



# WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

602 WEST RIDGEWAY STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 619  
WARRENTON, NORTH CAROLINA 27589

R04-22-A-002

Tare Davis, Chairman  
Victor Hunt, Vice Chairman  
Bertadean Baker  
Jennifer Pierce  
Walter Powell

Vincent Jones  
County Manager

Angelena Kearney-Dunlap  
Clerk to the Board

1. Applicant Identification  
Warren County  
602 West Ridgeway Street  
Warrenton, NC 27589
2. Funding Requested
  - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
  - b. Federal Funds Requested:
    - i. \$500,000
    - ii. Not Applicable
3. Location
  - a) Not Applicable
  - b) Warren County
  - c) North Carolina
4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information
  - a. Target Area Information: Kerr Lake-Norlina Corridor (Census Tract 9502)
  - b. Priority Site Information:
    - 1) Wise Interchange – US Highway 1 North, Norlina, NC  
36 32'3.98N 78 11'20.18W
    - 2) HealthCo Medical Clinic – 986 Manson Axtell Road, Norlina, NC
5. Contacts
  - a. Project Director  
Charla Duncan, Community & Economic Development Director  
(252) 257-3114  
charladuncan@warrencountync.gov  
602 West Ridgeway Street  
Warrenton, NC 27589
  - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official  
Tare Davis, County Board of Commissioners Chairman  
(252) 257-3116  
taredavis@warrencountync.gov  
602 West Ridgeway Street  
Warrenton, NC 27589



# WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

602 WEST RIDGEWAY STREET  
 POST OFFICE BOX 619  
 WARRENTON, NORTH CAROLINA 27589

Tare Davis, Chairman  
 Victor Hunt, Vice Chairman  
 Bertadean Baker  
 Jennifer Pierce  
 Walter Powell

Vincent Jones  
 County Manager

Angelena Kearney-Dunlap  
 Clerk to the Board

6. Population

Warren County, NC: 19,898 (US Census 2015–2019: American Community Survey)

7. Other Factors

**None of the other factors are applicable to this brownfield grant project.**

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 10,000 or less.	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	N/A
30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority site(s) within the target area.	N/A
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing.	N/A

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached

9. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable



NORTH CAROLINA  
*Environmental Quality*

October 19, 2021

ROY COOPER

*Governor*

ELIZABETH S. BISER

*Secretary*

MICHAEL SCOTT

*Director*

Charla Duncan  
Senior Assistant to the County Manager  
Warren County  
602 W. Ridgeway Street  
Warrenton, NC 27589  
charladuncan@warrencountync.gov

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

Dear Ms. Duncan,

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Program acknowledges and supports Warren County's application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. We are aware that your grant will focus on census tracts 9502 and 9504. This grant would be a tremendous economic development achievement for the County.

We hope that the County is successfully awarded this grant, and we will continue to support you in your Brownfields redevelopment efforts. The Brownfields Program offers technical project guidance in accordance with our program, throughout the life of your project. This is a major key to ensuring grant applicants make efficient use of the federal funds awarded. The liability protection offered by the program is also a primary marketing tool for developers and instrumental in securing financing.

The Brownfields Program can also assist with outreach efforts to your local community regarding reuse for commercial purposes and the controls to be put in place to make the property suitable. The liability protection offered by a Brownfields Agreement is a benefit to the whole community and can often facilitate additional economic development in the area surrounding a Brownfields Property.

We look forward to working with you regardless of a grant award or not. We truly believe successful Brownfields projects can rejuvenate a community.

Sincerely,

Bruce Nicholson  
Brownfields Program Manager

ec: NCDEQ Brownfields Public Outreach Team



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



**FY22 Brownfield Assessment Grant  
Narrative**



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

**a. Target Area and Brownfields** i. **Background and Description of Target Area:** Warren County was founded in 1779 as a tobacco and cotton farming region. These cash crops along with three hot springs attracted wealthy tourists leading to a vibrant local economy. However, the Civil War eroded the County's prosperity, and many of its fine mansions became dilapidated, hot spring resorts closed down, and the agricultural industry faltered. The County experienced a boom in agriculture and the influx of the textile industry in the post-war era, but this resurgence faded as the agricultural and textile industries exited the region throughout the mid-to-late 1900s. This left the County dotted with abandoned farm complexes, tobacco- and cotton-processing facilities, tobacco warehouses, other textile-manufacturing-related facilities, and supporting infrastructure.

Though slavery played a major role in the plantation operations that dominated the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the County had one of the largest free black populations in antebellum North Carolina. The area grew into a cradle for black landowners and politicians during Reconstruction, including John Hyman, the first African American to represent North Carolina in the US Congress. A strong sense of community and community activism developed, leading to Warren County's most important historic moment. Events surrounding **the construction of a polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)–waste landfill in Warren County and the subsequent protests by its residents sparked the environmental justice movement.**<sup>1</sup> In 1978, approximately 31,000 gallons of PCB-contaminated oil were illegally dumped along hundreds of miles of North Carolina highways, including Warren County. Property in Warren County was chosen for a landfill to hold 60,000 tons of PCB-contaminated soil removed from these highways. The community held numerous protests, feeling the landfill site was chosen due to Warren County's mostly poor, minority population. Citizens mounted what the *Duke Chronicle* called **"the largest civil disobedience in the South since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. marched through Alabama."** Despite the protests, the landfill was ultimately constructed. However, 20 years of continued activism prompted the detoxification of the landfill, completed in 2004. Warren County again faced environmental chaos when a coal ash landfill breached and highly contaminated coal ash infiltrated Kerr Lake, Warren County's main drinking water source and main tourist/recreational attraction.

The target-area, **Kerr Lake-Norlina Corridor (CT 9502)**, which is a **federally-designated Opportunity Zone (OZ)**, was chosen due to its historical environmental justice issues and the ability to leverage its status as an OZ for redevelopment activities. With roots in the environmental justice movement, Warren County has a community ready for revitalization but lacks the funding to restore its once vibrant economic status.

ii. **Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):** The County's network of major transportation arteries, which made the area a logistical hub and ushered consumers to its recreational and tourism points of interest, are now littered with the derelict remnants of more prosperous times. These brownfield sites exist on valuable property, many along major highways and crossroads. An initial review of property **in and around the target area identified a least 12 potential brownfield properties**, which include several **gas stations, automobile service facilities, rail support facilities, and warehouses** posing a significant health risk to the community. Additional sites will be identified and prioritized during a thorough site-inventory process, which will include input from target-area residents and project partners.

The first priority site is the **Wise Interchange** site. This 100-acre property is situated at the Wise Interchange on I-85, which is the first interchange in Warren County coming south from Virginia. This interchange is particularly suited for development as there is not a developed interchange for

---

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Justice History – US Department of Energy - <https://www.energy.gov/lm/services/environmental-justice/environmental-justice-history>





**County of Warren, NC**  
**FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

many miles in each direction on I-85 and **infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas and broadband internet) are already in-place**. This site has historically been used for agricultural cropland purposes including the growing of soybeans, cotton, and tobacco. Based on the agricultural use of the site, it is likely that various chemical fertilizers and pest control chemicals have been used, stored, and/or mixed at the site. Additionally, there is a potential that fuel was stored on-site to support agricultural operations. Furthermore, it was very common for these types of agricultural operations to have **uncontrolled farm dumps** for household and farm waste. With **no fence securing the site**, there is unfettered access to the property. The convenience of the adjacent highways, which makes its potential for redevelopment so great, also makes the property prime for unauthorized dumping, especially in light of the unsecured nature of the property. This unauthorized dumping provides opportunity for a host of additional environmental concerns. Common contaminants associated with agricultural operations include **petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile and semi-volatile compounds (VOCs and SVOCs), solvents, heavy metals, and chlorinated and organochlorine pesticides**. The County plans to **redevelop this property for commercial retail use including a restaurant and a hotel** to serve the surrounding residents and capture commuter and tourist revenue along the adjacent highways. The County **is in the planning stages for this site** and **has** been given verbal **site access** by the current property owner.

The second priority site, the **HealthCo Medical Clinic**, is an abandoned former medical clinic located on a two-acre property in Warren County's historic Soul City. Soul City is a planned community designed in the late-1960s by Floyd McKissick, a prominent civil rights leader. The idea of Soul City was to provide **opportunities for minorities and the impoverished** by providing jobs, education, housing, training, and social services. By the late-1970s, federal funding and government resources needed to support the growth of Soul City were taken away, and a decades long period of decay began. However, there is a renewed desire to bring to fruition the goals of Soul City to provide opportunities for minorities and the impoverished. The momentum created by the **current national social justice movement and the longstanding environmental justice movement in Warren County** make this an opportune time to begin the rebirth of Soul City. The clinic building has been abandoned over 10 years, and the County will **re-establish the building for use as a medical clinic with healthcare being a significant need for the target area's minority and impoverish population**. The decay of the abandoned facility increases the chance for exposure to the community from potential contaminants such as asbestos, lead paint, and mold. Additionally, the site is not secure, and is located near residential development increasing the likelihood that local citizens, including children, can access the site. The current property owner **has** verbally provided the County with **site access for environmental assessment**.

**b. Revitalization of the Target Area** i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Warren County has established clear goals for the revitalization in its **Warren County 2022 Comprehensive Land Use Plan**, which focuses on the target area. The Plan's goals are to encourage commercial and light industrial development to meet the County's needs, increase the tax base, generate new jobs for residents, and provide adequate facilities and services to protect public health and welfare, such as the re-establishment of the HealthCo Medical Clinic. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan targets development along the County's major transportation routes of Interstate 85 (I-85) and NC Highways 1, 158, and 401, which all transect the target area and priority sites. The Plan calls for coordination with the County Economic Development Commission to identify target sites for commercial and light industrial development. The County intends to develop a database of industrial and commercial properties for potential expansion that would complement the site inventory generated under the Brownfield Program. The County's two



priority sites, **Wise Interchange and HealthCo Medical Clinic**, align with the County's 2022 Land Use Plan perfectly. **The Wise Interchange site is targeted for commercial redevelopment that includes a restaurant and hotel.** The County plans to re-establish a medical clinic at the **HealthCo Medical Clinic** site. Redevelopment of these properties will provide healthcare, create jobs and commercial opportunities for disadvantaged residents, and capitalize on commuter traffic along I-85 and tourists visiting nearby Kerr Lake.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Warren County's historical prosperity was based on the success of its agricultural and industrial-focused economy, complemented by its tourist attractions. The County seeks to replicate this past success by capitalizing on the connectivity provided by its existing transportation network. The addition of brownfield redevelopment and revitalization to the County's Plan will generate an economic benefit of **job opportunities and increase its tax base, which supports additional economic development, especially for the planned redevelopment at the Wise Interchange priority site** by capturing tourist and commuter revenue. Re-establishing a medical clinic at the **HealthCo Medical Clinic priority site** will both create an economic benefit of job creation and a non-economic benefit of providing access to the healthcare for the County's disadvantaged population (people of color indicator).<sup>2</sup>

The **creation of jobs and access to healthcare** in the target area through the use of brownfield funding aligns perfectly with the Justice40 initiative in that 62% of the County's population are people of color, **which exceeds the 40% goal of the Justice40 initiative** and puts the County in the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile and target area in the 79<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Warren County has a successful history of leveraging a variety of funding sources on all types of public projects including those related to development, revitalization, infrastructure, healthcare, and education. The County has pursued and been awarded various Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), transportation grants, emergency management grants, cultural resource grants, social service block grants, and childcare development block grants. The County is pursuing additional **CDBG grants for demolition and redevelopment projects** as part of its Brownfield Program and will continue to apply every year they are permitted to do so. The County can use funds generated from its hospitality tax for redevelopment projects that incorporate tourism components. The County will leverage the target area's status as an Opportunity Zone and its New Market Tax Credit Qualification to attract private investment in redevelopment activities. In addition, there are funds available from other grant projects that can be applied to brownfield projects to support the overall success of the County's brownfield redevelopment activities. As sites that require cleanup are identified, the County will apply for **cleanup funding through EPA Brownfields Cleanup grants**. The County will continue to seek state, federal, and private funding to support redevelopment of its brownfield properties. Though these other funding sources exist for the County to leverage, the brownfields assessment grant funds are vital to the initial assessment of the brownfield properties and will serve as the key in activating these other funding sources.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The County's plans for redevelopment within the target area include the use of existing infrastructure including water/sewer, streets, transportation, and power. **The infrastructure to support brownfield redevelopment is already in place at the priority sites and throughout the target area**, so potential redevelopment-related funding will not have to be diverted to infrastructure-related projects.

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

---

<sup>2</sup> EPA EJ Screen Tool



a. **Community Need i. The Community's Need for Funding:** Warren County's existing budget primarily provides basic services and maintains infrastructure, **leaving no additional funds for assessment and remediation of brownfield sites.** With the departure of industry and a decrease in agricultural ventures, poverty, unemployment, and poor health have all increased. Without additional funding, the County lacks the resources to provide the community with solutions to these problems. The already impoverished community cannot afford tax increases to support these types of solutions. The target area has a **per capita income of \$20,493 and a median income of \$33,639**, which are significantly below the **state (\$30,783/\$54,602) and national (\$34,103/\$62,843) values.**<sup>3</sup> In the target area, **22% of the population lives below the poverty level** compared to the state (15%) and national (13%) values.<sup>3</sup> **In the target area, 27% of the population is over 62 years old, and in Warren County that demographic comprises 30%**, compared to the national average of 19%.<sup>3</sup> An older population is less productive, as these individuals are likely no longer working or generating taxable income (state) as they create no products or marketable services. Finally, an aging population is less likely to provide active consumers. The County's population is aging, impoverished, and contains a **high concentration of single mother households (8% compared to 5% nationally) and African Americans (50% compared to 13% nationally).**<sup>3</sup> Brownfields funded redevelopment and revitalization will generate earning potential and grow the County's labor force.

ii. **Threats to Sensitive Populations:** (1) **Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:** Warren County has several sensitive populations including its **elderly, impoverished, and African Americans.** The target area's 27% population over 62 years old is well above the state and national values of 19%.<sup>3</sup> The **median age in Warren County and the target area is 48 and 46 years old, respectively, compared to the state and national median ages of 38**, further illustrating Warren County's aging demographic.<sup>3</sup> Aging populations are more likely to require social services such as healthcare for treating chronic medical issues and would greatly benefit from access to local healthcare options as would be provided by the HealthCo Medical Clinic priority site. **Warren County ranks in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state, the 83<sup>rd</sup> percentile in EPA Region 4, and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile in the nation for population over 64 years of age.**<sup>4</sup> Warren County's disadvantaged aging population is also much more vulnerable to suffering health effects from the contaminants likely associated with its brownfield properties. Faced with few good options, the residents in the County's communities have no option other than turning to public assistance. In Warren County, **51% of single-mother households with children under 18 years of age are living below the poverty level**, a statistic well above the national average of 36%.<sup>3</sup> **Of the target-area population, 56% is African American (50% in Warren County overall), which is almost five times the national value of 13%.**<sup>3</sup> In Warren County, **10% of the African Americans are unemployed compared to 4% of the white population.**<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, **59% of the County's residents that are living below the poverty level are African American.**<sup>3</sup> Countless studies have shown that African Americans are more impoverished, have less access to healthy food and healthcare, are more likely to be victims of crime, have lower life expectancies, and are less employed than other racial groups.

Limited access to fresh food and healthcare is a paramount concern in the target area. Access to fresh food options to promote a healthy lifestyle is a serious concern for the sensitive populations living in the target area as **10% of the target-area population lacks access to a vehicle**<sup>3</sup> and, even more troubling, nearly half of Warren County **is classified as a Food Desert.**<sup>5</sup> In Warren

<sup>3</sup> 2015–2019 Census: American Community Survey

<sup>4</sup> US EPA EJSCREEN: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool

<sup>5</sup> USDA Food Desert – <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-atlas.aspx>





**County of Warren, NC**  
**FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

County, **23% of the households are receiving food stamp assistance compared to 12% nationally.**<sup>3</sup> According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, **Warren County, including the target area, is a Medically-Underserved Area.** There is currently **no hospital or urgent care center located in Warren County**, forcing a population with limited transportation access to travel to neighboring counties for medical emergencies or hospital care. Warren County has a community with a disproportionate amount of people at risk for health issues and without access to the proper healthcare and health insurance to get appropriate treatment.

The County believes that by identifying contaminants, allowing for assessment, and promoting redevelopment along its major thoroughfares, connectivity will increase throughout the target area, reducing the health and welfare threats by providing increased access to fresh food, healthcare (HealthCo Medical Clinic Priority Site), and job opportunities (Wise Interchange Priority Site) to help the sensitive populations transition out of the cycle of poverty.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Lead paint and asbestos exposure, which are commonly associated with aging structures found on the priority sites, pose increased risk factors to sensitive populations, particularly the target areas high minority and elderly populations and those living in poverty with limited access to healthcare. **The target area ranks above the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state and EPA Region 4 on the lead paint indicator.**<sup>6</sup> Asbestos can cause several different forms of **cancer** and chronic lung diseases, while lead can negatively impact the brain and central nervous system, causing coma, convulsions, and even death. In the eastern third of North Carolina where Warren County is located, **asthma-related emergency department visits occur at rate of approximately 94 per 10,000 visits compared to just 65 and 35 in the central and western portions of the state (county level and census tract target area data was not available).**<sup>7</sup> **Warren County has a cancer mortality rate of 171.0 per 100,000 people** compared to the national cancer mortality rate of 163.5 (**census tract target area health data not available**).<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the County has an average of 11.9 **infant** deaths per 1,000 live births compared to the state value of 8.5.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, in Warren County 12% of live births are classified as low weight compared to just 9% in the state (**census tract target area health data not available**).<sup>10</sup> The various petroleum compounds, VOCs, SVOCs, and heavy metals at the **Wise Interchange and HealthCo Medical Clinic priority sites** can lead to a host of short term and chronic health concerns. These health concerns include tremors, headaches, infertility, anxiety, depression, central nervous system depression, vision impairment, neurologic disorders, various forms of cancer, and numerous ailments of genetic, immune, and endocrine systems. The target area's already poor population would have difficulty dealing with such health effects due to the limited access to and ability to afford proper healthcare. As a result, **24% of adults in Warren County are in poor or fair general health compared to 17% in North Carolina and 16% in the United States.**<sup>11</sup> Additionally, data shows that the health of the long suffering African American population is more significantly impacted by contaminated sites based on the fact that the County's African American population has mortality rates related to heart disease and cancer of 215.8 and 185.1 per 100,000 people, respectively, compared to rates of just 157.2 and 156.2 for the County's white population.<sup>12</sup> However, by the identification and

<sup>6</sup> US EPA EJSCREEN: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool

<sup>7</sup> North Carolina Health News: <https://www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2018/04/27/asthma-rates-highest-among-poor-minority-communities-in-eastern-n-c/>

<sup>8</sup> North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics - [https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer/mortality\\_rates.htm](https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer/mortality_rates.htm)

<sup>11</sup> 2018 Warren County Community Health Assessment: <http://warrencountyhd.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Warren-County-CHA2018.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> NC Department of Health and Human Services: <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/keyindicators/reports/Warren.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> US News and World Report - <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/north-carolina/warren-county#population-health>

<sup>12</sup> North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics: 2015-2019 NC Resident Race/Ethnicity and Sex-Specific Age-Adjusted Death Rates



**County of Warren, NC  
FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

assessment of brownfield sites throughout the target area, redevelopment will allow for the removal of harmful contaminants causing serious health issues for sensitive populations.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: The derelict properties throughout the County, such as the Wise Interchange and HealthCo Medical Clinic priority sites, generate a ripple effect of negative consequences including decreased taxable revenue, decreased property values, and reduced ability to market properties for redevelopment. There is a clear concentration of these types of properties in the target area. According to NCDEQ’s Division of Waste Management Site Locator Tool, **the majority of the County’s identified petroleum and hazardous substance sites, which have come from former commercial and industrial operations, are situated in the Kerr Lake-Norlina Corridor target area, which contains a disproportionate minority population of 59%.**<sup>12</sup> The EPA Environmental Justice Screening Report shows Warren County in the 80<sup>th</sup>, 76<sup>th</sup>, and 74<sup>th</sup> percentiles in the state, EPA Region 4, and the nation, respectively, for the people of color population. The County also ranks in the 70<sup>th</sup>, 68<sup>th</sup>, and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles in the state, EPA Region 4, and the nation, respectively for low income population; and **85<sup>th</sup>, 83<sup>rd</sup>, and 85<sup>th</sup> percentiles in the state, EPA Region 4, and the nation, respectively for population over 64 years of age.**<sup>13</sup>

Warren County is the posterchild for disproportionately impacted populations. The placement of a PCB-waste landfill in Warren County ignited public outcry that led to the birth of the environmental justice movement. **Warren County’s poor, predominantly African American population was chosen by state and federal authorities to be the unfortunate recipients of 60,000 tons of PCB-waste generated from the illegal dumping of 31,000 gallons of PCB-laden transformer oil.** It took decades of community activism to get the landfill detoxified. Warren County faced environmental havoc when a coal ash landfill breached and highly contaminated coal ash infiltrated Kerr Lake, the main source of Warren County’s drinking water and one of its main tourist and recreational attractions. It is clear that the County’s disadvantaged residents are the ones living in and around the contaminated sites and have long been bearing the brunt the of negative impacts. Brownfields assessment funds would clear the way for the County to implement the goals of its Land Use Plan get these properties cleaned up and cleared for redevelopment. The reuse of the priority sites in particular would directly create jobs and provide access to healthcare for residents who have taken a disproportionate share of the negative effects of these underutilized properties. Once the County’s planned solutions can be achieved, business and industry will replace blighted brownfields ushering in employment opportunities and a brighter, more prosperous future for the community promoting environmental justice throughout the target area.

**b. Community Engagement** i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: The following project partners will assist in the process of site selection and prioritization, cleanup, and future redevelopment of the priority brownfield sites for this assessment project.

<b>Name of Org.</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>	<b>Specific role in project</b>
WARR Radio	Latisha Brothers newlifeofwellness@gmail.com (252) 767-6848	WARR Radio is a locally operated radio station based in the Warren County community and will assist with <b>community outreach</b> .
Working Landscapes	Carla Norwood [REDACTED] (252) 257-0205	Working Landscapes in a community group that works to promote a higher quality of life in disadvantaged, rural communities. They will assist with <b>site identification and community outreach and education activities</b> .
Lake Gaston Regional Chamber of Commerce	Leanne Patrick, President president@lakegastonchamber.com (252) 586-5711	The Chamber provides support and marketing for locally owned and operated businesses. The Chamber will assist with <b>site identification</b> and local business owner outreach.

<sup>13</sup> US EPA EJSCREEN: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool



**County of Warren, NC  
FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

Kerr-Tar Council of Governments	Diane Cox dcox@kerrtarco.org	The Kerr-Tar COG is voluntary organization that seeks to promote, unify, and organize communities, planning, and residents in the Kerr-Tar area. The COG will provide <b>planning assistance</b> .
---------------------------------	---------------------------------	--

iii. Incorporating Community Input: The County announced its intent to apply for this FY2022 community-wide brownfields assessment grant at its November 1, 2021 Commissioner meeting. The County believes community involvement requires fostering collaborative interaction with its residents and local organizations/entities/groups by keeping the community informed and collecting community input. Target-area residents will be informed and will know that they are a valued component of the County’s Brownfields Program. The residents will provide vital input and feedback on the neighborhood level. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created with the purpose of outlining planned community engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Through meeting minutes, the County will record community member input and suggestions on the project. The County will evaluate the information during quarterly project team meetings and prioritize addressing community input with the most benefit to the target area’s sensitive populations. Community outreach will allow target area residents to suggest potential brownfield sites. These sites will be added to the site inventory, and the County’s Brownfield Program team and project partners will prioritize the sites based on community need and the overall Brownfield Program goals. When necessary, the County will contact residents individually to discuss their suggestions in more detail.

Effective community outreach requires communication with residents about the Brownfield Program through multiple forms of media. The County will use a dedicated brownfields page on its website and various social media pages, which has a growing audience, to disseminate brownfields project information. This will ensure the widest reach of information throughout the community. The County will draw on its residents’ strong sense of community activism, which sparked the birth of the environmental justice movement, to drive community involvement. The County will also use informational brochures, press releases, and contacts with local media outlets, such as its project partner WARR Radio, to share information with Warren County residents and surrounding communities. County staff will also provide project updates and information during monthly County Commissioners meetings, community education meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions. Contact information for the brownfields project team will be posted on the web page and on all promotional materials.

Engaging with its community during the COVID-19 pandemic required quick adjustment by the County, including collaboration with local radio station WARR 1520 AM to create public service announcements and conduct live information broadcasts. The County also uses social media on a weekly basis to engage residents and receive community input and feedback. The County will continue to live stream monthly board meetings to encourage continued community involvement. The County will employ social media and video conferencing for brownfields community meetings if necessary. The County will generate videos to showcase sites selected for assessment during later community meetings when grant progress is discussed. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available.

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

**a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:** The County of Warren is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for community-wide assessment.

<b>Task 1: Outreach</b>	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The County’s Brownfield Project Director will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the



**County of Warren, NC**  
**FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

	environmental consultant (consultant). County staff will lead the community meetings (virtual/online during COVID-19 and in person post COVID-19) to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (handouts) and office supplies to manage the grant.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP created within 3 months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings held 1 <sup>st</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> quarters. Website and Outreach Materials created in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Charla Duncan - Community & Econ. Devp. Director/Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> CIP, Brownfield Website, 3 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Summary of Community Meetings in EPA required Quarterly Reports.
<b>Task 2: Site Inventory</b>	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The County's Brownfield Project Director will work with the residents living in the target area during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Although twelve potential sites have been identified, additional abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by County staff using the County's GIS website. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with staff to create an evaluation ranking tool with the help of residents to determine the order in which the sites will be addressed.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process which began with this application with the evaluation ranking process taking place in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter & continues throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Charla Duncan - Community & Econ. Devp. Director/Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List
<b>Task 3: Assessment</b>	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The consultant will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting first with the two priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which will include the SS-QAPP. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be obtained.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Activities to begin in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter and continue throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the County: Charla Duncan - Community and Economic Development Director/Brownfield Project Director.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 22 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 11 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP, Site Access Agreements, and Property Eligibility Determinations.
<b>Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning</b>	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> For projects identified for cleanup, the consultant will prepare the Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs and determining site appropriate remediation and/or reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The planning consultant will prepare a comprehensive Brownfields Revitalization Plan. The consultant will assist the County in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions (virtual or in person depending on COVID restrictions) for key properties.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes to begin in the 6 <sup>th</sup> quarter and will continue throughout the grant project. Creation of a Brownfield Revitalization Plan to begin in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the County: Charla Duncan - Community and Economic Development Director/Brownfield Project Director.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 4 ABCAs, 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes, 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan
<b>Task 5: Programmatic Support</b>	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The County's Brownfields Project Director will procure an environmental consultant to assist with the Brownfield Grant Project. The County's Brownfields Project Director oversees grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule and terms and conditions. The consultant will assist the County in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional





**County of Warren, NC**  
**FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant**

	Programmatic Support for the three-year term of the grant. The County staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend two national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter & Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in 5 <sup>th</sup> quarter, 9 <sup>th</sup> quarter, and during final close out.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Charla Duncan - Community & Econ Devp. Director/Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 3 Annual Financial Reports, 12 Quarterly Reports, 3 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period. Two staff to attend two conferences.

**b. Cost Estimates:** Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.* The budget for this project includes travel, supplies and contractual costs only. **The County will spend 72% of the budget on the Assessment Task.**

**Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$5,000 (40 hrs x \$125), Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$2,000 (16 hrs x \$125), 3 Community Education Meetings \$7,500 (3 meetings @ \$2,500/meeting). Supplies: Outreach Supplies (Paper \$25/box, Color Printouts \$1/sheet) \$2,000. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: Potential Brownfield Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool Creation \$10,000 (80 hrs x \$125) **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 22 Phase I ESAs \$3,500 each for a total of \$77,000. 1 Generic QAPP \$5,500. 11 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$25,000 each for a total of \$275,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 4 ABCAs at \$6,500 each for a total of \$26,000. 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$10,000 (\$5,000/meeting). 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan at \$50,000 (Planner: 130hrs x \$150; Market Analysts: 112hrs x \$125, Environmental Professional: 110hrs x \$150). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period \$25,000 (200 hrs x \$125). Travel: Two staff to attend two conferences \$5,000 (flights at \$750, 3 nights in hotel at \$350, incidentals and per diem at \$150 x 2 attendees).

Category	Tasks					Totals
	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Site Inventory</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Remediation/Reuse Planning</i>	<i>Programmatic Support</i>	
Travel					\$5,000	<b>\$5,000</b>
Supplies	\$2,000					<b>\$2,000</b>
Contractual	\$14,500	\$10,000	\$357,500	\$86,000	\$25,000	<b>\$493,000</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$16,500</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$357,500</b>	<b>\$86,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**c. Measuring Environmental Results:** To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule the County's internal Brownfields Project Team, which will include the consultant, will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a** using an excel spreadsheet and will report all progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the three-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and community partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and cleanup redevelopment plans. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project is not being achieved in an efficient manner, the County's has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The County will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer and if needed will create a Corrective Action Plan to help the project to get back on schedule.





#### **4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

**a. Programmatic Capability** i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii. Description of Key Staff: Warren County, in particular the team that would manage the brownfields grant, have decades of combined experience in successfully managing federal and state funded grants. The team identified below, and their supporting staff, provide more than adequate staff to successfully implement the brownfields assessment grant. Ms. Charla Duncan, the Director of Community and Economic Development, will serve as the **Brownfields Project Director**. Ms. Duncan, a Warren County native, has been with Warren County government since 2019 and has worked in local government since 2016. Ms. Duncan is responsible for supporting existing business/industry, recruiting new business/industry, conducting market research, and serving as a liaison between business/industry and local/state/federal regulatory agencies. She will be responsible for the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the project. Rachel Wooster, a Community and Economic Developer for the County, will serve as **Brownfields Project Manager**. Since joining the County in 2021, Ms. Wooster provides support for community and economic development projects including conducting research, budget tracking, community outreach, local business outreach, and marketing. Ms. Wooster will assist Ms. Duncan with all elements of brownfields grant implementation to ensure the successful execution of the brownfields grant. Lee Faines, the County's Finance Director, will serve as the **Brownfields Finance Director**. He has served in his position for 10 months and has served in financial management positions for over 4 years. As Finance Director, he plans, organizes, and directs the activities of the County's Finance Department including accounting, grant administration, collections, internal audit, risk management, and purchasing. He oversees the preparation of the annual financial statements and monitors budget expenditures. Mr. Faines will be responsible for managing the finances and drawdowns through ASAP.gov for this EPA grant project. A qualified environmental consultant will assist with the technical and reporting portions of the project.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Utilizing local contracting requirements and procurement process, the County will procure a qualified environmental consultant to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment, in addition to any other contractors needed to complete the project. The County will ensure compliance with the EPA's "Professional Service" procurement process.

**b. Past Performance and Accomplishments** ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreement (1) Purpose and Accomplishments: In 2018, the County was awarded a \$200,000 Golden LEAF Foundation grant to extend county sewer service to the Wise Interchange (priority site) on I-85. This area has flexible zoning for mixed use opportunities and the extension of the sewer line to this area will open up approximately 110 acres of property for commercial development. The grant closed and the project was completed in Winter 2020. Also, in 2018, the County was awarded a \$148,770 grant from the State Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF). The PARTF grant will fund improvements at the Magnolia Ernest Recreation Park, which is also located in the target area. The grant is currently open in the process of awarding the contract and is scheduled to be completed in Summer 2022. (2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: Warren County has a history of compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions, and has an excellent history of timely reporting with all award agencies. The County is on schedule on all active grants. Ms. Duncan is skilled in project management and is personally monitoring all grant activities to ensure compliance with all financial and reporting requirements.



**FY22 Brownfield Assessment Grant  
Threshold Criteria**



## Threshold Criteria

### 1. Applicant Eligibility

The County of Warren, North Carolina is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.

### 2. Community Involvement

The County announced its intent to apply for this FY2022 community-wide brownfields assessment grant at its board meeting on November 1, 2021. The County believes community involvement requires fostering collaborative interaction with its residents and local organizations/entities/groups by keeping the community informed and collecting community input. Target-area residents will be informed and will know that they are a valued component of the County's Brownfields Program. The residents will provide vital input and feedback on the neighborhood level. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created with the purpose of outlining planned community engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Through meeting minutes, the County will record community member input and suggestions on the project. The County will evaluate the information during quarterly project team meetings and prioritize addressing community input with the most benefit to the target area's sensitive populations. Community outreach will allow target area residents to suggest potential brownfield sites. These sites will be added to the site inventory, and the County's Brownfield Program team and project partners will prioritize the sites based on community need and the overall Brownfield Program goals. When necessary, the County will contact residents individually to discuss their suggestions in more detail.

Effective community outreach requires communication with residents about the Brownfield Program through multiple forms of media. The County will use a dedicated brownfields page on its website and various social media pages, which has a growing audience, to disseminate brownfields project information. This will ensure the widest reach of information throughout the community. The County will draw on its residents' strong sense of community activism, which sparked the birth of the environmental justice movement, to drive community involvement. The County will also use informational brochures, press releases, and contacts with local media outlets such as its project partner WARR Radio to share information with Warren County residents and surrounding communities. County staff will also provide project updates and information during monthly County Commissioners meetings, community education meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions. Contact information for the brownfields project team will be posted on the web page and on all promotional materials.

Engaging with its community during the COVID-19 pandemic required quick adjustment by the County, including collaboration with local radio station WARR 1520 AM to create public service announcements and conduct live information broadcasts. The County also uses social media on a weekly basis to engage residents and receive community input and feedback. The County will continue to live stream monthly board meetings to encourage continued community involvement. The County will employ social media and video conferencing for brownfields community meetings if necessary. The County will generate videos to showcase sites selected for assessment during later community meetings when grant progress is discussed.



**County of Warren, NC**  
**FY2022 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Threshold Criteria**

**3. Named Contractors and Subrecipients**

Not Applicable

**4. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**

Warren County, North Carolina affirms that the County does not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.