PROPOSAL FOR USEPA’S COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT
RFP NO. EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04/ CFDA NO. 66.818
Section IV.D. – Narrative Information Sheet
December 1, 2021

1. Applicant Identification
   Town of Wendell
   15 E. Fourth Street
   Wendell, North Carolina 27591

2. Funding Requested
   a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
   b. Federal Funds Requested:
      i. $500,000
      ii. N/A – Not Site Specific

3. Location:
   Town of Wendell
   15 E. Fourth Street
   Wendell, North Carolina 27591

4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information:
   • Target Area and City/County/Census Tract
     Target Areas    Town or County/Census Tract
     Town of Wendell CT 544.02 / CT 544.04
• **Addresses of Priority Sites**
  1. West 4th Street Properties, 10 North Buffalo Street, Wendell, NC 27591
  2. Former Carver School, 948 Morphus Bridge Road, Wendell NC, 27591
  3. Undeveloped Parcel, 325 Lake Glad Road, Wendell, NC 27591 (approx.)

5. **Contacts**
   a. **Project Director / AOR**
      
      Marc Collins, Town Manager  
      Town of Wendell  
      15 E. Fourth Street  
      Wendell, North Carolina 27591  
      Phone: 919-365-4450  
      Email: mcollins@townofwendell.com
   
   b. **Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official**
      
      Virginia Gray, Mayor  
      Town of Wendell  
      15 E. Fourth Street  
      Wendell, North Carolina 27591  
      Phone: 919-365-4450  
      Email: vgray@townofwendell.com

6. **Population**
   
   **US Census Bureau, Population Estimates**:  
   Town of Wendell 7,308

   1 US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019
7. **Other Factors Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
<th>Page #</th>
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<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>
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<td>The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<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>
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<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 for priority brownfield site(s) within the target area(s).</td>
<td>9</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>
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8. **Letter from the State Environmental Authority:** Attached
November 1, 2021

Marc Collins, Town Manager
Town of Wendell
15 E. Fourth Street
Wendell, NC 27591
mcollins@townofwendell.com

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Town of Wendell

Dear Mr. Collins,

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Program acknowledges and supports the Town of Wendell’s application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. We are aware that your grant will focus on the Wendell Downtown District for which four priority areas have been selected: an underutilized parcel that contains a pre-regulatory landfill on Lake Glad Road, former tobacco warehouse and current automotive repair facility properties on W. 4th Street, a former textile mill property on E. 4th Street, and the former African American Carver School on Morphus Bridge Road. This grant would be a tremendous economic development achievement for the Town.

We hope that the Town is successfully awarded this grant, and we will continue to support you in your Brownfields redevelopment efforts. The Brownfields Program offers technical project guidance in accordance with our program, throughout the life of your project. This is a major key to ensuring grant applicants make efficient use of the federal funds awarded. The liability protection offered by the program is also a primary marketing tool for developers and instrumental in securing financing.

The Brownfields Program can also assist with outreach efforts to your local community regarding reuse for commercial purposes and the controls to be put in place to make the property suitable. The liability protection offered by a Brownfields Agreement is a benefit to the whole community and can often facilitate additional economic development in the area surrounding a Brownfields Property.

We look forward to working with you regardless of a grant award or not. We truly believe successful Brownfields projects can rejuvenate a community.

Sincerely,

Bruce Nicholson
Brownfields Program Manager

ec: NCDEQ Brownfields Public Outreach Team
1. **PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

Unless noted, references are latest publicly available and reflect the most current information.

1.a. **Target Area and Brownfields**

1.a.i. **Background and Description of Target Area:** The Town of Wendell, North Carolina (Town or Wendell) is an outstanding candidate for an **EPA Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant**. Wendell is a charming, small community in Wake County with a population of 7,308 people per the latest available American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates available from the US Census Bureau (2019)\(^1\). Situated in the central Piedmont region of North Carolina (NC) along US-64, Wendell is about 15 miles east of the state capital, Raleigh. This tobacco farming community sprang up with the coming of the NC railroad in the 1850s bringing residential and commercial development defining the downtown area leading to formal incorporation in 1903. Wendell’s population grew quickly upon the opening of a tobacco market in 1907 and a textile mill in 1912. Downtown Wendell became home to a wide variety of businesses ranging from restaurants and retail to tobacco warehouses and farm service-based businesses. Today, most of the tobacco warehouses are gone, and the textile mill has been demolished. The lost jobs and places of employment have not been replaced, illustrated by 2019 Census Bureau inflow/outflow analysis data that shows **96.4% of residents living within Wendell traveled outside of the Town for employment**\(^2\).

Located on the far eastern edge of Wake County (WC or County) and without a major highway to draw traffic, Wendell has long been passed over for new development and redevelopment opportunities. Western Wake County towns such as Holly Springs and Apex have grown exponentially in the past 20 years while Wendell has remained relatively stagnant. However, as those places reach capacity and demand drives prices up, Wendell is beginning to experience its share of growth as people seek more affordable living options within close proximity to Raleigh. Today, Wendell ranks tied with Apex for the fastest growing community in all of North Carolina. The Town’s population growth combined with an availability of land, nearby access to I-87 and proximity to Raleigh competitively position Wendell as a location for the next wave of development within the Research Triangle Park region. The Town has become more attractive to young professionals, families and retirees looking for a place to call home or start a business with proximity to everything the region offers. Wendell’s downtown contains some retail establishments; however, several blighted, vacant and underutilized properties exist. Redevelopment and reuse of these properties is crucial to support and sustain the Town’s regrowth momentum by bringing in businesses into downtown and providing local food and recreational opportunities to the residents, who currently have to drive several miles out of downtown for such needs. Redevelopment begins with the environmental site assessments and planning facilitated by this grant.

The target area for Wendell’s proposed brownfields program is the **downtown core defined by 3rd and 4th Streets and extending to nearby properties within 1 mile** (Target Area). In recent years, Wendell has grown its footprint, with new residential and commercial extending westward towards I-87 leaving a hollowed out and receding downtown; the focus of this grant will be revitalizing the historical downtown core.

1.a.ii. **Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites:** The Town has begun the process of identifying initial brownfields sites within the core Target Area, highlighting three **priority brownfield sites** for its Brownfields Program. The priority sites were selected for their capacity to catalyze additional revitalization, strengthen the downtown core and promote environmental justice.

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\(^2\) [https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/](https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/)
Carver School Site – Wendell is in the process of annexing the historically African American Carver School and adjacent Pleasant Grove Baptist Church located just west of downtown off 3rd Street. The former Carver School was reportedly constructed in 1927 and has a heated area of 23,000 square feet (ft²). Currently the school site is used by the church as a non-profit family and community service food bank. The church envisions to restore the school building into multipurpose senior housing, community center with a business incubator, non-profit offices, and programming space for families and children. Grant funds would be utilized for structural and environmental site assessments (ESAs) of the Carver School building and property along with any planning efforts needed towards redevelopment. Due to the age of the building, asbestos and lead paint are expected. There is concern of additional contaminants with respect to the property’s past use and close proximity to the railroad and commercial areas. The unrestricted site is within a low-income area and near a public housing development.

Lake Glad Road Property - A 40-acre parcel off Lake Glad Road just south of downtown is an underutilized piece of property that has garnered developer attention. A preliminary residential development plan covering the site has been provided to the Town for review; however, the property has an environmental cloud hampering its development. The former Wendell Dump is located adjacent south, and the Town’s public works and wastewater treatment plant are adjacent to the east. The former landfill operated prior to environmental regulations, and therefore the exact contents or extents of the landfill are unknown. Due to funding limitations, the NCDEQ has not evaluated the landfill. Low-income residential properties border directly abutting the landfill to the east, and Buffalo Creek, a tributary of the Neuse River, makes the southern boundary. Buffalo Creek flows southeast through two additional low-income Wendell neighborhoods, potentially carrying and depositing landfill contaminants to these residential areas. The Town seeks to identify environmental encumbrances created by the pre-regulatory landfill through ESAs and anticipated remediation planning. The information will be used to guide the planned subdivision of the property into residential and public green space. Within the green space, walking trails are planned to provide for a walkable community and safer downtown access for the Holly Pointe, Wellington Place and Holly Lakes neighborhoods as well as the planned community. Portions of this property are within the 100-yr floodplain.

West 4th Street Block – Occupying the entire block at the end of West 4th Street in the downtown district, the 3-acre property is highly underutilized. The railroad runs along the south end of the property where two former tobacco warehouses measuring 7,500 ft² and 6,500 ft² are located. The warehouses have been used for general auto repair since at least 1999. Environmental concerns related to years of automotive use as well as from the railroad and tobacco warehouse operations need to be addressed. Health concerns include petroleum constituents, herbicides, pesticides, PAHs and heavy metals. Single-family homes are located immediately adjacent to the property with the closest home being less than 100 feet away. The Town has envisioned a large redevelopment project consisting of dense, multi-story development with retail and office space on the first floor and residential on the upper floors creating an extension of the current downtown footprint. Grant funded Phase I and Phase II ESAs would answer environmental health questions while planning funds would be utilized to determine best end use through community input.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and alignment with Revitalization Plans: This targeted area of revitalization has been documented as a priority in the 2021 Town of Wendell Strategic Plan³ and within the draft Blueprint Wendell 2030 Comprehensive Plan⁴. Priority #1 in the Strategic Plan is to: “build downtown vibrancy and economic growth” and “identify development options for vacant and dilapidated parcels.” The West 4th Street Block’s prime downtown location will provide excellent opportunities for a new mixed-used development bringing commercial jobs, healthcare options, restaurants and residential that will encourage revitalization in alignment with the Town’ Strategic Plan.

³ https://www.townofwendell.com/government/documents
⁴ https://www.blueprintwendell2030.com/
A stated goal within the Blueprint Wendell 2030 Comprehensive Plan is to “participate in efforts to redevelop sites and reuse existing buildings. The Town can play an important role in enabling private investment in redevelopment, infill and reuse of existing buildings.” Reuse of the Carver School building fulfills this goal as well as to “promote voluntary annexations in areas close to the existing town boundaries.” With regard to the Lake Glad Road Property, the reuse plan accomplishes goals to “ensure most residents live within a quarter mile of a park (including pocket parks), greenway or trail,” and “parcels adjoining Buffalo Creek should be the primary focus of site design and the provision of improved open space amenities” stated in the Blueprint Wendell 2030 Comprehensive Plan. As noted in 1.a.ii, the priority sites have either firm or envisioned redevelopment plans in place. Wendell will seek the best reuse option for each of the priority sites through proper planning and community input.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: By reusing the blighted priority properties noted above and throughout the Target Area, the Town hopes to renew economic revitalization to the downtown core by returning former commercial sites to vibrancy by cleanup of potential legacy contamination, by improving the health of the target area residents and by providing new mixed-use development and public recreation space. This strategy will result in a cleaner environment, healthier residents, new recreational facilities and new housing and employment opportunities to jump-start the Target Area’s rise from poverty. The Town hopes to eliminate potential hazards that limit priority site reuse (West 4th Street Block / Lake Glad Road Property) and attract neighborhood services to support the needs of local residents which meets current goals and objectives of the latest Wendell Strategic and Comprehensive Plans. Additional benefits of the Carver School project will be a more inclusive Wendell and potential addition of senior housing.

An excellent example of an outcome of the Town’s reuse strategy is the opening of the Bearded Bee Brewing Company during the 2020 pandemic. An old livestock building within the downtown core was transformed into a new thriving brewery business. Wendell leveraged this private investment by investing over $500,000 of their own funds to redevelop the adjacent alleyway to facilitate food trucks, parking, electric charging stations and event space, completely revamping this part of downtown and turning the blighted area into a thriving destination. The Town hopes to expand upon the success of this project to create more opportunities for local business and community-based services in the downtown Target Area by continuing to reuse blighted properties.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources
1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Completing environmental assessments, cleanup planning and redevelopment planning with this EPA grant funding is considered seed money towards additional leveraging to advance sites towards redevelopment. Wendell will strive to maximize EPA grant funds by seeking additional resources available for cleanup and reuse of priority brownfield sites. Sites that require extensive remediation may be steered towards an EPA Brownfields Cleanup or Multipurpose Grant. For developer-led remediation sites, the NC Brownfields Program provides excellent liability protection and tax incentives. Developers may also make use of Historic Tax Credits available to select Target Area properties. USDA Rural Development Community Facilities provide low interest loans and grants for healthcare facilities and food pantries like that envisioned for the former Carver School. The NC Department of Commerce offers building reuse grants, workforce training grants and community housing grants to name a few.

While the Town is eligible for a multitude of State and Federal grants and loans, Wendell can also tap into non-grant sources of assistance such as EPA’s Smart Growth Program and non-profit Groundworks USA and the Brownfields Technical Assistance Programs. Additionally, the Town is a member of the Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG), which helps communities with development and land-use coordination, sustainability and regional economic development strategies. TJCOG also operates a Regional Brownfields Consortium that assists communities to leverage brownfields redevelopment as an economic development and revitalization tool for their communities providing grant application assistance and administration for additional brownfields funding. The Town will seek and promote private investment wherever possible to move project sites forward to redevelopment.
1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The Town has preliminarily identified potential brownfield sites within the target area, including the three priority sites identified above. The utilization of existing utility connections (water, sewer, gas, electricity and telecommunications) and roadways were used as prioritization criteria in the Town’s preliminary inventory review. The entire Target Area is positioned along roadways with available utility connections. Existing buildings are sufficiently sized, and utilities are present for connection with no upgrades required for the anticipated uses. Sufficient utility capacity is available for most commercial projects anticipated for these parcels, but the Town will facilitate upgrades if needed for a specific site reuse utilizing future capital improvement funds and/or available state and federal resources where feasible.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. Community Need

2.a.i. Community’s Need for Funding: Wake County has created the Social Equity Atlas\(^5\) data tool using ACS most current 5-year average estimates to measure and rank community vulnerability and economic health indices at the Block Group level. A ranking of 1 is attributed to the healthiest socioeconomic community in Wake County and 455 being the most vulnerable. Out of the 455 total Block Groups in Wake County, Wendell’s two Target Area Block Groups rank:

- 368 & 396 in the Community Vulnerability Index (bottom 16% of Wake County Block Groups)
- 398 & 444 in the Economic Health Index (bottom 7% of Wake County Block Groups)
- 372 & 407 Combined Social Equity Ranking (bottom 14% of Wake County Block Groups)

Additionally, Wendell census tract 544.02 is one of only 30 county census tracts ranked as high poverty (>20%) designating it as one of the most economically challenged in Wake County. With Median Household Income (MHI) well below that of County (73%), Wendell reflects much higher poverty rates and people in need of food assistance when compared with surrounding Wake County. These examples of income disparity correlate to lower property values demonstrated by median housing values (MHV) at 68% of state MHV ($191,400 vs. $281,700)\(^1\) which leads to decreased tax revenue and overall lower investment appeal. Clearly the Town’s small population (<7,500) lacks critical financial resources to facilitate assessment, remediation, redevelopment planning and marketing of brownfields sites on its own to transform these sites from liabilities to productive assets.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations: (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:

As identified in the table above, the rate of young children in poverty for Wendell is over double that of the surrounding County. The Children’s Defense Fund cites multiple studies that have shown that impoverished children tend to have poor health and continue experiencing economic hardships throughout their lives due to lack of developmental resources.\(^6\) In addition, the National Research Council states that children also tend to be more susceptible to contaminants considering their stage of development.\(^7\) EPA’s Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) identifies

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\(^1\) https://www.wakegov.com/departments-government/planning-development-inspections/planning/social-equity-atlas

\(^2\) https://www.childrensdefense.org/the-state-of-americas-children-2020/

concentrated sensitive populations within the target area. For example, EJSCREEN reports the adjoining and downstream neighborhoods near the former Wendell Dump contain a high number of young children under 5 years of age, double that of the state average, placing the area in the 93rd percentile. Near the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church priority site, EJSCREEN notes an increased minority population of 66% and 52% of the neighboring residents as low income. Residents in these disadvantaged neighborhoods will not only be disproportionately impacted by possible contaminants from these sites but will be less likely to have resources to resolve health issues derived from these sites. Assessment and remedial planning for these sites will help alleviate impacts to children, minorities and those in poverty. Removal of contamination at these sites will decrease health risks to a vulnerable population living near or exposed to these sites.

(2) Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Current health data are only available on a county-wide basis. World-renowned UNC and Duke healthcare systems are located in WC skewing it as the healthiest county in NC; however, small WC towns such as Wendell do not have the same resources available to the rest of WC. Wendell does not have a dedicated medical center, and the Town’s only independent pharmacy has limited hours of operation. A Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) State of the Region report focusing on Northeast WC (which includes Wendell) states the following: “the overall county ranking does not account for pockets of Wake County where data indicates poor health is more prevalent. Health professionals in Wake County have indicated that a lack of local area health data (e.g. at the town, community or Census tract level) limits their ability to identify areas where pockets of poor health reside. The rural areas north and northeast of WC are areas that have been identified as pockets where there is a higher prevalence of poor health indicators.” The report also identifies Wendell’s Target Area Census Tract 544.02 as one of only three studied as having “high demographic indicators of poor health” for the area’s population.

Cancer has been the leading cause of death in North Carolina since 2009 when it surpassed heart disease which remains #2. In WC, breast cancer (WC174.9 vs. NC163.4) and prostate cancer (WC135.9 vs. NC116.9) rates are higher than the state averages per 100,000 population. As noted in Section 2.a.ii, Wendell has a higher number of minorities (majority African Americans) versus the region. A 2020 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Cancer Disparities Progress Report notes “African American men and women have a 111 percent and 39 percent higher risk of dying from prostate cancer and breast cancer respectively compared with their White counterparts.” This holds true in WC with White females experiencing rates of breast cancer per 100,000 population at 21% versus African American women at 32.9%. Similarly, WC African American men experience prostate cancer at a rate of 34.5% vs. White men at 18%. Both metrics indicate that Wendell’s minority populations experience a greater incidence of breast and prostate cancers. The AACR also relates these cancer rates to living in disadvantaged neighborhoods such as the area surrounding the Carver School and lack of access to medical care.

The CDC notes that the age adjusted rate of emergency department visits for asthma per 10,000 population in WC is 41.6, much higher than adjacent counties Chatham (17.9) and Johnston (29.2). The NC State Center for Health Statistics only tracks birth defects by total occurrence per county. In WC, the total number of all birth defects in 2017 was 450. This represents an approximate 33% greater occurrence of birth defects in Wake County.

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8 https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper
9 https://www.campo-nc.us/programs-studies/area-studies/northeast-area-study
11 https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/databook/
12 https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/DataExplorer/
Environmental Site Assessments of priority brownfield sites suspected of contamination will aid in evaluating lingering contaminants potentially contributing to the increased health effects noted above. Additional remediation planning will lead to the removal of impacted media or implementation of engineered/institutional controls preventing exposure to sensitive populations, i.e., children and minorities in close proximity to the priority sites.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: EJSCREEN notes portions of the Target Area rank in the 85th percentile Demographic Index, 82nd percentile for People of Color Population, and 80th percentile for Low Income Population. The Town has purposefully selected two of their priority sites in an effort to address environmental injustices present within the Target Area. The former Carver School site and the adjacent 150-yr old African American Pleasant Grove Baptist Church have been marginalized for decades due to discriminatory practices and excluded from Town-provided services. A 1962 Wendell Growth Plan notes this area as the highly blighted “fringe” of Wendell with a high African American population. Through the Jim Crow laws era and beyond, this area of Wendell has remained on the outskirts of Town looking in. As an effort to promote racial equality and environmental justice, this long ostracized area of town is being brought into the Wendell fold and will be provided equitable utility services. The Carver School project will build upon the benefits of the annexation and add additional funding to the African American community. Likewise, across the country it was historically commonplace to locate the Town landfill in low-income or high minority areas. Addressing the potential health concerns surrounding the Lake Glad Road Property pre-regulatory landfill will promote environmental justice for the surrounding low-income communities. Assessments and remediation planning of these priority sites will improve the health and welfare of these marginalized residents within the Target Area and help lessen the disparities noted in Section 2.a.ii.(2).

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i / 2.b.ii. Project Partners and Roles: The Town will convene a citizen board known as the Wendell Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Group (Wendell BRAG) to be led and informed by Town Staff. The BRAG will advance a sustainable brownfields redevelopment program and will serve as ambassadors, advisors and a steering committee throughout the project, bringing their community vision and expertise as sites are prioritized to identify their reuse potential. To date, the following Project Partners have committed to participation in the program:

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<tr>
<th>Partner Name</th>
<th>Point of Contact / Email / Phone</th>
<th>Specific Role in Project</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Grove Baptist Church</td>
<td>Pastor Asa Bell <a href="mailto:a.bell@asabelllaw.com">a.bell@asabelllaw.com</a> 919-365-7292</td>
<td>BRAG Member. Brownfields program outreach and advocacy thru solicitation of community input for site identification, and prioritization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake County Social and Economic Vitality Group</td>
<td>Verna Best <a href="mailto:Verna.best@wakegov.com">Verna.best@wakegov.com</a> 919-857-9243</td>
<td>BRAG Member. Advise in site identification, selection, and prioritization. Brownfields program outreach and advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake Technical Community College</td>
<td>Jeff Carter <a href="mailto:jjcarter@waketech.edu">jjcarter@waketech.edu</a> 919-866-5000</td>
<td>BRAG Member. Advise on youth and adult educational services, career coaching, and workforce training. Provide meeting space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendell Rotary Club</td>
<td>Marc Collins <a href="mailto:mcollins@townofwendell.com">mcollins@townofwendell.com</a> 919-365-0834</td>
<td>BRAG Member. Advise and support community Brownfields education, solicit input on site prioritization, selection, and redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendell Historical Society</td>
<td>Peedie Edwards <a href="mailto:Peedie1129@me.com">Peedie1129@me.com</a> 919-404-0334</td>
<td>BRAG Member. Brownfields program outreach and advocacy. Provide information to QEP regarding historical property uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development Committee</td>
<td>Braxton Davis Honeycut <a href="mailto:bh@lagrip.com">bh@lagrip.com</a> 919-365-4450</td>
<td>Brag Member. Provide development opportunities information and coordinate with developers, businesses, and communities.</td>
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2.b.iii. **Incorporating Community Input:** Wendell has a proven track record involving the community into Town planning decisions. As part of their ongoing Comprehensive Plan Update process, Wendell has held multiple public input sessions both in-person and virtual as well as mailed surveys. Likewise, for their recently funded NCDOT Pedestrian Plan, the Town formed a steering committee from various stakeholder groups to provide input. The Wendell BRAG will build upon these efforts to guide broader community outreach and support engaging stakeholders to better understand their needs, concerns and interests related to brownfields. Wendell will continue to offer mechanisms to provide a voice for the broader community and a forum for those who may not be directly represented by the BRAG to participate in site selection, cleanup and reuse of other priority sites. The BRAG will establish a schedule for regular community updates through press releases, website content and social media outlets. The BRAG will also include open house meetings and planning charrettes that will occur throughout the 3-year project period. With focus on stakeholders most affected in the target area, these meetings will include updates by BRAG members, staff and consultants to provide an open forum for engagement and education. Should Covid-19 protective measures persist through the FY2022 grant cycle, the Town will employ various social distancing outreach practices through their current contract with [www.publicinput.com](http://www.publicinput.com) which allows for live online meetings or surveys in over 100 languages and utilizes direct mailings to the community for those with limited digital access.

### 3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES AND MEASURING PROGRESS

#### 3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs (Sections 3.a.i.-iv. outlined under each task)

**Task 1 – Program Administration / Community Engagement**

- **i. Project Implementation:** *Cooperative Agreement Oversight* includes program and financial management to ensure compliance with grant requirements; oversee data input to EPA’s ACRES database; attend brownfield-related training and conferences; and submit quarterly, annual, and final performance reports. *Community Engagement* includes coordinating and conducting meetings and developing materials. **Grant-funded direct costs:** Travel expenses (registration, airfare, lodging, and meals), supplies, and contractual costs for assistance with reporting and maintaining interactions with stakeholders. **Non-EPA funded activities:** In-kind staff oversight for administration, monitoring, reporting, and community engagement activities and attending training conferences.

- **ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Procure Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) (4.a.iii): Q1; ACRES and quarterly reports: quarterly and as needed; Annual and closeout reports: Q4, Q8, Q12; BRAG meeting: Q2 and quarterly thereafter; Other activities: Ongoing and as needed.

- **iii. Task / Activity Lead:** AOR and Management Team with input/assistance from QEP and BRAG.

- **iv. Outputs:** RFP/QEP Contract (1); Quarterly Reports (12 Total - 4/Year); Annual Reports (3); Closeout Report (1); Property Profile Forms/ACRES Site Entries (18); BRAG Meetings (12); Community Meetings (6); Conferences (4); Brochures (3); Media Releases (6); Web Page Content (3); Advertisement, printing, and supplies (5 events).

**Task 2 – Site Inventory and Prioritization**

- **i. Project Implementation:** Wendell will prepare a GIS brownfields site inventory and database for sites in the target areas, including priority sites described in Section 1.a.ii. These properties will be compiled, mapped, characterized, and prioritized by the BRAG and County based on community vision and needs, and a pool of sites will be selected for assessment. No assessments will be conducted prior to confirming eligibility with EPA and DEQ if applicable for petroleum sites using Property Approval Questionnaires (PAQs). **Grant-funded activities:** Contractual costs to update, maintain inventory/database and prepare PAQs. **Non-EPA funded activities:** Staff oversight, site prioritization, and access coordination with property owners.

- **ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Site inventory and database, prioritization, selection: Q2 – Q3, update monthly; Other activities: Ongoing and as needed.

- **iii. Task / Activity Lead:** QEP will prepare/maintain inventory and PAQs with AOR/Management staff.
iv. Outputs: In-kind staff oversight, coordination with property owners, and review/approval of work products.

Task 4 – Preliminary Planning for Remediation and/or Redevelopment

i. Project Implementation: For some sites addressed through Phase II ESAs, preliminary remediation plans (Analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives or ABCAs) and associated cost estimates will be prepared to review alternatives for further environmental investigation and/or remediation, if warranted. Staff and QEP will also work with stakeholders to conduct preliminary redevelopment planning for selected target areas and/or sites to explore best reuse and economic potential. This may include reuse plans, marketing/feasibility studies, master plans, infrastructure evaluations, and conceptual development plans. **Grant-funded activities:** QEP costs for remediation and redevelopment plans. **Non-EPA funded activities:** Staff oversight, coordination with property owners and community partners to prepare plans and review/approve work products.

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<tr>
<th>Budget Categories</th>
<th>Task 1 Oversight / Community Engagement</th>
<th>Task 2 Site Inventory / Prioritization</th>
<th>Task 3 Environmental Site Assessments</th>
<th>Task 4 Remediation / Redevelopment Planning</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Costs</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
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<td>$19,400</td>
<td>$302,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$493,000</td>
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<td>TOTAL BUDGET</td>
<td>$28,600</td>
<td>$19,400</td>
<td>$302,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**3.b. Cost Estimates**

The **Project Budget Table** below provides direct costs to the defined tasks and cost types.

3.b.i / 3.b.ii. Development and Application of Cost Estimates: The table below shows cost estimates for each task, the development of costs based on reasonable and realistic unit costs, and application of costs to task activities. Cost estimates include an allocation of 60% of funds towards site-specific assessments and 30% of funds towards reuse/area-wide planning activities.
**Task 1 – Administration / Community Engagement – $28,600 Direct & Contractual**

1. Travel – $5,500 Total (Direct Expense) – Attendance of 1 national conference for 1 person and 3 state conferences for 2 people assuming the following unit costs (national/state): Conference registration: $200/$150; Transportation: $700/$200; Hotel: $150 per night for 3 nights/$100 per night for 2 nights; Meals: $70 per day for 4 days/$30 per day for 3 days
2. Supplies – $1,500 Total (Direct Expense) – Advertisement, printing, supplies and promotional materials for 5 community-wide and/or site-specific events estimated @ $300 per event.
3. Contractual – $21,600 Total – QEP assistance for reporting / grant administration: $750/quarter ($3,000/year, $9,000 total); and QEP assistance for community engagement activities including development of communication materials: $1,050/quarter ($4,200/year, $12,600 total)

**Task 2 – Site Inventory and Prioritization – $19,400 Contractual**

(a) Develop and maintain a GIS brownfields site inventory mapping / database and site prioritization matrix estimated: $6,750 ($2,250 per community)
(b) Site access coordination assistance, preparation, and submittal of PAQs: $1,050/quarter ($4,200/year, $12,600 total)

**Task 3 – Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)* – $302,000 Contractual**

(a) Phase I ESAs – Eighteen (18) @ $4,800 average – $86,400 total
(b) Phase II ESAs – Five (5) @ $40,000 average – $200,000 total
(c) Project Work Plans – Eleven (11) plans – $15,600 total, as follows:
   - Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan – 1 @ $4,100
   - Site-Specific Health & Safety Plans (HASPs)** – 5 @ $1,000 average – $5,000 total
   - Site-Specific Sampling & Analysis Plans (SAPs)** – 5 @ $1,300 average – $6,500 total

**Task 4 – Remediation / Redevelopment Plans – $150,000 Total – Contractual**

Based on site conditions following assessment, Wendell anticipates completing approximately nine (9) planning documents estimated as follows:
(a) Preliminary Site Remediation Plans (ABCAs) – 2 @ $15,000 average – $30,000 total
(b) Site-Specific Redevelopment/Reuse Plans/Studies – 4 @ $15,000 average – $60,000 total
(c) Area-Wide Redevelopment Plans/Studies – 3 @ $20,000 average – $60,000 total

* Unit costs for ESAs are estimates and may change depending on site-specific conditions.
** HASPs and SAPs will be combined into single report submittal.

### Measuring Environmental Results:
To maintain steady progress throughout the grant, the QEP will prepare **monthly reports to the Town and BRAG** in compliance with the approved **EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan** which will summarize activities, e.g., milestones achieved, issues encountered and budget and schedule updates. Progress will be measured by the outputs defined in Section 3.a.iv. and evaluated against the schedule in Section 3.a.ii. and costs defined in Section 3.b.i./b.ii. Significant deviations will be discussed with the EPA Project Officer to develop corrective actions. Updates will be reported upon implementation and completion of each site-related task in **EPA’s ACRES database**, and Wendell will provide ongoing (at a minimum quarterly) and post-grant information describing outcomes and benefits of the funding, including additional funds leveraged, jobs created, acres made ready for redevelopment and private investment and tax revenue generated by the program.

### 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

#### 4.a. Programmatic Capability
4.a.i. / 4.a.ii. / 4.a.iii. **Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure and Description of Key Staff:**
The table provides the future brownfield program’s organizational structure and a description of the experience and qualifications of the key staff. Given their education and professional experience, including their current position with the Town, the key staff fulfill roles that provide the technical, administrative and financial capacity to provide oversight, management and administration of the grant. If additional staff or resources are required, the Town will seek in-house talent to fulfill the need. The Town also has an on-call contract with a local engineering firm for technical expertise.
AOR/FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: Marc Collins, Town Manager
Over 20 years’ experience in government, related to parks & recreation, planning and administration. Experienced in technical, administrative, and financial requirements of the grant, combining institutional knowledge of the community, local government administration and economic development experience to provide the responsible guidance necessary to effectively oversee and manage all activities.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Bryan Coates, Planning Director
Over 20 years’ experience in government, related to economic development and planning. Supports overall management and economic development efforts; works closely with community members, developers, civic/professional groups and local, state and federal funding programs.

TECHNICAL: Brian Bray, Public Works Director
Over 6 years’ experience in government related to public works. Well-versed in management of property, water, sewer, streets and drainage, as well as stormwater management.

4.a.iii  Acquiring Additional Resources: Wendell will rely on a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) with appropriate expertise and resources to carry out the technical aspects of its Brownfields Program. The County follows competitive negotiation procedures required for all public bodies in the state to obtain professional services at reasonable cost. All procurement procedures will be conducted in compliance with 40 CFR 31.36 and the NC public procurement procedures for Qualifications Based Selection (QBS). Beginning with advertisement of a request for qualifications and proposals for professional services, followed by interviews with top candidates if needed, staff will score applicants, and select and negotiate a contract with a qualified candidate. Applicable EPA solicitation clauses will be incorporated into the County’s solicitation and final contract executed with the selected QEP.

4.b.  Past Performance and Accomplishments
4.b.ii. Wendell has not previously received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has received other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements:

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Wendell has an excellent track record in grant management and performing all phases of work within a multitude of recent funding program awards to the Town. In 2021, the Town received approval for almost $1.5M in CAMPO Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP) roadway and sidewalk improvements to go along with approximately $180,000 of annual Powell Bill funding. These projects correlate to a $100,000 NCDOT grant in 2016 to create Wendell’s Pedestrian Plan. Also awarded in 2021 was over $600,000 in American Rescue Plan and CARES/FEMA funding. 2022 CDBG Funding has been earmarked for Wendell in the amount of $250,000 for additional street, sidewalk and ADA projects totaling roughly $900,000. The Town has also received North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grants in 1998, 2016 and 2018. This succession of PARTF funds further demonstrates the Town’s ability to successfully complete grant projects. These awards clearly indicate the Town’s success in leveraging multiple resources and managing funds for projects.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: As noted above, the Town has managed both federally and non-federally funded projects and is fully capable of successfully completing all phases of work under this cooperative agreement. Wendell is familiar with and understands the necessity of developing work plans, creating and maintaining schedules and assuring adherence to project terms and conditions. For all projects identified above, all applicable site information, required administrative reports, design documentation and final inspections were submitted in a timely manner and approved by funding and regulatory agencies with purview. Final project closeout was accomplished for these projects in compliance with program requirements.
1. **Applicant Eligibility**

The Town of Wendell (Town), located in Wake County, North Carolina was established in 1903 as a separately chartered political subdivision of the State of North Carolina. The Town is considered a General Purpose Unit of Local Government and an eligible applicant for funding under EPA guidelines having rights to conduct associated activities within the Town’s incorporated limits and extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs) under the EPA Cooperative Agreement.

2. **Community Involvement**

Direct citizen input toward prioritization of brownfield sites and development of a true community-driven revitalization initiative will be paramount to strategically planned target area improvements. As further detailed in **Section 2.b.iii** of the Wendell’s Narrative Proposal, the Town will engage a community board of elected officials, administrative officers, economic developers, and public/private sector representatives (Project Partners) to serve as the **Wendell Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Group (Wendell BRAG)**. The BRAG will advance a sustainable brownfields program for the region and serve as brownfields ambassadors, advisors and a steering committee throughout the project, bringing community vision and expertise in planning, development, construction and real estate. Engaging impacted communities will be critical to a practical approach to identify redevelopment opportunities. The BRAG will guide support for program goals, engage other stakeholders to better understand their needs, concerns, and interests and provide a voice for the broader community and a forum for those who may not be directly represented by the BRAG.

The BRAG will meet approximately quarterly to assist staff with site selection and cleanup/reuse planning. Wendell staff will update citizens of brownfields activities through social media, periodic updates at Town Council meetings, as well other called community meetings. The BRAG and Town staff will directly involve representatives of neighborhoods most impacted by proposed redevelopment projects. Outreach efforts to be conducted throughout the target areas will include community open houses, educational seminars/workshops and design charrettes intended to garner input on existing assets and redevelopment needs in each target area.

Town policies require reasonable accommodations and services necessary for sensory-impaired and disabled citizens at all public meetings and strive to provide translation services for non-English speakers upon request and availability. Wendell has successfully used socially distanced in-person meetings and virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom or through their contract with [www.publicinput.com](http://www.publicinput.com) to conduct public meetings/surveys during COVID-19 and will continue to use these means to engage the community in the proposed brownfields program as needed. Meeting
announcements will be distributed/posted throughout the target areas and emailed to appropriate parties. All gatherings will be publicly advertised via local print and electronic media including via each government partner’s official website and social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).

Partner organization, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, by their very structure, can communicate and disseminate information directly to and act as representatives for the disadvantaged communities. This avenue of communication will be beneficial for those communities where internet or phone access is limited.

3. **Named Contractors and Subrecipients**
Not applicable – the applicant has not identified a procurement contractor nor subrecipient to conduct work proposed in this application.

4. **Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds**
Not Applicable: The applicant affirms it does not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.