

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

**SUBJECT:** SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project, Proposed Project Concept & Proposed Site Selection Criteria

**DATE:** ~~September 28, 2022~~ **October 21, 2022**

**BUDGET INFORMATION:**

REVENUES:

\$ 14,160,020	SPLOST 2020 Funding
\$ 2,000,000	State Grant Funding
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\$ 16,160,020	Total Revenue Available

EXPENSES:

CAPITAL:

\$ 100,654	Expensed or Encumbered
\$ 750,000	Designated Design & Construction Admin. Services
\$ 1,317,246	Designated Testing, Permitting, Utilities, PM Fees, and Commissioning
\$ 61,000	Designated Public Art - Sub-Project (SP) #1
\$ 1,689,000	Designated Fixtures, Furnishings & Equipment
\$ 2,000,000	Designated Books and Resources
\$ 2,742,020	Designated Project Contingency and Land Acquisition
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\$ 7,500,000	Total Available for New Construction

OPERATIONAL:

FUNDING SOURCE: CAPITAL - SPLOST 2020 Program Revenues/Financing, State Grant Funding  
OPERATIONAL – GENERAL FUND

**COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON:** November 1, 2022

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**PURPOSE:**

To request that the Mayor and Commission:

- a. Approve the Proposed Project Concept, as generally described in **Attachment #1**, for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project and authorize staff to advance the Project to the Schematic Design Phase in accordance with the Proposed Project Concept;
- b. Approve the Proposed Site Selection Criteria, as generally described in **Attachment #2**, for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project and authorize the Site Selection Committee (SSC) and staff to enter Stage II of the Major Site Selection Process to identify potential sites and subsequently develop a Candidate Site list for the East Side Public Library (SPLOST 2020 Project 25) to be presented for review and approval by the Mayor and Commission; and

- c. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents.
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#### **HISTORY:**

1. On January 31, 2019, Athens-Clarke County Libraries Board (ACCLB) Executive Director Valerie Bell submitted a project for consideration for the SPLOST 2020 funding.
2. On August 6, 2019, the Mayor & Commission (M&C) approved the Call for the SPLOST 2020 Referendum; included in the call was the East Side Public Library (Project 25). The approved budget for the project was \$14,499,000 with the acknowledgement that the cost of Land Acquisition was not included in the approved project budget.
3. On November 5, 2019, Athens-Clarke County (ACC) voters approved the SPLOST 2020 Program Referendum. This Referendum included the East Side Public Library (Project 25).
4. On February 2, 2021, the M&C approved the 2020 SPLOST Tier Funding Schedule. Allocating funds for this project across all Tiers but with the funding for design to begin in FY22 and Construction across FY23 and FY24.
5. On May 10, 2021, the Athens Cultural Affairs Commission (ACAC) approved a recommendation to the M&C that this project as appropriate for Public Art.
6. In July 2021, the ACCLB approved the hiring of McMillan Pazdan Smith to develop a preliminary program for the East Side Public Library. This program was to better understand the needs of the library and to help apply for state funding for the library project.
7. In July 2021, Manager Williams selected the User Group Members for the SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library 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:
  - Valerie Bell
  - Beth Smith
  - Jane Russell
  - Toby Mayfield
  - Lawrence Harris
  - Greg Deal
  - Terris Thomas
  - Mike Wharton (Ex-Officio)
8. On April 5, 2022, the M&C approved the designation of McMillan Pazdan Smith as the highest scoring firm for Professional Design and Construction Administration Services for the project and authorized staff to negotiate a final scope of services and fees with McMillan Pazdan Smith for a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$750,000.
9. During May – August 2022, the design team worked with the User Group and Site Selection Committee to develop the site selection criteria and project concept.

10. On June 19, 2022, an initial programming session was held with key staff of the existing libraries in the Athens Regional Library system.
11. On August 8, 2022, the SSC voted to recommend the Proposed Site Selection Criteria to M&C for their consideration during the September Work Session.
12. On August 18, 2022, the User Group voted to recommend the Proposed Project Concept and Site Selection Criteria to M&C for their consideration during the September Work Session.
13. On September 13, 2022, during the regularly scheduled work session, the draft project concept and site selection criteria for the East Side Public Library were presented to and reviewed by the M&C. Additionally, an update on the project budget and current construction costs for libraries was also shared with the M&C during the presentation.
14. On September 15, 2022, information from the Work Session and the drafts of the project concept and site selection criteria were posted to the SPLOST website for public review and feedback.
15. On October 1, 2022, the first public engagement session was held at Fire Station #7 on Barnett Shoals Road. The full listing of all comments are available in **Attachment #3**.
16. On October 3, 2022, two additional public engagement sessions were held. The first was at Living Hope Church and the second was at the East Athens Development Corporation. The full listing of all comments are available in **Attachment #3**.
17. On October 12, 2022, the SSC reviewed the Site Selection Criteria and the comments from the Public Input Session, recommended them for approval by the M&C.
18. On October 17, 2022, the Project Concept for the East Side Library was presented to the SPLOST 2020 Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee voted unanimously, confirming that this Project Concept is consistent with the Initial Project Statement for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project.
19. On October 27, 2022, the SSC reviewed and approved to recommend a slightly revised Site Selection Criteria, as shown on **Attachment #2**, for consideration by the M&C.

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## FACTS & ISSUES:

1. The Initial Project Statement for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 East Side Library Project reads as follows:

***Project #25, East Side Library Project**, will provide funding for land acquisition, design, construction, and/or equipping of a facility and/or renovations, improvements, additions to, and equipping of an existing facility for the purpose of extending library services to county residents on the east side of Athens-Clarke County. This annex facility would be a full-service library consistent with the level of resources and services provided at other similarly situated public libraries in the county. Depending upon costs and funding availability, the facility may include, but not be limited to, spaces such as meeting rooms, study rooms, children's area,*

*teen area, popular reading space, computer spaces, a creation space complete with digital and modern technology, innovative spaces and technology, and associated parking and general infrastructure to support the facility. This project may also provide funding for the purchase of enhanced technology, access improvements for the disabled, and purchase of library resources for the Athens-Clarke County Libraries. Additionally, to the extent allowed by law, funds may be used as matching funds for leveraging grant opportunities.*

2. Based on the above Initial Project Statement (F&I #1) and with consideration of feedback received from the three public engagement sessions (History 15 and 16), the Proposed Project Concept is as generally described in **Attachment #1**. The Proposed Project Concept was developed by and is recommended (History #12) by the User Group.
3. The ACCGov Site Selection process is implemented by a Mayor-appointed citizen committee chaired by a Commissioner. The principal charge to the committee is to ensure both appropriate technical and community values are considered and evaluated in the selection of sites for SPLOST and ACCGov facilities. The overall process includes specific activities as follows:
  - Stage I – development of appropriate technical and community values for the site selection criteria which must be approved by the M&C;
  - Stage II – identification of Potential Sites based on the approved criteria, and determination of up to ten Candidate Sites based on evaluated rankings of the Potential Sites. The Candidate Sites must also be approved by the M&C; and,
  - Stage III – develop detailed site studies as appropriate and a recommended final site ranking for M&C review and approval. Each of these steps also includes a public information/community meeting process to receive input from the public for additional consideration.
4. The Proposed Site Selection Criteria, as generally described in **Attachment #2**, has been updated for what was presented at the work session with additional informational gained through the public comments to make sure the Site Selection Criteria presents the greatest opportunity for a property selection that meets as many of the project needs as possible. Also, the wording of the criteria in some cases has been revised to allow properties to be more easily and equitably scored using the provided matrix. In some cases, criteria line items were combined where there might have been duplication or eliminated if the criteria did not allow for objective scoring. The criteria has been presented to and approved by both the User Group and the SSC, as shown in the revised **Attachment #2**.
5. To meet the desired schedule for the Project, the Project Concept and Site Selection Criteria are being brought in November 2022 to support the following schedule milestones:

a. Site Acquired & start Schematic Design	September 2023
b. M&C Approval of Schematic Design	January 2024
c. Construction Start	November 2024
d. Construction Completion	June 2026
6. ~~On October 17, 2022, the SPLOST 2020 Oversight Committee will meet to review the Proposed Project Concept for the East Side Public Library to determine if it is consistent with the Initial Project Statement for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library Project. The agenda report will be updated with those results prior to the November 1, 2022 voting session.~~

7. This recommendation supports the following ACCGov Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy:

- Identify and Close Gaps in Partnership with the Community Goal, Strategy C: *Identify ways to address unaddressed community needs and develop Identify ways to address unaddressed community needs and develop programs, policies, and processes to facilitate community transformation.*

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**OPTIONS:**

1. Mayor and Commission:
  - a. Approve the Proposed Project Concept, as generally described in **Attachment #1**, for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project and authorize staff to advance the Project to the Schematic Design Phase in accordance with the Proposed Project Concept;
  - b. Approve the Proposed Site Selection Criteria, as generally described in **Attachment #2**, for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 - East Side Library Project and authorize the Site Selection Committee (SSC) and staff to enter Stage II of the Major Site Selection Process to identify potential sites and subsequently develop a Candidate Site list for the East Side Public Library (SPLOST 2020 Project 25) to be presented for review and approval by the Mayor and Commission; and
  - c. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents.
2. Mayor and Commission does not approve the Proposed Project Concept and/or Site Selection Criteria for SPLOST 2020 Project 25 East Side Public Library Project.
3. Mayor and Commission defined option.

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

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of the Manager-SPLOST Program Management

Prepared by: John Simoneaux, Project Manager



Robert Cheshire, Capital Projects Director

October 11, 2022

Date:

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**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:**

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



Manager

October 10, 2022

Date:

Attachment #1 – Proposed Project Concept  
Attachment #2 – Site Selection Criteria  
Attachment #3 – Full listing of all Public Input

# PROJECT CONCEPT (PROGRAM / SPACE ELEMENTS)

## Must Have:

- A library that can accommodate +/-90-120 parking spaces (1.5 acres), 1.5 acres expansion of building, and .5 acre of open space.
- A library that can accommodate up to 200,000 visitors annually.
- A library that can house up to 50,000 books in its collection.
- A library that can accommodate a variety of spaces including but not limited to those mentioned below:
- A kitchenette in or near the large meeting space or accessible from multiple places and adjacent to meeting rooms.
- A large meeting room with a divider that could be open to the public after hours.
- Collaborative spaces to accommodate the increase in those working remotely. The spaces should include a range of sizes starting with smaller 1–2-person study rooms up to a 3-6-person study room. These spaces should also have the technology to accommodate virtual interviews and collaboration.
- 1 Online Public Access Catalog per collection spaced throughout the library.
- Children's area that includes a book collection and help desk that can also serve as circulation.
- A desk that can house general information, circulation, and self checkout services. Should be able to accommodate at least 2 staff members at a time.
- Staff lounge and staff only restrooms, as well as staff and volunteer storage.
- Multipurpose space with counters, storage, and a sink.
- Separate young adult area/teen station and collection, with a help desk.
- Adult book and media collection including new book collection, periodicals, and Special Collection.
- Meets the prerequisites as defined by the USGBC LEED (v4.1) criteria or similar certification in order to be considered "Certified"
- Strong pedestrian and inter-modal connections.
- Storage specific to each age group as well as separate courier storage.
- Storage for carts and an elevated loading dock for circulation.
- Outdoor accessible curbside returns area.
- Security monitoring infrastructure.

## Highly Wanted:

- Shaded outdoor space that can be used for working on laptops, have access to Wi-Fi and collaboration.
- Shaded and contained outdoor space for children’s activities as well as a nearby safe area for child pick-up and drop-off.
- Space to accommodate expanding staff.
- Is able to achieve a score of 50 or more points in USGBC LEED (v4.1) or similar certification to be considered "Silver."
- Opportunity to expand employee office space.
- Sensory area for patrons with specific needs.
- Advanced accessibility accommodations with a hearing loops system in main meeting room.
- Design to include shelving and spaces for foreign language collection and cultural representation collections.
- Accessible curbside infrastructure for returns that is protected from the elements.
- Separate young adult area with lounge seating, tables, computers, collection, and gaming station.
- A library that can accommodate +/-180 parking spaces (2.0 acres), 1 acre expansion of building, 1.5 acres of open detention opportunity, and .5 acres of open space.

## Nice to Have:

- Solar outdoor charging stations for devices.
- An outdoor gathering space and meeting space for the community that could be accessed after library hours.
- Is able to achieve a score of 60 or more points in USGBC LEED (v4.1) or similar certification to be considered "Gold" or "Platinum."
- A recording studio with necessary technology and acoustic separation.
- A private parenting room off the central area with seating and a sink.
- A drive-through drop off for returns.
- 9-12 acres to accommodate a 30 year expansion plan.

## SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library

### Site Selection Criteria - Community and Environmental Values

#### GENERAL AREA WALKABILITY

*Must have: Walkable within 5-10 min of other businesses (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Walkable within 5-10 min of residential community (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Walkable within 5-10 min of higher density residential community (5 points)*

#### PROXIMITY TO SCHOOLS

*Must have: Walkable within 5-10 min of campus (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Walkable 5-10 min & without crossing major street (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Walkable by adjacent property (5 points)*

#### PROXIMITY TO BUS ROUTE, GREENWAYS, INTERMODAL APPROACH

*~~Must have: On or near Bus Stop / Public Transportation Routes (1 point)~~*

*~~Highly Wanted: Within 5-10 min of current or future Bus Route / Transit, and Bicycle Routes (3 points)~~*

*~~Nice to have: Something unique or above the previous standards (5 points)~~*

*Must have: Walkable within 5-10 min of current or future Bus Stop / Public Transportation Routes (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Within 5-10 min of current or future Bus Route / Transit, and Bicycle Routes (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Something unique or above the previous standards (5 points)*

#### DEMOGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITY ALIGNMENT

*Must have: Close proximity to general population density centers (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Close proximity to heavy user ship (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Close proximity to Density, heavy user ship, and underserved communities (5 points)*

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

*Must have: Water pressure for fire suppression systems adequate (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Within 10 min of EMS/Police/ Fire response zone (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Close Proximity / under 5 min response time zone (5 point)*

#### SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

*~~Must have: Building location encourages inclusive community patronage (1 point)~~*

*~~Highly Wanted: Building location promotes inclusivity and has the opportunity to reach historically underserved patrons. (3 points)~~*

*~~Nice to have: Building location has opportunity to directionally change social conditions in a positive manner. (5 points)~~*

*Must have: Building location encourages inclusive community patronage through accessibility, walkability, and proximity to public transportation. (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Building location promotes inclusivity as listed above, and has the opportunity to reach historically underserved patrons in the neighborhoods defined by the demographic team. (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Building location has opportunity to directionally change social conditions in a positive manner through the expansion of items listed above that perhaps don't yet exist in the area. (5 points)*



<b>SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library</b> <b>Site Selection Criteria - Community and Environmental Values</b>	
<b>SUSTAINABILITY (USGBC LEED rating)</b>	
<i>Must have: The site must meet minimum prerequisites as defined by USGBC LEED (v4.1) site selection criteria equivalent in similar sustainable rating systems. (1 point)</i>	
<i>Highly Wanted: Site has potential to score 4 or more points on Sustainable Site in USGBC LEED v4.1 or equivalent in similar sustainable rating systems. (3 points)</i>	
<i>Nice to have: Site has potential to score 7 or more points on Sustainable Site in USGBC LEED v4.1 equivalent in similar sustainable rating systems. (5 points)</i>	
<b><del>HEALTH AND WELLNESS (USBC WELL rating system)</del></b>	
<i><del>Must have: Building location promotes active and healthy lifestyle choices (1 point)</del></i>	
<i><del>Highly Wanted: Building location promotes USBGC WELL Building minimum standards applicable. (3 points)</del></i>	
<i><del>Nice to have: Building location has potential to score strongly in USBGC Well Building Fitness, Comfort, and Mind standards. (5 points)</del></i>	
<b>CLEAR OF AIRPORT PROTECTIVE ZONES &amp; NOISE ZONES</b>	
<i>Must have: The site must be outside FAA regulated runway protection zones. (1 point)</i>	
<i>Highly Wanted: Outside FAA runway protection zones and clear of acceptable decibel that does not require special sound construction. (3 points)</i>	
<i>Nice to have: Includes above and has limited or no noise from overhead airplane activity (5 points)</i>	
<b>SITE VISIBILITY</b>	
<i>Must have: Signage visible from Street (1 point)</i>	
<i>Highly Wanted: Building &amp; Signage visible from street (3 points)</i>	
<i>Nice to have: Building easily identifiable and visible from major street / intersection (5 point)</i>	

<b>SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library</b> <b>Site Selection Criteria - Measurable Criteria Physical Site</b>	
<b>SITE LOCATION</b>	
<i>Must have: Within the defined Athens Eastside Library "Must Have" area defined as "The East Side" (1 point)</i>	
<i>Highly Wanted: Inside defined Athens Eastside Library "Highly Wanted" area (3 points)</i>	
<i>Nice to have: In close proximity or inside one of the defined Athens Eastside Library "Nice to Have" area (5 points)</i>	
<b>DEVELOPABLE SQUARE FEET AVAILABLE (ACREAGE)</b>	
<b>New Site</b>	
<i>Must have: 30,000 sf building foot print (0.75 acres), +/-90-120 parking spaces (1.0 acres), 1.25 acres expansion of building Total: 3.5 acres (1 point)</i>	

## SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library

### Site Selection Criteria - Measurable Criteria Physical Site

*Highly Wanted: 45,000 sf building footprint (1 acre), +/-180 parking spaces (1.4 acres), open detention opportunity (1 acre) Total: 4.0-6.0 acres (3 points)*

*Nice to have: 30 plus yr. plan ~~8-10~~ 6+ acres (5 points)*

#### **Adaptive Reuse**

*Must have: 30,000 sf with 25'- 30' structural bays for adaptive reuse, +/-90-120 parking spaces (or land to available to accommodate), 1.5 acres expansion of building, open space (0.5 acres) = total 5.0 acres (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: 45,000 sf with 25'- 30' structural bays and open floor plan available for adaptive reuse, +/-180 parking spaces (or land to accommodate 2.0 acres), 1 acre expansion of building, open detention opportunity (1.5 acres), open space (0.5 acres) = total 5.0-9.0 acres (3 points)*

*Nice to have: 30 plus yr. plan 9+ acres with minimal renovation (5 points)*

#### **Parking Requirements**

*Must Have: Provide 3 spaces per 1,000 sf of building*

*Highly Wanted: Provide 4 spaces per 1,000 sf planned future building (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Provide 4 per thousand with clear walkways (5 points)*

#### **TOPOGRAPHY**

*Must have: Slope may require some retaining walls or topography modifications, but meets buildable area requirements (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Slope may require some topography modifications, meets buildable area requirements (3 points)*

*Nice to Have: Site is generally level and accommodates multiple building layouts with minor grading (5 points)*

#### **ROAD ACCESS / TRAFFIC IMPACT**

*Must have: Location does not adversely affect adjacent properties traffic ingress and egress or add to street vehicle count by more than 20% (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Location allows for direct ingress and egress, and does not add to street vehicle count by more than 15% (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Traffic signaled entrance (5 points)*

#### **UTILITY ACCESS**

*~~Must have: Within adjacent right of way municipal water, municipal sewer, power, natural gas, and storm water (1 point)~~*

*~~Highly Wanted: Within adjacent right of way utilities noted above and has high speed data or fiber optic connection in adjacent right of way (3 points)~~*

*~~Nice to have: Site has utilities and data options noted above, and utilities are located below ground (5 points)~~*

#### **New Site**

*Must have: Access to municipal water, municipal sewer, power, natural gas, and storm water (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Within adjacent right of way utilities noted above and has high speed data or fiber optic connection in adjacent right of way (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Site has utilities and data options noted above, and utilities are located below ground (5 points)*

## SPLOST 2020 Project 25 – East Side Library

### Site Selection Criteria - Measurable Criteria Physical Site

#### **Adaptive Reuse**

*Must have: Existing utilities with upgrade acceptable (includes municipal water, municipal sewer, power, natural gas, and storm water) (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Existing utilities are acceptable and include those noted above, high speed data or fiber optic connection in adjacent right of way (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Site has utilities and data options noted above, and existing utilities are located below ground (5 points)*

#### **PROPERTY OWNERSHIP (COUNTY / PUBLIC, PRIVATE)**

*~~Must have: Willing seller with clear title/deed (1 point)~~*

*Must have: Site is available for purchase (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Existing Government property that would consider Intragovernmental agreement for exchange or use (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Property presently owned by ACCUG and available for development of Library use (5 points)*

#### **~~PROPERTY INCLUDES OUTDOOR SPACE~~**

*~~Must have: Patio or porches included in design add 3,000 – 8,000 sf. (1 point)~~*

*~~Highly Wanted: Small park area, meditation garden 8,000 – 12,000 sf (3 points)~~*

*~~Nice to have: Multiple outdoor spaces, possible something more active use like a trail amphitheater, other 12,000 sf+ (5 points)~~*

#### **PROXIMITY TO COUNTY OWNED SERVICES**

*~~Must have: Close proximity to recreation or greenspaces (1 point)~~*

*Must have: Site is available for purchase (1 point)*

*Highly Wanted: Adjacent to preserved land or greenspace (3 points)*

*Nice to have: Adjacent to Parks/active recreation, Greenspace and trails (5 points)*

### **Attachment #3 - Public Input Results**

Please visit the link below for the online public input results for the East Side Public Library project:

<https://athensclarke.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/9d4f5990a3ba4d21941e087fce7311ab>