
Young Gamechangers

a GeorgiaForward  program

Thank You to our Sponsors



Thank You to the Steering Committee

NAME	COMPANY/ORGANIZATION
Sarah McKinney	Athens Area Community Foundation
Grace Bagwell Adams	The Wellbeing Project & UGA
Tommy Valentine	Historic Athens
Tim DeMott	Classic Center
Elaine Cook	Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation
Whit Richardson	Tazikis
Fred Smith	East Athens Development Corporation
Brittany Standifer	University of Georgia, YG Alum
Kara Fresk	Lion Leadership
David Bradley	Athens Area Chamber of Commerce

1

ATHENS UNITED

Challenge Question

The University of Georgia is a big part of Athens' identity, yet the relationship between the university and the broader community is complex. How can we improve the town -and-gown relationship to foster stronger collaboration, and shared initiatives to ensure the university and the community are working together towards common goals?

THE TEAM



**Arica
Ratcliff**



**Brent
Snodgrass**



**David
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**Demetrius
McBride**



**DJ
Myers**



**Everett
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**Nic
Laconico**



**Nick
Joseph**



**Savannah
Lockman**



**Taylor
Cain**

THREE BIG IDEAS

1

“All in for
Athens”
Awareness
Campaign

2

Classic City
Pathway

3

Campus &
Community
Engagement
Center



BIG IDEA 1

“ALL IN FOR ATHENS”

A coordinated campus and community awareness campaign to promote and spread awareness of the many ways the county and university collaborate, which is often times unseen.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Implement a scalable and responsive model** based on funding, capacity, and other resources
- **Core elements:**
 - Storytelling campaign and media engagement
 - Joint Newsletter
 - Website
 - Shared 311 Platform
 - Interactive digital kiosks



ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

Planning -
Leadership,
surveys, branding

Capacity -
Newsletter, interns,
CivicPlus

Rollout -
SeeClickFix, media,
storytelling

Medium -Term

Launch - SeeClickFix,
newsletter, storytelling

Engagement -
Outreach, tools, civic
forum

Long-Term

Sustainability -
Evaluation, strategy,
funding

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

Provides state -level funding and resources to support housing, community development, and infrastructure needs.

Athens -Clarke County Police Department Community Policing Grants

Provides funding for local initiatives that strengthen trust and collaboration between law enforcement and the community.

The Coca-Cola Foundation

The philanthropic arm of The Coca-Cola Company, supporting initiatives that strengthen communities and promote sustainability.

The Ford Foundation

A global philanthropic organization funding initiatives that reduce inequality and empower communities.

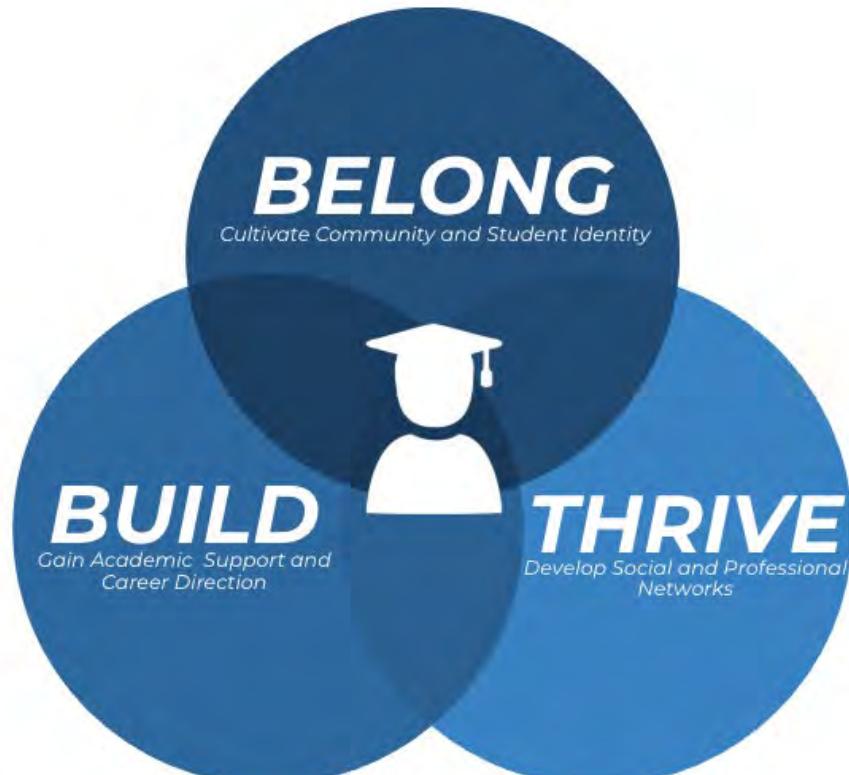
Smart Policing Initiative

A Bureau of Justice Assistant (BJA) supported program that helps law enforcement use evidence -based practices, data, and technology to improve policing strategies.

POTENTIAL IMPACT

- **Strengthen connection** between local community and university stakeholders
- **Expand access** to collective resources
- **Promote mutual respect**
- **Address misinformation** of existing collaborative relationship





The Classic City Pathway



BIG IDEA 2

CLASSIC CITY PATHWAY

A seamless Athens Tech-UGA program that expands access, boosts retention, and supports workforce development through dual enrollment, transfer advising, and a living -learning community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a seamless articulation program between Athens Technical College and UGA
- Support local high school students through college completion
- Core elements:
 - Dual enrollment
 - Transfer advising
 - UGA living-learning community
- Outcomes: Greater access to higher education, stronger student retention, and enhanced workforce development

ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

Agreement finalized and staff hired

Workgroup formed and website launched

Recruitment strategy and school outreach

Medium -Term

Pilot LLC curriculum and enrollment

Deliver programming and track outcomes

Evaluate, refine, and expand advising

Long-Term

Boost retention and graduation rates

Expand majors and program pathways

Expand funding and build alumni base

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

Why Georgia Works Alignment Grant

Funds workforce -aligned pathways that connect high school, technical college, and UGA.

HOPE Career Grant

Tuition support for students in Georgia's high-demand career fields.

ACC Community Partnership Program

Backs collaboration between schools, higher education, and local partners.

CCSD Funding for GCAC

Extends district investment to sustain articulation efforts.

Athens Area Community Foundation

Grants for local education and community impact initiatives.

Private and Corporate Fundraising

Raise funds while boosting community awareness and support.

POTENTIAL IMPACT





BIG IDEA 3

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER

A brick-and-mortar, mixed-use facility designated for existing shared initiatives, as well as newly established opportunities, between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Create a physical manifestation of the relationship between the community and university**
- **Create a centralized location where ACC & UGA individuals feel welcome through collaboration**
- **Core elements:**
 - Co-operated
 - Joint programming
 - Shared resources
- **Outcomes:** Public-facing collaboration with benefits for various stakeholders to include events, meetings, workspace, and co -shared office spaces

ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

- Vision clarity
- Stakeholder alignment
- Foundational planning

Medium -Term

- Feasibility study
- Partnerships
- Early commitments

Long-Term

- Capital development
- Staffing plan
- Construction and operation

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

UGA Capital Commitment

Demonstrates institutional buy -in and provides a critical foundation for attracting major donors.

Lead gift from UGA Foundation, trustee/regent engagement, naming opportunities.

Major Private Fundraising

Individual and family foundation donations.

Corporate Partnerships & Creative Supplemental Funding

Naming rights opportunities, programming support, sponsorship tiers, and in - kind contributions.

Public Funding & Grants

ACCG- CDBG, SPLOST, local bonds

State of Georgia - DCA programs and appropriations

Federal grants and Congressionally Directed Spending

BUDGET

OPTION 1: GROUND-UP CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITY

Land procurement	\$1–2 million
Ground -up construction	\$4.4–8.1 million
TOTAL	\$5–10.1 million

OPTION 2: BUILDING LEASE AND RENOVATION

Lease (annual)	\$200,000–275,000
Interior renovation construction	\$2.5–5 million

ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSES

Center coordinator	\$50,000
Utilities	\$25,000
Operations and maintenance	\$9,000
Furnishings (one -time)	\$625,000



QUESTIONS

MEET THE TEAM



Clayton
Adams



Ashley
Bailey



Amanda
Brown



Jason
Edwards



Diriki
Geuka



Madison
Krilla



Emily
Lasser



Alexander
Nikitin



Michelle
Roberts
Kelterborn



Allison
Shaw



Kasmira
Smith



Meredith
Stinson

2

Change Crafters

Challenge Question

With great need in Athens -Clarke County, there is also a wealth of resources and stakeholders. 610 non - profits, a major university, and a consolidated city -county government exist alongside a lack of coordination and mixed community perceptions that hinder progress. How can we motivate local leaders to take action in implementation and achieve shared community goals?

THREE BIG IDEAS

1

ATHENS
READS

2

UNITY IN THE
COMMUNITY

3

CATALOG
INITIATIVE TO
CULTIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS



BIG IDEA 1

Athens
Reads



29%

Athens Reads:

A county-wide commitment to
early childhood literacy.

Birth to 8
literacy pipeline



**ATHENS
READS**

Athens Reads: A Three Prong Approach

1

Birth to
Three

Family
Engagement

2

Pre-K +
Kindergarten

Enrollment +
Readiness

3

First to Third
Grade

Bolster existing
innovation +
supports

Action Steps

Short Term

(next year)

Name a champion

Launch literacy council

Secure cross -sector buy -in

Intermediate

(2-3 years)

Launch sustained funding campaign

Build brand recognition

Track outcomes

Long Term

(3+ years)

Increased kindergarten readiness

Achieve 60% proficiency



Clarke County
School District



ATHENS AREA
Community
Foundation



ATHENS AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA



UNITED WAY
Northeast Georgia



**ATHENS
READS**



BIG IDEA 2

Unity In
The Community

Unity in the Community

- Annual family -friendly event to bring every corner of Athens together
- Providing fun festival activities
 - Connecting families with valuable local resources and extracurricular services
- Facilitating partners between community leaders and the business community
 - Accessible for ALL



Action Steps

Short Term (3-6 months)

Create a Host Committee

Secure Venue on Eastside

Determine Event Vision & Key Partners

Intermediate (<1 year)

Set Date for Event

Secure Event & Resource Sponsorships

Finalize Marketing Plan & Timeline

Confirm Vendors

Long Term (2-3 years)

Secure Funding Partners

Gather Feedback

Integrate Community Goals

Implement Branding and Communications Plan

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY FESTIVAL





BIG IDEA 3

Catalog Initiative to Cultivate
Partnerships between Nonprofit
and For-profit Business

Catalog Initiative to Cultivate Partnerships

- Create digital “Athens Nonprofit Catalog”
- Connect nonprofit and for -profit businesses
- Advertise and promote the catalog
 - Create a “Partnering with Nonprofits” engagement guide
 - Address overlap of efforts and encourage businesses to partner for common goals



Action Steps

Short Term

(next year)

Develop Nonprofit Catalog

Assign roles and responsibilities

Produce for -profit business guide

Intermediate

(2-3 years)

Identify benchmarks for inclusion in catalog

Develop “matching system”

Initiate partnership with Athens Chamber

Long Term

(3+ years)

Create tier system for nonprofits

Explore program incentives

Brand recognition

ATHENS

COMMUNITY IMPACT GUIDE





QUESTIONS

3

LEVEL GROUND

Challenge Question

Despite Athens-Clarke County's vibrant academic and cultural landscape, economic disparity remains a pressing issue, with a poverty rate well above the state average.

What innovative strategies can community stakeholders collaboratively implement to foster middle -class growth amid great wealth and poverty in Athens?

THE TEAM



Jeffrey Burke
University of Georgia, Archway Partnership (Athens)



Morgan Ferguson
Electric Cities of Georgia (Atlanta)



Danielle Hall
AmericasMart ANDMORE (Atlanta)



Lamar Handy
Emory University & The DL Handy Foundation, Inc. (Lithonia)



Caitlin May
University of Georgia Law School (Athens)



Ebonie Medious
LinkedIn (Decatur)



Callen Moore
Foothills Regional High School (Bogart)



Hue Nguyen
City of Morrow (Morrow)



Reginald Rainge
City of Atlanta (Atlanta)



Urié Register
Southern Georgia Regional Commission (Valdosta)



David Stahl
City of Port Wentworth (Guyton)



Kimberly Wilder, *Davis, Chapman, and Wilder, LLC Attorneys at Law (Augusta)*

COMMUNITY MEMBER TESTIMONIAL



Taneisha Brooks
Preservation Impact Director at Historic Athens

“As a single mom living in public housing, I thought college was out of reach. WIOA gave me the support to stay in school, earn my degree, and give my children a better future.”

THREE BIG IDEAS

1

CRAYONS TO
CAREERS

2

THRIVE HUBS

3

PATHWAY TO
HOME OWNERSHIP



BIG IDEA 1

CRAYONS TO CAREERS

Crayons to Careers is designed to strengthen the Athens-Clarke County workforce and economic mobility by expanding access to affordable, high-quality childcare.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY



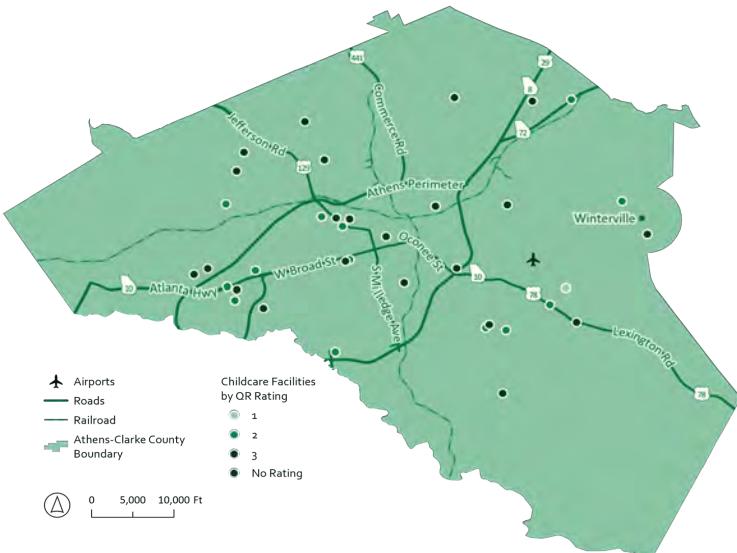
Athens -Clarke County faces deep economic disparity:

- Poverty rate: **~26%**
- Only **62%** of adults participate in the labor force

Crayons to Careers aims to:

- Expand access to affordable, high -quality childcare.
- Empower parents to pursue employment and training.
- Build a resilient, skilled local workforce.

CHILDCARE ACCESS BARRIERS



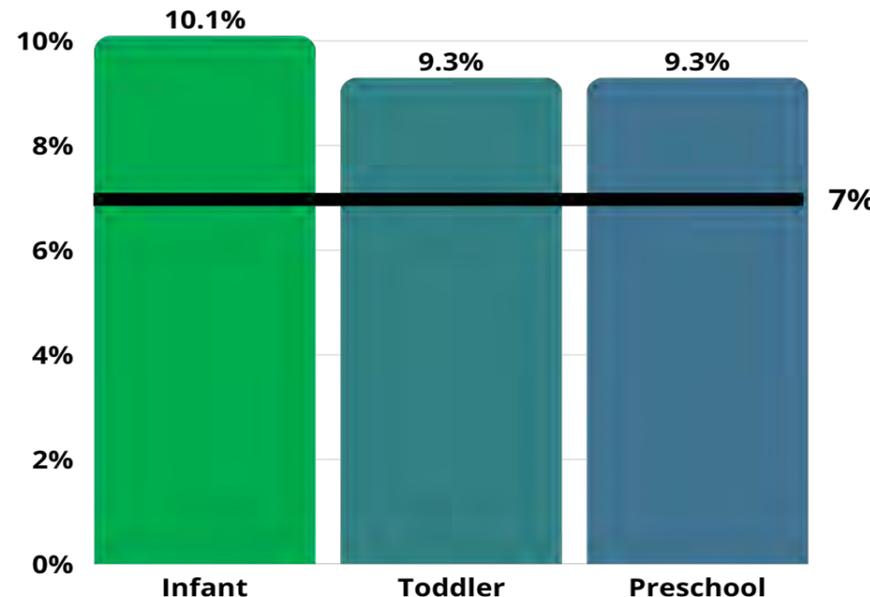
Childcare is a critical barrier:

- **6,200 children under age 5; only 36 licensed providers (17 are “Quality Rated”). (GEERS, DECAL)**
- Fewer than **3,000 licensed slots**; all facilities at capacity as of July 2025.
- **Only one provider offers weekend care;** few offer nontraditional hours.

COST OF CHILDCARE



Cost of Childcare as a Percent of Family Income
in Athens -Clarke County



RECOMMENDATIONS

-  **Expand Access to Affordable, High-Quality Childcare**
-  **Align Childcare with Workforce & Economic Development**
-  **Build Cross-Sector Partnerships**
-  **Support & Incentivize Providers**
-  **Launch Collaborative Funding Models**
-  **Expand Employer Partnerships**

ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

- Participate in Statewide Initiatives
- Build Cross-Sector Partnerships
- Expand Access to Childcare for Working Families

Medium -Term

- Support and Incentivize Providers
- Increase Affordable Childcare Through Collaborative Funding

Long-Term

- Expand Employer Partnerships to Provide Affordable and Flexible Childcare
- Expand Access to Inclusive Child Care Options

POSSIBLE FUNDING

- Athens -Clarke County Government Funding
 - ACC Foundation
 - Local SPLOST Funding
- Private Philanthropy & Foundations
 - Annie E Casey Foundation
 - Ford Foundation
 - Strive Together Network
- Employer and Industry Partnerships

- Federal and State Workforce Development Grants
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
 - Georgia WorkSource
 - United Way of Northeast Georgia
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - U.S. Department of Labor - Apprenticeship Building America
 - Federal TRIO Program

EXPECTED IMPACT

- **Increased Labor Force Participation**
 - More parents will be able to seek and maintain employment
- **Stronger Workforce Pipelines**
 - By integrating childcare access with existing workforce development programs, parents have the opportunity to pursue career advancement without sacrificing appropriate care for their children.
- **Child Development and School Readiness**
 - Children enrolled in quality -rated programs will benefit from early learning environments that promote cognitive, social, and emotional development, thus laying the foundation for long -term academic and personal success.
- **Economic Mobility and Equity**
 - Families receiving support through Crayons to Careers will be better positioned to increase their household income and build wealth to break cycles of poverty.
- **Community Growth, Dependability, and Stability**
 - As more employers join the program and invest in these family -friendly practices, Athens -Clarke County will experience a more inclusive and resilient local economy.



AI-generated photo as example. This does not depict a current building.



BIG IDEA 2

THRIVE HUBS

Thrive Hubs exist to empower the Athens community at every stage of life by providing accessible, community-based centers for wellness, lifelong learning, and financial empowerment.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Remove Barriers to Access Services



Bring Wrap-around Services to Local Neighborhoods

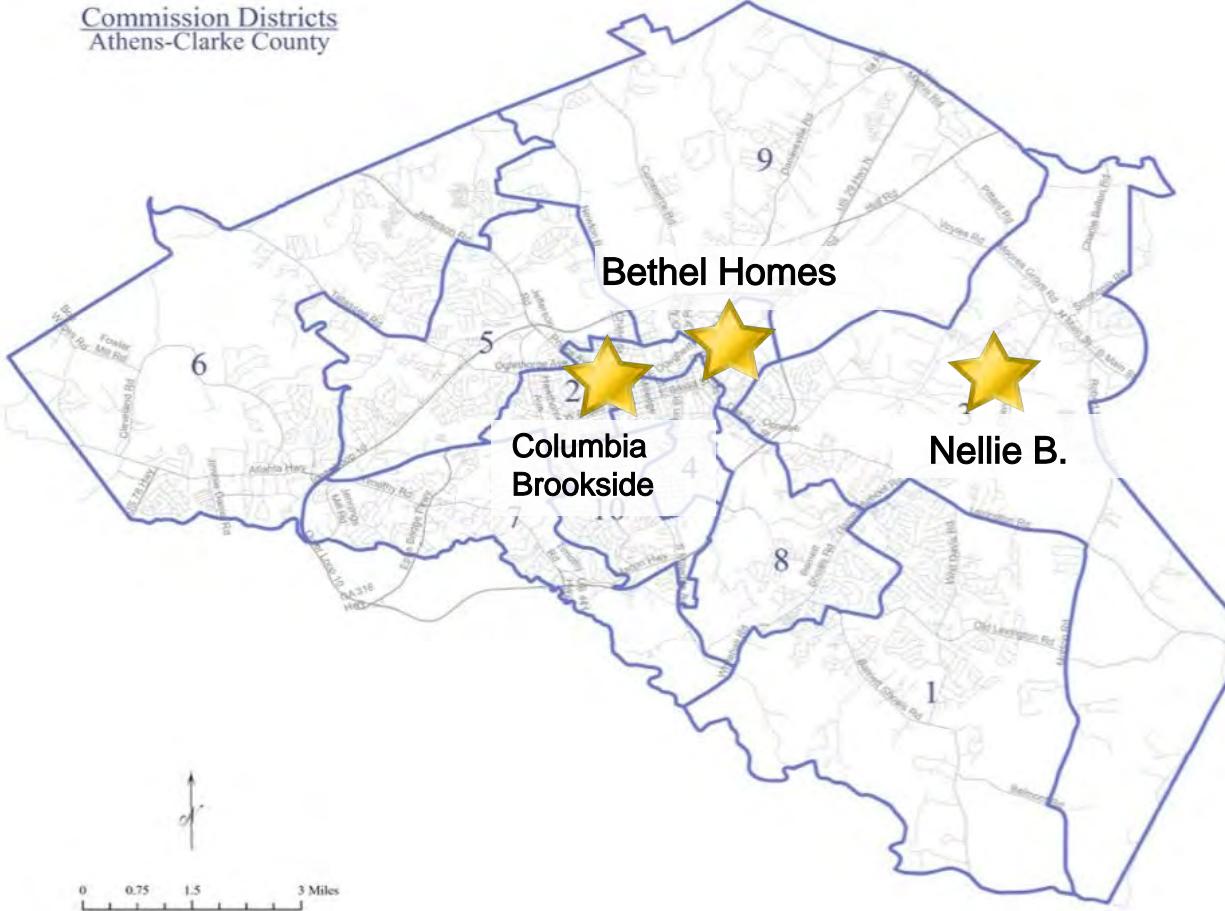


Align Non-profits in the Community



Partner with Key Developers to Build Thrive Hubs

THRIVE HUBS LOCATION (RECOMMENDATIONS)



ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

- Phase 1
 - Strategic Planning & Partner Alignment
- Phase 2
 - Design & Infrastructure Setup

Medium -Term

- Phase 3
 - Pilot & Community Engagement

Long-Term

- Phase 4
 - Evaluation & Expansion

POSSIBLE FUNDING

Community
Development
Block Grant

HUD Grant

Athens
Foundation

EXPECTED IMPACT

- **Improve Community Success**
 - Increase access to physical, mental, and preventive health services
 - Reduce avoidable ER visits and improve chronic condition management
- **Advance Educational & Digital Equity**
 - Improve literacy and academic performance for K –12 students
 - Expand digital literacy and upskilling opportunities for adults and seniors
- **Promote Financial Stability**
 - Increase financial literacy and savings among community members
 - Reduce reliance on predatory lending and improve credit outcomes
- **Strengthen Intergenerational Engagement**
 - Create safe, inclusive spaces where children, adults, and seniors feel supported and connected
- **Empower Local Voices & Leadership**
 - Build community -led governance and ownership of Thrive Hub programming
 - Increase civic participation and resident confidence in institutions



BIG IDEA 3

PATHWAY TO HOME OWNERSHIP

The Pathway to Homeownership initiative is committed to advancing economic equity and community preservation in Athens-Clarke County by creating sustainable pathways to home ownership in historically and culturally significant neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

-  **Preserve Heritage**
-  **Expand Homeownership**
-  **Build Wealth**
-  **Support Readiness**
-  **Strengthen Communities**

ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

- Identify a Backbone Organization
- Reestablish Land Bank Authority
- Build Support
- Mapping/Neighborhood Selection
- Real Estate Monitoring
- Financial Literacy/Community Support
- Pilot Funding

Medium -Term

- Home Acquisition & Renovation
- Launch Transitional Rental Program
- Monitor/Evaluate
- Expansion
- Establish a Formal Entity for the Program

Long-Term

- Refining/Evaluating
- Expand Inventory
- Community Awareness Campaign
- Resident/Community Support
- Secure Sustainable Funding

POSSIBLE FUNDING

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)
- Continuum of Care (COC) Grants

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)- Local Allocation
- Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)- Low Interest Loans
- Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

- Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation - Revolving Fund
- Athens Land Trust
- Donations of houses from individuals, estates, or organizations

EXPECTED IMPACT

- Preserve the Character of Athens Neighborhoods
- Increase Homeownership Opportunities for Local Residents



BEFORE



AFTER



QUESTIONS

4

Athens Regional Coalition - ARC

CHALLENGE QUESTION

As a regional hub for commerce, culture, education, and healthcare, Athens -Clarke County plays a vital role in Northeast Georgia. How can we balance this regional role and metro growth while prioritizing and addressing critical local challenges?

MEET THE TEAM



AUNDI LESLEY



JON MCBRAYER



GRACE TUSCHAK



STEPHANIE MANN



BRANDON GARDNER



KENNEDY STONE



ALISON MELVIN



CORY-LYNN THURSTON



JORDAN FRANK



ELYSE HARRIS



DANIEL FARR

THREE BIG IDEAS

1

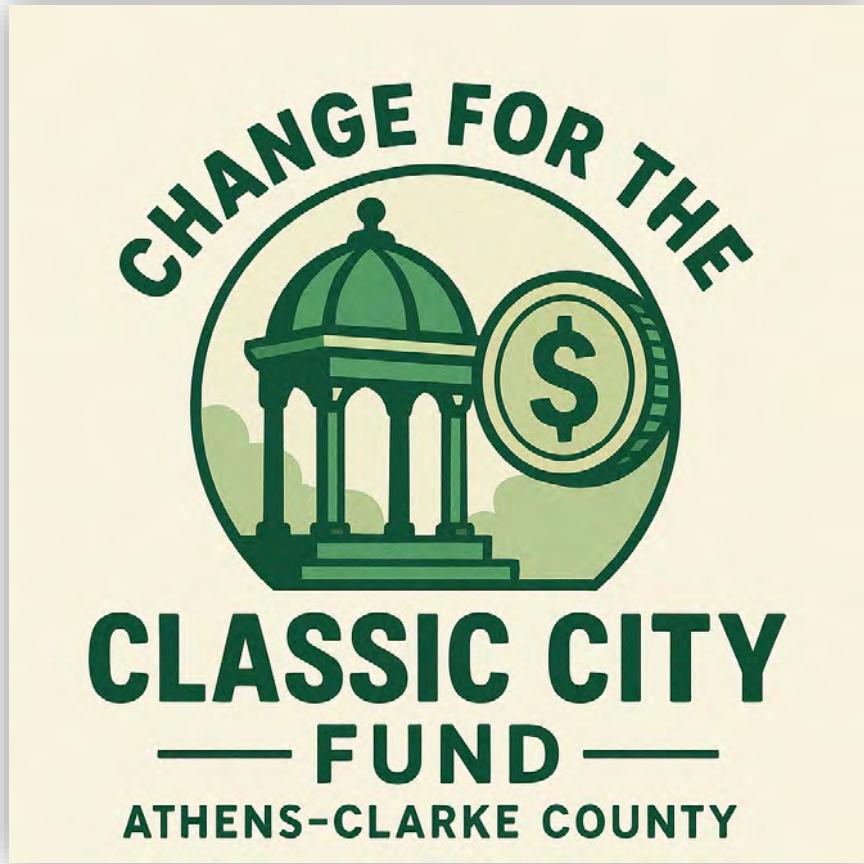
Change for
the Classic
City Fund

2

Woven
Together

3

Hub Cities
Strong



BIG IDEA 1

Change for the Classic City Fund: Harnessing Micro -Giving for Macro Impact

Every UGA game day brings over 100,000 visitors to Athens. *What if those visits also brought tangible community benefit?*

This philanthropic initiative invites residents and tourists to “round up” purchases to support the most pressing local needs.

RECOMMENDATION: CHANGE FOR THE CLASSIC CITY

A Community Giving Fund

Athens is more than a college town—it's a community built on art, food, music, and giving. Through the Change for the Classic City Fund, **every rounded-up purchase can fuel local impact**—supporting kids' dental care, youth programs, and stronger community infrastructure.



HOW IT WORKS

- Patrons at restaurants, retailers, music venues, and UGA events *round up* purchases to the nearest dollar.
- Contributions flow into the **Change for the Classic City Fund**, managed by the Athens Area Community Foundation.
- Steering Committee advises the Fund, identifying **one major community priority** (healthcare, youth programs, infrastructure) to address.



WHAT IS NEEDED

- Create a staff/fellowship position for the first 3 years of the initiative to:
 - Build key partnership relationships and formalize roles
 - Coordinate and launch marketing campaign to local businesses
 - Onboard local businesses to a POS system capable of rounding up dollars
- Develop steering committee with key partner representation, local leadership, local residents, and local business owners.



THE IMPACT

- Generate an estimated **\$100,000+** annually from local and visitor contributions.
- Every three years, **focus fundraising** on one specific community priority—ranging from healthcare access to youth programs, childcare gaps, or dental care for kids.
- Allow the collective impact to “**move the needle**” on one specific community need. Show progress and give the community wins together!



ACTION STEPS

Short-Term:

- Form Steering Committee
- Fund Staff Position
- Formalize Key Partners

Medium-Term:

- Open Fund at the Community Foundation
- Build infrastructure for the Round Up Program
- Launch unified marketing campaign
- Pilot program with a target group of local businesses

Long-Term:

- Align annual fundraising with cause
- Raise \$100,000**
- Engage 15% local businesses

POSSIBLE FUNDING

Seed Program
Funding from Key
Partners



Ongoing Round
Up Contributions:

Local Businesses,
Breweries,
Restaurants, and
Shops

UGA Athletic
Concessions



WOVEN TOGETHER

Making Athens a Leader
in Transportation



BIG IDEA 2
Woven Together:
Making Athens a Leader in Transportation

As Athens grows in its role as a regional hub, it must also lead in modern, inclusive, and connected transportation.

What if Athens became the gold standard for equitable, efficient, and enjoyable transportation for visitors *and* residents?

RECOMMENDATIONS

3,200

Households lacking
access to a vehicle

30,000

Below the poverty line



LOCAL CONNECTIVITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

E-BIKE REBATES: An equitable transportation solution



Credit: Atlanta Regional Commission



FIREFLY TRAIL DEVELOPMENT: A golden opportunity to enhance community life.



Credit: City of Greenville



Credit: Houston-Galveston Area Council
Rendering by Ankur Studios Company

REGIONAL + NATIONAL CONNECTIVITY



Credit: Go Triangle

ACTION STEPS

Short-Term

- **E-Bike Rebate Program**
- Complete the **Firefly Trail connection** to Winterville and plan for connections to downtown Athens
- **Expand local transit service** and assess demand
- **Create airline pitch** and rally community support.

Medium-Term

- **Begin planning efforts for trail-oriented development**
- Pursue **intergovernmental agreements for transit service** into neighboring jurisdictions.
- **AM Tours, community outreach, and Revenue Guarantee Fund for Commercial Air Service.**

Long-Term

- **Build out and promote the "Firefly District," including affordable housing measures and trail-side anchor projects.**
- **Create regional transit authority** to unite and expand existing transit services.
- **Secure airline agreement;** develop PR campaign to promote use of airline service.

POSSIBLE FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

LOCAL FUNDING

Impact Fees on new developments

SPLOST and TSPLOST revenue

Corporate sponsorships

STATE, REGIONAL & FEDERAL FUNDING

Transportation Grants through USDOT, GDOT, GA DNR, and FTA

Multi -County TSPLOST

PARTNERSHIPS

Public Agencies: ACC, Athens Airport Authority, GDOT, MACORTS, NEGRC

Educational & Healthcare: UGA, Piedmont, St. Mary's

Business Partners: Athens Area Chamber of Commerce; local businesses like Caterpillar and Synovus Bank

THE IMPACT

"The 'Woven Together' initiative isn't just about infrastructure; it's about building a more equitable, prosperous, and vibrant Athens .

- **Equity & Accessibility:** Promote inclusive and affordable access to jobs education, and services.
- **Economic Development & Growth:** Attract new businesses, skilled workers, and tourists with modern amenities and improved connectivity. This will lead to job growth, increased property values, and a larger tax base.
- **Expanded Tourism & Event Potential:** Regional and national access increases overnight stays and visitor spending; increased ability for major venues to host events without negatively impacting locals.
- **Quality of Life, Health, Environmental Benefits:** Improve public health and community cohesion by expanding safe, active transportation .



HUB CITIES STRONG



BIG IDEA 3

Hub Cities Strong

Athens is more than a college town —it's a lifeline for surrounding communities.

What if Athens could lead the way in solving Georgia's toughest urban challenges?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local Strategies

- **Mobile City Hall:** Taking ACC into the community to improve access and rebuild public trust.
- **Roadmap for Success** - an easy to read, streamlined comprehensive plan for that will encourage public participation

Impact: Community engagement, open lines of communication, equitable access



RECOMMENDATION - CONT.

Athens as a Regional Service Hub

- Athens is a central service anchor
- Build a regional services directory (health, housing, workforce)
- Quantify services through a Regional Impact Index
- Launch cross-sector Athens Hub Task Force
- Collaborate with surrounding counties and key partners

Impact: Aligns services, fills gaps, boosts collaboration



RECOMMENDATION - CONT.

Statewide Hub Cities Coalition

- Launch GA Hub Cities Coalition (GMA + GARC)
- Scale Athens' model to other GA hub cities
- Focus: housing, mental health, infrastructure, & resources
- Host annual summit + peer learning sessions

Impact: Strengthens statewide collaboration and advocacy



POSSIBLE FUNDING

Local & Regional Support

United Way of Northeast Georgia: Community Impact Grants for direct services

Athens Area Community Foundation: Microgrants for pilot programs like Mobile City Hall

Regional Development Authorities & Hospital Foundations: Support for health and housing initiatives

State & Legislative Funding

State Legislative Appropriations: With advocacy from GMA & GA Chamber

DCA Innovation Grant: For scalable public service models

Georgia Power Foundation: Community focused infrastructure and equity projects

\$10K

Create a community resource guide.

Federal & Academic Resources

Federal Grants: SAMHSA, HUD, DOJ for behavioral health and housing
University; National League of Cities

Partnerships: UGA graduate research for cost benefit analysis

Private Foundations: Support for civic innovation and equity initiatives

\$10K
Annually

Invest in a mobile city hall to bring resources to neighborhoods throughout the community.

\$100K
Annually

Staffing and support to the Hub Cities Coalition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Dr. Grace Bagwell Adams, UGA College of Public Health
- Jeremy Barnett, ACC Transit Department
- Mark Beatty, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Marc Beechuk, ACC Planning Department
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- Matt Brewster, Marigold Solutions
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- Myung Cogan, Invest Athens
- John Devine, Go Georgia
- Max Doty, ACC Planning Department
- Tony Ferguson, Georgia Power
- Dexter Fisher, ACC District 5 Commissioner
- Tammy Gilland, Piedmont Athens Regional
- Kelly Girtz, ACC Mayor
- Tino Johnson, Jackson EMC
- Jason Jones, ACC Transportation and Public Works Department
- Eva Kennedy, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Toby Mayfield, ACC Regional Library System
- Al McCall, Athens Technical College
- Victor Pope, ACC Transit Department
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- Daniel Sizemore, ACC Transportation and Public Works Department
- April Sorrow, Jackson EMC
- Kevin Tanner, Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Tina Wu, ACC Transit Department

THANK YOU



APPLY TO THE 2026 YOUNG GAMECHANGERS PROGRAM

HINESVILLE – LIBERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

GEORGIAFORWARD.ORG/APPL
Y



THANK YOU!
