

Board of Perry County Commissioners

212 S. Main St., Lower Level
New Lexington, Ohio 43764
Phone: 740-342-2045 Fax: 740-342-5505
E-mail: perryco@perrycountyohio.net



The following information was requested as part of the Narrative Information Sheet:

1. **Applicant Identification:** Perry County, Ohio, 212 South Main Street, Lower Level, New Lexington, Ohio 43764
2. **Funding Requested**
 - a. **Assessment Grant Type:** Community-wide
 - b. **Federal Funds Requested:** \$500,000
3. **Location:** Perry County, Ohio
4. **Target Areas and Priority Sites:** Target Areas for this project are the historic downtowns of the county's most populous villages: New Lexington (census tract 39127966200) and Crooksville & Roseville in Harrison Township (census tract 39127966000). Through these villages flow Rush Creek and Moxahala Creek, along which former mines, historical potteries, and orphan UST sites have resulted in known and suspected impacts to surface water.
 - a. **Census Tract:** 39127966200
 - b. **Priority Site:** 300-acre former surface mine (1870 Airport Road)
 - c. **Census Tract:** 39127966000
 - d. **Priority Sites:** Former Star Stoneware (7327 Ceramic Road); Former auto repair station/Perry County Coal Company (4118 Ceramic Road).
5. **Contacts**
 - a. **Project Director:** Mr. Benjamin Carpenter
Phone: 740-342-2045
Email: perryco@perrycountyohio.net
Address: 212 South Main Street, New Lexington, Ohio 43764
 - b. **Chief Executive:** Mr. Derek Householder, President, Perry County Board of Commissioners
Phone: 740-342-2045
Email: perryco@perrycountyohio.net
Address: 212 South Main Street, New Lexington, Ohio 43764

- 6. **Population:** Perry County, Ohio: 35,480
 - a. New Lexington: 5,772
 - b. Harrison Township (Crooksville & Roseville): 4,944

7. **Other Factors Checklist:**

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	1
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).	1, 2
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	1
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B. , for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	8, 9
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing.	4

- 8. **Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority:** Please see attachments.
- 9. **Releasing Copies of Applications:** Not applicable.



November 3, 2023

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5

ATTN: Ashley Green

77 West Jackson Boulevard

Mail Code SB-5J

Chicago, IL 60604-3507

RE: Perry County Community Wide Assessment Grant Proposal

Dear Ashley Green:

I am pleased to offer Ohio EPA's support for Perry County's (County) Community Wide Assessment Grant Proposal. The County is applying for a Community Wide Assessment Grant with funding totaling \$500,000. We have worked with the County in the past and hope to provide support under the Assessment, Cleanup and Revolving Loan Fund Grant program established by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfield Revitalization Act (P.L. 107-118).

The funding the County is requesting under their Community Wide Assessment Grant Proposal will be used to add to the existing brownfields inventory, complete Phase I and Phase II assessments, develop remedial action plans at properties contaminated with hazardous substances, and conduct public outreach and education. The County will focus on former coal mines and industrial brownfields along the environmentally impacted Moxahala Creek and Jonathan Creek, as well as commercial brownfields in the historical downtowns of the County's most populous villages (New Lexington, Somerset, Crooksville, and Roseville). The project will also target vacant and underutilized commercial properties in the historic downtown areas of the County's villages, where sites are located in close proximity to the County's most sensitive populations. Decentralized commercial development in Perry County disproportionately burdens the county's low-income residents, who face serious transportation challenges to obtain employment, goods, and services. Brownfields in and around the downtown areas of the County's villages will be targeted for assessment and redevelopment because these sites represent an opportunity to utilize existing infrastructure and cultural resources (community parks, historical buildings) to achieve a density of economic activity that can sustain local producers, retailers, and artisans in target areas, and

contribute to an improved quality of life that will attract residents, visitors, and additional business investment.

If awarded, the assessment funds will allow the County to protect public health and welfare by restoring control of contaminated sites and moving them through the assessment and cleanup process. Redevelopment of brownfields will improve residents' health and welfare by removing sources of contamination and limiting inhalation, ingestion, and dermal exposures. The redevelopment of priority brownfields will also limit uncontrolled nonpoint source pollution, and improve water and sediment quality in Moxahala Creek, Jonathan Creek, Monday Creek, Sunday Creek, the Muskingum River, and the Ohio River. This will reduce contaminants in these waterways, improving aquatic life and allowing for greater fishing and recreational opportunities. The efforts proposed under this grant are intended to alleviate poverty, utilize existing infrastructure, create economic opportunity, and nurture local entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the County is committed to development that involves disadvantaged residents in decisions that impact their neighborhoods.

We look forward to working with Perry County and U.S. EPA on this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-644-2295 or via e-mail at Lisa.Shook@epa.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Lisa Shook

Lisa Shook, Manager

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Voluntary Action Program

cc: Benjamin Carpenter, Vice President, Perry County Board of Commissioners

Kristy Hunt, Ohio EPA, DERR/SEDO



Department
of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal

Sheryl Maxfield, Director

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor



November 3, 2023

John Jurevis
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Mail Code SE-7J
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

RE: Perry County Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant Proposal

Dear Mr. Jurevis:

This letter acknowledges that the Perry County notified the Office of the Fire Marshal, Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Regulations (BUSTR) of its plans to use the \$500,000 grant proposal for a community-wide brownfield assessment for petroleum waste and hazardous substances investigation. The targeted areas for this grant are former coal mining and industrial sites along the tributaries of the Muskingum River and the downtown areas of the County's villages. Goals of the grant include addressing the environmental impacts from brownfields along the Moxahala, Jonathan, Sunday and Monday Creeks, addressing abandoned commercial and residential properties in the numerous villages within the County, improving infrastructure and to promote local businesses and artisans, create better job opportunities, and to allow for revitalized residential areas. The assessments performed with the brownfield grant will help leverage additional grants and investments.

I am pleased to offer BUSTR's support for the Perry County's Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant proposal. We look forward to working with the Perry County and the U.S.EPA on this project.

Sincerely,

Christine G. Pyscher, P.G.
Environmental Specialist
Division of State Fire Marshal
Ohio Department of Commerce

xc: Site File
Benjamin Carpenter, Perry County Commissioners

1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

Perry County (pop. 35,460) is one of the poorest counties in the State of Ohio. The County is rural with rugged hills, former mines, agricultural land, and portions of the Wayne National Forest. The County has a rich history of pottery production, with Crooksville (home of the National Ceramics Museum) and the surrounding communities becoming known as the “Pottery Center of the World” in the late 1800s. The county’s boom and bust cycles of coal, limestone, and clay mining severely degraded the landscape, but the end of mining did little to improve conditions as mines were allowed to sit exposed and un-reclaimed, ensuring the indefinite contamination of numerous surface water bodies in the county. 1/7th of Perry County (38,000 acres) now rests above underground mines, and several ghost towns can be found in the hills: the loss of local jobs provided by former mines and associated enterprises no longer sustains local commercial businesses and services for residents. Accordingly, target areas for this project include the historic downtown areas of the county's most populous villages: New Lexington (census tract 39127966200) and Crooksville & Roseville in Harrison Township (census tract 39127966000). Through these villages flow Rush Creek and Moxahala Creek, along which former mines, historical potteries, and orphan UST sites have resulted in known and suspected impacts to surface water. Ohio EPA has recommended the use designation “Limited Resource Water – Acid Mine Drainage” for multiple streams in the County including Moxahala Creek. Due to extensive impacts from historic mining, the stream failed to meet the aquatic life goals of the Clean Water Act, and biological community performance was rated “mostly fair” to “very poor” due to low pH, high total dissolved solids, and elevated concentrations of metals (Ohio EPA, Biological and Water Quality Study of the Moxahala Creek Watershed, 2009). Perry County is an impoverished county with a small population that must provide essential services for its residents and does not have funds for costly environmental assessment and cleanup. Fortunately, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) secured \$46 million in 2023 to recover abandoned mine lands like those in Perry County to address environmental impacts from historical mines. The county hopes that pursuing brownfields redevelopment in tandem with state-funded cleanup initiatives will maximize its return on investment and complement its master plan to protect and celebrate its natural resources. Improving environmental quality through assessment and cleanup of contaminated brownfields adjacent to the creeks will complement the County’s transition from an economic model that exploits its environmental resources to one that celebrates them. A critical element of this vision will be realized when county waterways return from acid-mine drainage channels to resilient environmental resources that provide drinking water, fishing, and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

A priority site near the historical downtown of New Lexington is a 300-acre former surface mine north of the county airport (1870 Airport Road). Here at the headwaters of Oxawoosie Creek, rainfall infiltrates exposed mine spoils, leaching acid and metals into surface water then flowing northwest through downtown New Lexington before joining Rush Creek and the Hocking River. Previous sampling at the airport priority site has indicated it contributes 23% of acid loading and 19% of metals loading to Rush Creek, which currently has 12 miles of biologically dead stream due to mine drainage. A second priority sites is the former Star Stoneware (7327 Ceramic Rd, Harrison Township), located 300 feet west of Moxahala Creek and partly within its floodplain. Numerous former potteries in the county have required extensive assessment and cleanup, such

as the former Friendship Pottery factory, located in the Harrison Township target area, where manufacturing from 1889 to the 1960s caused \$1.8 million of USEPA-funded lead contamination just 400 feet from Moxahala Creek. The priority Star Stoneware site was in operation from 1892 to 1945 and has never been assessed. A third priority site, a former auto repair station (4118 Ceramic Road), is known to have an orphan UST that has never been investigated. Historical releases of petroleum from former filling stations and derelict repair shops like this impact soil quality, groundwater, and the health of nearby residents through exposure to contaminated media or vapor intrusion of volatile organics to residential air. Collectively, the migration of contaminants from priority sites along Moxahala Creek poses a threat to the ecology of the Muskingum River watershed, as well as to the residents and visitors who rely upon them for drinking water supplies, contact recreation, and fishing. Finally, it is expected the project will assess commercial brownfields in the historic downtown areas of the County's villages, which are potential sources of asbestos-contaminated building materials and lead-based paint. Such sites are located in close proximity to the County's most sensitive populations of children and minorities, whose health and welfare are disproportionately threatened by brownfield contamination. Redevelopment of these sites presents an opportunity to utilize existing infrastructure and cultural resources (historical buildings, community parks) to achieve a density of economic activity that can sustain local producers, retailers, and artisans in target areas, and contribute to an improved quality of life that will help retain and attract residents, visitors, and business.

1.a.iii. Identifying Additional Sites

While several sites have been targeted for this application, all eligible properties will be considered. Sites will be characterized and prioritized for assessment based on: 1) alignment with county redevelopment goals, 2) actual or perceived health risk, 3) proximity to sensitive populations, as determined using USEPA EJSscreen and CEJST tools, 4) the presence of a committed developer, 5) expected economic outcomes (e.g., number of jobs or total investment) and 6) other factors as relevant. The county will also periodically review the active state database of UST releases (<https://apps.com.ohio.gov/fire/otter>) to identify additional eligible petroleum-contaminated sites.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

Reuse of the priority sites will be directed by the goals of the County's Asset-Based Redevelopment Plan (2014). The County seeks to pivot away from its historical economic dependence on lucrative but fleeting boom and bust cycles of extractive industries that have severely degraded county waterways, toward local economies centered around asset-based sectors including local food, cultural heritage, environmental resources, and arts tourism. The county's immediate brownfield redevelopment plans are also designed to align in location and timing with broader regional and state-funded initiatives, which are currently focused on repairing the environment and economy of Appalachian Ohio. In the village of Shawnee, ODNR has awarded \$4 million for restoration of the Tecumseh theater and two abandoned mine land features near town. In Wayne National Forest, which occupies 8% of Perry County land, \$2.4 million is being invested for 20 miles of trails and improvements. Redevelopment of the former pottery and orphan UST priority sites will support ongoing efforts to improve drinking water resources for county residents: the majority of Perry County residents rely on groundwater as their primary water supply, and over 2,300 households depend on private wells. The project will also advance the recommendations of the Perry County Community Health Assessment (2017),

in which residents identified a lack of bike or walking paths and a need to improve parks and outdoor areas as the number one way to improve their health. Brownfields redevelopment will restore miles of dead county waterways to biologically active streams surrounded by health greens paces for recreation to address these community-identified needs.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

The project will stimulate economic revitalization of Perry County by 1) offsetting the high cost of environmental due diligence for new or expanding businesses; 2) encouraging the reuse of built land for infill development; 3) increasing tax revenue and job opportunities by returning blighted properties to productive use; 4) enabling greater access to employment, services, and transportation in distressed neighborhoods; and 5) completing remedial plans to leverage cleanup grants from state and federal programs. The biggest economic benefits to be achieved via brownfields redevelopment are local job creation and increased local tax revenue. Brownfield property values are typically low, and tax revenue generated by brownfields is often less than the cost of municipal services needed to maintain them. Returning employers and jobs from out-of-county to our villages will restore municipal tax revenue and stimulate the local economy. Redevelopment of the priority sites will incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, and all redevelopment planning will consider suitability of development regarding future climate adaptation and/or mitigation, especially for pottery priority site which includes part of the Moxahala Creek floodplain. As a member of the Southeast Ohio Public Energy Council which administers USDA's Renewable Energy Development Assistance Program, Perry County developers are eligible for up to 25% reimbursement for small businesses who invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Savings Through Efficiency Program (STEP) and Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loans are also available through this entity. Eligible projects can include HVAC insulation enhancements, electrical upgrades, and window and roof replacements that may save the owner 20% annually in energy consumption and costs.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

Should cleanup be needed following assessment, the following resources are available by application: **Perry County CIC Economic Development Fund** – Public-private partnership providing aid for employers and entrepreneurs to finance new businesses or expand operations. **Community Foundation for Perry County** – Mini-grants up to \$5,000 for projects advancing the Pillars of Prosperity: community and economic development, arts and culture, education, environmental stewardship, and health and human services. **Foundation for Appalachian Ohio** – Regional charitable foundation offering grants for community and economic development. **State of Ohio - JobsOhio Revitalization Program** - Grants for \$200,000 for assessment, \$500,000 for asbestos-only cleanup projects, and up to \$5M for remediation. **Ohio EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)** - loans for cleanup/remediation activities. **Ohio EPA Urban Redevelopment Loan Program** - land and building acquisition, infrastructure improvements, brownfield site remediation activities, and building renovation/demolition. **Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** - financing for public infrastructure improvements and private improvements. **ODSA Abandoned Gas Station Cleanup Fund Grants** - up to \$100,000 for assessment, \$250,000 for assessment and cleanup, and up to \$500,000 for demolition and remediation at eligible properties. **Economic Development Administration Grants and Loans** - EDA funding can assist with up to 50% or more in the cost of infrastructure and improvements.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure

Redevelopment of sites targeted by this project will maximize the use of existing infrastructure. Brownfields in our historic village areas have direct access to major roads, rail, and utilities. The cleanup of existing sites will spur infill development, allowing reuse of existing infrastructure and limiting expenditures on utility extensions. As a rural community, targeting brownfields near historic village centers for redevelopment will ensure that new businesses are co-located with existing transportation infrastructure and municipal service centers. By moving away from outdated models of suburban sprawl and strip mall commercial development which infringe on green space and create logistical challenges for impoverished residents, Perry County can ensure equitable access to new development.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

2.a. Community Need

2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding

Perry County is a low-income community with a small population (35,408). Median household income in Perry County is only \$58,616, lower than Ohio's \$65,720 or the nation's \$74,755. 15.2% of all residents live in poverty, compared to 13.4% in Ohio and 12.6% in the nation. 22% of children live in poverty, compared to an average of 16.3% nationally. Just 13% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 32% in Ohio at large. **The New Lexington target area ranks in the 83rd percentile nationally for low-income census tracts (CESJT 2023)**, while the Harrison Township target area ranks alarmingly high in low medium income (87th), Poverty (88th), and Unemployment (92nd). In addition, the County has had a significant reduction in industrial employment in recent years, including two major employers losing a total of 118 positions. This includes losses of 83 jobs from Cooper Standard Auto Parts in New Lexington, and 35 jobs from the closing of Watertown Steel in Somerset. Out-of-county employers, on which two-thirds (62%) of Perry County residents are dependent for employment, are in similar decline. The American Electric Power (AEP) Muskingum River Plant in adjacent Washington County closed in 2015, resulting in a loss of 80 jobs. In 2020, the AEP Conesville Plant in adjacent Coshocton County closed resulting in the loss of approximately 225 jobs. While the closure of these plants directly impacts the former employees and their families, a study of coalfield counties in Appalachian Ohio including Perry County determined that for each job lost in the electricity generation industry, an additional 2.29 jobs are lost in the broader economy due to a dependent decrease in labor income spending (Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth and the Ohio University George V. Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, Core Project Narrative, 2016). For every 100 electricity generation jobs lost as coal mining activity and coal power production continue to decline, Perry County and Appalachian Ohio see a loss of over \$26 million in regional labor income.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

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

Sensitive populations of children, the elderly, and health-compromised individuals are disproportionately burdened by the county's brownfields, particularly children, who comprise 26% and 25% of the population of the Harrison Township and New Lexington target areas. One in four children in Perry County (26.5%) lives in a food-insecure household, and 42.4% of households with children are dependent on food stamps (Perry County Health Department, Community Health Assessment, 2017). The New Lexington target area is a Food Desert (EJScreen, 2023) where, relative to the rest of the nation, sensitive populations suffer from the following health or welfare issues: 83rd in low income; 84th in poverty, and 93rd in

transportation barriers, while those in the Harrison Township target area rank 98th in transportation barriers (CEJST 2023). A staggering 62% of Perry County workers must seek employment outside their county of residence, more than twice as many as the state (28%) and national (24%) averages (2021 ACS). This translates to a significant loss of potential income tax revenue to those out-of-county communities. The dearth of local employment also results in a mean travel time to work (32 minutes) for Perry County residents that is 39% greater than the state average (23 minutes). One in five (20%) men in Perry County must travel 60 minutes or more each way for employment, compared to 6% and 9% of men in the state and nation. Developing a density of new jobs, businesses, and amenities near existing public transportation hubs in downtown areas ensures redevelopment opportunities are accessible to all residents regardless of disability or income level. The transportation challenges that Perry County workers face for employment also manifest as barriers to accessing healthcare and other community services. In the Perry County Health Department's 2017 survey, lack of transportation was cited by residents as a key barrier to accessing health-related services, and one of the main reasons residents delayed seeking medical care (Perry County Health Department, Perry County Community Health Assessment, 2017). The drive time to the nearest emergency department is at least 30 minutes, and residents need to travel outside the county for any medical procedure, chemotherapy, dialysis, or other specialized care. Development near the historic downtown areas will incentivize efficient and cost-effective transportation options for residents who currently face transportation challenges to access employment opportunities and healthcare services.

2.a.ii.(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Nationally, the New Lexington target area ranks 81st in asthma, 89th in heart disease, and 89th in low life expectancy (EJScreen 2023). Harrison Township ranks 88th in asthma, 90th in heart disease, and 75th in life expectancy. Assessment and cleanup of brownfields in the target area will identify and mitigate legacy sources of pollution, limiting inhalation, ingestion, and dermal exposures. The project will provide environmental health data weighted toward disadvantaged areas near priority sites, supporting ongoing efforts to mitigate adverse health conditions for sensitive populations. The incidence rate of lung and bronchus cancers for Perry County (78.0 cases per 100,000 population) is higher than the rate for Ohio (69.9) and the rate for the nation at large (55.8). In addition, the cancer mortality rate in the County (206.1 per 100,000 population) is also significantly higher than the rates for Ohio (181.1) and the nation (166.1) (Ohio Department of Health, Perry County Cancer Profile, 2017). In Perry County, more than one in five (26.9%) adults are overweight, while an additional two in five (39.5%) adults are obese (Perry County Health Department, Perry County Community Health Assessment, 2017).

2.a.ii.(3) Environmental Justice

(a) Perry County's non-white residents are concentrated in the village of Roseville in the Harrison Township target area: although minorities comprise less than 5% of Perry County's population, they constitute 13% of the population in the target area, (census tract 391279660001), meaning the county's minorities are disproportionately burdened by the health and environmental impacts of brownfields. Minority residents in this target area are subject to high wastewater discharge (74th percentile) and USTs (81st). **(b)** Redevelopment of the priority sites will ensure new investment is directed into two of the county's poorest communities, and because this work will be completed on existing sites with existing infrastructure, residents will benefit from economic redevelopment without being displaced from their neighborhoods, ensuring that jobs remain local, that goods and services remain accessible, that residents can live in proximity to recreational facilities and green spaces to improve their health and wellbeing, and

that releases of contaminants from future flooding events at these sites are identified and controlled through modern hazard mitigation practices incorporated during re-use planning.

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i. Project Involvement/Project Roles

Partner & POC	Contact	Role
Buckeye Hills Regional Council	Melissa Zoller 740-376-1027	Regional development group; will help advertise a public workshop at project kickoff for businesses and developers.
Rural Action, Inc.	Nate Schlater 740-394-2047	Local watershed group treating Acid Mine Drainage; will assist in identifying and prioritizing brownfield sites.
Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action	Kelly Hatas 740-767-4500	Facilitate public outreach by distributing information on their website, at their facility, and during public meetings.
Perry County Chamber of Commerce	John Ulmer 740-342-3547	Facilitate communication between the County and members of the Chamber; market properties to prospective businesses.
Hocking College	Frits Rizor 740-753-7149	Promote local hiring; link members of the community to employment in brownfields cleanup or redevelopment.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input

The county will create a task force consisting of local civic, watershed, business, real estate, educational, and economic development groups. The intent of the task force is to assist in the implementation of the grant including public outreach, site prioritization, and redevelopment planning. The group will be invited to meet quarterly. Notice of community meetings will be provided to the public via media alerts a week in advance stating the meeting date and time through a press release to the local newspaper (Perry County Tribune) and by posting a notice on the Perry County website. The county will also advertise the meetings on local area radio stations (WOUZ and WWJM FM radio stations) and the WOUB Television Station, a public access television station, to reach residents at every educational level and those without internet. Meetings will have virtual attendance options due to COVID-19 to ensure access for all. The County intends those communications will be primarily provided in English, however, to ensure inclusion of all communities, communications will also be provided in Spanish as needed. Hard copies of the draft Work Plan will be made available at the Perry County Courthouse and Somerset and New Lexington public libraries to ensure access for those without information technology availability or experience. The public will be able to provide comments via phone, email, and letters. All comments received will be discussed during the kickoff public meeting.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress

Task 1: Community Outreach	
i.	Project Implementation: The county’s Brownfields Project Director will develop a Brownfields Task Force comprising the community leaders identified in section 2.b as well as outreach materials and a brownfield project Facebook page, with the assistance of the environmental consultant. County staff will lead community meetings (with options for hybrid in-person/virtual online meetings due to COVID-19) to keep the public informed of project progress at major project milestones, including: 1) project kick-off; 2) completion of Phase I and II activities; and 3) reuse and cleanup planning. Specific stakeholders, such as residents adjacent to a priority site, may also receive information via mail or phone. At the close of the grant, the county will hold a final public meeting to notify the community of the outcomes of the project. If health threats are identified, the Ohio EPA and the Perry County Health Department will be called upon to help identify/verify off-site health threats posed by contamination; identify related toxicological issues and support risk evaluations; and coordinate health testing if migration of contamination from a

	brownfields site is confirmed. Job opportunities in brownfields assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment related to the brownfield program will be posted on the Perry County Department of Job and Family Services website. The budget for this task includes funds for office supplies.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Facebook page, and outreach materials created within first quarter, to be updated quarterly. Community Meetings held annually and as needed.
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: Ben Carpenter, Perry County Brownfields Project Director
iv.	Outputs: Brownfields Task Force, 4 community meetings, community meeting minutes posted to county website, Facebook page, Facebook posts, grant brochures.
Task 2: Site Inventory	
i.	Project Implementation: In addition to the priority sites in this application, Community Outreach will identify new brownfields sites based on community concerns and input from local business and civic leaders. Sites will be characterized by county staff and prioritized for assessment based on alignment with county redevelopment goals, actual or perceived health risk to sensitive populations, expected economic outcomes, the presence of a committed developer, and other factors as relevant. While certain properties have been targeted for the purposes of identification in this application, all eligible properties will be considered. The county and consultant will identify, research, and visit prospective brownfield sites to determine site history and grant eligibility.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Outreach to identify additional sites and reevaluation of site priority ranking will continue throughout the life cycle of the grant.
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: Ben Carpenter, Perry County Brownfields Project Director
iv.	Outputs: Updated Brownfield Site Inventory
Task 3: Site Assessments	
i.	Project Implementation: The consultant will conduct ESAs at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory task, beginning with the priority sites identified in this application. County legal staff will assist in preparing site access agreements among the county, property owners, and consultant as needed. Once a site is deemed eligible by EPA and access is granted by the owner, the site will be assessed by the consultant through a Phase I ESA and/or Phase II. Work for Phase II ESAs will be completed under an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) developed by the consultant. Contaminated sites may be entered into the Ohio EPA Voluntary Action Program (VAP). Sites will be evaluated through Phase I and/or II ESAs conducted in accordance with All Appropriate Inquiries, ASTM E1527-21 and E1903-19 standards, and the Ohio VAP or Ohio Bureau of Underground Storage Tanks (BUSTR) as needed.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Activities to begin by the second quarter and continue to end.
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: The environmental consultant will manage all technical aspects of the grant, overseen by the county's Brownfields Project Director.
iv.	Outputs: Access Agreements, Eligibility Determinations, 1 QAPP, 10 Phase Is, 10 Phase IIs
Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning	
i.	Project Implementation: The consultant will work with the county and developer to devise liability management, cleanup, and site use strategies that support redevelopment goals for priority sites within the target area. Cleanup planning will evaluate cleanup alternatives based on future land use scenarios and calculation of cleanup costs. For high-visibility projects, the county will hold community meetings to communicate and refine reuse planning. The county will conduct cleanup/redevelopment planning in accordance with the Ohio EPA VAP or BUSTR programs, or EPA Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). This may include cleanup plans, assessment of redevelopment alternatives, and evaluation of institutional and engineering controls.

ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Reuse and cleanup planning to begin following completion of a Phase II, likely beginning by the grant's 3 rd quarter, and continuing throughout the project.
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: The environmental consultant will manage all technical aspects of the grant, overseen by the county's Brownfields Project Director.
iv.	Outputs: 10 ABCA/RAPs, preparation of institutional/engineering controls, as needed.
Task 5: Programmatic Support	
i.	Project Implementation: The county will prepare a Work Plan with community support and secure approval from the EPA, marking the official start of the project. The county will provide a legal public notice of a Request for Qualifications and contract a qualified environmental consultant. The county will track project schedules at each assessed property to ensure all work is completed within the required 4 years. The county Brownfields Project Director will be responsible for day-to-day grant operations including submittal of required quarterly/annual reports to EPA and updating the Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) database. The consultant will support the county in completing ACRES updates, Quarterly Reporting, Financial Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the grant. The budget allows for two staff to attend two national/regional brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Procure consultant: first quarter. ACRES updates: throughout grant project as Phase Is and Phase IIs are completed. Quarterly reporting: 30 days after end of each quarter. Annual financial and MBE/WBE reporting: 30 days after end of each fiscal year.
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: Ben Carpenter, Perry County Brownfields Project Director
iv.	Outputs: Procured consultant. ACRES updates, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 Annual Financial Reports, 4 MBE/WBE Forms, 1 Final Progress Report, Property Profiles for completed sites. Funds for two staff to attend two conferences.

b. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories		Task				Total	
		Community Outreach	Site Inventory	Phase I and II ESAs	Remediation/Reuse Plans		Programmatic Support
Direct Costs	Personnel	8000	8000			9000	25000
	Fringe Benefits						
	Travel					3000	3000
	Equipment						
	Supplies	2000					2000
	Contractual			315000	155000		470000
	Other						
Total Direct Costs							500000
Indirect Costs							
Total Budget		10000	8000	315000	155000	12000	500000

Task 1 – Community Outreach: *Personnel:* 200 hours at average rate of \$40/hr = \$8,000. *Supplies:* \$2,000 for preparing and printing materials for conducting community outreach meetings. **Task 2 – Site Inventory:** *Personnel:* 200 hours at average rate of \$40/hr = \$8,000. **Task 3 – Phase I and II Site Assessments:** The costs for completing Phase I and Phase II ESAs will vary depending on the complexity and whether Ohio VAP or Ohio BUSTR compliance is required. *Contractual:* 10 Phase I site assessments at average cost of \$4,750 = \$47,500. 10 Phase II site

assessments at average cost of \$26,750 = \$267,500. Total: \$315,000. **Task 4 – Remediation /Reuse Planning:** *Contractual:* 10 ABCAs/RAPs at average cost of \$15,500 = \$155,000. **Task 5 – Programmatic Costs:** *Personnel:* 225 hours at average rate of \$40/hr = \$9,000. Funds for two staff to attend one EPA Brownfields Conference and one other program (\$750 per person, per trip).

c. Measuring Environmental Results. To track progress the county will: 1) evaluate achievements against the goals stated in the Work Plan; 2) determine if the project has resulted in an improved site (acquisition/redevelopment); and 3) communicate outputs of the grant in quarterly and annual reports to EPA. The county will make full use of the ACRES database to track quantifiable project outcomes including: acres of land assessed; number of jobs created/retained; acres of property remediated; leveraged cleanup/redevelopment funding; acres of property redeveloped; and acres of greenspace created. ACRES profiles will be updated following completion of Phase I and II ESAs, ABCAs/RAPs, remediation, and/or redevelopment activities. If the project does not meet the sufficient progress requirement (at least 35% of funds expended within 18 months), we will develop a plan with our EPA Project Officer to ensure advancement.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i. Organizational Capacity, Structure, Staff

The County has the organizational capacity and structure (systems, processes, and procedures) to successfully implement the grant. The project implementation team will include representatives to address the administrative (Perry County Brownfields Project Director), financial (County Auditor), and technical (qualified environmental consultant) needs of the project. Benjamin Carpenter, presently Vice President of the Perry County Board of Commissioners, will serve as the Project Director for the grant. Mr. Carpenter's qualifications include 27 years as the Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District Administrator. Mr. Carpenter has also served the County and its villages of Crooksville, Glenford, Hemlock, New Straitsville, and Junction City as their FEMA Floodplain Administrator since 2005, and is a former Perry County Deputy Sheriff. As a county commissioner and former president of the board of commissioners, Mr. Carpenter has overseen both of Perry County's brownfield assessment grants, and has been closely involved in securing additional brownfields assessment and cleanup funding for Perry County from state grant programs in 2022 and 2023. If the project director is lost, the President of the Board of Commissioners will become the project director. The County Auditor will provide financial tracking and grant documentation support to ensure that grant reporting requirements are met. The County will complete all activities within the required 4 years.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources

Through past experience with an EPA brownfields assessment grant, Perry County has demonstrated that it has the ability to acquire any additional expertise and resources required to successfully complete the project. The County will solicit qualified environmental consulting firms through an open, competitive public Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and select a consultant using qualifications-based selection criteria in accordance with the County's procurement protocols and applicable federal procurement rules (2 CFR 200.317 through 200.326). The selected consultant will have demonstrated extensive experience with EPA Assessment Grants, the Ohio Voluntary Action Program, and successfully managed at least three brownfield projects where cleanup or redevelopment financing resources were leveraged. The County's financial staff with is qualified to undertake Assessment Grant management including enrollment in the Automated Standard Application for Payment system and submittal of progress reports to the EPA Officer.

4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.b.i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

4.b.i.1 Accomplishments

Perry County is a past recipient of two EPA brownfield assessment grants: 2015 (\$400,000) and 2019 (\$300,000). The FY19 grant was a strong success despite the COVID pandemic, resulting in 7 Phase Is and 7 Phase IIs. ACRES data indicates the project led to \$511,600 in leveraged cleanup funding, all properties ready for reuse (3 acres), 50 jobs, and \$360,000 in private investment for property redevelopment. The FY15 grant for \$400,000 was similarly successful, producing 8 Phase Is and 7 Phase IIs. ACRES data indicates that project led to \$250,000 in cleanup funding, 8, and over \$1.3 million in private investment. In alignment with Perry County's redevelopment goals, assessed properties were located in downtown historic Somerset (3 sites); in downtown New Lexington (3); along Rush Creek in New Lexington (2); along Moxahala Creek in Roseville (1) and Crooksville (3); and in the historic downtowns of Thornville (1), Thornport (1), and New Straitsville (1). These outcomes were achieved despite the complexity and extent of contamination of the brownfields, particularly at sites in Crooksville, New Straitsville, and New Lexington where leaking underground storage tanks were discovered. The former Beckett Sound and Video property in New Lexington was purchased by Perry County Behavioral Health and converted into an acute opioid treatment center, leveraging \$1.3 million in redevelopment and creating 4 full-time jobs. Located in downtown New Lexington, the property is easily accessible to Perry County residents, and addresses a critical community need for opioid addiction treatment. Assessment of the property was expedited to align with the Rush Creek bridge replacement, a downtown capital improvement project. An historic 3-story brick building in downtown Somerset, the former Swisher Bros. cigar factory, is currently undergoing renovations using historic tax credits to be redeveloped into a boutique hotel, which plans to capitalize on the historic nature of downtown Somerset and its proximity to Buckeye Lake, a popular tourist attraction. Following the success of a \$1.9 million streetscape improvement project intended to improve the walkability and vitality of downtown Somerset, the village is planning an \$11 million Somerset Renaissance Project to include the Kimpel properties (five buildings) for renovation and mixed-use redevelopment. The former PCC Airfoils property in Crooksville, a large former manufacturing property along Moxahala Creek, was purchased and has returned to generating property taxes for the municipality. After identifying lead paint and asbestos-contaminated building materials at the historic county courthouse and former county jail properties in downtown New Lexington, the County leveraged \$500,000 in cleanup funding for abatement from the Ohio Department of Development in 2022, with work to be completed in 2024.

4.b.i.2. Compliance with Grant Requirements

Perry County implemented its EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants per the approved Work Plans and in full compliance with all terms and conditions. The County has a successful record of compliance with all management aspects of our grants and all phases of work. We complied with the criteria of our Work Plans, all of the schedules for progress, and associated terms and conditions in a timely manner including completing all quarterly performance reporting, technical and annual reporting, and ongoing ACRES reporting as recently-assessed properties continue to move from assessment through cleanup to redevelopment. For the FY15 grant, the entire \$400,000 was spent within three years. For the FY19 grant, the entire \$300,000 was spent within three years, with the exception of less than \$10 in unspent funds, which was returned to EPA.

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. I affirm that my organization is a county and therefore eligible to apply for this assessment grant.
- b. N/A, Perry County does not lobby the federal government.

2. Community Involvement

At the beginning of the Project, the county will create a task force consisting of local civic, watershed, business, real estate, educational, and economic development groups. The intent of the task force is to assist in the implementation of the grant including public outreach, site prioritization, and redevelopment planning. The group will be invited to meet quarterly. Notice of community meetings will be provided to the public via media alerts a week in advance stating the meeting date and time through a press release to the local newspaper (Perry County Tribune) and by posting a notice on the Perry County website. The county will also advertise the meetings on local area radio stations (WOUZ and WWJM FM radio stations) and the WOUB Television Station, a public access television station, to reach residents at every educational level and those without internet. Meetings will have virtual attendance options due to COVID-19 to ensure access for all. The County intends those communications will be primarily provided in English, however, to ensure inclusion of all communities, communications will also be provided in Spanish as needed. Hard copies of the draft Work Plan will be made available at the Perry County Courthouse and Somerset and New Lexington public libraries to ensure access for those without information technology availability or experience. The public will be able to provide comments via phone, email, and letters. All comments received will be discussed during the kickoff public meeting.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

I affirm that my organization does not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

None.