1. **Applicant Identification**
   Walker County
   101 South Duke Street
   LaFayette, GA 30728

2. **Funding Requested**
   a. **Assessment Grant Type:** Community-wide
   b. **Federal Funds Requested**
      i. $500,000
      ii. Not Applicable

3. **Location**
   a) City of LaFayette b) Walker County c) Georgia
   a) City of Chickamauga b) Walker County c) Georgia
   a) City of Rossville b) Walker County c) Georgia

4. **Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information**
   **Target Area: Census Tracts**
   - LaFayette: 207 (13295020700)
   - Chickamauga: 205.1 (13295020501)
   - Rossville: 202 (13295020200)

   **Priority Sites**
   - City of LaFayette: LaFayette Cotton Mills – 300 West Main Street, LaFayette, GA 30728
   - City of Chickamauga: Former Crystal Springs Print Works – 100 Longstreet Ave Chickamauga, GA 30707
   - City of Rossville: Former Peerless Woolen Mills – 555 McFarland Avenue, Rossville, GA 30741

5. **Contacts**
   a. **Project Director**
      Shannon Whitfield,
      Chairman/Chief Executive Officer
      (706) 638-1437
      commissioner@walkerga.us
      101 South Duke Street
      LaFayette, GA 30728
   b. **Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official**
      Shannon Whitfield,
      Chairman/Chief Executive Officer
      (706) 638-1437
      commissioner@walkerga.us
      101 South Duke Street
      LaFayette, GA 30728
6. **Population**
   City of LaFayette, GA: 7,439  
   City of Chickamauga, GA: 8,021  
   City of Rossville, GA: 3,606  

7. **Other Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
<th>Page #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority site(s) within the target area.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. **Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority**
   See attached

9. **Releasing Copies of Applications**
   N/A
November 9, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC Mail Amanda.Herrit@terracon.com

Ms. Sara Janovitz, Regional Brownfield Program Contact
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, S.W., 10th Fl
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

RE: State Acknowledgement Letter – Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application
Walker County

Dear Ms. Janovitz:

This letter serves as acknowledgement from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (“GA EPD”) that Walker County will be submitting an application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) for funding assistance under the Federal Community-Wide Assessment Grant Program to conduct assessment activities. GA EPD understands that the County is applying for $500,000 to be used to assess brownfield properties contaminated with both hazardous substances and petroleum.

GA EPD would like to take this opportunity to encourage EPA’s positive decision in making a grant award to the County for such assessment. A successful award would greatly assist this community in its redevelopment efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon Ridley
Brownfield Coordinator

File: FFY 2022 EPA Grant Applicants, Walker County Assessment Grant
FY22 Brownfield Assessment Grant
Narrative
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields
   i. Background and Description of Target Area: As a rural, northwest Georgia community, Walker County seeks to remedy the economic and social woes precipitated by brownfields in three target area communities: City of LaFayette (LaFayette), City of Chickamauga (Chickamauga), and City of Rossville (Rossville). The target areas will use EPA Brownfield grant funding to augment redevelopment plans currently in place to assess environmental concerns, encourage brownfield site reuse, increase tax revenues through site redevelopment, and provide needed employment opportunities.

   Walker County is a nexus of historical importance, with 17 sites on the National Register of Historic Places, and home to the natural beauty of Lookout Mountain and the world famous Rock City Gardens.\(^1\) The target areas are also known for the “mill city culture” associated with textile mills historically located in this northwest portion of Georgia. For over 100 years, Walker County was home to numerous textile mills that opened in the late 1800s and are part of the West Georgia Textile Heritage Trail.\(^2\) Over time, the mills steadily closed as manufacturing moved overseas or larger national companies overtook smaller family-run mills. The City of LaFayette was incorporated in 1835 and serves as the county seat for Walker County. LaFayette is known historically for textile production, and its first mill, the Union Cotton Mill of 1893, operated in the same building until 1984. Elizabeth Hosiery Mills started in 1900, later became Barwick Mills, and then closed in the 1980s. The LaFayette Cotton Mills opened in 1903 and later, as Sunrise Hosiery, closed in 2004. The mill village consisted of housing, an orchard, recreational areas, and a school. The City of Chickamauga, established in 1891, is home to the historic Coke Ovens, which supplied coal coke to the steel and iron foundries of Chattanooga, Tennessee from 1891 until the 1930s, and the Lee and Gordon Mill, which operated as a grist mill from 1836 to 1967. A bleachery was established in 1909 and remained in operation until after World War II, closing in 1969. The Crystal Springs Print Works purchased the site and remained in operation until 2013.\(^2\) The City of Rossville was home to the Peerless Woolen Mills, opening in 1905 and becoming the largest single-unit mill in the world by the 1950s. During WWII, textile production boomed, but after the war demand waned, and the plant closed by 1970.\(^3\)

   LaFayette’s target area includes Census Tract (CT) 207, Chickamauga’s target area includes CT 205.1, and Rossville’s target area includes CT 202. The three priority brownfield sites, located within each city’s jurisdiction, exemplify the economic hardship and blight associated with target areas: the LaFayette Cotton Mills (LaFayette), Former Crystal Springs Print Works (Chickamauga), and the Former Peerless Woolen Mills (Rossville). These sites, the most severely environmentally impacted, are primed for redevelopment due to their city center locations yet, the environmental contamination and the cost of cleanup are a significant barrier to their redevelopment.

   ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Anticipating the EPA Brownfield funding, initial discussions between Walker County and the target area communities identified more than 25 potential sites for assessment including industrial facilities, dry cleaners, gas stations, and abandoned buildings throughout the three cities. Additional sites will be identified by target-area residents and project partners during the implementation of the Walker County’s Brownfield Program. Property owners of the three priority sites have given site access for environmental assessment.

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1 Walker County Website, https://walkercountyga.gov/connect/history.
LaFayette – LaFayette Cotton Mills: The cotton mill property (6.54 acres) is located adjacent to the Chattooga River and in the center of LaFayette near residential properties. The property operated as a cotton mill from 1903 to 1946, then as a jean manufacturer, and later as a sock factory, closing in 2004. The buildings were demolished in 2007. The unfenced property has sat vacant for almost twenty years. Contaminants associated with mill operations include volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semi-VOCs (SVOCs), heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from prior use of dyes, fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. Lead-containing materials (LCM) and asbestos-containing materials (ACM) are anticipated based on the age of the structures onsite. Redevelopment considerations for this site include affordable housing and/or mixed-use development with green space in the floodplain area of the site.

Chickamauga – Crystal Springs Print Works Mill: The unfenced, vacant facility (63.43 acres, approximately 13.6 acres located outside of the flood plain), located adjacent to a water source (Crawfish Spring), formerly operated as a bleachery from 1909 to 1969. The mill employed over 1,200 people at its peak, which is significant for a population of 3,000. A printing company later purchased the facility, and it remained in operation until 2013. Some buildings were demolished in 2014. The mill, located in the center of Chickamauga, is near residential properties and the main commercial core. Contaminants associated with mill operations include VOCs and SVOCs, heavy metals and PCBs from prior use of dyes, fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. LCM and ACM are suspected at this site. Redevelopment considerations for this site include affordable housing and commercial storefronts with a park along the creek.

Rossville – Former Peerless Woolen Mills: The Peerless Mill property, located adjacent to a Tributary of Chattanooga Creek and in the center of Rossville near residential properties and the central business area. The vacant facility with dilapidated buildings and overgrown vegetation covers approximately 27 acres and contains 1.3 million square feet of building space. At its height of production, Peerless Mill employed 3,500 workers in a city of 4,000 residents. One of the outbuildings has recently been redeveloped into a restaurant; however, due to concerns with ACM and LCM, much of the complex is a blighted eyesore in the heart of downtown, and in its current state, a huge impediment to new private investment. Contaminants associated with mill operations include VOCs, SVOCs, heavy metals, and PCBs from prior use of dyes, fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. Redevelopment plans for this site include a mixed-use development with affordable housing, commercial buildings, and a proposed passenger rail terminal.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Rehabilitation will provide the impetus for redevelopment that will promote community economic vitality through property improvement, business growth, job development, and community support. The assessment grant will be used as a tool to meet the redevelopment goals adopted in the Walker County Joint Comprehensive Plan, which highlights brownfield redevelopment as a priority for the county and its cities. All priority sites have environmental concerns that are inhibiting site reuse. Through environmental assessment and site-specific risk screening, these properties can be cleared for redevelopment. The Chickamauga Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan states that the former Crystal Springs Print Works Mill property “represents an unparalleled economic opportunity for the city and region.” Redevelopment plans for the property include retail storefronts and affordable housing along the street with large areas for passive

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4 Walker County Joint Comprehensive Plan, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, February 2017.
public recreation. The portions of the site located in the floodplain will remain green space for an organized recreation hub. Rossville worked with the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute, Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia, the Georgia Municipal Association, North West Georgia Regional Commission, and other groups to develop plans for the 50+ acres of downtown Rossville, including the revitalization of the former Peerless Mill. Rossville has also been working with Ryan Gravel, the visionary landscape architect, designer for the Atlanta Beltline, to develop a vision for the Former Peerless Mills property as potential mixed-use affordable housing/commercial with rail access or a community/education center. The areas of the site located within the flood plain will be designed for public recreation.6 LaFayette is currently working on a Downtown Revitalization Master Plan with the University of Georgia. The plan will incorporate the redevelopment of the LaFayette Cotton Mills and surrounding properties as affordable and/or veteran housing. The West LaFayette Redevelopment Plan encourages the reuse of historic buildings and redevelopment of infill lots contributing to a sense of community.7 The reuse of the LaFayette Cotton Mills site as a mixed use/affordable housing infill lot will align with this plan. The portions of the site located within the flood plain will be designed as green space to allow for flood control and groundwater recharge. The Walker County Joint Comprehensive Plan promotes the use of existing infrastructure, limiting growth in rural areas, and preferring brownfield sites.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Brownfield redevelopment will promote economic success for these communities including new employment opportunities, increased property values, and additional tax revenue, which will help to provide improved health outcomes and quality of life. Developers will be strongly encouraged by target area members to include the use of renewable energy and/or energy efficient designs as part of their redevelopment plans. Located in an Urban Redevelopment Area, Federal Opportunity Zone (OZ) and Rural Zone, the assessment and rehabilitation of the Former Peerless Woolen Mills will advance Rossville’s goals for revitalization: bring affordable housing and jobs opportunities to the neighborhood, decrease poverty in the target area, remove blighted structures, and reduce health hazards for at-risk residents (non-economic benefit). Rehabilitation and repurposing of the LaFayette Cotton Mills, and Crystal Spring Print Works for commercial, mixed-use affordable housing/commercial, and public areas for recreation will restore value for these historic properties, provide affordable housing, bring jobs Downtown, improve tax revenue (economic benefit), induce further investment in the Downtown district, and mitigate health hazards in the target area. The proposed redevelopment at the priority sites will greatly benefit the disadvantaged communities located within walking distance of the three priority sites by reducing blight, providing affordable housing and new employment opportunities while reducing exposure to potentially harmful contamination.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The target area members as local units of government are eligible to apply for private, state, and federal grant funding. Walker County is making every effort to secure additional funding to further its Brownfield Program redevelopment goals and is already using the following opportunities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Funding Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal HUD Community Development Block Grant (up to $500,000)</td>
<td>Building demolition to remove blight, contribute to affordable housing initiatives and expand housing opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Appalachian Regional Commission (up to $500,000)</td>
<td>Industrial development, business incubators, and community parks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Federal
- **EPA Cleanup Grant (up to $500,000)**
  - Cleanup of hazardous and petroleum contaminated brownfield sites.

### State
- **OneGeorgia Authority (EDGE FUND and EQUITY FUND up to $500,000)**
  - For rural community projects usable for public land acquisition.

#### ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure:
Each priority site is connected to existing infrastructure sufficient for future redevelopment, and the infrastructure (sewer, water, roads, utilities) throughout the target areas is sufficient for additional redevelopment. In the event additional infrastructure needs are required, Walker County will apply for state and federal grant funding.

### 2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### a. Community Need

##### i. The Community’s Need for Funding:
The target areas are designated as low population communities (LaFayette 7,439, Census Tract 207; Chickamauga 8,021, Census Tract 205.01; Rossville 3,606, Census Tract 202). The average per capita income for the target area is $19,437 substantially lower than the national level ($34,103), and the median household income is $47,045 (US, $77,263). The average percentage of employed civilian labor force is 55%, lower than the national level (63%). The population living below the poverty level in the target area is 24%, which is considerably higher than the national level (13%). Poverty levels for female heads of household in the target area CTS is (40%) is higher than the national level (27%). Vacant housing accounts for 17% of the existing housing compare to the national level of 12%.

Lower per capita income, fewer residents in the workforce employed, and higher poverty rates in the target area CTS versus national levels mean less revenue for the target area community budgets, limiting their ability to incentivize brownfields rehabilitation and redevelopment. The target area members have developed plans to address the large number of brownfield sites and blighted structures in their communities, but LaFayette, Chickamauga, and Rossville lack the funding to initiate a brownfield program due to the vast number of brownfield sites from the mill industry and the disproportionately poor population and perpetual community disinvestment that has limited tax revenue. Grant funding in combination with other available grant resources will augment the target area’s limited revenues so brownfield assessments can support economic development goals: diminish blight, attract new businesses, create better paying jobs, address health and crime issues, enhance prosperity, and improve tax revenues. Due to the unknown environmental conditions, Walker County recently lost a significant redevelopment investment opportunity of $350M and 1,900 jobs for the community. The EPA Assessment funding will be used to alleviate the direct and indirect consequences of the many brownfield sites within these communities, and as a result, the quality of life for these sensitive populations will improve.

##### ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations
1. **Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:**
   - Federal studies determined that poverty and public health are linked and are related to an array of characteristics: inequality, job access, residential instability, and access to safe and affordable housing. The target areas’ disproportionally female heads of household living in poverty, and impoverished residents, living in older, blighted properties, are the most sensitive populations of the target areas. The target areas’ impoverished population (24%) is significantly higher than the national level (13%). Within the target area, 59% of female heads of household with children under the age of 18 live in poverty, which is higher than the national level (36%).

   Lack of access to affordable housing and fresh food options is a serious welfare issue affecting

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the three target areas. Redevelopment plans determined that the blighted housing stock is a strain on public health in the community. Throughout the target areas, renter occupied housing (42%) is higher than the national rate (36%), and 49% of the housing stock was constructed in 1979 or earlier, which leads to potential exposure to LCM and ACM for the target area’s sensitive populations.\textsuperscript{10} The medium house value for the target areas is $100,133 (US $217,500) with a high vacancy rate of 17% (US 12%).\textsuperscript{10}

Worsening the welfare issues of the target areas is the lack of transportation options, as well as the lack of fresh food and outdoor recreational opportunities. This population has higher rates of obesity (41/100K) and diabetes (63/100K) than the national rates, respectively (35/100K, 57/100K) and less access to opportunities to exercise in Walker County (54%) than the state (GA, 75%).\textsuperscript{13} According to the US Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Economic Research Service, LaFayette and Rossville are designated as food deserts. The population receiving food assistance is 19%, well above the national level (12%).\textsuperscript{10} Despite the rural character of the target area CTs, 10% of households lack a vehicle, making access to food more difficult for the target-area population.\textsuperscript{10}

Research found that stress from social and economic conditions affects the poor more severely and supports a correlation between neighborhood conditions, older, blighted properties, and community health and wellbeing.\textsuperscript{11} Living near abandoned buildings or vacant lots as occurs with brownfields, equates to negative health impacts such as higher rates of chronic illness, developmental challenges, and unhealthy habits.\textsuperscript{11} By redeveloping brownfield sites within the city centers, greenspace and recreational opportunities as well as affordable housing will be more accessible and promote positive health outcomes for the sensitive populations. Rehabilitating brownfield sites within the target areas will help remove blight, create jobs, and promote healthier lifestyles for residents by identifying contaminants and reducing the associated threats to the sensitive populations’ health and welfare.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Contaminants from priority sites are known contributors to stroke, lung cancer, diabetes, chronic liver diseases, obesity, and other health issues plaguing the target area communities. This is troublesome considering the percentage of residents without health insurance in target-areas is 15% (US 11%).\textsuperscript{10} There is also less access to primary health care in Walker County (5,340:1) than the state (GA, 1,510:1).\textsuperscript{12} According to the EJ Screening Tool, the target areas have higher environmental indicators including cancer risk (72\textsuperscript{nd} percentile), lead paint indicator (68\textsuperscript{th} percentile), and respiratory hazard index (72\textsuperscript{nd} percentile) for the US. Although target area health data is not available, \textit{Walker County} has higher rates of stoke, cancer, diabetes, liver disease, and obesity rates than the national averages: stroke rates 58/100K (national 48/100K), lung cancer rates 99/100K (national 56/100K), diabetes 63/100K (national 57/100K), liver disease 24/100K (national 17/100K), and obesity rates 41/100K (national 35/100K).\textsuperscript{13} Obesity is a risk factor for asthma and in Georgia, the rate of \textit{asthma} (9%) is higher than the US (8%), and those who are obese with asthma is higher for the state (46%) than the US (39%).\textsuperscript{14} For those living in poverty, \textit{asthma} is reported at higher rates: average rate of asthma US 8%, population living in poverty 12%.\textsuperscript{14} This is especially troubling with the target area being in the 72\textsuperscript{nd} percentile in the US for the Respiratory Hazard Index.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{10}US Census: ACS 2015-2019
\textsuperscript{12}https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/
\textsuperscript{13}Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), Profile: Walker County, Georgia, 2014.
\textsuperscript{14}Center for Disease Control Website, https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/asthma_stats/asthma_obesity.htm, Accessed 11/13/21.
Operations at the priority sites involved VOCs, SVOCs, heavy metals, and PCBs, which are associated with cancer and liver diseases. Through environmental assessments completed as part of this grant, life-threatening contaminants associated with target-area priority sites can be identified and mitigated to reduce potential health threats for the sensitive populations who are suffering from a greater than normal incidence of disease.

(3) **Promoting Environmental Justice**: According the EJ Screening Tool, Walker County and the target areas have sensitive populations with **low incomes (81st percentile) and less than high school education (77th percentile)** in the US that have been negatively impacted from the historical industrial practices from the 1800s and 1900s and the long-lasting blighted conditions of today. This community has experienced a **disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences** due to the historical industrial practices including the production of textiles and coke for steel mills. Walker County has been further impacted by the closing of the mills (blighted properties and distressed neighborhoods) and loss of income, which has resulted in a large portion of the population living in poverty (24%).\(^{16}\) The historic textile and coke production activities and loss of industry have left a long-lasting impact on this community including **persistent poverty, high unemployment, substandard housing**, and as a result, **cumulative environmental impacts**. According to the Economic Innovation Group’s Distressed Communities Index (DCI), Lafayette and Rossville are highly distressed communities, 80% and 96%, respectively, and Chickamauga is an at-risk community (67%, GA 21%).\(^{17}\) The DCI is used nationwide to concentrate services and programs on distressed communities in order to promote more balanced and equitable community level economic growth. Due to the **disproportionate effects** of the known environmental justice issues in this community, the sensitive populations (impoverished) are unable to relocate away from environmental threats to safer areas. The EPA Brownfield funding will provide assessment and cleanup planning to promote the remediation and revitalization of this community for its sensitive and distressed population. This project will promote affordable housing, removing blight, and provide opportunities for employment.

b. **Community Engagement**

i. **Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles**: The County has identified prospective partners, organizations within the target area’s (listed below), who will assist in the process of site identification, site prioritization, cleanup and future redevelopment of priority brownfield sites for this assessment project. As the Brownfield Program progresses, additional project partners will be identified and involved throughout the three target areas to ensure that each community will be effectively engaged and informed throughout the grant project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Name</th>
<th>Point of Contact</th>
<th>Specific role in project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walker County Chamber of Commerce-President (Walker County)</td>
<td>Lacey Wilson, <a href="mailto:lacey@walkercochamber.com">lacey@walkercochamber.com</a></td>
<td>The Chamber advocates for business-friendly legislation and economic development. The Chamber will conduct outreach to local property owners, advocate for target-area redevelopment (reuse planning), distribute news and updates to their members, and site prioritization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Growth Association (Chickamauga)</td>
<td>Jennifer Tarvin <a href="mailto:chickamaugaagea@gmail.com">chickamaugaagea@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>The Community Growth Association promotes sustainable growth in the City of Chickamauga. The Association will advocate for business redevelopment and work with communities on smart development and placemaking and will promote equitable redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaFayette Rotary Club</td>
<td>Elijah Parker, <a href="mailto:eparker@peachstatefcu.org">eparker@peachstatefcu.org</a></td>
<td>The Lafayette Rotary Club promotes humanitarian service to spread peace and goodwill. Rotary will assist with the distribution of news and updates to their members and encourage active engagement in the community and will assist with identifying needs of the community.</td>
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iii. Incorporating Community Input: In an effort to gain community support and inform the local target area member communities, several meetings were held to discuss the need for brownfield assessment grant funding. The Walker County Board of Commissioners discussed reapplying for the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and invited questions and comments from the public on November 18, 2021. LaFayette held focus group meetings in February and March 2021 to discuss the blighted priority site. Target area members have held meetings over the past three years to discuss the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within their jurisdictions.

Walker County and the target area members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by the target members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website within two weeks of receipt. Resident-identified sites throughout the target areas will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and the future land-use redevelopment plans.

The Cities’ and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the county. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the Program’s status. To share the Walker County’s Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in Walker County’s Economic Development office, target area members City Hall offices, libraries, and on the Brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared through the community at target area member’s public meetings held within the target area and local libraries. The Program Director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly City Council Meetings, County Board of Commissioners Meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, community meetings have been held in person and in a virtual format. It is anticipated that future meetings will be held in person and in a virtual format as needed. Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual calls to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: Walker County is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in the amount of $500,000 for community-wide assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1: Outreach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Implementation:</strong> The Walker County Brownfield Project Director, Shannon Whitfield, will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website updates, and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental consultant (consultant). The Walker County staff will lead the community meetings (in person and virtual/online during/post COVID-19) to keep the public informed on...</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Walker County, Georgia
### FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1: Project Plans and Updates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Implementation:</strong> Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts) and office supplies to manage the grant.</td>
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</table>

| ii | **Anticipated Project Schedule:** CIP created within three months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings held 1st & 3rd quarter for each grant year. Website and Outreach Materials created in the 1st quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project. |
| iii | **Task/Activity Lead:** Shannon Whitfield, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/Brownfield Project Director |
| iv | **Outputs:** CIP, Brownfield Website, 6 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Minutes, Handouts, and Sign-in Sheets from Community Meetings. |

### Task 2: Site Inventory

| i | **Project Implementation:** Walker County Brownfields Project Director with the assistance of the selected environmental consultant will work with the community members and residents living in the target areas during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Although 25 potential sites have been identified, additional abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by the Walker County staff using the property appraiser’s websites and GIS. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with the Walker County staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine with the help of residents the order in which the sites will be addressed. |
| ii | **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Community meeting held in 1st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process that began with this application, with the evaluation ranking process taking place in the 3rd quarter & continuing throughout the grant project. |
| iii | **Task/Activity Lead:** Shannon Whitfield, Chairman/CEO/Brownfield Project Director. |
| iv | **Outputs:** Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List |

### Task 3: Assessment

| i | **Project Implementation:** The consultant will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting first with the priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which will include the SS-QAPPs. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be obtained. |
| ii | **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Activities to begin in the 2nd quarter and will continue throughout the grant. |
| iii | **Task/Activity Lead:** The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from Shannon Whitfield, Chairman/CEO/Brownfield Project Director. |
| iv | **Outputs:** 20 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 10 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPPs, Site Access Agreements and Property Eligibility Determinations. |

### Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning

| i | **Project Implementation:** For projects identified for cleanup, the consultant will prepare the Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site appropriate remediation/reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The consultant will assist Walker County in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions (virtual or in-person depending on COVID) for key properties. |
| ii | **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Plans & Charrettes to begin in the 6th quarter and will continue throughout the grant project. |
| iii | **Task/Activity Lead:** The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from Walker County’s—Chairman/CEO/Brownfield Project Director (Shannon Whitfield). |
| iv | **Outputs:** 5 ABCAs, 3 Vision Sessions/Charrettes for sites ready for cleanup |

### Task 5: Programmatic Support

| i | **Project Implementation:** The Walker County Brownfields Project Director, Shannon Whitfield, will procure an environmental consultant and will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule and terms and conditions. The consultant will assist Walker County in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the three-year term of the grant. The Walker County staff travel budget allows for three staff to attend two brownfield training/conferences/workshops. |
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Contractor procurement completed in the 1st quarter. ACRES Reporting begins in the 1st quarter & Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in 5th quarter, 9th quarter, and during final closeout.

iii. Task/Activity Lead: Shannon Whitfield, Chairman/CEO/Brownfield Project Director

iv. Outputs: Procured Contractor, ACRES Database Reporting, 3 Annual Financial Reports, 12 Quarterly Reports, 3 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period. Three staff to attend two conferences.

b. Cost Estimates: Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project based on past Brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks. The budget for this project includes travel, supplies and contractual costs only. Walker County commits to spending over 82% of the budget on Assessment Activities. Task 1 Outreach: Contractual: Community Involvement Plan $3,000 (24hrs x $125), Brownfield Website development, Social Media posts $2,000 (16hrs x $125), 6 Community Education Meetings $9,000 ($1,500/meeting). Supplies: Printing of outreach materials (1,000 handouts at $1.00 each), office supplies – paper ($30 per box), post it notes ($5 per pack), electronic support $1,500. Task 2 Site Inventory: Contractual: Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool $10,000 (80hrs x $125). Task 3 Assessment: Contractual: 20 Phase I ESAs (to include site eligibility/access agreements) at $3,500 each for a total of $70,000, 1 Generic QAPP at $3,500, 10 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPPs at $33,600 each for a total of $336,000. Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning: Contractual: 5 ABCAs at $6,000 each for a total of $30,000, 3 Vision Sessions/Charrettes $6,000 ($2,000/meeting). Task 5 Programmatic Support: Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period $24,000 (240hrs x $100). Travel: Three staff to attend two conferences $5,000 (2 flights for 3 staff members at $1,400, 3 nights in hotels $250 per night at $2,250, 3 days incidentals/per diem $150 per day at $1,350).

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<th>Remediation/Reuse Planning</th>
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c. Measuring Environmental Results To ensure this EPA Brownfield Grant is on schedule a representative from each community member’s organization, target area city staff, Walker County staff and the qualified environmental consultant will meet quarterly to track all outputs identified in 3.a, using an Excel spreadsheet reporting all progress for work scope, goals, and objectives fulfillment to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, expenditures and activities will be compared to the schedule to ensure the Grant Project will be completed within the three-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. Outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with project partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs and cleanup plans. Tracked outcomes will include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project’s performance is not efficient, Walker County has countermeasures in place to address this problem. Countermeasures for this project include Walker County, and the environmental consultant, to make monthly calls to the EPA Project Officer and, if needed, create a Corrective Action Plan to get the project back on schedule.
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii. Description of Key Staff: Walker County has a full staff that routinely manages federal and state grants. Walker County has applied for and administered the following federal and state grants: Coronavirus Emergency Funding (US Treasury), Coronavirus Relief Fund (US Treasury), Highway Construction (GA DOT), Officer Safety Enhancement and AED supplies (US DOJ), Emergency Management Performance (DHS/FEMA), and Adult Drug Court and Veterans Treatment (US DOJ). The project director will be responsible for the overall completion of the project and the project manager will handle the day to day implementation of the grant. Shannon Whitfield, Chairman/CEO will serve as the Brownfield Program’s Project Director and is ultimately responsible for timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of the administrative and financial requirements of the Brownfield Program. Mr. Whitfield has worked for Walker County for more than four years. Mr. Whitfield has expertise in grant management, economic development, site selection, state and federal tax incentive program management, and business plan development. He is also a member of the Walker County Development Authority. Elizabeth Wells, Economic Development Consultant, LaFayette/Rossville, will serve as the Brownfield Project Manager and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the grant. Ms. Wells will provide assistance to Mr. Whitfield. Ms. Wells is responsible for planning, special projects, and community outreach for the Region’s members. Walker County’s Finance Officer, Greg McConnell, will serve as the Brownfield Program’s Finance Manager. Mr. McConnell manages Walker County’s day-to-day financial operations. Mr. McConnell will be responsible for the financial requirements of the grant and the use of the ASAP.gov drawdown system. A qualified environmental consultant will assist with the technical and reporting portions of the project.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Utilizing local contracting requirements and procurement process, Walker County will procure a qualified environmental consultant to assist with the technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment. Walker County will ensure compliance with the EPA’s “Professional Service” procurement process.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: In 2018, Walker County was awarded $241,561 for the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for State Prisoners (RSAT) Grant from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The RSAT grant provides substance abuse treatment for approximately 50 inmates. The grant was closed in 2019 and all funds were expended. In 2018, Walker County was awarded $656,238 in grant funding from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The GDOT grant funded transportation for sensitive populations to health care services for Walker County. The grant was closed in 2019 and all funds were expended.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: Walker County has a history of compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions and has an excellent history of timely reporting with all award agencies. Walker County was on schedule and kept track of all grant activities to ensure timely results. Shannon Whitfield, Project Director; Elizabeth Wells, Project Manager; and Greg McConnell, Finance Director, are skilled in grant administration including project management. They will personally monitor grant activities to ensure compliance with all financial and reporting requirements. Walker County tracks all project results individually and will be able to manage the requirements for tracking projects in ACRES when awarded a grant from the EPA.
FY22 Brownfield Assessment Grant
Threshold Criteria
Threshold Criteria

1. **Applicant Eligibility**

   Walker County is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a local government as defined under 2 CFR §200.64. Target areas, City of LaFayette, City of Chickamauga, and City of Rossville, Georgia, are local governments pursuant to 2 CFR §200.64. **Draft** Memorandum of Agreements from each city citing agreement to participate in the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant are attached.

2. **Community Involvement**

   In an effort to gain community support and inform the local target area member communities, several meetings were held to discuss the need for brownfield assessment grant funding. The Walker County Board of Commissioners discussed reapplying for the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and invited questions and comments from the public on November 18, 2021. LaFayette held focus group meetings in February and March 2021 to discuss the blighted priority site. Target area members have held meetings over the past three years to discuss the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within their jurisdictions.

   Walker County and the target area members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by the target members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website within two weeks of receipt. Resident-identified sites throughout the target areas will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and the future land-use redevelopment plans.

   The Cities’ and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the county. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the Program’s status. To share the Walker County’s Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in Walker County’s Economic Development office, target area members City Hall offices, libraries, and on the Brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared throughout the community at target area member’s public meetings held within the target area and local libraries. The Program Director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly Council Meetings, County Board of Commissioners Meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.

   Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, community meetings have been held in person and in a virtual format. It is anticipated that future meetings will be held in person and in a virtual format as needed. Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual calls to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available.
3. **Named Contractors and Subrecipients**
   N/A

4. **Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**
   Walker County affirms that they do not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.