

## **APOLOGY IN RECOGNITION OF ATHENIANS DISPLACED BY URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS**

**WHEREAS**, the former City of Athens entered into agreements with the United States Government in the 1960's to create two Urban Renewal Districts, centered respectively on Baxter Street and College Avenue; and

**WHEREAS**, these two districts featured several hundred residents who were displaced during the decade that followed; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the intent and expression of "progress" provided at the time, this displacement resulted in the loss of generational wealth, particularly for Black Athenians; and

**WHEREAS**, social connections, proximity to family, work, leisure education, and entertainment were all lost or diminished by this displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, Athenians and the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County are together working toward recognition and remedy for past injustices; and

**WHEREAS**, this includes the present Linnentown Memory and Justice Committee and will expand to include recognition of other neighborhoods that have been lost; and

**WHEREAS**, the College Avenue area is again under redevelopment with the explicit intent to utilize a more welcoming and engaging process and an outcome that permanently displaces no current residents.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County extends to former residents of Athens' Urban Renewal Districts, their descendants, and to all Athenians a deep and sincere expression of apology and regret for the pain and loss stemming from this time, and a sincere commitment to work toward better outcomes in all we do moving forward.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Athens-Clarke County to be affixed this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2021.

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Mayor Kelly Girtz  
Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County