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**THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY  
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

**SUBJECT:** SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project – Proposed Project Concept

**DATE:** April 26, 2023

**BUDGET INFORMATION:**

**REVENUES:**

\$	5,218,500	SPLOST 2020 Project 28
\$	4,000,000	Proposed ARPA Funding
\$	9,218,500	Total Proposed Project Funding

**EXPENSES:**

**CAPITAL:**

\$	56,563	Expensed or Encumbered
\$	663,000	Designated for Facility Design
\$	402,073	Designated for Fixtures, Furniture, and Equipment
\$	589,576	Designated for Misc., Commissioning, Testing, and PM Fees
\$	32,500	Designated for Public Art
\$	880,000	Designated for Design and Construction Contingency
\$	6,594,788	Available for Construction

**FUNDING SOURCE:**

**CAPITAL:** SPLOST 2020 Program Revenues, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

**OPERATIONAL:** Advantage Behavioral Health Service

**COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON:** June 6, 2023

**PURPOSE:**

To request that the Mayor and Commission:

- a. Approve the proposed Project Concept for the SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project, as provided on **Attachment #1** and as generally shown on **Attachment #2**; and
  
- b. Authorize the staff to advance the Proposed Project Concept, as provided on **Attachment #1** and as generally shown on **Attachment #2**, to the schematic design phase, based on funding availability for SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project;
  
- c. Approve the ACC Safety and Justice Committee's recommendation, **Attachment #3**, to designate \$4,000,000 of ARPA funds, allocated for behavioral health, to support Advantage Behavioral Health Service's Mental Health Recovery Residence Facility as part of the SPLOST

2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project; and,

- d. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents.

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**HISTORY:**

1. On November 16, 2018, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems submitted a proposed project to the SPLOST 2020 Advisory Committee to construct a congregate living facility that will accommodate 30 two bedroom units, three of which will be designed to accommodate onsite staff and group/individuals counselling programming. Advantage's Proposed Budget for the Project was \$11,422,000.
2. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.
3. On February 27, 2019, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems submitted an alternate project budget to the SPLOST 2020 Advisory Committee for \$7,091,000; which still included the 30 two bedroom units but with using a shared access to the site from the existing facility versus a separate entry road.
4. On July 10, 2019, the M&C held a Special Called Work Session to review the proposed SPLOST 2020 Initial Project Statements and finalize project costs ahead of the vote on Final Projects for the referendum. The M&C did not vote, but consensus was reached through a Commission-generated spreadsheet for the projects and budgets to be included in the referendum. The Advantage Behavioral Health System submitted project budget was reduced by 25% to \$5,325,000 but no specific reason stated.
5. On August 6, 2019, the M&C approved the Call for the SPLOST 2020 Referendum; which included Project 28 - Mental Health Recovery Facility Project with a budget amount of \$5,325,000.
6. On December 1, 2020, in order to allocate funds for Program Administration, the Commission approved an Ordinance which amended the SPLOST 2020 Project Budgets. The budget for SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility was amended to \$5,218,500.
7. On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was signed into law. The \$1.9 trillion package is intended to combat the COVID-19 pandemic by stabilizing state and local government operations, households, and small businesses.
8. In mid-March 2021, ACCGov was granted \$57.6 million of ARPA Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF) funding to allocate across defined categories by virtue of being both a city and a county.
9. On May 10, 2021, the Athens Cultural Affairs Commission (ACAC) offered a recommendation in accordance with Athens-Clarke County Code Ordinance, Section 1, Title

I, Chapter 1-25-6, Additional Funding for Public Art, to the M&C related to the use of public art for SPLOST 2020 Project 28 – Mental Health Recovery Facility Project.

10. In July 2021, Manager Williams selected the User Group Members for the SPLOST 2020 Project 28 – Mental Health Recovery Facility Project to help ensure the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County (ACCGov) long terms goals are promoted during the Project Development process. The User Group Members are:
  - Tammy Conlin
  - Tom Hoover
  - Kevin Poe
  - David Kidd
  - Melinda Lord
  - Angel Hemly
  - Alphonso Daniel
  - Lt. Joe Geiger
11. On January 6, 2022, the Department of the Treasury released the Final Guidance for ARPA SLRF.
12. On February 7, 2022, through a Commission Defined Option, M&C named the ACCGov Safety and Justice Commission as an advisory body to weigh in on the use of the ARPA Behavioral Health funds.
13. On March 1, 2022, the M&C approved a budget allocating ARPA State and Local Recovery Funds to various programs including a budget of \$4,000,000 for Behavioral Health activities. This action designated Advantage Behavioral Health Systems (ABHS) as the initial advisory group, and directed staff to coordinate with ABHS to determine if and how SPLOST 2020 Project 28 (Mental Health Recovery Facility) should be considered as potential use of ARPA funds.
14. On August 2, 2022, M&C approved an Intergovernmental Contract with the Advantage Behavioral Health Systems (Advantage) for SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project. The Intergovernmental Contract was to provide Project Implementation Guidelines and to govern the expenditure of proceeds of SPLOST 2020 for the Project. The M&C also designated the SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project as appropriate for Public Art with a proposed Public Art Budget of \$32,500.
15. On August 5, 2022, ABHS submitted a legal opinion letter confirming that the agency is not subject to local zoning laws due to its status as a state Community Service Board.
16. On August 8, 2022, a Request for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P #01069) for Professional Design Services for the Mental Health Recovery Facility (Project 28) was released by ACCGov in accordance with the ACCGov procurement process.
17. On August 30, 2022, six qualification proposals were received in response to the above noted RFQ/P #01069 for Professional Design Services. See Facts & Issues (F&I) #2.

18. On September 13, 2022, the User Group met and determined the shortlisting of four firms for interviews. See F&I #4.
19. On September 27, 2022, the User Group conducted a site visit for the four shortlisted firms. The meeting was not mandatory but highly encouraged, three of the four firms attended.
20. On October 10, 2022, shortlisted firms submitted pricing to the User Group.
21. On October 11, 2022, during the M&C Work Session, ABHS presented an update on the SPLOST project and expected \$8.7M gap from initial proposal.
22. On October 11, 2022, the User Group interviewed the shortlisted firms and provided the scoring of the proposals based on the information from the proposals, interviews and pricing reviews to determine the recommended firm as listed in F&I #5.
23. On January 9, 2023, ABHS submitted a request to Manager's Office to (1) convey 2 county-owned properties known as the Creekwood Duplexes to ABHS, and (2) release the \$4M of ARPA behavioral health funds to cover renovations of both properties & additional financing for the SPLOST 2020 Project 28 Mental Health Recovery Facility.
24. On March 14, 2023, ABHS presented its request to the ACCGov Safety and Justice Committee (co-advisory group of ARPA Behavioral Health initiatives) for consideration. The committee voted, by unanimous vote, to support the project as stated.
25. On March 17, 2023, the ACC Safety and Justice Committee submitted a letter (**Attachment #3**) as support for the project to Mayor Girtz.
26. On March 28, 2023, the ABHS Board of Directors voted to withdraw the previous request to ACCGov (History #23), and to instead allocate the full \$4M of ARPA Behavioral Health funds to support the agency's SPLOST Mental Health Recovery Residence project.
27. On April 18, 2023, the Project 28 User Group approved the Proposed Project Concept.
28. On April 28, 2023, ABHS Chief Executive Officer Tamar L. Conlin submitted a letter (**Attachment #4**) to Mayor Girtz about the approval of ARPA funds allocation for the purpose of funding the Mental Health Recovery Facility Project.
29. On May 4, 2023, ABHS made a presentation to the M&C at their retreat regarding both the Advantage Board as well as the Safety and Justice Committee recommendations to use the ARPA funds to supplement funds from SPLOST 2020 Project 28 Mental Health Recovery Facility for the ABHS Recovery Facility.
30. On May 9, 2023 at the M&C Work Session, staff presented the Proposed Project Concept and the Project Budget showing the anticipated use of the \$4M to supplement the SPLOST Funding for the new Recovery Facility.

## FACTS & ISSUES:

1. The Initial Project Statement for SPLOST 2020 Project 28 Mental Health Recovery Facility reads as follows:

*Project #28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project, will provide funding for land acquisition, design, construction, and/or equipping of a mental health recovery facility project and/or renovations, improvements, additions to, and equipping of an existing facility so as to provide a residential style facility for individuals with mental health and potentially co-occurring addictive disease(s). It is anticipated that to the extent permitted by law the facility or facilities would be built in conjunction with one or more public or other private partner(s) that may provide additional capital funds to the project to support SPLOST funding and that would provide the operational funding for the facility. The program is envisioned to provide a facility or facilities to provide congregate living style facility that could accommodate group and/or individuals for counseling programming. An example of a potential partner organization may be, but not be limited to, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems, a Community Service Board (CSB), duly created and existing pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, specifically O.C.G.A. § 37-2-6. Additionally, to the extent allowed by law, funds may be used as matching funds for leveraging grant opportunities.*

2. Advantage Behavioral Health Systems (ABHS) operates a facility on 17 acres at 240 Mitchell Bridge Road. The existing facility was originally designed as a hospital and then served as office space for Athens-Clarke County School District (ACCSD) before being occupied by ABHS. This location has been chosen for the site of the Recovery Facility Project on the undeveloped northeast portion of the site. For the project to proceed at the 240 Mitchell Bridge Road address, it will be necessary to sub-divide the property so that the SPLOST project sits on its own, un-mortgaged parcel. This sub-division will be proposed during the concept phase of the project. The actual, legal sub-division of the property will run concurrently to the Land Disturbance Permitting Process.
3. The originally submitted project from Advantage Behavioral Health Systems and the above noted initial project statement are for the same size facility. However, the approved project budget is approximately 50% less than originally submitted budget and 25% less than the alternate project budget submitted by Advantage Behavioral Health Systems (History #4).
4. As generally shown in **Attachment #2**, the proposed two story building will be approximately 34,839 square feet and 24 apartment units, total. There will be approximately 15,677 square feet on the first floor and 19,162 square feet on the second floor, 10 apartment units on the first floor and 14 on the second floor. Also, as described on **Attachment #1** and as generally shown on **Attachment #2**, there will be common areas, staff offices, meeting rooms, rest rooms, utility space and storage and stairs.
5. The cost of the scope of work to be provided by the design professional is highly dependent of the available construction funding. In the absence of currently allocated funding to build the originally requested scope of work, the design professional was requested and priced the design services in phases. Pricing was requested and provided for the firms to do the Programming, Master Site Layout, Project Concept, and Schematic Design for the full

originally proposed scope of work. Additionally, they were requested and to provide pricing to continue those services for a Phase-I Project, funded by a \$3.2 construction budget through, construction. Thus preparing for potential future funding to build the future phases.

6. The U.S. Treasury Department requires that ARPA SLRF funds be obligated by December 31, 2024, and spent by December 31, 2026.
7. Based on the current construction market conditions the Designer's estimated cost of construction for the complete project is approximately \$11.2 million. Meaning, even with the added \$4 million in ARPA funding the current construction budget of \$6.8 Million is not adequate to complete the entire Proposed Project Concept scope of work. The estimated cost to complete all of the Proposed Project Concept, as generally shown in **Attachments #1 & #2** is approximately \$11.2 million dollars.
8. Because of the projected shortfall in funding, the Proposed Project Concept Plans, as generally shown in **Attachment #2**, includes potential phasing of construction. There are multiple options for how to best phase construction based on the funding available and any additional funding that may become available. The Proposed Project Concept, at this time, is to construct all of the site work and as much building as is possible with the construction budget. However, as the design matures through the next phase, the best limits of construction and phasing will be determined during the Schematic Plan and presented to M&C at the time of the Schematic Design Presentation.
9. The Proposed Project Concept will work to achieve a minimum certification of "Certified" through the EarthCraft sustainability program, for Sustainable Preservation criteria. This is in alignment with the current ACCGov Sustainability Policy. Currently the use of Solar Photovoltaic Systems on the facility have not been included in the Proposed Project Concept. However, the provisions for the addition of solar in the future will be included, at a minimum. The use of Solar Photovoltaic Systems on the new facility will be further evaluated during the Project Schematic Design and a recommendation, to M&C, regarding their use will be part of the future Schematic Design approval.
10. To meet the desired schedule for the Project, the procurement process for Professional Services was initiated in December 2021 to support the following schedule milestones:
  - a) Start Schematic Design Spring 2023
  - b) M&C Approval of Schematic Design Summer/Fall 2023
  - c) Construction Start Summer 2024
  - d) Construction Completion Summer 2025
11. This recommendation meets the following ACCGov Strategic Plan Goals, Strategies, and/or initiatives:
  - Strategy 1E: Support and promote healthy lifestyle choices: moving, eating, forming healthy relationships, physical and psychological care

- Strategy 2D: Ensure existing resources reach marginalized people and those most in need through effective and accessible social service delivery, nonprofit capacity building, and problem solving with connected community partners
- Strategy 4D: Prevent and reduce homelessness by enabling supportive housing options that meet a variety of needs

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**OPTIONS:**

1. Mayor and Commission:
  - a. Approve the proposed Project Concept for the SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project, as provided on **Attachment #1** and as generally shown on **Attachment #2**; and
  - b. Authorize the staff to advance the Proposed Project Concept, as provided on **Attachment #1** and as generally shown on **Attachment #2**, to the schematic design phase, based on funding availability for SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project;
  - c. Approve the ACC Safety and Justice Committee recommendation, **Attachment #3**, to designate \$4,000,000 of ARPA funds, allocated for behavioral health, to support Advantage Behavioral Health Service's Mental Health Recovery Residence Facility as part of the SPLOST 2020 Project 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility Project; and,
  - d. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents.
2. Mayor and Commission defined option.

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**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Option #1 a, b, c, & d

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**DEPARTMENT:** SPLOST Program Management

Prepared by: Keith Sanders for Robert Cheshire, Capital Projects Director

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*Robert Cheshire*

Robert Cheshire, SPLOST Capital Projects Director

5/09/2023

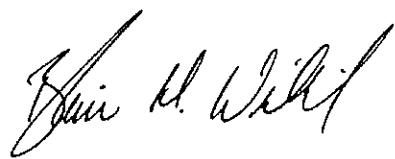
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**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:** Option #1 a, b, c, & d



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Manager

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May 10, 2023

Date:

Attachment #1 – Proposed Project Concept Narrative

Attachment #2 – Proposed Project Concept Plans

Attachment #3 – Recommendation from the ACC Safety and Justice Committee

Attachment #4 – Request from ABHS

**Mental Health Recovery Project SPLOST 2020 Project #28**

**Initial Project Statement**

**Project # 28, Mental Health Recovery Facility**, will provide funding for land acquisition, design, construction, and/or equipping of a mental health recovery facility project and/or renovations, improvements, additions to, and equipping of an existing facility so as to provide a residential style facility for individuals with mental health and potentially co-occurring addictive disease(s). It is anticipated that to the extent permitted by law the facility or facilities would be built in conjunction with one or more public or other private partner(s) that may provide additional capital funds to the project to support SPLOST funding and that would provide the operational funding for the facility. The program is envisioned to provide a facility or facilities to provide congregate living style facility that could accommodate group and/or individuals for counseling programming. An example of a potential partner organization may be, but not be limited to, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems, a Community Service Board (CSB), duly created and existing pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, specifically O.C.G.A. § 37-2-6. Additionally, to the extent allowed by law, funds may be used as matching funds for leveraging grant opportunities.

**Project #32 Concept with Proposed Prioritization**

The proposed prioritization of the Project Concept elements for Project #28, Mental Health R Project, are as follows:

**Must Have**

1. Potential occupancy up to 60 bed facility total, built in multiple construction phases.
2. Multiple floor facility to minimize compact to site
3. Two-bedroom units that could be configured for either: Double bedroom occupants for Program Service Level I units; or single bedroom occupants for Program Service Level II.
4. Visual control, via security cameras, for Common Areas
5. Office for on-site staff (24 hours a day) and single staff toilet
6. Each unit to have a full kitchen, including: refrigerator, sink, stove (cooktop and oven), and microwave
7. One bathroom per bedroom - Two-bedroom units would share a bathroom for Program Service Level I units and Single-bedroom units would have individual bathrooms for Program Service Level II units
8. Adequate Parking – Approximately 1 spot for every two beds (30), approximately 10 staff, and 17 visitor parking spaces ~ 57 parking spaces at full build.
9. Housekeeping Closets & Emergency Food Storage
10. Single Elevator
11. Single laundry facility for all residents and plumbing rough-ins for additional laundry
12. Reduced maintenance materials (e.g. flooring, impact resistant walls, etc.)
13. Walkability between points of egress & parking
14. Public Art to meet SPLOST funding criteria and Earthcraft Sustainable Certification

**Highly Wanted – To be added to the bidding documents if funding allows:**

- 1) Resident Community Room (minimum 30 people)
- 2) Additional resident laundry facilities on each floor
- 3) Maintenance Area / Storage
- 4) Resident Meeting Room(s) (approximately 8-10 people)

**Nice to Have**

1. Fitness Center for residents
2. Shuttle Bus pick-up/drop off
3. Common outdoor areas for residents
4. Resident computer room(s)
5. Staff breakroom
6. Covered outdoor resident area
7. Resident Quiet Room(s)
8. Outdoor walking paths for residents

Attachment 2  
Page 1 of 4

LDDBBlueLine

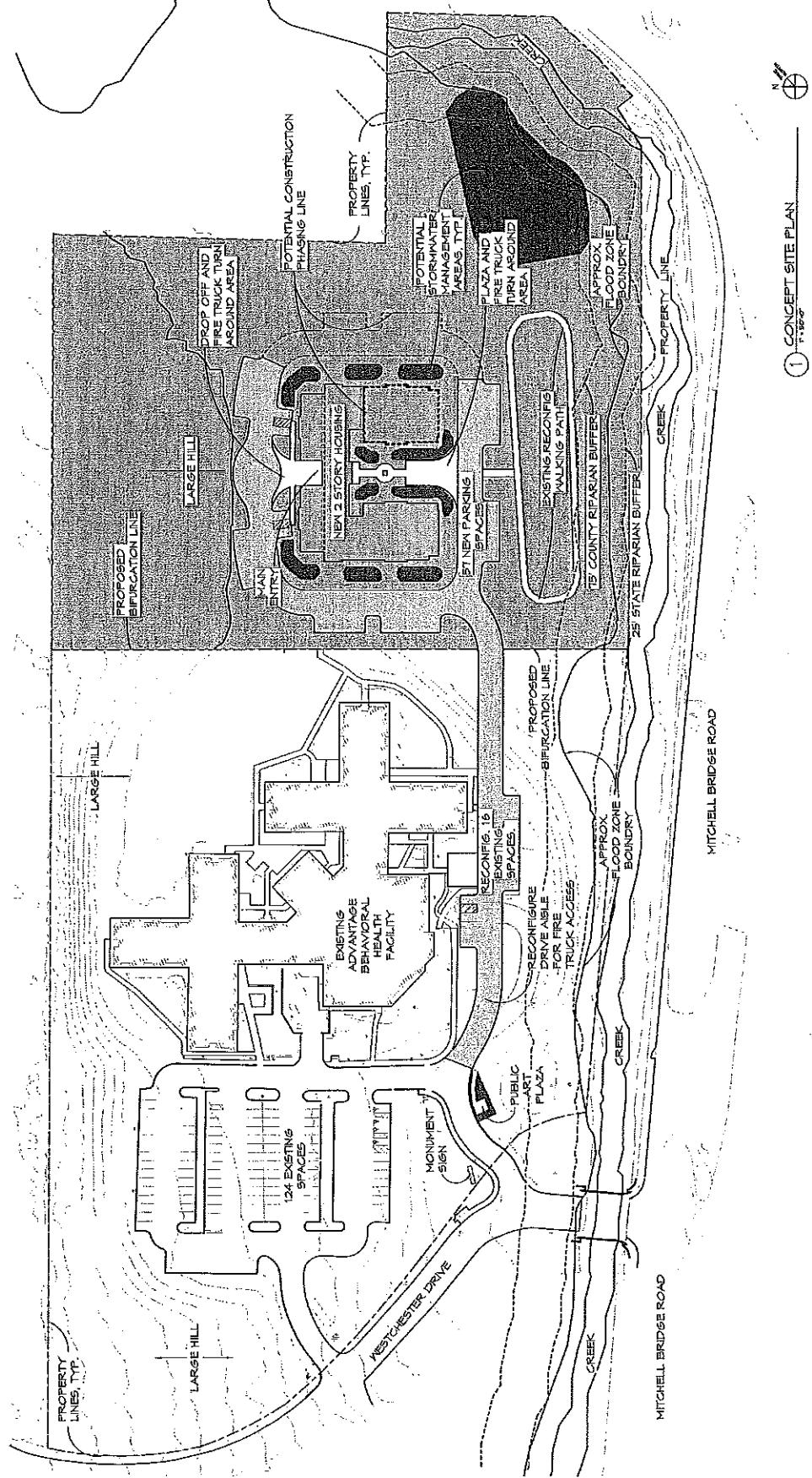
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING  
ACC ADVANTAGE

NEW FACILITY FOR

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

PROJECT NO. 00000000000000000000  
CONCEPT SITE  
PLAN

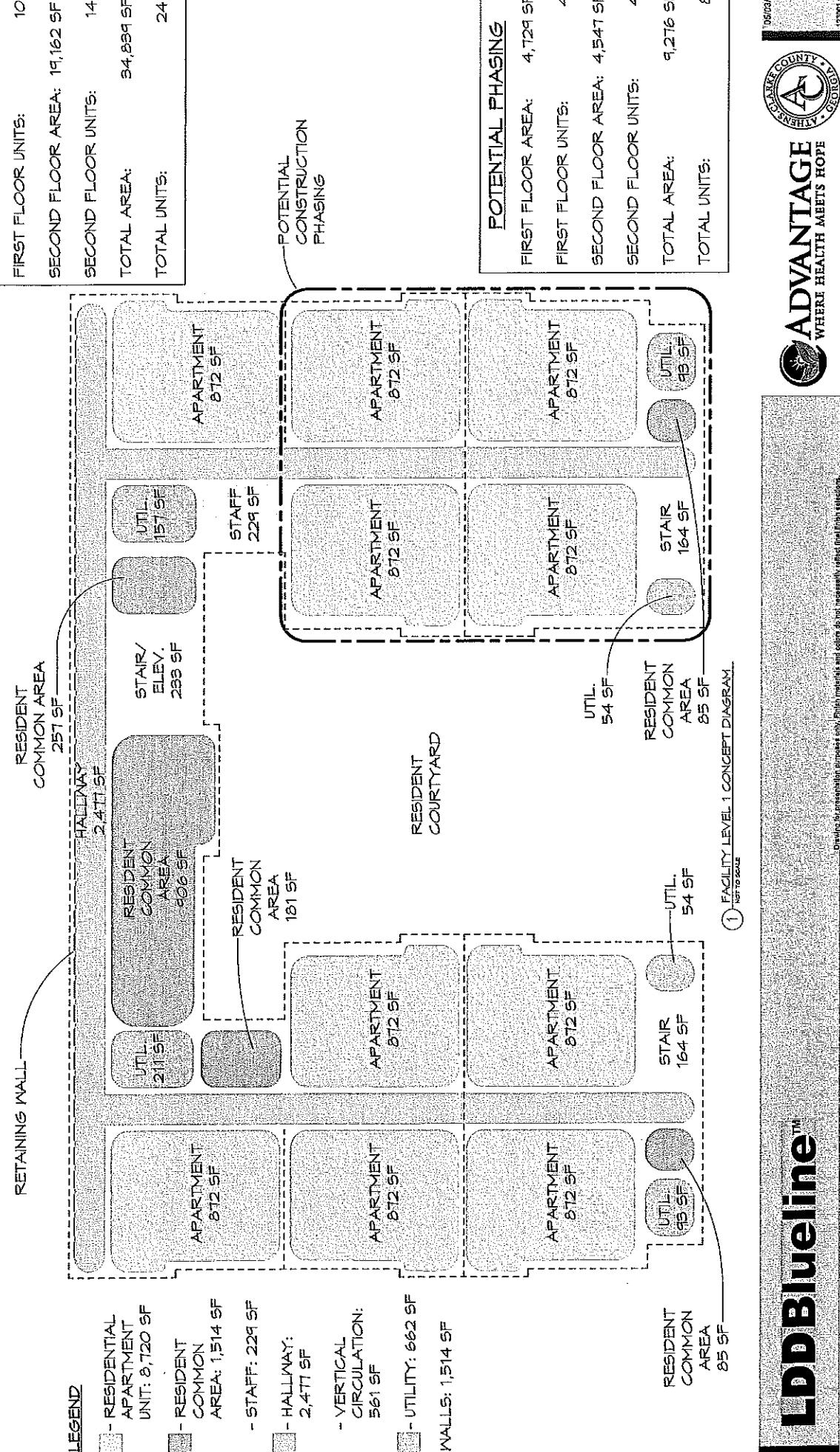
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# ACC Mental Health Recovery Facility

(SPLC 2020 PROJECT #28)

Attachment 2  
Page 2 of 4

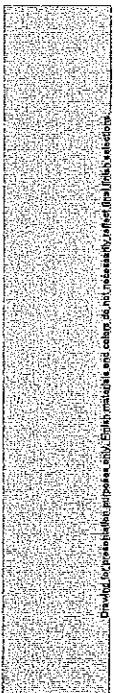
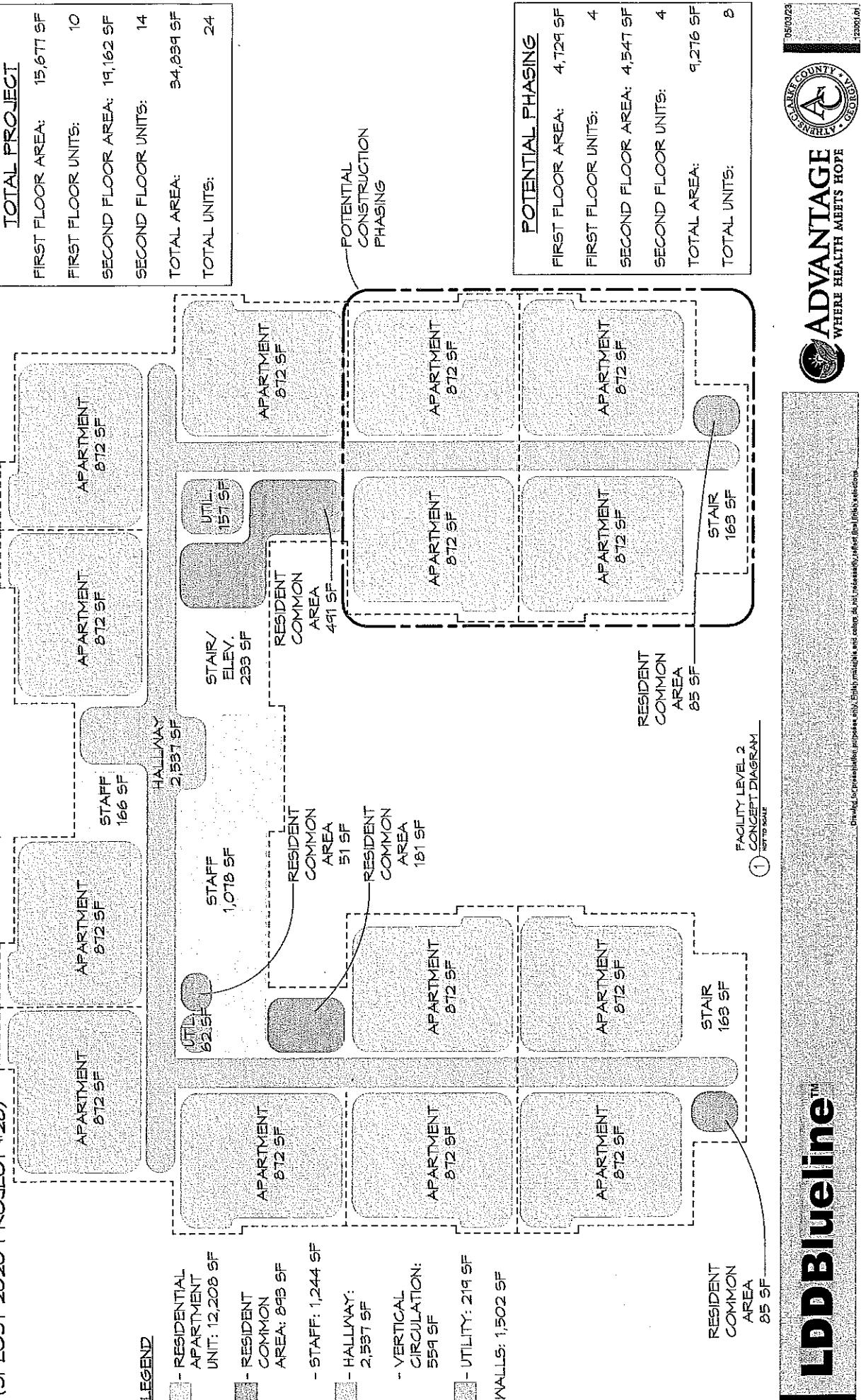


ACC Mental Health Recovery Facility

(SPL051 2020 PROJECT #28)

Attachment 2  
Page 3 of 4

## Athens, GA



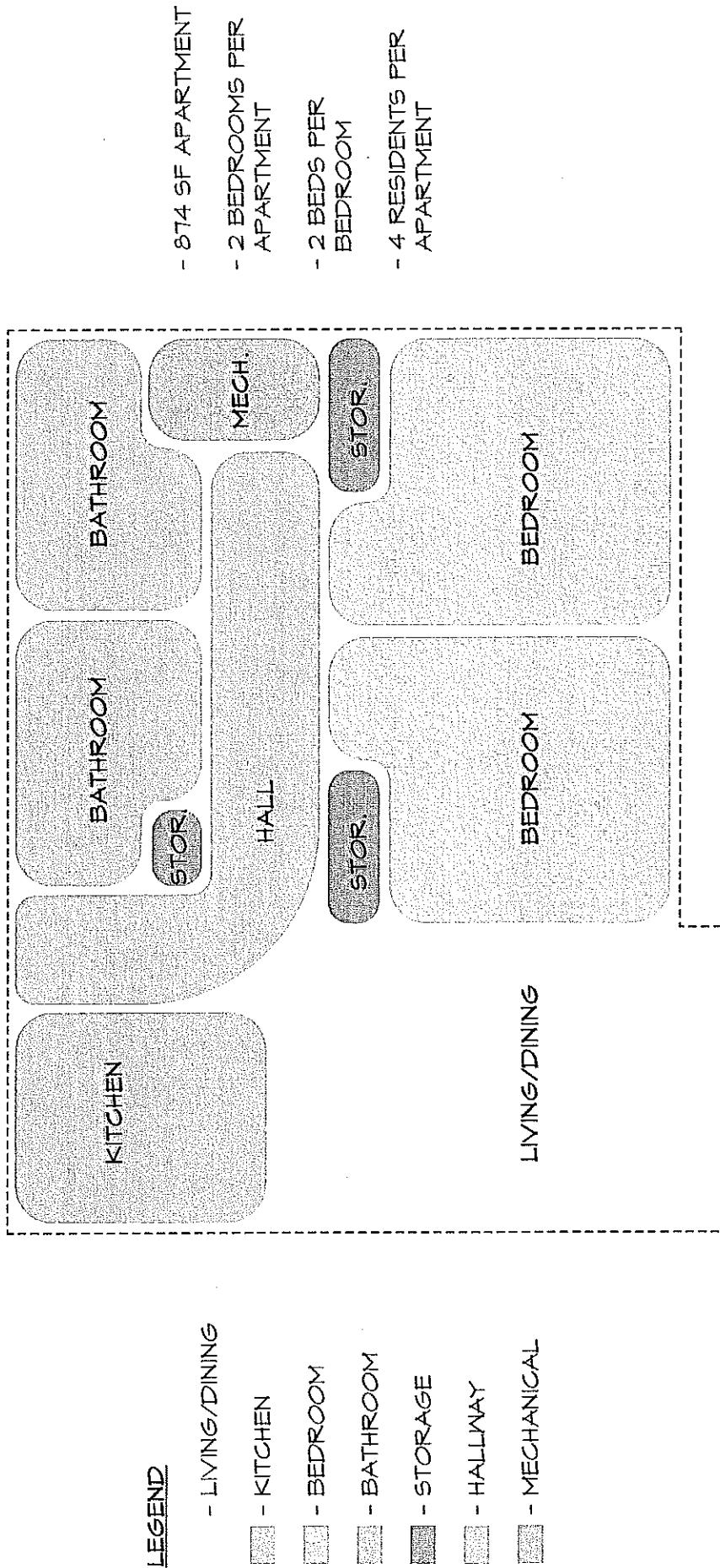
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## ACC Mental Health Recovery Facility

(SPLCOST 2020 PROJECT #28)

Attachment 2  
Page 4 of 4

Athens, GA



PROGRAM SERVICE LEVEL 1  
APTMENT CONCEPT DIAGRAM  
1  
NOT TO SCALE

**LDD Blueline**™

Diagram for presentation purposes only. Final floor plan and details do not necessarily reflect final finished products.



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**ADVANTAGE**  
WHERE HEALTH MEETS HOPE



March 17, 2023

Mayor Kelly Girtz  
Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County  
301 College Ave.  
Athens, GA 30601

Dear Mayor Girtz,

As the co-advisory group identified along with Advantage Behavioral Health Systems on recommendations for the Mental Health category of American Rescue Plan Act funding, the members of the ACC Safety and Justice Committee submit to you the following recommendation.

At the monthly Safety and Justice Committee meeting on March 14, 2023, the committee heard a presentation from ABHS on the following project (Path to Recovery Residential Program):

### **Project Statement**

*This project will provide funding for land acquisition, design, construction, and/or equipping of a mental health recovery facility project and/or renovations, improvements, additions to, and equipping of an existing facility so as to provide a residential style facility for individuals with mental health and potentially co-occurring addictive disease(s). It is anticipated that to the extent permitted by law the facility or facilities would be built in conjunction with one or more public or other private partner(s) that may provide additional capital funds to the project to support SPLOST funding and that would provide the operational funding for the facility. The program is envisioned to provide a facility or facilities to provide congregate living style facility that could accommodate group and/or individuals for counseling programming. An example of a potential partner organization may be, but not be limited to, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems, a Community Service Board (CSB), duly created and existing pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, specifically O.C.G.A. § 37-2-6. Additionally, to the extent allowed by law, funds may be used as matching funds for leveraging grant opportunities.*

Following the presentation by Evan Mills of ABHS and questions and answers from the Safety and Justice Committee, and by unanimous vote, the committee agreed to support the project as stated. Increasing treatment and transitional housing for some of our most vulnerable community members is a strategy aligned with our committee's work which has centered around solutions related to the barriers that exist for enhancing graceful returns to the Athens community for those who have served under incarceration or supervision that create new opportunities for those individuals. Mental health treatment barriers and lack of housing options have emerged as two of the critical issues that our committee believes currently prevent successful returns.

Please accept this letter as support for the project from the ACC Safety and Justice Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Meyers'.

Dawn Meyers, EdD, MSW  
Committee Chairperson

cc: Tamara Conlin, ABHS



# ADVANTAGE

WHERE HEALTH MEETS HOPE

April 28, 2023

Mayor Kelly Girtz  
United Government of Athens-Clarke County  
301 College Ave  
Athens, GA 30601

Dear Mayor Girtz,

Advantage Behavioral Health Systems was designated to serve as the designated Advisory Committee for the American Rescue Program ACT (ARPA) funds allocated for mental health services. Our Board of Directors, decided at the March 28<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to withdraw the previous request for Athens-Clarke County to convey, two county owned properties known as the Creekwood Duplexes to Advantage Behavioral Health Systems and to release the mental health ARPA funds to cover the renovations of both properties.

The Board voted at the March 28<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to allocate the \$4 million ARPA funds allocated for mental health services to be released for the purpose of funding the SPLOST Mental Health Recovery Residence project. We appreciate the opportunity to serve as the designated Advisory Committee for mental health services. Please let me know if you need additional information.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Tamara L. Conlin, CEO*

Tamara L. Conlin, M.S.S.A, LCSW  
Chief Executive Officer