



Application Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification:

Development Authority of Polk County
133 South Marble Street, Rockmart, Georgia 30153

2. Website URL

www.choosePOLK.com

3. Funding Requested

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000

4. Location

- a. City of Cedartown
- b. Polk County
- c. Georgia

5. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information – Community-wide

Target Area: City of Cedartown

Priority Sites:

- Cedartown Municipal Landfill, 10th Street & Prior Station Road, Cedartown, GA, Polk County Tax Parcel ID #s 018-033A, 024-010A, and 024-005A
- Standard Cotton Mill, 411 Cedar Hill Street, Cedartown, GA Polk County Tax Parcel ID # C29-053D

6. Contacts

Project Director

Chris Thomas
President/CEO
Development Authority of Polk County
133 South Marble Street
Rockmart, Georgia 30153
Office: 770.684.5686
Cell: 770.324.6922
Email: chris@choosepolk.com

Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

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7. Population

Target Area & Priority Site Location: Cedartown = 10,166 (US Census, 2020 (V2023))

Grant Geographic Boundaries: Polk County = 44,610 (US Census, 2020 (V2023))

8. Other

Information on the Other Factors	Page #
Target Area Community population is 15,000 or less.	1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	NA
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	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).	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.	NA
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	2 & 3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	NA
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).	9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	NA

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached

10. Releasing Copies of Applications

The applicant understands that the information included will be treated in accordance with [40 CFR §2.203](#). No passages are considered confidential.



Jeffrey W. Cown, Director

Land Protection Branch
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Suite 1058, East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-657-8600

January 23, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL: chris@choosepolk.com

Mr. Chris Thomas
President/CEO
Development Authority of Polk County
133 S. Marble Street
Rockmart, Georgia 30153

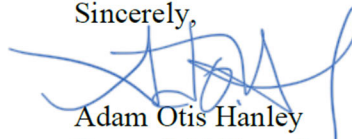
RE: State Acknowledgement Letter – Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application
Development Authority of Polk County

Dear Mr. Thomas:

This letter serves as acknowledgement from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) that Development Authority of Polk County will be submitting an application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for funding assistance under the federal Community-Wide Assessment Grant Program to conduct assessment and planning activities. EPD understands that the development authority is applying for \$500,000 for the assessment of hazardous substances and petroleum primarily within the City of Cedartown.

EPD would like to take this opportunity to encourage EPA's positive decision in making a grant award to the Development Authority of Polk County for such an assessment. A successful award would greatly assist the development authority in its redevelopment efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Adam Otis Hanley
Brownfield Team Lead

File: FFY 2026, EPA Grant Applicants, Development Authority of Polk County

(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of TA: The activities proposed under this grant will be conducted within the geographic boundaries of **Polk County**, Georgia, by the Development Authority of Polk County (DAPC). Polk County was formed in 1851 in northwest Georgia, covering approximately 311 square miles of largely agricultural land. With the introduction of the railroad during post-Civil War reconstruction, Polk County was able to leverage the rich natural resources of clay, iron shale, and mineral deposits to support a significant industrial economy.¹ Textile mills, cement plants, foundries, and manufacturing supported a vibrant economy and drove the development of Polk County’s county seat, Cedartown. However, shifting global economics and the decline of domestic manufacturing led to significant mill closures and job loss, including the closure of the Goodyear Clearwater Mills #1 and #2, Cedartown Cotton Mill, and Standard Cotton Mills.² The majority of the historical industrial activities occurred during the period prior to environmental regulations, and their closures and abandoned status have led to contamination concerns associated with heavy metals, solvents, petroleum and decaying structures with hazardous building materials.

The loss of this industrial base and the legacy of underutilized brownfield properties have contributed to persistent economic distress in Polk County, particularly within Cedartown. Since 1970, the county has experienced population growth of only 47%, compared to growth exceeding 100% in neighboring counties, and tax revenue growth of less than 10% between 2010 and 2020, compared to more than 30% in similar rural communities.³ Reflective of these conditions, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) classified the county as a Tier 1 county, defined by the Reg. 110-9-1.02 as “counties ranked and designated as less developed” in the state based on the “unemployment rate, lowest per capita income, and highest percentage of residents with income below the poverty level.”

DAPC has prioritized the specific **Target Area (TA) of the City of Cedartown**, Georgia (population 10,313, US Census V2024), an approximately 9.1 square mile area located in the northwest corner of Polk County for brownfield revitalization under this grant. Despite being the county seat and largest population center in the county, Cedartown has struggled to overcome brownfield challenges that have contributed to the loss of quality manufacturing jobs, an abundance of vacant industrial and commercial properties, and associated blight. Collectively, these conditions have resulted in disproportionately higher poverty rates (35.5% compared to 12.6% statewide and 10.6% nationally, per the 2023 ACS 5-year estimates) and significantly lower median home values, which are nearly 50% lower than the state median.

The proposed activities funded by this Community-wide Assessment Grant will enable the identification, assessment, and prioritization of brownfield sites that currently cannot otherwise advance toward cleanup or redevelopment due to insufficient local funding, contamination concerns, and lagging economic redevelopment interest. By addressing long-standing environmental uncertainties associated with vacant and underutilized properties, the grant will remove a critical barrier to reinvestment and help reverse damaging conditions within the TA. These assessment activities will support ongoing city and county revitalization efforts by laying the groundwork for future cleanup and reuse, including redevelopment for commercial, light industrial, and residential purposes. Assessment and subsequent cleanup of vacant and abandoned sites will reduce potential exposure to environmental contamination and improve neighborhood conditions. These activities will also support modern residential and commercial construction that enhances resiliency to extreme weather events and improves the overall economic viability and livability of the TA.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): DAPC identified priority sites through coordinated planning initiatives undertaken as part of its economic development programs, including a comprehensive inventory of industrial and commercial properties and close collaboration with the City of Cedartown on redevelopment planning. The following priority sites were selected based on ongoing economic development planning efforts, the potential for known contamination, proximity to sensitive populations, usable infrastructure, and potential to create living-wage jobs and suitable workforce housing options for our residents and stakeholders.

Priority Site #1: Cedartown Municipal Landfill, 10th Street & Prior Station Road (no street number), Cedartown, Polk County Tax Parcel ID #s 018-033A (86.80 acres), 024-010A (12.68 acres), and 024-005A (4.34 acres): This property was originally mined for iron ore beginning in the 1880s. The iron ore strip mine operations ceased at an unknown date, and the city assumed control of the property for use as a municipal solid waste landfill

¹ Mining and Mineral Industries of North Georgia: A Historic Context, New South Associates (2011)

² <https://westgatextiletrail.com/>

³ Economic Development Strategic Assessment 2022-2027, City of Cedartown, Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute (2022)

in the 1960s, continuing landfill operations through 1979. Municipal solid waste was placed in pits that were left over from the mining operation. Based on a 1998 EPA Amended Record of Decision document, landfilled material included a variety of industrial solid wastes such as heavy-metal contaminated waste from a nearby chemical manufacturer (Diamond Shamrock), sludge from an industrial wastewater treatment system, animal fat and vegetable oil skimming from a separation unit, liquid dye wastes, latex paint and paint sludge, and plant trash. Environmental sampling on the property has identified the presence of contaminated waste material (petroleum, solvents, and heavy metals) and impacted groundwater (benzene and heavy metals), and the site was placed on the EPA Superfund National Priority List (NPL) in 1989. The required remedy was completed by 1998, consisting of capping the waste material and monitoring groundwater/leachate conditions. The property was removed from the NPL in November 1998. The site is strategically located adjacent to the city's industrial/business park and associated infrastructure. Based on the location, acreage, and interest from a regional employer, the development authority is actively coordinating with Georgia Environmental Protection Division and EPA to move the site towards redevelopment as an agricultural processing facility. However, the site requires removal of waste materials within construction limits, and confirmation that onsite worker exposures remain within applicable risk-based criteria. With interested parties supporting the landfill's future redevelopment, additional assessment and cleanup planning are required.

Priority Site #2: Standard Cotton Mill, 411 Cedar Hill St, Cedartown, Polk County Tax Parcel ID # C29-053D (11.9 acres): Opening in 1900, the mill specialized in the manufacturing of high-grade hosiery, underwear, and yarns. The mill ceased operation in the 1930s, after which the site supported various textile manufacturers and a furniture manufacturing facility until the early 2000s. To date, only the smokestack and the adjacent mill village constructed for the workers remain. The land is scattered with building/manufacturing debris and concrete slabs. The property adjoins state waters (Dry Creek) and contains associated federally-listed floodplains. Potential contaminants include PFAS, lead-based paint, asbestos, arsenic from cotton processing, and petroleum from underground storage tanks and industrial equipment. This site is prioritized due to the immediate exposure risk to the community from contaminants (asbestos/lead) in debris on the site. Despite numerous code citations, the property is a substantial unsecured hazard. The site is prominently located along a central downtown thoroughfare and adjacent to the former mill village, and its vacant and deteriorated condition is a persistent blighting force contributing negative socioeconomic impacts on the surrounding community.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites: Once the priority site funding is allocated, any remaining assessment funds will be used on additional sites within the TA first, then county-wide. Project funds will be used to conduct a brownfields site/development opportunity inventory to identify potential brownfield sites throughout the county's jurisdiction. Additionally, a site nomination form will also be distributed at bi-yearly community engagement meetings and via the DAPC webpage as an additional means of soliciting site selection suggestions. DAPC will prioritize additional sites based on the known or potential presence of contamination, EPA eligibility status, readiness for development (zoning compliance, market status, utility availability), and community need (job creation and housing). These prioritization criteria for site selection will be formalized in the project's Community Involvement Plan (CIP).

Site selection will be further supported by the Brownfield Task Force (BTF) members, consisting of one representative from each involved community group noted in section 2.e. and two representatives from Polk County government. The BTF will identify and prioritize additional sites for selection and provide input on additional sites identified through the brownfield site inventory and community outreach efforts.

1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The reuse strategy for the priority brownfield sites identified in this application emphasizes infill redevelopment compatible with site conditions, surrounding land uses, and local revitalization objectives. This strategy is particularly appropriate given the concentration of vacant and underutilized industrial and commercial properties within the Cedartown TA. Reuse approaches will leverage existing utility infrastructure while protecting human health and the environment and incorporate hazard-mitigation measures to address increasing risks from extreme heat, heavy rainfall, and severe storms. Redevelopment guided by modern building codes will integrate energy-efficient systems, improved stormwater management, and resilient building design, address long-standing physical deterioration and strengthen community resilience.

For **Priority Site #1 (Cedartown Municipal Landfill)**, the reuse strategy is to redevelop the property as an agricultural/poultry processing facility, which presents a lower risk of hazardous substance or petroleum releases than other industrial manufacturing operations. The specific design and site layout require additional

environmental assessment and reuse planning. Grant activities will help evaluate redevelopment scenarios that are compatible with the completed Superfund remedy, existing institutional controls, and long-term monitoring requirements. Due to the site’s large size, location adjacent to the City’s industrial and business park, access to transportation and utilities, and active interest by a regional employer, this reuse strategy is focused on developing the site as an agricultural processing facility that will generate employment opportunities for displaced workers while preserving the integrity of established environmental controls.

For **Priority Site #2 (Former Standard Cotton Mill)**, the reuse strategy is to develop the property with mixed-use redevelopment and suitable workforce and affordable housing consistent with a commercial building along the MLK Jr. Blvd commercial thoroughfare and low-rise (single- or two-story) residential in the site interior. This scaling and mix of small-scale commercial uses align with the property's proximity to single-family residential development. The redevelopment plans will remove safety hazards, restore visual character along a major thoroughfare, and reintegrate the site into the surrounding community.

The planned reuse for both priority sites directly aligns with city, county, and regional planning efforts as detailed in the following table.

Table 1-1: Revitalization Plan Alignment

Planning Document	Plan Priorities	Priority Site Reuse Alignment
Cedartown Economic Development Strategic Assessment (22-27)	Plan priorities included downtown redevelopment, job creation, small business development, and housing stock development.	Priority Site #1: job creation within city limits & redevelopment of vacant site Priority Site #2: development of downtown housing
Polk County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2022-2026	This Plan encourages “the development of businesses and industries that provide quality employment opportunities close to home while minimizing the impact on our infrastructure and rural environment” and “promote[ing] an adequate range of safe, affordable, and resource-efficient housing in the community where our workforce can live and work.”	Priority Site #1: provides quality employment opportunities through the development and expansion of businesses and industries. Positioned in an area that includes utilities designed to support industrial operations. Priority Site #2: addition of resource-efficient and affordable housing in close proximity to employment centers
2023 Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	Identifies housing and increasing sufficient sites for business development as key goals	Priority Site #1: job creation within city limits, redevelopment of vacant site Priority Site #2: development of housing within the downtown area, reuse of vacant site

1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The assessment and reuse planning activities proposed under this grant will focus on economic development with indirect benefits to local resilience to extreme weather events by promoting modern construction (Priority site #1) and code-compliant housing (Priority Site #2). Grant funding will produce measurable benefits by advancing the redevelopment of priority sites in the rural communities being served by the grant funds.

For **Priority Site #1 (Cedartown Municipal Landfill)**, completion of additional assessment and planning will support evaluation of reuse scenarios that are compatible with the completed Superfund remedy and long-term environmental controls. These activities will provide prospective employers, regulators, and local decision-makers with the information necessary to advance planned industrial redevelopment while maintaining the protection of human health and the environment. Redevelopment of this strategically located site will create opportunities to support job creation, strengthen the local employment base, and leverage existing infrastructure adjacent to the city’s industrial and business park.

The revitalization of **Priority Site #2 (Standard Cotton Mill)** will address environmental uncertainties associated with a long-vacant and visibly blighted property. Redevelopment of this site will add appropriate, safe and much-needed housing to a disproportionately impacted community but would also address likely contamination issues on a property that adjoins state waters (Dry Creek) and associated federally listed floodplains (identified as a FEMA flood zone with a 1% annual chance of flooding), which will also benefit downstream communities and habitats once subsequent cleanup is complete. New construction on the site will result in modern code-compliant workforce housing that utilizes energy-efficient construction techniques driven by city building codes and DCA affordable housing guidelines, as outlined in the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments); specifically, the International Building Code and International Energy Conservation Code.

Collectively, assessment-driven reuse of brownfield sites identified within the TA will help eliminate blight, improve land utilization within already-developed areas, and reduce potential exposure to environmental

contaminants for nearby residents. By aligning site reuse with adopted local and regional plans that prioritize job creation, downtown revitalization, business development, and expansion of suitable housing options, the project will enhance the economic viability, livability, and long-term resilience of the Cedartown TA and Polk County.

1.f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: This assessment grant will supplement existing county and city resources to attract developers, businesses, and investors and accelerate site redevelopment. This Community-wide Assessment Grant will serve as the foundational step to unlock the following federal, state, and local resources for remediation, infrastructure improvements, and subsequent reuse.

Table 1-2: Funding Resources

Funding Source	Description & Purpose	Likelihood ¹ of Funding
Georgia DCA Job Tax Credit (Tier 1 County)	Polk County is designated as a Tier 1 community under Georgia’s Job Tax Credit program, making eligible employers qualified to receive \$3,000 per new job per year for up to five years for job-creating activities. / Incentivize private-sector investment and job creation at assessed brownfield sites	High / Priority Sites #1 and #2
CDBG – Employee Incentive Program (Georgia DCA)	Provides up to \$500,000 for publicly owned infrastructure improvements (e.g., rail spurs, roadways) and low-interest loans for eligible construction activities at sites that create significant employment.	Moderate / Priority Site #1
One Georgia Authority Site Development Initiative	Funding applications with a joint development authority for grants such as the Equity and the Edge Fund that finance land acquisition, due-diligence, infrastructure, and equipment. Grants capped at \$2,500,000 per project for large industrial tracts and \$500,000 for smaller projects / Applicant is eligible	Moderate / \$500,000 to \$2,500,000 for Priority Sites #1 and #2
Georgia Redevelopment Fund	Grants up to \$500,000 to address blight and improve redevelopment readiness.	Moderate / Priority Site #2
Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grants	Federal–state funding for workforce development, infrastructure, and economic development projects in eligible Appalachian counties, including Polk County / Supports workforce readiness, site access, and complementary infrastructure-efficient infill redevelopment.	Moderate / Priority Sites #1 and #2
Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)	Federal tax credit program used to finance affordable and workforce housing developments through either 9% tax credit or 4% bond. / Redevelopment projects with affordable housing components are eligible	Moderate / Priority Site #2
Georgia Rural Zone Incentives (Cedartown)	Layered state income tax incentives, including: (1) Job Tax Credit of up to \$2,000 per new full-time equivalent job per year for up to five years; (2) Investment Credit equal to 25% of the purchase price of qualifying property; and (3) Rehabilitation Credit equal to 30% of qualified rehabilitation costs for eligible buildings. All incentives require job creation. / Encourage job-creating redevelopment, downtown investment, and rehabilitation of vacant or underutilized properties within the TA.	High / Priority Sites #1 and #2

¹Ratings considered eligibility, alignment with program priorities, anticipated competitiveness, and funding availability. Assigned ratings reflect strong site eligibility and alignment with program priorities; however, uncertainty in future funding availability resulted in rating selections of “moderate” for most sources and eligible entities.

1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Work performed under this grant will facilitate the use of existing infrastructure, like roadways and utilities (electrical power, water, and municipal sewer service) at the priority sites. The priority sites are served by existing roadways, railways, and utilities. Identified priority sites will be supported with existing natural gas, water, wastewater, solid waste, and stormwater services. Any additional utility upgrades will be supported with CDBG or One Georgia Authority funding. Through the grant activities, the DAPC seeks to determine the short- and long-term adequacy of public and private infrastructure serving the brownfield sites and to identify needed infrastructure improvements and priority investments in the Comprehensive Plan, such as mobility improvements. Currently, the county is working with the Georgia Department of Transportation to fund road improvements in the TAs, such as improved transportation options and American Disability Act-compliant ramps and sidewalks. Should additional infrastructure be needed, DAPC will use EPA planning dollars to complete utility evaluations and will seek supplemental funding from state and federal sources such as DOT and Tax Allocation District funds.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Table 2-1: Economically Impoverished Factors (ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, viewed 1/9/2026)

Data Category	TA	County (Polk)	State (GA)	US
Poverty Rate	35.5%	17.3%	12.6%	10.6%

Median Household Income	\$32,064	\$55,308	\$74,664	\$78,538
Per Capita Income	\$26,593	\$27,807	\$39,525	\$43,289
With Disability (under 65 years)	17.6%	15.8%	14.0%	9.6%
Highschool Education (over 25 years)	76.3%	82.1%	89.0%	89.4%
College Education (over 25 years)	16.8%	14.5%	34.2%	35.0%
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	\$148,000	\$163,500	\$272,900	\$303,400
Households Receiving SNAP Benefits	30.3%	18.2%	12.3%	11.8%

2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding: This grant will support the communities of Cedartown and throughout Polk County who lack local sources of funding to carry out environmental assessments or remediation and subsequent reuse planning because they have **small populations** and **are low-income**. Polk County has a small population (44,610), with the county seat of Cedartown supporting only 10,313 residents⁴. As shown in Table 2-1, in comparison to state and national averages, the TA has the highest concentration of residents experiencing elevated poverty rates (35.5%), lower household incomes (\$32,064), and lower median home values (\$148,000). Educational attainment in the TA also lags Georgia and its US counterparts, with a smaller percentage of residents having completed high school (TA=76.3% vs. US=89.4%) or attained postsecondary education (TA=16.8% vs US=35%). This is further supported by the county's Tier 1 Status by Georgia DCA for counties with the highest unemployment rate, lowest per capita income, and highest percentage of residents with income below the poverty line. Without funding through the EPA Brownfields Program, the community will struggle to transition priority and other brownfield sites into valued community resources for jobs, safe and affordable housing, and important tax base resources. Due to the TA’s small population and low-income status, taxable values in the TA communities limit the ability to implement assessment, remediation, and reuse projects without this grant. EPA funding will enable the county to restore properties to productive reuse by conducting assessment activities and reuse/cleanup planning that would not otherwise be possible.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:

Table 2-2: Sensitive Population Factors (2020 Decennial Census, viewed 1/9/2026)⁵

Data Category	TA	County (Polk)	State (GA)	US
Percent of Population ≥ 65 years of age	13.5%	5.3%	14.7%	16.8%
Percent of Population ≤ 5 years of age	6.7%	6.2%	5.7%	5.6%
Percent of Female Population 15 to 50 years of age	26%	23%	26%	24%
Population (% of non-white alone population)	49%	27%	48%	38%
Age of Housing, Constructed Pre-1980	53%	42%	29%	48%
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	44.7%	64.5%	65.4%	65.0%

The TA community serves multiple sensitive populations, including children (6.7%), female population (26%), and residents living in aging structures (53% pre-1980 housing) likely containing asbestos and lead-based paint. Within the county, young and working families have limited access to healthcare. According to the US Health Resources and Services Administration, the entire population within Polk County is designated as a medically underserved rural population (57.7 Index of Medical Underservice)⁶. The sensitive populations in the TA are at greater risk for exposure to risk factors that exacerbate the adverse health outcomes of residents. This is supported by the lower than average life expectancy [an average of 72.1 years for TA CTs; 13233010400 & 13233010500] vs the national average of 78.4 years.⁷ Cedartown has a Crime Index score of 12 out of 100 (where 1 represents the most dangerous), and its violent crime rate is nearly double the statewide average (NeighborhoodScout; data accessed 1/12/26). Poverty, crime, and disinvestment negatively impact mental health. Atrium Health *Community Health Needs Assessment 2021* for Polk County noted mental/behavioral health as the third greatest area of concern. Most residents, as per the table above, live in rented housing; the Enterprise Community 2023 Georgia Statewide Housing Study noted that the Northwest region, which includes Polk County and Cedartown, has housing inadequacies such as substandard heating and lack of complete indoor plumbing; and are more prone to environmental exposures from aging housing which represent a much higher than average percentage than the state of Georgia (Table 2-2).

EPA-funded assessment activities funded by this grant will identify potential exposure pathways affecting

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau V2024,

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. "RACE." *Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), Table P1*, Accessed on 9 Jan 2026.

⁶ <https://data.hrsa.gov/topics/health-workforce/shortage-areas/mua-find>, This attribute represents the Index of Medical Underservice (IMU) score. The lowest score (highest need) is 0; the highest score (lowest need) is 100. In order to qualify for designation, the IMU score must be less than or equal to 62.0

⁷ Murphy SL, Kochanek KD, Xu JQ, Arias E. Mortality in the United States, 2023. NCHS Data Brief, no 521. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2024. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc/170564>.

sensitive populations and provide the information needed to support informed cleanup and reuse decisions. More importantly, these actions will help remove degraded site conditions and reduce environmental risks by advancing redevelopment that improves community living conditions and economic viability. Through purposeful site reuse, the proposed grant activities will expand opportunities for living-wage employment and increase the availability of safe, appropriate workforce and affordable housing for residents of the TA.

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

Table 2-3: Health Measure Statistics, 2023 crude prevalence%⁸

Data Category	TA	County (Polk)	US
Current asthma among adults	10.2%	10.5%	9.8%
Diagnosed Diabetes	14.5%	14.1%	12.0%
Obesity among adults	41.0%	40.4%	32.8%
High blood pressure among adults	38.3%	38.8%	34.4%
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease among adults	8.0%	8.9%	6.2%
Fair or poor self-rated health status among adults	25.4%	24.5%	19.2%
Food insecurity in the past 12 months	22.9%	20.0%	14.7%
Housing insecurity in the past 12 months	18.4%	15.6%	11.7%

TA residents are subject to greater than normal incidences of health disparities. As noted above, residents may be exposed to potential contamination from previous mining and land disposal practices (Priority Site #1), to lead and asbestos from aging housing, and dilapidated industrial development at Priority Site #2. Multiple health studies have linked hazardous substances, such as volatile organic and petroleum compounds, metals, and asbestos, with serious health concerns, such as those facing our residents. Historical environmental assessments and monitoring on Priority Site #1 have identified both petroleum and heavy metals have been reported in groundwater emanating from the former landfill, which presents a potential risk to nearby water bodies and downstream water resources.

Due to the small geographic area of the TA, limited health statistics were available; however, county level statistics in the Atrium Health *Community Health Needs Assessment 2021* stated that access to care and cardiovascular disease, followed by behavioral health and nutrition, were the top concerns in Polk County. Age-adjusted cancer incidence rates per 100,000 cases in Polk County for 2017-2021 were 488.2 compared to the state rate of 468.9 and the US rate of 444.4 (NIH Cancer Institute), meaning that incidences are more likely here. This combination of poor health factors and the environmental conditions described above has resulted in the disproportionately low life expectancy in the TA, as noted in section 2.b.

Health outcomes for TA residents will be improved through DAPC’s plan to identify brownfield sites and associated contaminants that may be adversely affecting community health and to address those conditions through future cleanup grants, as appropriate. Redevelopment-driven economic improvements will enhance residents’ ability to access safe and adequate housing, as well as reliable and nutritious food by increasing the economic status of area residents. These improvements are expected to contribute to measurable reductions in chronic health conditions, including diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular and pulmonary disease. In addition, the removal of long-standing disinvestment and physical deterioration and the creation of living-wage employment opportunities through site redevelopment will strengthen the local economy, improve the area’s housing stock, and support additional job creation for communities disproportionately affected by poverty and food insecurity.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: As detailed in Table 2-1, the TA supports the highest concentration of economically impoverished residents (**35% poverty rate**). The area is also the most densely developed, containing a quarter of the county’s residents within 3% of the county’s land area. This dense concentration of impoverished residents places them adjacent to historical and ongoing industrial operations that were strategically located in close proximity to this population center. Substandard housing, coupled with historical contamination and neglect, crime, and poverty create conditions that are exacerbated by challenging environmental conditions.

The TA community disproportionately bears the environmental burdens of historical industrial activity, commercial abandonment, and long-term underinvestment. The poverty rate within the TA is approximately 25% higher than the national average, and the per capita income (\$26,593) is 39% lower than the national per capita income (\$43,289) (US Census). These economic conditions reflect the reduced ability to support government services due to limited discretionary funding. Approximately 35% of residents in the TA live below the poverty

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health. PLACES Data [online]. 2025 [accessed Jan 09 2026].. URL: <https://www.cdc.gov/PLACES>

level, compared to 12.6% statewide and 10.6% nationally (Census.gov). These economic indicators are closely linked to negative environmental consequences resulting from historical industrial, governmental, and commercial land-use decisions. For decades, textile mills, mining, and industrial uses were promoted and sited in rural and working-class areas where environmental oversight was limited. As facilities declined or closed, contamination in soil, groundwater, and building materials were frequently left unaddressed, transferring long-term environmental liabilities to multiple generations, including today’s communities. Persistent exposure risks, degraded environmental conditions, and physical deterioration have deterred private investment and constrained both job creation and economic diversification. These cumulative conditions contribute directly to the elevated poverty, unemployment, and health vulnerability indicators observed across the TA today.

2.e. & 2.f Project Involvement & Project Roles: DAPC has committed partners from community-based organizations (CBO)s, state/regional agencies, and community partners that will support this program by making decisions on site selection, cleanup, and future reuse of the brownfield sites. All partners have committed to participation in the Brownfield Task Force that will be established upon grant award.

Organization	Point of contact/email	Mission/Specific involvement
Cedartown Performing Arts Center	Oscar Guzman; oguzman@downtowncedartown.com	Provides performing arts/educational programming. / Will use the facility as a venue for meetings in TA. Will work with TA residents and provide existing resources to engage the community
One Door Polk	Ronda Heuer; rhonda@polkcouncil.com	Provides support services to TA residents / Will provide existing resources to support community outreach to residents near priority sites.
Polk Co. Chamber of Commerce	Marianne Wood; director@polkgeorgia.com	Advocates for business development / Participate in public meetings. Provide local insight and ongoing input for decision-making regarding additional site selection
NW GA Regional Commission	Julianne Meadows; jmeadows@nwgrc.org	Provides redevelopment planning, economic impact studies, and business marketing needs. / Will provide resources to support reuse decisions
Georgia DCA	Patrick Vickers; patrick.vickers@dca.ga.gov	Provides support to communities for economic opportunities and local redevelopment and economic planning. / Will provide economic funding sources to incentivize the reuse decisions specific to affordable housing and job creation projects
Georgia Dept. of Economic Development	Lori Dowdy; ldowdy@georgia.org	Provides planning, marketing, and state resources for new business and existing industry investment / Support the project through reuse decision planning, economic impacts, and business marketing resources
City of Rockmart	Stacey Smith; ssmith@rockmartga.gov	Local government operations (non-TA) / Will provide reuse planning, outreach, site selection, and decision-making for sites located outside of the TA
City of Cedartown	Edward Guzman; eguzman@cedartowngeorgia.gov	Local government operations (TA) / Lead contact/liaison for the City of Cedartown. Will provide support with project deliverable reviews, site selection within the TA, and community engagement coordination

2.g. Incorporating Community Input: DAPC will implement a structured community engagement process to ensure meaningful public participation throughout the project period. Engagement activities will include in-person and virtual public meetings, consultation with a Brownfields Task Force (BTF), distribution of project fact sheets, and online outreach. Community engagement procedures will be documented in a CIP, which will define methods for information dissemination, public input documentation, and response. All community input will be documented and incorporated into project decisions, with BTF input ensuring alignment with community priorities.

Community meetings: DAPC will conduct a minimum of two public meetings annually to provide project updates and address community concerns, and solicit input on priority site selection, additional site identification, and reuse planning. Meetings will be advertised through the DAPC website and social media platforms and will offer virtual participation options. Spanish-language materials and translation services will be provided as needed. Content and feedback from meetings will inform decisions on priority sites, additional site selection, and will be considered in planning activities. Written and verbal responses will be provided via email or in person at community meetings. Meetings will be advertised on DAPC web pages and social media platforms.

The Brownfields Task Force: The BTF will include local residents, government officials, and business leaders. Members of the task force will support DAPC by supplying resources for community engagement efforts and providing input regarding site selection and decision-making for site reuse planning.

Project Fact Sheets/Flyers: DAPC will develop project fact sheets and flyers for use on social media platforms, websites, and to distribute at community meetings. The fact sheets/flyers will communicate information

and solicit additional input specific to the brownfields program, identifying additional brownfields sites, and planned site reuse.

3) TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

DAPC anticipates a 4-year grant performance period (48 months/16 quarters). To implement this project, DAPC will procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) through a federally compliant process.

3.a. Project Implementation; 3.b. Schedule; 3.c. Task and Lead; 3.d. Outputs:

Task/Activity 1: Programmatic Support
<p>Project Implementation: The DAPC Project Director will oversee all program management activities as per terms of the EPA cooperative agreement (CA) and in keeping with an EPA-approved work plan (WP), including grant/project /financial management; programmatic oversight; reporting; monthly team meetings; ACRES maintenance; travel to EPA training and National Brownfield conference</p> <p><i>Non-EPA grant resources contributed:</i> DAPC personnel effort, office supplies</p>
<p>Project Schedule: Pre-award period: CA, WP, QEP procurement; Quarter 1 (Q1): QEP contract issuance; Q1-Q16: project implementation and management activities as described.</p> <p>Project Years 1 and 3 (PY1/PY3): Training/conferences; Post project (120 days): Closeout reporting</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with support from project staff (finance and technical) and QEP</p>
<p>Output(s): 1 CA; 1 WP; 16 Quarterly reports; 1 QEP contract; 4 Annual reports; closeout; ACRES; 48 Team meetings; 2 Trainings/conferences</p>
Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement
<p>Project Implementation: Project Director will oversee all community engagement, including outreach, community meetings, and property owner communication. The Project Director will be assisted in outreach by City of Cedartown BTF members and the QEP. The project team will also use community meetings to gather project input & recommendations from area residents/stakeholders and for redevelopment/reuse planning.</p> <p><i>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</i> DAPC personnel, BTF effort, meeting materials</p>
<p>Anticipated Project Schedule: Pre-award period: Award announcement; Q1: Community involvement plan (CIP), BTF formation; Q2/Q4/Q6/Q8/Q10/Q12/Q14/Q16: 8 community input meetings; Q2: Program brochure/fact sheet & webpage; PY1-PY4: Ongoing owner outreach; community communication; quarterly BTF meetings</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with support from BTF and the QEP</p>
<p>Output(s): 1 CIP; 8 community engagement meetings; 16 BTF meetings; 1 program brochure; 8 meetings announcements, 8 media posts; 10-15 property access agreements</p>
Task/Activity 3: Environmental Assessments
<p>Project Implementation: The Project Director with support from the technical coordinator will oversee the QEP. The QEP will complete eligibility determinations for sites prior to conducting Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) for priority sites and non-priority sites that are identified in the public engagement and in the Development Opportunities Inventory processes. Given the age of the priority sites, it is anticipated that Asbestos and Lead surveys will be required to position some properties for reuse.</p> <p><i>Non-EPA resources contributed:</i> project staff time</p>
<p>Anticipated Project Schedule: Q2-3: eligibility determinations; Phase I assessment of priority sites; Q3-4: Phase II of priority sites; Q3-Q10: Phase I ESA for non-priority sites; Q6-12: Phase IIs and ACM/LBP surveys</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead(s): QEP with oversight by the Project Director and technical coordinator</p>
<p>Output(s): 12 Phase I and 5 Phase II ESAs; Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint surveys (as needed); 1 Generic Quality Assurance Plan (QAPP) and 5 site-specific QAPPs</p>
Task/Activity 4: Cleanup and Reuse Planning
<p>Project Implementation: Cleanup planning at specific sites (3 Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternative (ABCA) reports); and a brownfields revitalization plan for the TA and and Infrastructure Plans and/or Disposition Plans for the redevelopment of the Priority Sites. GIS-based inventory of brownfields sites for assessment/future reuse (Development Opportunity Inventory (DOI)), and the DOI will be updated upon input from the community garnered through public engagement. It is assumed that if assessment indicates that cleanup is required at a site, then the owner will enter the site into an applicable state cleanup program.</p> <p><i>Non-EPA grant resources contribution:</i> staff time.</p>
<p>Anticipated Project Schedule: Q2-Q4, DOI; Q5-13, ABCAs; Q9-Q15, Redevelopment planning</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with assistance from QEP</p>
<p>Output(s): 1 TA Brownfields revitalization plan, 3 ABCAs,1 DOI; 3 GA voluntary cleanup program enrollments; and 2 Disposition Plans</p>

3.e. Cost Estimates: The following cost estimates are based on past project and grant management experience and with consultation of EPA TAB resources. No administrative costs are included.

Budget Categories	Project Tasks 1-4 over a 4-year project period				Totals
	1: Prog. Support	2: Engagement	3: Assessment	4: Planning	
Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$4,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,200
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Contractual	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$495,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$800
Total direct	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$500,000
Indirect costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$500,000

Cost Breakdowns

Task 1 Programmatic Support = \$30,000

\$4,200 = Travel: Hotel at \$2,000 (2 rooms X 4 nights X \$250/night); Airfare at \$1,200 (\$600 round-trip ticket x 2 for 1 staff/two events); Ground transport/parking at \$400; Per diem at \$600 (4 days X 2 persons X \$75/day); **\$25,000 = Contractual:** 180 hours of QEP services [est. \$125 per hour X 80 hours for reporting/ACRES and \$150 per hour X 100 hours for project management assistance]; **\$800 = Other:** registration at \$800 (1 person at two events, \$400/event)

Task 2 Community Engagement = \$20,000

\$20,000 = Contractual: \$125 per hour X 160 hours of QEP [est. 30 hrs. for CIP; 60 hrs. community meetings; 40 hrs. communication support, including brochure development; 30 hrs. owner outreach]

Task 3 Environmental Site Assessment = \$300,000

\$300,000 = Contractual: \$48,000 = 12 ASTM-AAI compliant Phase I ESAs with eligibility determinations at \$4,000/ESA; \$5,000 = one Generic QAPP; \$25,000 = 5 Site-specific QAPPs at \$5,000 per QAPP; \$222,000 = 5 Phase II ESAs/Lead-based Paint and Asbestos surveys (average \$44,400 per site, *costs will vary due to the complexity of sites/issues/RECs*)

Task 4 Cleanup and Reuse Planning = \$150,000

\$150,000 = Contractual (set fees): \$20,000 for GIS-based Brownfield/DOI for TA; \$15,000 for 3 ABCAs at \$5,000 ea.; \$25,000 for reuse planning, infrastructure plans and renderings for sites(\$12,500 ea.); \$30,000 for 2 Disposition Plans (2 Priority Sites at \$15,000 ea.); \$15,000 for 3 Georgia Brownfield/Voluntary Remediation Program Cleanup Plans at \$5,000 per Plan; \$45,000 for one TA Brownfields Revitalization Plan.

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: The DAPC Project Director, staff and the QEP will track, measure, and evaluate project outputs, overall results, and eventual outcomes through quarterly progress reports and monthly communication with the EPA Project Officer. The activities and outcomes will be tracked through our project management and invoice management system, EPA ACRES, and summarized in a final closeout report. *Outputs:* 12 Phase I & 5 Phase II ESAs; Brownfield Development Opportunity Inventory; 3 ABCAs; 8 formal community meetings; Community Involvement Plan; ACRES entries. *Outcomes:* Number of sites for which property title transfers are facilitated; acres of land redeveloped, and square footage of buildings positioned for adaptive reuse; the amount of private investment and other funding leveraged; jobs created or retained; increased property and sales tax revenue generated. The key overall gauge of success will be the creation of jobs and the improvement in conditions in environmental justice communities. These successes will be tracked through the number of jobs created from brownfield sites, acres of land redeveloped, the number of affordable housing units added, the value of private investment and funding leveraged, and the growth of property and sales tax revenues captured in annual budgets for the TA. The DAPC will make monthly calls to its EPA Project Officer. The project team will evaluate the project progress semi-annually against the goals and will meet with the BTF and the QEP to discuss shortcomings and adjust the approach/schedule, as needed.

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. – c. Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure, and Description of Key Staff: The DAPC project team has 50 years of experience in property and economic development and possesses the technical, administrative, and financial skills needed to successfully implement this project. The team has effectively

managed contractors and consultants during the acquisition and redevelopment efforts of 15 sites and 400 acres, demonstrating its ability to deliver complex projects with accountability and efficiency.

Working under a clear organizational structure, **Project Director Chris Thomas** will coordinate daily operations and ensure all milestones remain on schedule. As a full-time DAPC employee with deep experience in municipal and economic development, community engagement, and grant management, he will facilitate regular communication between staff, consultants, local partners, and the EPA. Chris will convene weekly internal coordination meetings and monthly grant progress reviews to maintain alignment with the workplan and verify timely expenditure of funds. **Jeanie Stooksbury, Project Financial Coordinator**, will work closely with the Project Director to manage all financial and reporting obligations. She will oversee ASAP drawdowns, maintain grant-specific cost tracking, and ensure documentation meets EPA and federal audit standards. Her experience in closing out the 2018 EDGE Grant positions her to effectively manage financial compliance, reconcile expenditures, and prepare required financial reports. Jeanie and Chris will jointly review expenditures against budget categories to ensure spending remains timely, allowable, and consistent with the approved scope. As **Technical Coordinator, Jamie Morris Jr.** will provide critical oversight on QEP deliverables, including workplan implementation, technical reports, and environmental documents. Jamie will participate in review cycles to ensure accuracy, completeness, and responsiveness to EPA requirements. His decades of corporate management experience will support coordinated decision-making, risk assessment, and timely resolution of technical issues. **Edward Guzman**, City Manager of Cedartown, will serve as the primary contact between the City and County partners. He will facilitate ongoing communication with the Cedartown council, residents, and site owners to ensure transparency and alignment with community priorities. His participation in the BTF ensures that local perspectives are integrated into project decisions and that any municipal coordination needs are addressed promptly to avoid delays.

Together, this team will maintain a structured communication plan that includes coordinated updates, shared project calendars, transparent documentation procedures, and routine check-ins with the EPA Project Officer and QEP. These collaborative processes ensure that all technical and administrative requirements are met on time and within budget.

DAPC also has mechanisms in place to replace staff and mobilize additional contractor resources if needed. In the event of turnover, the remaining team members will redistribute tasks to maintain progress while the Project Director expedites staffing solutions. Should obstacles arise, the Project Director will work directly with the EPA Project Officer and QEP to implement countermeasures, such as adjusting timelines, reallocating resources, or modifying management strategies to maintain compliance with the workplan and ensure successful completion.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources: To successfully administer this grant project and obtain the necessary brownfields expertise, the DAPC will acquire additional resources by procuring a QEP and other planning or technical assistance firms as needed through competitive procurement processes consistent with 2 CFR 200.317–200.326. CCD will publicly advertise Requests for Qualifications or Requests for Proposals, as appropriate for the service type, and will use an evaluation process that complies with all federal, state, and local requirements.

4.f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements:

1) Purpose and Accomplishments			
DAPC Grants	Amount	Purpose	Accomplishments
2018 EDGE Grant from GA DCA: <i>for the expansion and competitive edge for area company, Meggitt</i>	\$850,000	Econ. Dev.	1) Funds offset cost of purchase of machinery and for equipment installation; 2) Completed grant project on time and met administrative requirements; 3) Led to 211 jobs
2013 One Georgia Equity Grant GA DCA: <i>financing that promote economic security & retaining jobs</i>	\$200,000	Econ. Dev.	1) Funds offset construction costs for industrial facility; 2) Completed grant project on time and met administrative requirements; 3) Creation of 45 jobs

These grant programs are similar to USEPA brownfields grants in that applications are competitively reviewed with a rating system and threshold criteria must be met. Further, all activities must meet grant agreement requirements and be implemented in a prescribed timeline.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The DAPC staff has a history of timely compliance with state grants, closely monitors project progress and conducts annual audits. No adverse findings were reported concerning grant awards/ programs, internal audits, compliance, or other matters. Grant terms and conditions are met promptly and by set schedules. Reports have been submitted promptly, and grants have been closed.

Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a) The applicant, the Development Authority of Polk County (DAPC), is a local unit of government (local public authority) as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64 pursuant to provisions in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 36-62-1. In 2005, the Polk County Commission created the DAPC as an official local public authority of Polk County, Georgia.
- b) All applicants: **indicate** if your organization is exempt from Federal taxation under section of the IRC. **Not applicable**

See attached Polk County Commission resolution creating DAPC as a local public authority.

2. Community Involvement

DAPC acknowledges that broad-based support and community participation in the process of executing the Brownfields Assessment grant will be essential to ensure the overall acceptance and success of the Brownfield Program, and we recognize that it is essential to include community residents and stakeholder input throughout all phases of project planning, decision-making, and implementation. To guide this process, a formal Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be drafted. This document will provide a formal communication strategy to solicit input from local residents of the Target Area.

As will be further detailed in the CIP, DAPC plans a minimum of two public meetings per year to communicate information and to solicit additional input specific to the brownfields program, site selection/additional brownfields inventory, and site reuse. Public input and feedback will be sought on project planning, site selection and prioritization (for additional sites as funds permit), cleanup decisions outlined in Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), and reuse planning.

DAPC offers virtual meeting options (through Zoom and telephone conference calls) for those unable to travel and/or to provide program services and community meetings. Meetings will also be conducted inclusive of Hispanic/Spanish-speaking community members.

A central printed repository of information will be established at the DAPC office to allow those without computer access to view plans, voice concerns, and provide input toward redevelopment. All information will be disseminated via the DAPC's webpage in addition to being produced in leaflet form and distributed at information repositories at the physical office location.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

Not applicable - DAPC does not have an open EPA Brownfields grant.

4. Named Contractors and Named Subrecipients

- Contractors: Not Applicable - no contractors have been selected
- Named Subrecipients: Not Applicable - no subrecipients are named.