



**BERKELEY**  
**COUNTY SC**  
 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

 [BerkeleyMeansBusiness.com](https://berkeleymeansbusiness.com)  
 1003 Highway 52  
 P.O. Box 6122  
 Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
 (843) 719-4416 direct  
 (843) 719-4381 fax

1. Applicant Identification  
 Berkeley County, South Carolina  
 Economic Development Department  
 1003 US Highway 52  
 Moncks Corner, SC 29461
2. Website URL  
<https://berkeleymeansbusiness.com/brownfield>
3. Funding Requested
  - a. Grant Type: Single Site Cleanup
  - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$3,497,573
4. Location  
 a) Town of St. Stephen, b) Berkeley County, c) South Carolina
5. Property Information  
**Former St. Stephen High School**  
 1266 Russellville Road  
 St. Stephen, South Carolina 29479
6. Contacts
  - a. Project Director  
 Corey McClary, County Workforce Development Manager  
 (843) 719-4096  
[corey.mcclary@berkeleycountysc.gov](mailto:corey.mcclary@berkeleycountysc.gov)  
 1003 US Highway 52, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
  - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official  
 Johnny Cribb, County Supervisor and County Council Chairman  
 (843) 719-4094  
[Johnny.cribb@berkeleycountysc.gov](mailto:Johnny.cribb@berkeleycountysc.gov)  
 1003 US Highway 52, Moncks Corner, SC 29461
7. Population  
 St. Stephen, SC: 1,460  
 (US Census: 2019–2023 American Community Survey)



8. Other Factors

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 15,000 or less.	3
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	N/A
The proposed site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the remediation/reuse; secured resource is identified in the Narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.	N/A
The proposed site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the proposed 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 proposed site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the proposed site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the proposed site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	N/A

9. Releasing Copies of Applications

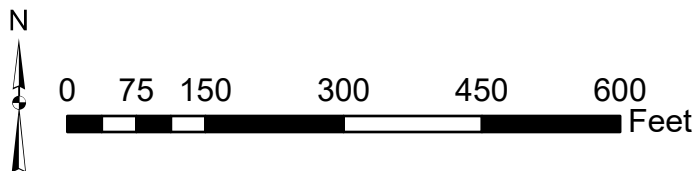
Not Applicable.

**Legend**

 Approximate Site Boundary



bing



**Target Area Map**  
Berkeley County FY26 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application  
Former St. Stephen High School  
1266 Russellville Road  
St. Stephen, Berkeley County, South Carolina

EXHIBIT NO.  
**1**



**BERKELEY  
COUNTY SC**

**Berkeley County  
South Carolina**

**FY26 Brownfield Cleanup Grant  
Narrative**

## **1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

**Target Area and Brownfields.** a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Berkeley County (pop. 238,723)(County) is the northernmost county in the Charleston tri-county region and the eighth most populated in South Carolina, spanning 1,099 square miles that include Lake Moultrie and much of the 250,000-acre Francis Marion National Forest.<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1682 and re-established within modern boundaries in 1921, the County evolved from an indigenous trade hub into one of antebellum America’s major agricultural centers, built on rice, indigo, cotton, and the labor of an enslaved population that outnumbered White residents more than three to one by 1790. Reconstruction briefly shifted political power to the Black majority until the 1880s, when White leaders regained control and used gerrymandering to concentrate 25% of the state’s Black population into a single district that included Berkeley County. The rise of sharecropping cemented timber and farming as economic pillars until the 1939 Santee Cooper hydroelectric project spurred regional recovery while displacing farms and communities. After World War II, population growth shifted toward the county’s southern and eastern edges, driven by expanding government and manufacturing jobs tied to the Charleston economy.

The **geographic boundary** of this project is the **county limits**, with a **target-area focus of census tract (CT) 45015020201**, which is a community in the northern portion of the County, centered on the *Town of St. Stephen*. The target area (TA) has a much lower than average median household income (\$27,418; US \$78,538), a much higher population of families at or below the poverty line (35%; US 9%), and a significantly higher reliance on government subsidized food programs (27%; US 12%) than the national average.<sup>1</sup> The TA had some success with attracting lumber mills and light manufacturing employers following the construction of the hydroelectric lakes in the 1940s, but this area lost its appeal as it competed with the more accessible interstate corridor along the southeast county border. Vacant manufacturing sites have created **blight and brownfield challenges that include underused properties and minimal job opportunities**. The few remaining major employers for this area are located outside of the TA, most notably the **coal-fired Cross Generating Station power plant**, which operates upwind of the TA, adjoining Lake Moultrie. This Cleanup Grant will address the brownfield challenges affecting this community by funding the remediation of a critical brownfield property and thus reducing blight, creating jobs, and providing a space for community members to gather. Successfully addressing brownfield challenges at this property will spur future brownfield redevelopments in the community and throughout Berkeley County.

b. Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site(s): The former St. Stephen High School (20 acres) located at 1266 Russellville Road is located between the Town of St. Stephen and Russellville and served as the local high school from approximately 1954 to 1996, when a new, consolidated high school opened southeast of the Town for the surrounding communities. Since then, the local school district divested themselves of the former school property, and the Town of St. Stephen took ownership, with the intention to convert the structure into a community center. The primary structure on the site is the vacant former school, but the parcel also includes multiple detached vacant structures, an athletic field, additional cleared spaces, a former borrow pit, and undeveloped wooded land. A concrete slab, three aboveground storage tanks (ASTs), three boiler rooms with the associated boilers, multiple pole-mounted transformers, a pad-mounted transformer, a radio tower, and fencing in the athletic field areas are also present. The former high school structure is in visible disrepair, with broken windows, failing roof coverings, and an overgrown front facade. The current Senior Citizens Center is in an ancillary structure on the site. The structure

---

<sup>1</sup> US Census 2019–2023 American Community Survey

was assessed and appears to be in good condition; however, Berkeley County plans to permanently relocate the Senior Citizens Center to an alternative location within the boundaries of the Town of St. Stephen prior to cleanup. Assessments performed at the site have identified multiple known environmental issues ranging from hazardous building materials to soil and groundwater contamination. Identified contaminants are lead paint, asbestos, mercury, benz[a]anthracene, benzo[a]pyrene, benzo[b]fluoranthene, naphthalene, cyanide, dieldrin, bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, chloroform, petroleum products, and arsenic.

**Revitalization of the Target Area. c. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:**

The County’s Economic Development team recognizes the importance of redevelopment in northern Berkeley County’s distressed areas and wishes to continue their success through their existing Brownfield Program with the redevelopment of the Former St. Stephen High School as a community resource facility dedicated to enhancing quality of life by delivering inclusive opportunities such as adult education programs, workforce and life-skills training, community meeting rooms, and shared gathering spaces that foster engagement, collaboration, and social connection for residents.. The County initiated its 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update process in the Fall of 2020 and held public meetings to obtain public input regarding the current state of the county. This planning focused on infrastructure needs, economic implications, and community needs in rural areas, as demonstrated by the **County’s Guiding Principle 1** in its current Comprehensive Plan, to “*protect and promote the existence of distinctive and diverse, sustainable communities within its boundaries.*” The County’s goal for completing assessments, remediation, and redevelopment on the cleanup site includes the **development of a community resource center at the former high school**. The Comprehensive Plan **Guiding Principal G1.1** states, “*Berkeley County will support the provisions of community services, essential for all population groups.*” **Guiding Principal G4.1** commits “*to providing pleasant, accessible public gathering places and parks throughout the community.*”

The County has strong support from St. Stephen community members to redevelop this site into a community center with enhanced greenspace. **Located outside of a floodplain**, the property offers a stable foundation for long-term redevelopment. The County is currently working with community members as well as local nonprofit organizations such as Small-Town Restoration Inc. and the St. Stephen Farmers Market for visioning and redevelopment planning. **The overall cleanup goal is to provide a much-needed public space for supplementary education services, elderly and low-income assistance programs, youth and teen after-school programs, sports programs, and meetings space for events.**

d. **Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:** The cleanup site will provide both economic and noneconomic **benefits to the distressed community**. **The target-area demographics show that the census tract has a lower-income population experiencing persistent poverty and larger-than-average minority populations**. The TA is part of a larger labor study encompassing a 10-mile radius of St. Stephen, reviewed by the County, and exhibits both a high underemployment rate and a high unemployment rate, comparatively.<sup>2</sup> New construction jobs (100 estimated over the course of the cleanup and 30–40 for the construction of the Community Center) will be created throughout the cleanup process and the remodeling of the existing structures into a community center. Additionally, a new community center will provide much-needed social support services, educational opportunities, and public recreation space for the low-income, youth, and minority populations in the area, adding long lasting noneconomic benefit. Additional noneconomic benefits include blight removal from the largely unused property and using the land to generate a

---

<sup>2</sup> SC Power Team, Qualified Industrial Labor Summary, 10-mile radius of St. Stephen, SC.

stronger sense of community belonging. County leadership will work with the local community in the design of the **redevelopment, ensuring the use of energy-efficient measures and renewable energy processes** at the site, such as solar panels, LED lighting, and water conservation methods. The County plans to include **LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) in all building designs** and will act as an example of sustainable development. Furthermore, repurposing the former school into a modern community center will strengthen **local resilience to extreme weather events and natural disasters** by providing a safe, energy-efficient facility that can serve as an emergency shelter, a hub for disaster response coordination, and a reliable resource for residents during times of crisis.”

**Strategy for Leveraging Resources.** e. Resources Needed for Site Characterization: The previous investigations conducted at the site sufficiently characterized the overall extent and degree of contamination to develop a draft Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) with a preferred cleanup approach, identifying multiple environmental issues including hazardous building materials and soil and groundwater contamination with substances such as lead paint, asbestos, mercury, petroleum products, arsenic, and various organic compounds.

At this time, no additional resources are believed to be needed for site characterization. In the case the site needs additional assessment for characterization, the South Carolina Revolving Loan Fund or State Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) funding will be sought.

f. Resources Needed for Site Remediation: The EPA grant funding requested in this application will be sufficient to allow the County to complete the remediation. The site is enrolled in South Carolina’s VCP, which provides regulatory oversight and access to potential funding options. If additional resources are needed beyond this grant, the County will utilize the Revolving Loan Fund in conjunction with VCP alternatives to ensure completion of all necessary remediation activities.

g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Berkeley County will seek funding from corporate sponsorships, Main Street USA Grant, Park Recreation Development Grant, the SC VCP and federal grants for reuse. The Main Street USA Grant is particularly well suited to support the redevelopment of the cleanup site because it prioritizes the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing historic structures into facilities that meet identified community needs and support long-term economic revitalization.

h. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The existing infrastructure (streets, roads, utilities, water, sewer, internet access) at the cleanup site and throughout the TA is sufficient for redevelopment. Additionally, previous assessments conducted have identified repurpose opportunities to the existing infrastructure at the cleanup site. As additional infrastructure needs are identified, the County will acquire additional funding through state and federal grant programs, particularly the South Carolina Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), the State Revolving Fund (SRF), and the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) Infrastructure Grants.

## **2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**Community Need.** a. The Community’s Need for Funding: The TA (CT 45015020201) is home to both a **small population and low-income community** that is in desperate need of economic and community investment. The TA has a **total population of 3,701, of which 1,460** live within St. Stephen.<sup>3</sup> The TA has a **per capita income of \$19,571, a median household income of \$27,418, and a median family income of \$47,745**, each less than half the national averages (\$43,289; \$78,538; \$96,922).<sup>3</sup> St. Stephen, which is central to the TA census tract, has **triple** the people living at or below the poverty level (36%) and more than double the households

<sup>3</sup> US Census 2019–2023 American Community Survey.

receiving food stamp assistance (27%) compared to the national averages (12%; 12%).<sup>3</sup> The TA is in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for poverty where income is at or below the federal poverty level.<sup>4</sup> The TA and the Town of St. Stephen currently have a 6% unemployment rate, both above the national average (5%).<sup>3</sup> With the current state of unemployment, poverty levels, and low income, it is impossible for the County to raise taxes to fund this project on its own nor can it rely on funding from Berkeley County. The County is unable to fund brownfield remediation efforts in the TA due to the resources required to manage the rapid development and economic growth along the southern and eastern county limits. The County's vision of a much-needed community resource center can only be realized with remediation assistance from the EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: **Sensitive populations within the TA include the youth and elderly, females, and those living in poverty.** The TA has a high population of youth and elderly combined (54%; US 42%) as well as impoverished residents, with 35% of all families living below the poverty level (US 9%) and 75% of those families being female head of household with children under the age of 18 (US 33%).<sup>5</sup> In addition, the TA has a significantly high **Black population of 25%, nearly double the national average (12%).**<sup>5</sup>

The TA is in the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile for less than a high school education, which can lead to higher crime rates and higher poverty.<sup>6</sup> Crime statistics associated with St. Stephen are higher than most communities of the same size within the US. The current crime rate is 56 per 1,000 residents. One's chance of becoming a victim of either violent or property crime here is 1 in 18. Within South Carolina, more than 90% of the communities have a lower crime rate than St. Stephen. In St. Stephen, the current violent crime rate is 1 in 142 and property crime is 1 in 20.<sup>7</sup>

Crime in rural and distressed areas is often a result of generational socioeconomics, limited **community support services**, and diminished job availability. These conditions disproportionately affect youth and female-headed households, creating environments where involvement in criminal activity becomes more likely. National research highlights that poverty and unemployment are significant predictors of crime, particularly in rural communities, where economic fragility and isolation exacerbate these risks. For youth, the absence of structured environments such as after-school programs further increases vulnerability; studies show that access to safe, supervised spaces dramatically reduces delinquency and improves long-term outcomes.<sup>8</sup> Investment in the TA will support development of a community resource center, reduce youth involvement in crime, and help residents address longstanding socioeconomic barriers. EPA Cleanup Grant funding will convert the former St. Stephen High School into a new community center, expanding opportunities and services for minority and underserved residents.

c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The confirmed contaminants at the former St. Stephen High School can lead to serious health concerns for residents. Exposure to asbestos and lead paint are significantly detrimental to children and young adults, who are particularly drawn to the vacant and unattended former high school site. **CT-tract and County-area model-based data were obtained from the Center for Disease Control.** The TA has an estimated 62% higher rate of coronary heart disease when compared to Berkeley County as a whole (10% vs. 6%), an estimated 72% higher rate of diabetes (21% vs. 12%), an estimated 74% higher rate of COPD (12% vs. 7%), and a 93% higher rate of stroke (6% vs. 3%) for all adults. The TA is in the 89<sup>th</sup> percentile for low life expectancy, 92<sup>nd</sup> percentile for asthma, and 61<sup>st</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://public-environmental-data-partners.github.io/j40-cejst-2/>

<sup>5</sup> US Census 2019–2023 American Community Survey

<sup>6</sup> <https://pedp-ejscreen.azurewebsites.net/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/sc/st-stephen/crime>

<sup>8</sup> [www.alliedacademies.org/articles/the-impact-of-socioeconomic-factors-on-crime-rates-26135.html](http://www.alliedacademies.org/articles/the-impact-of-socioeconomic-factors-on-crime-rates-26135.html)

**percentile for cancer.**<sup>6</sup> Lead and asbestos are common components of commercial structures constructed prior to 1980. Residents exposed to lead or asbestos when trespassing on the sites could develop neurological effects that include (for children) behavior issues and intelligence limitation and (for adults) high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, and reduced fertility. Berkeley County’s rate of disease mortality from diabetes, urogenital, blood, and endocrine diseases has increased 26% between 1980 and 2014.<sup>9</sup> Asbestos exposure can also cause several types of incapacitating diseases including asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. **Based on the most recent five-year data, lung cancer represents the leading cause of both cancer diagnoses and cancer-related mortality in Berkeley County.**<sup>10</sup> Berkeley County’s infant mortality rate of 6.9 deaths per 1,000 live births exceeds the US rate of 5.44, indicating a higher risk for infants in the county, with the leading cause of death due to **birth defects.**<sup>11</sup> Cleanup Grant funding will facilitate the remediation of these threats to sensitive populations in the TA.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: The cleanup site lies within a community long burdened by economic hardship and environmental degradation and is home to **economically impoverished and disproportionately impacted populations**, including large youth and elderly cohorts, female-headed households, and residents living in poverty. The TA’s combined youth and elderly population is the majority of residents at 54% (US 42%), and 35% of families live below the poverty level (US 9%), with 75% of those families led by women with children under 18 (US 33%).<sup>12</sup> The Black population is also significantly elevated at 25% (US 12%).<sup>12</sup> Decades of disinvestment—driven by eminent-domain land seizures for federal energy projects and the collapse of timber-related industries—have left widespread blight and limited economic opportunity. Environmental stressors further compound these inequities, including some of the state’s highest wastewater discharge indicators and toxicity-weighted concentrations, along with industrial and municipal releases into Lake Moultrie and coal-ash impacts from the nearby Cross Generating Station. The EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant will help reverse long-standing disparities by remediating the priority site and transforming it into a community services hub that removes hazardous-material exposure and expands access to education, workforce development, and health resources. By addressing contamination and repurposing the former school for public benefit, the project reduces environmental risks, strengthens community engagement, and builds the foundation for long-term economic resilience—ensuring that economically impoverished and disproportionately impacted populations remain central to the revitalization process.

**Community Engagement e. Project Involvement & f. Project Roles**: Project partners will play a key role by guiding outreach and public education efforts and supporting cleanup planning and future site-reuse strategies.

Name of organization	Entity’s mission	Point of contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Berkeley County Environmental Authority (BCEA)	Support the Berkeley County Brownfields Program	Gerald Addison, gwaddison@tds.net	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Organization created during the BF Assessment Grant process; community-led committee made up of target-area residents who take part in the reuse planning

<sup>9</sup> 2016 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Berkeley County, South Carolina. [https://www.healthdata.org/sites/default/files/files/county\\_profiles/US/2015/County\\_Report\\_Berkeley\\_County\\_South\\_Carolina.pdf](https://www.healthdata.org/sites/default/files/files/county_profiles/US/2015/County_Report_Berkeley_County_South_Carolina.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> dc.statelibrary.sc.gov/server/api/core/bitstreams/00113458-4a5d-4b21-a0a6-1d688d2e48dd/content

<sup>11</sup> healthytricity.com/sites/healthytricity/files/2024 Data Walk/MaternalChildHealth.pdf

<sup>12</sup> US Census 2019–2023 American Community Survey

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Government (BCDCOG)	Assist local government's plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit, and coordinate for sound regional development	Kathryn S. Basha AICP, kathrynb@bcdco g.com	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Provides leveraging assistance for program success via grants to fund redevelopment of the community center
Metro Chamber of Commerce (MCC)	Government relations, talent development, and leadership advancement	Scott Barhight, sbarhight@charlestonchamber.org	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Provides expertise in connecting key business partners with community members to support brownfield redevelopment planning and reuse planning
Small Town Restoration Inc.	Beautify, restore, and revitalize the Town of St. Stephen	Gerald Addison, gwaddison@tds.net	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Local nonprofit organization formed with the goal of restoring the town of St. Stephen, SC, and providing assistance with planning services provided at the center
Berkeley Seniors Inc.	Provide services to the senior citizens of Berkeley County, SC	Mayor John Rivers, admin@berkeley seniors.org	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Provides services to senior citizens in Berkeley County area and will be in the new St. Stephen community center, providing education and entertainment to locals
Berkeley County School District	Provide education and opportunities to the youth of Berkeley County, SC	Dr. Anthony Dixon, Superintendent@ bcsdschools.net	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Manages the public education programs throughout Berkeley County and will provide outreach regarding programming at the new community center
St. Stephen Farmers Market	Provide weekly community markets with fresh produce and other goods	Michele Stosick, [REDACTED]	<b>Assistance/Decision Making:</b> Local nonprofit organization who will use the new center to educate the local public on fresh food alternatives

g. Incorporating Community Input: Berkeley County established the citizen-led Berkeley County Environmental Authority (BCEA) on August 17, 2021, to support community outreach and ensure long-term public involvement in brownfield redevelopment. Composed of residents and St. Stephen Town Council members, the BCEA leads brownfield planning and organizes community meetings throughout the cleanup project at locations within the TA, including Timberland High School, local restaurants, and churches. Engagement has been offered both virtually—through web-based meetings promoted on the County’s economic development website and on St. Stephen’s Facebook page—and in-person to accommodate residents without internet access. These efforts drew strong participation during the FY22 Assessment Grant project, including an initial meeting of roughly 130 attendees, the largest Brownfield Program meeting in the Southeast.

Throughout 2024 and 2025, the County and BCEA held multiple collaborative sessions to advance redevelopment planning for the cleanup site, including visioning exercises and review of environmental assessment findings. This foundation will continue into the Cleanup Grant project, with resident input documented in meeting minutes, compiled by the BCEA, and submitted to the Brownfields Program Director to guide cleanup and redevelopment decisions. The County and BCEA will solicit public input and respond to any individual comments within two weeks.

The County’s Community Involvement Plan (CIP), developed under the previous Assessment Grant, will be updated for the Cleanup Grant to outline engagement activities and key stakeholders. To ensure broad communication, the County will continue using online postings and traditional outreach, including flyers at churches, community centers, parks, grocery stores, libraries, youth centers, and after-school programs. The County remains committed to meaningful community involvement to ensure redevelopment reflects the needs of the TA’s sensitive populations.

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS**

**a. Proposed Cleanup Plan:** The recommended cleanup approach for the identified asbestos-containing material (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), mercury-hazardous flooring material, fuel oil aboveground storage tanks (ASTs), septic underground storage tank (UST), and universal waste materials at the site is Removal/Abatement. ACM has been identified throughout the buildings on-site, including in the ceilings, roof flashing, floor tiles, chalkboards, and piping. LBP has been identified in windowsills, interior doors, and kitchen walls. The ACM and LBP will be abated using licensed South Carolina abatement contractors and in accordance with SCDES regulations 61-86.1 and 61-107.19, which require air monitoring and proper disposal at regulated landfills. The mercury-containing floor material, fuel oil ASTs, USTs and universal waste will each be removed from the property following OSHA requirements and will be properly disposed of according to the applicable SCDES regulations. The abatement and removal of these materials will address human health risks using proven approaches that are consistent with recognized industry standards for the remediation of these contaminants. Additionally, Removal/Abatement aligns with the future reuse plans, allowing for renovation and reuse of the structures at the site to build a community center.

**Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

<b>Task 1: Community Engagement</b>	
b.	<i>Project Implementation: EPA-Funded:</i> Updated CIP, outreach materials, Brownfield (BF) webpage, and social media posts will be developed by the County’s BF Project Director with assistance from the qualified environmental professional (QEP). County staff will lead the community/educational meetings discussing project plans and updates. Supplies: printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts) and office supplies to manage the grant.
c.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP, BF webpage, and outreach materials updated in Q1. Community/educational meetings held Q2 in Y1–4.
d.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Corey McClary, BF Project Director
e.	<i>Outputs:</i> Updated CIP, BF webpage, 4 community/educational meetings, brochures/handouts, social media posts, summary of community meetings in EPA-required quarterly reports.
<b>Task 2: Program Management</b>	
b.	<i>Project Implementation: Non-EPA-Funded:</i> Using its own funding, the County will procure a QEP to assist with the BF Grant project. The County’s BF Finance Director will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement work plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. <b>EPA-Funded:</b> The QEP will assist in completing ACRES database reporting, yearly financial reporting, quarterly reporting, and additional programmatic support for the four-year term of the grant. The travel budget allows for two staff to attend three BF training conferences/workshops.
c.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Procure QEP in Q1. ACRES & quarterly reporting begin in Q1 and continue throughout the grant. Annual reporting and forms created in Q5, Q9, Q13, and final closeout.
d.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> County: Lechele Brown, BF Finance Director
e.	<i>Outputs:</i> ACRES database reporting, 4 annual financial reports, 16 quarterly reports, programmatic support for the four-year grant period. Two staff to attend three conferences.
<b>Task 3: Cleanup Planning</b>	

b.	<i>Project Implementation: <b>EPA-Funded:</b></i> The QEP will finalize the draft Analysis for Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), and/or Cleanup Plans, which include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs, preparing site-appropriate remediation specifications for hazardous materials abatement and tank removals, and determining reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks.
c.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans begin in Q4 and will continue throughout the grant.
d.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The QEP will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the County: Corey McClary, BF Project Director.
e.	<i>Outputs:</i> 1 ABCA, 1 Cleanup QAPP, 1 Remediation Specifications package
<b>Task 4: Cleanup &amp; Oversight</b>	
b.	<i>Project Implementation: <b>EPA-Funded:</b></i> The County will work with the QEP as they manage the site cleanup activities, perform confirmation sampling, contractor oversight, cleanup reporting, and final remedial action report. The County’s BF Project Director, with assistance from the QEP, will oversee the abatement contractor as they perform site cleanup activities including contractor coordination, mobilization, abatement of ACM and lead paint, mercury abatement as hazardous material, universal waste disposal, and aboveground storage tank (AST) and septic tank removal from the site.
c.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Oversight will follow Cleanup schedule. Final remedial action report May 2028. Cleanup and abatement activities will begin 9–12 months after award and will be completed 12–18 months after initial activities.
d.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The QEP will conduct cleanup oversight of the project. The abatement contractor will implement the cleanup plan and activities with oversight from the QEP and the County: Corey McClary, BF Project Director.
e.	<i>Outputs:</i> 1 cleanup report, 1 final remedial action report, 1 site ready for reuse, 50 remediation jobs created (annualized).

**f. Cost Estimates:** Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.*

- The budget for this project includes travel, other (conference registration), supplies, construction and contractual costs only. No administrative costs are included in the budget.

**Task 1 Community Engagement:** Contractual: updated CIP \$2,080 (13hrs × \$160); updated BF webpage, outreach brochure/handouts, social media posts \$3,200 (20hrs × \$160); 4 community education meetings \$8,000 (50hrs × \$160; \$2,000/meeting). Supplies: \$2,000 (1,000 printouts \$1 each, 5 display boards at \$100 each, paper, pens, ink \$500).

**Task 2 Program Management:** Contractual: ACRES database reporting, yearly financial reporting, quarterly reporting \$25,120 (157hrs × \$160). Travel: 2 staff attend 3 events for a total of \$9,600 (flights at \$800, 2 nights in hotel at \$250/night, incidentals and per diem at \$100 per day × 3 days × 2 staff × 3 events). Other: conference registration \$1,800 (\$300 per event per person).

**Task 3 Cleanup Planning:** Contractual: 1 ABCA \$3,520 (22 hrs x \$160). 1 Cleanup QAPP \$7,040 (44 hrs x \$160). 1 Remediation Specifications package \$12,000 (75 hrs x \$160).

**Task 4 Cleanup & Oversight:** Contractual: 1 Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Plan \$30,000 (200 hrs × \$150); Asbestos Project Design \$6,000 (30 hrs × \$200); Asbestos Abatement Air Monitoring \$156,000 (120 days × \$1,300/day); Asbestos Abatement Project Designer Oversight \$16,800 (12 inspections × \$1,400/inspection); Asbestos Abatement Clearance Sampling \$10,000 (50 samples at \$120/sample, 10 containments at \$400/containment); Asbestos Abatement Final Report \$2,750 (22hrs × \$125); Lead Paint Abatement Project Design \$6,000 (30hrs × \$200); Lead Paint Abatement Air Monitoring \$26,000 (20 days × \$1,300/day); Lead Paint Abatement Project Designer Oversight \$5,600 (4 inspections × \$1,400/inspection); Lead Paint Abatement Clearance Sampling \$2,000 (\$25/sample × 80 samples), Lead Paint Abatement Final Report \$2,750 (22 hrs × \$125); Mercury Flooring Abatement Project Design \$6,000 (30hrs × \$200); Mercury Flooring

Abatement Air Monitoring Vapor Meter Equipment \$5,070 (\$845/day × 6 days); Mercury Flooring Air Monitoring Oversight \$7,800 (\$1,300/day × 6 days); Mercury Flooring Abatement Project Designer Oversight \$6,400 (\$1,600/day × 4 days); Mercury Flooring Abatement Clearance Sampling \$3,480 (\$320/sample × 12 samples), Mercury Flooring Abatement Final Report \$2,750 (22hrs × \$125); Universal Waste Abatement Oversight \$23,000 (125hrs × \$184), Universal Waste Abatement Oversight Final Report \$3,500 (28hrs × \$125); AST & Septic Tank Removal Oversight and tank closure report \$60,000 (375hrs × \$160).

Construction: Asbestos Abatement and Disposal by licensed contractor: \$1,063,480; Lead Paint Abatement and Disposal by licensed contractor: \$785,950; Mercury Gym Flooring Abatement and Disposal as Hazardous Material by licensed contractor: \$759,000; Universal Waste Abatement and Disposal by licensed contractor: \$190,520; and AST & Septic Tank Removal/Abatement by licensed contractor: \$242,363.

**All prices are based on costs provided by an abatement contractor.**

Category	Tasks				Totals
	<i>Community Engagement</i>	<i>Program Management</i>	<i>Cleanup Planning</i>	<i>Cleanup &amp; Oversight</i>	
Travel		\$9,600			\$9,600
Other		\$1,800			\$1,800
Supplies	\$2,000				\$2,000
Contractual	\$13,280	\$25,120	\$22,560	\$381,900	\$442,860
Construction				\$3,041,313	\$3,041,313
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$15,280</b>	<b>\$36,520</b>	<b>\$22,560</b>	<b>\$3,423,213</b>	<b>\$3,497,573</b>

**g. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results:** To ensure the Brownfield Project is on schedule and milestones are being met, the County’s internal Brownfield Project Team, including the QEP, will meet quarterly to track project progress of outputs identified in 3.e. using an Excel spreadsheet. Additionally, quarterly reports will be submitted to the EPA and regular check-ins with the EPA Project Officer (PO) will be scheduled. Project expenditures and activities will be monitored to ensure timely completion within the four-year timeframe. Site-specific information will be entered into the ACRES database. Key outputs to be tracked include QAPP; ABCA; cleanup plan and specifications development; contractor procurement; quarterly, annual, and closeout reports; and the number of community meetings. Key outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, leveraged redevelopment dollars, and jobs created. If project progress falls behind, the County will implement countermeasures such as monthly calls with the EPA PO and, if needed, a Corrective Action Plan to restore progress.

**4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

**Programmatic Capability** a. Organizational Structure & b. Description of Key Staff: The County has obtained support from the local community leaders in St. Stephen and the county council members and the Economic Development team. The County’s Brownfield Project Team is made up of staff from the Economic Development Department and Grants Administration Department, with a combined total of 19 seasoned staff committed to community residents and county prosperity. The Economic Development Project Director, Corey McClary, will be responsible for the day-to-day activities, timely and successful expenditure of funds, and completion of the project’s administrative and financial requirements as the **Brownfield Project Director**. He has served as the Brownfield Project Director for the County’s existing Brownfield Grant for the past three years. Mr. McClary has served as the County’s Workforce Development Director for the past

four years. He will be assisted by Ms. Lechelle Brown, the County's Grants Administrator, as the **Brownfield Finance Director**. She is responsible for managing the finances for the existing EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant project and will continue to handle grant funding draw downs through the ASAP system. She has over ten years of experience managing grant finances and programmatic reporting and has acted as the Berkeley County Grants Administrator for a year. In her current role, she is responsible for federal funding draw downs, record keeping, and contractor invoice management. A qualified environmental professional (QEP) will assist with the technical and reporting portions of the project.

c. Acquiring Additional Resources: The County will procure a QEP and subcontractors to assist with technical and reporting aspects of the Brownfield Cleanup project. Procurement procedures will comply with the EPA requirements for Professional Service. The County has experience with EPA procurement rules and regulations from previous Brownfield Grant awards and will follow all procedures to ensure compliance.

**Past Performance and Accomplishments** d. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: (1) Accomplishments: The County was awarded an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in FY22 in the amount of \$500,000. To date, five Phase I and two Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) have been completed on priority sites. The historical and cultural significance of the former St. Stephen High School property (proposed cleanup site) in the community led to the refocusing of funds to fully assess the former St. Stephen High School structures. Asbestos, lead paint, mercury, and a structural assessment have been performed to support future redevelopment. Six community meetings were held from April 2023 to July 2025. The first community meeting was the largest public meeting ever attended in the Southeast for the Brownfield Program with about 130 people, over three times larger than expected. Along with the community meetings, eight Steering Committee meetings were held from June 2023 to June 2025. When selecting the Steering Committee, over 70 interested individuals wanted to serve. Extensive communications and media posts have been shared to effectively communicate the details of the grant, including representation at the local Catfish Festival. Multiple internal planning meetings are held monthly to prepare for community and committee meetings. All information has been reported in ACRES. Berkeley County was awarded a second EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in FY25, totaling \$500,000. This new funding builds on the success of the FY22 Assessment Grant and will allow the County to expand its revitalization efforts in the St. Stephen area. Planned activities include pursuing assessments at priority sites such as the former Georgia-Pacific property, evaluating underused downtown parcels, and identifying additional opportunities to support community redevelopment. These efforts will help lay the groundwork for future investment, economic growth, and improved quality of life for residents.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The County has been in full compliance with its open FY22 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant. ACRES has been updated with all relevant grant information and outputs. All reporting has been turned into the EPA Project Officer in a timely manner. The FY22 grant opened on 10/01/2022 and is expected to close with all funds expended by March 2026 (official closeout date is 09/30/2026). As of December 10, 2025, 99% of the grant has been spent. The remaining \$4,907.18 will be spent on a closeout report. The FY25 grant was opened in 10/01/2025 and is expected to close in 09/30/2029. The County is in the process of procuring a QEP for that project and has been on time with all reporting to date. The County's Brownfield Project Team has successfully managed the FY22 grant to near completion and will continue to submit all required ACRES reporting and process all ASAP draw downs in a timely and compliant manner.



**BERKELEY  
COUNTY SC**

**Berkeley County  
South Carolina**

**FY26 Brownfield Cleanup Grant  
Threshold Criteria**

## **Threshold Criteria**

### **1. Applicant Eligibility**

- a. Berkeley County, SC (County), is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant as a general-purpose unit of local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.
- b. The County is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **2. Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants**

The former St. Stephen High School site located at 1266 Russellville Road has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

### **3. Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds**

The County does not have an open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.

### **4. Site Ownership**

The County is the current owner of the property, having acquired the property on November 12, 2024.

### **5. Basic Site Information**

- a) Site Name: Former St. Stephens High School
- b) Site Address: 1266 Russellville Road  
St. Stephen, South Carolina 29479

### **6. Status and History of Contamination at the Site**

- a) The Former St. Stephen High School (20 acres) is contaminated with hazardous substances and petroleum.
- b) The site is located on an approximately 20-acre tract of land and contains eight structures totaling approximately 66,000 square feet of building area. The site was initially developed in the 1950s and served as the former St. Stephen High School from the 1950s to the 1990s. Seven of the eight structures have since been vacant. The current Senior Citizens Center is in one of the ancillary structures on the site. The structure was assessed and appears to be in good condition; however, Berkeley County plans to permanently relocate the Senior Citizens Center to an alternative location within the boundaries of the Town of St. Stephen prior to cleanup.
- c) Previous Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) have been conducted at the site. Asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), lead-based paint (LBP), mercury, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) were identified at the Former St. Stephen High School.
- d) The site became contaminated primarily from materials associated with construction of the buildings and heating systems, including boilers and fuel storage tanks, as it sat vacant and in disrepair since the 1990s. Hazardous materials used in the construction of the buildings include ACMs, LBP, and mercury. Eighteen homogenous materials have been identified as ACM, seven surfaces (interior and exterior) have LBP, and mercury is present in the gymnasium flooring. Three on-site diesel aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) are located upgradient from soil and groundwater petroleum impacts (PAHs) and appear to have leaked as they sat unused

since the 1990s. Universal wastes, including ballasts containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and liquid mercury in thermostats, remain onsite in the vacant buildings.

**7. Brownfield Site Definition**

The County affirms that the site is:

- a. NOT a facility listed (or proposed for listing) on the National Priorities List (NPL);
- b. NOT a facility subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA; and
- c. NOT a facility that is subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the US government.

**8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Applications**

The following site assessment reports have been completed for the site at 1266 Russellville Road:

- Phase I ESAs: July 10, 2023 & October 16, 2024
- Asbestos and Lead Paint Inspection Report: February 27, 2024
- Industrial Hygiene Consulting – Mercury: May 22, 2024
- Phase II ESA: October 15, 2024
- Draft ABCA: December 19, 2025

**9. Site Characterization**

- a. Not Applicable.
- b. i. The site is eligible to enrolled in the SCDES voluntary cleanup program. The attached letter from the state affirms that:
  - (a) Berkeley County has requested State oversight by the means of voluntary cleanup contract 23-7790-NRP;
  - (b) The St. Stephen High School property is eligible to be overseen by the State program; and
  - (c) The site has had a sufficient level of characterization for the remediation work to begin on the site.
- ii. Not Applicable.
- c. Not Applicable.

**10. Enforcement or Other Actions**

The County affirms there are no known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions related to the site at 1266 Russellville Road.

**11. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination**

The County affirms that the Former St. Stephens High School at 1266 Russellville Road does not require property-specific determination per the Information on Sites Eligible for Brownfields Funding under CERCLA 104(k) to be eligible for EPA Brownfield Grant funding.

**12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability**

The site is contaminated with hazardous substances and petroleum, and the contaminated areas are distinguishable.

**a. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substance Sites**

**i. EXEMPTIONS TO CERCLA LIABILITY**

**(1) Indian Tribes**

Not Applicable.

**(2) Alaska Native Village Corporations and Alaska Native Regional Corporations**

Not Applicable.

**(3) Property Acquired Under Certain Circumstances by Units of State and Local Government**

Not Applicable.

**ii. EXCEPTIONS TO MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSERTING AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO CERCLA LIABILITY**

**(1) Publicly Owned Brownfield Sites Acquired Prior to January 11, 2002**

Not Applicable.

**iii. LANDOWNER PROTECTIONS FROM CERCLA LIABILITY**

**(1) Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser Liability Protection**

**(a) Information on the Property Acquisition**

(i) The property was transferred from the Town of St. Stephens to Berkeley County.

(ii) The transfer occurred on November 12, 2024.

(iii) The County has a fee simple title.

(iv) The County acquired the property from the Town of St. Stephen, 124 Hood Street, Saint Stephen, South Carolina 29479-3370.

(v) The Town of St. Stephen, SC, and Berkeley County are affiliated local governments but have no familial, contractual, or corporate relationship, including with regard to the property.

**(b) Pre-Purchase Inquiry**

(i) ASTM E1527-21 Phase I Environmental Site Assessments were completed on July 10, 2023, and October 16, 2024, for Berkeley County, SC. An Asbestos and Lead Paint Inspection Report was completed on February 27, 2024, for Berkeley County, SC. A mercury-focused Industrial Hygiene Consulting Report was completed on May 22, 2024, for Berkeley County, SC. An ASTM E1903-19 Phase II Environmental Site Assessment was completed on October 15, 2024, for Berkeley County, SC. A Draft ABCA report was completed on January 9, 2026, for Berkeley County, SC. A Structural Assessment Report was completed in January 17, 2025, for Berkeley County, SC.

- (ii) The ASTM E1527-21 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was performed by Andy Ruocco, an Environmental Professional at Terracon Consultants, Inc. The required declaration by the environmental professional is included in the written report.
- (iii) A new ASTM E1527-21 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was completed on October 16, 2024, at the site for Berkeley County, SC. This new Phase I ESA was performed in compliance with ASTM standards and is within 180 days prior to Berkeley County taking ownership of the site.

(c) Timing and/or Contribution Toward Hazardous Substances Disposal

All hazardous substances at the site (ACM, LBP, mercury) are associated with building materials in the original former St. Stephen High School structure. Berkeley County has not caused or contributed to the release of hazardous substances at the site, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site, or transported hazardous substances to the site.

(d) Post-Acquisition Uses

Berkeley County acquired the site on November 12, 2024. The site currently contains a vacant former St. Stephen High School structure, an occupied senior citizens center, multiple detached vacant structures, an athletic field, and undeveloped wooded land. The site was formerly used as the St. Stephen High School from approximately the 1950s until its closure in the 1990s and is vacant except for the St. Stephen Senior Citizens Center. The St. Stephen Senior Citizens Center has been in operation at the site since 2012 in one of the ancillary structures that is in working condition. Berkeley County plans to permanently relocate the Senior Citizens Center to an alternative location within the boundaries of the Town of St. Stephen prior to cleanup activities.

(e) Continuing Obligations

- (i) There are no continuing releases at the site. The site currently contains three diesel fuel ASTs. The ASTs are not currently in use at the site. Based on the assessments performed at site, the groundwater and soil impacts at the site are likely attributed to a previous release at the site. Additionally, no evidence of a continuing release was identified in connection with the ASTs at the site. No hazardous materials were disturbed during the assessment process to limit hazardous substance release. All state and local requirements were met during active sampling.
- (ii) Future releases are being prevented. The site is limited from any activities beyond the St. Stephen Senior Citizens operations to limit disturbance of hazardous materials. The site is known to attract trespassers and/or vandalism that could potentially lead to a future hazardous material release. The Town of St. Stephen has posted no trespassing signage to limit trespassing at the site. Additionally, fencing exists around portions of the site but can easily be bypassed. Berkeley County plans to increase property security and restrict trespassing by placing additional fencing around accessible portions of the site and barricading open entrances to the structures on the site.
- (iii) Exposure to previously released hazardous substances is being prevented by restricting access to the vacant former St. Stephen High School structure through posted no-trespassing signs, a perimeter gate, and caution tape marking areas of structural and

environmental concern. Specialists accessing the building for sampling and assessment are required to wear personal protective equipment prior to entering areas known to contain hazardous materials.

Berkeley County affirms that:

- (i) As of now, there are no land use restrictions or institutional controls placed on the site. If any land use restrictions or institutional controls are placed on the site, the County will comply and avoid impeding the effectiveness of the controls.
- (ii) Berkeley County is assisting and cooperating with those performing the cleanup and providing access to the property,
- (iii) complying with all information requests and administrative subpoenas issued in connection with the property, and
- (iv) providing all legally required notices.

**Non-Publicly Owned Sites Acquired Prior to January 11, 2002**

Not Applicable.

**iv. SITES WITH HAZARDOUS BUILDING MATERIAL THAT IS NOT RELEASED INTO THE ENVIRONMENT**

Not Applicable.

**b. Property Ownership Eligibility – Petroleum Sites**

A copy of the state petroleum site eligibility determination letter is attached.

**i. INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR A PETROLEUM SITE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

(1) Current and Immediate Past Owners

The current owner of the site is Berkeley County, SC. They acquired the property from the Town of St. Stephen, SC. No onsite USTs are the source of petroleum contamination.

(2) Acquisition of Site

The site was acquired November 12, 2024, through the method of transfer acquisition from another government entity.

(3) No Responsible Party for the Cleanup of the Site

Neither Berkeley County nor the immediate past owner, the Town of St. Stephen, is responsible for the petroleum product contamination at the site. Neither entity (i) dispensed or disposed of petroleum or petroleum product, or exacerbated the existing petroleum contamination at the site. (ii) Neither owned the site when the dispensing of petroleum took place. (iii) Both took reasonable steps with regard to the contamination at the site.

(4) Cleaned Up by a Person Not Potentially Liable

Berkeley County is the current owner of the real property and has not dispensed or disposed of petroleum products or exacerbated the existing petroleum contamination at the site. Berkeley County has conducted the necessary assessments to determine a pathway toward

removal and remediation of the petroleum impacts at the site. Berkeley County has taken reasonable steps with regard to contamination at the site.

(5) Judgments, Orders, or Third-Party Suits

No responsible party, including Berkeley County, is identified as potentially liable for cleaning up the site, through either:

- (a) a judgment rendered in a court of law or an administrative order that would require any person to assess, investigate, or clean up the site; or
- (b) an enforcement action by federal or state authorities against any party that would require any person to assess, investigate, or clean up the site; or
- (c) a citizen suit, contribution action, or other third-party claim brought against the current or immediate past owner of the site (or where a UST(s) is involved, the current or immediate past owner of the UST(s)), that would, if successful, require the assessment, investigation, or cleanup of the site.

(6) Subject to RCRA

The site is not subject to any order under § 9003(h) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act.

(7) Financial Viability of Responsible Parties

Not Applicable.

**13. Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure**

- a. The site entered the State Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) on May 23, 2024. Cleanup of the site will be monitored through the South Carolina VCP program.
- b. It is not anticipated that neighboring or adjacent properties will need to be accessed based on the localization of the contamination within the site boundaries.

**14. Community Notification**

**a. Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives**

The County announced its intent to apply for cleanup funding for the 1266 Russellville Road site and its proposed redevelopment on January 12, 2026. A draft ABCA for the site and this application was made available on January 12, 2026, for public review and comment. These documents summarized information about:

- the site and contamination issues, cleanup standards, and applicable laws;
- the cleanup alternatives considered; and
- the proposed cleanup.

**b. Community Notification Ad**

A community notification ad clearly stating (i) that a copy of the grant application, including the ABCA, is available for review and comment, (ii) how to comment on the draft application, (iii) where the draft application is located, and (iv) the date, time, and location of the public meeting which was published on January 12, 2025, on the County's dedicated brownfields webpage and through the County's Public Information Office at [berkeleycountysc.gov](http://berkeleycountysc.gov) and [berkeleymeansbusiness.com](http://berkeleymeansbusiness.com). A copy of this grant application, including the draft ABCA was made available for public review and comment on January 12, 2025.

**c. Public Meeting**

Three community members attended this virtual public meeting for the FY26 Cleanup Grant application on January 14, 2026, in St. Stephen, SC. The County documented participant attendance at the meetings. Public comments regarding this grant application were received and documented.

In addition to this grant required meeting, on January 17, 2026, there was a community bingo night in St. Stephen, where the audience was told about the grant application and encouraged to make comments. No comments were received from the Bingo event. Attached is the sign in sheet.

**d. Submission of Community Notification Documents**

The following community notification documents are included as an attachment to this proposal:

- a copy of the draft ABCA;
- a copy of the ad that demonstrates notification to the public and solicitation for comments on the application and that notification to the public occurred at **14 days** before the application was submitted to the EPA;
- the comments received – a copy of the comments received are attached to this proposal;
- response to those public comments – a copy of the response to public comments are attached to this proposal;
- meeting notes from the public meeting; and
- meeting sign-in sheets/participant list.

**15. Contractors and Named Subrecipients**

- **Contractors.**  
Not Applicable.
- **Named Subrecipients.**  
Not Applicable.



**SC DEPARTMENT of  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES**

**Juli E. Blalock, Chief  
Bureau of Land and Waste Management**  
2600 Bull Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

January 7, 2026

Aditi Chakravarty  
Region 4 Brownfields Coordinator  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
61 Forsyth Street SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

RE: EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant  
Berkeley County, South Carolina

Dear Ms. Chakravarty:

The South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES), the State's environmental authority, acknowledges that Berkeley County plans to conduct the cleanup of a brownfield site and is applying for an FY26 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

Berkeley County has developed an application requesting site-specific federal Brownfields Cleanup funding for the St. Stephen High School property, a former high school that operated until 1996 for the St. Stephen community, located at 1266 Russellville Road, St. Stephen, South Carolina.

SCDES affirms that the St. Stephen High School property:

- i. Berkeley County has requested State oversight for the site by means of voluntary cleanup contract 23-7790-NRP;
- ii. The site is eligible to be overseen by a State program or office; and
- iii. Based upon the environmental site assessments performed to date and information provided by the applicant, the State oversight program concurs that the site has had a sufficient level of site characterization for the remediation work to begin on the site.

SCDES appreciates your consideration of the application and hopes for a favorable outcome. Your positive response will assist Berkeley County in its efforts to revitalize properties in the community. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Nicholas Hammond, member of my staff, at 803-898-0736 or [Nicholas.Hammond@des.sc.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Hammond@des.sc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Juli E. Blalock".

**Juli E. Blalock, Chief**  
Bureau of Land and Waste Management

CC: Wendy Boswell, Area Director – BRLS Charleston Regional Office  
Preston Mousseau, Manager, Brownfields Program  
Nicholas Hammond, Project Manager, Brownfields Program