

APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

1. Applicant Identification

North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG)
P.O. Box C
Decatur, AL 35602

2. Website URL

NARCOG – narcog.org
City of Decatur – cityofdecatural.com
City of Moulton – cityofmoultonal.com

3. Funding Requested

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Assessment Coalition
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,500,000

4. Location

Non-lead member: City of Decatur

- a. **City**: Decatur
- b. **County**: Morgan County
- c. **State**: Alabama

Non-lead member: City of Moulton

- a. **City**: Moulton
- b. **County**: Lawrence County
- c. **State**: Alabama

All geographic boundaries

- a. **Cities**: Baileyton, Berlin, Colony, Courtland, Cullman, Decatur, Dodge City, Eva, Fairview, Falkville, Garden City, Good Hope, Hanceville, Hartselle, Hillsboro, Holly Pond, Moulton, North Courtland, Priceville, Somerville, South Vinemont, Town Creek, Trinity, West Point
- b. **Counties**: Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan Counties
- c. **State**: Alabama

5. Coalition Members' Target Areas and Priority Site Information

Lead Coalition member: NARCOG

Target area: Courtland/North Courtland

Addresses of the priority sites:

Courtland Gas Station
3572 Jefferson St.
Courtland, Alabama 35618

Auto Service Shop
Jefferson St. & Clinton St.
Courtland, Alabama 35618

Coalition member: City of Decatur
Target area: Decatur Downtown-Waterfront
Addresses of the priority sites:

ADM Cotton Oil Warehouse
 1 Moulton St.
 Decatur, Alabama 35601

Culver’s Dry Cleaners
 334 1st Ave. SE
 Decatur, Alabama 35601

Coalition member: City of Moulton
Target area: Moulton
Address of the priority site:

Moulton Gas Station
 14219 Court St.
 Moulton, Alabama 35650

6. Contacts

a. Project Director

Joey Hester
 Director of Planning & Development
 256.355.4515
jhester@narcog.org
 P.O. Box C
 Decatur, AL 35602

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Robby Cantrell
 Executive Director
 256.355.4515
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 P.O. Box C
 Decatur, AL 35602

7. Population

Town of Courtland, Alabama: 777
 Town of North Courtland, Alabama: 405
 City of Decatur, Alabama: 57,760
 City of Moulton, Alabama: 3,397

8. Other Factors

Sample Format for Providing Information on the Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	1, 2, 6
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is continuous 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).	3
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	5
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	5
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	5

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.	11
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

Letter from Alabama Department of Environmental Management attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not applicable.

EDWARD F. POOLOS
DIRECTOR

JEFFERY W. KITCHENS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR

Alabama Department of Environmental Management
adem.alabama.gov

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Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1463
(334) 271-7700 ■ FAX (334) 271-7950

January 12, 2026

Mr. Joseph Hester
Director of Planning and Development
North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments
PO Box C
216 Jackson Street SE
Decatur, AL 35602
jhester@narcog.org

RE: Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant Support

Dear Mr. Hester:

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) is pleased to support the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) in your pursuit of a FY25 Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

We understand that NARCOG is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals and the livability of communities within Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan Counties. NARCOG connects regional and community leaders, organizations, and businesses to resources that create more vibrant and livable communities. NARCOG is seeking to secure and utilize EPA assessment grant funds to identify and resolve potential environmental issues at the numerous brownfield sites located in your region, and to help spur revitalization in the area. We understand that the focus of your grant application will primarily be communities along the Singing River trail system in north Alabama, and that you hope to clear out potential environmental issues on sites in this area with the grant funds.

The ADEM Redevelopment Section routinely aids governments interested in brownfields redevelopment. Upon request, ADEM may participate in the various outreach activities needed to accomplish your brownfields project goals, entry of sites into the ADEM Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP), or use of our own grant funds for conducting site assessment (offered on a first come/first served basis, subject to fund availability).

We wish you and the residents of the NARCOG community success in the pursuit of your grant. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance. For any questions regarding this letter, please contact Crystal L. Collins at 334-279-3067 or via email at ccollins@adem.alabama.gov.

Sincerely,

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

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



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

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

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



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION. 1.a. Coalition Members. The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) is the lead coalition member and fiscal agent for the coalition and is a grant-eligible regional planning organization in north-central Alabama. The coalition includes two non-lead members, both grant eligible as local units of government: **the City of Decatur and the City of Moulton**. Although eligible to apply, the non-lead members lack the capacity to independently apply for and manage an EPA Brownfields grant. The City of Moulton is a small, rural municipality with **limited staff, constrained fiscal capacity, and no in-house environmental or brownfields grants management expertise**. Moulton has **never received an EPA Brownfields grant** and has not had access to Brownfields funding or technical assistance to address legacy sites within its community. Participation in this coalition represents its first opportunity to access EPA Brownfields resources. Decatur previously received an EPA Brownfields grant in 2012, which is long closed. Since that time, **staff turnover and expanded redevelopment responsibilities** have reduced institutional capacity to independently administer a new Brownfields grant without overextending current personnel. While Decatur maintains planning and economic development staff, managing a Brownfields grant at this time would compete with ongoing projects and exceed available staff capacity. None of the coalition members currently hold an **active EPA Brownfields grant**, and no counties or other eligible entities within their jurisdictions have open EPA Brownfields grants. As a result, coalition communities lack access to EPA Brownfields funding and associated technical resources, despite the presence of vacant, underutilized, and potentially contaminated properties. The coalition structure is therefore necessary to ensure EPA Brownfields resources reach communities that cannot effectively access or manage them independently.

1.b. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas. The geographic boundary for the proposed grant activities includes **Cullman County, Lawrence County, and Morgan County, Alabama**, which together comprise NARCOG’s service area. Within these three counties, NARCOG serves a population of **246,387 residents across approximately 2,005 square miles**, encompassing **24 incorporated cities and towns**. Only **three municipalities exceed 10,000 residents**, reflecting a predominantly rural region characterized by small municipal tax bases, limited staff capacity, and constrained access to redevelopment capital. All assessment and planning activities funded through this grant will occur within these three counties, which share common brownfield challenges rooted in historic land use patterns and uneven economic transition.

Life and work across the region have long been shaped by its natural landscape and transportation routes, including the Appalachian foothills, the William B. Bankhead National Forest to the south, and the Tennessee River along its northern edge. Our beloved Tennessee River is the lifeblood of our region. The river is also called the “Singing River” based on legend that its flowing waters and shoals sound like a woman singing: soft and melodious in calm conditions and louder when waters run high. It has been the historical central artery of the region’s trade, industry, and community growth for generations. While current planning efforts focus on reconnecting people and communities to the river through initiatives such as the Tennessee RiverLine and the Singing River Trail, many of today’s brownfield challenges stem from earlier eras of development. Beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing through much of the twentieth century, **industrial, manufacturing, and transportation-related uses** concentrated along the river and adjacent rail corridors, particularly in and around the City of Decatur. River access supported industrial processes and barge transport, while rail connections linked the region to Birmingham to the south and Huntsville to the north, shaping linear patterns of development that once anchored the regional economy. Over time, changes in technology, global markets, and industrial practices led to the **consolidation, automation, relocation, or closure** of many of these operations. The legacy of that transition remains across the NARCOG region today. Numerous former industrial and commercial properties were left vacant or underutilized, with environmental conditions that were never fully characterized. These brownfields remain concentrated along historic riverfronts and railways where environmental uncertainty continues to **deter reinvestment, complicate reuse planning, and affect nearby neighborhoods**. The brownfields’ impacts are most evident in Morgan and Lawrence Counties. Morgan County, anchored by the City of Decatur, has experienced repeated cycles of industrial closure and restructuring, resulting in episodic job losses even as advanced manufacturing has emerged. Most recently, the 2025 phase-out of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) manufacturing at 3M’s Decatur facility eliminated 170 jobs, affecting **workforce stability and local revenues** in an area with a long industrial history. In Lawrence County, the impacts of job loss have been more severe and enduring. The 2013 closure of the International Paper mill in Courtland resulted in the loss of 1,100 direct jobs and left more than 2,200 acres of river-adjacent industrial land idle for nearly a decade. The closure also disrupted thousands of auxiliary forestry and logging jobs statewide, contributing to **long-term employment instability, population decline, and reduced household income in communities** with limited replacement employment opportunities.

At the same time, new momentum is emerging along these same historic corridors through the Singing River Trail. The Singing River Trail is a planned, multi-jurisdictional greenway corridor following the Tennessee River and its historic transportation and industrial alignments, connecting the NARCOG communities of Decatur, Priceville, Courtland, North Courtland and Moulton with other cities across the North Alabama region. By tracing riverfronts, rail corridors, and former employment centers, the Singing River Trail highlights areas where



unresolved environmental conditions remain a critical barrier to reinvestment. As planning and investment along the corridor advance, the Singing River Trail provides a practical, corridor-based framework for prioritizing brownfield assessments where clarifying site conditions can reduce risk, support reuse planning, and enable coordinated, economically viable redevelopment. Through EPA-funded environmental assessments and cleanup planning at priority sites within each Target Area, this grant will help reduce environmental uncertainty at legacy industrial properties, enable informed reuse decisions, and support coordinated reinvestment along the Singing River Trail in communities that lack the capacity to address these barriers. By reducing environmental uncertainty at these sites, the project will also help mitigate the impacts of brownfields, such as **suppressed property values, stalled private investment, and limited access to job-generating land uses**, that disproportionately affect communities along the corridor.

The coalition has identified three non-overlapping Target Areas (TAs) for this grant, one within each coalition member’s geographic boundary. All three Target Areas are located along the Singing River Trail corridor or its connected spur linking the Tennessee River south to the Bankhead National Forest and reflect shared brownfield challenges tied to historic industrial land use, economic transition, and community vulnerability.

Target Area 1: Decatur Downtown–Waterfront (Decatur). Selected by the City of Decatur (non-lead), **TA1: Decatur DW** encompasses the city’s downtown and riverfront, spanning 8.76 miles along the Tennessee River and including Census Tracts 1, 4, 6, and 7. The Target Area has a population of **15,170** and includes some of the region’s oldest industrial properties and most persistent brownfield challenges. Census Tract 6, where the former ADM Cotton Oil Warehouse priority site is located, has a **poverty rate of 40.5%**, more than double the Alabama rate (15.6%) and more than triple the national rate (12.4%). Environmental uncertainty at legacy riverfront properties continues to constrain redevelopment in an area central to downtown revitalization and key to regional connectivity along the Singing River Trail.

Target Area 2: City of Moulton (Moulton). Selected by the City of Moulton (non-lead), **TA2: Moulton** is defined by its city limits and covers 5.99 square miles with a population of **3,397**. Moulton is located along a planned Singing River Trail spur that connects the Tennessee River at Courtland south through the community toward the Bankhead National Forest. The Target Area includes a high concentration of sensitive populations, including residents with disabilities (26.4% compared to 16.2% statewide and 13.0% nationally) and seniors age 65 and over (30.5% compared to 17.5% statewide and 16.8% nationally). Like many small rural communities, Moulton has experienced gradual population decline and commercial disinvestment. The historic courthouse square, once the city’s economic and civic center, now includes a vacant courthouse and underutilized storefronts that present brownfield challenges. With courthouse renovations underway and Moulton’s role as a connector between the Tennessee River corridor and the Bankhead National Forest, environmental assessment and reuse planning represent a timely opportunity to support downtown revitalization and tourism-related economic activity.

Target Area 3: Courtland / North Courtland (NARCOG). Selected by NARCOG (lead), **TA3: Courtland** encompasses the Town of Courtland and the Town of North Courtland in Lawrence County, covering approximately 3.6 square miles with a combined population of **1,182**. The Target Area lies directly along the Tennessee River and within a core segment of the planned Singing River Trail. It occupies a strategic position along the main trail corridor and serves as the connection point between the core river alignment and a planned spur extending south through Moulton toward the Bankhead National Forest. **TA3: Courtland** has experienced sustained economic contraction following the closure of the International Paper mill in 2013, which eliminated approximately 1,100 jobs and left more than 2,200 acres of river-adjacent industrial land idle for nearly a decade. The closure also disrupted supporting forestry and logistics activity across the county, contributing to long-term employment instability and population decline. Between 2000 and 2020, the Target Area experienced a **population decrease of -21.7%**, compared to growth of 13.0% statewide and 18.2% nationally. Through EPA-funded ESAs and planning within the coalition’s Target Areas, this grant will reduce uncertainty at legacy industrial properties, support informed reuse decisions, and help reintroduce productive land uses along the Singing River Trail, strengthening employment access, stabilizing land values, and supporting long-term community recovery in an area with limited capacity to address these challenges independently.

1.c. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites. The coalition has identified five priority brownfield sites, ensuring that each coalition member’s Target Area includes at least one priority location. Across the three Target Areas, 35 brownfield sites have been identified, ranging from less than one acre to 40 acres in size. These properties include former gas stations, a junkyard, a dry cleaner, a former lumber yard, warehouses, a flooring business, an old hospital, a five-acre industrial site near the river, and older buildings with asbestos concerns located along major travel corridors. Many of these sites lie along historic transportation routes now aligned with the Singing River Trail and face unresolved environmental challenges that limit redevelopment.

TA1: Decatur DW (Morgan County) – Decatur (non-lead) Target Area
Priority Site 1: ADM Cotton Oil Warehouse (PS1: ADM Warehouse) – 1 Moulton St., Decatur, Alabama 35601
Owned by the City, this 7.4-acre former industrial site contains four vacant structures totaling approximately 71,670 square



feet, including two 25,000-SF warehouse buildings constructed circa 1900, a 5,150-SF storage shed, and a 16,520-SF industrial building built in 1901. The site supported cottonseed oil processing and storage for decades and once employed hundreds of workers. Contaminants of concern (COCs) include **petroleum hydrocarbons; residual agricultural and industrial chemicals; and metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs)** associated with machinery operations. The site is bounded by rail lines to the north and east, commercial uses to the south, and residential neighborhoods to the west. Dry Branch, a tributary to the Tennessee River, runs along its western boundary and portions of the site lie within a FEMA floodplain. The site also sits in a Qualified Opportunity Zone (QOZ). This site is prioritized due to its prominent waterfront location, proximity to residential neighborhoods, direct alignment with the Singing River Trail, and strong redevelopment interest driven by its historic architecture. Environmental uncertainty remains the primary barrier to reuse.

Priority Site 2: Culver’s Dry Cleaners (PS2: Culver’s Cleaners) – 334 1st Ave. SE, Decatur, Alabama 35601

Located in a QOZ, this City-owned site consists of a vacant 6,074-SF building constructed in 1946 on 0.93 acres. The property operated as a dry cleaner for more than 30 years and is located immediately adjacent to the Morgan County Farmers’ Market, which is along the Singing River Trail. Potential contaminants include **chlorinated solvents** affecting soil and groundwater, as well as **asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and lead-based paint (LBP)**. The site is prioritized due to its proximity to sensitive receptors, including a heavily used public market and surrounding underserved neighborhoods, and its planned reuse as an expansion of the adjacent Farmers Market, which cannot proceed without environmental assessment.

TA2: Moulton (Lawrence County) – Moulton (non-lead) Target Area

Priority Site 3: Moulton Gas Station (PS3: Moulton Gas) – 14219 Court St., Moulton, Alabama 35650

PS3: Moulton Gas includes a vacant 1,820-SF building on approximately 0.5 acres with underground storage tanks (USTs remaining in place). Located at a prominent downtown intersection along the Singing River Trail spur, the site is adjacent to the Moulton Senior Center, a large church campus, and nearby residences. Contaminants of concern include **petroleum hydrocarbons** affecting soil and groundwater. The site is prioritized due to its visibility, proximity to sensitive populations, location along the Singing River Trail spur and the northern gateway to the Bankhead National Forest, and its role as a barrier to downtown reinvestment and tourism-oriented reuse in a community with limited capacity to address environmental uncertainty.

TA3: Courtland (Lawrence County) – NARCOG (lead) Target Area

Priority Site 4: Courtland Gas Station (PS4: Courtland Gas) – 3572 Jefferson St., Courtland, Alabama 35618

This 0.2-acre site includes a vacant 3,453-SF building constructed in 1945 that is in significant disrepair, with roof failure, missing bay doors, overgrowth, and structural deterioration. The property is located at the eastern gateway to the Target Area along Jefferson Street, directly across from Roy Coffee Park (a local baseball field and children’s playground) and adjacent to residences located within 50 feet. Signage announcing the developing Singing River Trail is already present at the site.

Priority Site 5: Auto Service Shop (PS5: Auto Shop) – Jefferson St. & Clinton St., Courtland, Alabama 35618

This vacant 0.5-acre site, located in a QOZ, includes a 2,153-SF concrete building constructed in 1960 that remains structurally suitable for reuse. The site serves as the western gateway to the Target Area and is located approximately 1,000 feet east of Big Nance Creek, where a park and kayak launch are planned. The site lies along the planned Singing River Trail and is directly adjacent to residential properties within 100 feet. COCs at **both sites Priority Sites in the Target Area include petroleum hydrocarbons, solvents, degreasers, lead, cadmium, ACM, and LBP** associated with historic auto service and fueling operations, and older buildings. Both Priority Sites are prioritized due to their gateway locations along the primary east-west corridor through **TA3: Courtland**, proximity to residences in an underserved community, alignment with the Singing River Trail, and the potential health and safety risks posed by unresolved contamination.

1.d. Identifying Additional Sites. The coalition anticipates that grant funds will remain after completion of assessments at the identified priority sites. Any remaining funds will be used to identify and assess additional eligible brownfield sites within NARCOG’s geographic boundary. Process for Identifying and Selecting Additional Sites: NARCOG will lead the identification, screening, and selection of additional sites in coordination with the non-lead coalition members **through the Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC)**. The BAC includes representatives from the City of Decatur and the City of Moulton (non-leads), NARCOG staff, local planning and economic development partners, and community stakeholders with knowledge of site conditions and redevelopment priorities. This structure ensures that site selection reflects both local conditions and regional redevelopment objectives. Non-lead coalition members will play a central role in advancing sites within their respective jurisdictions. The **coalition non-leads** will nominate candidate sites based on local knowledge, redevelopment priorities, and community input; assist with preliminary screening and coordination of site access; and participate in prioritization decisions through the BAC. Consistent with EPA coalition requirements, at least two sites within each non-lead member’s jurisdiction will be assessed under this grant, ensuring an equitable distribution of assessment resources across coalition members. Additional sites may also be identified through outreach to local governments and property owners; review of historic land use, zoning, and tax records; coordination with economic development partners; and field reconnaissance. Community input gathered through BAC meetings and local engagement activities will inform site nominations and prioritization throughout the grant period. Criteria for Prioritizing Additional Sites: Candidate sites will be prioritized using **consistent criteria applied across the coalition**, including: known or suspected contamination that presents a barrier to reuse; proximity to residential areas, community assets, or public access corridors; redevelopment potential that supports economic activity or community-serving uses; feasibility of securing site access; and alignment with



adopted local plans, corridor initiatives, and investment strategies, including the Singing River Trail. This structured process ensures that remaining EPA-funded assessment resources are directed to sites where clarifying environmental conditions can most effectively reduce uncertainty and support informed reuse decisions across the coalition’s service area.

1.e. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans. Reuse strategies for the coalition’s priority sites are directly aligned with adopted local and regional revitalization plans that emphasize downtown reinvestment, river-oriented development, tourism, and trail-based economic activity. These include the One Decatur Plan, the Singing River Trail Master Plan, the Lawrence County Master Trail Plan, the Courtland Economic Development and Recovery Program Plan, the North Courtland Comprehensive Plan, and the NARCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Together, these plans establish a shared vision of reconnecting communities to the Tennessee River, strengthening historic downtowns, and leveraging recreational infrastructure to support long-term economic resilience. Eligible planning activities, including community meetings and stakeholder engagement, will guide the development of reuse strategies for the Priority Sites. These efforts will help ensure that projected reuse aligns with local land use and revitalization plans and advances community-driven priorities.

Site/Reuse/Eligible Planning	Alignment with Plans
PS1: ADM Warehouse (Morgan County) <u>Retail/Entertainment/Greenspace Campus</u> Site Reuse Vision/Revitalization Plan	The planned reuse for PS1: ADM Warehouse is (modeled after Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment in Birmingham) an anchor for the Decatur Downtown Commons, a mixed-use retail and entertainment campus with restaurants, event space, shopping, art studios/creative space, and publicly accessible greenspace. The planned reuse for PS2: Culver’s Cleaners is an expansion of the adjacent farmers’ market. Together, these reuses advance <i>One Decatur Plan</i> goals to revitalize the urban core, improve deteriorated properties, expand cultural and lifestyle amenities, diversify the local economy, increase local food access, and support small business growth. Redevelopment of these prominent, river-adjacent sites will activate long-vacant industrial properties, reconnect surrounding neighborhoods to the Tennessee River, and establish high-visibility destinations along the Singing River Trail that reinforce downtown revitalization and corridor-based investment.
PS2: Culver’s Cleaners (Morgan County) <u>Farmer’s Market Extension</u> Fiscal Impact Analysis	
PS3: Moulton Gas (Lawrence County) <u>Singing River Trail Trailhead</u> Site Reuse Assessment	The project reuse for both sites is Singing River Trail Trailheads. Each site is located near its respective downtown, positioning trail users within walking distance of local restaurants, services, and community destinations. The <i>Singing River Trail Master Plan</i> identifies trailheads as essential infrastructure for trail success, providing amenities such as parking, restrooms, wayfinding, and visitor information that encourage longer stays and local spending. Reuse of these sites is appropriate to their size and configuration and is consistent with the <i>Lawrence County Master Trail Plan</i> , which emphasizes linking the trail to downtowns, cultural assets, and historic areas to support tourism and strengthen the regional recreational economy.
PS4: Courtland Gas (Lawrence County) <u>Singing River Trail Trailhead</u> Site Reuse Assessment	
PS5: Auto Shop (Lawrence County) <u>Café and sundries store</u> Evaluation of Market Viability	The projected reuse strategy is a café and sundries store serving Singing River Trail users, visitors to the adjacent Big Nance Creek Park and kayak launch, paddling enthusiasts accessing Courtland from the Tennessee RiverLine, and local residents. This reuse aligns with the adopted <i>Courtland Economic Development and Recovery Program Plan</i> , which prioritizes reconnecting downtown to Big Nance Creek Park and leveraging emerging recreational assets to support small-scale commercial activity. Redevelopment of this long-vacant site would activate a key gateway location, address environmental uncertainty in close proximity to residences, and support tourism-oriented economic activity in a low income community.
All Sites Brownfields Area-Wide Plan	Assessment and reuse of these sites will support coordinated reinvestment along the Singing River Trail corridor and its connected spur, strengthening linkages between riverfront communities, downtowns, and outdoor recreation assets. All projected reuses are consistent with the <i>Singing River Trail Master Plan</i> objective to catalyze tourism-driven economic development and with NARCOG’s CEDS goals to strengthen the regional tourism economy and promote historic downtowns and cultural assets as destinations. All reuse strategies at our priority sites are consistent with relevant <i>land use plans</i> in their respective cities.

1.f. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy.* (Estimates in this section are based on comparable adaptive-reuse destinations in the region and conservative employment and visitor-spending assumptions.) Cleanup and reuse of the coalition’s priority brownfield sites in its rural communities will **stimulate economic development, expand recreational infrastructure, and strengthen community resilience** across all three Target Areas by removing environmental barriers to reinvestment along the Singing River Trail corridor. Reuse outcomes are designed to generate sustained economic activity while delivering public benefits aligned with adopted revitalization and



resilience plans. Projected reuse of **PS1: ADM Warehouse** will transform a long-vacant industrial landmark into a mixed-use destination supporting an estimated 105 permanent jobs¹ and \$1.45 million per year in direct visitor spending,² while restoring public access to 10 acres of riverfront greenspace. Redevelopment will replace a highly visible redevelopment barrier with an active community hub that supports small business formation, strengthens downtown identity, and creates a “reason to stay” in Decatur’s downtown core. Projected reuse at **PS2: Culver’s Cleaners** expand the adjacent farmers’ market to support 15-20 additional vendors,³ increasing vendor capacity by approximately 60% and improving parking access for visitors. This reuse will strengthen local food access in an area with elevated food insecurity and chronic health conditions while supporting small-scale entrepreneurship. Reuse of **PS3: Moulton Gas** and **PS4: Courtland Gas** as Singing River Trail trailheads will create property for non-profit use, improve visitor access, establish clear gateways to downtowns, and strengthen functional connections between the trail, local businesses, and historic community assets. The Singing River Trail’s estimated \$1.06 million in annual local economic impact is driven in part by visitor spending in corridor communities; creating well-designed trailheads in smaller towns increases the likelihood that users stop, spend locally, and return. These reuses will also expand safe access to nearby recreational assets, including Roy Coffee Park, by providing additional parking and eliminating unsecured abandoned structures adjacent to areas used by children and families. Projected reuse of **PS5: Auto Shop** as a café and sundries store will support 6-9 new jobs,⁴ and generate \$20,000-\$35,000 per year in local sales tax revenues⁵ while serving trail users, residents, and visitors to Big Nance Creek Park and its kayak launch. Collectively, these reuses advance economic resilience by **activating underutilized properties, expanding access to recreation, and reinforcing the Singing River Trail as a catalyst for long-term community revitalization**. Together, the project will **return about 10 acres** to productive use and stimulate economic development by **increasing local employment, expanding revenues, removing long-standing blight, and growing tourism-related activity**.

Reuse of priority brownfield sites will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters by replacing deteriorated, sometimes flood-prone properties with safer land uses that incorporate greenspace and modern stormwater management, such as downspout disconnection and infiltration practices. Redevelopment of river-adjacent **PS1: ADM Warehouse** will reduce flooding and runoff risks through improved drainage and open space. Converting vacant industrial sites also reduces hazards associated with abandoned structures during severe storms. Reuse planning will be informed by site-specific floodplain constraints to ensure that redevelopment avoids increasing flood risk and improves site performance relative to existing unmanaged conditions. Collectively, these reuses mitigate flood risk, reduce environmental hazards, and support land use patterns better suited to increasingly frequent extreme weather events in the Tennessee River Valley. Reuse of the priority sites will incorporate energy-efficient design and, where feasible, small-scale renewable energy features appropriate to site conditions and projected uses. Planned reuses at **PS1: ADM Warehouse** and **PS5: Auto Shop** will encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures, reducing embodied carbon associated with demolition and new construction while allowing for high-efficiency HVAC systems, LED lighting, improved insulation, and modern building controls. Trailhead reuses at **PS3: Moulton Gas** and **PS4: Courtland Gas** are expected to incorporate energy-efficient lighting and low-energy fixtures, with opportunities for solar-powered lighting, or signage to support trail operations. Collectively, these measures will reduce long-term operating costs, lower energy demand, and support resilient, low-impact redevelopment consistent with local sustainability goals and EPA brownfields best practices.

1.g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse. Numerous funding resources are available to support our reuse projects at the priority sites. However, none of these funds are allocated for environmental assessments, which are essential first steps in moving these projects forward. This is why the support of this grant is critical, as it will enable these foundational assessments to take place, thereby **stimulating the availability of additional funds** for site remediation and development, and accelerating subsequent reuse strategy investment and implementation. The Singing River Trail has already generated \$25.7 million in federal funding for our target areas and is anticipated to attract a total of \$100 million in public-private investment for construction. EPA-funded assessments will **allow priority sites to fully participate in this momentum** by enabling alignment with implementation-phase funding sources. Examples of follow-on funding needed for site reuse are described in the

*All job and revenue estimates in this section are planning-level estimates, not a commitment.

¹ Derived by scaling a comparable adaptive-reuse arts/retail venue in North Alabama (Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment: ~190,000 SF; 153 studios; 200+ artists/makers/businesses) to ADM Warehouse building area (~71,670 SF).

² Assumes ~40,000 annual visitors, average on-site/nearby spend: \$30/visitor, overnight share: 5% of visitors, overnight local spend: \$150/visitor, consistent with SINGING RIVER TRAIL corridor assumptions.

³ Based on observed operating ranges for community farmers’ markets of similar size and context, informed by USDA Local Food Market typologies, EDA small-scale commercial reuse guidance, and comparable Alabama downtown markets. Assumes approximately 300–500 SF per vendor (including circulation and shared amenities), excluding parking and storage, with seasonal rotation.

⁴ Based on BLS NAICS 722513 (Limited-Service Restaurants) and 445120 (Convenience Retail), assuming a small-format operation (3,453 SF) with low-density staffing typical of rural food service (1.8–2.6 jobs per 1,000 SF).

⁵ Assumes annual gross sales of \$400,000–\$550,000, consistent with small rural cafés serving local residents. Local sales tax capture is applied at prevailing municipal and county rates.



following table.

Priority Site/Reuse	Funding Sources – Phase of Use	Eligibility and Likelihood to Obtain Funding
PS1: ADM Warehouse (Decatur) Retail/Entertainment/Greenspace Campus	EPA Cleanup Funding – Remediation	Eligible as a city-owned site/non-originator. Highly likely to obtain.
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Remediation (clearance/demolition) and infrastructure development	Eligible due to location and reuse alignment with mission. Highly likely to obtain.
	Opportunity Zone (OZ) tax benefits – Development	Eligible due to location in an OZ. Highly likely to obtain.
PS2: Culver’s Cleaners (Decatur) Farmer’s Market Extension	EPA Cleanup Funding - Remediation	Eligible as a city-owned site/non-originator. Likely to obtain.
	CDBG LMI Benefit – Remediation (clearance/demolition), infrastructure development	Eligible due to location in a HUD LMI area and reuse for food access. Highly likely to obtain.
	Clif Family Foundation Grant – Development	Eligible as a farmer’s market. Likely to obtain.
PS3: Moulton Gas (Moulton) Singing River Trail Trailhead	Supporting Healthy Aging Through Parks and Recreation Grant – Development	(Moulton Gas only) Eligible due to location adjacent to senior center and community, and projected reuse alignment with mission. Likely to obtain.
	People for Bikes, Bike Industry Community Grant, IMBA Trail Accelerator Grants – Development	(Both sites) Eligible due to projected reuse alignment with mission. Likely to obtain.
PS4: Courtland Gas (NARCOG) Singing River Trail Trailhead		
PS5: Auto Shop (NARCOG) Café and sundries store	NARCOG Small Business Fund – Development	Possibly eligible if small business. Highly likely to obtain.
	Opportunity Zone tax benefits – Development	Eligible due to location in an OZ. Highly likely to obtain.

1.h. Use of Existing Infrastructure. Reuse of the priority sites will rely on existing public infrastructure, reducing costs and supporting timely redevelopment. All sites are within incorporated areas and are served by existing water, sewer, electric, broadband, and roadway systems. Sites are located along established downtown streets or corridors, allowing reuse **without major utility extensions** and maximizing prior public investment. In Downtown Decatur, recent and planned streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, lighting, and roadway enhancements, will directly support reuse of **PS1: ADM Warehouse** and **PS2: Culver’s Cleaners** by improving access to downtown, the riverfront, and the Singing River Trail. Any additional infrastructure needs, such as pedestrian links, lighting, traffic controls, or stormwater features, will be funded through non-EPA sources, including local capital funds, CDBG funds, state transportation programs, or private investment.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. Data for this section are from US Census ACS, CDC PLACES, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, State Cancer Profiles, Alabama Public Health, and Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Employment and Wages. **TA1: Decatur DW** comprises Morgan County Census Tracts 1, 4, 6, and 7. When Target Area-level data was not available, city/town level data was used. When city/town-level data was not available, county-level data was used.

2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding. Communities within NARCOG’s geographic boundary lack the financial capacity to fund environmental assessment, cleanup planning, or reuse at brownfield sites without federal assistance.

Community Need	TA1: Decatur DW	TA2: Moulton	TA3: Courtland	NARCOG	Alabama	US
Population	15,170	3,397	1,182	246,387	-	-
Population change	-6.9%	3.4%	-21.7%	9.4%	13.0%	18.2%
Average HH income	\$57,917	\$65,685	\$45,831	\$81,881	\$86,225	\$110,490

Small populations, limited tax bases, and low incomes **constrain local ability to address environmental uncertainty**, even where redevelopment interest exists. This need is most evident in the Target Areas. **TA1: Decatur DW** has a population of 15,170 and experienced a –6.9% population decline from 2000–2020, compared to state (13%) and national (18.2%) levels increasing. Also, **TA1: Decatur DW’s** average household income (\$57,917) remains far below state (\$86,225) and national (\$110,490) levels, which reduces property taxes collected by the City, constrains discretionary spending budgets, and limits its ability to absorb the upfront costs of assessing complex legacy industrial sites. **TA2: Moulton** is a rural community of 3,397 residents with modest population growth (3.4%) but limited municipal revenues. Average household income (\$65,685) remains well below state and national benchmarks, and the City lacks the technical and fiscal capacity to independently assess



brownfield sites that directly affect its small downtown. **TA3: Courtland** is one of the smallest and most economically constrained communities in the region, with a population of 1,182 and a –21.7% population decline from 2000-2020. Average household income (\$45,831) is less than half the national average, leaving the Town unable to address environmental conditions at former commercial and industrial properties without external support. Across the region, unresolved environmental conditions **deter private investment and stall reuse where local governments lack resources to reduce risk**. This grant will provide the critical first step of site assessment needed to unlock cleanup funding, support reuse planning, and return priority properties to productive use in communities that cannot draw on other funding sources to do so independently.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations.

Sensitive populations are concentrated in all Target Areas and experience elevated health and welfare risks associated with poverty, age, disability, and chronic disease. Poverty rates exceed state and national levels in each Target Area, reaching 24.7% in **TA1: Decatur DW**, 21.1% in **TA2: Moulton**, and 29.2% in **TA3: Courtland**, compared with 15.6% statewide and 12.4% nationally. Low income **limits residents’ ability** to mitigate environmental risk and **increases vulnerability** to unmanaged brownfield sites. Age-related sensitivity further heightens risk. Children under age five represent 6.6% of the population in **TA1: Decatur DW** and 7.5% in **TA3: Courtland**, exceeding state (5.8%) and national (5.7%) shares, while seniors age 65+ comprise 30.5% of **TA2: Moulton** and 21.7% of **TA3: Courtland**, well above Alabama (17.5%) and U.S. (16.8%) averages. Pregnancy is a **critical developmental period** during which potential exposure to contaminants poses heightened risk, particularly near unsecured or vacant brownfield sites. In **TA2: Moulton**, there higher rates of childbearing aged women (19.9%) than state (19.6%) and US (19.6%) rates. Young children, seniors, and pregnant women are **more susceptible to contaminants** commonly associated with former industrial and commercial uses, including petroleum hydrocarbons, solvents, and metals, where exposure pathways remain undefined. Health and functional vulnerability is also elevated in the region. Disability rates exceed state and national levels in **all Target Areas**, reaching 26.4% in **TA2: Moulton** and 27.2% in **TA3: Courtland**, compared with 16.2% statewide and 13.0% nationally. Residents reporting multiple chronic conditions also exceed state and national benchmarks across **all Target Areas** (76.4%–79.0% vs. 74.2% statewide and 68.9% nationally), **increasing sensitivity** to environmental stressors and unmanaged site conditions. This grant will help these issues by funding site-specific environmental assessments and reuse planning at brownfield properties located near homes, parks, senior facilities, and downtown corridors. By identifying COCs, clarifying exposure pathways, and informing appropriate mitigation and reuse strategies, the project will **reduce environmental uncertainty** and limit potential contact with hazardous substances. Reuse of assessed sites for parks, trailheads, food access, and community-serving commercial uses will replace blighted, unsecured, and potentially contaminated properties with **active, safer environments that support physical activity, access to services, and neighborhood stability**, supporting safer daily conditions for sensitive populations in each Target Area.

Sensitive Populations	TA1: Decatur DW	TA2: Moulton	TA3: Courtland	Alabama	US
Poverty	24.7%	21.1%	29.2%	15.6%	12.4%
Children <5	6.6%	2.8%	7.5%	5.8%	5.7%
Seniors 65+	15.9%	30.5%	21.7%	17.5%	16.8%
Women 15-44	15.8%	19.9%	13.6%	19.6%	19.6%
Disabled	16.6%	26.4%	27.2%	16.2%	13.0%
Multiple chronic conditions	76.4%	79%	79%	74.2%	68.9%

Disease/Health Conditions	TA1: Decatur DW	TA2: Moulton	TA3: Courtland	Alabama	US
Asthma	11.1%	10.5%	10.5%	10%	9.8%
Cancer per 100K population	467.3	473.0	479.7	431.4	444.4
Birth Defects	2.4%	6%	6%	3.2%	-
Heart Disease	9.5%	8.4%	8.4%	7.3%	6.4%
Diabetes	20.9%	15.5%	15.5%	14.8%	12%
Food Insecurity	38.3%	19.7%	19.7%	19.2%	14.7%
Hospitalizations for Preventable Conditions per 100K population	18.1%	15.9%	13.2%	9.4%	8.6%

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

Populations in all three Target Areas experience rates of chronic disease and adverse health conditions that exceed state and national benchmarks, increasing vulnerability to potential exposure from legacy industrial and commercial properties. Asthma prevalence ranges from 10.5% to 11.1% across **all Target Areas**, exceeding Alabama (10%) and U.S. (9.8%) rates.

Cancer incidence is elevated in **all Target Areas** (467.3–479.7 per 100,000 residents vs. 431.4 statewide and 444.4 nationally). Birth defect rates are notably higher in **TA2: Moulton** and **TA3: Courtland** (6.0%) than the Alabama average (3.2%). Across **all Target Areas**, high prevalence of heart disease (8.4%–9.5% vs. 7.3% statewide and 6.4% nationwide) and diabetes (15.5%–20.9% vs. 14.8% statewide and 12% nationwide). These health conditions reflect **cumulative health stress** in communities with long-standing economic and environmental burdens, and align with the health effects of COCs associated within the coalition’s target areas, including petroleum hydrocarbons, chlorinated solvents, and metals, as well as building-related hazards (e.g., asbestos-containing materials) from former cottonseed oil processing, dry cleaning, gas station, auto repair uses and older structures. Hospitalizations for preventable conditions are elevated in **all Target Areas** (13.2%–18.1%) compared to Alabama



(9.4%) and the U.S. (8.6%), indicating **unmanaged chronic illness** in communities where environmental conditions and exposure pathways remain uncertain. Food insecurity significantly compounds these health risks. In **TA1: Decatur DW**, 38.3% of residents experience food insecurity, nearly double the statewide rate and more than 2.5 times the national rate. Between 2017 and 2022, food insecurity in **TA1: Decatur DW** increased by 3.5 percentage points, more than three times the statewide increase and seven times the national increase. This grant will help address these threats by funding site-specific environmental assessments and cleanup planning that identify contaminants of concern, clarify potential exposure pathways, and inform mitigation measures. Reuse of **PS2: Culver’s Cleaners** to expand the adjacent farmers’ market will increase access to fresh, affordable food in an area with elevated chronic disease prevalence and alarming rates of food insecurity, supporting improved nutrition outcomes and reduced diet-related health risks. Reuse strategies that advance the Singing River Trail will also support increased physical activity, access to recreational space, and stress reduction, health benefits associated with reduced heart disease and diabetes, while replacing vacant, unsecured sites with active community assets. Together, assessment and reuse will **reduce environmental uncertainty, limit potential exposure, and support healthier living conditions** in communities experiencing a disproportionate burden of disease.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations.

Economically vulnerable populations are concentrated within all three Target Areas, and experience compounded impacts from legacy industrial and commercial land use, limited employment access, and unresolved environmental conditions. Poverty rates in **TA1: Decatur DW** (24.7%), **TA2: Moulton** (21.1%), and **TA3: Courtland** (29.2%) substantially exceed Alabama (15.6%) and U.S. (12.4%) levels, reflecting long-term economic stress in communities

Economically Impoverished/ Impacted	TA1: Decatur DW	TA2: Moulton	TA3: Courtland	Alabama	US
Per capita income	\$23,384	\$31,263	\$21,227	\$34,834	\$43,288
Poverty	24.7%	21.1%	29.2%	15.6%	12.4%
Labor Force Participation	51.3%	40%	42.9%	58.1%	63.5%
% Change in Employment	11.1%	13.6%	13.6%	11.4%	13.1%
No HS Diploma (workforce mismatch)	28.6%	15.2%	10.8%	11.9%	10.6%
Uninsured (health)	18.1%	15.9%	13.2%	9.4%	8.6%
Avg Home Value	\$119,800	\$228,897	\$104,394	\$251,246	\$303,400

historically dependent on corridor-based and industrial employment. Per capita income is also markedly lower across **all Target Areas** (\$21,227–\$31,263) than state (\$34,834) and national (\$43,288) benchmarks, **limiting household capacity** to absorb risk or finance redevelopment. Labor force participation is significantly lower in **all Target Areas** (40.0%–51.3%) than statewide (58.1%) and nationally (63.5%), indicating **structural barriers to employment** rather than labor market strength. **Workforce mismatch** further intensifies vulnerability, particularly in **TA1: Decatur DW**, where 28.6% of adults lack a high school diploma, more than double state and national rates. Elevated uninsured (health) rates (13.2%–18.1%) are double national rates, and depressed home values, especially in **TA1: Decatur DW** (\$119,800) and **TA3: Courtland** (\$104,394) compared to state (\$251,246) and national (\$303,400) values, underscore **persistent disinvestment and reduced economic stability** in neighborhoods adjacent to brownfield sites. This grant will help reduce these disproportionate impacts by funding environmental assessments that remove uncertainty at priority brownfield properties and enable their return to productive use. By supporting reuse strategies focused on local services, small businesses, housing, and trail-oriented activity, the project will **expand access to employment, stabilize property values, and help interrupt long-standing cycles of poverty and environmental burden** in communities with limited alternatives for reinvestment.

2.e. Project Involvement, 2.f. Project Roles. NARCOG will lead implementation and retain responsibility for grant management, procurement, reporting, and compliance, while ensuring structured, meaningful involvement by coalition members and local partners throughout site identification, assessment sequencing, and reuse planning. Project involvement integrates local knowledge into decision-making within a clear governance framework consistent with EPA Brownfields coalition best practices.

Non-lead coalition members will serve as primary local conveners within their jurisdictions. They will identify candidate sites, secure site access, coordinate outreach with residents and stakeholders, and convey community priorities to NARCOG. Non-leads will remain actively engaged through regular coordination, review of assessment findings, and participation in reuse discussions affecting their communities.

NARCOG will convene and manage a BAC composed of coalition members, economic development entities, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders. Operating under a defined roles-and-responsibilities framework, the BAC will provide advisory input on site nomination, prioritization criteria, assessment sequencing, review of environmental findings, and reuse considerations. BAC input will be documented and used to inform NARCOG’s final decisions, consistent with EPA requirements.

Community partners, including economic development organizations, business associations, educational institutions, and neighborhood-based groups as listed in the table below, will support site identification, outreach, and issue-specific input related to market conditions, sensitive populations, historic resources, and community



needs. Partners were selected based on established presence, trusted relationships, and demonstrated redevelopment experience in the target areas. This structure ensures early and continuous engagement, keeps non-lead members fully informed, and grounds site selection and reuse planning in local priorities while maintaining centralized accountability.

Name	Mission	Point of Contact	Involvement or Assistance
North Alabama Industrial Development Association (All TAs)	Economic development; site readiness and business attraction	Brooks Kracke, bkracke@naida.com	Inform site selection and reuse feasibility; identify potential private developers.
Athens State University (All TAs)	Higher education and community advancement.	Kim LaFevor, Kim.LaFevor@athens.edu	Inform reuse planning; align workforce and training needs with site reuse.
Main Street Alabama (TA1: Decatur DW)	Support public-private partnerships, community engagement, and downtown revitalization	Mary Helmer, mary@mainstreetalabama.org	Inform site selection, cleanup, and reuse concepts; identify development partners.
Kings Memorial Methodist Church and Belle Primitive Baptist Church (TA1: Decatur DW)	Support community harmony and goodwill. Support the community’s people. Both community-based organizations serving local residents	Pastor Stallworth kingsmemorial@yahoo.com and Pastor Burt bellpbchurch@outlook.com	Convey community priorities; inform site selection and reuse; share project feedback with residents.
Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority (TA1: Decatur DW)	Downtown revitalization and implementation of the One Decatur Plan	Kelly Thomas, kthomas@downtowndecatur.org	Serve on the BAC; inform site prioritization and reuse alignment with adopted plans.
Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce (TA1: Decatur DW)	Represent nearly 1,000 local business and industries (mostly small/mid-sized).	Crystal Brown, crystal@dcc.org	Inform site selection, cleanup considerations, and reuse feasibility; identify potential developers.
Lawrence County Industrial Development Board (TA2: Moulton and TA3: Courtland)	Business recruitment, retention, and expansion	Blake McAnally, bmcannally@lawrenceidb.com	Inform site selection, cleanup considerations, and reuse feasibility; identify potential developers.
Lawrence County History and Preservation Society (TA2: Moulton and TA3: Courtland)	Historic preservation and cultural resource advocacy	Elayne Jackson, Ichps21@gmail.com	Inform site selection and reuse; advise on historic preservation considerations.

2.g. Incorporating Community Input. NARCOG will implement a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to **meaningfully solicit, consider, and respond to community input** throughout the project period. **Non-lead coalition members** will serve as the primary local points of contact within their target areas, coordinating outreach, gathering input, and ensuring community priorities are communicated to the coalition and incorporated into project decisions. The BAC will be convened and managed by NARCOG and will include coalition members, local governments, economic development partners, and community stakeholders. The BAC will meet quarterly to **review documented community input**, inform site identification and prioritization, guide assessment sequencing, and provide input on reuse considerations. Community meetings will be held in affected communities **prior to assessment work beginning** and at least **semi-annually thereafter**, with additional meetings scheduled as needed based on project activity or community interest. Engagement methods will include in-person meetings, virtual meetings or livestreams, online surveys, project webpages, and direct outreach through trusted local organizations to ensure access for seniors, low-income residents, and individuals with limited internet access. All community input will be **logged, reviewed, and evaluated** by NARCOG in coordination with the BAC. Input will be incorporated into site prioritization, assessment sequencing, and reuse planning decisions where feasible and appropriate. Responses to community feedback and questions will be provided within **4–5 business days**, and decisions informed by community input will be communicated back through meeting summaries, public updates, and direct follow-up by non-lead coalition members, ensuring a clear and transparent feedback loop.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS. The tasks below describe how the coalition will manage the grant, assess priority and additional sites, and advance reuse readiness. All tasks include only eligible activities and are structured to be completed within the four-year project period. No funds will be used for community liaisons or health monitoring, and no subawards are anticipated.



Task 1. Project Management
3.a. Project Implementation EPA-funded tasks/activities: EPA-funded activities are programmatic. NARCOG will oversee workplan implementation; manage QEP procurement and performance; coordinate with EPA and ADEM; and ensure compliance with all cooperative agreement terms. At NARCOG’s direction, the QEP will support required reporting, including quarterly reports, FFRs, DBE reports, the final report, and ACRES updates. A NARCOG representative will attend six required and relevant brownfields conferences. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Additional hours for programmatic activities will not be charged to the grant.
3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Ongoing throughout the 4-year project period. Reporting as described (quarterly, annual) New grantees meeting will be in quarter (Q) 1 and other conferences will be attended when they are scheduled by the organizer. ACRES updates quarterly, and more as needed.
3.c. Task/Activity Lead: NARCOG program manager Outputs: 6 conferences attended, 16 quarterly reports, 4 FFRs, 4 DBE reports, 1 final report, ACRES updates
Task 2. Site Selection and Community Outreach
3.a. Project Implementation EPA-funded tasks/activities: NARCOG will develop a CIP, create a brownfields website and outreach materials, make social media posts, conduct general public meetings, and convene quarterly BAC meetings. The QEP will create an initial brownfields site inventory, and the BAC will modify and prioritize the sites for assessment using the EPA’s Community Reuse Property Prioritization Tool (EPA 560-F-16-166) and other evaluation standards. NARCOG (and non-leads in their respective communities) will also manage community inputs/comments and responses, as needed. All community input will be documented, evaluated by NARCOG and the BAC, and addressed through site prioritization, assessment sequencing, or reuse planning decisions, as appropriate. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Meeting spaces and additional personnel hours needed for community engagement
3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Site inventory development will occur primarily in years 1-3 and continue as needed. Community meetings will be held prior to initiating work in new areas and semi-annually thereafter, with additional meetings as needed. BAC meetings will occur quarterly.
3.c. Task/Activity Lead: NARCOG program manager 3.d. Outputs: 1 CIP, brownfield inventory, BAC meetings (quarterly, more as needed), at least 8 public meetings (more as needed), outreach materials (flyers/signs), website & social media posts, community comments/responses
Task 3. ESAs and Cleanup Planning
3.a. Project Implementation EPA-funded tasks/activities: The first step is creating a generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Phase I ESAs (upon successful eligibility determinations) will be completed per the All-Appropriate Inquires Final Rule and ASTM E1527-21 standards. If Phase I ESAs show additional assessment is needed, site-specific Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) will be submitted for approval prior to conducting Phase II ESAs (including ground penetrating radar (GPR) surveys, if needed). Lead-based paint (LBP) and/or asbestos-containing material (ACM) surveys will also be conducted, if needed. When Phase II ESAs show further analysis is needed, Phase III ESAs will be conducted in preparation for cleanup planning. When ESAs indicate the need for and possibility of cleanup activities, ABCAs will be created for cleanup planning. One site will be submitted for ADEM Voluntary Cleanup Plan (VCP) enrollment. At least two sites in each coalition member’s geographic boundary will be assessed. Priority sites will be assessed first, followed by additional sites to ensure equitable distribution of assessments across coalition member jurisdictions. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Not applicable
3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule: ESAs will begin in the first quarter and continue until the final quarter of the grant period. ESAs will be conducted at the priority sites first, before beginning work at additional sites. Cleanup planning will begin following ESA findings.
3.c. Task/Activity Lead: QEP with oversight from NARCOG program manager 3.d. Outputs: 1 generic QAPP, 30 Phase I ESAs, 12 Phase II ESAs, 3 Phase III ESAs, 6 ABCAs, 1 VCP enrollment
Task 4. Other Eligible Planning
3.a. Project Implementation EPA-funded tasks/activities: Eligible planning activities will be conducted after sufficient environmental information is available to support realistic reuse decisions. Priority sites and target areas will be addressed first, followed by additional sites as resources allow. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Meeting spaces
3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Brownfield revitalization and brownfield site reuse planning will take place later in the grant period, after several sites have been cleared or evaluated for cleanup planning. Target areas/priority sites will be given priority for appropriate planning activities, before additional areas/sites.
3.c. Task/Activity Lead: NARCOG program manager with support from the QEP 3.d. Outputs: 1 Brownfield Area-Wide Plan, 2 Site Reuse Assessments, 1 Market Study, 3 Site Reuse Visions, 1 Resource Roadmap, 1 Revitalization Plan, 1 Evaluation of Market Viability, and 1 Fiscal Impact Analysis

e. Cost Estimates. The table below summarizes the cost estimate for this grant project. The proposed budget prioritizes site-specific environmental work that directly reduces barriers to reuse while maintaining fiscal discipline and minimizing administrative overhead. **ESAs and cleanup planning account for 60.1% of total project costs**, reflecting the coalition’s focus on resolving environmental uncertainty at priority and additional sites to



enable redevelopment. **Other eligible planning activities comprise 30% of total costs** and reuse planning necessary to translate assessment results into implementable, market-supported redevelopment outcomes. **Administrative costs total \$0 (0%)** to ensure the maximum share of EPA funds is directed to on-the-ground assessment and planning activities consistent with best practices demonstrated by successful coalitions.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)					Total
		Prog. Mgmt.	Site Selection & Comm. Outreach	ESAs & Cleanup	Other Eligible Planning	Admin	
Direct Costs	Personnel	30,080	28,000	18,760	40,040		\$124,880
	Fringe Benefits						
	Travel	16,200					\$16,200
	Equipment						
	Supplies				170		\$170
	Contractual	40,250	24,500	839,800	409,100		\$1,313,650
	Construction						
	Other – Conf Reg & VCP Reg	2,100		43,000			\$45,100
Total Direct Costs		96,630	52,500	901,560	449,310	0	\$1,500,000
Indirect Costs							
Total Budget		\$96,630	\$52,500	\$901,560	\$449,310	\$0	\$1,500,000

Task 1, Program Management (\$96,630)

Personnel: 544 hours (hrs) x \$70 = \$30,080. 64 hrs for reports & ACRES updates (4 hrs x 16 quarters). 288 hrs for EPA communications & other programmatic (6 hrs x 48 months). 192hrs for QEP management (2 hrs x 96 biweekly meetings).

Travel: 1 person @ 6 conferences (1 new grantees, 2 EPA national, 3 Alabama state). Each conference: flight (\$1,000) + hotel (\$300 x 4 nights = \$1,200) + per diem (\$125 x 4 days = \$500) = \$2,700 x 6 conferences = \$16,200

Contractual: \$40,250 for reporting support.

Other: 1 person @ 6 conferences. Each conference: registration fees (\$350) = \$350 x 6 = \$2,100.

Task 2, Site Selection & Community Outreach (\$52,500)

Personnel: 400 h x \$70 = \$28,000. 64 hrs for Web updates & social media posts. (4 hrs x 16 quarters). 80 hrs for Community outreach & responses (10 hrs x 8 semi-annual). 128 hrs for Coalition (2 hrs x 48 monthly) & BAC (2 hrs x 16 quarterly) meetings. 192 hrs for site inventory, prioritization, tracking (2 hrs x 48 months).

Contractual: \$24,500 for site inventory and community meeting support.

Task 3, ESAs & Cleanup Planning (\$901,560)

Personnel: 268 hrs x \$70 = \$18,760. 60 hrs for site access work (2 hrs x 30 sites). 208 hrs for ESA/cleanup planning reports review (4 hrs x 52 reports).

Contractual: Total = \$839,800. QAPP (\$6,400), Phase I ESAs (30 x \$5,500 = \$165,000), Phase II ESAs (12 x \$45,000 = \$450,000), Phase III ESAs (3 x \$30,000 = \$90,000), ABCAs (6 x \$6,400 = \$38,400).

Other: ADEM VCP application & review @ 1 site = \$43,000.

Task 4, Other Eligible Planning (\$449,310)

Personnel: 572 hrs x \$70 = \$40,040. 440 hrs for Eligible planning support (40 hrs x 11 plans). 132 hours for plan reviews (12 hrs x 11 plans).

Supplies: \$170 for community meeting materials – large pads, markers, flyers

Contractual: Total = \$409,100. Brownfields Area-wide Plan (\$50,000), Site Reuse Assessments (2 x \$8,000 = \$16,000), Market Study (\$45,000), Site Reuse Visions (3 x \$9,000 = \$27,000), Resource Roadmap (\$6,100), Revitalization Plan (\$150,000), Evaluation of Market Viability (\$50,000), Fiscal Impact Analysis (\$65,000).

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results. NARCOG will use the approved workplan as the primary benchmark to track, measure, and evaluate project progress and results. **Schedule and budget tracking tools**, including spreadsheets and Gantt charts, will be used to ensure expenditures align with completed tasks and that activities advance on realistic timelines within the four-year period of performance. Progress will be **reviewed quarterly** and documented through required EPA reports. Project outputs will be tracked quantitatively and reported through quarterly reports and ACRES, including the number of sites inventoried, Phase I, II, and III ESAs completed, SAPs and ABCAs prepared, cleanup plans developed, and community engagement activities conducted. Internal tracking logs will be maintained to ensure consistency with EPA output definitions. Outcomes will be evaluated through ongoing coordination with the QEP, coalition members, BAC participants, and local partners. Outcome measures will include acres assessed and made ready for reuse, reduction of environmental uncertainty, advancement of reuse plans, leveraged funding, and redevelopment readiness indicators such as developer interest and site disposition progress. NARCOG will **continue to report outcomes** to EPA through ACRES when feasible after grant closeout, consistent with EPA guidance and best practices demonstrated by recent coalition awardees.



4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE. 4.a. Organizational Capacity, 4.b. Organizational Structure, and 4.c. Description of Key Staff. NARCOG has extensive experience managing grant tasks/activities and funds to project completion, and has the organizational capacity needed to carry out and manage the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the project and grant on the coalition's behalf, led by NARCOG's Planning and Development Department. The organizational structure supporting this project integrates executive oversight, financial management, and technical planning staff to ensure timely implementation. Program governance will be supported through a BAC, which includes coalition members and key local partners and provides structured input on site selection, assessment sequencing, and reuse planning. Coalition members will have meaningful involvement through the BAC and through regular coordination with NARCOG staff to ensure grant funds address locally identified priorities and benefit each participating community.

Key staff assigned to administer the grant include: **Joey Hester, AICP**, Director of Planning and Development, who will serve as Program Manager and primary point of contact with EPA and brings 29 years of planning experience, including 20 years with NARCOG; **Jacklyn Moore**, Grants Specialist, with 5 years of experience at NARCOG, who will support grant administration, reporting, and coordination; and **Tricia Arnold**, Director of Finance, with more than 30 years of experience managing federal and state grants, who will oversee financial management, procurement, and required financial reporting. Together, this team provides the technical, administrative, and fiscal capacity needed to successfully implement the proposed project.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources. NARCOG will fully administer all grant activities and grant finances; however, NARCOG does not have the technical capability to conduct some activities of the project. To help accomplish these tasks, NARCOG selected a QEP consistent with Notice of Funding Opportunity **Section 4.D. (Applicants Using Contractors and/or Subrecipients)** to perform eligible assessment, cleanup planning, and reuse planning activities that require professional environmental expertise not maintained in-house. NARCOG selected the QEP using fair and open competition requirements noted in **2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500 and 40 CFR Part 33**. NARCOG strives to promote local hiring: the selected QEP offices and technical staff are within a 60-minute to 80-minute commute to the target areas for this grant.

4.f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements. NARCOG has not previously received an EPA Brownfields grant but has successfully managed multiple federal and state financial assistance agreements with scopes comparable in complexity, reporting rigor, community coordination, and deliverables to the proposed project.

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) - Southern Automotive and Aviation Workforce (SAAW) Grant (\$1 million) – 2021

Purpose: Industrial facility expansion to support automotive supply-chain growth. *Accomplishments:* Oversaw construction of a 40,000-SF warehouse expansion; created 10 permanent jobs, retained 13 existing jobs, and leveraged \$1.3 million in private investment. Project completed on schedule and within budget.

ARC SAAW (\$1 million) and HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (\$1.5 million) – 2023

Purpose: Infrastructure improvements to support a new advanced manufacturing facility. *Accomplishments:* Constructed approximately 4,700 linear feet of sewer line, 2,300 linear feet of water main, and 3,900 square yards of roadway. The project supported a \$1.1 billion private investment and the creation of 715 jobs with an annual payroll approaching \$40 million.

ARC SAAW (\$1 million) - In progress

Purpose: Expansion of the Lawrence County Career Technical Center to strengthen regional workforce training capacity. *Status and Expected Outcomes:* Managing a 20,000-SF facility expansion to add classrooms, meeting space, and advanced technology. The project will enhance workforce training for 15 education and industry partners across three counties and has leveraged \$5.2 million in local investment. Construction is underway.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: NARCOG complied with all workplans, schedules, and terms and conditions under the assistance agreements. As shown through NARCOG's record of no audit findings, benchmark goals for each assistance agreement were met. NARCOG had a successful history of timely and acceptable required reporting, which was an integral part of maintaining the grants' timely implementation.

Threshold Criteria
North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG)

1. Eligibility of Lead and Non-Lead Members

- a. The applicant has two non-lead coalition members. Neither is an agency or instrumentality of or affiliated with the lead member or with another non-lead member.

Lead Member:

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) is a Government Entity Created by State Legislature. It operates as an inter-local governing body between Cullman County, Lawrence County, and Morgan County in the State of Alabama. Eligibility documentation is included as Attachment A.

Non-lead Coalition Members:

- City of Decatur, Alabama – The City is eligible for funding as a General Purpose Unit of Local Government.
 - City of Moulton, Alabama – The City is eligible for funding as a General Purpose Unit of Local Government.
- b. None of the coalition members are exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Target Areas

Target Areas for the lead and non-lead members have been identified on the Application Information Sheet as a response to Section 4.B.(5). Each has its own Target Area, none overlap, and they are in at least three distinct municipalities or jurisdictions.

3. Non-lead Member that Never Received an EPA MARC Grant

Non-lead member, the City of Moulton, has never been awarded an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, or Cleanup (MARC) Grant.

4. Legal Authority to Expend Grant Funds on Behalf of Non-Lead Coalition Members

- a. The lead member, NARCOG, has legal authority to expend grant funds on behalf of the non-lead members, the City of Decatur and the City of Moulton, to conduct the proposed grant activities.
- b. Not applicable.

5. Coalition Agreement

Letters of Interest in being part of the coalition from the City of Decatur and the City of Moulton are included as Attachment B.

6. Community Involvement

NARCOG will lead implementation and retain responsibility for grant management, procurement, reporting, and compliance, while ensuring structured, meaningful involvement by coalition members and local partners throughout site identification, assessment sequencing, and reuse planning. Project involvement integrates local knowledge into decision-making within a clear governance framework consistent with EPA Brownfields coalition best practices.

Non-lead coalition members will serve as primary local conveners within their jurisdictions. They will identify candidate sites, secure site access, coordinate outreach with residents and stakeholders, and convey

community priorities to NARCOG. Non-leads will remain actively engaged through regular coordination, review of assessment findings, and participation in reuse discussions affecting their communities. NARCOG will convene and manage a Brownfield Action Committee (BAC) composed of coalition members, economic development entities, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders. Operating under a defined roles-and-responsibilities framework, the BAC will provide advisory input on site nomination, prioritization criteria, assessment sequencing, review of environmental findings, and reuse considerations. BAC input will be documented and used to inform NARCOG’s final decisions, consistent with EPA requirements.

Community partners, including economic development organizations, business associations, educational institutions, and neighborhood-based groups as listed in the table below, will support site identification, outreach, and issue-specific input related to market conditions, sensitive populations, historic resources, and community needs. Partners were selected based on established presence, trusted relationships, and demonstrated redevelopment experience in the target areas. This structure ensures early and continuous engagement, keeps non-lead members fully informed, and grounds site selection and reuse planning in local priorities while maintaining centralized accountability.

Name	Mission	Point of Contact	Involvement or Assistance
North Alabama Industrial Development Association (All Target Areas – TAs)	Economic development; site readiness and business attraction	Brooks Kracke, bkracke@naida.com	Inform site selection and reuse feasibility; identify potential private developers.
Athens State University (All TAs)	Higher education and community advancement.	Kim LaFavor, Kim.LaFavor@athens.edu	Inform reuse planning; align workforce and training needs with site reuse.
Main Street Alabama (TA1: Decatur Downtown-Waterfront – DW)	Support public-private partnerships, community engagement, and downtown revitalization	Mary Helmer, mary@mainstreetalabama.org	Inform site selection, cleanup, and reuse concepts; identify development partners.
Kings Memorial Methodist Church and Belle Primitive Baptist Church (TA1: Decatur DW)	Support community harmony and goodwill. Support the community’s people. Both community-based organizations serving local residents	Pastor Stallworth kingsmemorial@yahoo.com and Pastor Burt bellpbchurch@outlook.com	Convey community priorities; inform site selection and reuse; share project feedback with residents.
Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority (TA1: Decatur DW)	Downtown revitalization and implementation of the One Decatur Plan	Kelly Thomas, kthomas@downtowndecatur.org	Serve on the BAC; inform site prioritization and reuse alignment with adopted plans.
Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce (TA1: Decatur DW)	Represent nearly 1,000 local business and industries (mostly small/mid-sized).	Crystal Brown, crystal@dcc.org	Inform site selection, cleanup considerations, and reuse feasibility; identify potential developers.

Name	Mission	Point of Contact	Involvement or Assistance
Lawrence County Industrial Development Board (TA2: Moulton and TA3: Courtland)	Business recruitment, retention, and expansion	Blake McAnally, bmcannally@lawrenceidb.com	Inform site selection, cleanup considerations, and reuse feasibility; identify potential developers.
Lawrence County History and Preservation Society (TA2: Moulton and TA3: Courtland)	Historic preservation and cultural resource advocacy	Elayne Jackson, lchps21@gmail.com	Inform site selection and reuse; advise on historic preservation considerations.

NARCOG will implement a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to meaningfully solicit, consider, and respond to community input throughout the project period. Non-lead coalition members will serve as the primary local points of contact within their target areas, coordinating outreach, gathering input, and ensuring community priorities are communicated to the coalition and incorporated into project decisions. The BAC will be convened and managed by NARCOG and will include coalition members, local governments, economic development partners, and community stakeholders. The BAC will meet quarterly to review documented community input, inform site identification and prioritization, guide assessment sequencing, and provide input on reuse considerations.

Community meetings will be held in affected communities prior to assessment work beginning and at least semi-annually thereafter, with additional meetings scheduled as needed based on project activity or community interest. Engagement methods will include in-person meetings, virtual meetings or livestreams, online surveys, project webpages, and direct outreach through trusted local organizations to ensure access for seniors, low-income residents, and individuals with limited internet access.

All community input will be logged, reviewed, and evaluated by NARCOG in coordination with the BAC. Input will be incorporated into site prioritization, assessment sequencing, and reuse planning decisions where feasible and appropriate. Responses to community feedback and questions will be provided within 4–5 business days, and decisions informed by community input will be communicated back through meeting summaries, public updates, and direct follow-up by non-lead coalition members, ensuring a clear and transparent feedback loop.

7. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

None of the coalition members has an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

8. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Contractors

NARCOG will fully administer all grant activities and grant finances; however, NARCOG does not have the technical capability to conduct the environmental assessments and planning activities required under this grant project. To help accomplish these tasks, NARCOG selected a QEP through a competitive process to assist with reporting, community participation, and completion of environmental assessments, cleanup plans, and reuse plans.

Our procurement procedures to hire an environmental services contractor began by reviewing recent Request for Qualifications (RFQs) used by other Alabama planning commissions to contract similar services,

and our internal procurement processes for federal grant support. Our Planning Department then created an RFQ and published it on January 3, 2024, on our public Website. The RFQ was advertised for 30 days. Additionally, four firms were solicited. NARCOG received and considered four offers, which were reviewed by our selection committee. We reviewed the proposals with the following criteria in mind: expertise (in particular, expertise in successfully securing funding for Alabama communities), brownfields experience, project approach, familiarity with local communities, ability to facilitate public outreach activities, the ability to provide comprehensive and creative environmental services, and proposed cost or range of associated cost. Price accounted for 20 percent of the evaluation scoring. We notified the selected firm, PPM Consultants, Inc., on February 9, 2024. The firm then provided a contract to NARCOG describing in detail the services it would be providing, along with cost estimates for review. The terms and costs of the contract seemed reasonable, so approval by the NARCOG Executive Director was given on February 16, 2024.

NARCOG selected the QEP using fair and open competition requirements consistent with 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500 and 40 CFR Part 33, as well as the EPA's guidance documents: [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) and the [Brownfields Grants: Guidance on Competitively Procuring a Contractor](#). The solicitation document can be found at [277ddf_59db5896746b4368b63a7f8be8eb6578.pdf](#). The signed executed contract is included as Attachment C.

Named Subrecipients

No subrecipients will be named during the grant period.