

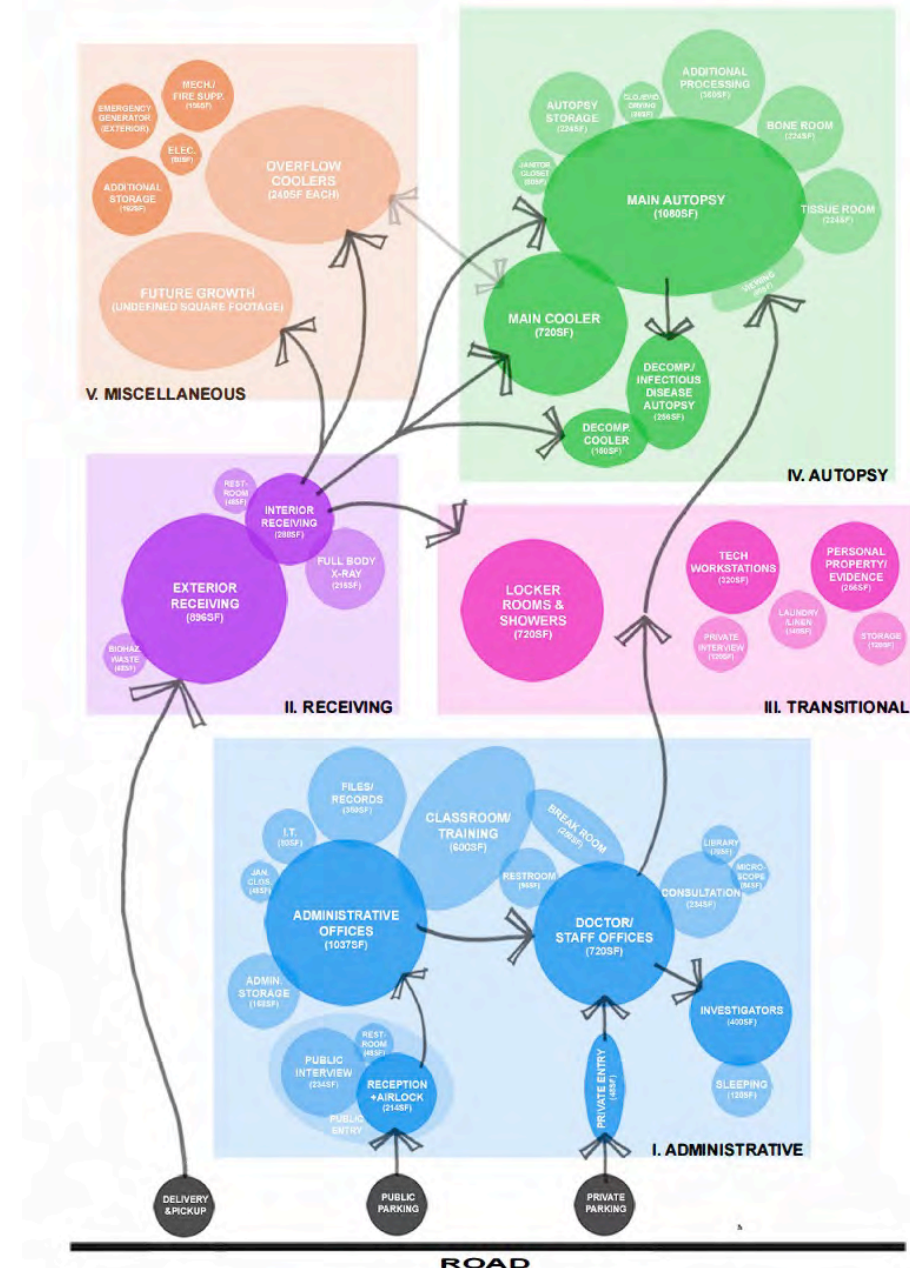
Existing Hamilton County Forensic Center

3202 Amnicola Hwy
Chattanooga, TN

Built 1989
4,806 Square Foot



Pre-design Building Program Study Diagram



Pre-design Building Program Study Requirements

New Building Size
14,244 SF

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS:

- Security/Alarm system
- Secure roof w/anti-terrorism roof hatch
- Autopsy area & Admin area on separate HVAC systems
- Solar panel installation recommended
- Confirm compliance with NAME (National Association of Medical Examiners) standards for NAME accreditation

BUBBLE DIAGRAM:

The attached bubble diagram is meant for programmatic purposes only. Its purpose is to illustrate the organization of the spaces defined within this document, as well as required adjacencies and access points.

SQUARE FOOTAGE TOTALS:

Administrative Area Total Square Footage: 5665 s.f.

Receiving Area Total Square Footage: 1709 s.f.

Transitional Area Total Square Footage: 1978 s.f.

Autopsy Area Total Square Footage: 4104 s.f.

Misc. Space Total Square Footage: 788 s.f. (interior)

= 14,244 s.f. TOTAL

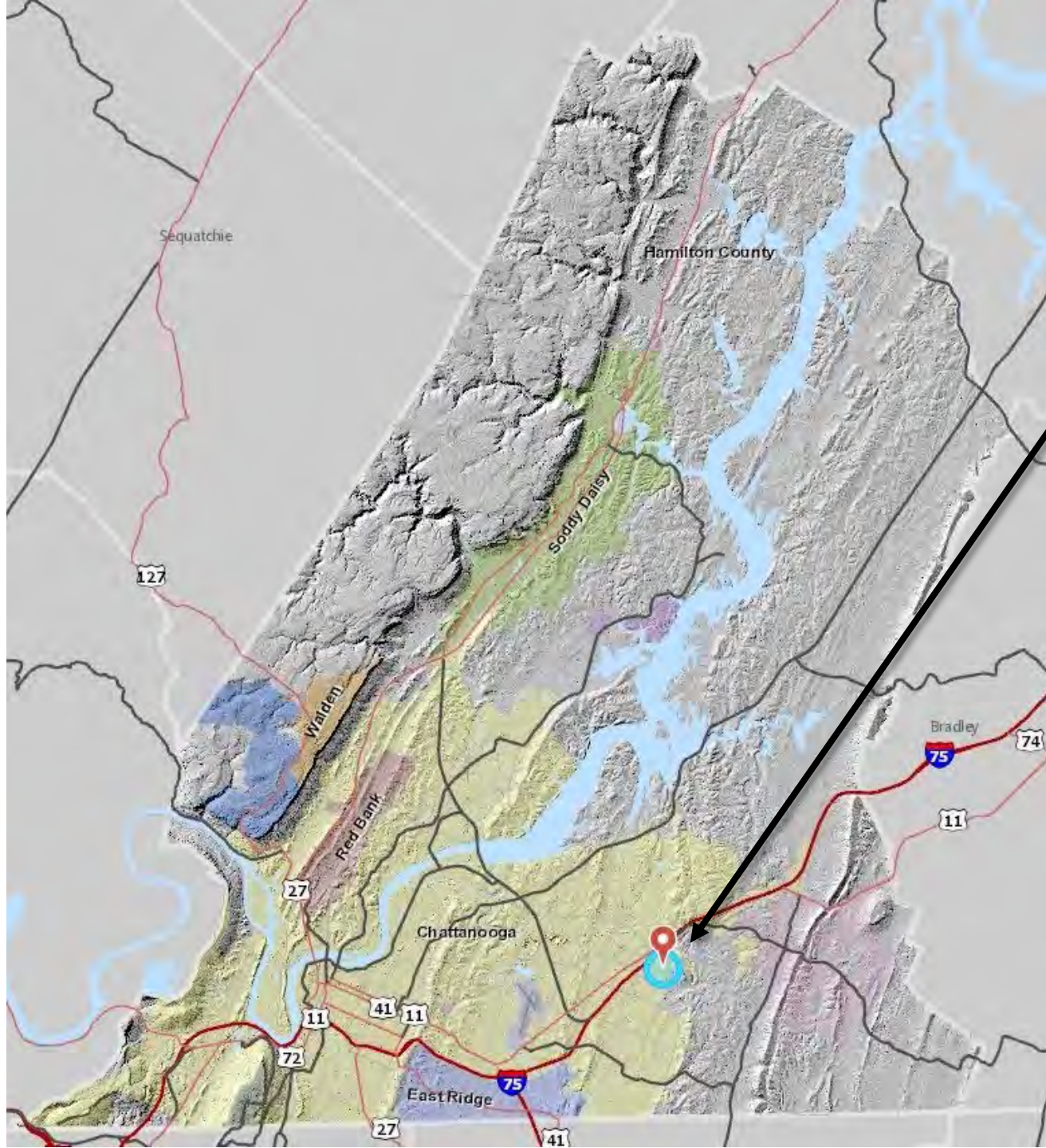
CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE:

A preliminary construction estimate is **\$5,700,000**. This estimate is based on current construction costs (as of 03.16.21) and is subject to change. This construction estimate covers the building structure costs only. Sitework/site improvements would be an additional **\$150,000**. (No geotechnical testing has been performed in the area of the proposed site.) The proposed site is a favorable location because of its existing direct access to utilities (water, sewer, gas, electric), as well as existing road access.

Existing Building and Site Constraints

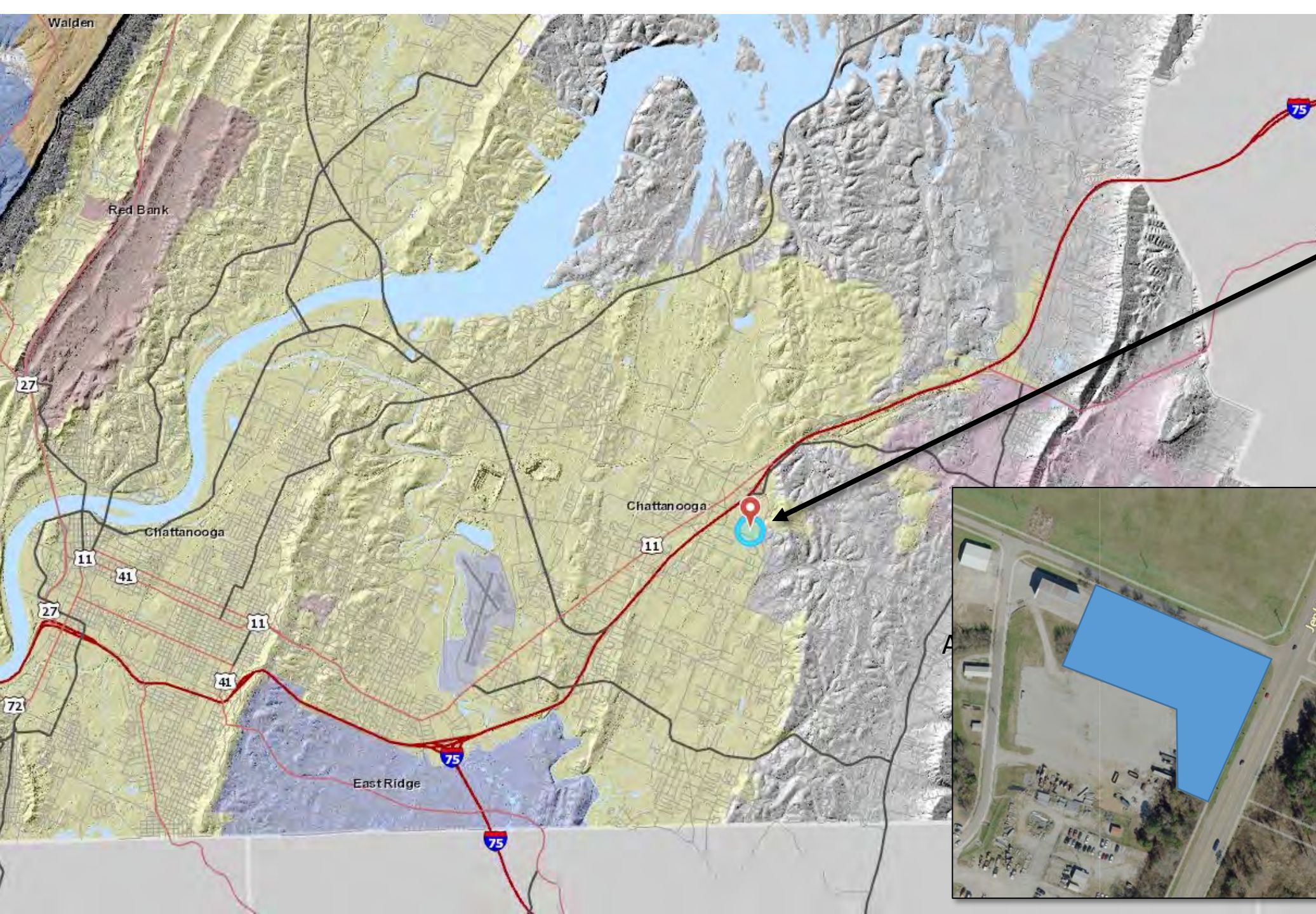
- Building is inadequate for future growth to accommodate required workspaces as identified by Program Study
- Deficiencies include insufficient HVAC and exhaust system
- Existing site size of 28,000 SF is unable to support a building requirement of 14,244 SF





Proposed Site For
New Forensic Center

Off I-75, Exit 7
Near 3600 Jenkins Road
Chattanooga, TN

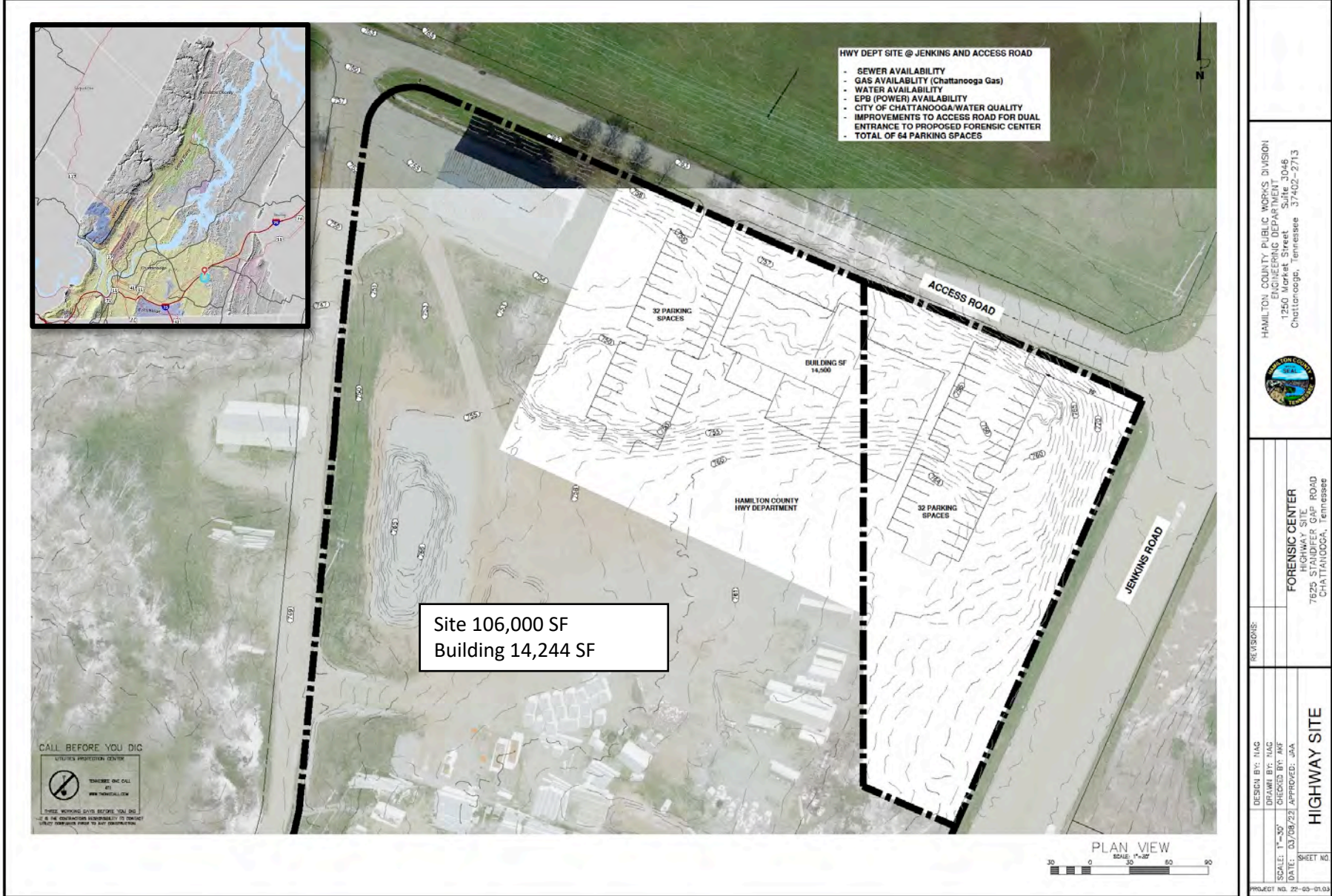


Proposed Site For
New Forensic Center

3600 Jenkins Rd,
Chattanooga, TN



Proposed New Facility Site – 3600 Jenkins Rd



HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT 1048
1956 Locust Street, Tennessee 37402-2713
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402-2713



REVISIONS:

DESIGN BY: MAC	DATE: 03/08/23
DRAWN BY: MAC	
CHECKED BY: AMF	
APPROVED: JAA	

FORENSIC CENTER
HIGHWAY SITE
7625 STANDFER GAP ROAD
CHATTANOOGA, Tennessee

HIGHWAY SITE

SHEET NO.

PROJECT NO. 23-03-01.03

Project Cost Estimate

\$10,105,200

*Building Construction Cost
Estimated at \$400 per SF

Project Costs developed Spring 2022

Design (10% of estimated building cost)	\$570,000
Special Inspections during construction (2% of estimated building cost)	\$114,000
Site Infrastructure (grading and preparation)	\$150,000
Project construction admin/testing (2% of estimated building cost)	\$114,000
Construction contingency (10% of estimated building cost)	\$570,000
<u>Building Construction</u>	<u>\$5,700,000*</u>
Estimated Total	\$7,218,000
Plus 40%	\$2,887,200
Estimated Total	\$10,105,200

Project Timeline

- Pre-design Building Program – Completed February 2020
- Architect Selection – Request for Qualifications (RFQ) – 3 Months
- Design – 9 Months
- Bid & Award – 3 Months
- Construction – 12 Months
- Total Time After Project Approval – approximately 2 Years, 3 Months

Projected Budget

New Building (design and construction)	\$10,105,200
Autopsy Equipment	\$3,475,290
Property (approx. 2.5 acres)	<u>\$250,000</u>
TOTAL COST	\$13,830,490
State Investment	\$10,000,000
Hamilton County Investment	\$3,830,490

Note: Hamilton County intends to absorb any additional utility costs (estimated at \$100,000), donate the property (approx. 2.5 acres), and deal with any construction cost escalations by reducing building square footage and/or providing additional funding.

Staffing Analysis:

POPULATION BY COUNTY:

Hamilton 375,000

Bradley 112,000

Polk 17,000

Rhea 34,000

Sequatchie 16,000

Marion 30,000

Bledsoe 16,000

Meigs 13,000

Total catchment area population: 613,000

Hamilton County: 62% of catchment area population

Total out-of-county population: 238,000 (38% of catchment area population)

NAME standards: 250 autopsies and equivalents per pathologist; 3 exams = 1 autopsy equivalent

Estimated autopsies/equivalents: Hamilton County: 500 (375 autopsies + 125 exams)

Estimated autopsy referrals, out of county: 238

Probable actual autopsy referrals: 120 (50% estimate based on experience in similar systems)

Total Hamilton County autopsies / equivalents, plus estimated autopsy referrals 500+238= 738

Total Hamilton County autopsies / equivalents, plus probable autopsy referrals 500+120= 620

738 autopsies / 250 autopsies per pathologist = 3 pathologists

620 autopsies / 250 autopsies per pathologist = 2.5 pathologists

Staffing:

Current Staffing

- 2 Forensic Pathologists
- 1 Chief Medical Investigator/Office Manager
- 1 Chief Deputy Medical Investigator/Asst. Office Manager
- 4 Medical Investigative Specialists
- 2 Forensic Technicians
- 1 Administrative Support
- 1 Accreditation & QA Support

Estimated Additional Future Staffing:

- 1 Additional Forensic Pathologist
(prefer Board-Certified)
- 2 Additional Medical Investigative Specialists
- 2 Additional Forensic Technicians
- 1 Additional Administrative Support



HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR
WESTON WAMP

Tony Niknejad
Policy Director
Office of Governor Bill Lee
State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Mr. Niknejad:

As a follow up, please find below justification for use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to be utilized for a new Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center.

Executive Summary

- The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center is the Southeast Tennessee Regional Forensic Center and has the capacity to handle 12 bodies at a time – as of July 2022, Hamilton County has had 1,177 confirmed COVID-19 deaths.
- COVID-19 patients are routinely sent to Hamilton County Hospitals because it is a regional health care hub.
- The influx of COVID-19 deaths has overloaded the current facility, which, was not designed to handle a pandemic of this size.
- The footprint and ongoing operations of the current facility make it impossible to retrofit to handle the influx from COVID-19.
- Building a duplicate site would be wasteful and inefficient.
- In order to handle the influx from COVID -19, a new facility is needed ASAP and Hamilton County has agreed to provide the land, engineering, construction management, relocation cost, and cover all expenses beyond the 10 million grant.

Regional Forensic Centers across the State of Tennessee:

Tennessee State Department of Health has designated five (5) regional forensic centers; West Tennessee Regional Forensic Center (Memphis), Middle Tennessee Regional Forensic Center (Nashville), East Tennessee Regional Forensic Center (Knoxville), Northeast Regional Forensic Center (Johnson City), and Southeast Regional Forensic Center (Chattanooga). Additionally, all regional forensic centers are accredited under National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME).

Negative Impacts of Covid-19 on Operations and Population Served:

The Covid-19 Pandemic unofficially started at some point in the year of 2019. At that time Covid-19 symptoms were diagnosed or misdiagnosed as Flu, or upper respiratory infections, as early warning signs and flawed testing negated the actual identification of the Covid-19 disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Covid-19 testing plans were initiated in early January 2020. In late January 2020, details by the CDC of Covid-19 testing were received. In February 2020, detection and testing of suspected Covid-19 cases began. In April 2020, there was a lack of wide distribution of Covid-19 test kits to health agencies and the deaths were underestimated. Negative impacts from the Alpha, Delta, Omicron and current BA.2 etc. variants were felt greatly in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

After the first health warning issued by the CDC, due to hoarding, and lack of mass produced personal protection equipment (PPE), the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center was unable to purchase from any vendor (PPE) for our office, staff, and field medical investigators to adequately perform duties. All (PPE) was on back order or very limited (especially latex gloves, facemasks, face shields, body disaster bags, and no R95 facemasks required/preferred to wear). The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center could not purchase any hand sanitizer, or any sanitization liquids (except what was in stock) to clean hands and equipment. Negative impact due to supply and demand, (PPE) costs doubled or tripled; not budgeted for.

At or near peak reported deaths, nationwide, Hamilton County, Tennessee local hospitals (three major hospitals) were in the same situation, but not to the extent of cities/counties with enormous populations, as Hamilton County, Tennessee has roughly a population of 364,700.

Hamilton County, Tennessee is surrounded by other Tennessee counties and borders several Georgia counties without the level of care (ventilators) to treat or required for the pandemic treatment. Most if not all suspected Covid-19 patients in the outlying counties were transferred (by EMS or air medical) to the three Hamilton County hospitals for higher level of care and ventilator availability/capacity. One Hamilton County, Tennessee hospital is a level one trauma center, so they were accepting not only suspected Covid-19 patients, but all critically ill and traumatic injury cases. Hamilton County Covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths were exacerbated due to the influx of out of county/state Covid-19 patients that were transported to local Hamilton County hospitals caused hospital staff shortages, closure of floor rooms (inadequate staffing), staff infected with Covid-19, and intensive care units at full capacity; utilization of negative air pressure units in neuro trauma intensive care units. Negative impact; over capacity (inadequate staffing) of hospitals; emergency rooms placed on advisory, or bypass (excluding trauma cases); economic deficits and negative revenue.

Negative impact to the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center - deaths from outlying counties/states at local hospitals caused additional burden for overflow of deaths from hospitals and storage of decedents until funeral arrangements were made.

The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center was directly and negatively impacted by the closure of all schools, businesses closings, travel restrictions, training canceled, and staff working at home remotely. The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center split weeks of personnel being at the office and the other half working at home remotely.

The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center must have 24/7, 365 coverage for death scene investigations, examinations/autopsies, and indigent deceased person storage with no prearranged funeral home plans. Also, if both forensic pathologists were infected or suspected as infected with Covid-19, then all examinations/autopsies would have to be transferred/transported to another regional forensic facility (Knoxville or Nashville) at the expense of Hamilton County government and county taxpayers, which would be a negative economic impact, and logistic issues; fortunately, that did not occur.

On March 10, 2020, Hamilton County Emergency Management procured (monthly rental approximately \$6,000 to \$7,000 per container) two (2) offsite mobile morgue refrigerated containers for local hospitals and our office for death overflow storage. The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center staff had total control of the operations of the offsite facility and made protocols of use for the offsite facility, which was located approximately ten (10) miles from the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center. Further, the negative economic impact included vehicle fuel, vehicle maintenance costs, employee salaries and overtime compensation.

Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center selected staff had to implement the offsite facility protocols and coordinate with all local hospitals on how to use the facility, which took Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center staff away from normal duties to initiate the written protocols, make sure the hospital assigned coordinators were updated and had read the new protocols for use. A group email was established with read receipts for confirmation of disseminated information.

Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center and Hamilton County Emergency Management had to contract private transport service for all Covid-19 or suspected Covid-19 deaths from hospitals, homes, motels/hotels to the offsite Covid-19 refrigerated container facility. All the above items (offsite facility, split shifts transport services, and additional documentation had a negative economic impact as these were additional services not previously budgeted for).

The pandemic economically impacted the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center as additional overtime compensation was required for the new unscheduled duties of the offsite facility for hospitals and coordination with the private transport service of deceased persons, as Hamilton County Emergency Medical Services (HCEMS) were backlogged with calls for service including Covid-19 patients.

Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center can hold twelve (12) deceased persons, with the use of a (construction materials type manufactured) hand-crank lift to wall trays in the main cooler. The six (6) floor trays are for pending examinations/autopsies. Negative impact: Employees subject to injury to move bodies to wall trays in order to have adequate floor trays available.

All confirmed or suspected Covid-19 deaths were transported from hospitals or homes directly to the offsite Covid-19 facility and not brought into the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center as the facility does not have any negative air pressure area/room for infectious disease control, thus a negative Covid-19 impact for service. Cases that required autopsy were performed with limited staff to lesson possible exposure.

Due to negatively impacted Covid-19 deaths, families could not have traditional funeral services for their loved ones. Local, out of county, and other state funeral homes were negatively impacted due to the backlog of planned funerals and some funerals took as long as a month or longer to be performed.

Most families, not by choice, made the determination to have their loved one cremated, as funeral homes could not provide refrigerated storage long enough for a traditional burial. Hospitals initiated no visitor policies, which included families not able to be with their loved ones at or near the time when death occurred. Families had to rely only on hospital personnel/staff to comfort loved ones when death occurred. Negative impact: harmful, emotional, and mentally distressing to families and healthcare workers.

If the death occurred in Hamilton County, Tennessee, it was the responsibility and duty of the Office of the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center, either the Chief Medical Examiner or Associate Medical Examiner, to review all cremation permits, and death certificates. Clerical staff had to make a cremation case file, and fax all approved cremation permits to the appropriate funeral home. Negative Economic Impact for Covid-19: Cases are not usually/normally a medical examiner case. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic cases, the additional autopsy caseloads, and natural cases not associated to Covid-19 were the responsibility of the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center.

Statistical information for the pandemic period January 01, 2019 to July 15, 2022:

Hamilton County, Tennessee

Covid-19 deaths: 1,177

Accidental deaths: 1,374 (including 586 Drug Overdose Deaths)

Homicides: 153

Suicides: 237

Cases Autopsied: 1,600

Total Medical Examiner Cases: 3,053

Natural Deaths: 757

Non-ME Cases but deaths reported: 9,886

Cremation Permits: 8,813

Cremation Permits: 1,177 Covid-19 deaths (probably one-third (1/3) to possibly one half (1/2) or more were Covid-19 related deaths; cremations).

Additional Covid -19 Concerns:

As nationwide, Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center still has Covid-19 concerns. The death rate has decreased as well as hospitalizations. With that said, should a new more vicious Covid-19 variant emerge, with mass deaths, the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center is in the same exact position as

during the previously mentioned pandemic parameters; unable to provide adequate forensic services with space constraints. Within the timeframe of May 2022 through July 2022, 75% of Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center staff was positive for some variant of Covid-19 and required quarantine.

There is no possible way to incur a surge of Covid-19 deaths with our current building facility if another Covid-19 wave should reappear or surface. New Covid-19 variants even more contagious have emerged with local hospitals preparing for a late 2022 outbreak on increased hospitalizations. The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center's current facility is simply too limited to handle our current case load and Covid-19 or worse.

Economically, it would be a reasonable approach after having endured the negative impact of Covid-19, including the harm of placing employees at risk of exposure to Covid-19 related infections (negative air capabilities), to build a new forensic facility, safe for employees, capable of a pandemic surge and to handle the current case load. The current facility lacks the capacity for body assisted lift systems currently used by updated forensic centers. There is no ceiling room space to retrofit such body lift systems. Having the body lift systems in place would assist in preventing employee injuries.

The additional safeguards are not practical to retrofit the current building facility as there is no adequate building space for such retrofitted equipment. Since the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center must operate 24/7, 365 days/year, and understanding the interior space of the current building, there is no way to continue regular operations while renovating the current facility. Also, the lot/property is very limited and would not allow adequate construction site space while continuing regular operations.

Analysis:

The Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center falls under the umbrella of State of Tennessee Department of Health and should meet the eligibility criteria under the Public Health Category. Investigation of death and the determination of the manner and cause of death is the primary principle of any forensic center for any person/citizen that requires forensic services.

1. Covid-19, like any other communicable infectious disease, is a public health concern with various economic impacts on resources, appropriate functioning building facilities, appropriate staffing, budgets, employee benefits, coordination and cooperation with peripheral agencies and other stakeholders and we must attempt to honor family religious parameters regarding religious autopsy protocols.
 - Impact to Covid-19 socioeconomically deprived or less fortunate persons or households; provide same forensic services as any person/citizen would expect with Covid-19 infections
 - Impact on business, hospitals, funeral homes, law enforcement agencies, non-profits, hospice care, body donations to science entities, DNA paternity testing, organ donation centers, indigent or reasonable funeral expenses or cremation services (Hamilton County, TN provides indigent cremations)
 - Disproportionate impact on homeless community, indigent families of deceased, closure of businesses due to Covid-19 pandemic, economic financial failure

- Most severe impacts with Covid-19 exposures to healthcare workers (including Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center staff/employees), frontline workers (law enforcement, general governments, front line infrastructure workers; infected with Covid-19 causing debilitating post-infection effects (loss of job and most severe death)

2. Design a response that addresses or responds to the impact:

- Impact of harm/risk of Covid-19 due to Hamilton County's geographic location, health care facility development, population growth, this necessitates a need for additional space for forensic services. With a projected 3.8% to 3.9% population growth (estimated) Hamilton County will have just under 400,000 in total population
- Not figured into the project population growth are homeless community populations, and the influx of out of county/state patients transferred to Hamilton County local hospitals for Covid-19 treatment; any deaths associated to Covid-19 are the responsibility of the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center for possible overflow storage and cremation application processing
- Reasonableness of impact for a projected new forensic center based on previous or future Covid-19 outbreaks; adequate space to conduct forensic examinations and autopsies; and adequate employee work stations; reasonable benefit to any person regardless of socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, or ethnicity by a more expeditious approach of forensic services (autopsy results/reports for answers to families, death certificates, cremation permits, law enforcement inquiries on criminal cases; efficient body storage inventory reduction (cooler space) to funeral homes with ample cooler space for continued examinations and forensic services

Address additional information on specific Covid-19 impact to the operations of the current facility:

Covid-19 continues to impact the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center's day to day operations with additional unbudgeted capital and operations expenditures as previously mentioned including private transport services, delegation of extra personnel duties and responsibilities that ordinarily would not have been tasked. However, these are reasonably proportional to the harm/risk associated to the Covid-19 pandemic and in compliance with National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) standards of accreditation.

Specifically inquired for this response was that cooler space was the main issue for a new forensic center. However, this is only one component of necessary improvements to handle Covid-19.

Address building a new facility vs increase current cooler space:

1. There is no possible way based on the footprint and square feet of the current building/facility to attempt such an expansion or retrofit of additional cooler space or equipment. Making larger or

increasing cooler space would decrease the other limited precious space/area currently in use to compensate for the cooler expansion. Hamilton County and Chattanooga City building codes may negate or prohibit any add-on or exterior additions/expansions to the current facility. Current employee and visitor parking is already inadequate. Any proposed external expansion would negate the current parking space.

2. It would make our current facility non-operational (closed or cease operations) due to any demolition or attempted construction to expand cooler space in the current facility. Examinations/autopsies would have to be transferred to other regional forensic centers with a negative impact of economic non-budgeted expenditures.

Address opioid-related deaths as a one of the primary needs for a new forensic center compared to the effects of Covid-19 pandemic:

There is a logical or reasonable assumption that due to Covid-19, some individuals lost their jobs permanently. Some of those individuals were previous substance abusers and were possibly working in an environment where their employer conducted/mandated drug screen testing for employment. This kept the individual clean of drug use while being actively employed. Once the individual lost their job, reduction in force etc. was reasonable that the individual returned to substance abuse use due to lack of employment or ability to find other employment. These individuals potentially fell back into depression and reverted back to a previous life style of drug addiction. More importantly the previous drug addiction; the synthetic opioid Fentanyl may have not been prevalent; but now is the number one death component in opioid deaths.

Workforce employees working remotely or from home were not under supervised scrutiny. This gave an avenue of recreational drug use with unfortunate distribution of unknown opioid laced drugs. This resulted in opioid drug overdoses (survival/recoveries) and associated drug overdose opioid deaths. Negative impact to hospitals, public safety (Police, Fire, EMS), forensic centers with a public health hazard/concern.

In numerous opioid death cases, the decedent was also Covid-19 positive.

Address the cost of the capital project reasonable and proportional response to the pandemic's impact:

The pandemic's effect was globally harmful to the entire populace. It struck absolute fear in people with daily news announcements of the increasing death tolls with no end in sight. When it was announced that Covid-19 was indeed a public health hazard, the fear was exacerbated to the point of hoarding personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning out stores of sanitary items, water, and food. The pandemic turned into panic. Most people infected were under the impression they would die based on televised death tolls.

The harm effected every individual globally and locally. There was no immediate remedy for Covid-19 testing abilities, treatment was based on traditional pulmonary disease infection treatment protocols with ventilators. Healthcare workers and epidemiologists were initially treating individuals on a new Flu variant not encountered before and were grossly mystified. Vaccination research/testing was going

through clinical trials. There have been deadly disease pandemics globally (Plague, different variants of Flu, SARS in 2002-2003 and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic) and lessons should have been learned for a future outbreak. It is unknown how long the delay was from China, but the minute Covid-19 was known to be fatal, the CDC and World Health Organization should have immediately prepared a strategic plan of action. Unfortunately, the delay and political intervention (of initial denial as a health concern) caused deadly and economically grave consequences.

The nationwide extent of harmful effect resulted in 1,016,647 deaths with 87,000,000 Covid-19 infections. Hamilton County alone had 1,177 deaths and 103,532 Covid-19 infections during the timeframe previously mentioned. This alone was a harmful event not to exclude the economic negative impact to Hamilton County. The number of entities affected include hospitals, health care workers, front line public safety, funeral homes, non-profit organizations, and most importantly all the families that lost loved ones to the Covid-19 pandemic, which still exists.

Capital expenditures for a new forensic center are appropriate for an assortment of reasons, including most of the existing facility, equipment, office furnishings, and employee office space is grossly inadequate to handle the increased volume from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Comparison of a capital project against two alternative capital expenditures and why the capital expenditure is superior.

1. **Proposed alternative capital expenditure:** to expand current building facility space including cooler space. Our current facility has cooler space for twelve (12) deceased individuals. This endeavor would not be possible due to the already limited space, lot size and footprint of the existing facility. There is no room for any expansion project (internally or externally) to the existing facility. Any proposed demolition, retrofitting, or construction would cause a closure of the existing facility, which requires 24/7, 365 days of operation for forensic services. This alternative would be considered completely unacceptable.

2. **Proposed alternative capital expenditure:** to use the current facility in addition to a proposed retrofitting of another facility. First and foremost, Hamilton County Government has no facility/building for such retrofitting (any facility with square footage required) as that was addressed up front initially. Attempting to work out of two separate facilities to compensate for inadequate space or additional square footage would be disadvantageous, an unrealistic working environment, and economically not a viable avenue of a capital expenditure. The current forensic services facility/building should remain as one entity and not be separated in order to prevent wasteful spending on duplication of equipment and productivity loss from employee separation. This alternative would be considered unacceptable.

3. **Proposed alternative capital expenditure:** the construction of a proposed new facility from the ground up with the appropriate space, square footage adequate for the increased current
 - forensic caseload including any Covid-19 communicable diseases/infections (past, present or future) a compelling and reasonable response.

- Hamilton County has already paid and committed for engineering and program phase design based on the size of other comparable newly constructed forensic center facilities of similar size. Based on pre-engineering assessment, the size of the new facility was determined to be approximately 14,244 square feet verses the current 5,812 square feet to efficiently provide forensic services.
- To initiate two new alternative capital expenditures would require Hamilton County to provide pre-engineering program phase with costs associated for the two alternative projects that are incapable to execute/accomplish. Hamilton County has assessed that they do not have an existing building to retrofit our forensic service's needs. The reduction of any square footage of the proposed new forensic center defeats the purpose of proposed/projected county growth and the harm would be redundant as in the current situation we experienced with Covid-19 or future outbreaks.
- Hamilton County does have land available for immediate construction of a new forensic center facility. The proposed building of a new forensic center verses any of the alternative proposals mentioned is superior based on current and projected population increases, continued Covid-19 disease detections, desired visitor destination location, and surrounding county and other state transfers of higher level of care of critically ill patients to Hamilton County. Any deaths associated to these patient transfers that occur in Hamilton County are deemed to be under the jurisdiction of the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center.
- FURTHER: Currently Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center contracts with Bradley County for forensic services. With the new facility at the current engineered specifications, the Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center could potentially expand contracted services and handle potential overflow from Covid-19 or future pandemics. This simply will not work with the current facility/building. Additional contracted services would require appropriate staffing to facilitate workload with authorization in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for reimbursement from other Tennessee counties. Nearby counties currently pay for forensic services and transportation to Nashville or Knoxville Regional Forensic Centers. A closer geographic location for forensic services could benefit additional Tennessee counties.

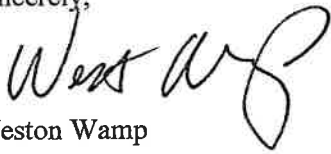
Based on the above information, the third proposed capital expenditure is superior verses two alternative capital expenditures.

Modifications to the existing facility inadequate:

- The current Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center was built in 1989 and was not designed to handle the surge from Covid-19.
- The current Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center building and footprint are simply too limited to be modified to handle Covid-19.

Your consideration and guidance for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) usage for the proposed building of a new Hamilton County Regional Forensic Center is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Weston Wamp". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping final letter.

Weston Wamp



Budget Proposal

Hamilton County Medical Examiner Facility

About the Project

Hamilton County Government is proposing an initial \$10,000,000 state budget request for the development of a new Hamilton County Medical Examiner building to replace and serve as the Southeast Tennessee Regional Forensic Center. The County is fully committed to, and vested in, the comprehensive oversight of the funds, management, and completion of the project. Any additional cost overages, revisions, or unanticipated activities incurred will be provided, as needed, by the County toward the total project amount. Currently, the estimated construction cost of \$10,105,200, anticipated equipment cost of \$3,475,290, and property donation of \$250,000 combined are approximately \$13,830,490.

The proposed 14,244 sq. ft. building will replace and more than triple the square footage of the current 33 year-old (built in 1989) now obsolete, outgrown structure. The new building will house and provide sufficient staff space and resources as needed by Hamilton County and the surrounding Southeast counties in its regional medical examiner service area.

The current forensic center is impeded by issues related, but not limited to, capacity backlogs; advanced technology requirements; physical plant failures; quality process improvements; etc. Results have yielded ever-rising case numbers primarily attributed to, and compounded by increases in regional population growth, violent crime fatalities, opioid overdoses, and COVID-19 deaths. Overall the new medical examiner facility will address these costly debilitating inefficiencies and outcomes, while fulfilling the mission of protecting the public's health and safety, participating in the criminal justice system, and providing vital statistical data.

Timeline

Pre-design Building Program – Completed February 2020

Architect Selection – Request for Qualifications (RFQ) – anticipated Three (3) Months


Design – anticipated Nine (9) Months

Bid & Award – anticipated Three (3) Months

Construction – anticipated Twelve (12) Months

Total Design, Bid and Construction Time – approximately Two (2) Years

The project is scheduled, after architect selection, to start July 1, 2023 and end June 30, 2025



Design and Bid & Award
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Construction
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Budget Information

Project Design and Construction Estimate

Design (10% of estimated building cost)	\$ 570,000.00
Special Inspections during construction (2% of estimated building cost)	\$ 114,000.00
Site Infrastructure (grading and preparation)	\$ 150,000.00
Project construction admin/testing (2% of estimated building cost)	\$ 114,000.00
Construction contingency (10% of estimated building cost)	\$ 570,000.00
Building Construction *	\$ 5,700,000.00
Estimated Total	<u>\$ 7,218,000.00</u>
Current 2022 Estimate + 40%	<u>\$ 2,887,200.00</u>
Grand Total	<u>\$ 10,105,200.00</u>

Note: *14,244 sf at \$400/sf. Estimate does not include any required land acquisition, equipment, or furnishings

Projected Autopsy Equipment Estimate

Autopsy Stations and Equipment	
Full Body X-Ray - (LODOX)	
Autopsy Carts- Hydraulics (5)	\$ 480,000
Pneumatic Saws With Vacuum	\$ 500,000
System Coolers (Main and	\$ 33,310
Decomposition) Miscellaneous	\$ 15,000
Shelving	\$ 145,000
Office Furniture	\$ 66,000
Floor Scale	\$ 75,000
Refrigerator and Deep Freezer	\$ 19,500
Rack: Front Load 40 Cadavers 3x7 footprint, Main Cooler, 4 Tiers	\$ 13,440
Height Winch-Body Lift System (3)	\$ 40,000
Cadaver Trays 27" x 78" (76 Trays) with Drain/Plug @ \$900 Each	\$ 70,000
Cadaver Carriers (36 Carriers) @ \$3,000 Each	\$ 68,400
Microscopes (5)	\$ 108,000
HVAC additional Negative Air Pressure System Requirements	\$ 130,000
Generator Commercial Grade (Electrical Backup, Power Failure)	\$ 300,000
Medical Grade Stand-Behind Hydraulic Fork/Scissor lift (Body Lift to Wall Racks)	\$ 150,000
Security, Phones, IT	\$ 10,000
Safety Wall Mount Shower and Eyewash	\$ 250,000
Washing Machine and Dryer Commercial Grade (Biohazard Sheets, Towels)	\$ 4,200
Moving Expenses	\$ 2,000
Grand Total	<u>\$ 2,482,350</u>
Supply, Demand, Materials Cost Increase Estimate +40%	\$ 992,940
Total	<u>\$ 3,475,290</u>

Appendix

- **Justification Letter to Build a New Hamilton County Medical Examiner Facility**
- **Projected Estimated Cost for New Facility**
- **Projected Estimated Cost for Autopsy Equipment**
- **Projected Estimated Budget for New Facility**



Office of Hamilton County Medical Examiner Southeast Tennessee Regional Forensic Center

3202 Amnicola Hwy · Chattanooga TN 37406 · P 423-209-5700 · F 423-493-5176

Justification Letter to Build a New Hamilton County Medical Examiner Facility

Hamilton County, Tennessee Government has current land acquired for the immediate construction of the new proposed Hamilton County Medical Examiner building facility.

The current Hamilton County Forensic Center was built and occupied for use in 1989. It is now 33 years old, and is in constant need of repair, outdated, and unable to hold current 2021-2022 staffing; office space is limited to six (6) staff offices, requiring some office space to be shared. Current staffing is twelve (12) employees.

The 5,812 sq. ft. facility was sufficient for the staffing at that time and could provide adequate forensic capabilities for cases required by Tennessee State Law to be examined as medical examiner cases.

The onset of population growth in Hamilton County, and surrounding Tennessee counties, including peripheral north Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina states and counties, dramatically increased the volume of cases investigated by Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office.

Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee also has a level one trauma hospital with ground and air medical EMS transports daily of critical injured patients from outside Hamilton County jurisdiction. If any of those critically injured patients succumb, the death is a Hamilton County Medical Examiner responsibility for investigation only and completion of death certificates due to the death occurring in Hamilton County jurisdiction.

Currently, Hamilton County violent crime is on the rise, opiate overdoses cases have tripled possibly quadrupled with the introduction of the deadly Fentanyl synthetic opioid in the year 2017.

The Covid-19 Pandemic 2020-2021 increased Hamilton County Medical Examiner case load as local hospitals have limited or no morgue/cooler space and decedents have to be transported under Hamilton County Medical Examiner jurisdiction for storage until families could make funeral arrangements.

Funeral homes are backlogged with funeral services, and maximum capacity reached in their facility morgues/coolers, which caused extended storage of decedents at the Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office.

Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office has the capability of holding twelve (12) decedents in the interior main cooler with the use of wall racks. An outside refrigerated disaster trailer was purchased due to limited interior cooler space with a capacity of holding twenty-four (24) decedents. The disaster trailer stays near capacity due to indigent county cremations and hospital, funeral home overflow and is therefore not available for its intended (and necessary) purpose.

September 10, 2021, Hamilton County purchased a refrigerated container with the capability of storage of 20-40 decedents dependent on configuration. This was an emergency purchase due to the Covid-19 Delta Variant deaths occurring at local hospitals. The refrigerated container was placed off-site in a secure Hamilton County facility approximately 8-10 miles from the Medical Examiner's Office.

Hamilton County Medical Examiner's personnel are also responsible for control, supervision, and inventory of decedents housed/stored at the off-site refrigerated container.

There are two autopsy stations in the main building and a third station for bariatric and decomposition cases at the Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Office. However there are no negative air pressure capabilities for infectious disease and advanced decomposition cases.

Autopsy stations are equipped with older generation forensic tools that are powered by electricity. These electric tools are near water and considered a potential shock hazard even though on ground faulted receptacles (GFIC).

The use of power tools plugged into wall receptacles also are potential tripping hazards while working at the autopsy stations. Modern forensic equipment are now predominantly pneumatic air tools stationed on ceiling reels to eliminate electric shock and fall/tripping hazards.

Conclusion:

The current Hamilton County Medical Examiner's Forensic Center is thirty-three (33) years old, in poor condition and in constant need of repair. Current exterior stucco building walls have deteriorated due to natural environment, weather and maintenance machinery abuse exposing foam insulation material at the base of the walls.

Current HVAC systems do not and have not worked properly for years making inside working environment for employees unpleasant and uncomfortable, hazardous due to wet and damp autopsy floors (slip fall hazards). The moisture issues regarding expensive X-ray equipment required placing towels over the equipment to prevent damage. Moisture has also caused autopsy tools, scalpel blades to rust inside manufactured packaging.

Building security systems are lacking with only one security camera available. Grieving and upset family members have breached secure rear areas of the facility placing medical examiner employees at risk of confrontational threats by decedent's family members.

The footprint of space for the building has limited rear parking for the current staff. Some staff have to park in the front (visitor parking area), which can be an issue with safety with encounters of upset family members. Our front visitor parking area is sometimes shared with overflow parking to an adjacent fire and police training center.

Current autopsy stations are very close together making working two stations at once distracting and intrusive for the forensic pathologists and technicians to conduct their examinations.

Older and outdated autopsy electrical equipment/tool; potential risk of shock and fall/tripping hazards.

Absence of negative air pressure capabilities for infectious disease and advanced decomposition odor absorption.

Absence of a separate cooler space for decedents with infectious disease and advanced decomposition odor absorption capabilities.

Inadequate cooler space based on current intake and inventory of deceased individuals; hospital, funeral home overflow due to Covid-19 Pandemic, and indigent county cremation storage cases.

Inadequate eye/skin contamination stations, only one near the autopsy station and not a separate emergency safety station.

Inadequate and safety/security parking for employees/staff.

Building maintenance repairs are only a temporary fix and not monetarily feasible to continue spending money based on the age of the facility.

Inability to expand or retro-fit any construction additions due to the footprint of land the current building is on. It is also noted that the land the current building is on is owed/property of the City of Chattanooga and not Hamilton County.

Inadequate office space for current employees/staff.

Inadequate building square footage based on employee staffing, autopsy work stations, and cooler space.

Building air systems have not been efficiently working and has caused mold/mildew and condensation issues. These issues caused having to move older stored case photographs and DNA cards to a dry Hamilton County facility so not to compromise the integrity of the photographs and degrading of the DNA cards that have to be maintained indefinitely.

Bottom line, current population increase, volume of intake of cases, increased violent deaths, traffic related deaths, opioid overdose deaths, increased Covid-19 deaths, current staffing, and age of facility; this facility is grossly inadequate in square footage for proper efficiency and operational requirements.

Projected Estimated Cost for New Facility

Hamilton County Engineering and Facilities Maintenance coordinated a building project programming analysis for a new Forensic Center in March of 2021. The analysis was conducted by a consulting architectural firm. The result of detailed interviews with Forensic Center staff to determine daily operational requirements, review of the existing facility layout, and comparison with other similar size facilities was the completion of a programming phase.

Project design and construction budget information, based on the programming phase analysis for a new Forensic Center with a square footage of 14,244 square feet, is outlined as follows:

Design (10% of estimated building cost)	\$570,000
Special Inspections during construction (2% of estimated building cost)	\$114,000
Site Infrastructure (grading and preparation)	\$150,000
Project construction admin/testing (2% of estimated building cost)	\$114,000
Construction contingency (10% of estimated building cost)	\$570,000
<u>Building Construction *</u>	<u>\$5,700,000</u>
Estimated Total	\$7,218,000
Current 2022 Estimate + 40%	\$10,105,200

Note: *14,244 sf at \$400/sf in Spring 2022
Estimated Annual Utility Costs (Gas, Water, Sewer, Elec.): approx. \$100,000

Projected Estimated Cost for Autopsy Equipment

Autopsy Stations and Equipment	\$480,000
Full Body X-Ray - (LODOX)	\$500,000
Autopsy Carts- Hydraulics (5)	\$33,310
Pneumatic Saws With Vacuum System	\$15,000
Coolers (Main and Decomposition)	\$145,000
Miscellaneous Shelving	\$66,000
Office Furniture	\$75,000
Floor Scale	\$19,500
Refrigerator and Deep Freezer	\$13,440
Rack: Front Load 40 Cadavers 3x7 footprint, Main Cooler, 4 Tiers Height	\$40,000
Winch-Body Lift System (3)	\$70,000
Cadaver Trays 27" x 78" (76 Trays) with Drain/Plug @ \$900 Each	\$68,400
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Security, Phones, IT	\$250,000
Safety Wall Mount Shower and Eyewash	\$4,200
Washing Machine and Dryer Commercial Grade (Biohazard Sheets, Towels)	\$2,000
Moving Expenses	\$2,500
Subtotal	\$2,482,350
Supply, Demand, Materials Cost Increase Estimate +40%	+\$992,940
Total	\$3,475,290

Projected Estimated Budget for New Facility

New Building (design and construction)	\$10,105,200
Autopsy Equipment	\$3,475,290
Property (approx. 2.5 acres)	<u>\$250,000</u>
TOTAL COST	\$13,830,490
State Investment	\$10,000,000
Hamilton County Investment	\$3,830,490

Note: Hamilton County intends to absorb any additional utility costs (estimated at \$100,000), donate the property (approx. 2.5 acres), and deal with any construction cost escalations by reducing building square footage and/or providing additional funding.

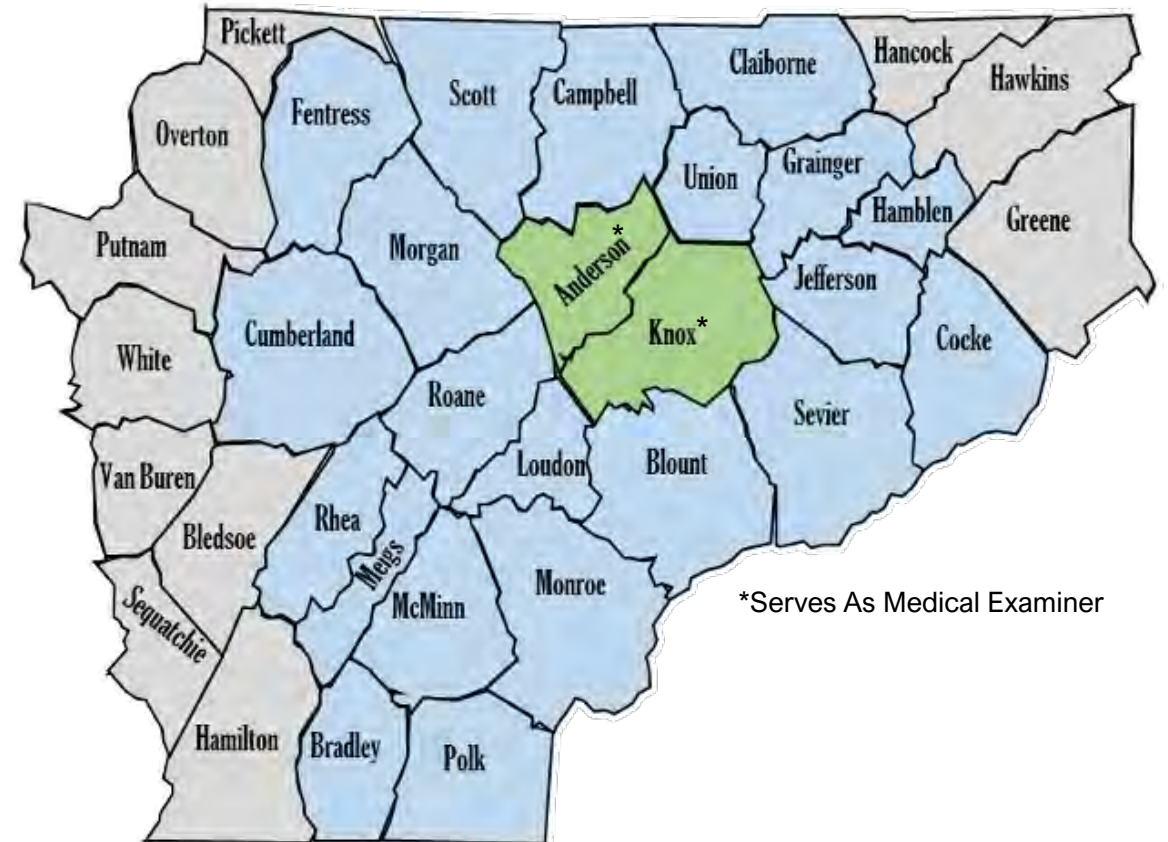
OUTLINING THE NEED FOR A NEW FACILITY



KNOX COUNTY
REGIONAL FORENSIC CENTER

The Regional Forensic Center (RFC) Provides Professional Forensic Services For 23 Counties

- Serves as the **medical examiner's office for Knox and Anderson Counties** and performs autopsies for **21 additional counties**
- Conducts anthropology workups to **determine the cause of death and identification of all skeletal and decomposed remains**
- Provides **court testimony** and collects **sexual assault kits**
- Is responsible for **indigent cremation and veteran identification**
- **Trains medical students and offers clinicals** for state and community colleges
- **Issues reports on death and drug-related death trends** to raise public awareness
- Is trained to assist in **regional mass fatality response**



Current Facility

- **In December 2014, Knox County purchased and renovated a defunct surgery center near downtown Knoxville to open an 18,235 sq. ft. facility at a total cost of \$5.25 million. The State of Tennessee contributed \$4.25 million towards construction.**
- The RFC currently employs a staff of 36, including six board-certified forensic pathologists, ten medicolegal death investigators, 13 autopsy technicians and night attendants, a six-person administrative staff, and a contracted forensic anthropologist.
- The following state departments and agencies also utilize this facility:
 - Dept. of Children's Services
 - Dept. of Correction
 - Dept. of Environment & Conservation
 - Dept. of Health
 - Dept. of Human Services
 - Dept. of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
 - Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development
 - Dept. of Safety & Homeland Security
 - Board of Parole
 - Bureau of Investigation
 - Donor Services
 - Highway Patrol
 - Wildlife Resources Agency
 - Sixty-Eight Local Law Enforcement Agencies

FY 2022-23 Operating Funding & Revenue Sources

FY 2022-23 BUDGET: \$5,238,126

Salaries & Benefits	\$4,062,419	77.55%
Other Operating Expenses:	\$1,175,707	22.45%
Medical Services & Contracts	\$630,000	
Maintenance & Repair	\$270,000	
Supplies	\$193,000	
Insurance & Licensing	\$64,707	
Travel, Training, & Education	\$18,000	

FY 2022-23 Revenue Sources (est.)

Knox County	\$2,022,248	38.60%
Anderson County	\$399,945	7.64%
21 Partner Counties	\$1,900,000	36.27%
Private & Hospital Cases	\$455,000	8.69%
State of TN	\$240,933	4.60%
Cremation Permits & Records	\$220,000	4.20%

SAMPLE COST OF SERVICES

Autopsies - \$1,900 ME Ordered

\$6,200 Private Full

\$40 Cremation Permits

Exams - \$950 ME Ordered

\$3,900 Private Partial

\$30 Report Fee

Our Communities' Needs Are Growing Rapidly

- In 2015, staff conducted 803 full autopsies at 282 per doctor. In 2021, this grew to **1,530 at 380 per doctor, an increase of 90.53%**.
- In 2015, staff investigated 4,296 deaths. **This grew to 8,416 in 2021, an increase of 95.90%**.
- **Decedents have increased by 20% or more each year** for the past 3 years. In 2021, staff processed **2,818 decedents or 7.7 people per day**, which exceeds station capacity.
- Due to the overdose epidemic, **morgue space was exceeded on several occasions**. Staff were unable to assist local hospitals with storage during the COVID pandemic due to lack of space.

2015 VS 2021

**90% INCREASE IN
AUTOPSIES**

**95% INCREASE
IN DEATH
INVESTIGATIONS**

**202% INCREASE IN
DRUG-RELATED
DEATHS**

Key Metrics: 2015-2022

Knox County Regional Forensic Center

Five Year Look at Key Metrics

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (Thru 9/30)
Total Deaths Investigated	4,296	5,194	5,585	5,798	5,890	7,450	8,416	6,115
% Change (Year over Year)		20.90%	7.52%	3.81%	1.59%	26.49%	12.97%	
% Change (2015 to 2021)							95.90%	
Full Autopsies	803	1,017	995	1,034	974	1,204	1,530	1,120
% Change (Year over Year)		26.65%	-2.16%	3.92%	-5.80%	23.61%	27.08%	
% Change (2015 to 2021)							90.53%	
Drug-Related Deaths	345	421	448	535	512	769	1044	n/a
% Change (Year over Year)		23.09%	6.41%	19.42%	-4.30%	50.20%	35.76%	
% Change (2015 to 2021)							202.60%	
Full-Time Employees (FTE)	17	29	29	29	29	32	35	36
# of Autopsies per Doctor*	282	304	308	318	314	385	380	307
# of Doctors on Staff	3	3.5	4	4	4	4	5	6

* In order to remain National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) Accredited, we must adhere to certain requirements. We have been persistently out of compliance with regard to the number of autopsies per doctor and risk our accreditation if we don't take action.

A New Facility Is Urgently Needed

1. Facility capacity **cannot meet the current demand for services**, let alone anticipated increases in the coming years.
2. Current working conditions **negatively impact our ability to provide quality service to the county partners and retain professional staff.**
3. There is a need to hire a 7th Pathologist to remain NAME accredited; **however, the current facility does not have the space for another doctor.** Losing accreditation could jeopardize the ability to use autopsies in criminal cases.
4. With continued population growth, **demand for forensic services is expected to continue to increase** due to the overdose epidemic, as well as additional suicides, homicides, and accidental and natural deaths.
5. The pandemic made clear that **preparedness is needed for health-related crises, natural disasters, or other large-scale crises.**
6. The current building is **landlocked** and cannot be expanded.

Proposed Expansion To Meet Demand

FACILITY SPACE	CURRENT	PROPOSED
Total Square Footage	18,235 sq. ft.	31,850 sq. ft.
Main Cooler	1,015 sq. ft.	1,800 sq. ft.
Decomp Cooler	249 sq. ft.	400 sq. ft.
Main Storage Capacity	100 Decedents	180 Decedents
Decomp Storage Capacity	25 Decedents	40 Decedents
Total Storage Capacity	125 Decedents	220 Decedents
Autopsy Room	1,723 sq. ft. w/ 4 Stations	3,500 sq. ft. w/ 8 Stations
Special Autopsy Suite	404 sq. ft. w/ 1 Station	800 sq. ft. w/ 2 Stations

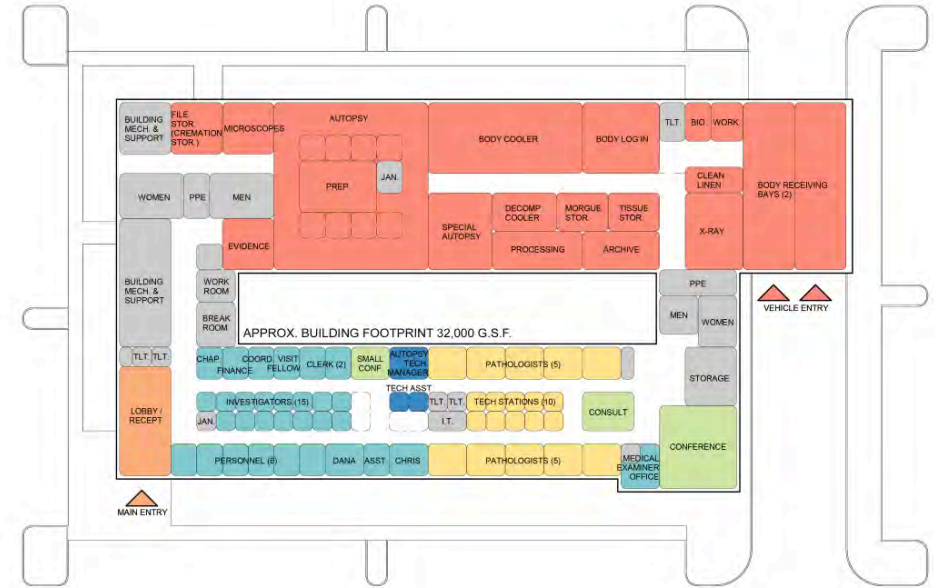
New Facility Renderings



2 CONCEPTUAL RENDERING
EAST TENNESSEE REGIONAL FORENSIC CENTER
KNOX COUNTY / PUBLIC BUILDING AUTHORITY



bma BARBERMcMURRY
architects since 1915
©2022 BarberMcMurry Architects



1 CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN DIAGRAM
EAST TENNESSEE REGIONAL FORENSIC CENTER
KNOX COUNTY / PUBLIC BUILDING AUTHORITY



0 15 30 60

bma BARBERMcMURRY
architects since 1915
©2022 BarberMcMurry Architects

KNOX COUNTY
REGIONAL FORENSIC CENTER

State Funds Are Needed To Achieve This Result

COST OF CONSTRUCTION

Programming Space Needed	31,850 sq. ft.
Estimated Price Per Square Foot	\$600
FF&E and Other Fees	\$9,500,000
TOTAL COST	\$28,700,000

We respectfully request the **State of Tennessee consider appropriating \$20 million of one-time funding** for the capital costs associated with the construction of this facility.

Knox County will invest the proceeds from the sale of the current facility into the cost of constructing the new facility.



OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

November 16, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

RE: Regional Forensic Center Support

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Knox County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Knox County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,
Glenn Jacobs
Knox County Mayor

cc: Files
Chris Thomas
Darinka Mileusnic



ANDERSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

TERRY FRANK
COUNTY MAYOR

October 10, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Anderson County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Anderson County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Terry Frank
Anderson County Mayor

Mrs. Terry Frank
Anderson County Mayor

PHONE: (865) 273-5700
FAX: (865) 273-5705
EMITCHELL@BLOUNT.TN.ORG



BLOUNT COUNTY MAYOR
ED MITCHELL

"LET'S BE BLOUNT...WORK HARD. WORK HONEST. WORK TOGETHER."

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Blount County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

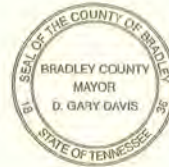
Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Blount County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Ed Mitchell

341 COURT STREET
MARYVILLE, TN 37804-5906
WWW.BLOUNT.TN.ORG



Office of the
BRADLEY COUNTY MAYOR
D. GARY DAVIS

P.O. Box 1167
Cleveland, Tennessee 37364
Office (423) 728-7141
Facsimile (423) 476-0696

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Bradley County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Bradley County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Gary Davis
Bradley County Mayor
155 Broad St NW
Cleveland, TN 37311

"A world class place to call home"



Jack Lynch

County Mayor

OFFICE: (423) 562-2526 590 MAIN STREET • P.O. Box 435
FAX: (423) 562-2075 JACKSBORO, TENNESSEE 37757
EMAIL: MayorLynch@campbellcountygov.com


October 24, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Campbell County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit. The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services. Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services. IN conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Campbell County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,


Jack Lynch
Campbell County Mayor
570 Main St #15 A
Jacksboro, TN 3775



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Re: Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee

Dear Governor Lee,

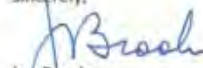
On behalf of the citizens of Claiborne County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Claiborne County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,


Joe Brooks
Claiborne County Mayor

Joe Brooks, County Mayor

1740 Main Street • P.O. Box • Tazewell, TN 37879 • office 423-626-5236 • fax 423-626-1661
www.ClaiborneCountyTN.gov • email countymayor@claibornecountytn.gov

Office: (423) 623-8791
Fax: (423) 623-8792
Email: rob.mathis@cockecountytn.gov



Courthouse Annex
360 East Main St. Suite 146
Newport, Tennessee 37821

October 7, 2022

**Cocke County Mayor
Rob Mathis**

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Cocke County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Cocke County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Rob Mathis in blue ink.

Rob Mathis
Cocke County Mayor
360 E Main Street
Suite 146
Newport, TN 37821

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Grainger County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Grainger County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mike Byrd in blue ink.

Mike Byrd
Grainger County Mayor
8095 Rutledge Pike #100
Rutledge, TN 37861



October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee Governor
The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Hamblen County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee.

As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for the benefit of our region. The current facility serves 23 counties in East Tennessee including : Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can be found that provides these services.

The current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity for several reasons including drug-related deaths and population growth. We need to take steps to address this issue. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate a larger facility that would meet the needs of our region.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Hamblen County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Bill Brittain
County Mayor

Bill Brittain, County Mayor

511 West Second North Street • Morristown, TN 37814 • *office*: 423.586.1931 • *fax*: 423.585.4699
www.HamblenCountyTN.gov • *email*: bbrittain@co.hamblen.tn.us



Jefferson County Office of the Mayor

Mark Potts
County Mayor

P. O. Box 710 • Dandridge, Tennessee 37725 • mpotts@jeffersoncountyttn.gov

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Jefferson County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Jefferson County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Mark Potts
Jefferson County Mayor
214 W Main St.
Dandridge, TN 37725

PHONE: 865/397-3800 • FAX: 865/397-3839



Office of Rollen "Buddy" Bradshaw
LOUDON COUNTY MAYOR

100 River Road . Suite 106 □ Loudon, Tennessee 37774

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Loudon County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Loudon County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Buddy Bradshaw
Loudon County Mayor
100 River Road
Suite 106
Loudon, TN 37774

Phone 865-458-4664 □ Cell 865-740-6960 □ Fax 865-458-1784
bradshawb@loudoncounty-tn.gov □ www.loudoncounty-tn.gov

MEIGS COUNTY GOVERNMENT
17214 TN-58, Decatur, TN 37322

Main Line: (423) 334-5850
Fax: (423) 334-2687

www.MeigsCounty.org



MAYOR EDGAR A. JEWELL, JR.

Mayor Edgar A. Jewell Jr.
County Mayor

Office: (423) 334-5850
Cell: (423) 240-8633
Fax: (423) 334-2687
Mayor@MeigsCounty.org

November 4, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Meigs County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to Build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Meigs County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Edgar A. Jewell Jr.
Meigs County Mayor
17214 State Highway
Decatur, TN 37322

MITCH INGRAM
MONROE COUNTY MAYOR

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

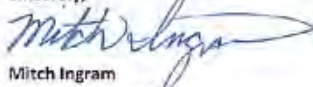
On behalf of the citizens of Monroe County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Monroe County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,



Mitch Ingram
Monroe County Mayor
105 College Street South, Suite 1
Madisonville, TN 37354



BRIAN LANGLEY
Working For The People

Office: (423) 346-6288
PO Box 387 Warburg, TN 37887
Email: executive@morgancountytia.org

October 18, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

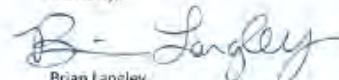
On behalf of the citizens of Morgan County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Morgan County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,



Brian Langley
Morgan County Executive
415 N Kingston Street
Warburg, TN 37887



Office of the County Executive
Roane County Courthouse

October 18, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,


On behalf of the citizens of Roane County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Roane County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,


Wade Creswell
Roane County Executive
200 E. Race Street
Kingston, TN 37763

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Scott County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Scott County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,


Jerried Jeffers
Scott County Mayor
2845 Baker Highway
Huntsville, TN 37756

October 7, 2022

Telephone 865-453-6136

Fax 865-453-6830

E-mail: lwaters@seviercountytm.org

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243



Larry Waters County Mayor

125 Court Avenue
Suite 201E
Sevierville, TN 37862

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Sevier County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Sevier County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Larry Waters
Sevier County Mayor
125 Court Ave
#201 E
Sevierville, TN 37826



Jason Bailey, Ed.D. Union County Mayor



October 7, 2022

901 Main Street
Suite 100
Maynardville, TN
37807

(865) 992-3061

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, The State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the citizens of Union County, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center (RFC) for East Tennessee. As proposed by Knox County, this facility will continue to operate for our region's benefit.

The current facility serves the following 23 counties in East Tennessee: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Cumberland, Fentress, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Scott, Sevier, and Union. If not for this regional facility, each county would either have to build and operate a forensic facility or seek a private contractor, assuming one can provide these services.

Due to factors such as drug-related deaths and population growth, the current RFC in Knox County has outgrown its current capacity. If steps are not taken to address this issue, families and communities will be negatively impacted. I am grateful that Knox County and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are willing to, once again, operate this facility in their county, which is centrally located in our region, and offer us access to these critical services.

In conclusion, I fully support the efforts of Knox County as they seek one-time capital funding from the State of Tennessee to construct a new RFC. On behalf of myself and the good people of Union County, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your continued service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jason Bailey
Union County Mayor

Email: jason.bailey@unioncountytm.gov

Website: www.unioncountytm.gov



OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

January 10, 2023

Tony Niknejad
Policy Director
Office of Governor Bill Lee
State Capitol
600 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Nashville, TN 37243

Mr. Niknejad:

Please find below the justification for using State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) for a new Knox County Regional Forensic Center.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Knox County requests an allocation of \$20 million from Tennessee's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to assist with the construction of a new forensic facility to increase the operational capacity needed in response to the growth in opioid-related deaths due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Regional Forensic Center (RFC) serves as the medical examiner's office for Knox and Anderson Counties and performs autopsies for 21 additional counties in east Tennessee. The RFC is responsible for conducting anthropology workups to determine cause of death and identification of skeletal and decomposed remains, collecting sexual assault kits, training medical students, providing testimony in court, and issuing reports on death and drug-related death trends to increase awareness of public health-related issues.

In December 2014, Knox County purchased and renovated a defunct surgery center near downtown Knoxville to open an 18,235 sq. ft. facility at a total cost of \$5.25 million. The State of Tennessee contributed \$4.25 million towards construction. The RFC currently employs a staff of 36, including six board-certified forensic pathologists, ten medicolegal death investigators, 13 autopsy technicians and night attendants, a six-person administrative staff, and one contracted forensic anthropologist. In addition to sixty-eight local law enforcement agencies, the following state departments and agencies also utilize this facility: Children's Services; Safety & Homeland Security; Correction Board of Parole; Environment and Conservation; Bureau of Investigation; Health; Donor Services; Human Services; Highway Patrol; Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities; Wildlife Resources; and Labor and Workforce Development.

In 2015, RFC staff conducted 803 full autopsies at 282 per doctor. Due in large part to the pandemic, this number grew to 1,530 at 380 per doctor in 2021, an increase of 90.53%. Death investigations increased 95.90% from 4,296 in 2015 to 8,416 in 2021. Decedents have increased by 20% or more each year for the past 3 years.

In 2021, the station capacity of the current RFC facility was exceeded when staff processed 2,818 decedents equally 7.7 per day. Additionally, due to the overdose epidemic, morgue space was exceeded on several occasions and the RFC was unable to assist local hospitals with storage during the COVID pandemic.

The State’s approval of Knox County’s request for capital funds to support this project will ensure adequate forensic services are available to meet the current and future needs of counties in east Tennessee served by the Knox County Regional Forensic Center.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR THE PANDEMIC PERIOD JANUARY 01, 2019, TO MOST CURRENT AVAILABLE:

	ACCIDENTAL DEATHS	HOMICIDES	SUICIDES	CASES AUTOPSIED	MEDICAL EXAMINER CASES	NATURAL DEATHS	NON-ME CASE DEATHS	CREMATION PERMITS NON-COVID	CREMATION PERMITS COVID-19	TOTAL COVID DEATHS *
ANDERSON	359	7	72	286	1,066	344	233	2,342	114	334
BLOUNT	259	14	36	400	411	70	31	41	0	436
BRADLEY	39	17	8	89	89	18	0	0	0	415
CAMPBELL	89	11	17	158	161	26	27	16	0	167
CLAIBORNE	43	7	8	66	77	8	25	12	0	178
COCKE	91	9	29	174	178	37	28	28	0	216
CUMBERLAND	13	2	3	15	23	1	11	26	0	326
FENTRESS	27	4	9	43	56	9	1	4	0	128
GRAINGER	44	7	8	81	84	20	17	14	0	109
HAMBLEN	83	10	27	199	200	67	27	17	0	353
JEFFERSON	87	12	13	160	161	30	36	23	0	264
KNOX	2,989	174	380	2,203	6,995	2,230	8,913	15,106	924	1,377
LOUDON	113	9	42	212	235	57	16	27	0	192
McMINN	80	13	11	142	148	29	9	17	0	260
MEIGS	19	2	4	32	35	4	0	1	0	57
MONROE	152	14	29	165	301	78	16	39	0	243
MORGAN	49	5	14	84	89	11	7	16	0	86
POLK	23	7	11	38	53	8	0	2	0	74
RHEA	64	5	13	117	119	2	0	3	0	160
ROANE	148	13	8	177	220	31	13	34	0	233
SCOTT	14	4	10	46	48	16	13	11	0	117
SEVIER	267	22	74	500	534	139	46	84	0	415
UNION	40	3	5	59	60	9	17	12	0	75
TOTAL	5,092	371	831	5,446	11,343	3,244	9,486	17,875	1,038	6,215

*Total COVID-19 deaths as reported by CDC

ELIGIBILITY TEST

1. IDENTIFY A COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

Identify a COVID-19 public health or negative economic impact on an individual or a class. Recipients should identify an individual or class that is “impacted” or “disproportionately impacted” by the COVID-19 public health emergency, its negative economic impacts, and the specific impact itself.

One of the significant impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic has been an increase in fatalities related to substance misuse disorders in our region. Similar to what has been seen in communities across the country,

the pandemic had a negative impact on the mental health of a significant part of our population. Consequently, substance misuse rates increased dramatically. At the same time, due to social distancing measures, access to treatment declined, and fewer people were provided substance misuse counseling and rehabilitation services. With fewer resources available, our region and the rest of the country have experienced the largest overdose epidemic in history, and members of our community have died at an unprecedented rate.

2. EXPLAIN HOW YOUR RESPONSE ADDRESSES OR RESPONDS TO COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

During the pandemic, there was a marked increase in the illegal sale of drugs containing highly potent fentanyl. This change increased the number of overdose deaths in our region during the height of the pandemic and continues today, causing a disproportionate number of fatalities in our community. The ability to conduct autopsies on the increasing number of decedents in our region is critical to ensuring that the individuals distributing these drugs are arrested. Determining that there was no natural cause of death and determining the quantity, type, and synthetic signature of the drugs responsible for the death is necessary to prosecute these individuals successfully.

The work of our medical examiners is vital in stopping the overdose epidemic in our region. Conducting autopsies and sharing findings with those working within the criminal justice system is core to the individuals responsible for distributing the drugs used in an overdose accountable for these deaths. Our proposed project will increase the capacity to do this critical work and subsequently reduce the amount, and availability, of deadly street drugs in our region.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Preconstruction tasks would begin immediately upon notification of project approval. Knox County will prioritize the project's timely completion and ensure all funds are obligated by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31, 2026, in accordance with Treasury's SLFRF requirements.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CURRENT FACILITY

NEW FACILITY VS. INCREASE IN CURRENT COOLER SPACE

The limited size of the parcel of property where Knox County's current facility is located prohibits increasing the current size of the building. With no surrounding parcels available, expanding the existing facility is impossible. The construction of a new facility will allow the Knox County Regional Forensic Center to increase operational capacity to ensure critical forensic services are available to meet the needs within our region.

OPIOID-RELATED DEATHS

In March 2020, Knox County Regional Forensic Center recorded sixty-seven opioid-related deaths, a significant increase from previous years. Before this time, the highest number of deaths from substance misuse recorded in a month was fifty. March 2020 was the highest number of opioid-related deaths recorded in a single month. Since the spring of 2020, the forensic center has seen no decrease and the average is now consistently over seventy opioid-related fatalities per month. Appropriately investigating this increased number of deaths has

required increasing the operational capacity of the forensic center. However, Knox County has a critical need for additional staff, and with no room to expand at the current facility, our region's availability of forensic services is being negatively impacted.

CAPITAL PROJECT IN RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC

From 2019 to 2021, the Knox County Regional Forensic Center experienced an approximate 42% increase in caseload. The need for anthropology consultation and dental examinations has increased by 150% due to the increased number of decedents discovered significantly after they died alone in their homes. Additionally, the growth in our region's population since the pandemic began naturally increases the number of deaths in our community and further exacerbates the capacity issues brought on by the increase in opioid-related deaths.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

PLEASE PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE HARM OR NEED TO BE ADDRESSED:

With the population growth projections for our area and the increased opioid-related deaths in our region, the Knox County Regional Forensic Center will reach capacity within the next two to three years and will no longer be able to serve our region adequately. If Knox County's proposed project is approved, constructing a new forensic center will provide the space needed to expand operations. It will ensure that critical forensic services are accessible to those currently served by the center and at current levels and can be extended to those presently served on the caseload in the next 2-3 years. Delay could mean that bodies will wait weeks for autopsies, losing critical evidentiary material.

PLEASE PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION OF WHY A CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IS APPROPRIATE:

The capacity at the Regional Forensic Center cannot meet the current demand for services, let alone the anticipated increase in the coming years. The current working conditions negatively impact the staff's ability to provide quality service to the counties currently served and hinders efforts to retain professional staff. The current facility does not have the space for another doctor; however, a 7th pathologist is needed for the RMC to remain NAME accredited and losing this accreditation could jeopardize the ability for autopsies to be used in criminal cases.

With increasing population growth, demand for forensic services related to suicides, homicides, accidental, and natural deaths is expected to increase. When combined with the overdose epidemic, this increased need for services requires increased capacity at the RFC that cannot be met in the current facility. The pandemic made clear the importance of preparedness for not just the day-to-day provision of forensic center, but for the ability to respond to other health-related crises, natural disasters, and large-scale mortality events. The current building occupied by the RFC is landlocked and the only way to expand is to build a new facility.

PLEASE PROVIDE A COMPARISON OF THE CAPITAL PROJECT AGAINST TWO ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AND WHY THE CHOSEN CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IS SUPERIOR:

1. Knox County has explored the idea of renovating the current facility instead of building a new one. Because the campus is landlocked, there is no way to renovate the facility to increase capacity to the level required to

continue serving the surrounding counties in east Tennessee. While the cost to renovate would be less than building a new facility, a renovation would only increase capacity if the RFC decreased the number of counties currently served. Discontinuing services to surrounding counties would result in a reduction in regional collaboration and an increase in the cost to the counties forced to provide these services directly to their constituents.

2. Knox County additionally explored building a new facility on land owned by the County in a business park. This alternative would reduce our land cost by an estimated \$3 million. However, the business park is in far east Knox County, compared to our current facility centrally located in the City of Knoxville. This location would prove difficult for field response and transportation of decedents. Similar to alternative number one, this option would reduce regional collaboration and increase transportation costs for outside counties being served by the RFC. Additionally, the proposed site of Cherokee Farms will enhance the research component of the work undertaken at the RFC and facilitate continuing the important work currently being done with the University of Tennessee Medical Center.

The construction of a new facility for the Regional Forensic Center will ensure adequate forensic services are available to meet current and future needs of the counties in east Tennessee. Thank you for your consideration of our request to support this critically needed capital project through the State's SLFRF funding.

Sincerely,

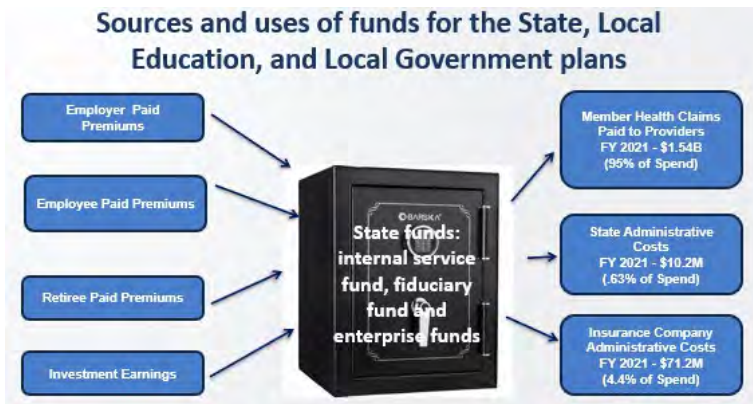


Glenn Jacobs
Knox County Mayor

American Rescue Plan Act Fund Request

Background: State Group Insurance Plan Funding

The State, Local Education, and Local Government plans provide health insurance for ~100 state and higher education entities, ~120 local education agencies, and ~400 local government agencies, covering ~284,000 people across the state. The plans are each self insured (also known as “self-funded”), which means the state is responsible for paying the medical claims and for operating the health plans. Instead of paying insurance companies a premium, the state, like other large, self-insured employers, pay a fee (usually per member or per employee per month) to use their networks and their administrative services. The contractors are acting as third-party administrators (TPAs), not as insurers. The state is the insurer, collecting premiums from the employers, employees, and retirees to pay the costs of our members’ health care directly, instead of using the fully-insured products of an insurance company. The premiums we collect for each plan stay with the State, in dedicated funds, that include only the premiums and expenditures for that plan; the premiums are not passed to the insurance companies.



Of the state’s annual plan expenses, 5% pay administrative costs and 95% pay providers for health care costs. In contrast, if we were to pay insurance companies a premium, they are permitted by law to retain up to 15% for large groups to account for profit margins, marketing and other administrative expenses. In our self-insured plan, while the state is responsible for the members’ claims, we also save money in the instance that claims are lower than forecast. In a fully insured plan, the

responsibility of members’ claims as well as the insurance risk is transferred to the insurance carrier, who benefits in case of lower claims. These key differences are outlined below:

	Self-insured – State, Local Education, Local Government	Fully Insured
Savings	Results in higher savings as the plan doesn’t pay for the insurer’s profit, reserves or marketing and has lower administrative costs. If claims are less than forecasted, the plan retains the surplus, not the insurance company.	The premiums are usually higher as the financial and insurance risk is passed on to the insurer. By law, insurers of large groups are permitted an 85% medical loss ratio (i.e., they can retain 15% for marketing, administrative costs, profit).
Flexibility	The state can control the benefit design.	The ability to alter the benefits may be limited.
Cash flow	Medical claims are paid as they occur, and the state only pays claims to providers and administrative fees to the third-party administrator(s). The state maintains reserves should claims exceed expectations and retains the surplus in its funds.	The employer pays a fixed monthly premium to the insurance carrier regardless of the level of member claims. The insurance carrier retains surplus beyond payout of claims and maintains reserves.
Financial risk	The employer holds the financial risk arising out of claims’ experience higher than expectations.	The insurance carrier owns the financial risk related to the payment of medical claims.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Request: Benefits Administration (BA) requests ARPA funds for the State Group Insurance Program (SGIP) to reduce future premium increases resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact to the plans.

BA requests ARPA funds to help mitigate the extraordinary negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SGIP. All three self-insured plans administered by BA (State, Local Education and Local Government) have experienced significant increases in claims due not only to the specific costs for COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccines, but also deferred care and the unfavorable rebound from delayed treatment. Since the pandemic started through October 2022, costs directly associated with COVID treatment, testing, and prevention and paid by members and the plans totaled **\$205.9M**. Specific COVID-related costs incurred on or after 3/3/2021 through 10/31/2022 and paid by the plans, which would be eligible for ARPA funds, totaled **\$127.4M**:

Claim Net Payments for Claims Incurred on or after March 3, 2021 and Paid Through October 31, 2022					
BCBST/CIGNA & Caremark	COVID Treatment	COVID Test Claims	COVID Vaccination Claims	COVID Anti-Viral Claims	Total
State/Higher Education	\$41,842,403.07	\$15,946,240.19	\$5,291,194.63	\$38,480.46	\$63,118,318.35
Local Education	\$33,202,348.70	\$11,115,036.87	\$6,148,027.28	\$25,171.68	\$50,490,584.53
Local Government	\$10,476,484.79	\$2,741,716.54	\$570,355.63	\$5,500.50	\$13,794,057.46
Total	\$85,521,236.56	\$29,802,993.60	\$12,009,577.54	\$69,152.64	\$127,402,960.34

BA’s consulting actuary, Aon, modeled the impact of the ARPA funds on future rate increases under three scenarios. All scenarios assume the ARPA payments reimburse actual costs incurred by the respective plans from 3/3/21 – 10/31/22 applied to the most recent forecast, which assumes a 6.75% trend. Aon’s projections over the last twelve months for the SGIP reflect sizable volatility in claims experience. While Aon’s most recent forecast as of October 2022 includes a factor for general inflation, this dynamic continues to change. If the actual trend is just 1% higher than the current forecast, the baseline rate increases by almost 2%. Aon projects 3-year rate increases at the following levels for the plans. Fully funding the COVID expenses through ARPA reduces the needed premium increases ~1 percentage point.

Premium Increase Budgeted/Forecast	State	Local Ed	Local Gov
CY 2023 Premium Rate Increase	6.2%	6.1%	7.5%
CY 2024-2026 Premium Forecast as of Sept 2022	5.3%	5.9%	7.2%
Scenario 1	4.3%	4.9%	6.1%
Scenario 2	5.3%	4.9%	6.1%
Scenario 3	4.8%	4.9%	6.1%

As an example of the funding impact, in the Local Government Plan, the Level 3 Premier PPO family premium increase for 2024 would be reduced by \$281/year, shared by both the member and the agency.

ARPA funds could be distributed differently across plans or used for expenses through 2026, so a determination could be made in 2023 as to the most impactful way to distribute the funds. It is notable that the COVID costs per member for the Local Government plan were 21% higher than the State/Higher Education Plan and 18% higher than the combined costs for all three plans. Reduced premium increases would directly benefit members across the state as well as the agencies that fund a portion of the premiums, not the insurance carriers. As the state funds 80% of the premiums for state/higher education members and 45% of local education instructional staff through the BEP/TISA formula, the ARPA funding applied to help offset COVID costs in the health plans will also reduce the state funds budgeted and appropriated for these programs.

We expect higher costs and claims volatility to continue in the foreseeable future. The ARPA funds will help mitigate this volatility and reduce premium increases required to maintain the plans’ health and stability. As self-insured plans, this infusion will directly benefit the plan’s participating agencies and the ~284,000 Tennesseans provided health coverage through the SGIP.

ARPA FUNDING REQUEST

State Group Insurance Program

PARTNERS
FOR HEALTH



THE STATE GROUP INSURANCE PLAN (SGIP) IS THE LARGEST EMPLOYER-SPONSORED PURCHASER OF HEALTH CARE IN TENNESSEE

The SGIP provides comprehensive and affordable public sector health coverage to **283,701** employees, retirees and dependents through **three self-funded plans**, serving:

▶ **125** Local Education Agencies

▶ **384** Local Government Agencies

▶ **99** State and Higher Education Agencies

THE SGIP PLANS ARE SELF-FUNDED

Of the annual plan expenses, **95%** pay providers for health care delivery and **5%** pay administrative costs



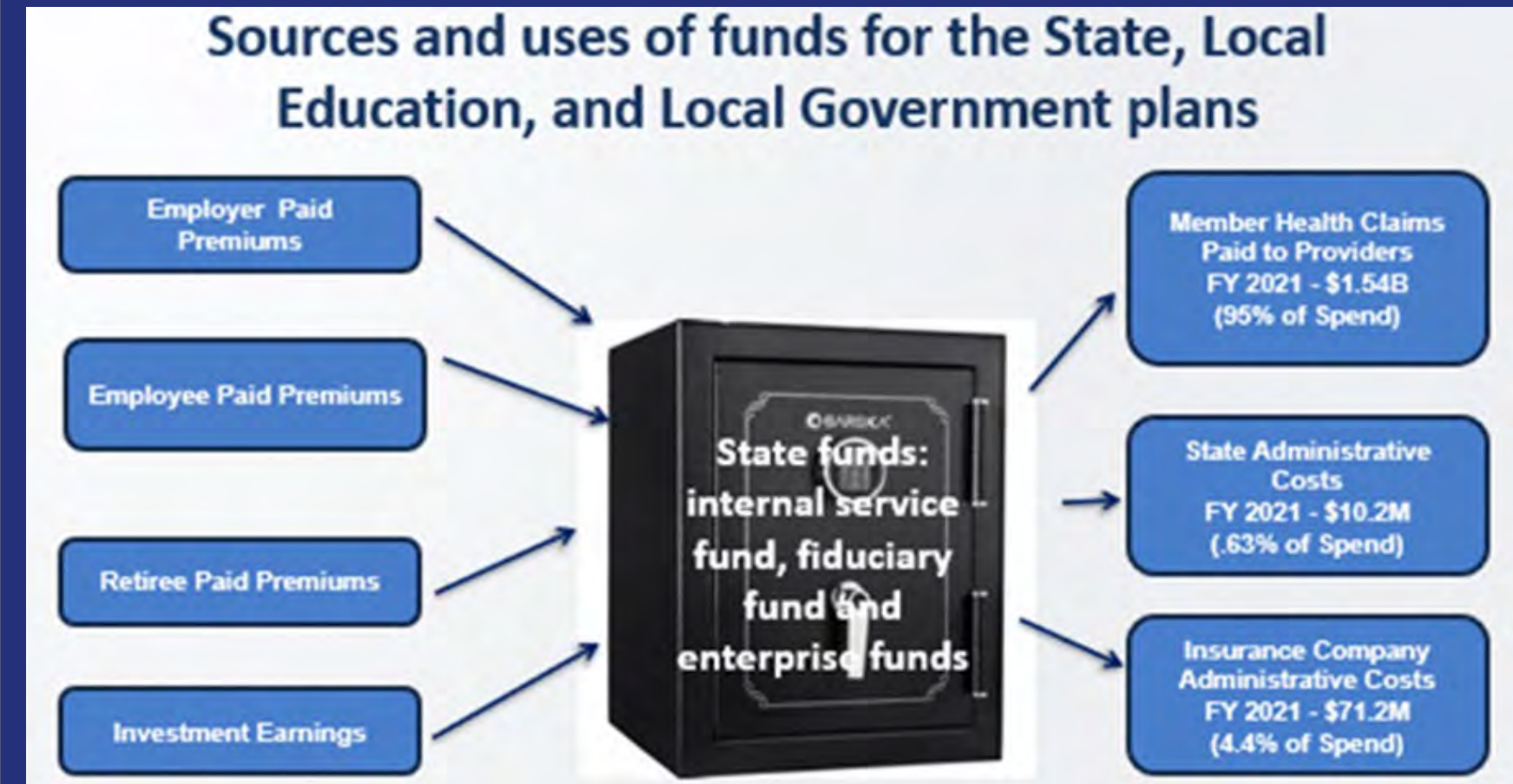
The State is the insurer, collecting premiums to pay providers



Premiums stay in the state funds and are not paid to insurance companies



Insurance companies and other contractors provide administrative services on a per employee per month fee



- ☑ SGIP doesn't pay for insurer's profit, reserves, or marketing
- ☑ If claims are less than forecasted, SGIP retains the surplus to reduce future premium increases to members
- ☑ State retains flexibility in benefit design
- ☑ Medical claims are paid out as they occur instead of a fixed premium to a third party

COVID-19 ADDED UNFORESEEN COSTS AND VOLATILITY TO THE PLANS

Claim Net Payments for Claims Incurred on or after March 3, 2021 and Paid Through October 31, 2022					
BCBST/CIGNA & Caremark	COVID Treatment	COVID Test Claims	COVID Vaccination Claims	COVID Anti-Viral Claims	Total
State/Higher Education	\$41,842,403.07	\$15,946,240.19	\$5,291,194.63	\$38,480.46	\$63,118,318.35
Local Education	\$33,202,348.70	\$11,115,036.87	\$6,148,027.28	\$25,171.68	\$50,490,584.53
Local Government	\$10,476,484.79	\$2,741,716.54	\$570,355.63	\$5,500.50	\$13,794,057.46
Total	\$85,521,236.56	\$29,802,993.60	\$12,009,577.54	\$69,152.64	\$127,402,960.34



\$205.9M in total Covid treatment, testing and prevention costs since the start of the pandemic



\$127.4M in plan costs during the ARPA funding period through 10/31/22



Local Government Plan per member COVID costs were **18% higher** than for all plans combined



AS THE SGIP PLANS ARE SELF-FUNDED, ARPA FUNDS WOULD DIRECTLY BENEFIT PARTICIPATING AGENCIES AND MEMBERS

Example impact: 2024 premium increase would be reduced by \$281/year for families in the Local Government Level 3 Premier PPO

Premium Increase Budgeted/Forecast	State	Local Education	Local Government
CY 2023 Premium Rate Increase	6.2%	6.1%	7.5%
CY 2024-2026 Premium Forecast as of Sept 2022	5.3%	5.9%	7.2%
CY 2024-2026 Scenario 1	4.3%	4.9%	6.1%
CY 2024-2026 Scenario 2	5.3%	4.9%	6.1%
CY 2024-2026 Scenario 3	4.8%	4.9%	6.1%

- BA's actuary modeled the impact of the ARPA funds on future rate increases under three scenarios
- All scenarios assume the ARPA payments fund actual costs incurred by the respective plans from 3/3/21 – 10/31/22
- Model assumes the most recent forecast (Sept 2022)

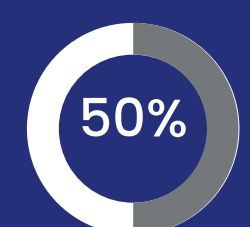
Scenario 1

Fund all three plans to offset total COVID costs incurred:
\$127,402,960.34



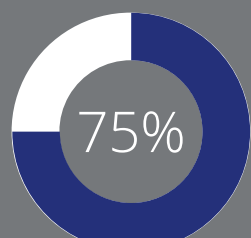
Scenario 2

Fund the Local Education and Local Government plans:
\$64,284,641.99



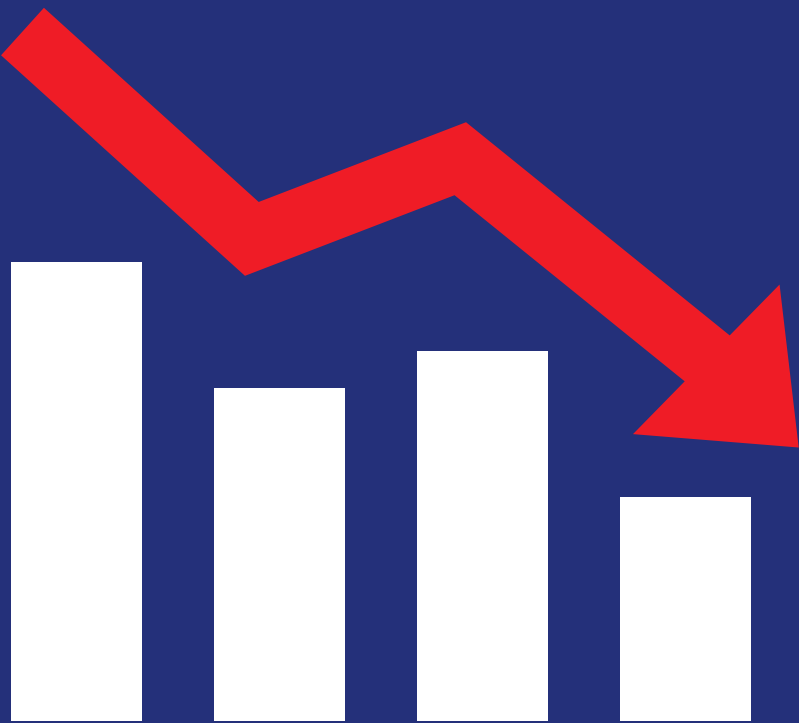
Scenario 3

Fund the Local Education and Local Government plans and ½ the State plan:
\$95,843,801.17



SUMMARY OF ARPA FUNDING REQUEST

- As a result of the pandemic, the State, Local Education and Local Government plans of the SGIP have experienced **unforeseen costs and volatility**
- Higher costs and claims volatility are expected to continue in the foreseeable future, **driving up premiums**
- ARPA funds applied to the SGIP plans will **reduce future premium increases** and help **maintain the plans' health and stability**
- The SGIP is a self-funded plan, therefore, **reduced premium increases will benefit the 600+ public sector agencies and 284,000 Tennesseans** across the state who pay for the premiums
- **ARPA funds could be distributed differently** across plans or used for expenses through 2026





Strategic
Technology Solutions

Eligible State Technology Services Projects



STS - Summary

The Opportunity:

COVID-19 has been a transformational event requiring new or improved technologies to support the business of Tennessee. With approval of the requested projects, our State can continue to speed up the adoption of new or improved technologies that are essential to meeting the new demands that COVID-19 has placed on Tennessee and its citizens.

The Benefits:

- Enterprise-wide impact--moves the state forward in critical areas
- Creates an environment in which Tennessee businesses and citizens can safely and efficiently interact with the State of Tennessee
- Leverages Federal investment vs State investment as many of the projects requested would have been requested in out-year budget requests

Summary of Investment Request

Cloud Air-Gapped Data Backup and Recovery	\$4,500,000
Cloud Consumption Costs	\$12,000,000
Application Migration/Modernization to Cloud	\$20,000,000
DOHR Modernization	\$12,000,000
Tennessee "No Wrong Door" Portal	\$15,000,000
Tennessee One-Stop Business Gateway	\$10,000,000
CISO-as-a-Service	\$4,000,000
	\$77,500,000



STS – Cloud Air-Gapped Backup and Recovery

Objective: Cloud Air-gapped technologies are essential to mitigating the risk of compromised back-ups. It will additionally support the restoration of data — especially as the result of ransomware. With more staff working remotely during COVID-19, and not physically on the State's Network, there is more exposure to the end user compute devices to become compromised. With that larger potential attack footprint, the risk for ransomware being introduced into the network and impacting application servers is increased. This solution provides an "Air-Gapped" solution that would allow for the State to limit the movement within our network AND provide the ability recover from a ransomware event.

Cost: The total cloud investment requested is \$4,500,000.

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only



STS – Cloud Consumption Costs

Objective: This is an expansion of our current ARPA consumption costs for two additional years; the remainder of the ARPA allowable period. Consumption costs are the costs we pay to run applications/services in the cloud. This project will cover cloud consumption costs for two years — allows us to gain experience and understanding of cloud costs and allows us time to optimize what we put in the cloud for performance and cost. Additionally, by covering the consumption costs, it removes any barriers or objections that agencies may have toward moving to cloud, thus accelerating our migration.

Cost: The total cloud investment requested is \$12,000,000

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Limited number of contractors only

STS – Application Migration/Modernization to Cloud

Objective: This expands the funds for the continued acceleration of the modernization, redesign, rehosting, and development of Agency applications using cloud-native technologies. Cloud technologies, such as Amazon AWS and Microsoft Azure have proven to improve the security, availability, and resiliency of applications. Speeding up the adoption of new or improved technologies is essential to meeting the new demands that COVID-19 has placed on State government and delivering essential services to impacted citizens.

Cost: \$20,000,000

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only

STS – DOHR Modernization

Objective: This project will implement modernized platforms to transform employee and applicant experience, improving the operational efficiency and effectiveness of Human Resource services. This includes a one-stop human resources portal for job recruiting, knowledge management, and employee onboarding. It will incorporate leading solutions in automation to reduce manual work of DOHR employees, improve collaboration, and enhance reporting. This project will support current and future State employees providing access to information simply and easily.

Reducing the number of systems that employees and applicants need to access and learn to perform HR functions will deliver more value, better outcomes, and increased employee productivity and satisfaction. This project will also reduce the amount of manual processing and in-person work that needs to be accomplished by DOHR, thus allowing for proper COVID-19 social distancing. This solution will also drive significant benefits to our state employees by allowing them to benefit from access to information and less time spent on administrative functions. Additionally, this project will allow for a streamlined applicant experience, with clear workflows and less manual rework.

Cost: The total investment requested is \$12,000,000.

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only

STS – Tennessee “No Wrong Door” Portal

Objective: This project will deliver a unified experience for residents to discover and manage services provided by the State of Tennessee. The project removes administrative barriers that increase access and support equity. Imagine a true one-stop shop for all governments services. This project further streamlines backend processes further making agencies more efficient. The one-stop shop also enables data sharing across agencies to allow for more rapid and consistent approaches. The scope of this effort includes integrated applications for services, leverages existing investments in identity and access management and comprehensive data management. The project would deliver a portal, communication preference/consent management, cross-program enrollment, residents’ dashboards, email and SMS nudging, eligibility wizards and checklists, advanced search features, and referrals to support organizations.

Cost: \$15,000,000

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only



STS – Tennessee One-Stop Business Gateway

Objective: This project will deploy a modernized Business Gateway that serves as a single destination for the tools and information needed for a business to get started and operate in the State of Tennessee. We envision a digital portal where businesses can create accounts, view their entire interaction history with the state, view notifications and alerts for services, quickly access information, use wizards to understand the steps needed to register, access omni-channel customer support, and complete transactions. This project includes a one stop portal for businesses allowing government and business officials common access and records as well as enhanced omni-channel support and data-driven eco-system to support decision making.

Cost: \$10,000,000

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only



STS – CISO-as-a-Service

Objective: This project provides CISO (cybersecurity consulting services) support for counties/cities that are not able to provide the service, themselves and provides valuable/timely consultive services. This project was omitted from our original ARPA requests that went to the FSAG for consideration due to a clerical error.

Cost: \$4,000,000

Project Length: Three Years

Temporary # of employees: Contractors only



To: Tony Niknejad, Policy Director Governor's Office

From: Maggie Riden, Fahe

RE: Fahe TN ARPA Funding Proposal Version 2

Date: January 18, 2023

Dear Mr. Niknejad,

We are writing in response to your request for a more refined and targeted ARPA funding proposal. In response to this request, Fahe asked our coalition partners to complete a survey on shovel ready projects. We asked members to focus on projects that serve: at-risk and distressed counties, the areas around Blue Oval City, special populations and counties with high workforce housing demand and minimal capacity in the current market. This information was distilled by Fahe staff to draft our current proposal which will leverage \$21.9 million in ARPA funding to deliver \$82.3 million in housing across the state.

A short summary of the proposal can be found in this document, and full detail on the projects, their location, units developed or preserved, populations impacted, already secured funding levels, and key partners can be found in the attached spreadsheet. Before we turn to the proposal, we want to make a few clarifications and share a handful of assumptions that have gone into this proposal:

1. The projects we've outlined below and attached do not reflect the entire universe of need, or opportunities for housing development or preservation on the horizon. This is a single, snap shot of shovel ready projects.
2. For the purposes of this proposal, "shovel ready" means projects with a start date in 2023 or the first quarter of calendar year 2024.
3. To the best extent possible, we asked partners to prioritize projects in the Blue Oval City footprint, At-risk and Distressed Counties, those serving special populations and/or responding to excessive housing demand in under-served parts of the state.
4. With regard to the at-risk and distressed counties: **Our proposal for these communities seeks to remain proportional to demand.** The reality is that due to the depressed economic environments of Distressed and At-Risk counties; demand is limited.
5. For the purposes of this proposal, "households" means both individuals and families.
6. For the purposes of this proposal "special populations" includes: Veterans, Elderly, Disabled, DV Survivors, Returning Citizens (re-entry population), Addiction recovery and workforce households (middle income households currently priced out of the market).
7. All projected costs are based on current dollars and interest rates, and are subject to change.
8. We have not included administrative fee estimates. This expense will vary depending on the final funding and scope of work needed to disburse and track sub-grants; and manage reporting. Partners are aware that their final awards may be lower than projected to account for these costs.

9. Within each scenario, we've included a mix of Fahe Members, TAHRA members and Neighborworks affiliates.
10. What is detailed in the attached memo is an estimate of what can be produced using ARPA funding as of January 2023. Given the unpredictability of the current market and a lack of certainty about when ARPA funding would be received, some of these projects may be in a different stage of development by the time funding is available. Therefore, what is listed in this summary proposal is not guaranteed for selection. For final award decisions, Fahe will strive to fund a mix of projects serving similar counties, at similar income levels, for similar special populations and with a similar scope of units built or preserved.

Proposal Summary:

With an investment of \$21.9 million in ARPA funding, Fahe partners can deliver \$82.3 million in housing projects across the state. Combined, these projects:

- Deliver 27 finished projects by June of 2026
- Expand housing capacity in 20 counties;
- Build 224 new units
- Preserve 549 affordable units
- Benefit 1,435 households
- Provide immediate investments in 5 Distressed Counties are served; and 5 at-risk counties
- Support the Blue Oval City project through 4 housing projects
- Create housing options for special populations - 20 projects have an explicit focus on special populations

A Note on Leveraging of Funds:

Partners have already exceeded a 1:1 match for what we're requesting in ARPA Funding. We have received commitments for \$24.8 million. Leveraging these commitments and ARPA dollars will enable coalition partners to quickly close the remaining funding gap.

Concluding thoughts:

Fahe welcomes the opportunity to partner with the state of TN. That is true today as we consider ARPA funding, and in future as other resources become available. To that end, we want to reiterate once more, that while we have substantially scaled back our request and proposal- the need remains. Our hope is that this opportunity- and the projects we're able to deliver- serve as a catalyst for the development of a robust statewide plan focused on the production and preservation of housing working families can afford. As always, we welcome any questions you may have with regard to this proposal and look forward to working with you in the near future.

Fahe TN Housing Coalition Proposal Snapshot

Red= Distressed County **Yellow= At-Risk County** **Blue = Oval City Adjacent** **Orange= Alternative Sites**

Project	Anticipated project start date	Anticipated date of project completion	County where project will occur	Alternative Locations	Is this project intended to serve families at or below 80% of AMI?	Is this project intended to serve households making up to 300% of the federal poverty guideline (about \$70K for a family of 3)?	Special Populations?	Number of units to be built	Number of units to be preserved	Number of households (individuals and families)	Total project cost (in dollars)	Amount of ARPA funding requested (in dollars)	Committed Funding	Key Partners	Other Notes
1	01/13/2023	06/30/2024	Bledsoe	Could be any of these Cumberland, Fentress, Overton, Jackson, Pickett, Morgan, Rhea, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Grundy, White, Cocke, Grainger, Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Union, Campbell, Hamblen, Jefferson, Sevier	Yes	Yes	Not directly	6	0	6	1,400,000	1,000,000	400,000	no	No
2	02/01/2024	02/28/2025	Bradley County		Yes	No	Veterans and/or Disabled Veterans	0	80	80	3,200,000.00	1,000,000.00	2,200,000	no	Project is conceptual and not a shovel ready project. Planned preservation of existing affordable housing thru acquisition w/rehab of former 80-unit Public Housing property. Conversion of property to serve Veterans and Disabled Veterans thru the VASH voucher program.
3	07/01/2023	05/31/2025	Cocke	Fentress, Overton, Jackson, Pickett, Morgan, Rhea, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Grundy, White, Cocke, Grainger, Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Union, Campbell, Hamblen, Jefferson, Sevier, Monroe	Yes	Yes	Elderly and others but not exclusively	0	150	150	1200000	1,000,000	200000	USDA	Home repair for health and safety issues

Fahe TN Housing Coalition Proposal Snapshot

Red= Distressed County
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 Orange= Alternative Sites

Project	Anticipated project start date	Anticipated date of project completion	County where project will occur	Alternative Locations	Is this project intended to serve families at or below 80% of AMI?	Is this project intended to serve households making up to 300% of the federal poverty guideline (about \$70K for a family of 3)?	Special Populations?	Number of units to be built	Number of units to be preserved	Number of households (individuals and families)	Total project cost (in dollars)	Amount of ARPA funding requested (in dollars)	Committed Funding	Key Partners	Other Notes
4	08/01/2023	05/29/2026	Cumberland County		Yes	Yes	Workforce Households who are Low-income, with special interest in first responders & educators, and also veterans who are low-income and rural, and those who are aged 60 or older and low-income.	0	16	23	320,000	280,000	40,000	Housing Assistance Council.	
5	08/01/2023	05/29/2026	Fentress County		Yes	Yes	Workforce Households who are Low-income, with a specific interest in serving first responders & educators, and low-income rural veteran households.	0	12	20	240,000	230,000	15,000	Housing Assistance Council	

Fahe TN Housing Coalition Proposal Snapshot

Red= Distressed County
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Orange= Alternative Sites

Project	Anticipated project start date	Anticipated date of project completion	County where project will occur	Alternative Locations	Is this project intended to serve families at or below 80% of AMI?	Is this project intended to serve households making up to 300% of the federal poverty guideline (about \$70K for a family of 3)?	Special Populations?	Number of units to be built	Number of units to be preserved	Number of households (individuals and families)	Total project cost (in dollars)	Amount of ARPA funding requested (in dollars)	Committed Funding	Key Partners	Other Notes
6	01/13/2023	02/15/2025	Grundy County	We also work in 6 other counties, so projects could also be happening in Bledsoe, Marion and Sequatchie counties	Yes	Yes	elderly and others	3	10	40	750,000	600,000	150,000	USDA for the rehab project (hopefully partnering with them to utilize some of the grant funding we have utilized in the past for major home repair)	We partner with a number of organizations, so hopefully would be able to partner with others on these projects as well, including Habitat for Humanity and other area housing non-profits.
7	06/01/2023	12/31/2024	Hamilton County		Partly	Partly	no	32	0	32	5,350,000	1,000,000	780,000	Yes. City of Chattanooga	The project has a \$350,000 funding commitment from a local foundation (included in committed dollars). It is already in permitting. Trying to secure additional gap financing since the interest rate under the CITC program has increased from zero to 3.5% soon to be 4%. That caused an additional million dollar gap.
8	10/01/2023	12/31/2024	Hancock	Fentress, Overton, Jackson, Pickett, Morgan, Rhea, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Grundy, White, Cocke, Grainger, Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Union, Campbell, Hamblen, Jefferson, Sevier, Monroe	Yes	Yes	Elderly and others but not exclusively	0	15	15	1,000,000	1,000,000	0		We will help families facing foreclosure (who are not eligible for govt relief programs) stay in their home by refinancing or buying home and selling back to original homeowner with new, affordable mortgage along with free counseling, etc. Similar to this program https://bluehubcapital.org/foreclosure-relief
9	8/1/2023	01/01/2026	Henderson County		Yes	No	Yes	16	38	156	2000000	1000000.00	0	NO	This project will help update the units that we have existing. These units have not been updated since the day they were built.

Fahe TN Housing Coalition Proposal Snapshot

Red= Distressed County
 Yellow= At-Risk County
 Blue = Oval City Adjacent
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Project	Anticipated project start date	Anticipated date of project completion	County where project will occur	Alternative Locations	Is this project intended to serve families at or below 80% of AMI?	Is this project intended to serve households making up to 300% of the federal poverty guideline (about \$70K for a family of 3)?	Special Populations?	Number of units to be built	Number of units to be preserved	Number of households (individuals and families)	Total project cost (in dollars)	Amount of ARPA funding requested (in dollars)	Committed Funding	Key Partners	Other Notes
10	07/01/2023	12/31/2024	Jackson	Fentress, Overton, Jackson, Pickett, Morgan, Rhea, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Grundy, White, Cocke, Grainger, Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Union, Campbell, Hamblen, Jefferson, Sevier, Monroe	Yes	Yes	Yes, but not exclusively	0	0	60	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	Not formally	This would be downpayment assistance to make homeownership affordable for families who do not income qualify for USDA 502D and/or are not located in a rural area. Families making over \$50,501 are blocked out of homeownership at this time because of the cost of homes. This can help.
11	06/01/2023	12/31/2024	Knox County		Yes	Yes	Seniors/Elderl	40	0	50	\$7,001,500	\$1,000,000	\$1,750,000	Knox County thr	This 40-unit development for low income seniors will have a significant impact on the lack of affordable senior housing in our area. in grant funds and equity. We also have a lender to provide a loan on the rest of the project, should we have enough funds to make it work.
12	07/31/2023	12/29/2023	Madison County		Yes	Partly	No	0	10	40	1,400,000	1,000,000	400,000	No	This project is intended to increase the supply of affordable rental units in the city. Over the last 18 months over 300 units have been lost due to the conversion of previously affordable units to market rate. These 300 units no longer accept housing choice vouchers and have pushed up the rents. The location of the proposed properties will serve employees of existing businesses and also the new Great Wolf Lodge development. They will be priced to serve working families and individuals.

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13	08/31/2023	07/31/2024	Madison County		Partly	Partly	Elderly	15	0	45	2,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	No	The city has been experiencing a surge in development which is driving up housing costs and dramatically reducing the supply of affordable for rent and for sale housing. Working families are in need of affordable homeownership options, to fix their housing payment and allow them to stay in the area.	
14	07/31/2023	08/01/2024	Madison County		Yes	Partly	No	TBD	36	100	7,200,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	No	This project is an existing apartment complex in major disrepair owned by and adjacent to a local college. This project would transform the immediate neighborhood and provide quality affordable housing, for a range of population. The city is struggling with housing affordability due to previous tax credit properties completing their compliance periods and converting to market rate-they are no longer accepting housing choice vouchers. The city has lost over 300 affordable units in the last 18 months and this trend is expected to continue.	
15	06/15/2023	07/31/2023	Madison County		Yes	Partly	The project will serve affordable households with a preference for Elderly, workforce housing and VASH veterans.	N/A	Acquis	This is a	32	1,600,000	1,000,000	600,000	No	The property is located on the west side of the city, in a neighborhood that has gone through major redevelopment. This has dramatically reduced the available supply of affordable units. This project will not only help with affordability, but also access to the city's major employer and also the main medical center. It will also place them closer to amenities, thus reducing transportation burdens.

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16	06/01/2023	12/15/2023	Morgan County			No	Yes, Rehab projects for elderly in Morgan, Campbell and Roane Counties	0	20	36	237000	142,000	95,000	Yes, we currently have an HPG grant for approximately 5 rehab projects in Roane County. We are requesting ARPA funds for leverage for these projects and for funding for projects in Morgan and Campbell counties.		
17	09/01/2023	12/31/2024	Roane County		Yes	No	Veterans - in part	0	88	202	8400000	1000000	0	USDA RD HAC	This is a Section 515 RD rental development that is being disposed. We would like to purchase and rehab the units so they remain affordable.	
18	07/03/2023	04/30/2024	Shelby County		Partly	No	Yes, veteran rental	2	0	2	500,000	150,000	0	Yes, Memphis Housing Authority for VASH vouchers	This is a scattered site rental program to help veterans transitioning to permanent housing using VASH vouchers.	
19	03/22/2023	06/30/2024	Shelby County		Yes	Partly	Yes, elderly	n/a		35	35	5,000,000	1000000	3000000	Yes, City of Memphis	This is a owner-occupied home repair program to help elderly stay in their homes.

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20	03/01/2024	02/01/2025	Shelby County		Yes	Yes	No	20	n/a	50	5,560,000	1,000,000	0	Maybe the Memphis Housing Authority's SHAPE program - voucher to homeownership program.	This is a workforce housing development in the Binghampton neighborhood in partnership with the Binghampton Development Corporation. They have pledged the land for this project with United Housing as co-owner/developer. The BDC has a lot of workforce development and job training programs. Their clients would be part of the pipeline to buy the homes.
21	04/03/2023	04/30/2024	Sullivan County		Yes	No	Workforce Housing	4	0	4	910,772	550,000	360,772	Northeast Tennessee/Virginia HOME Consortium (Sullivan County and City of Kingsport)	This will be 4 single-family homes built in Sullivan County and City of Kingsport to help with the shortage of affordable workforce housing.
22	07/01/2023	12/31/2024	Van Buren	White, Fentress, Overton, Grundy, Van Buren, Jackson, Pickett, Cocke, Grainger, Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Hamblen, Jefferson	Partly	Yes	Not directly	0	10	10	1,400,000	1,000,000	400,000	No	We will buy foreclosures, rehab and then sell or rent as affordable homes.
23	09/11/2023	08/26/2024	Warren County		Yes	No	Disabled residents	0	24	30	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	no	Money to provide at least 24 walk-in showers and/or convert existing bathrooms to handicapped accessible in low-income properties including high-rise. Will provide loss of rent income while units are vacant or pay residents to stay in motel during work. We will do as many units as money allows.

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24	09/11/2023	09/09/2024	Warren County		Partly	Partly	Elderly with Veteran Preference	4	0	6	1,300,000	1,000,000	300,000	McMinnville Housing Auth. and it's nonprofit housing Warren County Development Corp.	
25	01/30/2023	08/01/2024	Washington County		Yes	No	Work Force Housing	6	0	6	1,800,000	1,000,000	744,000	THDA	We have an approved construction line of credit with FAHE in the amount of \$1,200,000.
26	05/01/2023	05/01/2024	Washington County		Partly	Yes	Re-Entry for Recovery Clients	0	5	5	600,000	500,000	400,000	Yes, First Tennessee Development District (Carter County, Washington County, and Sullivan County)	This project will be partnering with the Northeast Tennessee Recovery Center which is 180-bed inpatient drug recovery center. It will be a step down center after inmates are released. Efforts to stop recidivism.
27	07/10/2023	12/15/2024	Williamson County		Yes	Yes	No	76	0	200	20,000,000	500,000	11,000,000	THDA, City of Franklin	The project will serve 30%-60% AMI.
TOTAL			Total					224	549	1435	82,369,272	21,952,000	24,834,772		