



Town Of North Wilkesboro

Post Office Box 218

North Wilkesboro, North Carolina 28659

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Narrative Information Sheet

- 1) Applicant Identification
Town of North Wilkesboro
P.O. Box 218
832 Main Street
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
- 2) Website URL
<https://www.north-wilkesboro.com>
- 3) Funding Requested
a) Single Site Cleanup
b) 1,757,208.00
- 4) Location
North Wilkesboro, NC
- 5) Property Information
Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery Property
127 Maple Street, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
- 6) Contacts
a) Project Director

Meredith Detsch, CZO
Planning Director
Town of North Wilkesboro
Email: planning@northwilkesboronc.gov
832 Main Street/Mailing: PO Box 218
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
Office: 336-667-7129 ext. 3011
Cell: 336-466-5275

b) Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Mayor Marc Hauser
Board of Commissioners
Email: mhauser@northwilkesboronc.gov
832 Main Street/Mailing: PO Box 218
North Wilkesboro, NC 2865
Office: 336-667-7129
- 7) Population
4,349

8) Other Factors

Other Factor	Page #
Community Population 15,000 or less.	4
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	n/a
The proposed brownfield 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.	2
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	2
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	2
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	3
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2014 or later) or is closing.	n/a

9) Releasing Copies of Applications n/a

North Wilkesboro Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application - Threshold Criteria for Cleanup Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a) The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms it is eligible for an EPA Clean-up Grant, as a General Purpose Unit of Local Government. The town was incorporated on March 4, 1891, and is a *Local government* as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1.
- b) The Town of North Wilkesboro is a unit of local government, thus section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code does not apply.

2. Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants

The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms that it has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the proposed site.

3. Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds

The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms that it does not have an open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.

4. Site Ownership

Text below is sample text to be finalized upon completion of the sale.

The Town of North Wilkesboro is the sole owner through foreclosure... fee-simple title of the Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery Property, as defined in the Wilkes County Register of Deeds (Doc #XXXX) recorded on November 12, 2024.

5. Basic Site Information

- a) Name of the site: Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery Property
- b) Address: 127 Maple Street, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659

6. Status and History of Contamination at the Site.

The 3.01-acre Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery site is located in a commercial/industrial area of North Wilkesboro. The site was occupied by a tannery from 1897 to 1940 under the names C.C. Smoot & Sons Tannery (Smoot Tannery, 1897-1925) and International Shoe Company (1925 – 1940). The majority of the tannery operations were destroyed by a flood and fire in 1940. Jenkins Wholesale Supply Company (Jenkins) moved into the property in the 1950s and remained until the early 2000s. Jenkins included an automobile restoration business known as Jenkins Properties, Inc. Antique Auto Sales & Restorations. The site is now vacant, with six dilapidated office and warehouse buildings. Reconnaissance at the site indicates both hazardous substances and petroleum contaminants, with hazardous substances as the predominant contaminant.

Historical tanning operations and processes included soaking hides in vats containing solutions that included chromium and arsenic. Site maps depict former presence of vats and tanks which likely contained these chemicals, as well as rail spurs which may have been used to transport the chemicals to the site. Based on known chemicals historically used during tanning operations, like chromium and arsenic, and the former presence of tanning infrastructure at the property, the former presence of Smoot Tannery is a Recognized Environmental Condition (REC).

An April 1994 Tank Closure Report indicated that one 1,000-gallon and one 2,000-gallon gasoline Underground Storage Tank (UST) were removed in July 1993, from the northern site boundary. The tanks were from two separate tank pits with a fuel dispenser in the middle. The USTs were buried beneath 1- to 2-feet of fill material consisting of bricks and timbers; no evidence of other debris or municipal waste was observed. Following removal of the tanks, six of eight soil samples from the tank pits identified total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) above applicable standards. The soil excavated during the tank removal was used to backfill the excavations. A UST Closure Report in August 1994 indicated that based on the results of the 1993 soil samples, the petroleum-affected soils were removed from the UST excavations and disposed off-site in June 1994. During removal of the affected soils, the two excavations were merged into one. In February 2020, the NCDEQ issued a No Further Action (NFA) Status for the two USTs, stating the soil samples did not exceed the lower of the soil-to-water or residential Maximum Soil Contaminant Concentrations (MSCCs). Based on the regulatory status, the two USTs were considered to be a historical REC (HREC) during the April 2023 Phase I ESA. If any orphaned USTs are found on the site, they will be removed as part of the clean up plan.

Automotive restoration activities conducted on the site through the Jenkins Properties, Inc. Antique Auto Sales & Restorations service commonly use solvents and petroleum products during operations. The site contains three in-ground hydraulic lifts, eight Aboveground Storage Tanks (ASTs) with unknown contents, a paint mixing room with a hazardous waste drum, several unlabeled drums with contents unknown, a parts washer, and numerous vehicles in various states of disrepair. The ATs, drums, vehicles, and containers with automotive related liquids are identified as RECs; the lifts and drains are also identified as RECs.

Since tanning operations largely ceased in 1940, minimal evidence of the operations was observed during the Phase I ESA, other than those described above. Most observations are likely attributed to the Jenkins Properties, Inc. Antique Auto Sales and Restoration operations. Based on review of available historical files for the site, the following potential contaminants of concern (CoCs) have been identified: Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), including but not limited to petroleum-related constituents including benzene, methyl-tert-butyl ether (MTBE), and naphthalene, semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), metals, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

7. Brownfields Site Definition

The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms that the site is a real property that contains hazardous substances, like pollutants or contaminants, that complicates efforts to expand, redevelop or reuse the property. The site is not listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List (NPL). The site is not subject to unilateral administration orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA. The site is not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Proposals.

WSP performed a Brownfields Site Assessment in August 2023 to evaluate potential impacts of previous tannery and automotive restoration operations at the subject Site. The assessment activities included the advancement and sampling of 10 soil borings via direct push

technology (DPT), the advancement and sampling of 5 soil borings via hand auger, the installation and sampling of 9 soil-gas sampling points, the installation and sampling of 5 monitoring wells, and the sampling of 1 existing monitoring well. A Brownfields Site Assessment Report for the assessment activities performed at the Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery Property was prepared and submitted to the NCDEQ Brownfields Section by WSP USA E & I Inc. (dated January 31, 2024).

WSP performed an additional Brownfields Site Assessment in June 2024 to further evaluate potential impacts of previous activities at the subject Site. The assessment activities included the advancement and installation of a methane monitoring point via hand auger and two rounds of methane screening to identify potential methane release from the buried debris. A Report of Methane Screening for the assessment activities performed at the Former Jenkins Wholesale and Smoot Tannery Property was prepared and submitted to the NCDEQ Brownfields Section by WSP USA E & I Inc. (dated July 17, 2024).

The scope of work for the Phase II related Brownfields Site Assessment was outlined in WSP's July 2023 QAPP for Site Assessment, consisted of 15 soil borings, 9 soil-gas points and 6 monitoring wells. The Brownfields Site Assessment was conducted for the site by WSP USA Environmental Infrastructure Inc. in August 2023, and a Brownfields Site Assessment Report relative to Phase II Environmental Assessment activities was submitted by WSP, dated January 31, 2024.

9. Site Characterization

See Attachment **A** (*awaiting site characterization letter from NCDEQ*)

10. Enforcement or Other Actions

The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms there is no known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions relating the site for which Brownfields Grant funding is sought.

11. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination.

The Town of North Wilkesboro affirms the site does not need a Property-Specific Determination, as it is not considered a special class of property under CERLCA Section 104(k).

12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability

The site is believed to commingled with hazardous substances and petroleum, with hazardous substances being the predominant contaminant. The Town of North Wilkesboro is applying for hazardous substances funding and responding to the relevant section under subpart (a).

a. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substance Sites

i. EXEMPTIONS TO CERCLA LIABILITY

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

The details regarding the liens and site ownership below are sample text that will be updated upon completion of the sale.

The Town of North Wilkesboro believes it qualifies as exempt from CERCLA Liability per CERLCA § 1010(20)(D), as a local unit of government that acquired the property by a combination of escheat and intergovernmental transfer. The most recent

property owner, Lewis Hill Jenkins Sr., 87, passed away on October 31, 2013, with no heirs and defunct corporation, thus the property is abandoned. The site had several liens from the Town, County, and the IRS. Those liens have since been paid or expunged. The County foreclosed on the property on October 11, 2024, and the Town secured ownership on November 12, 2024. All recorded disposal of hazardous substances is associated with the previous owners and the tannery and automotive restoration operations that occurred in the late 1800s and early to mid-1900s. The town affirms it has not caused or contributed to any release of hazardous substances at the site. The town affirms it has not at any time arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site, nor has it transported hazardous substances to the site.

13. Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure

- a) The deteriorating condition of the site poses significant safety hazards, including risk of injury from unstable structures and exposure to contaminants; the neglected site is also susceptible to unwanted activities, contributing the social issues within the community. The Town is committed to addressing these safety concerns to improve the overall well-being of the community.

The Town maintains a close relationship with the NCDEQ Brownfields Program and has and will continue to rely on its expertise during the cleanup process. The Brownfields Agreement with NCDEQ will dictate areas on the site that need to be capped or cleaned up. The Town will be responsible for overseeing the cleanup activities on the site, including hiring contractors, managing schedules, and ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. The Town will also incorporate technical assistance from a project manager or environmental consultant specializing in brownfield cleanup. This process will be completed through a formal competitive bid process. The successful consultant will follow federal requirements for all procurements including fair labor laws and the Davis Bacon Act.

- b) Cleanup activities will not extend beyond the boundaries of the proposed site and the entire property is accessible from the main road or from an alleyway. The Town owns the property to the south of the site if access is needed from that direction. Town will secure through the hired consultant a stormwater and land disturbance permit through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) which will ensure that run-off and other migration of contaminants are contained properly through demolition and any related construction activities.

Additionally, this site is in a federally regulated floodplain and in close proximity to the Yadkin River. We will be requiring extra run off mitigation measures be put into place including silt fencing and other required site-specific needed materials to catch sediment and debris. Town staff monitors the river gages on the Yadkin River and tracks any significant increases in the levels to prepare response for flooding in the area.

14. Community Notification

a) Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives

The Town has published the grant application on their social platforms, website and held a public input meeting on October 29, 2024, to receive feedback. Included in the draft grant application, the ABCA is available for comment and other supporting documents the town has been working on. These documents include an economic development study on the site and various publications for outreach the Region 4 EPA CUPP interns created for the Town of North Wilkesboro.

b) Community Notification Ad

The Town of North Wilkesboro advertised the community input meeting on October 17th and 24th in the local newspaper. Social media platforms started advertising the event and grant application on October 10th.

c) Public Meeting

The public meeting for comment on the draft application was held on October 29, 2024, at 5:30PM, in the Commissioners Board Room at 212 9th Street, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659. *[Additional details on attendance, comments, and incorporation of comments to be added after event.]*

d) Submission of Community Notification Documents

The following documents are included as attachments below *[Several of these documents will be created and attached following the October 29 public comment meeting]:*

- The draft ABCA – Attachment **B**
- A copy of the newspaper ad for the public meeting – Attachment **C**
- A summary of the public comments and the responses to them – Attachment **D**
- The meeting notes and the meeting presentation – Attachment **E**
- The meeting sign-in sheet – Attachment **F**

15. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

• Contractors.

The Town of North Wilkesboro has not identified or procured contractors specific to this project. However, the Town does have Master Service Agreements with five qualified engineering firms to provide on-call multi-disciplined professional engineering services to the town. The Town *may* choose to use any of these contractors for this project, if appropriate.

The procurement process followed to secure the on-call engineering services included a Request for Qualifications that was issued in January 2024 and MSAs were executed in April 2024. The procurement was governed by and in accordance with all laws of the State of NC and the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Wilkesboro. All on-call engineering agreements include terms and provisions requiring that any funding from a federal source, whether in whole or in part will require adherence to Federal Uniform Guidance, pursuant to 2 CFR Section 200.326 and 2 CFR Part 200, and that the following provisions will also apply: Equal Employment Opportunity (41 C.F.R. Part 60), Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3148), Copeland “Anti-Kickback” Act (40 U.S.C. 3145), Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 3701-3708), Clean Air Act

(42 U.S.C. 7401-7671q), Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C.1251-1387), Debarment and Suspension (Executive Orders 12549 and 12689), Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C.1352), Procurement of Recovered Materials (2 C.F.R. § 200.322), and Record Retention Requirements (2 C.F.R. § 200.324)

- **Named Subrecipients.**

N/A

DRAFT

North Wilkesboro Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application Narrative

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

The Smoot Tannery site in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, currently saddles a small town with major environmental and economic challenges. Historically, the tannery was a key contributor to the local economy, but its operations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries left behind hazardous contamination, including soil pollution from volatile organic compounds (VOCs), petroleum hydrocarbons, arsenic, and chromium. In later years, after the property had changed owners and operations, auto restoration activities further contributed to the contamination, primarily through solvents and other hazardous materials used on-site. These environmental hazards pose serious risks to public health, with residents facing increased risks of cancer, birth defects, and respiratory conditions, including asthma.

The site is in downtown North Wilkesboro and is adjacent to community assets like Smoot Park, Yadkin River Blueway, and the Yadkin River Greenway, making it a prime location for potential redevelopment that could boost recreational and community engagement opportunities. Currently, the abandoned and blighted state of the property undermines efforts to revitalize the downtown area, deterring investment and exacerbating economic stagnation.

Redeveloping the Smoot Tannery site is part of a broader strategy to target key properties in the downtown corridor for revitalization as outlined in the Downtown Master Plan and River District Plan. This grant will be used to address contamination and stabilize the site, paving the way for redevelopment that is essential for achieving the town's broader economic and public health goals. Remediation will not only remove dangerous pollutants but will also mitigate public health risks, enabling future community-centered projects such as public green spaces, commercial uses, or mixed-use developments that align with local revitalization plans.

1.a.ii. Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site

The Smoot Tannery site, located at 127 Maple Street in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, spans 3.01 acres near the Yadkin River and downtown. After a long history of industrial activity, the site is now vacant and significantly contaminated. Established in the late 19th century, the tannery processed animal hides using chemicals like chromium and arsenic, which have contributed to soil contamination. Following the tannery's closure around 1940 in the wake of a severe flood, the site was used for auto restoration and antique car sales, introducing additional pollutants, including solvents, petroleum products, and other hazardous chemicals associated with vehicle repairs.

Currently, the property is abandoned, featuring several deteriorating structures, some of which have fully or partially collapsed. These dilapidated buildings add to the area's blight and pose safety risks due to their unstable condition and the potential presence of hazardous materials such as asbestos or lead-based paint.

Environmental assessments have identified various contaminants in the soil, including chromium, arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and lead, which pose public health risks. Groundwater contamination is also a concern, with traces of VOCs and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) linked to past activities, which exceeded their respective NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) Industrial/Commercial Industrial/Commercial Health-Based Preliminary Soil Remediation Goals (PSRGs). These chemicals threaten the habitats of endangered species present near the site, which include the Bog Turtle, Monarch Butterfly, and several migratory bird species.

Potential methane generation from buried debris and vapor intrusion risks present additional challenges, as harmful chemicals could migrate into indoor air if redevelopment occurs without adequate mitigation measures. The contamination has hampered redevelopment efforts, contributing to economic decline in the surrounding area. The site's location near the Yadkin River raises concerns about the potential impact on local water sources, as the river feeds into local drinking water sources, including the nearby metropolitan area of Winston-Salem. Cleaning up the Smoot Tannery site is vital for revitalizing North Wilkesboro, enabling future community-

focused projects that could include green spaces, commercial ventures, or other developments aligned with local revitalization plans.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The projected reuse strategy for the Smoot Tannery site is aligned with North Wilkesboro's local government land use and revitalization plans, with the goal of transforming the currently contaminated and abandoned property into a community asset. The proposed reuse includes a combination of green spaces, workforce development spaces, collaborative businesses, outdoor economies, and commercial development, all of which address the needs of the local underserved community while also contributing to the town's economic revitalization.

The reuse strategy can incorporate energy-efficient building practices for any new structures developed on the site, including energy-efficient lighting, HVAC systems, and insulation. These measures will reduce the overall energy consumption of the new development and contribute to the town's long-term sustainability goals. There will be opportunities to incorporate renewable energy systems, such as solar panels, and improve energy efficiency. The proposed reuse strategy aligns directly with North Wilkesboro's broader revitalization initiatives, as outlined in the Roadmap to Reuse Plan by Atlas Community Studios, as well as the Downtown Master Plan and River District Plan.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

The revitalization of the Smoot Tannery site will have significant impacts on North Wilkesboro's local economy, environment, and quality of life. Redeveloping this contaminated property will stimulate economic growth, improve environmental sustainability, and enhance community spaces. The project's strategic location near the downtown corridor, Yadkin River, Smoot Park, and the Yadkin River Greenway offers opportunities for mixed-use development, which will attract investment and support small businesses, creating job opportunities for residents. The availability of affordable commercial spaces will encourage entrepreneurship and stimulate economic activity, raising the town's tax base and driving long-term growth.

Redevelopment will create construction jobs during the cleanup and development phases, and permanent jobs in retail, hospitality, and other sectors afterward. The site's transformation into a commercial incubator or sports complex will provide economic and recreational opportunities for underserved communities, improving access to amenities and increasing property values. Additionally, addressing the site's current conditions, including concerns about the large homeless population in the area, will help reduce blight and improve safety for the community.

The revitalization plan also includes developing green spaces and connecting the site to nearby recreational areas. Green infrastructure elements like rain gardens and permeable pavements will be integrated to manage stormwater and reduce flood risks, especially given the site's location in a federally designated floodplain. The addition of green spaces will alleviate the urban heat island effect, improve air quality, and support biodiversity, while encouraging outdoor activities that promote physical and mental well-being.

The cleared and remediated site could potentially host solar panels or other forms of renewable energy infrastructure. Given the site's size and location, the integration of solar energy systems could support the local energy grid, reduce carbon emissions, and provide a source of clean, renewable energy to the community. This aligns with broader goals of reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Addressing environmental justice concerns is a key goal of the project. The Smoot Tannery site is near low-income populations, with a median income of \$48,681 and 16.1% living in poverty. By transforming the site into a space with commercial, recreational, and green components, the project aligns with local revitalization goals and ensures that all residents benefit from the redevelopment.

The project will also bolster climate resilience by implementing flood-resilient design measures, such as elevating structures and installing bioswales, to protect against future flood risks. By removing contamination, the project eliminates environmental hazards that could worsen during extreme weather events, contributing to the community's sustainability and safety.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.c.i Resources Needed for Site Characterization

The NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), a key partner to North Wilkesboro, has access to a variety of funding sources to support ongoing environmental assessments and the redevelopment of the Smoot Tannery site. Previous EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants through NCDEQ have funded Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), laying the groundwork for future remediation. Should further characterization be required, the NCDEQ Brownfields Program provides additional fee-based services to support updated assessments and refine remediation plans. The EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) offers flexible funding that can help fill site characterization financing gaps.

To secure supplementary funding, North Wilkesboro will work with the Development Finance Initiative (DFI), Golden Leaf Foundation, Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), NC Department of Commerce, and local nonprofits. These collaborations can help bridge financial gaps for further site evaluations. Additional private investments and local grant opportunities will be pursued once initial remediation efforts begin. This strategy ensures that all necessary resources for site assessment are in place, ensuring effective redevelopment planning.

1.c.ii. Resources Needed for Site Remediation

The EPA funding requested in this application will be the basis for remediation efforts at the Smoot Tannery site. Given the site's complexity, size, and floodplain location, additional funding will likely be needed to fully address environmental hazards. The NCDEQ Brownfields Program will continue to play a key role, offering ongoing support for remediation services to ensure that cleanup activities meet regulatory standards.

To cover the remaining remediation costs, state-level brownfields incentives, matching funds, and low-interest loans will be explored. Should unforeseen remediation needs arise, private sector investment will be actively pursued as the site's appeal increases post-initial cleanup. North Wilkesboro aims to secure the resources required for a thorough and sustainable cleanup, enabling the site to be safely redeveloped and integrated into the community, while supporting long-term environmental and economic benefits.

1.c.iii. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

The EPA grant will cover remediation, but additional resources may be necessary to support the successful reuse of the Smoot Tannery site. Partnerships with organizations such as the DFI will be key in securing funding to help redevelop the site for commercial and recreational purposes. These collaborations will leverage public and private funding, ensuring a steady flow of resources for redevelopment. Further support will be sought from the Golden Leaf Foundation, state-level brownfield incentives, tax credits, or low-interest loans for infrastructure and redevelopment activities. As the site is prepared for redevelopment, these incentives will help bridge any gaps and attract private sector investment.

1.c.iv. Use of Existing Infrastructure

Located in downtown North Wilkesboro, the site is well-positioned to make the most of existing infrastructure, minimizing the need for extensive new installations. The site has access to Maple Street, which connects directly to downtown and nearby neighborhoods. By using existing roadways, the redevelopment will reduce the need for additional road construction, supporting cost-effective and sustainable growth. The site is also equipped with water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure, which can be reactivated and modernized to support new uses after remediation. Upgrades could include expanding capacity for sewage and water systems to support increased population density or installing renewable energy systems such as solar panels that require modern electrical connections.

The grant will enable environmental cleanup to ensure these utilities are safe for future commercial or recreational developments, reducing costs compared to installing entirely new systems. In addition, the site's location near the Yadkin River and existing stormwater management systems allows for the integration of improved flood mitigation strategies, such as bioswales and stormwater retention, utilizing the current infrastructure to manage runoff effectively. The nearby Smoot Park, Overmountain Victory Trail, Yadkin River Blueway, and Yadkin River Greenway provide accessible recreational areas, which the project aims to connect

to the redevelopment. This will enhance the area’s appeal and encourage active use of public spaces and alternative transportation routes without the need for significant new infrastructure investments.

Potential funding sources include USDA Rural Development Loans and Grants, the Appalachian Regional Commission, State and Local Infrastructure Improvement Funds, the Golden Leaf Foundation, and the NC Department of Commerce.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. Community Need

2.a.i. The Community’s Need for Funding

North Wilkesboro is a small community, with 4,131 residents per the 2020 U.S. Census. This figure represents a stagnation of the Town’s development, as it is nearly the same as the population in 2000; for context, this flatlining occurred while the State of North Carolina increased its population by nearly 30%. Several statistics show North Wilkesboro’s residents are struggling economically relative to the State and country:

	Median Income	Poverty Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate	Age >=25, w/ less than a H.S. degree
North Wilkesboro	\$36,855	22.0%	51.6%	21.9%
North Carolina	\$66,186	13.3%	62.6%	10.6%
United States	\$75,149	12.5%	63.5%	10.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

Given the Town’s low population and the limited means of its residents, North Wilkesboro’s municipal budget is commensurately small, providing inadequate local government resources to undertake this site’s cleanup. The FY 2024-25 Community Development budget was just over \$370,000; it would need to be nearly doubled to cover the costs of this project over the projected four-year implementation period. The Town’s millage rate of .52 per every \$100 of assessed property value is already high relative to other neighboring jurisdictions, and with the need to maintain affordability for the residents, the Town has limited capacity to raise property taxes.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

2.a.ii.(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

CEJST data indicates that the Smoot Tannery site is in a Census tract (37193960600) with a significant low-income population. It is in the 95th percentile for low median income, the 91st percentile for households in poverty, and the 86th percentile for households at or below twice the federal poverty level. According to U.S. Census ACS data, 32% of residents in the tract identify as non-White. 20% of the tract’s residents are 18 years old or younger. While health and welfare statistics cannot be exactly overlaid with these subgroups, the tract’s overall population is experiencing a range of health and welfare issues. According to EJScreen data, the tract is in the 93rd percentile for heart disease incidence, 83rd percentile for low life expectancy, and 75th percentile for cancer prevalence.

The site sits directly within the 100-year flood plain along the Yadkin River, as shown on EJScreen, and the site’s history includes a 1940 flood that covered the entire property, wiping out the original tannery. As Hurricane Helene has recently shown, flooding threats in Western North Carolina are increasing with the impacts of climate change and development. Remediating conditions on this site will prevent existing contaminants from being washed away in future flooding events and polluting nearby waterways. The redevelopment scenarios for the site include new green space and greenways, and connections to existing Town parks and greenways, that will increase recreation opportunities for the community, providing the associated health benefits that come through increased exercise. Residents have expressed a desire for these amenities – reflecting a high likelihood they will be utilized - in the community meeting for the Town’s Parks Master Plan. New green spaces such as athletic fields for soccer, community gardens, yard games, unpaved trails, and a dog park could be easily integrated into already existing recreational facilities. The site also has the potential for new businesses such as river outfitters, restaurants, and other indoor recreation facilities that can enhance existing parks and recreational opportunities.

2.a.ii.(2) Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

As noted, the prevalence of cancer in this site’s Census tract is in the 75th percentile, per EJScreen. This site is currently contaminated with a mixture of petroleum and VOCs and SVOCs (such as ethylbenzene, naphthalene, benzo(a)anthracene, and benzo(a)pyrene, among others). Exposure to these contaminants has been shown to increase the risks of cancer and chronic lower respiratory diseases and to cause damage to the liver and kidneys. Removing these contaminants from the area may have a positive effect on the incidence and mortality rates among the area’s residents in relation to these health issues. The Wilkes County Community Health Assessment in 2022 found that county-wide mortality from chronic lower respiratory diseases were 50% higher than State average, while chronic liver disease and cirrhosis deaths were 38% higher.

Based on the results of the Phase II ESA and the NC Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) Exposure Risk Calculations, the level of soil contamination is such that community members will not be allowed on the site until given approval, and construction workers will need additional protective measures taken to work on the site and areas will need to be capped to prevent exposure. Soil gas (vapor) interference was concluded to have three of twelve noted dangerous gases at levels that will require air purifiers or other ventilation systems to be put into place on the site.

2.a.ii.(3) Environmental Justice

2.a.ii.(3)(a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues

On several measures, the target area is home to various groups that have traditionally experienced disproportionate exposure to environmental threats. The Census tract for this site is one of Wilkes County's most racial and ethnically diverse; it has the second largest proportion of residents identifying as not White alone in the County (28%) and the third largest Hispanic population (13% of residents), per the 2020 Census. Per CEJST data referenced above, the workforce development characteristics demonstrate the relatively low-income population, representing another category of individuals historically living in closer proximity to polluted areas. And CEJST further confirms the level of legacy pollution and water quality threats faced by this area; the tract is in the 95th percentile for proximity to Risk Management Plan facilities and the 91st percentile for underground storage tanks and releases.

CEJST data shows the site is within a Census tract identified as disadvantaged. Additionally, North Wilkesboro as a whole is spread across a total of five Census tracts, all of which are identified as disadvantaged in CEJST.

2.a.ii.(3)(b) Advancing Environmental Justice

The current state of the site poses environmental and public health risks to the community, both through the presence and possible exposure to the contaminants on site, and because of the dilapidated and abandoned state of the property, which makes it a hazard for anyone wandering onto the property and a potentially attractive site for illicit activities. The blighted condition of the property has economic and social impacts on the surrounding community by depressing property values and nearby economic activity and diminishing community morale.

The market analysis that produced the current reuse strategy of a destination recreation and entertainment facility carefully reviewed the market demand and landscape of options for this type of use across Wilkes County and a broader 60-minute drive radius, resulting in a proposed use that fits a market gap and does not overly compete with existing businesses. The resulting facility will be additive to the market activity of the Town, increasing demand for current goods and services by drawing in out-of-town visitors. At the same time, the site’s size and the scale of the proposed redevelopment is modest enough that it will not have such an impact on the market dynamics of the Town that it will create affordability issues around housing or retail space costs. The scale of the project seems to be just right for North Wilkesboro – large enough and strategically situated to have a marked impact on town conditions, but small enough to protect the existing community from the negative side effects of economic growth.

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i. and 2.b.ii. Project Involvement and Project Roles

The Town of North Wilkesboro has been partnering with North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) Brownfield Redevelopment Section over the past two years. The Town is one of the five recipients for NCDEQ’s MARC grant.

Name of organization/ entity/group	Entity’s mission	Point of contact (name & email)	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) Brownfield Redevelopment Section	To work with Brownfields Property Owners to maintain the on-going safe reuse and compliance of properties with recorded Brownfields Agreements and protect human health and the environment.	Jordan Thompson jordan.thompson@deq.nc.gov	Assisting with Brownfield Agreement and ABCA. Assisting with public meetings. Providing technical guidance on clean up and reuse on the site.
North Wilkesboro Planning Board	This board is an advisory board to the Town Board of Commissioners with Zoning Ordinance amendments and policies conformance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Special projects may be assigned to this board through the Commissioners.	John Harwell Planning@northwilkesboronc.gov	Conducting technical reviews and holding input meetings on all plans before the Board of Commissioners approves them. Can facilitate the review of a small area plan for the site and public input.
Board of Commissioners	Town Governing Board consists of a Mayor and five Town Commissioners who identify community needs and commit Town resources to meet those needs within the limits of federal and state law.	Marc Hauser, Mayor mhauser@northwilkesboronc.gov	Holding public input meetings and advising staff through the process. Allocating money to additional needs to ensure the project is successful.
Wilkes Outdoor Action Plan Group	A group of community stakeholders working on economic development of Wilkes’ outdoor assets through the adopted Great State of Wilkes Action Plan.	Jenn Wages, jenn@healthwilkes.org	Reviewing, commenting, and supporting the redevelopment of the property through the various plans the Town is working on. Also, a collaborator on additional funding opportunities for the site post cleanup for recruitment of outdoor business opportunities.
Wilkes Chamber of Commerce	The voice and advocate for business and the hub for communication in Wilkes County.	Linda Cheek, lcheek@wilkesnc.org	Assisting with connecting the business community with the Town for outreach and community comment on the plans and future of the site.
Wilkes Economic Development Corporation	To facilitate the creation of new jobs and capital investment in Wilkes County, through the retention and expansion of existing businesses, recruitment of new businesses along with real estate development for growth in Wilkes County.	LeeAnn Nixon, lnixon@wilkesedc.com	Assisting with connecting the Town with economic development incentives including assisting with grant application focused on workforce development. Will assist with marketing the site once it is cleaned up.

Wilkes Tourism Development Authority (WTDA)	To bring overnight travelers to Wilkes County to grow the local economy.	Thomas Salley tsalley@wilkesboronc.org	Promoting the redevelopment of the site and assisting with attracting businesses and users of the site once cleanup is complete.
Wilkes Soil and Water Conservation District	To foster voluntary, incentive-driven management of soil, water, and related natural resources for the benefit of the environment, economy, and all citizens.	Kayla M. McCoy kmccoy.wilkes@gmail.com	Assisting with environmental education programs and community outreach throughout the grant. Resources for finding and applying for environmental grants that could assist this project and further efforts.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input

The Town has been working with EPA Region 4 College/Underserved Community Partnership Program (CUPP) students over the past year and focused on their analytical skills to create public outreach documents. To date the interns created a brochure summarizing our completed Phase I ESA, our completed Phase II ESA, and a survey for community members to complete. The interns presented to either our Board of Commissioners or our Planning Board in a public meeting their final work and deliverables at the end of their terms.

The survey has been distributed in our water bills, on flyers posted at community centers and business, and online through our website and social media accounts. We have held an in person public input meeting on October 29th and included a virtual option. We also participated in our community Halloween festival and will be passed out the link to the survey as well as the public meeting date. Staff has been collecting the public’s input since July 2024 through all the platforms listed. Town staff is taking the communities input from these outlets and incorporating them into the Roadmap to Reuse Plan by Atlas Community Studios, as well as the Downtown Master Plan and River District Plan. Both of these economic development plans as well as our Parks Master Plan are slated to be adopted by the Town’s governing board in early 2025. The Town will continue to engage the community and do additional outreach including providing updates to the project’s status. Additionally, as our flagship park undergoes renovations in the next year, staff will engage with those patrons and provide updates on these redevelopment projects in the vicinity. All forms of comments including verbal, written, phone calls, and additional surveys will be compiled as part of the feedback throughout the cleanup process.

Type of Outreach	Date(s)	Point of contact who conducted	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Online Survey	July 2024- Nov. 2024	Meredith Detsch	Project Manager of Brownfield Redevelopment at Jenkins/Smoot Tannery
Public outreach community wide events	October 5 th & October 26 th , 2024	Meredith Detsch	Apple Festival and Downtown Merchants Association Spooktacular.
Public Input meeting	October 17 th & October 29 th , 2024	Meredith Detsch	October 17 th Board of Commissioners review the Roadmap to Reuse Plan for Smoot Tannery; Public Input meeting on EPA grant application on October 29 th

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Proposed Cleanup Plan

To adequately clean the site for redevelopment, option three in the Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) is to conduct Building Demolition, Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) and Lead Based Paint (LBP) abatement and debris removal with offsite disposal. This would be the only option for the Town to pursue to clean up the property and deliver it pad ready for future redevelopment. The cost of this option is estimated at \$1,672,500. This includes costs for demolition of buildings and abatement of ACM and LBP at the subject property, removal of remaining building material and concrete slab, removal of four inground hydraulic lifts,

and additional assessment to further delineate subsurface impacts at the subject property. A complete removal of ACM and LBP on the site will eliminate future exposure and risks of hazardous materials to the community. The Town’s approved contractor secured through the proper procurement proceedings will assist with managing the grant and will secure an abatement contractor licensed in North Carolina to remove the ACM and LBP and notify the proper agencies when conducting the abatement. Additional safety measures will be taken to protect the abatement contractors and community when removing the hazardous waste. Appropriate permits (e.g., notify before you dig, soil transport/disposal manifests, demolition permits) will be obtained prior to the work commencing. Federal and State National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) regulations require that notification of any proposed demolition activity that would disturb ACM be provided to the appropriate regulatory agency. The disturbance of lead-containing painted surfaces will be performed in accordance with U.S. EPA-Lead; Renovation, Repair and Painting Program (40 CFR 745.80, Subpart E) and also be addressed in accordance with OSHA Construction Standard for Lead (29 CFR 1926.62). The hazardous waste removed will be disposed of in an approved site that can properly handle and dispose the hazardous materials. Once the abatement is complete for the ACM and LBP, the removal of the four hydraulic lifts on the site, demolition of all buildings and structures (except the smokestack at the rear of the property) will be necessary to facilitate the additional environmental assessments of the soils. A full detailed cost estimate is included in the attached ABCA.

3.b. Descriptions of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Project Implementation	Anticipated Project Schedule	Task Lead	Outputs
Task 1: Project/Grant Management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking project progress and managing QEP on timely completion of cleanup tasks • Financial management, including budgeting, invoice processing/payment, and all necessary reporting • Documenting and reporting on project activities and accomplishments • Travel and training opportunities 	Most activities will occur throughout project period - Q3 2025 through Q2 2029; anticipate attending Aug. 2025 Brownfields conference (Q3 2025)	Town of North Wilkesboro w/ NCDEQ support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 quarterly reports • 4 annual reports • Ongoing ACRES reporting • 8 Public input meetings on progress • Training and attending Brownfields Conference (2025) • QEP hired through competitive bid process • Grant close-out report
Task 2: Cleanup Planning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing RFP For QEP selection • Selecting QEP and negotiating contract for cleanup activities • Holding kickoff meeting with QEP, Town staff, elected officials, public and other boards associated with the project • Finalizing full cleanup plan and scope of work • Selecting cleanup contractor through bid 	Q3 2025 through Q4 2025	Town of North Wilkesboro w/ NCDEQ support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP for site cleanup contractor • Contract with QEP • Public Input • Clean up bid
Task 3: Site Cleanup			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project design specifications for ACM and LBP abatement 	Q1 2026 through Q4 2028	QEP & Town of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolished & remediated site

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilization/demobilization/site set up • ACM & LBP abatement • ACM & LBP debris transportation and disposal • Slab removal and disposal • Hydraulic lift removal • Fieldwork • 3rd party air monitoring • Oversight/confirmation survey 		North Wilkesboro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final cleanup report
Task 4: Additional Assessment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of QAPP • Additional site assessment, including new drilling • Management of Investigation Derived Waste (IDW) • Analysis of samples and report preparation 	Q1 2029 through Q2 2029	QEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QAPP • Updated site analysis report

3.c. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		Project/Grant Management	Cleanup Planning	Site Cleanup	Additional Assessment	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$53,491.36	\$6,686.42			\$60,177.78
	Fringe Benefits	\$18,721.97	\$2,340.25			\$21,062.22
	Travel	\$3,468.00				\$3,468.00
	Equipment					
	Supplies					
	Contractual			\$1,614,500.00	\$58,000.00	\$1,672,500.00
	Construction					
	Other (include subawards) (specify)					
Total Direct Costs		75,681.33	9,026.67	\$1,614,500.00	\$58,000.00	\$1,757,208.00
Indirect Costs						
Total Budget (Total Direct Costs + Indirect Costs)		75,681.33	9,026.67	\$1,614,500.00	\$58,000.00	\$1,757,208.00

Task 1 Program Management – Personnel costs are calculated as follows: **Salaries:** Meredith Detsch (MD) - \$38.30 hourly rate x (52 weeks x 4 hours a week x 4 years = 832 hours) = \$31,865.60; Holly Minton (HM) - \$54.25 hourly rate x (52 weeks x 1 hour a week x 4 years = 208 hours) = \$11,284; Joseph Kamperman (JK) - \$24.86 hourly rate x (52 weeks x 2 hours a week x 4 years = 416 hours) = \$10,341.76; **Total Salaries = \$53,491.36; Fringe Benefits:** The Town’s fringe benefit costs equal 35% of employee’s base pay; 35% x \$31,865.60 (MD) = \$11,152.96 + 35% x \$11,284 (HM) = \$3,949.40 + 35% x \$10,341.76 (JK) = \$3,619.61; **Total Fringe Benefits = \$18,721.97. Travel:** to attend Brownfield Conference including hotel stay, meals, expenses, and airfare per GSA rates for 2025 trip to Chicago, IL: **Airfare:** \$449 one-way (\$898 round-trip); **Meals/expenses:** \$69 per diem 1st day and 3rd day of travel, \$92 per diem 2nd day = \$230 for three days.

Lodging: August 2025 \$202 x 3 nights = \$606 for 3 days. **Total travel:** \$1,734 per person x 2 attendees = **\$3,468.00.**

Task 2 Cleanup Planning – Personnel costs are calculated as follows: **Salaries:** MD - \$38.30 hourly rate x (26 weeks x 4 hours a week = 104 hours) = \$3,983.20; JK - \$24.86 hourly rate x (26 weeks x 2 hours a week = 52 hours) = \$1,292.72; HM - \$54.25 hourly rate x (26 weeks x 1 hours a week = 26 hours) = \$1,410.50; **Total Salaries = \$6,686.42; Fringe Benefits:** 35% of employee's base pay; 35% x \$3,983.2 (MD) = \$1,394.12 + 35% x \$1,292.72 (JK) = \$452.45 + \$1,410.50 (HM) x 35% = \$493.68. **Total Fringe Benefits = \$2,340.25.**

Task 3 Site Cleanup – Per the ABCA, estimated costs for this task include: 1) Project Design Specifications for ACM and LBP Abatement - \$6,000; 2) Mobilization/Demobilization/Site Set Up - \$45,000; 3) ACM & LBP Abatement (1 month) - \$500,000; 4) ACM & LBP Debris Transportation and Disposal - \$450,000; 5) Slab Removal and Disposal (85,000sq ft, 1' thick) - \$175,000; 6) Hydraulic Lift Removal (3 days) - \$12,500; 7) Fieldwork (6 weeks) - \$400,000; 8) 3rd Party Air Monitoring (5 weeks, 25 days) - \$20,000; 9) WSP Oversight/Confirmation Survey - \$6,000

Task 4 Additional Assessment – Per the ABCA, estimated costs for this task include: 1) Preparation of QAPP - \$4,000; 2) Additional Assessment (Labor) - \$14,000; 3) Additional Assessment (Drilling) - \$14,000; 4) IDW Management - \$4,000; 5) Analytical - \$14,000; 6) Report Preparation - \$8,000

3.d. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

Our goal of this grant is to take a derelict contaminated property and get it remediated so that it can become once again a contributing property to the Town's economy. The Town's team of staff members dedicated to this project will work closely with the hired QEP and the contractor throughout the cleanup. Bi-weekly meetings with the team, QEP and clean up contractor will ensure tasks and objectives are being met with the scope of work. Post bi-weekly meetings, budgetary data, updated timelines and tasks needing to be completed will be captured in a way that all members of the cleanup team can access to see a live status at any time. Quarterly reports to EPA will include that data along with current projected costs and where the project lands with the schedule. Any discrepancies found during this reporting will be corrected to ensure the project stays within budget and on time. The recommended cleanup alternative (Alternative #3): Building Demolition, ACM and LBP Abatement and Debris Removal with Offsite Disposal will require numerous air, water and other monitoring measures to be taken during and afterwards to track the impact on the environment. The location of the site additionally within the floodplain and close proximity to the Yadkin River will be monitored closely to ensure limited impacts are present. Any areas needed for further testing and analysis will be prioritized as the spread of containments will be a significant concern during the cleanup process.

During the cleanup, the team will be responsible for tracking the amount of property cleaned, contaminated materials removed in tonnage, active staff members, any jobs created (if applicable), any interactions with the public and their feedback, outstanding invoices, and costs to date. These metrics will be utilized in the quarterly reports as well as bi-annual community updates. After the cleanup and assessment of areas that were not originally able to be assessed, the town will move forward with prepping the property for redevelopment. Additional input from the public will be taken to apply for workforce and economic development grants to bring the property up to the highest and best use. In conjunction with the voluntary Brownfield Agreement with NCDEQ, all covenants and land restrictions will be honored with future development. Any monitoring wells or systems will remain if needed and be checked annually by an accredited contractor to evaluate the results.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i. Organizational Structure

The Town of North Wilkesboro has been incorporated since 1891 and governed through an entrepreneurial spirit that is still strong today. The Town maintains a fiscally conservative approach to every year's budget and maintains a fund balance that is well above the state's requirements. Our Finance team has handled numerous states, federal, and private grant administration to bolster our services to the citizens. The Planning Director has been working with NCDEQ over the last two years on their EPA MARC grant and has been making significant strides with managing the brownfield site and tasks at hand to execute the work associated with it. Both the

Town Manager and Planning Director have experience with applying, managing and closing out grants. The administrative team we have will be able to fully execute the grant requirements.

4.a.ii. Description of Key Staff

Planning Director (Project Manager) - The Planning Director, Meredith Detsch, will be providing general management activities of the grant and the day-to-day tasks. She has worked on several private and state grants in both North Carolina and South Carolina and is capable for administering this grant with assistance from the Town Manager. Ms. Detsch will provide oversight on the contractor activities and ensuring quality control for all needed tasks.

Town Manager (Program Manager) - The Town Manager, Holly Minton, has worked in the non-profit field for more than ten years securing funding and successfully acquiring and executing grants for the organizations' needs. Her recent transition to local government in the past two years is already a proven track record with moving large community projects forward and securing over six million dollars to upgrade our Fire Department and flagship community park, Smoot Park that is near the brownfield site.

Planner – Joseph Kamperman has worked in the local government field for close to nine years in various jurisdictions. He applied and received several private grants focused on quality of life and landscaping improvements in the communities he worked for.

4.a.iii. Acquiring Additional Resources

The Town follows procurement requirements and has its own policy derived from the state's requirements. The Town has been working on a large redevelopment plan through our Outdoor Economy Initiative and has identified this site as a potential redevelopment site. The Town will be conducting Request for Proposals (RFP) for the work to be done on the site and will go through competitive bidding process. Contractors will work in their approved scope from the procurement process and direction from the Town.

The Town is an equal opportunity employer and has high ethical standards for its employees. The Town works closely with our local economic development team, Wilkes Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and has several staff and elected officials that sit on that board. The Town is a member of the Wilkes Outdoor Action team and has been working with numerous agencies including the Town of Wilkesboro, Wilkes County, Wilkes County Health Department, non-profit agencies including our Greenway Council and Health Foundation, Wilkes Economic Development Corporation (EDC). This action group is focused on healthy living in our community to start promoting our outdoor assets and focus attention to creating jobs that will support our outdoor economy. We have been working over the past five years to collaborate and execute a plan for growth in our community that include incentives through the local governments and Wilkes EDC. The adopted plan, The Great State of Wilkes Outdoor Action Plan is a 15-year roadmap to grow the outdoor economy and encourage active living in Wilkes County, North Carolina. Most recently we utilized the previous TAB provider, ICMA to subcontract with Atlas Community Studios to put together a redevelopment plan for the site as well as a preliminary cost estimate that will be utilized to secure additional funding opportunities to execute the plan. The redevelopment plan outlines several potential recreation entertainment venues that would create economic drivers and jobs in our community in line with our adopted The Great State of Wilkes Outdoor Economy Action Plan. Outlined in the Roadmap to Reuse on the property, it is projected that the employment impact of this cleanup project on the site is 93 jobs with 64 direct, 7 indirect, and 16 induced jobs just from the construction of a recreation facility at the brownfield site. Total economic output is projected at 16 million dollars from the construction project with 12 million dollars estimated project costs.

4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.b.ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements

4.b.ii.(1) Purpose and Accomplishments

The Town has successfully applied, received and managed numerous Federal, State, and Private grants. Several of recent note in the past three years that the Project and Program Managers have secured and are managing. In May 2022, the Town of North Wilkesboro received **\$325,000 from Lowe's Hometown for Smoot Park Inclusive Play Equipment**. The Town procured a contractor to install the inclusive play equipment and

significantly has improved our youth's lives. Additionally, partnership with our local Lowe's stores allowed volunteers to install landscaping and beautify the park. This grant is completed and in compliance.

In 2022, the Town of North Wilkesboro received **\$500,000 grant from the Accessibility for Parks (AFP)** grant to increase accessibility in our parks. This grant opportunity is ongoing and has spurred additional funding to be allocated to the renovation of the park. The focus on inclusivity and accessibility continues into the other assets of the park including trail systems, the public swimming pool, pool house and other play amenities.

In 2019, the Town received a \$527,250 award through FEMA's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program, which was expended over a four-year period. The award funded the salaries of four new part-time firefighters, a volunteer firefighter recruiting program and related expenses. The Town was able to administer the grant, recruit and hire positions and adequately meet the grant requirements over the timeframe, and it has since applied for another to continue its efforts.

4.b.ii.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements

The Town of North Wilkesboro applies, manages, and completes grant reporting in numerous federal, state, private, and non-profit entities. The Town has been able to expand its capacity with services to its residents by aggressively pursuing grants in all areas. The Town takes pride in completing grant reporting on time and staying within budget for the project as noted in the above examples. Clear and thorough communication with the grantor is vital to ensuring the project supported by the grant stays on schedule and within budget.

Additionally, if things change during the grant timeline, open communication can assist with solving any challenges. The Town is equipped to track expenses and time, provide invoicing and disbursement requests, all needed reporting, and continuous monitoring of the site during and after the grant is closed out.