



1. Applicant Identification
Town of Robbins
101 N. Middleton Street
PO Box 296
Robbins, NC 27325
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
3. Location
 - a) Town of Robbins b) Moore County c) North Carolina
4. Target Area and Priority Site Information
 - Target Area: Town limits of Robbins (1.59 square miles)
 - Priority Site Information:
 1. Former Filling Station, 191 S. NC 705 Hwy, Robbins, NC 27325
 2. Underdog Garage, 380 S. NC 705 Hwy, Robbins, NC 27325
5. Contacts
 - a. Project Director
Clint Mack, Town Manager
336-302-9635
manager@townofrobbins.com
PO Box 296, Robbins, NC 27325
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
Mayor Cameron Dockery
919-515-4115
[REDACTED]
100 South Middleton Street, Robbins, NC 27325
6. Population
Robbins, NC: 1,168 (US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey)



7. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	1, 4
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	NA
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	NA
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).	NA
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	NA
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	1, 3
At least 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area.	8
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing.	NA

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority
See attached.

9. Releasing Copies of Applications
Not Applicable.



NORTH CAROLINA
Environmental Quality

October 26, 2023

ROY COOPER

Governor

ELIZABETH S. BISER

Secretary

MICHAEL SCOTT

Director

Clint Mack, CZO
Town Manager
Town of Robbins
101 N Middleton St
Robbins, NC 27325
manager@townofrobbins.com

Re: U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Town of Robbins

Dear Mr. Mack

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Brownfields Redevelopment Section (BRS) acknowledges and supports the Town of Robbins' application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. We understand that your grant will focus on priority sites within Town limits including includes a former filling station and the Underdog Garage site. The purpose of the grant will be to bring revitalization to these areas, which would be a tremendous economic development achievement for the Town.

The BRS offers technical project guidance to help ensure assessments conducted utilizing grant funds are in accordance with our program requirements throughout the life of your project. Coordination with the BRS is critical to ensuring that the assessments make efficient use of the federal funds awarded. The BRS can also assist with evaluating the benefits of entering specific properties into our State Brownfields Program through a brownfields agreement. A brownfields agreement outlines the controls needed to make the site safe for the intended reuse and is often a marketing tool for developers and instrumental in securing redevelopment financing. Additional tax incentives are also available upon completion of Brownfields redevelopment if completed in the State's Program.

We hope that the City is successfully awarded this grant, but we will continue to support you in your Brownfields redevelopment efforts whether a grant is awarded or not. We truly believe successful Brownfields projects can rejuvenate a community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jordan L. Thompson".

Jordan Thompson
Brownfields Project 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



The Town of Robbins, NC
FY24 Brownfields Assessment Grant
Narrative



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

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

Target Area: The Town of Robbins has a history of prosperity followed by social, economic, and environmental hardship. The Town was established in 1795 and was known at the time as Mechanics Hill, when Alexander Kennedy and family settled there and established a rifle factory near the present-day Robbins Water Plant. In 1891, the Durham and Charlotte Railroad was constructed, connecting many prominent towns within the area. The railroad generated commerce for the Town by providing accessible means of transporting turpentine, lumber, agricultural products, and passengers. In the 1920s, Carter's Mill was constructed along Bear Creek, and in 1924, William Cowgill built the first textile plant. The mills brought jobs, profit, and commerce, but **today they are often associated with various unregulated chlorinated solvents and improper disposal of highly dangerous chemicals.** The Town became home to a prosperous poultry processing plant, a mobile home manufacturing plant, and several booming textile mills. During the 1990s, the once thriving Town began to lose its industry base, resulting in environmental contamination and economic challenges associated with the many closures.

The **geographic boundary and target area for this application is the Robbins Town Limits**, which encompass **1.59 square miles**; within the Town limits is **designated Justice40 Disadvantaged Census Tract (CT) 37125950200**, which is also a Qualified Opportunity Zone. In 1965, the Robbins population was 1,325. In 2021, the Robbins population was listed as 1,168 residents, indicating a decrease of approximately 20% in 50 years.¹ When industry began to close and relocate, residents were left with a difficult decision: remain in Robbins or find a new place to call home. When many residents decided to find a better life elsewhere, a drastic shift in population occurred. Buildings that had once housed successful industries were left decrepit and abandoned with environmental contamination completely unaddressed. Robbins had a vibrant history that allowed its community to thrive. However, due to losing vital industry in the 1990s, the impacts of **climate change** with recent massive hurricanes (coupled with intensifying hurricanes, flooding impacts, and wind), the Town lacks the funds to support the restoration of its former vibrant community. Robbins would use the grant to address the abandoned and severely contaminated industrial sites, to improve **climate resiliency** by supporting and increasing current infrastructure, and to reestablish a thriving present-day industry to promote sustainable growth.

ii. **Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):** Although a formal brownfields inventory has not yet been completed, an initial review of North Carolina Division of Waste Management records of the town limits identified approximately 33 sites that are associated with regulatory databases and that have historically been used for industrial purposes, dry cleaners, or filling stations.² Unfortunately, the Town has been left to figure out safe ways to address the high vacancy rate of the abandoned industrial facilities.

The first priority site, **Former Filling Station (191 S. NC 705 Hwy)**, has been vacant land for decades. The Robbins Village Theater (RVT) owns the two parcels that make up the priority site totaling 0.196 acres and has plans to use them for associated RVT parking. This redevelopment will provide crucial downtown parking for events held at the theater such as tutoring, teaching seminars, job fairs, pottery festivals, health screenings, and blood drives. Cars are a main form of transportation in Robbins, so prioritizing parking within the community will strengthen infrastructure and create opportunities for anticipated growth along NC 705 Hwy. The site contained a historic filling station that was previously demolished and has several buried tanks of

¹ US Census: 2017–2021 <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/all?q=Robbins%20NC>

² North Carolina Division of Waste Management Site Locator Tool
<https://ncdenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7dd59be2750b40bebebfa49fc383f688>



unknown status, which could be impacting groundwater and soil with petroleum constituents as well as solvents, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), metals, and other hazardous substances from automotive maintenance operations. The priority site is located near a middle school and church, creating a safety concern for residents, especially children, as the site has unobstructed access. **The Town has been given site access for assessment from the site owners.**

The second priority site is **Underdog Garage** (0.30 acre) auto repair shop and filling station. The garage operated in the target area for decades but closed in 2015 and has since remained unused. The site is known to have operated underground storage tanks, which were removed and replaced with three existing aboveground storage tanks. Previously completed environmental investigations have confirmed the presence of petroleum hydrocarbon contaminants at this site. Based on the use of the site, it is also possible that solvents, PCBs, and heavy metal contaminants could also be present. **The known and potentially additional site contaminants can migrate into soil and groundwater.** Additional assessment is needed to further understand site contaminants to facilitate safe redevelopment activities. The site is not secure and located near a restaurant, neighborhood, and church, increasing the likelihood of the sensitive populations accessing the site. **The Town has obtained site access for assessment from the property owner.**

iii. Identifying Additional Sites: Due to the small town limits of 1.59 square miles, the geographic boundary and target area are one and the same. The Town will work with residents to determine additional eligible sites within this Justice40 disadvantaged community. The Town recognizes that due to its history as a primarily industry-focused community, there are many underused and/or abandoned buildings that have the potential to experience brownfield-related challenges in redevelopment and safe reuse. The Town Manager will work with the residents living in the target area during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment, identifying the abandoned and underutilized properties. Town staff will further research the identified properties using the county GIS tool. The Town will incorporate resident feedback and US Census data to determine the need when prioritizing sites for assessment.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Robbins established clear goals for the next 25+ years through *The Town of Robbins Master Plan* that focuses on improved growth by addressing available and affordable housing, health and wellness, the creation of an active town center, and the establishment of Robbins as an economic hub. The Master Plan incorporated numerous community stakeholders in its creation, and an important aspect of this plan was the inclusion of a North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) brownfield representative. By including an NCDEQ brownfield representative, Robbins showcases its commitment to addressing brownfield sites and other regulatory agencies.

Both priority sites are also located along NC Hwy 705, known as “Pottery Highway.” Prioritizing sites along Pottery Highway will support local artistry while still maintaining the goal of building community growth, creating local job opportunities, and revitalizing the town center. Robbins’ Master Plan seeks to evolve the specific historical aspects of Robbins that led to its economic successes in the 1900s. Redeveloping the **Former Filling Station priority site** will provide increased parking access for the community members and parking for visitors along the Pottery Highway. Redeveloping this site is a proactive step by the community to maintain an active town center by increasing parking for the RVT, which will host community events. Promoting mixed-use areas along Hwy 705 will help support commercial development by marketing to through traffic. Redevelopment along this area will promote new consumers and employers to a mix of uses, including a range of residential, commercial, and industrial options. The increased parking will support the growing businesses in town limits, which will allow the downtown to become an



engine for economic development and job creation. Redeveloping the **Underdog Garage priority site** into affordable housing at the gateway of the Town will enhance the stock of their current housing and achieve the Master Plan's guiding **principle #3 of safe and affordable housing options**. Focusing on expanding high density housing within the area, providing a mix of safe and affordable housing types, ensuring a fair share of the housing production is affordable to lower income families, and promoting future residential development on the vacant properties located within existing residential areas will signal the introduction of new residents to the area. With the goal of investing in the arts, increasing community events, and providing additional housing, crucial aspects of the Town's Master Plan will be addressed.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Assessing and redeveloping the priority sites within the town limits has the potential to significantly impact this underserved community. Robbins is home to a business district that consists of numerous vacant lots, poor land use, and environmentally contaminated properties. The **Former Filling Station priority site will be repurposed as parking for the associated RVT**. This theater first opened in 1950 and has been a community staple, providing access to theater shows, music, art, and community gathering space. The redeveloped site will have **noneconomic benefits** for the Town by providing parking not only for the theater but also for surrounding restaurants and businesses. The **Underdog Garage priority site** is located near the entrance to Robbins' downtown and has numerous residential developers expressing interest due to the site's unique "gateway" location. This property has the potential to provide much needed additional **housing**. Underdog Garage will provide **noneconomic benefits** of increased housing and economic prosperity leading to better quality of life. The **economic benefit** of both priority sites will be new job creation; approximately 15 or more construction jobs will be created. Robbins will prioritize **energy-efficient redevelopment** in all aspects of brownfield redevelopment by encouraging green infrastructure, climate-resilient landscaping, high-efficiency lighting, and more. Conditions found during assessment of the target area sites will allow for either **renewable energy (RE) or energy efficient (EE) approaches** to be incorporated during redevelopment activities, including but not limited to installation of solar panels on new or rehabilitated buildings or solar canopies within a parking lot, use of EE field equipment, and EE appliances and windows.

c. **Strategy for Leveraging Resources** i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Robbins has a successful history of leveraging revitalization, redevelopment, and disaster relief funding sources for the betterment of their community. The state of North Carolina's Brownfields Redevelopment Section (NCBRS) is a key resource that Robbins will use throughout the redevelopment process. NCBRS works with the prospective developer to develop a Brownfields Agreement that provides defined liability benefits along with tax incentives following the first five years of development. The Town will apply for additional EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grants as needed for remediation. To further address those sites, Robbins can leverage the Opportunity Zone to attract developer support and to use funds from other community grants for other brownfield redevelopment purposes. The Town will apply for Community Development Block Grant funds for the demolition of derelict buildings. Robbins will seek out additional funding opportunities in the form of state, federal, and private funding to address their need for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. This funding will act as a catalyst to drive additional brownfield redevelopment across the town.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The Town intends to use existing infrastructure at both priority sites, including water/sewer, transportation, and power. The Town has the necessary infrastructure to fully support the proposed redevelopment in the target area, and because of that, additional funds are not needed to establish additional infrastructure.



2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **Community Need** i. The Community's Need for Funding: Robbins is home to a **small population of 1,615 residents.**³ This 1.59-square-mile rural community operates under a \$1.2 million budget. Robbins' history showcases the devastating aftermath of industry leaving the community; decades later the same community must address increased poverty, depleted resources, and environmental and public health concerns. Within the town limits, the **average per capita income is \$18,277 (US \$37,683) and average median household income is \$43,295 (US \$69,021).**³ **Approximately 26% of residents fall below the poverty line**, which is nearly triple the national average of 9%.³ According to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST), the Town falls in the **82nd percentile of people in households where income is less than or equal to twice the federal poverty level**, not including students enrolled in higher education. Additionally, the Town is in the **33rd percentile for the share of households making less than 80% of the area median income.**⁴

In addition to the financial impacts, the Town has dealt with many environmental challenges. In 2018, the Town endured the impacts of Hurricane Florence that totaled \$1.6 million in damages. The compounded effects of Hurricane Florence and major industry loss forced the Town to allocate its small operating budget to focus on active problems. Therefore, funds were not available to address potential brownfields sites, but assistance from the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant will allow Robbins to address the many potential brownfield sites throughout the target area.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Robbins' sensitive populations face many challenges, such as higher levels of crime, lack of affordable and safe housing, and a lack of education and broadband access. Robbins' sensitive populations include: **people of color 39% (US 18%) and persons in poverty 26% (US 9%).**³ In 2021, Robbins indicated that 203 people, or nearly **35% of households, within their community were living with supplemental security income (SSI), cash public assistance income, or food stamps/SNAP within the past 12 months**, and approximately **18% of people indicate they are living with a disability (US 13%).**³

Robbins also lacks safe housing, with **38% of the houses built prior to the 1960s, which ties directly to the period of lead-based paint use.**³ According to CJEST, the Town is in the **56th percentile in the state for houses that contain lead-based paint.** This highlights Robbins' dire need to provide additional safe housing infrastructure to its at-risk residents. The Town also falls into the **33rd percentile of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.**⁴

Robbins is in the 44th percentile for safety, which indicates that 56% of cities are safer than Robbins.⁵ Estimated poverty levels in Robbins show 32% of the population below the poverty level.³ A high poverty level correlates to decreased income, job losses, and work shortages. **Thirty-five (35%) percent of the residents have no academic degree.**⁴ Those concerns coupled with sensitive populations mean limited opportunities and a complete lack of social upward mobility. Another issue is that both priority sites are located within the 84th percentile of limited broadband gaps for internet access.⁴

Redevelopment of the **priority sites** will address the welfare issues plaguing the city by providing residents with easy access to public parking and increasing the availability of affordable and safe housing. The RVT will provide access to a cultural arts center in a rural southern city by redeveloping the **Former Filling Station** and creating safe and accessible parking. The first step will be underway in creating the welcoming environment of the RVT. The redevelopment of the

³ US Census 2017–2021 American Community Survey

⁴ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool

⁵ Robbins Safety: <https://crimegrade.org/safest-places-in-robbins-nc/>



Underdog Garage priority site will provide housing resources to Robbins as multiple developers have expressed interest in the property and adjoining parcels. Assessing these sites will address a major safety concern within the community as these sites remain accessible to the public and are in a predominantly residential area.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The priority sites were historically used as filling stations. These filling stations are often associated with a history of environmental contamination from spills or on-site leaking petroleum tanks. Sensitive populations are often the most impacted by environmental contamination, and these priority sites indicate the likely presence of petroleum and gasoline contamination. This contamination can lead to increased kidney, stomach, brain, prostate, and lung cancers among those exposed. The Moore County health report indicates that **cancer is the number one cause of all death** for Moore County residents (target-area data not available), and it is the leading cause of death for ages 40–84. The Moore County incidence of cancer is 464.0 per 100,000 people, which is more than the national average of 442.4 per 100,000 people.⁶ The Town is in the **95th percentile in the state for cancer risk**.⁷ Contaminants typically associated with fueling operations and petroleum products tend to be carcinogens. Identifying contaminated sites and their constituents is the first step to increasing Robbins' overall health. **Use of the assessment grant funds for assessment and redevelopment will limit and reduce the number of residents exposed to cancer-causing constituents from the likely presence of petroleum products at the priority sites.**

The CJEST shows the town is within the **73rd percentile of people who have been told they have asthma**.⁷ Long-term exposure to contaminants can lead to short-term health effects such as eye, nose, and throat irritation and shortness of breath. Robbins is also in the **23rd percentile for ozone levels in the air**.⁸ Ozone exposure can lead to various health problems that include chest pain, coughing, and congestion. Many of the homes in Robbins were built before the 1960s, which increases lead-based paint exposure. Increased lead exposure for children and adults might lead to high blood pressure, joint pain, or difficulties with memory. Using this grant to address these properties will allow for a concrete way to address the environmental concerns. Substandard housing, including effectively abandoned units, will be addressed through Town ordinances and related enforcement actions, penalties, and fines, to reduce residents' exposure to lead paint.⁹

(3) Environmental Justice: (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: Due to its complex history, Robbins has become a **low income and high persistent poverty community** located just outside of the wealthy and affluent area of Pinehurst-Southern Pines, North Carolina. In fact, according to CJEST, Robbins is in the **82nd percentile of household incomes less than or equal to twice the federal poverty level** and deals with **high housing cost burden and substandard housing**.¹⁰ The Town's academic status of its residents is significantly below that of the national academic percentiles. Within the Robbins community, only 5% of all residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher (State 36%).¹⁰ Due to the negative environmental consequences and years of associated underinvestment caused by the abandoned industrial facilities, the sensitive populations have been unable to experience the economic growth and vitality from which the rest of the Town has benefited. This is illustrated by the high poverty rates, low rates of broadband access, substandard housing, and low high school graduation rates. When community members do not have access to education, it severely limits their ability to advocate for their social, economic, and

⁶ Health Report: <https://www.moorecountync.gov/images/departments/health/policies-reports/2018%20SOTCH%20Moore.pdf>

⁷ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool

⁸ EPA EJ Screen Tool

⁹ Town of Robbins Master Plan

¹⁰ US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey



welfare needs. Throughout the years, these consequences have severely limited prospective developers from investing in the Town. If a community has limited education, this typically results in an intergenerational poverty trap in which community members are unable to escape poverty, and individuals and families remain in poverty for their entire lives. The target sites are associated with a 36th percentile superfund proximity index and the 48th percentile for underground storage tank proximity index.¹¹ When you couple the proximity indices with that of the educational attainment data, the Robbins community is faced with disproportionate inequity. Robbins is within the 96th percentile of economic loss rate to agricultural value resulting from natural hazards each year.¹¹ If these issues go unaddressed, many of them will increase in severity. Robbins has the potential to address these economic and educational disparities by leveraging this grant money as a spur to economic opportunity, enabling development of the RVT and providing improved safe and sustainable housing at the gateway to the town, as well as address the impacts of intergenerational poverty and environmental justice concerns.

b. Advancing Environmental Justice: This grant money will provide employment opportunities within a disadvantaged community, decrease environmental contamination, all while providing a framework for addressing racial and equity justice issues. Additionally, assessing and redeveloping vacant sites means that **existing residents and businesses will not be displaced.**

b. Community Engagement i. **Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles:** The following project partners will play crucial roles in the process of assisting the Town with site selection, prioritization, cleanup, and further redevelopment of brownfield sites for this assessment project.

Name of Org.	Point of Contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Robbins Village Theater Nonprofit (RVT) (501c3)	Lynn McDuffie [Redacted]	The rebuilding of the Robbins Village Theater will allow for enrichment for the general public and aid in driving Robbins toward an active town center and becoming an economic hub. They will help with compiling the site inventory.
Foothills Outdoors Local Nonprofit (501c3)	Dr. Will McDuffie [Redacted]	Foothills Outdoors has worked previously as a community stakeholder and has expressed their capability and commitment as a board member for community involvement. Partnering with a nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation will help provide Robbins with a perspective to implement neighborhood parks and trails, encouraging residents to interact and increase their overall physical health. They will help with reuse planning strategies.
Northern Moore Rotary Satellite Club	Jessica Coltrane jcoltrane@townofrobbins.com	The Rotary Club has worked previously as a community stakeholder and has expressed their capability and commitment as a board member for community involvement. They will help with outreach to further engage the residents.
Robbins Lions Club	Dr. Will McDuffie [Redacted]	Robbins Lions Club has worked previously as a community stakeholder and has expressed their capability and commitment as a board member for community involvement. They will also aid in outreach efforts.

iii. **Incorporating Community Input:** The Town has a deep-rooted history of community collaboration and a willingness to implement revitalization practices. In 2016, Robbins was awarded \$400,000 for a Brownfield Cleanup Grant that focused on downtown revitalization with an emphasis on providing meaningful impacts for community members through beautification programs, educational programming, and a detailed focus on regional history. As a result of the previously awarded grants, Robbins has successfully demonstrated continued and fortified community involvement for planning, implementation, and application of grant funds.

The Town is dedicated to transparent and inclusive communication with the local community, particularly underserved residents and groups directly impacted by the project. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to outline planned community engagement activities, a schedule of events, a project background, and the key players. The CIP will leverage various

¹¹ EPA EJ Screening Tool



outreach methods, including online platforms, virtual town halls, and surveys, to ensure effective engagement. The Town is committed to actively soliciting, thoughtfully considering, and promptly responding to community input, fostering a meaningful alternative to in-person community engagement throughout the grant period.

Using town meeting minutes, community input and suggestions given during target-area community meetings and Town Council meetings will be evaluated within a week of the meeting. All suggestions and input will be addressed on an individual basis within a week and promptly posted to the Town’s brownfield website for further public review. Sites and feedback suggested by the community will be added to the site inventory, and the project team will prioritize the site based on need and the overall Brownfields Project goals. Community members will be contacted individually to provide details regarding suggestions about implementation. Robbins will use a variety of communication forms and ensure all residents are familiar with the multiple forms of communication so that the widest reach of information through the community is fulfilled. The Town will use social media platforms to advertise the project at the various stages of completion and success and to educate and increase transparency surrounding the project. The Town will operate a dedicated brownfield information page on its website. It will provide updates and vital Brownfields Project information in newspaper press releases, postings at Robbins Town Hall, public outreach at community meetings, and presentations at local civic clubs. Informational brochures, press releases, and local media outlets will be used to increase information access and share information with Robbins community members. Town staff will provide project updates and information during monthly Town Council meetings, Planning Board meetings, and Appearance Committee meetings. As part of involving the community members, the town leaders understand the crucial role community members play in successfully implementing brownfield assessment activities. The Town has already established a group of volunteers to act as a Brownfield Advisory Board and serve as a community resource to ensure transparency among all involved parties.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:

Task 1: Outreach	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The Town Manager will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental contractor (EC). Town staff will lead the community meetings to keep the public informed about project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts) and office supplies.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP created within 3 months of award (upon completion, a more concrete schedule will follow). Seven community meetings held 1 st , 3 rd , 5 th , 7 th , 9 th , 11 th , and 13 th quarters. Website and outreach materials created in the 1 st quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Clint Mack, Town Manager (Brownfield Project Director)
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> CIP, Brownfield Website, 7 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Summary of Community Meetings in EPA required Quarterly Reports.
Task 2: Site Inventory	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The Robbins Town Manager and Town Clerk will work with residents during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Abandoned and underused properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by Town staff using the Moore County GIS tool. Once a list is compiled, the contractor will work with Town staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine with the help of residents the order in which the sites will be addressed.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in 1 st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process that began with this application, with the evaluation ranking process taking place in the 3 rd quarter and continuing throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Jessica Coltrane, Town Clerk (Brownfield Project Manager)



Town of Robbins, NC
FY2024 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant

iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List
Task 3: Assessment	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The EC 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> Assessment activities begin 2 nd quarter and continue throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the Town: Clint Mack, Town Manager (Brownfield Project Director).
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 16 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 8 Phase II ESAs, including SS-QAPP, Site Access Agreements, and Property Eligibility Determinations.
Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> For projects identified for cleanup, the EC will prepare the Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, developing an inventory of site assets and infrastructure, identifying potential brownfield site reuse options, assessing market conditions, analyzing opportunities and constraints, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site appropriate remediation and/or reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The EC will assist the Town in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions for key properties. A planner will work with the underserved community to create Site Reuse Plans, a Market Study, and Brownfield Revitalization Plan.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes begin in 6 th quarter and continue throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from Clint Mack, Town Manager (Brownfield Project Director).
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 2 ABCAs, 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes, 1 Brownfields Rev. Plan, 2 Site Reuse Plans, 1 Market Study.
Task 5: Programmatic Support	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The Town will procure an EC to assist with the Brownfield Grant Project. The Town Manager and Finance Director will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. The consultant will assist the Town in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the four-year term of the grant. The Town staff travel budget allows for two staff members to attend three national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES & Quarterly Reporting begin in the 1 st quarter and continue throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in the 5 th , 9 th , and 13 th quarters and during final closeout.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Stephanie Maness, Finance Officer & Grant Current Operations (CUOPS)
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 4 Annual Financial Reports, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period. Two staff members to attend three conferences.

b. Cost Estimates: The anticipated cost estimates for this project follow and are *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. **Fifty-four (54%) percent will be spent on site-specific work through the Assessment Task, and 34% of the budget will be spent on area-wide planning.**

Task 1 Outreach: Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$4,000 (32hrs x \$125); Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$2,000 (16hrs x \$125); 7 Community Education Meetings \$8,750 (7 meetings @ \$1,250/meeting). Supplies: Outreach Supplies (Paper \$25/box, Color Printouts \$1/sheet) \$750. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: Potential Brownfield Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool Creation \$5,000 (40hrs x \$125). **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 16 Phase I ESAs \$4,000 each for a total of \$64,000; 1 Generic QAPP \$5,500; 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$25,250 each for a total of \$202,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 2 ABCAs \$7,500 for a total of \$15,000; 2 Vision



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Sessions/Charrettes \$12,000 (\$6,000/meeting); 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan at \$85,000 (Planner: 225hrs x \$150; Market Analysts: 210hrs x \$125, Environmental Professional: 200hrs x \$125); 2 Site Reuse Plans \$40,000 (Planner: 125hrs x \$160; \$20,000/plan); 1 Market Study \$20,000 (Planner: 100hrs x \$150; Market Analysts: 40hrs x \$125). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant \$24,000 (192hrs x \$125). Travel: Two staff to attend three training events/conferences \$12,000 (flights at \$800, 3 nights in hotel at \$300, incidentals and per diem at \$75 per day [4 days] x 2 attendees x 3 events).

Category	Tasks					Totals
	Outreach	Site Inventory	Assessment	Remediation/Reuse Planning	Programmatic Support	
Travel					\$12,000	\$12,000
Supplies	\$750					\$750
Contractual	\$14,750	\$5,000	\$271,500	\$172,000	\$24,000	\$487,250
Total Budget	\$15,500	\$5,000	\$271,500	\$172,000	\$36,000	\$500,000

c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule, the Town’s internal Brownfields Team and the Brownfield Advisory Board, which will include the EC, 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. Project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the four-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. If the project is not being completed in an efficient manner, the Town has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The Town will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer and, if necessary, will create an EPA Corrective Action Plan to help the project get back on schedule.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii. Description of Key Staff: With the Mayor/Council form of government, a strong web of support exists among the elected officials and appointed public officials within the Town of Robbins. The Town will use three staff members to manage and oversee grant implementation. These employees have a wealth of experience in brownfield redevelopment and have the explicit capacity for successful grant implementation and utilization. Clint Mack, the Robbins Town Manager, will serve as the **Brownfield Project Director**, be responsible for the timely and successful expenditure of funds, and complete the administrative and financial requirements that the project will entail. He will provide the community with communication of grant progress. Mr. Mack holds a bachelor’s degree in public administration from Villanova University, which he partially earned while working as an infantry platoon sergeant for the US Army. During his time in the US Army, Mr. Mack worked tirelessly to restore governments halfway around the world. He has extensive exposure to the many facets of government work and how to leverage funds efficiently. Mr. Mack will be assisted in grant implementation and brownfields decision making by Jessica Coltrane, who will serve as the **Brownfield Project Manager**, the Town Clerk, and the Grant Future/Opportunity Operations (FUOPS) and will be responsible to manage day-to-day operations and assist the project director. Stephanie Maness will serve as the **Finance Officer** & Grant



Current Operations (CUOPS) and will be responsible for the successful expenditure of funds and allocation of appropriate resources. Both Jessica Coltrane and Stephanie Maness have been working for Town for 2 years. All three will serve to guide brownfields decisions and monitor risk management, direct project management, and oversee all portions of the project. A qualified environmental contractor will be used to ensure technical and reporting aspects of the grant implementation are completed accurately.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Using local contracting requirements and the procurement process, the Town will secure a qualified environmental consultant to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment and any other contractors needed to complete the project. The Town will ensure compliance with the EPA’s “Professional Service” procurement process. During brownfields redevelopment, construction activities and the rehabilitation of abandoned properties can provide local construction, landscaping, electrical/plumbing, or building maintenance/security jobs.¹² The Town recognizes the importance of ensuring that the benefits of this grant extend beyond environmental improvement to meaningful economic and social impacts for the community and is committed to fostering strong labor practices, supporting local hiring and procurement by partnering with local hiring organizations, and creating educational and workforce opportunities for all community members in the context of this Brownfields Assessment Grant as noted by **guiding principle #4 of the Master Plan—education and workforce development**.¹²

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: (1) Accomplishments: The Town of Robbins received a \$400,000 EPA Assessment Grant in 2013. This grant accomplished 3 Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA), 1 Phase II ESA, 1 Asbestos Survey, 2 Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), and 2 Redevelopment Plans. All grant information was input into the ACRES system, and all funding was expended within the grant timeframe. The Town won a \$400,000 Cleanup Grant in FY16 for the former Robbins Mill (Milliken Textile Plant). Grant information was input into the ACRES system, and all funding was expended. During the FY16 Cleanup Grant of the former Robbins Mill, staff worked directly with community stakeholders, local organizations that championed redevelopment, and residents to establish redevelopment plans and implementation of the grant. Two Phase I ESAs and one Phase II ESA were completed on the site. The awarded funding was used for testing, decontamination, and cleanup on the two parcels of the brownfield mill site. In 2018, the Town was awarded an additional \$200,000 of EPA Cleanup Grant funds for the former Robbins Mill–Smokestack parcel. Cleanup of the site included abatement and disposal of asbestos-containing materials and debris, removal of two aboveground storage tanks, and excavation and disposal of contaminated soil. Redevelopment plans include historic preservation of the former mill’s smokestack and transformation of the site into greenspace and a park for residents. (2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: Robbins has a history of successful compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions and has an outstanding history of on-time reporting. Both grants have remained in compliance, and all funding expended. The FY13 Assessment Grant closed out on September 30, 2016, with all funds expended. The FY16 Cleanup Grant closed on September 30, 2019, with all funds expended. Both grants had reports and forms submitted in a timely manner, and all outputs were recorded in ACRES. FY18 EPA Cleanup Grant still has an open status, and all outputs are being recorded in acres. Ms. Maness is a great asset with skills in grant and project management and will be proactively monitoring all activities and costs associated with grant requirements.

¹² Town of Robbins Master Plan



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Threshold Criteria



Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The Town of Robbins, 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.
- b. The City is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement

The Town of Robbins has a deep-rooted history of community collaboration and a willingness to implement revitalization practices. In 2016, Robbins was awarded two Brownfields Cleanup Grants, totaling \$400,000, that focused on downtown revitalization with an emphasis on providing meaningful impacts for community members through beautification programs, educational programming, and a detailed focus on regional history. As a result of the previously awarded grants, Robbins has successfully demonstrated continued and fortified community involvement for planning, implementation, and application of grant funds. The Town is dedicated to transparent and inclusive communication with the local community, particularly underserved residents and groups directly impacted by the project.

A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to outline planned community engagement activities, a schedule of events, a project background, and the key players. The CIP will leverage various outreach methods, including online platforms, virtual town halls, and surveys, to ensure effective engagement. The Town is committed to actively soliciting, thoughtfully considering, and promptly responding to community input, fostering a meaningful alternative to in-person community engagement throughout the grant period. Using town meeting minutes, community input and suggestions given during target-area community meetings and Town Council meetings will be evaluated within a week of the meeting. All suggestions and input will be addressed on an individual basis within a week and promptly posted to the Town's brownfield website for further public review. Sites and feedback suggested by the community will be added to the site inventory, and the project team will prioritize the site based on need and the overall Brownfields Project goals. Community members will be contacted individually to provide details regarding suggestions about implementation.

Robbins will use a variety of communication forms and ensure all residents are familiar with the multiple forms of communication so that the widest reach of information through the community is fulfilled. The Town will use social media platforms to advertise the project at the various stages of completion and success and to educate and increase transparency surrounding the project. The Town will operate a dedicated brownfield information page on its website, which will provide updates and vital Brownfields Project information in addition to newspaper press releases, postings at Robbins Town Hall, public outreach at community meetings, and presentations at local civic clubs. Informational brochures, press releases, and local media outlets will be used to increase information access and share information with Robbins community members. Town staff will provide project updates and information during monthly Town Council meetings, Planning Board meetings, and Appearance Committee meetings. As part of involving the community members, the town leaders understand the crucial role community members play in successfully implementing brownfield assessment



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activities. The Town has already established a group of volunteers to act as a Brownfield Advisory Board and serve as a community resource to ensure transparency among all involved parties.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The Town of Robbins, North Carolina, affirms it does not have an open EPA Brownfield Assessment or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.