

**Submitted By:** Sustainability Office

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**Project Classification:** Environmental Protection

**Project Focus:** Basic Facilities & Infrastructure

**Project Type:** Other - Pollution Remediation

**Previously Submitted and Rejected:** No

**Continuation Project:** No

**Project Total Cost:** \$ 7,188,000

**Total Operating Cost:** \$ 105,000

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**Project Description:** The Environmental Mitigation & Restoration Program will fund capital projects, on ACCGOV owned properties, to remediate existing environmental hazards and to install preventative measures that mitigate the potential for future environmental degradation. This project will prioritize projects that address existing environmental impacts and then systematically implement preventative projects. Examples of projects to be included in this project include, but are not limited to, brownfield remediation, landfill and hazardous waste management improvements, firing range improvements, and/or in-county wetland and stream mitigation. This project will improve and protect community health, decrease legal liabilities for the Unified Government, restore and protect the environment, and enhance opportunities for economic development on restored ACCGOV properties. Once remediated, these ACCGOV sites become available for other enhanced uses including, but not limited to, parks and recreational areas, new buildings, transportation infrastructure, and/or permanently protected greenspace.

**Project Mission Statement/Goals & Objectives:** As an urbanized area, Athens-Clarke County has a legacy of environmental challenges that continue to impact our community. ACCGOV owns sites that historically served or currently function as landfills, incinerators, fuel storage tanks, outdoor firing ranges, and that are involved with the creation and processing of hazardous waste. In some cases, these legacy sites do not meet modern standards; as such they can result in conditions that harm the environment and citizen welfare. Specifically, our community has:

- A. Several dormant landfills, legacy dump sites, and former incinerators.
- B. An outdoor firing range that requires improved equipment to protect local waterways.
- C. Multiple small hazardous waste generators who must carefully store and process their waste.
- D. Streams that were piped or channelized by poor agriculture and development practices so they no longer provide the same water quality and wildlife habitat benefits.

If we do not become proactive with these issues, the community runs the risk that we encounter large, unplanned budget impacts and that land is unable to attain its highest economic and

environmental potential. This has already happened in recent history at the Landfill, Firing Range, and Multi-Modal sites. Goals for this project include:

- A. Use non-SPLOST funds to conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments to identify ACCGOV sites with environmental contamination.
- B. Prioritize ACCGOV site implementation based on risks to human health, environmental impact, and proximity to low-income populations; then implement corrective measures at high priority sites.
- C. Identify and implement restoration measures for priority II projects (historic dump sites, stream modifications, and hazardous waste processing).
- D. Implement preventative measures by deploying hazmat response equipment for public safety use, vehicle and equipment washout stations, hazardous waste storage enhancements, and the improvements needed to help our citizen's process and recycle household hazardous waste.
- E. Improve long-term financial outcomes for the community by decreasing ACCGOV liabilities, improving public budget stability, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the ability for land to support private development.

**Projected Useful Life of Project:** This program ensure the project sites are available perpetually for a better purpose.

**To meet the Project Goals & Objectives, when should this project be completed?** To be most efficient, we recommend this project be implemented evenly over the SPLOST 2020 tiers.

**The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building System compliance:** This project will not contribute to new conditioned space that triggers the implementation of the ACCGOV sustainable building policy. The implementation of this will help projects to be LEED certified by meeting the Environmental Site Assessment, Brownfield Remediation and On-Site Restoration scoring criteria.

**How will this project help meet the Public Safety, Basic Facilities/Infrastructure, and/or Quality of Life needs in Athens-Clarke County?** This program will support basic facilities and infrastructure by remedying environmental contamination, renovating existing green and grey infrastructure, and increasing the economic and environmental potential of ACCGOV properties. Implementing this project will decrease the capital investments needed to improve community health and minimize liabilities.

This program will improve the quality of life for people in the community by improving community health outcomes. Brownfields and other contaminated sites impact public health by polluting soil, air, and water resources. Proximity to contaminated sites is associate with higher rates of cancer, ADHD, genetic disorders, and respiratory problems. Across the United States, low-income communities are more likely to live in close proximity to contaminated sites. The EPA and CDC have documented that long-term trends for these health outcomes can be improved when site contamination is addressed. Site pollution remediation and prevention also creates opportunities for economic prosperity by improving public budget stability, improving health outcomes, and creating development opportunities on neglected land. One notable brownfield project is the Atlantic Station project in Atlanta, GA. This particular project turned a 138 acre brownfield into a \$2 billion dollar development. Locally, brownfields and contaminated sites have been addressed in government properties such as the ACC Firing Range, and at the Multimodal Center. This project can enhance public

safety by addressing items of concern with current firing range operations and by better equipping first responders with specialty hazardous material response equipment. Doing so will protect first responders, community health, and the environment.

**How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGOV Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Study, Service Delivery Plan, Envision Athens, etc.?** This project is affirmed in the Envision Athens Action Agenda with their priorities to:

- A. Develop incentives to reuse existing developments
- B. Create a reclaimed industrial land program
- C. Establish incentives for environmentally sustainable standards for new development
- D. Improve the health and quality of our streams
- E. Create incentives to revitalize neighborhoods and commercial developments
- F. Implement infrastructure to address impediments to expanding business & industry
- G. Enhance safety programs for at-risk populations

### Triple Bottom Line Impacts

**Positive Benefits for the Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County:** This will benefit the prosperity of the community by increasing the economic potential of currently polluted properties, by creating stability and predictability in government budgets, and by decreasing public liabilities associated with contaminated and impaired sites. The Georgia brownfield laws permit new developments to receive local tax credits for any funding they invest in site remediation. Unfortunately, this system does not create an incentive where existing contamination can be addressed on public properties.

**Detrimental Impacts to the Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County:** Because they vary based on the type of pollution present and the actions taken to remedy the issues, these projects are not always an "implement and forget" scenario. In some cases, years of post-implementation monitoring are needed to ensure the problem has been corrected. It is for this reason that we are including a small operating fund impact with this proposal. Ultimately, this budget increase is offset by a decrease in ACCGOV liability and an increase the development potential of these properties.

**Positive Benefits for our Citizens and Visitors:** This program will address a legacy of contamination that can harm the health of our community members. By increasing the environmental health of these sites, we provide for the clean water, air, and soil needed for better health outcomes. Across the United States, this is especially important for those in poverty, those who lack healthcare, and those who use their land for food and water.

Brownfield remediation addresses emerging blight in the community. In recent history, the New Way Cleaners site has been reincarnated as an neighborhood-scale outdoor recreation store, the Armstrong and Dobbs and Athens Hardware sites have evolved with more than \$160 million in mixed-use developments, and a former dump along the North Oconee River now hosts parts of the Classic Center and Multi-Modal

Transportation Center. This project would not involve cleanup at or on any private held lands. The above were offered as examples of what can occur with brownfield remediation.

**Detimental Impacts for our Citizens and Visitors:** N/A

**Environmental Benefits, including but not limited to Positive impacts on existing Infrastructure/Systems:**

This project will actively restore sites harmed by pollution and urban use. This will result in cleaner water, soil, and air. It is especially important for water, as contaminated sites commonly transfer their pollution into groundwater where it can more easily move off-site to adjacent properties. This project can protect the environment by equipping our first responders with the equipment needed to respond to emergencies involving hazardous materials. For example, in 2010, first responders successfully suppressed a fire at the J&J Chemical site in northern Athens. Unfortunately, this suppression resulted in the discharge of chemical-laden water into Trail Creek. The result was a massive die-off of organisms in Trail Creek that still had not recovered after nearly a decade. By deploying specialty equipment to our first responders, we protect their health while minimizing the impact of the hazardous materials release.

**Detimental Impacts for the Environment, including but not limited to Negative impacts on existing Infrastructure/Systems:** N/A

**Positive/Negative Impacts on ACCGOV Departments, Agencies, or other Organizations, if not covered in one of the above questions:** N/A

## 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:	\$ 700,000
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno,; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 406,000
3. Miscellaneous Fees: (Min. Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.)	\$ 87,000
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:	\$ 3,000,000
6. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 300,000
7. Acquisition of Capital Equipment:	\$ 1,000,000
8. Testing:	\$ 580,000
9. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 243,000
10. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 632,000
11. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 30,000
12. Other 1:	\$ -
13. Other 2:	\$ -
<b>Project Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 6,978,000</b>
14. Program Management (3% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 210,000
<b>SPLOST 2020 Project Total:</b>	<b>\$ 7,188,000</b>

## Operating Cost

### Total Annual Net Operating Costs when Project is complete:

Only identify additional or net operating costs to be paid by ACCGOV. Identify the additional or net costs needed above ACCGOV's current operating budget to operate the requested project and any additional project related revenues that would be generated. Provide budget costs for each identified category below.

Operating Costs (round to thousand)	Estimated Impact for Annual Operating Expenditures
<b>TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES FROM PROJECT</b>	-
<b>PROJECTED EXPENDITURES</b>	
1. Personnel Costs: from Appendix A	-
2. Annual Utilities:	
• Gas:	-
• Electrical:	-
• Water:	-
• Sewer:	-
• Phone:	-
• Solid Waste Collection:	-
• Other:	-
3. Operating Supplies:	-
4. Equipment Maintenance:	105,000
5. Facility Maintenance:	-
6. Fuel:	-
7. Other:	-
8. Other:	-
9. Other:	-
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	105,000
<b>NET OPERATING COSTS OF PROJECT:</b>	<b>\$ 105,000</b>

## Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than SPLOST 2020? No

**Project Site**

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