

Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance (EDA)  
Application Information Sheet

R04-26-A-004

1. Applicant Identification: C3 of Northwest Alabama, Inc.  
D/B/A Northwest Alabama Economic Development  
Alliance (EDA)  
4020 US Highway 43  
Guin, Alabama 35563-3435
2. [Home - Northwest Alabama EDA](https://northwestalabamaeda.org) – <https://northwestalabamaeda.org>
3. Funding Requested:
  - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
  - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
4. Location:
  - a. Fayette and Brilliant
  - b. Marion, Lamar, Fayette
  - c. Alabama
5. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information:  
Community-wide Assessment Grant  
Target Area: Brilliant  
Census Block Tracts: 9642, 9644.01, 9644.02, 9645, 9646, 9647.01, 9647.02  
  
Target Area: Fayette  
Census Block Tracts: 202 and 203  
  
Priority Sites:  
  
Former Brilliant Mine  
State Hwy. 129 & County Rd. 68  
Brilliant, AL 35548  
  
Former Fayette Cotton Mill  
3<sup>rd</sup> St. SE & 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE  
Fayette, AL 35555
6. Contacts:  
Project Director / Chief Executive:  
Mr. Tom Wisemiller, President & CEO  
Address: 4020 US Highway 43, Guin, AL 35563-3435  
Phone: 205-468-3213  
Email: [twisemiller@northwestalabamaeda.org](mailto:twisemiller@northwestalabamaeda.org)

7. Population:

Fayette, AL: 4,221<sup>a</sup>

Brilliant, AL: 1,078<sup>b</sup>

NW Alabama EDA Region: 59,634<sup>c</sup>

8. Other Factors Checklist:

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	1
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.	1,2
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.	2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	
The proposed project will improve resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A(2), for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	8,9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority: Attached

10. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not Applicable

<sup>a</sup>US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>b</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>c</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

**EDWARD F. POOLOS**  
DIRECTOR

**JEFFERY W. KITCHENS**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



**KAY IVEY**  
GOVERNOR

**Alabama Department of Environmental Management**  
[adem.alabama.gov](http://adem.alabama.gov)

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January 6, 2026

Mr. Tom Wisemiller, President & CEO  
Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance  
4020 U.S. Highway 43  
Guin, Alabama 35563

Re: U.S. EPA Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant Application

Dear Mr. Wisemiller:

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) is pleased to support the Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance in your pursuit of a U.S. EPA Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant.

ADEM understands that the Northwest Alabama EDA represents the joint economic and marketing pursuits of the cities and unincorporated areas of Marion, Lamar, and Fayette Counties and that the EDA promotes brownfield redevelopment as a catalyst for economic revitalization and environmental restoration in its cities and towns. We are aware that Northwest Alabama EDA intends to use the funds to continue building their redevelopment program and specifically targeting mine-scarred properties within their footprint. ADEM recognizes that this grant award would be a significant economic and environmental boost for these communities and the entire tri-county area.

The ADEM Redevelopment Unit routinely aids government entities interested in brownfield redevelopment. Upon request, ADEM would be happy to participate in the various outreach activities needed to accomplish your brownfield project goals, entry of sites into the ADEM Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP), and technical project guidance in accordance with the Alabama Land Recycling and Economic Redevelopment Act (ALRERA). We wish you and the residents of the Northwest Alabama EDA community success in the pursuit of your grant. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

For any questions regarding this letter, please contact Crystal L. Collins at 334-279-3067 or via email at [ccollins@adem.alabama.gov](mailto:ccollins@adem.alabama.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Crystal L. Collins".

Crystal L. Collins, Chief  
Redevelopment Unit  
Land Division  
Alabama Department of Environmental Management



**Birmingham Office**  
110 Vulcan Road  
Birmingham, AL 35209-4702  
(205) 942-6168  
(205) 941-1603 (FAX)

**Decatur Office**  
2715 Sandlin Road, S.W.  
Decatur, AL 35603-1333  
(256) 353-1713  
(256) 340-9359 (FAX)

**Coastal Office**  
1615 South Broad Street  
Mobile, AL 36605  
(251) 450-3400  
(251) 479-2593 (FAX)

## 1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION & PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION:

### Target Area & Brownfields:

#### 1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area:

The Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance (EDA) includes the 3 counties of Marion (pop. 29,341), Lamar (pop. 13,972), and Fayette (pop. 16,321), Alabama.<sup>a</sup> The 3-county area is the geographic boundary for this project. This rural region of just under 60,000 residents includes the City of Fayette (pop. 4,221<sup>b</sup>) and the Town of Brilliant (pop. 1,078<sup>c</sup>), which will be the two initial target areas for this grant.

In the 1800s new roads and rail lines connected the region to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Nashville, Tennessee. The 1900s brought the textile industry, coal mining, and later a variety of manufacturing operations to the area. Just before the turn of the century, the Brilliant Coal Company opened in Marion County. At one point, the company employed 600 employees and had one of the largest payrolls in the region. The name Brilliant was chosen because of the glossy appearance of the coal. A town grew up around the mine, and residents chose to name the town “Brilliant” to honor the coal company that had brought such prosperity to the area. Unfortunately, that prosperity ended when the mine shut down in the 1950s. Alabama’s coal sector continues to contract, decreasing by 36% over the last decade, with 4,756 jobs in 2011 down to 1,731 jobs in 2021 (most recent data). The decline of the coal industry has left the region with former mines, former coal processing sites, and other mine-scarred lands, such as the former **Brilliant Mine** site.

Textiles were also once one of Alabama’s largest industries, employing 54,000 in 72 mills in 1950. In 1928, the **Fayette Cotton Mill** opened in the City of Fayette and employed over 350 people, but offshoring trends resulted in significant job losses from the early 1990’s through the 2010’s. The Fayette Cotton Mill closed in April 2002, laying off 286 employees. Now the industry has been reduced to only a few small mills. The shift to overseas production of textiles and other manufactured goods and decreasing coal use led to the loss of over 3,000 jobs from 1999 to 2012 in the EDA counties. Noteworthy closures included Oneita Industries in 1999 (355 employees), Arvin Meritor, Inc. in 2001 (371 employees), **Fayette Cotton Mill** in 2003 (286 employees), Weyerhaeuser Plywood Plant in 2003 (250 employees), Indies House in 2006 (356 employees), SITEL in 2010 (302 employees), and American Power Source in 2012 (119 employees). These closures have left behind large textile mills and factories and hundreds of acres of potentially contaminated land. Environmental concerns at the sites include heavy metals, solvents, oils, dyes, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), petroleum products, asbestos, and lead-based paint. The employment and population losses have also led to the closure of grocery stores and other service businesses. Fayette’s last full-service grocery store (Food World), which was located near downtown, closed in 2004. Low household incomes and the lack of other financial resources have led to an aging, poor-quality housing stock in the EDA counties, making it difficult to attract new industries who look for available workforce housing options. These grant funds will be used to assess and plan for the redevelopment of: 1. Legacy mining and manufacturing sites, preparing them for efficient, advanced manufacturing operations, 2. vacant or underutilized properties with potential for developing affordable, energy efficient housing, and 3. dilapidated retail and commercial buildings for new amenities, such as grocery and retail stores and recreational amenities. The assessment and reuse planning under this grant will help facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield sites to create new jobs and new housing opportunities for the target areas and the 3-county region.

#### 1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):

There is a range of brownfield sites across the region and within the Target Areas. Community partners have identified over 30 sites in region, including former textile mills, manufacturing sites, warehouses, gas/service stations, and downtown commercial properties. There are also former coal mines and mine-impacted properties where heavy metals are possibly leaching into groundwater.

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<sup>a</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

<sup>b</sup>US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>c</sup>US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The EDA's first priority site is the former **Brilliant Mine**, a surface coal mine, located in the Town of Brilliant target area. Once one of the wealthiest communities in the county because of the Brilliant Coal Company, its closure near the end of the 1950s left the town decimated and in state of decline. Today, Brilliant is one of the lowest-income towns throughout the 3-county region with 35.8% of residents living in poverty, compared to Alabama's statewide average of 16%.<sup>d</sup> This site is selected as a priority site, because of its potential to attract sustainable, high-paying advanced manufacturing jobs. Its size, access to ample utility infrastructure, and proximity to Interstate-22 meet many criteria corporations evaluate to site new facilities. The 19-acre property includes ponds created by excavating extraction pits and mine spoils (gob piles), which are present at several locations across the site. A few structures remain, including the former 1,500-square-foot gate house and truck scales. Surface runoff from the gob piles and groundwater migration may be carrying acidic water contaminated with heavy metals and sulfur-bearing minerals onto nearby properties and into water resources.<sup>e</sup> Contaminants may include sulfuric acid, lead, manganese, cadmium, chromium, copper, iron, mercury, arsenic, selenium, and zinc – substances known to have adverse, long-lasting effects on aquatic systems.<sup>f</sup>

The EDA's second priority site is the former **Fayette Cotton Mill** in the City of Fayette target area. The property is located south of downtown Fayette on 22 acres adjacent to the Sipsey River and near several of Fayette's largest employers including Ox Bodies, Phifer Inc., and SHOWA Glove. Most of the site's buildings were demolished in 2011-2012. Large debris piles remain on the concrete slabs of the foundation, and four small outbuildings remain. The site is fenced, and vegetation is overgrown around the perimeter and sprouting through cracks in the former parking lots. Approximately 24 homes remain in the former mill village adjacent to the site, next to the site's suspected contamination, which includes asbestos, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), toxic heavy metals, VOCs, and PAHs. Residents of these homes include low-income, minority families with little knowledge of the potential hazards posed by the former Fayette Cotton Mill site. This site is selected as a priority due to potential health risks to nearby families, impacts to the Sipsey Watershed, and the redevelopment potential of the site, which is located less than a mile from Fayette's downtown.

#### 1.c. Identifying Additional Sites:

Working with our target areas and community stakeholders, the EDA has identified another 25-30 sites across the region in need of assessment, cleanup planning, or reuse planning. These sites include gas stations, former schools, closed commercial businesses, former industrial facilities, and additional mine-scarred properties. As funding allows, the EDA will continue to work with the communities to identify and prioritize additional sites and target areas. Sites will be prioritized by their importance to the community, alignment with revitalization plans, owners' willingness to participate, and the reuse plans/potential of the site for redevelopment.

#### Revitalization of the Target Area:

##### 1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:

The **Brilliant Mine** site is located approximately 1 mile from an I-22 interchange (Exit 30) along Alabama State Route 129. Its location, access to infrastructure, and the area's ample workforce make it a prime redevelopment opportunity as an industrial or commercial site. Manufacturers in the EDA region already provide several components essential to major automotive manufacturers. The *Economic Development Playbook, 2017-2021* – a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for West Alabama Region II – focuses on developing the advanced automotive sector to drive job creation and regional innovation. In furtherance of that strategy, the EDA is forging educational partnerships to expand technical, certificate-based, and two-year training programs in the region to better prepare young adults for careers in advanced manufacturing, and to transition incumbent workers from obsolete heavy industries (e.g., coal, textiles) into better opportunities. A key component of this plan is leveraging the region's industrial

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<sup>d</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *2020 Decennial Census*

<sup>e</sup> US EPA. Polluted Runoff: Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution – Abandoned Mine Drainage. <https://www.epa.gov/nps/abandoned-mine-drainage>

<sup>f</sup> US EPA. (August 2000). *Abandoned Mine Site Characterization and Cleanup Handbook*. 910-B-00-001

sites to recruit new clean, advanced manufacturers, such as automotive component suppliers and manufacturers, to the I-22 corridor. There is an acute need for increased electrical component and battery manufacturing capacity to support the auto industry's conversion to an electrified future. The Brilliant Mine site is strategically situated within 100 miles of the Toyota plant on I-22 in Tupelo, MS, the Toyota-Mazda plant in Madison, AL, and the Mercedes Benz plant in Vance, AL. Preparing the **Brilliant Mine** site to support a future advanced manufacturer or distribution center aligns with these plans to grow the automotive sector in the region. EPA Grant funds will be used to assess the site, explore redevelopment concepts, and engage local, state, and federal stakeholders regarding the site's future.

In recent years Alabama has experienced a resurgence of advanced manufacturing operations due to its strong labor force, transportation attributes, and low cost of living. SHOWA Glove, a manufacturer of nitrile gloves, recently announced a \$35 million dollar expansion in Fayette, which will employ 80 new workers. Also, O'Neal Manufacturing is developing a 130,000 square foot steel fabrication center in Fayette, which will utilize advanced robotics systems and employ 70 new workers. These successes have magnified the need for funds to prepare new sites, increase housing options, and provide essential services such as healthy food options. In one example of the region's efforts, the City of Fayette worked with the EPA's Office of Community Revitalization to develop a community action plan under the *Local Foods, Local Places* initiative. The project's report, published in December 2020, recognizes the impact from the closure of mills and factories located around the city. The report notes the presence of the following brownfield sites in addition to the **Fayette Cotton Mill**: Shelby Die Casting, Lanier Clothing, Okie Garment, and Winfield Cotton Mill - a significant number of large sites for a small community. The *Local Foods, Local Places* report focused on improving urban food access for the neighborhood south of downtown, which has high poverty, subsidized housing, and numerous vacant properties. The lack of a grocery store and no public transportation means access to healthy food choices is extremely limited. The plan recommended leveraging the EPA's brownfield grant programs to help redevelop former industrial sites to promote economic development, remove blight, and spur community gardening projects. The proposed redevelopment of the **Fayette Cotton Mill** site and surrounding area aligns with this plan. Neighboring business, Ox Bodies, is currently working with the property owners and the town on an expansion plan to potentially occupy a portion of the former mill site to bring additional advanced manufacturing operations. With this addition, the area surrounding the **Fayette Cotton Mill** envisions a mixed-use redevelopment, which will include new affordable, energy-efficient housing, community gardens, a neighborhood market or grocery, access to the Sipsey River, and pedestrian accessible service businesses. To bring this idea to fruition the EDA will use EPA grant funds to engage the public, create the redevelopment plan for the **Fayette Cotton Mill** and surrounding area, assess the site's environmental conditions, and attract interest from development partners.

#### 1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:

Recruiting advanced manufacturing operations as global automotive firms increasingly "re-shore" to respond to the increased US-content requirements of tariffs and trade agreements will create new job opportunities for the region. These businesses require shovel-ready sites for their operations. Completing environmental assessment of brownfield properties along the I-22 corridor, such as the Brilliant Mine site, increases the EDA's competitiveness to attract new operations to brownfields, instead of developing greenfield properties. New industries on brownfield sites will spur economic development by creating jobs and driving population growth. For example, in 2024, the EDA announced the recruitment of advanced engineering firm IS4S to invest \$2.1 million to establish a new research and Development (R&D) center in Marion County, which created 13 high-paying full-time engineering positions with an average annual salary of approximately \$132,000. Redevelopment of the priority sites are expected to generate similar successes. The high-paying jobs created will further stimulate commercial and retail business sectors, increasing real estate property values, household wealth, and collected tax revenues. Legacy manufacturing operations, such as the Cotton Mill site, will play a vital role in providing affordable, energy-efficient housing options, access to healthy food options, and outdoor

recreation for low to moderate income residents within the target areas. Assessing and cleaning up brownfield sites will protect the health of nearby residents and ensure the protection of vital water resources.

#### Strategy for Leveraging Resources:

##### 1.f Resources Needed for Site Reuse:

The EDA and the City of Fayette are partnering with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) to conduct an initial Site Analysis of the Fayette Cotton Mill site. The EDA allocated limited funds in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 budgets to pay for debris removal and site preparation to support future Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments and eventual redevelopment planning efforts. If necessary, the EDA and/or City of Fayette will secure ownership of the Cotton Mill site to apply for an EPA Cleanup grant for site cleanup. Additionally, the EDA and/or City of Fayette may also consider applying for a low interest loan from the Alabama Land Recycling Revolving Loan Fund Program to assist with site cleanup expenses. Developers who join the Alabama Department of Environmental Management's (ADEM)'s voluntary cleanup program are eligible for certain tax abatements upon completion, that can be leveraged for redevelopment. Should additional assessments be required beyond the scope of this project, the EDA may request funding for limited site assessments from ADEM's brownfield technical assistance program. For the redevelopment of sites, the EDA will work to leverage funding from private partners and may assist by pursuing grants from the US Economic Development Administration, the US Department of Agriculture, or the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Community Development Block Grant. Private developers can also leverage Alabama's Historic Preservation Tax Act's tax credit which provides a 25% tax credit for qualified rehabilitation expenses for properties at least 60 years old. Additionally, the EDA will continue to seek funding from the Alabama Site Evaluation Economic Development Strategy (SEEDS) program to assist with redevelopment. The EDA has previously secured funding for sites in Fayette, Hamilton, and Sulligent. The SEEDS program is designed to strengthen the state's portfolio of industrial sites, enhancing Alabama's competitiveness for high-impact economic development projects. In an effort to continue recruiting advanced manufacturing to the region, the EDA has also partnered with Beville State Community College to launch the Career BOOST program (a tuition reimbursement program designed to support workforce development). Career BOOST is the latest initiative under EDA's TIME (Tech Innovation Means Employment) program, which focuses on fueling tech and innovation opportunities in Northwest Alabama. The program aims to strengthen the local workforce by encouraging enrollment in high-demand technical fields and helping reduce barriers for students pursuing careers in skilled trades.<sup>g</sup> Similarly, the EDA will work with the State of Alabama, Marion County, and the Town of Brilliant to access the funding options described above in order to address the abandoned Brilliant Mine as well as other mine-scarred properties in the area. The EDA will also coordinate with the State of Alabama to pursue Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization Grant (AMLER) funds for the Brilliant Mine site. The AMLER Program supports local investment opportunities that provide for sustainable long-term rehabilitation of coalfield economies. Alabama's allocation of AMLER funding in 2025 was \$11 million<sup>h</sup> and is anticipated to match or exceed this amount in 2026. Also, because of the former mine's location in the Sipsey Watershed, the EDA may also work with project partners to pursue wildlife protection grants. The key to leveraging funds from many of these programs are having the completed environmental assessments, cleanup plans, and redevelopment plans that this grant will provide.

##### 1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure:

Priority sites have existing electric, gas, fiber, water, and sewer utilities and infrastructure with sufficient capacities to support proposed reuses. Depending on the final redevelopment, some upgrades to the Brilliant Mine site may include surface preparation, access road improvements,

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<sup>g</sup> [News Archives - Northwest Alabama EDA](#)

<sup>h</sup> [Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization \(AMLER\) Program | Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement](#)

and electrical and other utility system installations. These upgrades will either be funded through economic development site-ready programs (SEEDS) and/or through the private investment of companies locating at the site.

**2. COMMUNITY NEED & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

**Community Need:**

**2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding:**

As the following table shows, the EDA region is characterized by low incomes, small populations, and a weak tax base unable to fund brownfield redevelopment projects. Our Target Areas have small populations, Fayette (4,221) and Brilliant (1,703) and limited resources and staff capacity. They are noticeably more economically impoverished with median and per capita incomes significantly lower than the state’s, while their percentages of poverty, families with children in poverty, and families receiving SNAP benefits are significantly higher. The median home value (property taxes being the main source of revenue) in Fayette is 37.4% less than the state’s, while Brilliant’s is a staggering 71.7% lower. These small population, low-income communities lack the personnel and resources needed and must draw upon outside sources of funding to address complex brownfield sites. Funding from this project will enable the communities to take the first steps needed to assess, develop a plan, and revitalize the priority brownfield sites in the Target Areas.

Demographic Data <sup>i</sup> (ACS 2023 5-year estimates)	Fayette	Fayette County	Brilliant	Marion County	Lamar County	Alabama
Total Population	4,221	16,173	1,703	29,190	13,809	5,054,253
% Minority	24.0%	16.1%	1.0%	8.7%	13.4%	31.6%
% Elderly (>65)	27.8%	21.6%	18.6%	21.1%	22.2%	17.5%
Median Household Income	\$38,009	\$50,733	\$47,877	\$50,714	\$47,447	\$62,027
Per Capita Income	\$25,220	\$27,734	\$26,511	\$26,555	\$24,169	\$34,835
% All In Poverty	27.3%	13.1%	27.3%	11.7%	10.4%	11.3%
% Families with Children in Poverty	42.6%	18.4%	61.7%	20.9%	14.8%	18.2%
% with SNAP Benefits	23.6%	17.7%	26.8%	17.8%	18.6%	13.6%
Median Home Value	\$122,200	\$121,200	\$55,200	\$104,300	\$112,700	\$195,100

**2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:**

The health and welfare of the sensitive populations in the target areas have been negatively impacted by living in close proximity to brownfield sites. Older and impoverished populations are at greater risk from the impacts of environmental contamination, particularly the heavy metals, PCBs, PAHs, VOCs, ACM, and LBP suspected at the priority sites. Poor health outcomes can be exacerbated by other conditions present in these communities, such as the low educational attainment, poverty, and lack of healthy food options in the target areas. The CDC<sup>j</sup> reports the Target Area communities report higher percentages of poor health status as compared to the United States.

Measure (Age-adjusted prevalence %)	Fayette	Brilliant	US
Frequent mental distress among adults - 2023	<b>18.1</b>	<b>19.5</b>	15.6
Frequent physical distress among adults - 2023	<b>17.6</b>	<b>18.0</b>	12.8
Fair or poor self-rated health status among adults - 2023	<b>28.8</b>	<b>27.9</b>	19.2

Through this project, the EDA can assist the communities with identifying the exposure risks, developing mitigation strategies, and facilitating the redevelopment of the brownfield sites in order to improve the economy, health, and welfare of the Target Areas’ sensitive populations.

**2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions:**

The Target Areas’ sensitive populations are particularly susceptible to chronic health impacts from the suspected contaminants associated with brownfields, including heavy metals, PCBs, PAHs, VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum constituents, pesticides, herbicides, ACM, and LBP. As the following table shows, the Target Areas have elevated rates asthma, high blood pressure, and

<sup>i</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>j</sup> [PLACES: Local Data for Better Health | PLACES | CDC](#), accessed January 2026

COPD compared to the country. Exposure to suspected contaminants on the priority sites may be contributing to the higher rates – exposure to asbestos can exacerbate asthma conditions and exposure to PAHs can worsen high blood pressure and COPD.

CDC Places Data <sup>k</sup> (Percentages Among Adults) - 2023	U.S	Brilliant	Fayette
Asthma	9.8	<b>10.8</b>	<b>10.7</b>
High Blood Pressure	34.4	<b>46.2</b>	<b>50.4</b>
COPD	6.2	<b>12.1</b>	<b>11.6</b>

Exposure to acid mine drainage and heavy metals, such as those suspected at the **Brilliant Mine** priority site, have been linked to higher incidences of colon, lung, and stomach cancers, and Marion County has a higher incidence rate of each of those cancers. Fayette County has higher incidences of bladder, colon, kidney, and lung cancers. Suspected contaminants at the **Fayette Cotton Mill** included asbestos, which is linked to lung cancers; PAHs, which are linked to bladder and lung cancers; pesticides, which are linked to kidney cancers; and heavy metals, which are linked to colon cancers. , such as those suspected at the **Fayette Cotton Mill** priority site, have been linked to Lung Cancers.

National Cancer Institute State Cancer Profiles <sup>l</sup> Age-Adjusted Incidence Rate cases per 100,000	Fayette County (Fayette)	Marion County (Brilliant)	Alabama	U.S.
Incidence Rate of Bladder Cancers	<b>17.8</b>	<b>17.1</b>	16.9	18.8
Incidence Rate of Colon & Rectum Cancers	<b>50.4</b>	<b>42.6</b>	40.1	36.4
Incidence Rate of Kidney & Renal Pelvis Cancer	<b>24.6</b>	17.2	18.5	17.3
Incidence Rate of Lung Cancers	<b>59.9</b>	<b>66.4</b>	58.4	53.1
Incidence Rate of Stomach Cancers	N/A	<b>6.9</b>	6.4	6.3
Incidence Rate of All Cancer Sites	422.2	423.2	431.4	444.4
Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate (All Cancers)	<b>183.5</b>	<b>181.7</b>	160.2	146.0

The assessments funded by this grant and eventual remediation and redevelopment of these properties will reduce the targeted community’s exposure risk to contaminants and help lower the incidences of adverse health conditions.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

Families, particularly those living adjacent to the priority sites, in the target areas are disproportionately impacted by the negative environmental consequences of the mining or industrial operations. For example, many of the homes used for worker housing at the **Fayette Cotton Mill** share a property boundary or are located immediately across the street from the site. Residents are at risk from wind-blown contaminants, such as asbestos, or from vapor intrusion and the associated exposure to VOCs due to groundwater migration of contaminants. Also, homes in this neighborhood are from an aging housing stock with 77% of homes constructed prior to 1960, which presents asbestos and lead-based paint concerns. With 42.6% of families with children below the age of 5 living below the poverty threshold in the surrounding areas<sup>m</sup>, major home repairs are unlikely to be completed to remove lead-based paint and/or properly abate asbestos (which may be an exposure threat due to deteriorating conditions). Due to their poor economic situations and a lack of housing options, it is difficult for residents near the **Fayette Cotton Mill** site to relocate. The target area residents have been disproportionately impacted as a result of past government policies allowing mines, heavy industries, and residential properties to locate in close proximity. Thus, residents are at more risk of exposure to wind-blown contaminants, contaminated site runoff, and contaminants in groundwater. Site assessments and cleanup planning funded by this EPA grant will identify contaminants, migration pathways, and possible cleanup and containment options to prevent transport and reduce risks to nearby residents. These efforts will reduce health risks, create jobs, encourage new investment in struggling neighborhoods and

<sup>k</sup> CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion, Division of Population Health, Places Data, accessed January 2026. <https://www.ced.gov/PLACES>

<sup>l</sup> National Cancer Institute. <https://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/index.html>. Accessed January 2026.

<sup>m</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

provide safe, energy efficient, affordable, and lead-free housing options for the target areas.

Community Engagement:

2.e. Project Involvement and 2.f. Project Roles:

Partner Name	Point of Contact	Specific Role in the Project
Inner-City Ministries	Willie Ivey [REDACTED]	Willie Ivey is an active community member in Fayette and will be a member of the steering committee. He will be helpful in identifying sites and providing community input.
West Alabama Economic Development Association (WAEDA)	Andy Johnson <a href="mailto:ajohnson@bankofvernon.bank">ajohnson@bankofvernon.bank</a> 205-712-6995	Will support site identification, prioritization, and cleanup and reuse planning.
West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)	Dennis Stripling, Exec. Dir. <a href="mailto:dennis.stripling@westal.org">dennis.stripling@westal.org</a> 205-333-2990 Ext. 218	Will support the regional brownfields team on community planning and engagement efforts.
Community Development Foundation	Wade Nixon, Chair <a href="mailto:wade.nixon@bscc.edu">wade.nixon@bscc.edu</a> 205-412-6032	Will provide a member to the task force and provide redevelopment leveraging and cleanup and reuse planning support during this project.
Fayette First Baptist	Brother Scott Davis, Pastor <a href="mailto:fayettefbc1@gmail.com">fayettefbc1@gmail.com</a> 205-932-5562	Will assist in raising awareness about brownfields programs including upcoming community engagement meetings. One of the largest churches in Fayette.
Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Fayette County office (Auburn Univ. and Alabama A&M Univ.)	Ronni Rena Brasher <a href="mailto:rrb0006@aces.edu">rrb0006@aces.edu</a> 205-932-8941	Assisting with a site analysis on the Fayette Cotton Mill site to provide a framework for potential acquisition of the property by the City of Fayette or prospective investor for purposes of redeveloping the site.
North Alabama Council of Local Governments	Keith Jones, Executive Director <a href="mailto:kjones@nacolg.org">kjones@nacolg.org</a> 256-389-0555	Will help develop regional strategies for growth and development, provide planning assistance to local governments for site reuse plans.

2.g. Incorporating Community Input:

The EDA is experienced in regional community initiatives and gathering public input. Developing support and public engagement requires a multifaceted outreach strategy of digital and in-person communication, engaging grassroots and professional networks. The initial approach will be to create a regional identity by focusing on the commonalities of mill and mining towns and shared cultural history of the communities in the I-22 corridor. The project team will develop a branded outreach campaign across all EDA digital and print platforms. Messages on the brownfield initiative launch, upcoming meetings, accomplishments, and video clips of sites and events will be distributed electronically as needed, but no less than 2 times per month on the EDA social media accounts. Messages will be shared by the project partners (listed above) for wider distribution. The campaign will include a virtual tour of brownfield properties and project information will be shared on the EDA's brownfields project landing page. The EDA will issue press releases and work with local media (TV and radio) to broadcast key milestones, including the project launch, mid-project review, opportunities to participate in the project activities, as well as information about upcoming meetings. The EDA will couple digital efforts with on-the-ground outreach that will include briefings at partner organizations, meetings with local officials and community organizations in the target areas. These meetings will take place throughout the project but will be concentrated in the first year of the initiative. The EDA anticipates meeting with an average of 2 organizations per month during the first year of the initiative. The meetings will inform attendees but also recruit them to participate in project activities (site identification and prioritization for assessment, cleanup and reuse planning, etc.) and to disseminate information by sharing EDA's social media content and by posting information on community message boards. The EDA will keep partner organizations informed of project accomplishments and activities through a monthly status report distributed by email and an open quarterly partnership meeting held online as an alternative to in-person engagement. The EDA will work with partner organizations to coordinate community meetings at key milestones to provide information, answer questions, solicit input, and engage residents in the target areas. This will include a review of activities and results of assessments at the priority sites and a discussion of redevelopment

priorities as well as gathering input on the selection and prioritization of new sites. The EDA team will employ interactive and creative input methods, such as design charrettes, to gather feedback on possible reuses. The EDA will catalog and respond to questions and input received for consideration and provide direct responses to community members. Assistance will be provided to those persons with physical disabilities, such as holding meetings at locations that are handicap accessible. When needed, translators will be provided. We will also work closely with all partner organizations to ensure that communication messages reach all constituent groups in target areas.

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES & MEASURING PROGRESS:**

Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs:

3.a. Project Implementation, 3.b. Project Schedule, 3.c. Task/Activity Lead, & 3.d. Outputs:

The EDA is prepared to complete the following tasks within the four-year grant:

	<b>Task 1.0 Management</b>	<b>Task 2.0 Community Outreach</b>	<b>Task 3.0 Env. Site Assessments</b>	<b>Task 4.0 Cleanup &amp; Reuse Planning</b>
<b>3.a Project Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and track project tasks, schedule &amp; budget</li> <li>Oversee Contractor</li> <li>Report to Stakeholders</li> <li>Attend National and Local/Regional Brownfield Conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold Quarterly Partner meetings</li> <li>Develop &amp; publish outreach materials, including press releases, radio announcements, fact sheets, brochures &amp; social media posts</li> <li>Hold community information &amp; planning meetings</li> <li>Update BF inventory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Site Eligibility Forms to the EPA</li> <li>Conduct Phase I &amp; Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) at priority sites</li> <li>Author generic and site-specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP) and Health &amp; Safety Plans (HSP)</li> <li>Conduct ACM and LBP Surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) at priority sites to evaluate cleanup options with public input</li> <li>Create site-specific reuse plans with market studies</li> </ul>
<b>3.b Anticipated Project Schedule</b>	48 Months (ongoing)	48 Months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly Partner Meetings</li> <li>Organizational meetings Q1-4</li> <li>Community meetings in Q4-16</li> <li>Planning meetings concentrated in Q6-16</li> </ul>	39 Months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase I ESAs will concentrate in Q2-12</li> <li>Phase II ESAs will concentrate in Q3-14</li> <li>ACM &amp; LBP Surveys will concentrate in Q3-14</li> </ul>	18 Months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ABCAs will concentrate in Q5-15, following Phase II ESAs</li> <li>Site Reuse Plans will concentrate in Q6-15, following Phase II ESAs</li> </ul>
<b>3.c Task Lead</b>	Project Director with support from Contractor	Project Director with support from Contractor	Contractor with Project Director oversight	Contractor with Project Director oversight
<b>3.d Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 Quarterly Reports</li> <li>4 Financial Status Reports</li> <li>ACRES Updates</li> <li>Final Summary Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Print &amp; Digital Outreach Materials</li> <li>Meeting Minutes &amp; Sign-in Sheets</li> <li>News Articles</li> <li>BF Inventory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 Site Eligibility Forms</li> <li>15 Phase I ESA Reports (ASTM 1527 &amp; AAI Rule 70FR66070)</li> <li>7 Phase II ESA Reports (ASTM 1903-11)</li> <li>1 Generic QAPP &amp; HSP</li> <li>7 Site-specific QAPPs</li> <li>7 Site-specific HSPs</li> <li>8 ACM &amp; LBP Surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 ABCAs</li> <li>4 Site Reuse Plans and Market Studies</li> </ul>

3.e. Cost Estimates:

Cost estimates are based upon spending from our previous Community-wide Assessment Grant and anticipated costs for continuing the program.

Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Equipment, Supplies, Construction, Indirect, and Administrative Costs are **not** requested for reimbursement.

Travel: 2 staff attend 4 regional workshops (2 staff x 4 workshops x (\$250 for 1 night hotel + \$100 per diem for meals) = \$2,800 + (4 x 300 miles roundtrip (RT) x \$0.725/mile) = \$870; 2 staff attend

2 national conferences (2 conferences x 2 staff x (\$800 airfare + (\$250/ night hotel x 3 nights) + \$200 per diem for meals)=\$7,000: Total = \$10,670

Other: 2 staff attend 4 regional workshops (2 staff x 4 workshops x \$150 registration fee) = \$1,200;  
 2 staff attend 2 national conferences (2 conferences x 2 staff x \$350 registration fee) = \$1,400:  
Total = \$2,600

Contractual: The following table breaks down associated contractual costs for anticipated tasks.

Activity	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total	Task #
Project Management Support and Monthly Project Team Calls (2 hrs @ \$175/month)	48	\$350/month	\$16,800	1.0
Quarterly Reports	16	\$425/each	\$6,800	1.0
ACRES Updates	16	\$325/each	\$5,200	1.0
Final Report	1	\$5,000/each	\$5,000	1.0
Outreach Materials	Est. 6	\$500/each	\$3,000	2.0
Quarterly Stakeholder Meetings (4 hrs @ \$175/hr per mtg)	Est. 16	\$700/each	\$11,200	2.0
Support Community Meetings (8 hrs @ \$175/hr per mtg)	Est. 16	\$1,400/each	\$22,400	2.0
Property Owner Meetings (2 hrs @ \$175/hr per mtg)	Est. 16	\$350/each	\$5,600	2.0
Generic QAPP	1	\$5,000/each	\$5,000	3.0
Phase I ESAs	Est. 10	\$4,000/each	\$40,000	3.0
Phase II ESAs (including SSQAPP, HASP)	Est. 5	\$27,746/each	\$138,730	3.0
ACM / LBP Surveys	Est. 6	\$4,500/each	\$27,000	3.0
ABCA	Est. 4	\$5,000/each	\$20,000	4.0
Reuse Plans and Market Studies (avg 300 hrs @ \$150/hr)	Est. 4	\$45,000/each	\$180,000	4.0
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$486,730</b>	

Note: Est. is an estimated number based on experience with our current grant.

**Anticipated Grant Budget:**

Budget Categories		Project Tasks				Admin Costs	Total
		Task 1.0	Task 2.0	Task 3.0	Task 4.0		
Direct Costs	Personnel						
	Fringe						
	Travel	\$10,670				\$0	\$10,670
	Equipment						
	Supplies						
	Contractual	\$33,800	\$42,200	\$210,730	\$200,000	\$0	\$486,730
	Construction						
	Other	\$2,600				\$0	\$2,600
Total Direct		\$47,070	\$42,200	\$210,730	\$200,000	\$0	\$500,000
Indirect							
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$47,070</b>	<b>\$42,200</b>	<b>\$210,730</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results:**

The project team will meet monthly to review activities, accomplishments, schedule, and budget to ensure goals are achieved and corrective actions are taken when necessary. The project's progress will primarily be measured by the completion of task activities and expenditure of funds. In addition, the team will track outputs: # of community meetings and attendees; # of presentations delivered to local community groups and organizations; # of brownfield sites identified and profiled in the inventory; # of Phase Is, IIs, ACM/LBP Surveys, ABCAs, and Reuse Plans; and outcomes: # of sites and acres assessed; acres ready for reuse; amount of leveraged funding; and jobs created. These metrics will be tracked throughout the project and reported in the EDA's Quarterly Reports. Property specific information will be entered into ACRES during the project

and after the performance period as outcomes are realized.

#### 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE:

##### Programmatic Capability:

##### 4.a. Organizational Capacity:

C3 of Northwest Alabama, Inc. now branded as the Northwest Alabaman Economic Development Alliance (EDA), was incorporated in the fall of 2010 as a cooperative marketing and economic development alliance for the cities and counties throughout Marion, Lamar and Fayette (3 counties or C3). The mission is to create and promote an environment wherein businesses will choose to invest and create jobs for area residents. The EDA and its staff have the requisite capacity to administer the EPA grant funds based on a combination of previous experience with managing an EPA Brownfields CWA grant and several other federal and state grants.

##### 4.b. Organizational Structure & 4.c. Description of Key Staff:

Mr. Tom Wisemiller, President and CEO, has successfully managed the EDA's FY23 EPA Brownfields CWA grant, and he previously served as the project manager for a city's brownfield program, which received over \$1,000,000 in EPA brownfields grants. Mr. Wisemiller holds a master's degree in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University. He has nearly 20 years of experience in downtown revitalization, economic development, community and economic planning, and other topics applicable to the proposed program. Mr. Wisemiller will be supported by Jamie Christian, the EDA's Marketing and Membership Director. Ms. Christian has a bachelor's degree from the University of North Alabama in Marketing. Ms. Christian has extensive experience supporting local communities and business as an Executive Director/Marketing Director of chambers of commerce in Alabama and Colorado. She currently manages the EDA's day-to-day budgeting, accounts payable and receivable, and regularly prepares financial reports for the Board of Directors. Ms. Christian will assist with financial management and administrative duties throughout the grant period. The EDA and staff have demonstrated the ability to successfully administer brownfield grants, the timely and successful expenditure of funds, and the completion of the grant's technical, administrative, and financial requirements.

##### 4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources:

As demonstrated on the previous brownfield project, the EDA has a system in place to competitively procure additional resources in compliance with 2 CFR 200 to support project work. The EDA publicly issues a Requests for Proposals (RFP), which is widely advertised online and sent to our list of local contractors. Respondents have 30 days to submit proposals, which the EDA staff then evaluate based on criteria defined in the RFP, such as qualifications, experience, and cost (always at least 25% of the scoring criteria). The EDA then negotiates a contract with the highest-scoring firm.

##### Past Performance and Accomplishments:

##### 4.e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant:

##### 4.e.(1) Purpose and Accomplishments:

In 2023, the EDA received a \$500,000 EPA Community-wide Brownfields Assessment Grant (BF03D02224) with the period of performance ending on September 30, 2027. As of October 1, 2025, \$350,022.60 (70%) of grant funds had been drawn down. An additional \$46,826.45 was spent in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (ending December 30, 2025) with a total remaining budget of \$84,583.89, which are expected to be expended by October 2026. Funds from the current assessment grant have been used for project management, site inventory work, 13 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESA, 2 wetlands/threatened and endangered species/cultural resource surveys, 2 aerial site surveys, and 3 site-specific planning activities. Additional funding is needed to continue the program and help capitalize on additional state programs that are available.

##### 4.e.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements:

The EDA has complied with the workplan, schedule, and terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement. The results of the projects were reported in a timely manner and included in ACRES. The EDA submitted all required technical and administrative reports to date in a timely manner, including Quarterly Reports and annual Federal Financial Reports.

Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance (EDA)  
Threshold Criteria

**1. Applicant Eligibility**

C3 of Northwest Alabama, Inc., DBA Northwest Alabama Development Alliance (EDA), is a regional governmental agency. A copy of the Articles of Incorporation is attached.

EDA is not exempt under 501(c)(4) of the IRC.

**2. Community Involvement**

The EDA is experienced in regional community initiatives and gathering public input. Our region is largely rural and gathering community support and engagement requires a multi-channel outreach strategy that leverages a mix of digital and in-person communication, leveraging on work completed with our existing grant and strong grassroots social and professional networks. Our initial approach is to create a more resonate regional identity by focusing on the commonalities of mill and mining towns and shared cultural history of the communities in the I-22 corridor. We will work with our contractor to develop a branded outreach campaign across our digital and print platforms. Messages on the initiative launch, upcoming meetings, accomplishments, and video clips of sites and events will be distributed electronically using this same theme, including hashtags, as needed but no less than 2 times per month on our LinkedIn account. The campaign will feature a virtual tour of brownfield properties in our region. Key project information will be shared on our brownfields project landing page. The EDA will issue press releases and work with local media (TV and radio) to broadcast key milestones, including the project launch, mid-project review, opportunities to participate in the area wide revitalization plan, as well as information about upcoming meetings.

The EDA will couple digital efforts with on-the-ground outreach that will include briefings at partner organizations, meetings with local officials and community organizations in communities with brownfield sites. These meetings will take place throughout the project and we anticipate meeting with an average of 2 organizations per month during the first year of the initiative. The meetings will inform attendees, but also recruit them to disseminate information by sharing EDA's social media content and by posting information on community message boards. The EDA will keep partner organizations informed of project accomplishments and activities through a monthly status report distributed by email and an open quarterly partnership meeting held via a digital video conferencing system such as Zoom or MS Teams. The EDA will work with partner organizations to coordinate community meetings at key milestones to provide information, answer questions, solicit input, and engage residents. This will include a review of the brownfield inventory to discuss redevelopment priorities and gather input on the selection and prioritization of new sites. The EDA team will employ interactive and creative input methods such as design charrettes to gather feedback on possible reuses. The EDA will catalog and respond to questions and input received for consideration and provide direct responses to community members. Assistance will be provided to those persons with physical disabilities, such as holding meetings at locations that are handicap accessible. When needed, translators will be provided. We will also work closely with all partner organizations to ensure that communication messages reach all constituent groups in affected areas.

**3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**

The EDA currently is working through an EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant, Cooperative Agreement BF03D02224 that closes on September 30, 2027. As of October 1, 2025, EDA had drawn down \$350,022.60 (70%) with a remaining balance of \$149,977.40 (see attached ASAP Account Balance Inquire Report, dated 01/21/2026). An additional \$46,826.45 was spent in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2025 (ending December 30, 2025) with a total remaining budget of \$84,583.89, which are expected to be expended by October 2026.

**4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients**

Not applicable. The EDA has not procured a contractor for this new grant and will follow all federal, state, and local procurement guidelines in order to solicit technical support.

Not applicable. The EDA does not plan to award grants to subrecipients.