

R04-26-A-035



APPLICATION INFORMATION SHEET

City of Wilson FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant

1. Applicant Identification:

City of Wilson
112 Goldsboro St. East
Wilson, NC 27894

2. Website URL(s): <https://www.wilsonnc.org/>

3. Funding Requested:

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

4. Location: City of Wilson, Wilson County, North Carolina

5. Target Areas and Priority Site Information

- a. Target Area(s): Contiguous Census Tracts 3719500080, 37195000401, and 37195000200
- b. Priority Site Addresses
 - i. Wilson Mall – 1501 Ward Boulevard
 - ii. White’s Tire Warehouse – 501 Goldsboro Street South
 - iii. Montrose Hangers & Wall Metal Recycling – 301 Railroad & 404 Maury Street South

6. Contacts

- a. Project Director: John Morck
Phone Number: 252-399-2227
Email: jmorck@wilsonnc.org
Mailing Address: City of Wilson
P.O. Box 10
Wilson, North Carolina, 27894

- b. Chief Executive Officer: Mayor Carlton L. Stevens
Phone Number: 252-285-2853
Email: cstevens@wilsonnc.org
Mailing Address: P.O.Box 10
Wilson, NC 27894-00100

7. Population: 47,606

PLANNING & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

8. Other Factors:

Other Factors	Page #
Community Population is 15,000 or less	5
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	N/A
The priority site is impacted by mine-scareed 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 floodplain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures	4
The reuse of the proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
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 sites within the target areas.	9
The target area is impacted by 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:** Attached.

10. **Releasing Copies of Applications:** N/A

PLANNING & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION



NORTH CAROLINA
Environmental Quality

January 14, 2026

JOSH STEIN

Governor

D. REID WILSON

Secretary

MICHAEL SCOTT

Director

John Morck
Planning and Community Development Manager
City of Wilson
112 Goldsboro Street E.
Wilson, NC 27894
jmorck@wilsonnc.org

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – City of Wilson

Dear Mr. Morck,

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Redevelopment Section (BRS) acknowledges and supports the City of Wilson's application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. We understand that your grant will focus on the assessment of the former Wilson Mall, former White's Tire facility, and the Montrose Companies and Wall Recycling site. Revitalization of these properties will be a wonderful success for this community and the City of Wilson.

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 the City of Wilson 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

NARRATIVE/RANKING CRITERIA

a) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a) Overview of Brownfields Challenges and Description of Target Area - The City of Wilson

(Wilson) will serve as the geographic boundary for activities performed under this grant. Wilson is located in the rapidly growing coastal plain of eastern North Carolina (NC) and is strategically positioned between the cities of Raleigh and Greenville to offer an ideal setting for targeted revitalization and private investment. With immediate access to major transportation corridors, such as I-95, US-301, and US-Alternate 264, Wilson serves as a high-visibility waypoint for regional travel and commerce. Yet, even with these competitive advantages, Wilson has weathered decades of economic transition that have reshaped its industrial landscape. Understanding these historic challenges is essential to recognizing why targeted Brownfields investment can unlock Wilson's full redevelopment potential.

Throughout the early 1900s, Wilson was known as the “World’s Greatest Tobacco Market,” thriving on fertile soils, favorable weather conditions, and strategic rail access that fueled a robust agricultural economy and reinvestment in supporting industries. As health concerns and regulatory pressures intensified, North Carolina farmers were producing 100 million fewer pounds of tobacco by 1980, triggering a sharp economic decline in tobacco-dependent communities like Wilson. Wilson was forced to pivot away from its agricultural base, leaving more than 50 acres of vacant and underutilized warehouses and processing facilities by the end of the 20th century. This decline was compounded by the later erosion of Wilson’s manufacturing sector, as globalization and technological shifts redirected operations away from the region.

Over the past decade, Wilson has experienced continued job losses and tax base erosion. Since 2016, plant closures by Voith, Sonoco/Placon, Ardagh Glass, Sandoz/Novartis, and others have eliminated an estimated 1,000–1,100 jobs, with individual closures costing up to nearly 400 positions (NC Department of Commerce, WARN). Designated a Tier 1 most distressed county, Wilson County also faces constrained property and sales tax growth, as ACS 5-Year data show median home values (\$171,800) well below the state average (\$259,400).

Long-term industrial contraction has translated directly into a dense concentration of brownfields in and around Wilson's historic industrial and warehouse corridors, particularly along U.S. 301. Our Target Area, which encompasses contiguous census tracts 37195000200, 37195000401, and 37195000801, form the historic urban core of Wilson and more than 50 brownfields sites have already been identified. This area is anchored by two major transportation corridors: U.S. 301 which is a longstanding commercial spine lined with aging industrial buildings, former tobacco warehouses, and older retail centers; and U.S. 264 Alternate, which bisects the target area and historically served as a key east-west connector for freight and regional travel before modern bypass routes. Within these boundaries lie several historically significant and economically distressed neighborhoods, including Old Wilson, Five Points, and portions of East Wilson. Citywide the median household income is just \$47,294. With an average median household income of \$27,397, **the census tracts that comprise our Target Area earn less than 60% of Wilson's median income and less than 40% of the statewide median of \$69,904.** Together the three tracts represent the communities most directly affected by legacy tobacco and manufacturing operations and contain the highest density of brownfield sites.

This grant would first address these challenges/impacts by prioritizing reinvestment in historically impacted communities, especially those along US 301 and Alternate US 264 where industrial closures have contributed to job loss, declining home values, and elevated poverty rates. Second, assessment activities paired with community engagement will identify hazards and ensure residents have a voice in shaping redevelopment outcomes, allowing them to benefit from the new jobs, housing opportunities, and services that come with reinvestment. Finally, by restoring blighted or abandoned sites to active use, the grant will support safer neighborhoods, increase market confidence, and position Wilson for long-term economic resilience.

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b) Description of the Priority Brownfields Site(s) - Wilson has inventoried more than 50 brownfield sites within the Target Area, ranging from 0.25 to 46 acres and including former manufacturing facilities, agricultural and chemical supply stores, auto repair shops, tobacco warehouses, and dry cleaners. From this inventory, Wilson has identified three priority sites for assessment under this grant.

The former **Wilson Mall**, located at 1501 Ward Blvd, is a 46-acre, City-owned property located near U.S. 301 and Alternate U.S. 264, approximately one mile east of Downtown Wilson. The site includes a 478,000-square-foot enclosed mall and multiple high-risk outparcels historically occupied by dry cleaners, auto service centers, and gas stations. Vacant since 2013, the property has suffered significant deterioration from long-term abandonment. A 2023 Phase I ESA identified multiple Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs), including former underground storage tanks (USTs), historical automotive repair operations, and potential releases of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Semi-Volatile Organic Compound (SVOCs), and petroleum products. Given the site's age, structural degradation, and potential for soil, groundwater, and vapor intrusion impacts, a Phase II ESA is critically needed to support cleanup and redevelopment planning.

Assessment of the Wilson Mall site is urgent because the northern 14 acres are planned for conversion into a Water Quality Park as part of the **Hominy Creek Greenway and Water Quality Master Plan**. Environmental risks must be addressed before this emergent green infrastructure construction can proceed to reduce flooding to homes downstream of the proposed park. Brownfields funding will eliminate uncertainties, support safe demolition, and position the remaining acreage for mixed-use redevelopment, including commercial uses and diverse housing options that expand the tax base and improve access to community amenities.

The **Montrose/Wall Recycling** site, located at 301 Railroad St/404 Maury St. South, encompasses approximately 5 acres along Maury Street, bounded by Highway 264 Business and the CSX railway. The site includes a former manufacturing parcel demolished in 2013 and a former metal recycling facility with visible scrap materials and stained soils. Environmental concerns include potential soil and groundwater contamination from VOCs, SVOCs, and heavy metals, as well as contaminated runoff discharging toward Hominy Creek. The site is prioritized due to its adjacency to City-owned land planned for affordable housing and the new Pender Street Park. Assessment will support redevelopment for essential services such as grocery and retail uses and complementary workforce housing.

The former **White's Tire**, located at 501 Goldsboro Street South, totals approximately 1.06 acres and includes aging industrial buildings originally constructed for tobacco processing and later repurposed for tire services. A Phase I ESA identified multiple RECs, including potential VOCs and SVOC contamination, vapor intrusion risk, and the likely presence of asbestos and lead-based paint. Located directly across Highway 264 Business from Downtown Wilson and a new minor league baseball stadium, the site is well positioned for commercial and retail reuse. However, unknown environmental conditions have deterred private investment. Phase II assessment is needed to reduce redevelopment risk and catalyze reuse.

c) Identifying Additional Sites - Wilson will supplement their current inventory of over 50 brownfields sites in the target area by using their community partners and residents to help identify additional sites should grant funds remain after addressing the priority sites. This process will include a transparent, criteria-based framework to evaluate all candidate sites according to environmental risk, historical land use, and potential community benefit. Properties with suspected or known contamination will be screened for RECs and their impact on surrounding neighborhoods. Sites will then be ranked based on factors such as their proximity to economically distressed communities, ability to support mixed-use or economically catalytic redevelopment, alignment with existing infrastructure, and opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure. This process will ensure that Wilson systematically identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes properties where grant resources will have the greatest community impact.

d) Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans - Wilson recently adopted **Growing Together: The 2043 Comprehensive Plan**, which establishes a community vision centered on removing blight, expanding quality affordable housing, and creating economic opportunity. All three of Wilson's priority

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brownfield sites fall within one of the Comprehensive Plan's designated focus areas for reinvestment, where targeted brownfield assessment and redevelopment will help achieve planned outcomes. Wilson's **2022 Housing and Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan** further affirms that Wilson's future housing needs cannot be met by its existing supply and identifies priority actions, including the creation of new affordable units, support for publicly assisted housing, non-housing community development, and mitigation of environmental hazards commonly found in older housing, such as lead-based paint. The planned reuse of each site directly advances these adopted strategies by converting underutilized, environmentally challenged properties into catalysts for community revitalization, economic reinvestment, and neighborhood stability.

The **Montrose/Wall Recycling site**, located along a key commercial and residential corridor, presents an ideal opportunity to fill documented gaps in the Comprehensive Plan and Housing and Neighborhood Development Plan by offering mixed-use redevelopment that blends commercial and retail space with affordable workforce housing. Redevelopment of this site will bring essential services such as grocery, pharmacy, and neighborhood-scale retail back into a community that currently lacks them. Its location is adjacent to a new affordable housing project and the Pender Street Park revitalization area and will support pedestrian improvements outlined in the **2020 Wilson Pedestrian Plan** to establish a walkable, connected district consistent with **Comprehensive Plan Policy CPP-1**, which prioritizes multimodal infrastructure linking key community assets.

The **White's Tire site**, positioned at the gateway to Downtown Wilson and directly across from the new minor league baseball stadium, is a prime candidate for adaptive reuse as a mixed-use commercial and office hub. This redevelopment fully supports **Policy PEP-1**, which seeks to expand Wilson's economic base by attracting and retaining new businesses and entrepreneurs. Similarly, the **Wilson Mall site** will accommodate mixed-use commercial development and a range of affordable and market-rate housing options while also advancing major community resilience goals through the development of a park. Wilson's planned ***Water Quality Park is part of a larger redevelopment and stormwater management strategy*** on the mall's northern acres and is a central component of the **Hominy Creek Greenway and Water Quality Master Plan** that will address downstream flood control challenges, protect future infrastructure investments, and improve resident's quality of life. While the census tracts that comprise the true target area are not in FEMA flood zones, several areas in Wilson that surround these tracts are considered special flood hazard areas, particularly near Hominy Swamp. Further assessment at White's Tire supports a watershed level approach to addressing Wilson's widespread flooding challenges, but unfortunately, construction of this water quality park cannot proceed until environmental conditions are fully understood.

e) Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

Our track record of producing economic development results within our Brownfields Program has established a proven model for directing investment into Wilson's most underserved neighborhoods, generating jobs, expanding services, and reducing environmental risks for Wilson's most vulnerable populations. The planned reuse of our three priority sites will directly benefit the sensitive, urban communities within the Target Area—neighborhoods characterized by high poverty rates, aging housing stock, limited access to essential services, and disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards. Assessment and redevelopment of the **Montrose/Wall Recycling site** will activate nearly 5 acres of long-blighted land located within walking distance of public housing and historically Black neighborhoods that have limited access to grocery stores, pharmacies, and stable employment. Its redevelopment as a mixed-use, community-serving hub—with affordable workforce housing and essential retail—will improve daily living conditions for residents who currently face barriers to access for basic goods, while also improve access to open space and recreation opportunities through coordinated improvements to nearby Pender Street Park. These investments help address long-standing inequities by increasing access to healthy food, safe housing, greenspace, and economic opportunity for the residents of the target area.

Cleanup and reuse of the **White's Tire site** will further support sensitive populations in the target area by bringing new businesses, services, and employment opportunities to a location immediately adjacent to the

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downtown core and public transit routes. Its redevelopment will reduce blight and improve environmental and health safety along a highly visible commercial corridor while supporting small business growth and job creation accessible to residents who may not have reliable transportation. Assessment of the **Wilson Mall site**—one of Wilson’s largest and environmentally complex properties—will unlock opportunities for both housing and resilience improvements. Redevelopment plans include mixed-income housing that directly addresses the affordability gaps identified in the **2022 Housing and Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan**, as well as the creation of a **Water Quality Park** that will provide recreational greenspace and reduce chronic downstream flooding, improve stormwater quality, and decrease exposure to environmental hazards in adjacent neighborhoods. By integrating nature-based solutions, mixed use redevelopment, and energy efficient buildings across all three priority sites, the project will strengthen local resilience while lowering disaster risk, utility costs, and long-term exposure for low-income and underserved residents.

Across all three priority sites, Wilson will incorporate **renewable energy and green building strategies, such as solar energy and greenspace/greenway expansion**, consistent with **Strategy CGP-2.3** of the **2043 Comprehensive Plan**, ensuring that redevelopment reduces utility burdens for low-income households, and creates healthier, safer living environments. Together, these projects will deliver meaningful, equitable benefits by reducing environmental risks, expanding access to services and amenities, generating jobs, increasing housing options, and improving quality of life for the sensitive populations who call Wilson home

f) Resources Needed for Site Reuse - Our proficiency in leveraging diverse funding sources is demonstrated by the recent \$4M award through HUD for 14 park redevelopment projects across Wilson and the \$875K awarded through the Golden Leaf Foundation for flood mitigation and stormwater projects aimed to protect redevelopment investments within our Target Area from the impacts of extreme weather events. The HUD congressionally directed spending grant supports the relocation and enhancement of Pender Street Park, directly adjacent to the Montrose/Wall Recycling site, and has already spurred private investment for the Pender Street Crossing affordable housing project. Building on this momentum, we are eligible for and will pursue funds for the identified reuse strategies through NCDOT, the Golden Leaf Foundation, USEDA, and NC Department of Commerce, which offers building reuse grants, workforce training grants, and community housing grants to further facilitate commercial development. We are eligible for and will pursue future EPA Brownfields Cleanup or Multipurpose Grants and leverage NCDEQ’s Dry Cleaning Solvent Cleanup Act, NC LUST Trust Fund, and Abandoned Tank Program, which fund assessment and cleanup activities at abandoned dry cleaners, leaking UST sites, and abandoned UST sites, respectively. In addition, rail adjacent sites will be eligible for not only NC Railroad Company’s (NCRR’s) brownfield grants (for assessment, cleanup and redevelopment activities) but for Build Ready Sites grants and NCRR Invest grants, that fund tasks like rail construction, rail spurs, and site grading and engineering. We also plan to utilize over \$700,000 in program income from our closed Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund to facilitate cleanup and redevelopment within our Target Area. Finally, to ensure comprehensive revitalization, we will also capitalize on our Downtown Redevelopment Incentive Grant (DRIG) program, which offers incentive grants for infill growth, rehabilitation of older buildings, and development of commercial, residential, and mixed-use projects.

g) Use of Existing Infrastructure - No additional infrastructure upgrades are required for the Reuse of our priority sites, as each is already served by established road networks, water and sewer utilities, stormwater systems, and nearby commercial corridors. Because these sites are located within long-developed urban areas along major transportation routes, such as US 301, Alternate US 264 and Highway 264 Business, these sites allow Wilson to focus investment on environmental assessment and redevelopment goals rather than costly new infrastructure.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a) The Community’s Need for Funding - Wilson County is among the 40 most distressed counties in NC and this grant will be instrumental in addressing the critical needs of our Target Area, where widespread poverty, unemployment, and lack of investment have created a cycle of economic stagnation. With a per capita income of \$15,243 – only a quarter of the state’s average – and an unemployment of more than 21%, our Target

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Area is designated as a low-income community that faces significant barriers to financial stability and opportunity¹. The small population of our Target Area (7,667) makes up over 16% of Wilson’s total population but contributes only a fraction of the sales and property tax revenue. The limited tax base and resulting revenue shortfalls have hindered our ability to carry out assessment and/or remediation with our own resources or attract private investment and redevelopment efforts.

This grant will directly address these issues by providing resources to assess and remediate brownfield sites, paving the way for new developments that will stimulate economic growth and much needed jobs in our Target Area. With a total population just shy of the 50,000-person threshold needed to access CDBG Entitlement funds, this grant is vital to filling the funding gap and providing resources typically available to cities of comparable size. The grant will also supplement existing programs, such as the DRIG, to expand revitalization efforts beyond the downtown core and into our Target Area, helping to offset revenue deficits. By leveraging this funding, we will transform our brownfields sites into productive reuse sites that will build a foundation for long-term economic success and an improved quality of life for our residents.

b) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations – Our Target Areas are home to a high concentration of sensitive populations that include young children, older adults, and economically vulnerable households that are at risk from environmental contamination and neighborhood disinvestment. According to the 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, up to 20.5% of residents are over age 65 and 24.7% are children under 18, which exceeds state and national averages. These populations are especially vulnerable to toxic exposures, respiratory illness, neurological impacts, and mobility limitations. As shown in the table below, between 44% and 85% of residents live below 200% of the federal poverty level, unemployment reaches up to 35%, and as many as 56% of households earning under \$75K are housing cost burdened.

Target Area	% Below 200% FPL	% No HS Diploma	% Unemployed	% Housing Cost Burdened (<\$75k)	% Uninsured	% Age 65+	% With Disability	% Children 18 and under
37195000401	44.2%	16.4%	13.5%	37.8%	15.7%	24.3%	14.4%	21.9%
37195000200	83.0%	40.0%	19.5%	46.1%	30.0%	14.3%	15.0%	20%
37195000801	84.7%	32.2%	35.3%	55.6%	24.9%	11.7%	20.5%	24.7%
North Carolina	29.3%	12.7%	4%	26.1%	8.6%	16.9%	13.4%	21.9%

Our sensitive populations reside in an area with the highest risk (above the 90th state percentile) for exposure to nitrogen dioxide, diesel particulate matter, and UST leaks and a high percentage of pre-1960’s housing with lead paint. Blight within the Target Area has exacerbated crime rates that are 28.2% higher than the national average and include more than 540 incidents of Part 1 crimes, the most serious violent or property crimes, reported over this past year alone. There is also concern that contaminants from our brownfields may be leaching into Hominy Creek, one of the few natural recreational activities for the community and exposing users to these contaminants. Our project will address these issues by identifying actual risks associated with each site (including Hominy Creek). The remediation/mitigation of contaminants will reduce exposure to harmful pollutants and improve overall health outcomes. This grant will accelerate economic growth by filling our vacant buildings with new businesses and new, higher paying jobs for our sensitive populations. The

¹ US Census Bureau 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

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increased tax base will allow us to acquire resources to address healthcare, food insecurity, and crime in our Target Areas, further improving its overall welfare.

c) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions - The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences links chronic health conditions—including asthma, cardiovascular disease, and cancer—to exposure from contaminants such as asbestos, VOCs, SVOCs, and metals, all of which are suspected at our priority sites. CDC Cancer Statistics place Wilson County in the second-highest cancer mortality grouping in NC, with a rate of 167.2 deaths per 100,000 people. While census-tract-level cancer data are unavailable, the concentration of brownfields within the Target Areas suggest elevated localized risk. CDC PLACES data further show that asthma prevalence within the Target Areas range from 12.2% to 14.7%, significantly higher than the state average of 8.7%. These health outcomes are associated with air pollution, diesel exhaust, toxic air releases, lead exposure, and contaminated soil and groundwater—all present throughout the Target Areas. An active railroad corridor directly borders the Montrose/Wall Recycling site and lies within 1,500 feet of the White’s Tire site, further increasing exposure risks.

Assessments will identify site-specific contaminants and exposure pathways, enabling targeted cleanup and mitigation during redevelopment. Improvements outlined in the Hominy Creek Master Plan—including water quality measures and greenway development—will further reduce exposure, mitigate flooding, and expand opportunities for physical activity. These actions will help reduce asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease risks while delivering long-term health and environmental benefits to the surrounding community.

d) Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations - Residents in our Target Areas face significant socio-economic challenges, including a high unemployment rate (20% compared to the state’s 5% and the nation’s 6%) and low per-capita income levels (approximately \$15,000 compared to the \$61,839 state average), heightening their vulnerability to environmental threats. Railroads and major highways have contributed to the isolation of these neighborhoods from Wilson’s economic core, limiting access to jobs, services, and investment. The NCDEQ Site Locator Tool identifies numerous potential contamination sources within the Target Areas, including 8 hazardous waste facilities, 4 brownfields sites, and nearly 100 documented release incidents. Low educational attainment (23% of the population) reduces opportunities for residents to participate in community decision-making, compounding long-standing disparities. Hominy Creek, which bisects the Target Area, also poses a recurring flood risk—40 homes were lost during Hurricane Matthew, and subsequent storm events continue to threaten properties due to insufficient stormwater controls. In addition, previous zoning and governmental policies in our Target Areas encouraged development of industrial and manufacturing businesses to support the tobacco industry and nearby residences for their workers. As these sites have become abandoned, the surrounding communities have encountered disinvestment and become inhabited by our economically challenging and sensitive populations. The former policies and resulting operations have proven problematic as they have been shown to disproportionately impact the communities that now live there. This grant will identify and reduce threats through our ESAs and subsequent cleanup activities. Our reuse strategies will reverse the economic trends by bringing new businesses, jobs and amenities to our Target Areas, increasing the tax base and tax revenue.

Community Engagement

e-f Project Involvement & Project Roles

Name of Organization	Entity’s Mission	Point of Contact (name & email)	Specific Involvement in the project or assistance provided
St John Community Development Corporation	Provide social & educational services that help create positive change in individuals & families; and 2) create & facilitate economic development through real estate and workforce development.	Dr. Michael Bell, Executive Director 252-265-9764	Provide connection to the local community and solicit input on project activities in the vicinity of the Montrose/Wall Recycling and White’s Tire site

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Wilson Community Improvement Assoc. (WCIA)	Improve the quality of life of all residents in Wilson and surrounding counties by building and supporting stable, safe, and economically viable neighborhoods.	Barbara Blackston, Director blackstonwcia@earthlink.net 252-315-4389	Assist in representing the communities surrounding the priority sites and throughout Wilson; significant partner for community outreach for the grant.
Wilson Housing Authority	The agency's mission is to provide safe, decent, affordable housing to the Wilson Community, ensuring the sustainability and responsible land use in our development that is required for a forward-thinking community.	Kelly Vick, President-CEO kvick@wilsonha.org 252-291-2245 ext. 250	Identify problematic sites impacting neighborhoods, and develop housing on brownfield properties, where appropriate.
Wilson Economic Development Council (EDC)	Responsible for making Wilson more attractive to industrial prospects and marketing Wilson to the community.	Jennifer Lantz, Executive Director jlantz@wilsonedc.com 252-237-1115	Assist in prioritizing sites for reuse, maintain a site inventory in their offices and promote the use of our sites during the recruitment of new business to the City.
Wilson Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC)	Wilson Downtown Development Corporation's mission is to lead community investment and drive the social, cultural and economic engine of an authentic Wilson by creating and promoting a vibrant, innovative and sustainable downtown.	Kimberly Van Dyk, Staff Representative kvandyk@wilsonnc.org (252) 293-5306	Large group of city personnel, civic leaders, business owners and residents. Members provide critical program input. <u>Updates given at these meetings are disseminated throughout the community by these members.</u>
Wilson Downtown Properties	Leader in creative placemaking and property redevelopment projects, through economic development, art, culture, innovation and preservation, that drives community and economic investment in Historic Downtown Wilson.	Frank Kidd, President fkidd@myglnc.com (252) 299-1285	Provide guidance on reuse options; recruit private developers; help lead community outreach efforts; disseminate information to target area property owners.

a) Incorporating Community Input - Wilson's strong foundation for community engagement in our Target Area is shown by the 2043 Comprehensive Plan, 2022 Housing and Reinvestment Plan, and Hominy Creek Master Plan. Meaningful input will be solicited and considered at our semi-annual Advisory Board and quarterly WDDC meetings (attended by 30-40 people in-person and virtually). These are our primary and most effective communication channels with stakeholders, including members actively representing their neighborhoods, where regular project updates will be provided. Community input will also be gathered through direct neighborhood encounters, civic clubs and associations, and addressed in small group meetings. Input will be responded to directly at meetings or through follow-up email or written correspondence. Information will also be shared via email lists, newspaper articles, Wilson's TV channel, project brochures, and social media and will be offered in English and Spanish to support the large Hispanic community within our Target Areas.

(3) TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a-d) Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task 1: Programmatic
i. Project Implementation - Mr. John Morck, Planning & Community Development Manager, will serve as the Project Manager. With support from our Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), John will oversee grant management, compliance with EPA award terms and conditions, ensure that all tasks on completed on time and within budget, oversee all coordination and final work products from the QEP, organizing monthly team meetings, prepare quarterly reports, update ACRES, and prepare the final grant closure report.
ii. Anticipated Schedule - Throughout the grant cycle on the schedule outlined above.
iii. Task Lead – Project Manager John Morck with assistance from the QEP.
iv. Outputs – 48 Team Meetings, 16 Quarterly Reports, 48 monthly ACRES reports, and 1 Closure Report.

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Task 2: Public Involvement
i. Project Implementation: The Project Manager will coordinate with community representatives during Advisory Board meetings (two times annually), WDDC presentations (4 annually), public outreach sessions conducted annually (minimum), one-on-one and/or small group sessions to develop and distribute approximately 1,000 project flyer/factsheets, and updates to Wilson’s website.
ii. Anticipated Schedule: Advisory Board Meetings will take place annually within Q2 and Q4. Website creation, WDDC presentations, and public outreach sessions will be completed/held by Q4 of the first year and updated quarterly as needed. Small group sessions, distribution of materials, and website updates will take place quarterly, as needed, throughout the lifecycle of the project.
iii. Task Lead: Project Manager John Morck with assistance from our chosen QEP.
iv. Outputs: Community Involvement Plan (CIP), at least 6 Advisory Board Meetings, 12 WDDC presentations, at least 3 public outreach sessions, project flyer/factsheet, and 1 project website.
Task 3: Site Inventory
i. Project Implementation – John Morck will work with our chosen QEP to conduct a detailed GIS inventory of the Target Area and adjacent census tracts within 6 months of grant award. This inventory will supplement our current inventory and be presented at WDDC and community input meetings and then our Advisory Board will develop the parameters to begin site prioritization. Non-EPA grant resources not needed.
ii. Anticipated Schedule: Year 1, Q2: QEP will complete additional GIS site inventory and present to Advisory Board. Year 1, Q4: Site prioritization criteria and prioritization list completed by Advisory Board.
iii. Task Lead: Project Manager - John Morck with assistance from our chosen QEP.
iv. Outputs: Completed inventory including a prioritization score for each site.
Task 4: Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)
i. Project Implementation - Complete 12 Phase I ESAs on eligible sites in accordance with ASTM 1527-05/21 and 40 CFR Part 312. Complete 7 Phase II ESAs in accordance with ASTM 1903-11 upon approval of site specific QAPPs. Before initiation of Phase II ESA activities, a Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and Site-Specific Sampling and Analysis Plans (SSAPs) will be submitted to EPA and NCDEQ for review and approval. QAPPs will relate to both priority and the non-priority sites. Task 4 activities will not require non-EPA grant resources.
ii. Anticipated Schedule: Phase I ESAs to begin during Q1, Year 1 and continue 18-24 months after start date with all Phase I ESAs complete by Q4, Year2. Phase II ESAs will commence, if deemed necessary, following the completion of the Phase 1 and all Phase IIs will be completed by Q4, Year 3. Generic QAPP will be in Q3, Year 1 prior to SSAP preparation and Phase II activities.
iii. Task Lead: Our chosen QEP will lead these activities due to the required technical expertise to conduct them. John Morck will oversee the project and review all outputs.
iv. Outputs: 1 Generic QAPP, 12 Phase I ESAs, 7 SSAPs and Phase II ESAs
Task 5: Cleanup and Reuse Planning (CUP)
i. Project Implementation – We are committing 30% of our overall budget to cleanup planning demonstrating Wilson’s readiness-to-redevelop approach. We anticipate 4 ACM/LBP designs. Four Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), or other equivalent document, will be prepared for sites with contamination to include cleanup costs, evaluating cleanup alternatives. We also anticipate 5 Property Condition Assessments (PCAs). We will also assist with negotiating brownfield agreements and other regulatory agencies. The remaining portions of our budget will be used for a comprehensive reuse plan, the type and scope of which will depend on the sites and expertise needed.

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ii. Anticipated Schedule: All ABCA and Cleanup Planning will begin place during Year 4 and will be completed by Year 4 Q4.

iii. Task Lead: The chosen QEP will have the required technical expertise to lead and conduct these activities. Project oversight will be provided by our Project Manager, John Morck.

Outputs: 4 ACM/LBP designs, 5 PCAs, 4 ABCAs and 1 reuse/concept plan.

e) Cost Estimates

	Project Tasks (\$)					
	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	
Category	Programmatic	P.I.	Inventory	ESAs (65%)	CUP (30%)	Total
Travel		\$5,000				\$5,000
Supplies		\$2,000				\$2,000
Contractual	\$14,400	\$18,775	\$5,525	\$306,200	\$148,100	\$493,000
Total	\$14,400	\$25,775	\$5,525	\$306,200	\$148,100	\$500,000

Task 1- Programmatic: Total Budget \$14,400 Contractual (2 hours per month for 48 months @ \$150/hour) to attend monthly meetings and assist our Project Manager with ACRES updates, quarterly reports, and the closure report.

Task 2 - Public Involvement: Total Budget - \$25,775 *Travel-\$5,000* The Project Manager will attend relevant conferences and trainings to include the National Regional Brownfields conferences, Regional Grantee Workshops, and any other relevant trainings such as workshops sponsored by NCDEQ. *Supplies-\$2,000* Printing costs, meeting supplies, and technology costs for Advisory Board, WDDC and public/community input meetings. *Contractual \$18,775:* Our hired QEP's assistance in public outreach, including developing/maintaining our website (20 hours @ \$180), creation of materials and community involvement plan (16 hours @ \$150) preparation for and presenting at public meetings and Advisory Board meetings, and one-on-one communication with residents, property owners, and prospective developers to discuss the benefits of the project (45 hours @ \$180; 20 hours @ \$200; and \$675 for travel).

Task 3-Site Inventory: Total Budget - \$5,525 *Contractual* (20 hrs @ \$150; 10 hrs @ \$185; \$675 for travel)

Task 4-Site Characterization: Total Budget – \$306,200 *Contractual* (12 Phase I ESAs at \$4,000 each; Generic QAPP at \$7,600; 7 SSAPs at \$3,800 each; and 7 Phase II ESAs at an average of \$32,000 each). Note that costs are subject to flexibility due to site-specific criteria.

Task 5-Cleanup and Reuse Planning: Total Budget – \$148,100 (4 ACM/LBP removal designs at \$5,000 each; 5 PCAs at \$10,000; 4 ABCAs at \$4,000 each; and \$62,100 for targeted cleanup/reuse planning).

f) Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results - Wilson will hold monthly conference calls with the project team (including EPA and NCDEQ) to review project status, budget, and schedule. This will ensure our EPA Project Manager is fully informed, Wilson is meeting their expectations, and provide a means to quickly address any part that may be off schedule. Wilson's Project Manager and/or QEP will measure and report results by entering information into ACRES at the end of each quarter throughout the award term. The Project Manager will review the ACRES entries at each monthly meeting to ensure timely reporting of data and closely monitor the QEP. Our Project Manager will also track workplan timelines in Outlook or other scheduling software to ensure we stay on track. The Advisory Board will utilize GIS products and project management software, such as Monday.com, to measure and evaluate progress and review, discuss, and revise the schedule as needed during semi-annual meetings. Collectively these efforts will ensure that our **specific outputs** (including those listed in section 3.a.iv) and **specific outcomes** (including community

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participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created) are achieved. **Wilson will continue to contribute our own resources for programmatic oversight activities, community outreach, and participation in project tasks. Based on experience, we anticipate approximately 400 hours at \$53.25 per hour (\$21,300).**

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a) – c) Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure, and Key Staff - Wilson has the capacity to administer the EPA grant funds based on previous experience in federal and state grant management. Mr. John Morck, Planning & Community Development Manager, will serve as the Project Manager. Mr. Morck has more than nine years with project management and oversight and has successfully managed Wilson's previous brownfield projects. Ms. Terry Worley is the Wilson's Long-Range Planner and will assist Mr. Morck in implementation of this grant. She has extensive experience in mapping and data management related to ongoing brownfields program projects. Finally, Ms. Jessica Grimsley, Wilson's Grants Manager, will assist with budget management, reporting, and drawdowns. She has over 8 years of accounting experience and oversees all of Wilson's current grant contracts.

d) Acquiring Additional Resources - Wilson will procure a QEP experienced in brownfields in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200 and 1500. Wilson's Purchasing Division of the Finance Department procures services efficiently, effectively, and at the best value for Wilson in a timely manner. The QEP will be selected by Fall 2026 to start project activities upon award. Wilson's Project Manager will closely supervise the QEP to ensure all requirements are met within the duration of the project. We will also work with city personnel and members of our target area to ensure that local firms are hired when appropriate. We will also encourage contractors, drillers, environmental service providers, etc. to post job openings on our project website.

e) Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

1. Accomplishments - Wilson has received previous assessment grants. A grant awarded in 2017 completed seven Phase I ESAs, five Phase II ESAs, four ABCAs, and one Ground Penetrating Radar survey. This grant was closed in 2020 with all funds expended. A 2022 grant award was recently closed (almost a year early) with all funds expended and included 19 Phase I ESA, 5 Phase II ESAs, 12 ACM/LBP surveys, and 2 cleanup plans and is projected to close a year early with all funds fully expended. Assessments conducted under the grants referenced above has resulted in an additional \$876,000 leveraged to fund additional cleanup and abatement activities to facilitate redevelopment in and around our new baseball stadium. We anticipate assessments associated with this grant to unlock an additional \$212M in economic development for downtown Wilson. For each of the awards listed above, Wilson has submitted all financial and reporting requirements on time and in compliance with their associated agreements and all outputs and outcomes are accurately reflected in ACRES.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements - We have a remarkable track record for grant compliance AND leveraging our work for success. For each brownfield grant we've received, Wilson has complied with all designated workplans, schedules, terms and conditions. ACRES reporting and other grant deliverables have been timely and accurate and all grant funds were expended under previous grants. Our proactive project parameters that increase the efficiency of our management capabilities have ensured compliance and that the expected results have been achieved. Our ACRES reporting reflects our success, with our brownfield projects leveraging millions in additional funding and investments. Our new minor league baseball stadium (a \$90M investment) is being built on a block containing 8 brownfield sites in desperate need of being assessed under this grant. This transformative project is a result of, in part, the fact that the environmental assessments and planning necessary to attract this project were conducted years ago under our previous grant awards. We know how to turn these grant dollars into redevelopment/reuse!

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The City of Wilson is a municipality and is identified as a General-Purpose Unit of Government as defined in 2 CFR 200.1 which is eligible for funding under this solicitation.
- b. The City of Wilson is NOT exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the IRC.

2. Community Involvement

Within three months of receiving the grant, the City of Wilson will develop a comprehensive Community Involvement Plan (CIP) designed to actively engage community members in our project. Our CIP will include several initiatives to foster participation and input from local residents. We will create an informative flyer and factsheet outlining the program's objectives to share at all community and public meetings. Additionally, we plan to host outreach sessions within the target area, allowing citizens to learn about the project, discuss their potential roles, and provide feedback on our initial inventory of sites. We aim to hold at least one outreach session per year to ensure ongoing engagement. To keep the community informed and involved, we will publish a semi-annual newsletter detailing our project's progress, activities, and opportunities for public input. This newsletter will be distributed through various channels, including mail, the city's offices, community centers, and our project website.

To sustain community interest and momentum, we will provide regular updates during Wilson Downtown Development Corporation meetings, which are attended by 30-40 community members, including our project's advisory board members. These meetings will continue to offer both in-person and virtual options to maximize participation. We also plan to engage with local groups, civic clubs, and neighborhood associations throughout the project's development. Our outreach will extend through email newsletters, newspaper articles detailing project activities, updates via the City's TV channel, brochures distributed to the community, and regular posts on our social media platforms. By prioritizing these strategies, we aim to ensure that the community's voice is integral to our project's success.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable. The City of Wilson will procure its consultant and contractor in compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, and/or 40 CFR Part 33.