

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BROOME COUNTY LEGISLATURE MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2023

The Committee of the Whole Broome County Legislature met on Thursday, July 20, 2023 in the Legislative Conference Room, Sixth Floor, Edwin L. Crawford County Office Building, Binghamton, New York.

Members Present: D. J. Reynolds (Chair), S. Flagg, S. Baker, K. Wildoner, G. Baldwin, M. Pasquale, J. Shaw, M. Hilderbrant, E. Micha, L. Augustini, R. Weslar,

Members Absent: S. Ryan, K. Myers

Others Present: A. Martin, C. Hall, M. Tanzini, J. Scott, Legislature; J. Garnar, M. Ponticiello, C. Wagner, C. Whalen, County Executive; J. Collins, P. Memos, District Attorney; R. Brown, S. Mastin, DPW; Representatives from Chianis & Anderson, Representatives from Clear Path for Veterans, Representatives from Southern Tier Veterans Support Group.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 4:07 PM

District Attorney School Resource Officer Update

Chief Investigator Jack Collins briefed the Committee on the District Attorney's Office School Resource Officer program. (Presentation attached with the minutes)

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins explained that some school districts are covered by municipal police departments that are located within the school district.

In response to a question from the Committee, firearms that are utilized by School Resource Officers must be inspected by a firearms instructor.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins stated that the continuation of the program, and which agency operates it, is a collaborative decision that should be made with the relevant stakeholders.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins stated there has been interest to expand the program to Tioga County, but there are legal requirements and jurisdictional regulations that would need to be overcome in order to accomplish the expansion outside of Broome County.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins stated that the challenges that exist related to managing the current program include the large number of participating school districts, each district having several school facilities, and keeping tabs on all personnel and situations occurring simultaneously at schools in real time.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins stated that a School Resource Officer would have to be informally approved by the School District and the agency that's managing the SRO Program.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Collins stated that the School Resource Officers are County employees that are structured in a similar way as other District Attorney's Office employees.

Veterans Services Facility Update

Broome County Executive Jason Garnar, Acting Public Works Commissioner Roger Brown, DPW Engineer Scott Mastin and representatives from Chianis & Anderson briefed the Committee on the current plans for a Veterans Services Agency Facility slated for 530 State Street in the City of Binghamton. (Presentation attached with the minutes)

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that all projects undertaken by Broome County need to be up to code and emergency access will be compliant with regulations. County Executive Garnar also stated that sidewalk clearing and maintenance would be performed by the County.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that there is a need for housing for Veterans and the RFP for this project will include criteria to accommodate Veterans who need housing.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that he expects the housing aspect to be temporary, and case workers will work with Veterans to develop a plan on how long they'd stay at the facility with the goal to transition them to permanent housing or home ownership. County Executive Garnar also stated the scale of housing veterans is determined by the amount of funding dedicated to the project. County Executive Garnar also stated that \$2.8 million dollars out of the \$10 million dollar project total is dedicated to Veteran housing.

Legislator Mary Kaminsky stated that having services for Veterans in one place is advantageous and will greatly assist the Veteran community.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that there was a consideration to allocate fund balance funds for this project, but due to ongoing inconsistencies in funding from New York State, it's advantageous to continue building the County's fund balance to address possible future budget shortfalls impacted by New York State.

In response to a question from the Committee, DPW Engineer Scott Mastin stated that environmental testing was conducted at the site. Some construction debris was identified but no hazardous chemicals were found.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that the office space will be utilized by Veteran service providers and those approvals will be made by the Legislature and Administration.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that Veterans will not pay out of pocket for rent and utilities. Those expenses are covered by the County.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that he's confident the County will be able to collect the amount needed to fund the project through the real property transaction fee. County Executive Garnar also said that fund balance is healthy and there are funds in the Veterans account that can be utilized.

In response to a question from the Committee, representatives from Chianis & Anderson stated that the square footage of the main building is around 14,000 square feet. It was also stated that IT needs will be accommodated at the Veterans facility.

In response to a question from the Committee, County Executive Jason Garnar stated that there was consideration to rent a facility versus building a facility. County Executive Garnar also stated there were not many options that could accommodate the building, the housing and the parking needs for the project.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Whalen seconded by Mr. Shaw. The meeting adjourned at 5:34 PM.

**Broome County District
Attorney Office
School Resource Officer
Program**



Program Updates

- Creation & History
- Mission of Program
- Goals & Objectives
- Administration & Operations
- Programs Future

History of Program

- Program started in 2016
- Windsor School District was the first district to partner with the District Attorney Office and have an interagency agreement.
- Today, we cover 8 districts with a total of 24 SRO's.

History of Program

- Districts

BOCES – 2

Chenango Valley – 3

Union Endicott – 4

Harpursville – 2

Catholic Schools of BC – 2

Susquehanna Valley - 4

Windsor – 4

Whitney Point – 3

Mission of the SRO Program

It is the mission of the Broome County District Attorney Office to facilitate positive relationships with school officials, students, and parents. As such, school resource officers (SROs) shall participate in safety planning, respond to the needs of students, and conduct investigations and other related law enforcement activities on school property in conformance with accepted legal practices and in recognition of the authority and responsibility of school officials to manage the school environment. It is not the policy of this agency to enforce administrative rules on behalf of school officials.

Goals & Objectives

- To foster educational programs and activities that will increase student knowledge of and respect for the law and the function of law enforcement agencies;
- To act swiftly and cooperatively when responding to major disruptions and flagrant criminal offenses at school;
- To report serious crimes that occur on or off campus and to cooperate with law enforcement officials in their investigation. Establish and maintain a close partnership with school administrators in order to provide for a safe school environment;
- Assist school administrators in emergency crisis planning and building security matters. Provide a course of training for school personnel in handling crisis situations and assist in conflict resolution efforts.

Goals & Objectives

- Work to prevent juvenile delinquency through close contact and positive relationships with students;
- Conduct security inspections as permitted by law to deter criminal or delinquent activities;
- Monitor crime statistics and work with local patrol officers and students together to design crime prevention strategies.

Administration & Operations

- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's)
- Hiring & Selecting SRO's
- Training
- Financial
- Supervision & Management

Memorandums of Understanding

- The MOU outlines several areas to include but not limited to:
 - Goals & Objectives
 - Duties
 - Qualifications
 - Training
 - Financial, Terms, Insurance & Indemnification
 - Access to Educational Records
 - Chain of Command
- MOU's are approved through Legal & Executive Office.

Hiring & Selecting

- Retired Police Officers

Why?

- Experience
 - Part – Time position
 - No Benefits
 - Recycling Retired Police Officers back into the work force (NYSP, BPD, BCSO, VPD & EPD)
- We collaborate closely with the individual districts in selecting a candidate to fill positions.
 - SRO's do not change from district to district.

Training

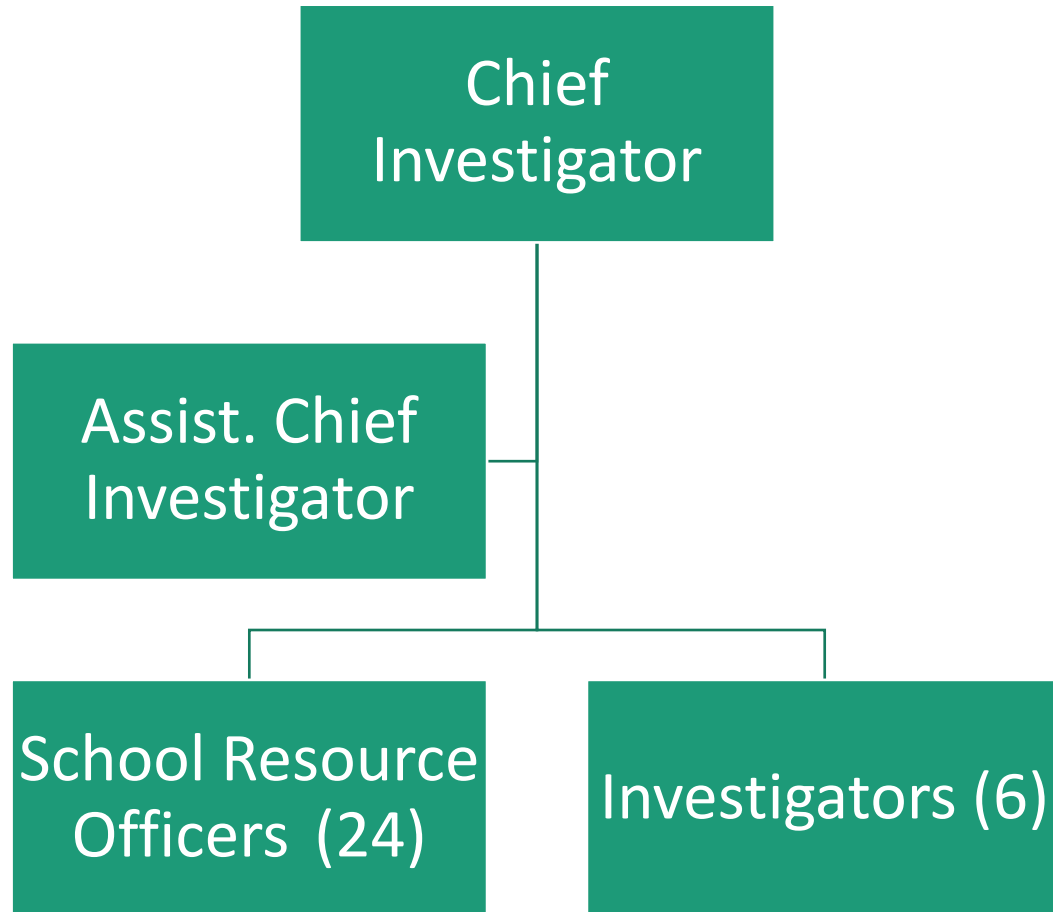
- Annual Training
 - In-Service Training with BCSO
 - BC Yearly Required Training
 - Firearms & Use of Force
 - Written Policies (Updates & Changes)
- Other
 - SRO I (Basic)
 - SRO II (Advanced)
 - Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
 - Active Shooter Drill
 - District Sponsored Training

Financial

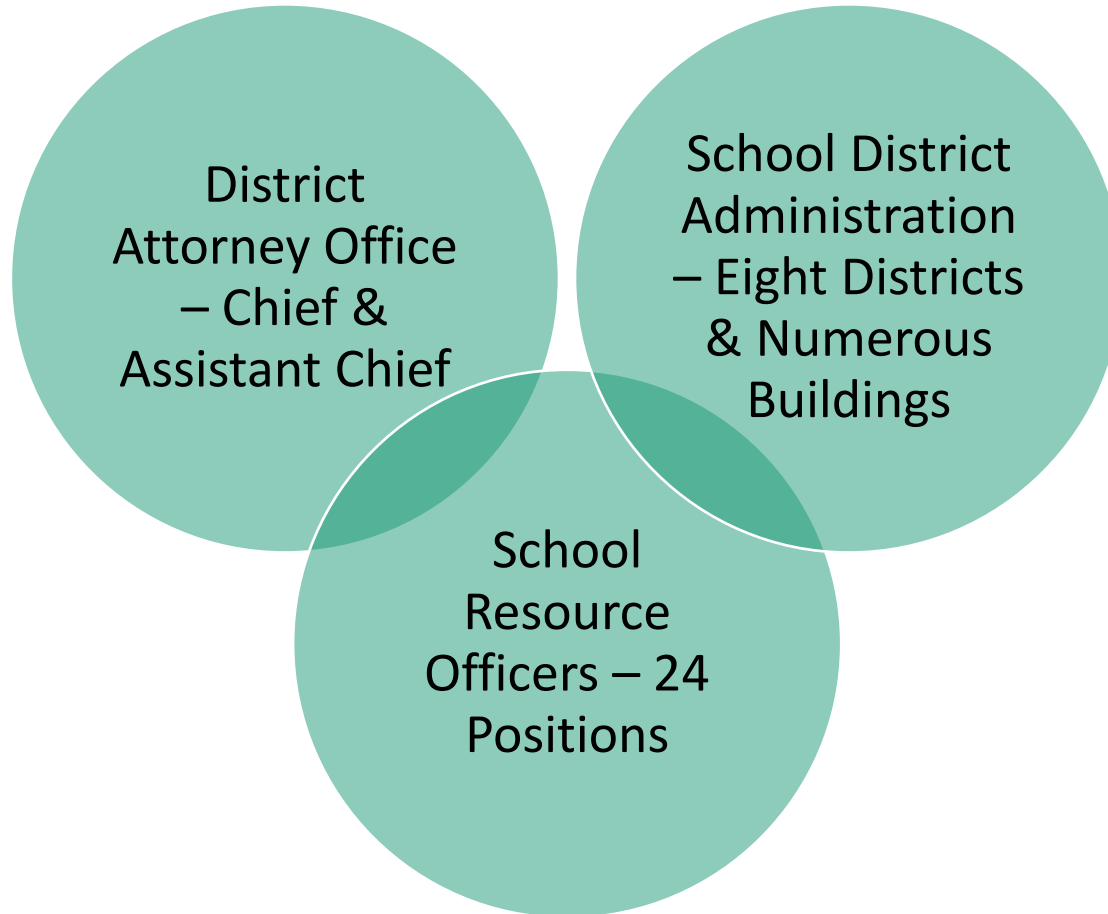
- District
 - Salary & FICA
 - \$44,789 & \$3,426 (.0765)

 - Start-up Expenses (Uniforms, Safety Equipment, Radios, Travel & Education)
 - \$7,345

Supervision & Management – Investigative Division of DA Office



Supervision & Management – SRO Program



Programs Future

- Seeking approval to hire additional positions. Districts are requesting additional SRO's.
- Will be asking in the 2024 budget for the approval to hire a Senior Investigator with the direct responsibility to oversee operations of the SRO Program and Training.

Questions & Comments

The Broome County Veterans Resource Center

Providing for our veterans for the next generation





Local Veteran Issues of Concern

- Veterans have a hard time accessing services in downtown
- Local veteran agencies either don't have an office or are scattered throughout the county
- Community organizations that offer veteran-specific services don't have a common place to serve veterans
- 1 out of every 4 homeless individuals has worn a U.S. military uniform
- On average Broome County has an estimated 20 homeless veterans at any given time

Mission

1. Create a welcoming one stop shop for Veteran services in Broome County.

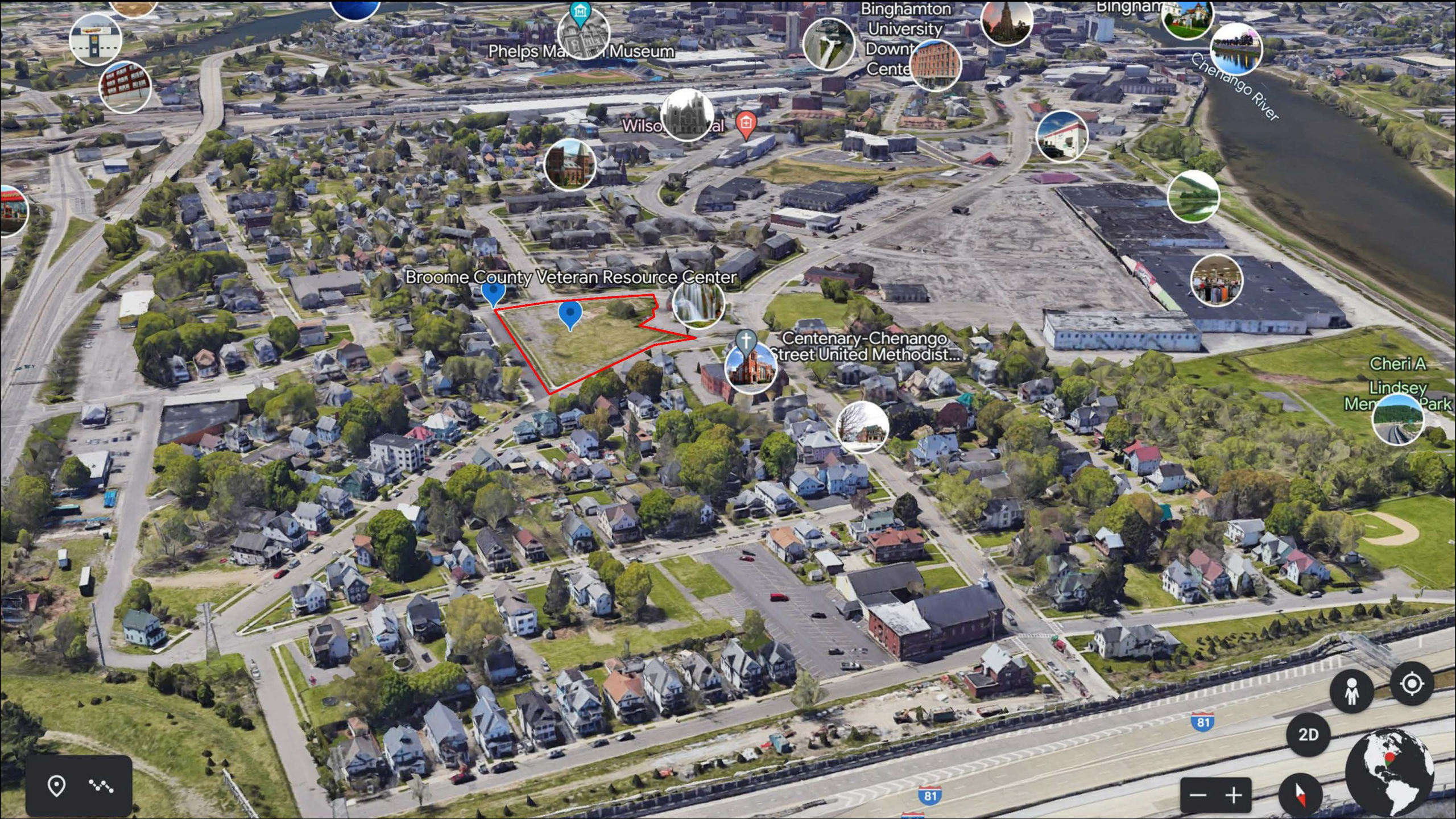
2. Ensure that all veterans in Broome County have a place to call home.





Street View 530 State Street, Binghamton

- Purchased from Salvation Army
- On BC Transit Line
- Within short distance to Binghamton Veterans Counseling Center and VA Clinic
- In a welcoming area which will be soon redeveloped
- Supported by Mayor and positively reviewed by Planning Board
- Strongly supported local veteran community



Phelps Memorial Museum

Binghamton University
Downtown Center

Binghamton

Chenango River

Wilson Memorial

Broome County Veteran Resource Center

Centenary-Chenango
Street United Methodist...

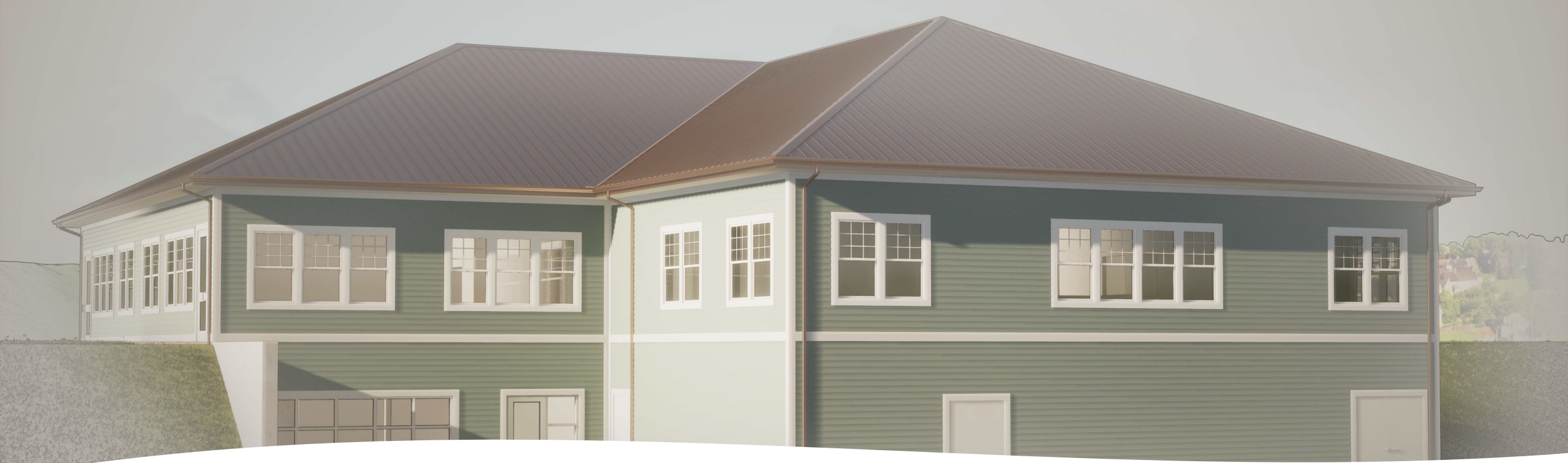
Cheri A
Lindsey
Memorial Park

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2D

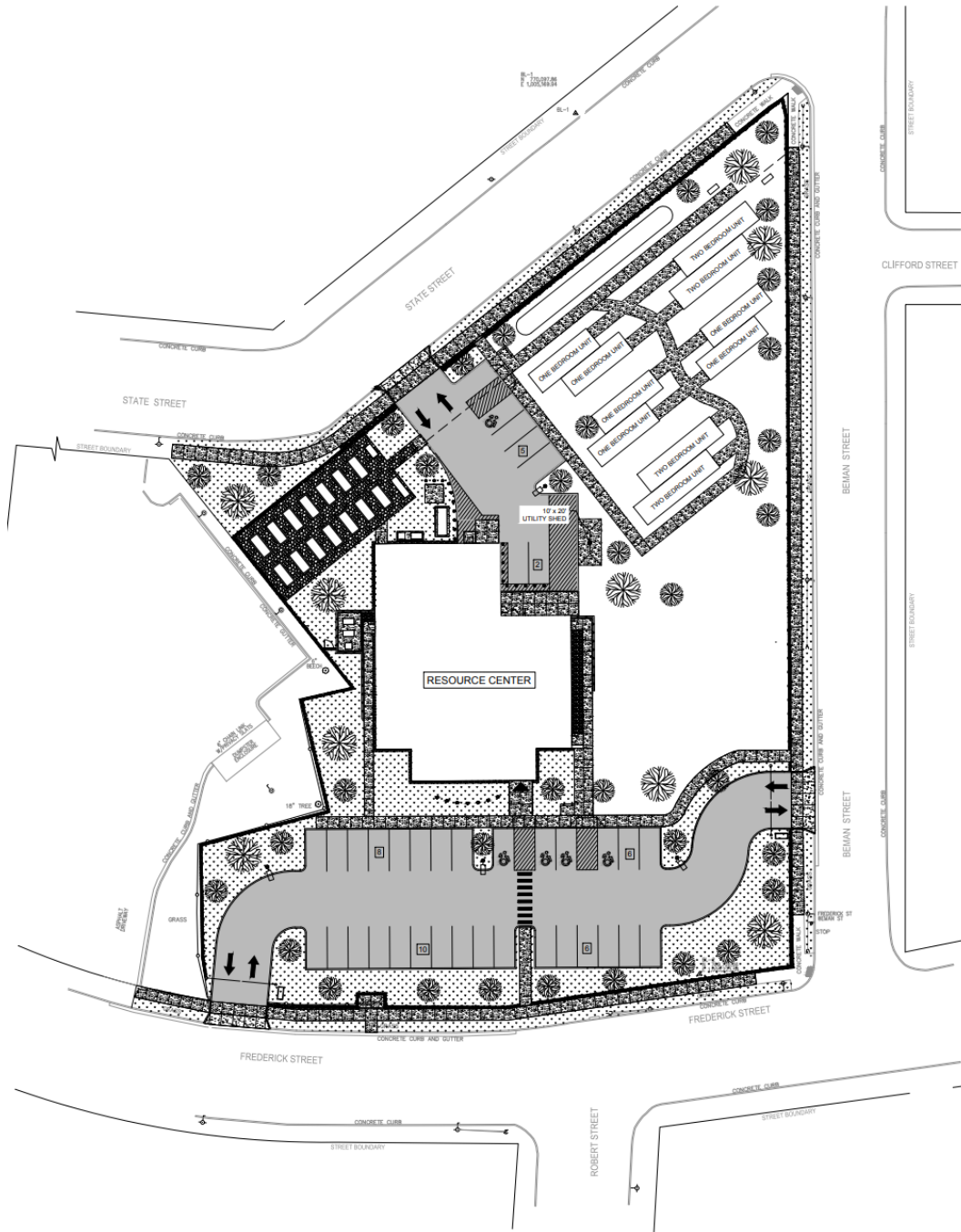
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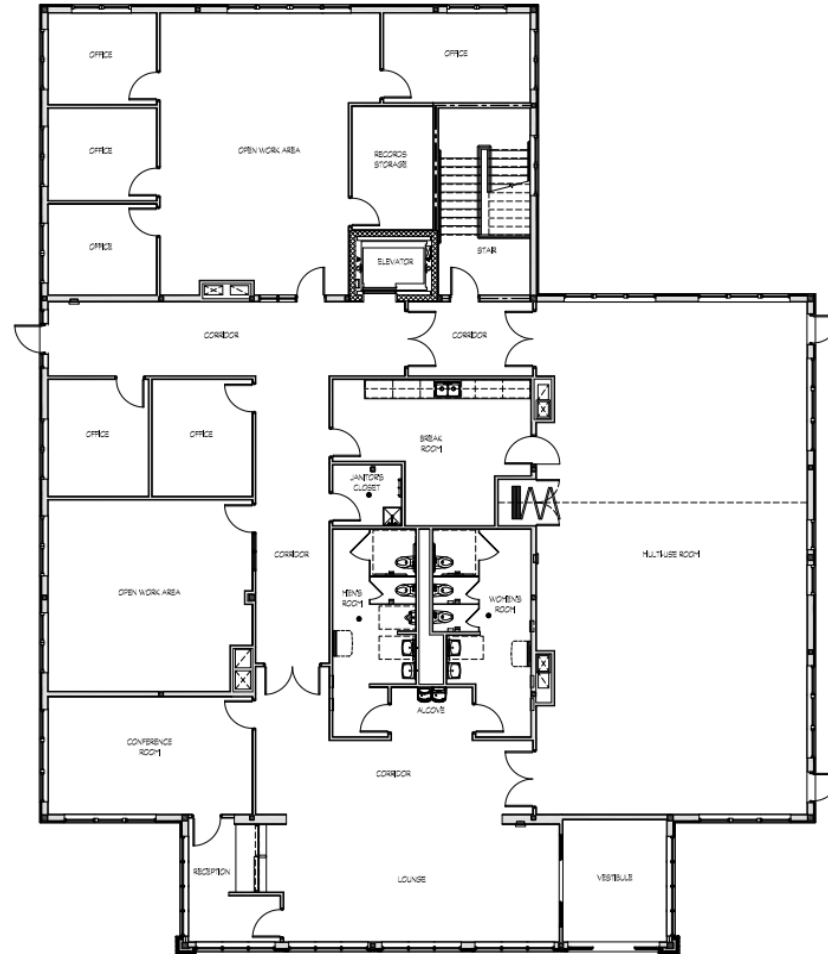


A One Stop Shop for Veterans Services

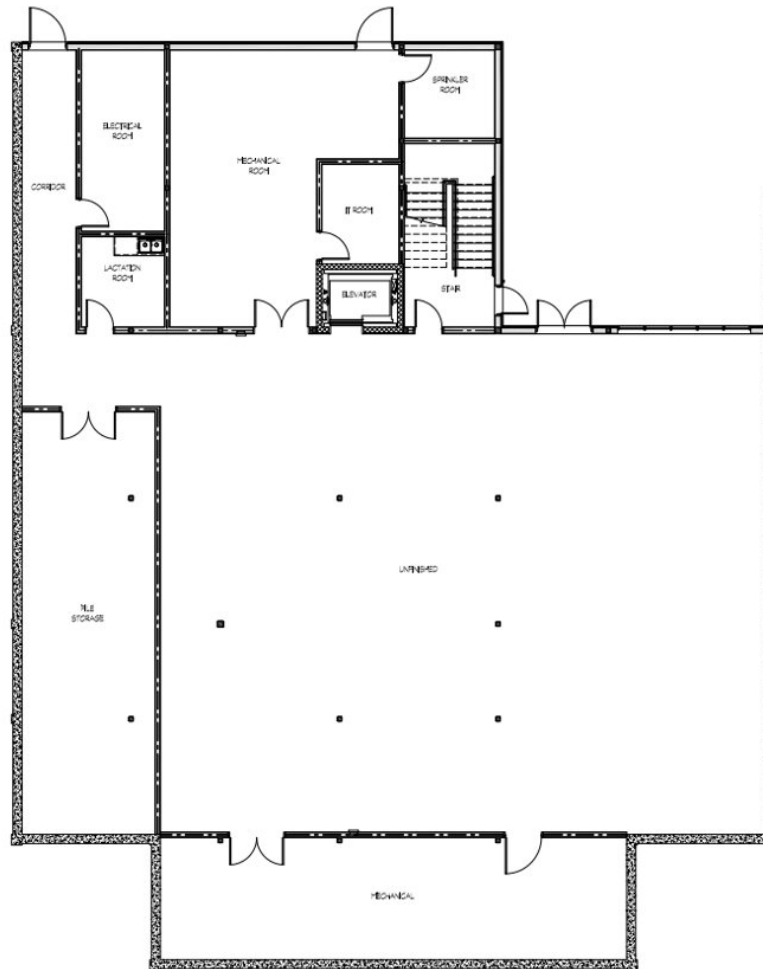
- ADA accessible, modern and accommodating office space for Broome County Veterans Services, Clear Path for Veterans, Southern Tier Veterans Support Group, and other vet organizations.
- A shared work space room which can accommodate other community partners
- A 100 person capacity community room for education and fellowship events
- Ten units of tiny homes, first to be built in Broome County
- VINES Community Garden
- Parking lot for staff and the public



Upper Level Floor Layout



Lower Level Floor Layout



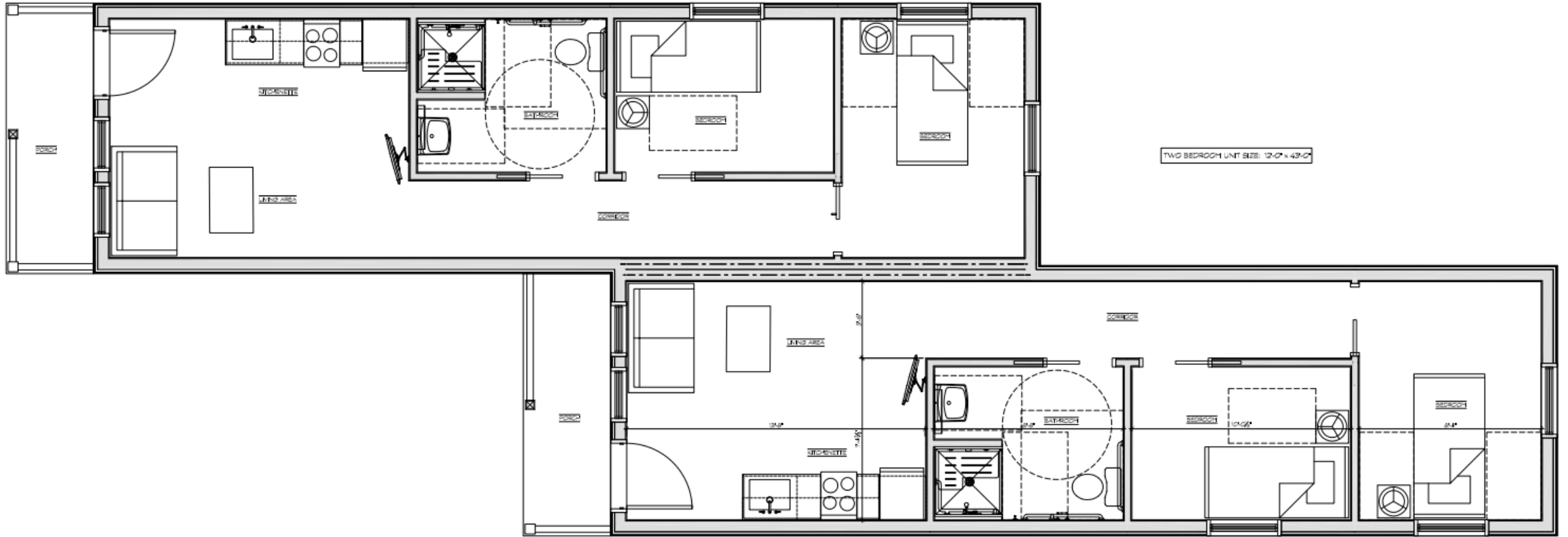


Ten Units of Tiny Homes for Veterans

- ADA accessible
- 6 single and 4 double apartments
- Include all appliances
- Managed and operated by a local housing management company (RFP forthcoming)







TWO BEDROOM UNIT SIZE: 12'-0" x 43'-0"

Timeline

- August 2023: \$10 million bonding resolution
- August 2023: home rule request sent to state
- Fall 2023: bids out/construction starts
- Fall 2023: rfp selection for housing management
- Fall/Winter 2024: construction and move to center complete

Funding Sources

- Federal Earmark (Molinaro/Schumer/Gillibrand): \$1,000,000
- NY Senate SAM Grant (Akshar): \$1,000,000
- NY Assembly SAM Grant (Lupardo): \$500,000
- NY ESD Grant: \$650,000
- TOTAL: \$3,150,000

Increase Real Estate Transfer Fee to Fund Project

- Broome Currently Collects \$700,000 per year
- Proposal would be to increase fee \$1 to pay for the project
- Fee would increase from \$5 per \$1,000 to \$6 per \$1,000
- Home rule request sent this year, approval by State next year
- Average mortgage of \$150,000 would see fee increase of \$150 (\$750 to \$900)
- Fee has not been changed in decades
- No net support from general fund