

1. Applicant Identification

Sampson County
406 County Complex Road
Clinton, NC 28328

2. Website URL: <https://www.sampsoncountync.gov>

3. Funding Requested

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

4. Location

a) City of Clinton, b) Sampson County, c) North Carolina

5. Target Area and Priority Site Information

- Target Area Information: Census tracts 37163970600 and 37163970700
- Priority Site Information
 - Former Dr. Pepper Bottling Plant Site, 300 McKoy Street, Clinton, NC 28328
 - Southwest Boulevard Staging Site, 1018 & 1105 Southwest Boulevard, Clinton, NC 28328

6. Contacts

a. Project Director

Ray Jordan, Executive Director
Sampson County Economic Development
910-592-8921
rjordan@sampsonedc.com
406 County Complex Rd., Suite 130, Clinton, NC 28328

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Allen McLamb, Chair
Sampson County Board of Commissioners, District 1
910-592-6308
allen.mclamb@sampsoncountync.gov
406 County Complex Rd., Suite 110, Clinton, NC 28328

7. Population

City of Clinton, NC: 8,336 (US Census: 2019–2023 American Community Survey)

NORTH CAROLINA'S
SAMPSON COUNTY
 OFFICE of the COUNTY MANAGER

8. Other Factors

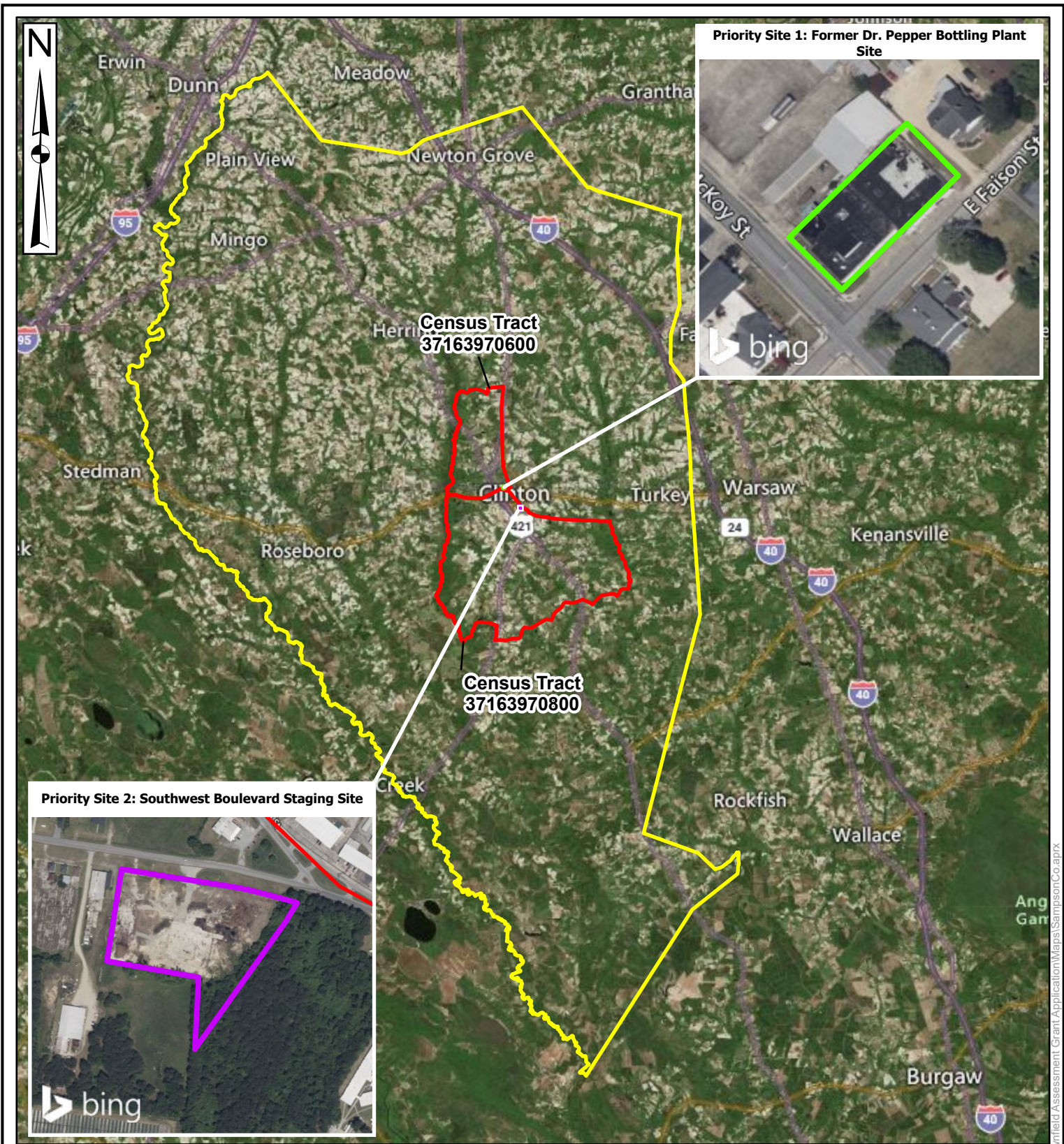
Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	4
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the 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).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3, 4
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3, 4
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3, 4
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.	N/A

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable.



- ▬ Sampson County
- ▬ Target Area: Census Tracts 37163970600 and 37163970800
- ▬ Priority Site 1: Former Dr. Pepper Bottling Plant Site, 300 McKoy Street
- ▬ Priority Site 2: Southwest Boulevard Staging Site, 1018 & 1105 Southwest Blvd



DATA SOURCES:
 Bing Aerial Imagery
 Basemap accessed
 2026; Site Boundary
 based on NC One Map
 Sampson County and
 NC Census Tract
 Municipality Data

Target Area and Priority Site Map

Brownfields Assessment Grant Application
 Sampson County
 Census Tracts 37163970600 and 37163970800
 Clinton, Sampson County, NC

**EXHIBIT
 NO.**

1



NORTH CAROLINA
Environmental Quality

December 15, 2025

JOSH STEIN

Governor

D. REID WILSON

Secretary

MICHAEL SCOTT

Director

Ray Jordan
Executive Director
Sampson County Economic Development
406 County Complex Road
Clinton, NC 28328
rjordan@sampsonedc.com

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Sampson County

Dear Mr. Jordan,

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Redevelopment Section (BRS) acknowledges and supports Sampson County's application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. We understand that your grant will focus on assessments at the Former Dr. Pepper Bottling Plant Site located at 300 McKoy Street and the Southwest Boulevard Staging Site located at 1018 & 1105 Southwest Boulevard, both in Clinton. Revitalization of these properties will be a wonderful success for this community and Sampson County.

The goal of EPA Assessment funds is to facilitate redevelopment and economic growth within a community. To that end, BRS offers technical project guidance to help ensure assessments conducted utilizing grant funds are in accordance with our program requirements throughout the life of your project. Coordination with DEQ BRS is critical to ensure that the assessments make efficient use of the federal funds awarded. This will begin at grant initiation and continue with review of site-specific assessment plans. It is imperative that BRS be involved in field sample scope planning to ensure that a property is eligible for future entry into the North Carolina Program should a property owner or future developer desire. A brownfields agreement outlines the controls needed to make the site safe for the intended reuse and is often a marketing tool for developers and instrumental in securing redevelopment financing. Additional tax incentives are also available upon completion of brownfields redevelopment if completed in the State's Program.

We hope that Sampson County is successfully awarded this grant, and we will continue to support you in your brownfields redevelopment efforts whether a grant is awarded or not. We truly believe successful brownfields projects can rejuvenate a community.

Sincerely,

Jordan Thompson
Brownfields Grants Manager

cc: NCDEQ Brownfields Grant Collaborative Team



North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality | Division of Waste Management
217 West Jones Street | 1646 Mail Service Center | Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1646
919.707.8200

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields. a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: The economy of Sampson County (County) revolves around its robust industrial and agricultural history. Geographically, the County is the largest in North Carolina (NC) and in its prime, had lush agricultural land and wide-open spaces for industry. Established in 1784 and named for early settler John Sampson, the county grew from fertile farmland, flowing rivers, and dense timber that attracted generations of families seeking economic opportunity. For decades, textile mills, agricultural processing, and manufacturing facilities powered the local economy and provided stable employment. These industries formed the backbone of the County's small communities, generating a sense of prosperity and rural character that residents still hold closely. However, as manufacturing declined some of these industrial facilities closed, while other manufacturers chose to relocate elsewhere. This left behind shuttered buildings, abandoned industrial parcels, decaying agricultural infrastructure, and environmental legacies. The growth of large-scale Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) over the past several decades has compounded these challenges. While CAFOs became a major economic force, they also created significant environmental burdens, including **ammonia and hydrogen sulfide emissions**. As a result, residents face a myriad of environmental challenges associated with industry flight and increased CAFO use. The community contends with the broader implications and lasting **brownfield challenges** of environmental degradation, **consistent devastating hurricanes**, and the damage from former environmental practices that are currently unacceptable.

The geographic boundary for this project are the **Sampson County borders**. Within this boundary are Census Tracts 37163970600 and 37163970700, which together form the project's **target area**. Both tracts lie within the city of Clinton and extend through portions of the historic downtown corridor. The target area experiences significant socioeconomic challenges as its population struggles under a considerable **low-income (per capita \$27,629/US \$43,289)** and is **racially varied (60% non-white minorities/US 36%)**.¹ Sampson County is a Tier 1 community, meaning it is one of the **top 40 most distressed communities** based on economic well-being within the state.² In the target area, CAFOs have become a leading industry, and the contaminants released from CAFOs are linked to respiratory and cardiovascular ailments.³ Residents that live near aging industrial sites, CAFO operations, and areas prone to flooding, are placed at increased risk of exposure to contaminants. The County, like many rural communities across the state, is actively working to reinvent and reinvest within their community. According to an article published by *Environmental Health Perspectives*, "Concentration of agricultural operations tends to remove a higher percentage of money from rural communities than when the industry is dominated by smaller farm operations, which tend to circulate money within the community."⁴ By concentrating resources in the target area, the County can begin to reverse decades of economic decline and environmental degradation. The grant will spur new jobs, improve environmental conditions, strengthen the local tax base, and establish a foundation for long-term economic and environmental stability for residents who have long endured the compounded burdens of poverty, job loss, and pollution.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Sampson County contains numerous abandoned and underused industrial properties, many of which are environmentally impacted by past operations and are strong candidates for assessment. Redeveloping these sites is a critical first step

¹ US Census 2019–2023 American Community Survey.

² 2023 NC Commerce-Tier Designations Memo.

³ National Library of Medicine, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1817697/>.

⁴ Environmental Health Perspectives, <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/EHP11344>.

toward the County's goals of expanding quality local jobs and encouraging nonresidential growth. A preliminary windshield survey identified at least 20 potential brownfield sites in the target area, with another 40 under review by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). These properties may contain contaminants associated with former filling stations, facilities with underground storage tanks, dry cleaners, and other waste-handling operations—posing significant health risks to nearby residents. Additional sites will be identified and added to a grant-funded inventory, with priority given to locations near sensitive populations. The two priority sites were selected for their redevelopment potential and community benefit. Both are located in areas prone to repeated flooding and near CAFO operations, heightening the risk of environmental impacts from stormwater runoff and leached by-products. Assessing these properties is therefore essential to protecting public health and stabilizing the target area.

The **first priority site** is the **Former Dr Pepper Bottling Company** (0.33 acres), located at 300 McKoy Street on the edge of the downtown Clinton Commercial Historic District. The site has been vacant for nearly twenty years and contains a deteriorating 12,232-square-foot brick bottling facility constructed in 1938. The site was used as a Dr Pepper bottling plant from 1938 to the mid-1980s. Historical bottling shops pose potential environmental concerns due to past practices such as the materials used in production, contamination from the facility operations, and improper waste disposal and dumping. Historically lax environmental regulations mean there is potential for legacy environmental contamination on the property. Currently, no fence or boundary limits access to the property. The surrounding area is a mix of single-family homes, auto repair/detailing, storage units, a funeral home, a gas station, and dry cleaners. Within half a mile of the site sits a Head Start preschool, a public school, and multiple churches, placing a large number of sensitive community facilities in close proximity to the property. As such, the property can be easily accessed by at-risk and sensitive City populations. **The owner of this site has provided access to the County for assessment.**

The second priority site is the **Southwest Boulevard Staging Site** (5.84 acres). The site was formerly used as a Concrete Batch Plant called S&W Ready Mix Concrete and Faircloth Construction. **The cement manufacturing industry is the third-largest industrial source of pollution (in the state) and is notorious for leaving behind sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and carbon monoxide contaminants.**⁵ The site contained two former USTs, which are frequently tied to groundwater and soil contamination from petroleum constituents. No work has been completed to address the on-site contamination, and the status of contaminants is unknown. The property, located less than three miles from a CAFO, is unused and vacant. A fence divides the property from the road, but portions of the fence are overgrown with brush and vegetation. The overgrown vegetation has compromised the integrity of the fence, and the public can access the property. Residential properties are within a quarter mile of the property to the north and west, and a nursing and rehabilitation center is southeast of the property. Within one mile are the local elementary school and several churches. The County has secured access for assessment and intends to position the property for environmentally safe and appropriate industrial reuse that meets modern environmental and public health standards. The proximity and high density of CAFOs in the surrounding areas, along with the region's tendency to flood, puts both sites at risk from further contamination from leached CAFO by-products.

c. Identifying Additional Sites: In preparation for this grant application, a windshield survey identified more than 20 potential brownfield sites. During the grant, the County will develop a more detailed, grant-funded site inventory and evaluation process, working closely with target-area

⁵ Cement manufacturing: <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/cement-manufacturing-enforcement-initiative>.

residents to identify and prioritize sites. County staff will further research these properties using the property appraiser's database. Site-ranking criteria will be based on community need, input from project partners and residents, and U.S. Census data to ensure distressed and sensitive populations receive priority. When the target-area sites are fully addressed with grant funding, the County will expand its search across the broader geographic boundary to identify additional abandoned or underused properties. Given the County's industrial and agricultural history, many such properties are likely to present brownfield-related challenges. Newly identified sites will be ranked using the same criteria to determine assessment order.

Revitalization of the Target Area. d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Sampson County intends to strengthen its industrial base to further support and sustain the local economy. Both priority sites lie within the target area's established development corridors inside the city of Clinton, where the **Clinton 2035 Comprehensive Plan** directs future growth. The Plan emphasizes strategic infill development, the rehabilitation of older industrial areas, and the reuse of underutilized properties to support job creation while protecting environmental and community health. The **Former Dr Pepper Bottling Company and Southwest Boulevard Staging Site** are set for redevelopment for **commercial/industrial purposes** due to their strategic locations. One of the County's main goals is to encourage non-residential growth that will result in high-quality jobs for residents and provide wages and benefits higher than the County average. With grant funds to initiate development of the two priority sites, the County can encourage infill redevelopment adjacent to these properties. **The Plan specifically targets brownfield redevelopment.** The Plan states that the target area's goal is to clean up and reinvest in these properties because doing so "increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, frees impaired land for development, and improves/protects the environment."⁶ Redevelopment of these brownfield sites will not only enhance economic opportunity but will also work to increase adjacent property values and stabilize land use within the community.⁷

e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: With this grant, the County has the potential to greatly benefit eastern North Carolina, which is crucial because this region is projected to grow an average rate of 0.35% per year to a population of 1.48 million by 2029.⁷ Assessment and safe redevelopment of the **Former Dr Pepper Bottling Company and Southwest Boulevard Staging Site** will attract new industry to this region that seeks to provide a fair wage, good benefits, and safe working environment. **Economic benefits** realized through this redevelopment include construction and industrial jobs, increased incomes, and an increased tax base. **Noneconomic benefits** include safe work environments and the removal of possible contamination. Establishing an economy that can support and sustain the projected growth in the region by providing industry and jobs is vital to the region's economic success; **redeveloping these sites for industrial reuse** will create job opportunities for all educational attainment levels.

Both redevelopments will strengthen the target area's resilience to extreme weather, an important consideration in a region repeatedly affected by hurricanes and flooding. By assessing and mitigating contamination, the County can prevent pollutants from being mobilized during heavy rain or storm-related flooding, particularly given the sites' proximity to CAFO operations and downstream neighborhoods. Redevelopment will incorporate **stormwater-management features such as permeable surfaces and smart landscaping**. Where feasible, future reuse will integrate **energy-efficient design and sustainable building practices**. Together, these measures

⁶ City of Clinton 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

⁷ NCEast Alliance: <https://www.nceast.org/overview/demographics>.

will support safer redevelopment, enhance climate resilience, and deliver long-term environmental and economic benefits to the community.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources. f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Sampson County has a successful history of leveraging funding resources on public projects that have a primary focus on economic development, commerce, and education. The state of North Carolina's Brownfields Redevelopment Section (NCBRS) is a key resource throughout the redevelopment process, giving redevelopers access to liability protections and tax incentives. If awarded the Assessment Grant, the County will apply for EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants to address the myriad sites with historical on-site contamination within the vicinity of each of the priority sites. The County can leverage the Opportunity Zone located near the priority site location and its Tier 1 status to further attract developer support and to use funds from other community grants for additional brownfield redevelopment purposes. The County will apply for Community Development Block Grant funds for demolition of blighted sites and for Golden LEAF funding, which specifically targets economic opportunities in NC's rural and tobacco-dependent communities. The County will seek additional state, federal, and private funding opportunities.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The County intends to use existing infrastructure at both priority sites, including water/sewer, transportation, broadband, and power. The County believes the necessary infrastructure to fully support redevelopment in the target area is present. In the event, additional infrastructure is needed, the County will pursue federal or state funding sources.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need. a. The Community's Need for Funding: The target area has a **small population of 11,298 residents** and a limited tax base, which severely restricts the County's ability to address the environmental challenges posed by its numerous brownfield sites.⁸ Much of the County's operating budget is absorbed by essential public services such as police, fire, and emergency response, as well as the significant costs associated with extreme weather events that routinely impact the region. High poverty rates and low household incomes further weaken the local revenue needed to support brownfield assessment or redevelopment. The County recognizes that these sites must be addressed to support residents, reduce environmental health burdens, and remove longstanding barriers to outside investment. The County requires the use of EPA funding to take a proactive step toward addressing the numerous brownfield sites within the community.

Grant funding and the jobs leveraged from redevelopment of the priority sites will help address the target area's **low median household income of \$51,777 (US \$78,538).**⁸ **In the target area, 27% of households receive food stamps/SNAP benefits (US 12%),** which indicates that far too many residents do not receive a living wage and are unable to afford necessary food resources.⁸ The target area is in the **79th percentile for people in households whose income is at or below the federal poverty level** and the **81st percentile for unemployment.**⁹ The County is attempting to address these issues by planning for new and expanded industrial parks to provide stable, local, high-quality jobs for these **distressed** residents. Assessment and future redevelopment of the priority sites will entice new industry into the area and create permanent and temporary entry-level local jobs to help lower the unemployment rate and alleviate poverty.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: The target area includes several sensitive populations that face heightened environmental and social vulnerabilities. Poverty rates are significantly elevated: **14% of families (US 8%)** and **28% of children under 18 (US 16%)** live below the poverty level.⁸ The area also has a high percentage of minority residents: **35% are Black**

⁸ US Census 2019-2023 American Community Survey

⁹ <https://pedp-ejscreen.azurewebsites.net/>

(US 12%) and **23% are Hispanic** (US 19%).¹⁰ These populations experience disproportionate environmental burdens due to their proximity to aging industrial properties, CAFO operations, and repeated flooding from hurricanes and severe storms such as Hurricanes Matthew and Florence and Tropical Storm Debby. These conditions have contributed to long-term cumulative environmental impacts and reduced community resilience.

The target area is in the **86th percentile for community members with less than a high school education**.¹¹ Populations with lower educational attainment frequently face barriers to obtaining stable, higher-wage employment, making them more vulnerable to economic hardship and limiting access to the resources needed to cope with environmental stressors. The target area's low median income and low educational attainment can directly impact target-area safety/crime rates. Sampson County is in the **44th percentile for safety**, meaning that 56% of municipalities within the state are more safe.¹² The violent crime rate in the target area is 9 per 1,000 residents (US 4) and 42 per 1,000 for property crimes (US 19).¹³ EPA Assessment funding will help address these disparities by identifying and reducing environmental threats in areas where low-income families and minority communities face the greatest risks. Assessing and preparing priority sites for redevelopment will reduce exposure to unknown contaminants, improve neighborhood safety, and create conditions that attract employers offering stable, accessible jobs. Over time, these efforts will expand economic opportunity, strengthen community resilience, and lessen the economic and environmental burdens disproportionately affecting target-area residents.

c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The target area experiences a greater-than-normal incidence of several serious health conditions that heighten the urgency of assessing and mitigating environmental risks at the priority sites. The target area ranks in the **76th percentile for adults diagnosed with asthma**, the **86th percentile for adults diagnosed with heart disease**, and the **75th percentile for low life expectancy**, demonstrating chronic health burdens significantly above national norms.¹⁴ Health data also shows that **11% of adults report active asthma**, and **9% report a cancer diagnosis**, highlighting the widespread respiratory and chronic disease challenges facing residents. These outcomes align with known environmental stressors that the area falls in the **80th percentile for toxic releases to air** and the **77th percentile for Underground Storage Tanks**, suggesting long-term exposure to airborne irritants, petroleum constituents, and volatile organic compounds.¹¹ Emerging research on **birth defects in Sampson County** also raises concerns. Peer-reviewed studies of North Carolina counties with intensive agricultural activity have found elevated rates of certain congenital defects, particularly in areas with high proximity to CAFO waste, nitrates, heavy metals, and other environmental pollutants. These patterns suggest that chronic exposure to contaminated water, air, and soil may contribute to higher-than-expected rates of adverse reproductive outcomes. Although data at the census-tract level are limited, the combination of **elevated childhood poverty**, **presence of hazardous sites**, and **cumulative air emissions** increases the likelihood of disproportionate health impacts on pregnant individuals and infants in the target area.¹⁵

The priority brownfield sites lie directly within neighborhoods already experiencing these greater-than-normal disease burdens, and both properties contain potential petroleum or chemical contaminants historically associated with asthma, heart disease, and certain cancers. Residents who already face high rates of chronic disease are therefore more vulnerable to additional

¹⁰ US Census 2019-2023 American Community Survey

¹¹ <https://pedp-ejscreen.azurewebsites.net/>

¹² <https://crimegrade.org/safest-places-in-sampson-county-nc>

¹³ <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/nc/clinton/crime>

¹⁴ public-environmental-data-partners.github.io/j40-cejst-2/en/#10.83/35.0339/-78.3495

¹⁵ dukespace.lib.duke.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/7b9596c3-c059-4a61-bc01-9c6317351cd6/content

environmental exposures, making proactive assessment and mitigation essential. By clarifying contamination levels, identifying exposure pathways, and preparing sites for safe reuse, the project will reduce environmental health risks for residents already experiencing greater-than-normal rates of asthma, heart disease, and cancer. In doing so, the grant will help break the cycle of environmental exposure and adverse health conditions that have persisted for decades.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: The target area includes economically impoverished and sensitive populations that disproportionately bear the environmental and health burdens associated with industrial activity in the County. Residents experience persistent poverty, limited employment opportunities, and a constrained tax base that prevents adequate investment in environmental protection or site remediation. These socioeconomic vulnerabilities are compounded by the area’s proximity to numerous environmental hazards. The County, home to some of the highest concentrations of hog and poultry CAFOs in the United States, has seen disproportionate placing of these facilities in low-income, minority communities across the coastal plain. These operations release ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, particulates, and waste-borne contaminants that degrade air and water quality. With the target area lying downstream and downwind of many large CAFOs, residents face cumulative environmental exposures that intersect with existing industrial burdens. Flooding further magnifies these risks. Extreme weather events caused widespread inundation of agricultural waste lagoons and industrial parcels across the target area. Studies have shown that storm and flood-related overflow from CAFO waste lagoons increases the transport of contaminants into surrounding neighborhoods and waterways, disproportionately affecting communities already situated near industrial and agricultural operations.¹⁶ In the target area, this means that contaminants from both brownfield sites and CAFO operations can be mobilized during heavy rainfall events, exacerbating exposure for residents who are least able to mitigate or relocate from environmental harm. By identifying contamination at priority sites and preparing them for safe reuse, the project will reduce long-standing exposure risks in neighborhoods historically burdened by industrial and agricultural activity. Redevelopment will expand job opportunities, attract new investment, and strengthen economic resilience in communities long affected by underinvestment. Reinvesting in these sites will lessen environmental burdens, improve public health, and provide stability for residents who have disproportionately borne these impacts.

Community Engagement e. Project Involvement & f. Project Roles: Local community partners, with a strong presence in the area, will play key roles in outreach and education, site inventory selection and ranking, and cleanup and reuse planning.

Name of organization & mission	Point of contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Clinton-Sampson Chamber of Commerce. Promotes community growth through economic advancement and advocacy and making positive impacts on the community.	Avery LeClear info@clintonsampsonchamber.org	Assistance/Decision Making: reuse planning.
Clinton 100. Nonprofit organization working to promote economic growth and development within the Clinton area.	Chuck Spell, csPELL@hogslat.com	Assistance/Decision Making: site inventory.
South River EMC. Locally owned and operated electric cooperative with a mission to provide safe, reliable, and competitively priced electricity.	Cathy O’Dell codell@sremc.com	Assistance/Decision Making: outreach.

¹⁶ www.ewg.org/research/exposing-fields-filth

NC Southeast. Economic development organization providing leadership through marketing and collaborative regional initiatives.	Steve Yost stevey@ncse.org	Assistance/Decision Making: outreach.
Sampson Arts Council. Administers grassroots art grants and promotes local art growth.	Kara Donatelli director@sampsonarts.org	Assistance/Decision Making: education.
Sampson Connect. Local grassroots partnership created to bolster enrollment in the educational pipeline, foster opportunities for the business community to hire locally, and recruit and retain the area’s growing Latinx student population.	Lisa Turlington lturlington@sampsoncc.edu	Assistance/Decision Making: site inventory.
Sampson County Partnership for Children. Focus on early childhood education, NC Pre-K, family support, and health services.	Donna Jackson djackson@scpfc.org	Assistance/Decision Making: site inventory.
Sampson County Friends of Agriculture. Nonprofit Agri-Business Organization that educates and provides resources for local agricultural community members.	Ronnie Jackson rjackson@intrstar.net	Assistance/Decision Making: reuse planning.

g. Incorporating Community Input: The County believes that community support drives success and that a strong line of communication is important. Distressed residents, those living within the target area most affected by the project, will be well-informed of brownfield decision-making and, in turn, will be afforded an opportunity to provide crucial input and suggestions. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to outline planned community engagement activities, a plan for project scheduling, a project background, and the community stakeholders. The County is dedicated to transparent and inclusive communication with the local community, particularly distressed residents and groups directly impacted by the project. One goal of the target area’s Plan emphasizes involvement of its citizens in the decision-making processes, which can be achieved through community meetings that allow residents’ opinions to be heard and considered. This was shown during the creation of the Plan, when an array of target-area community members provided constructive feedback. The CIP will leverage various outreach methods, including online platforms, virtual town halls, and surveys, to ensure effective engagement. The County is committed to continue its active soliciting, thoughtful consideration, and prompt responses to community input and to foster meaningful supplements to in-person community engagement throughout the grant period. To ensure the target area’s most sensitive populations have a voice, the County will conduct quarterly **Brownfield Project Team (BPT)** meetings and address community input. Community outreach will encourage residents to provide input for potential brownfield sites. Suggestions will be added to a running site inventory list, and the County’s BPT and supporting partners will prioritize suggestions based on community need and sites that specifically benefit sensitive populations in the target area. If necessary, the County will communicate directly with target-area residents to further discuss needs and suggestions within two weeks of receiving their comments.

Establishing effective community outreach is a top priority within the County. The County will inform residents of all brownfield-related decision-making through multiple forms of communication (website, social media, newspaper). The County will include a specific brownfields page on their economic development website and will leverage various social media platforms to increase reach. By using multiple forms of communication, the County will convey information in an effective and efficient manner for all residents. The County has maintained a strong sense of community engagement by using these communication efforts, which have proven highly successful. The BPT will regularly provide updates and information, including at county

commission meetings, community education meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions. Due to the high Latino population, a translator will be made available at outreach events as needed.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:

Task 1: Outreach	
a.	<i>Project Implementation: EPA Funded:</i> Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, Brownfield (BF) project webpage, and social media posts will be developed by the County’s BF Project Director with assistance from the environmental contractor (EC). County staff will lead the community/educational meetings discussing project plans and updates. Supplies: printing of outreach materials (brochures) and office supplies.
b.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP created in 1 st quarter. Community/educational meetings held 1 st , 3 rd , 5 th , 7 th , 9 th , 11 th , and 14 th quarters. BF webpage and outreach materials created in 1 st quarter and posted throughout the grant.
c.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> County: Ray Jordan, Executive Director Econ. Dev., BF Project Director
d.	<i>Outputs:</i> CIP, BF webpage, 7 community/educational meetings, brochures/handouts, social media posts, summary of community meetings in EPA-required quarterly reports.
Task 2: Site Inventory & Assessment	
a.	<i>Project Implementation: EPA Funded:</i> The County’s BF Project Director will work with target-area residents during outreach events to add to the site inventory. Identified abandoned and underused properties will be researched further by County staff using GIS and the County property appraiser’s website. EC will work with County staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine the order the sites will be addressed. The EC conducts Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), starting with the priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI-compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs will include the Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP). Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be obtained. National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultations will be addressed when applicable.
b.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Meeting held in 1 st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process. Evaluation ranking process and assessments begin in the 2 nd quarter and continue throughout the grant.
c.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the Sampson County BF Project Director, Ray Jordan, Executive Director Economic Development.
d.	<i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation ranking tool, site inventory list, 14 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 7 Phase II ESAs including SAP, site access agreements, property eligibility determinations, Section 106 determinations (if applicable).
Task 3: Remediation Planning	
a.	<i>Project Implementation: EPA Funded:</i> Projects identified for cleanup. The EC will prepare the Analysis for Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans, which include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site-appropriate remediation and/or reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The EC will assist the County in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions. A planner will create the following EPA-approved planning documents: BF Revitalization Plan, Site Reuse Assessments, and Market Study.
b.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & charrettes to begin in 6 th quarter and will continue throughout the grant.
c.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from Ray Jordan, the Sampson County Executive Director of Economic Development, BF Project Director.
d.	<i>Outputs:</i> 2 ABCAs, 2 vision sessions, 2 Site Reuse Assessments, 1 BF Revitalization Plan, 1 Market Study.
Task 4: Programmatic Support	
a.	<i>Project Implementation: Non-EPA Funded:</i> Utilizing its own funding, the County will procure an EC to assist with the BF Grant project. The County’s BF Finance Director will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement work plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. <i>EPA Funded:</i> The EC will assist in completing ACRES database reporting, yearly financial reporting, quarterly reporting, and additional programmatic support for the four-year term of the grant. The travel budget allows two staff to attend three BF training conferences/workshops.
b.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Procure EC in the 1 st quarter. ACRES & quarterly reporting begin in the 1 st quarter and continue throughout the grant. Annual reporting and forms created in in the 5 th , 9 th , 13 th quarters and final closeout.

c.	<i>Task/Activity Lead: Task/Activity Lead: Sampson County: David Clack, Director of Finance, BF Finance Director.</i>
d.	<i>Outputs: ACRES database reporting, 4 annual financial reports, 16 quarterly reports, programmatic support for the four-year grant period. Two staff to attend three conferences.</i>

e. Cost Estimates: Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.* The budget for this project includes travel, supplies, conference registration (other) and contractual costs only. No administrative costs are included in the budget. **Of the budget, 48% will be spent on site-specific work and 38% for area-wide planning activities.**

Task 1 Outreach: Contractual: CIP \$4,060 (29 hrs × \$140); BF webpage, outreach brochure/handouts, social media posts \$3,080 (22 hrs × \$140); 7 community/educational meetings \$10,500 (\$1,500 per mtg.; 10 hours per meeting to include preparation and execution × \$150); Supplies: \$860 (\$400 [200 printouts at \$2 each]; \$400 [4 display board printouts at \$100 each]; pens, markers, paper \$60).

Task 2 Site Inventory & Assessment: Contractual: BF site inventory and evaluation ranking tool creation \$13,500 (90 hrs × \$150). 14 Phase I ESAs \$53,200 (\$3,800 each); 1 Generic QAPP \$6,500; 7 Phase II ESAs including SAP \$168,000 (\$24,000).

Task 3 Remediation Planning: Contractual: 2 ABCAs \$13,000 (\$6,500 each); 2 vision sessions \$5,200 (\$2,600/meeting); 2 Site Reuse Assessment \$70,000 (\$35,000 each [Senior Planner: 50 hrs × \$200; PM Planner: 90 hrs × \$175, Support Personnel: 74 hrs × \$125]); 1 Market Study \$29,000 (Senior Planner: 10 hrs × \$200; PM Planner: 70 hrs × \$175 Support Personnel: 118 hrs × \$125); 1 BF Revitalization Plan \$85,000 (Principal Planner: 25 hrs × \$250; Senior Planner: 60 hrs × \$200; PM Planner: 170 hrs × \$175, Support Personnel: 296 hrs × \$125).

Task 4 Programmatic Support: Contractual: ACRES database reporting, yearly financial reporting, quarterly reporting \$24,900 (166 hrs × \$150). Travel: 2 staff attend 3 conferences for a total of \$11,700 (flights at \$800, 3 nights in hotel at \$250/night, incidentals and per diem at \$100 per day × 4 days × 2 staff × 3 events). Other: \$1,500 conference registration (\$250 per event per person).

Category	Tasks				Totals
	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Site Inventory & Assessment</i>	<i>Remediation Planning</i>	<i>Programmatic Support</i>	
Travel				\$11,700	\$11,700
Other				\$1,500	\$1,500
Supplies	\$860				\$860
Contractual	\$17,640	\$241,200	\$202,200	\$24,900	\$485,940
Total Budget	\$18,500	\$241,200	\$202,200	\$38,100	500,000

f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: To ensure timely project completion, the County’s internal Brownfield Team, including the EC, will meet quarterly to track **outputs identified in 3.d.** and will record progress using Excel to track the scope of work, goals, and objectives. The County will submit quarterly and annual reports to the EPA. Project expenditures and activities will be monitored quarterly against the four-year timeline. Site-specific information will be recorded in the ACRES database. Key performance indicators/outputs, such as the number of neighborhood meetings, community groups and partners meetings; environmental assessments; and cleanup plans, will be tracked. In addition, outcomes like community participation, acres assessed, acres made ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created, will be monitored. To address potential project delays, the County has

contingency plans in place, including monthly communication with the EPA Project Officer and the development of a Corrective Action Plan if necessary to ensure the project is on schedule.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability. a. Organizational Capacity, b. Organizational Structure, & c. Description of Key Staff: The County operates under a five-member board of county commission form of government. The County will use two staff members to guide and implement all necessary grant work with the goal of serving as a catalyst and resource for business development and growth within the County. **These two employees have managed over 100 grants and have experience and the explicit capacity to undertake and successfully implement the EPA Assessment Grant.** **Ray Jordan**, Executive Director of Economic Development for Sampson County, will serve as the **Brownfield Project Director** and will manage the day-to-day operations required of the grant. Mr. Jordan has worked for the County for 27 years and plans, manages, and coordinates all economic development activities for the County. Mr. Jordan has also served as president of the Sampson Arts Council Board of Directors. **David Clack**, Director of Finance, will serve as the **Brownfield Finance Director** and will be responsible for the successful expenditure of funds and allocation of appropriate resources. Mr. Clack has a degree in accounting and has held his current position as Director of Finance for 30 years. **Gary Mac Herring Jr., Sampson County Advisory Board Chair, will serve as an additional resource for grant implementation.** The elected officials and appointed public officials form a strong web of support. A qualified environmental contractor (EC) will be used to ensure all technical and reporting aspects of the grant implementation are completed accurately.

d. Acquiring Additional Resources: The County will hire a qualified EC to support the technical and reporting aspects of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment Grant and adhere to EPA's Professional Service procurement process and local contracting requirements. Throughout the project, additional resources or contractors will be acquired as needed.

Past Performance and Accomplishments f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements: (1) Purpose and Accomplishments: In 2021, the County received a \$1.28 million grant from the NC Commerce Industrial Development Fund (IDF) for new road construction and a water and sewer extension project. This grant was used to extend roadway into the newly acquired 120-acre site at the Sampson Southeast Business Center in the target area. This grant money was used as part of an anchor to the County's future economic development efforts. The project was successfully completed in late 2023 and allowed for the completion of 450 feet of new road construction, 2,245 feet of sewer line extension, and 675 feet of water line extension located at the Sampson Southeast Business Center. The County was also awarded a \$265,112 grant for the Sampson Southeast Business Center SITE Development in 2022 from the Golden LEAF Foundation. This grant money will be used to aid Sampson County in clearing and grading an approximately 10-acre portion of a larger parcel within the 120-acre Sampson Southeast Business Center industrial park. The project is expected to create approximately 50 jobs and \$7.5 million in capital investment. The project is in the process of implementation as the County is working to gain interested businesses.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: Sampson County has successfully implemented all necessary work plans, schedules, terms and conditions, and any required additional steps regarding the implementation of the grants they have received. All grants have remained in compliance, and funding has been fully expended. Mr. Jordan has many years of experience in grant and project management and will be proactively monitoring all activities associated with the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant.

Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. Sampson County (County), North Carolina, is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.
- b. The County is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement

The County believes that community support drives success and that a strong line of communication is important. Distressed residents, those living within the target area most affected by the project, will be well-informed of brownfield decision-making and, in turn, will be afforded an opportunity to provide crucial input and suggestions. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to outline planned community engagement activities, a plan for project scheduling, a project background, and the community stakeholders. The County is dedicated to transparent and inclusive communication with the local community, particularly distressed residents and groups directly impacted by the project. One goal of the target area's Plan emphasizes involvement of its citizens in the decision-making processes, which can be achieved through target area community meetings that allow residents' opinions to be heard and considered. This was shown during the creation of the Plan, when an array of target-area community members provided constructive feedback. The CIP will leverage various outreach methods, including online platforms, virtual town halls, and surveys, to ensure effective engagement. The County is committed to continue its active soliciting, thoughtful consideration, and prompt responses to community input and to foster meaningful supplements to in-person community engagement throughout the grant period. To ensure the target area's most sensitive populations have a voice, the County will conduct quarterly **Brownfield Project Team (BPT)** meetings and address community input. Online and in person community outreach will encourage residents to provide input for potential brownfield sites. Suggestions will be added to a running site inventory list, and the County's BPT and supporting partners will prioritize suggestions based on community need and sites that specifically benefit sensitive populations in the target area. If necessary, the County will communicate directly with target-area residents to further discuss needs and suggestions within two weeks of receiving their comments.

Establishing effective community outreach is a top priority within the County. The County will inform residents of all brownfield-related decision-making through multiple forms of communication. The County will include a specific brownfields page on their economic development website and will leverage various social media platforms to increase reach. By using multiple forms of communication, the County will convey information in an effective and efficient manner for all residents. The County has maintained a strong sense of community engagement by using these communication efforts, which have proven highly successful. The BPT will regularly provide updates and information, including at county commission meetings, community education meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The County affirms that they do not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.