, and/or Quality of Life needs in Athens-Clarke County? Good-quality affordable housing is an essential need for all citizens of Athens-Clarke County. The lack of stable housing is associated with a host of community problems, including crime, poor health, and poor educational outcomes. By increasing access to affordable housing, Athens-Clarke County citizens will be directly addressing priority needs in all three of these areas.

How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGOV Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Study, Service Delivery Plan, Envision Athens, etc.? The Envision Athens Action Agenda highlights ACC's lack of housing for middle income ranges, which results in little to no vacancy for affordable rental housing. Although housing production has increased, it has largely been focused on market-rate units that fulfill student housing demands. The Envision Athens plan states "Athens must consider innovative new actions that address the quality, quantity and affordability of housing throughout the community." The Priority Action for housing is to "target challenged multi-family developments for major redevelopment, especially mixed-income." The first recommendation under Additional Actions is to "increase the amount of and provide access to affordable housing." This proposal would directly address both of these actions.

The Athens-Clarke County Comprehensive Plan identifies the following needs:

*Affordable or subsidized public housing options are too few with long waiting lists. Everyone should have a quality place to live. *The average income of households does not match-up with the average sales price and market rate rental for homes in terms of affordability. There are limited housing options for households earning 60-120 percent of median income. In fact, 64% of ACC households earn less than \$50,000 per year.

Based on these needs, the plan articulates the following goal:

*Housing options that reflect the diversity and meet the needs of the community, including housing for families and a diverse workforce.

Triple Bottom Line Impacts

Positive Benefits for the Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: Stable housing is at the foundation of economic stability and opportunity for individuals and families. Creating stable housing situations for Athens-Clarke County citizens, through safe, decent, affordable rental housing ensures that more citizens can seek and maintain employment and contribute to the local economy. According to a 2018 report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, increased access to affordable housing improves economic mobility for residents. When residents pay more for housing costs, these expenses reverberate to less money spent locally on household needs, goods and services. Rehabilitation and development of affordable housing on substandard, blighted, or vacant parcels increases property values, meaning increased property taxes flow to the local government and school board. These developments can also increase the value of neighboring properties, stabilizing these neighborhoods.

Detrimental Impacts to the Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: None

Positive Benefits for our Citizens and Visitors: Stability of housing is an important issue when addressing poverty. Increased quality rental housing for families in need also addresses a major obstacle to economic stability for low-income and minority families in Athens-Clarke County. By addressing this need, the living situation for families and neighbors of struggling rental developments will also be enhanced. Meeting the need for increased affordable rental housing also addresses the crime and blight that accompanies current substandard options with high vacancy rates and corresponding high crime in these areas.

Housing options near employment improve outcomes for employers from higher worker productivity, fewer days missed from work, better employee loyalty, and reduced turnover. Appropriate housing options near employment with shorter commutes also result in happier and healthier employees.

Detrimental Impacts for our Citizens and Visitors: Potential projects, including rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing low-income rental housing properties, must include a thoughtful strategy for the relocation of current residents to quality affordable housing alternatives, of which there is already a shortage.

Environmental Benefits, including but not limited to Positive impacts on existing Infrastructure/Systems: Rehabilitated and newly constructed affordable housing and replacement of inefficient energy systems and appliances can reduce energy use, associated carbon emissions, and unnecessary water use. Residents will also benefit from reduced energy costs. Increased affordable housing units throughout the county, especially in transit corridors and in proximity to jobs and schools, can cut travel distances and reduce emissions. Positive environmental impacts also translate to healthier living environments and improved health outcomes for residents, especially when mold, lead, asbestos, toxic building materials, or other asthma-inducing conditions are remediated or eliminated.

Detrimental Impacts for the Environment, including but not limited to Negative impacts on existing Infrastructure/Systems: None

Positive/Negative Impacts on ACCGOV Departments, Agencies, or other Organizations, if not covered in one of the above questions: While distressed low-income housing can negatively affect public safety and crime rates, improved quality affordable housing brings stability to neighborhoods, reduces vacancy rates, and increases residents' perceptions of neighborhood safety and security. It can also increase rates of civic engagement, which can help reduce crime. Investment in quality affordable housing development(s) can address areas of concentrated crime, having positive impacts on policing and public safety efforts by ACCGOV. Studies have also shown that affordable housing developed to serve vulnerable communities can be a cost-effective public investment, as it contributes to family and community stability and reduces rates of criminal activity and future policing and corrections costs.

Project Costs

Detailed project capital budget costs (to be funded from SPLOST 2020 only):

Project Costs (round to thousand)	Amount
1. Land Acquisition / ROW / Easement:	\$ 20,850,000
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno,; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 2,460,000
3. Miscellaneous Fees: (Min. Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.	\$ 2,700,000
4. Fixtures, Furniture, and Equipment (for a facility): A detailed estimate is preferred – but dependent upon the specific project, utilize at a minimum \$15 to \$20 per square foot.	\$ -
5. Construction:	\$ 20,500,000
6. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 1,560,000
7. Acquisition of Capital Equipment:	\$ -
8. Testing:	\$ 615,000
9. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 1,948,000
10. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 5,064,000
11. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 205,000
12. Other 1: Abatement / Demo / Relocation	\$ 3,214,000
13. Other 2: Investment from Public Private Partnership	\$ (15,927,000)
Project Subtotal:	\$ 43,189,000
14. Program Management (3% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 1,296,000
SPLOST 2020 Project Total:	\$ 44,485,000

Operating Cost

Total Annual Net Operating Costs when Project is complete: No increase in operating cost.

Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than SPLOST 2020? Yes

If yes, please fill in information below.

Describe the current commitments for the other sources funding this project: There are no current federal or state funding commitments; however, the affordable housing components of the project(s) may be supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Project Site

Will the proposed Project require any land, whether existing sites, new site, easements, or Rights of Way? Yes

Will the proposed Project be on a site currently owned by ACCGOV? Unsure

Approximately how many acres is available or will be needed for the new facility or Park?

Project Location/Address (Existing or Proposed):

Potential sites could be located anywhere within the boundaries of Athens-Clarke County; however, intent is to focus on location(s) where there is existing transportation infrastructure that offers equitable access and easy connectivity to multiple transportation options, such as transit, bicycle lanes or paths (e.g.: Greenway, Firefly Trail), and sidewalks.

Will the Project require fee simple additional land acquisition? Yes

Will the Project require Rights-of-Way or Easement acquisition? Unsure

Site Criteria and Standards

Current Property Owner (if applicable): Unsure

Minimum acreage necessary for Project. May have more than one site; however, at the most, one site is not expected to exceed 25 acres

Topography: This is unknown. There may be multiple sites yet to be identified.

Estimated cost per acre: Potential sites could be anywhere within Athens-Clarke County; however, since these sites will likely be zoned Multi-Family, we anticipate \$120,000/acre to \$650,000/acre. This was calculated by taking the average current land value per acre as identified by the ACC Tax Assessor for multi-family properties both outside and inside the loop respectively.

Location/Accessibility

Define location relative to the Project's service area that best meets the Goals and Objectives.

The intent of this project is to provide affordable housing. Such housing may be within a mixed income community that may also be combined with some commercial and/or office retail operations; therefore, prospective locations should be near, and accessible to, multiple forms of transportation (i.e.: transit, bicycle lanes or paths (e.g.: Greenway, Firefly Trail), and sidewalks).

If necessary to meet the Goals and Objectives, describe what types of vehicular access will be required.

Onsite vehicle access and parking will be necessary, either to accommodate residents who have vehicles and/or citizens using vehicles to access the sites for commercial and/or office retail or other purposes.

If necessary to meet the Goals and Objectives, describe what types of pedestrian access will be required.

Onsite pedestrian access will be necessary as well as connectivity to offsite pedestrian infrastructure, either to accommodate residents who (1) do not have vehicles and must walk to work and/or shopping, or (2) choose walking as their mode of transportation, or to accommodate off-site guests of the development(s) who may be walking to the site(s) to visit residents and/or shop at onsite commercial retail establishments.

If necessary to meet the Goals and Objectives, describe what types of Bicycle access will be required.

Onsite bicycle access will be necessary as well as connectivity to offsite bicycle infrastructure, either to accommodate residents who (1) do not have vehicles and must bike to work and/or shopping, or (2) choose biking as their mode of transportation, or to accommodate off-site guests of the development(s) who may be biking to the site(s) to visit residents and/or shop at commercial onsite retail establishments.

Infrastructure Construction Estimate

By W&A Engineering

Jon Williams

**Water, Sewer, Storm water, Grading, Road Construction, Road Paving,
and Retaining Walls**

24 acres @\$500,000 per acre \$12,000,000

Rock contingency \$ 3,000,000

Additional Site Contingency \$ 2,000,000

SUBTOTAL Infrastructure Cost \$17,000,000

Additional 7 acres @ \$500,000 per acre \$ 3,500,000

TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS \$20,500,000