

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 2nd day of February 2021.

Mayor Kelly Girtz
Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County