

Alabama Center for Rural Organizing and Systemic Solutions (ACROSS)

Warren Tidwell
Executive Director
ACROSS
48 Oak St.
Camp Hill, AL 36850

March 30, 2024

RE: Letter of Commitment for EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

On behalf of the Alabama Center for Rural Organizing and Systemic Solutions (ACROSS), we are excited to partner with the Town of Parrish, Alabama on their application for funding for the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project (PSAP). This critical funding for a struggling energy community provided by the Climate Pollution Grants Program: Implementation Grants General Competition (CPRG) would allow Parrish to effect an important transition away from dependency on fossil fuels, help revitalize the town, and demonstrate how even small communities can be a part of a new energy future.

I founded ACROSS in 2023 in the wake of a devastating hail storm in the small community of Camp Hill, leveraging decades of experience in disaster response and recovery to help rural communities prepare for an uncertain climate and become more resilient. I grew up in Walker County near Parrish and know what it takes to get things done there. The Town of Parrish has a plan and a vision for a sustainable, resilient future that ACROSS is committed to helping with. We have years of experience in rural organizing, and bring an extensive network of knowledgeable collaborators from intersecting movements including environmental justice, disaster preparedness and recovery, long-term strategy, workforce issues and sustainable development.

For the Parrish Sustainability Activation Project (PSAP), ACROSS will:

- recruit experts to host workforce development events and skills/apprenticeship programs with a minimum target of 6 events a year for 5 years after the completion of renovations.
- use its national network and media contacts to promote Parrish as a sustainability-focused city in the heart of coal country
- aid Parrish in determining the specific design requirements of the PSAP and negotiating with contractors throughout project implementation
- support Parrish in the completion of all mandatory reports and voluntary reports listed in the PSAP implementation timeline

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- compile and conduct or train others to conduct surveys required to generate data relevant to the key performance metrics

ACROSS operates as a 501(c)3 organization, currently with fiscal sponsorship by another Alabama non-profit - Automotive Free Clinic - while we await our formal determination letter from the IRS. We are enthusiastic about participating in this opportunity for the Town of Parrish to become an example of what is possible for other rural communities throughout the Deep South and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Tidwell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Warren A. Tidwell
Executive Director
Alabama Center for Rural Organizing and Systemic Solutions