Narrative Information Sheet

City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
166 Boulder Drive
Fitchburg, MA 01420

The City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, located in Worcester County, is requesting a Community-Wide Assessment Grant in the amount of $300,000. The City of Fitchburg, MA has a population of 40,666, according to the 2017 American Community Survey data.

Project Director:

Amy LeBlanc, Senior Project Manager
718 Main Street, Suite 308
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Phone: 978-829-1893
Email: ALeBlanc@FitchburgMA.gov

Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:

Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale
718 Main Street, Suite 304
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Phone: 978-829-1801
Email: Mayor@FitchburgMA.gov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
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<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the</td>
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<td>priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water,</td>
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<td>or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for</td>
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<tr>
<td>a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from</td>
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<td>wind, solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
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<td>The reuse of the site will incorporate energy efficiency measures</td>
<td>5-6</td>
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<td>30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>planning activities for priority brownfield site(s) within the target area.</td>
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One particular pipeline project, 0 Crawford Street, known locally as “The Sandpit”, is directly adjacent to the Nashua River and a portion of the property is in a federally designated flood zone. The property and flood zone are within FEMA Panel 250304 0012 D. The properties noted on Boulder Drive are also within the flood plain, as is the property at 85 River Street. Although other listed properties are not adjacent to bodies of water or in flood zones, the North Nashua River runs through the City of Fitchburg and specifically through areas that were primarily industrial and manufacturing in nature. Due to this fact, it is likely that future priority sites will also be adjacent to the river and/or be within a federal flood zone.
November 4, 2021

U.S. EPA New England
Attn: Frank Gardner
Via email

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
City of Fitchburg, Application for EPA Assessment Grant Funds

Dear Mr. Gardner:

I am writing to support the proposal submitted by the City of Fitchburg (“City”) under the Fiscal Year 2022 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant Program. The City is seeking funding to conduct environmental assessments at several properties throughout the City with a focus on two designated Opportunity Zones and along the City’s industrial corridor. Documented contamination exists at some of these properties. Additional assessments will allow for both developer applications and future tax-taking properties, as the City often encounters tax takings with significant environmental liability.

In Massachusetts, state and federal agencies have developed strong partnerships and work together to ensure that parties undertaking Brownfield projects have access to available incentives. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), through our regional officers, provides technical support to Brownfield project proponents when regulatory issues arise. If this proposal is selected, MassDEP will work with our state and federal partners to support the City to help make this project a success.

We greatly appreciate EPA’s continued support of Brownfield efforts here in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Paul Locke
Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup

ec: Tom Skwierawski, City of Fitchburg
Amy Sullivan, MassDEP Central Regional Office
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a.i. Background and Description of Target Area: Fitchburg is a 28.1 square mile city located in central Massachusetts, with approximately 40,702 citizens. Fitchburg has had a manufacturing-based economy dating back to the 19th century with a historic emphasis on mill industries situated along the Nashua River. Fitchburg’s economy had been on the decline for many years, and as a whole has not kept up with the rest of the state; American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates from 2017 show Fitchburg’s unemployment rate at 10.1%, as compared to the state average of 6.0%.

Nationally, Fitchburg is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Community and also serves as the lead city in the Fitchburg-Leominster HOME Program Consortium from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Fitchburg has thirteen Economic Opportunity Areas, two Opportunity Zones, and has been designated as an Economic Target Area as of 1994. In 2010, Fitchburg had a minority population of 36%, including 5.1% Black or African-American, 3.7% multiracial, and 3.6% Asian. 21.6% of the total population identifies as Hispanic or Latino. According to 2017 ACS five-year estimates, the City had a median family income of $51,412, which is significantly lower than both the Massachusetts median income of $85,843 and the United States median income of $65,712. Compounding the issue is the cost of living. In July 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics listed Massachusetts as the fifth most expensive state in which to live.

While Fitchburg is requesting a community-wide assessment grant, its target areas are in the two most economically-disadvantaged census tracts in the City. Tract 7106 represents Fitchburg’s Historic Downtown. According to 2017 ACS data, Tract 7106 has a population of 6838 people, with 45% of its residents represented by minority populations, and a median income of $50,729, which is over 40% less than the state median income. It includes 3 distinct commercial districts. Tract 7107 encompasses the City’s downtown. This tract has a population of 1644, with 48% minority and a median income of $17,292. Both of the communities listed are environmental justice census tracts, and are some of the most economically disadvantaged census tracts in Worcester County. These two census tracts will be the focus of this project’s work, however projects outside of the district will be considered, provided the site falls within the project team’s criteria.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The City of Fitchburg has identified fifteen priority brownfield sites which vary in size and type. All but one of the listed sites are within the priority census tracts 7106 and 7107. Some of the sites are under public ownership, often coming to the city through tax lien judgments.

There are also a number of other privately-owned sites within Fitchburg’s downtown, an area fighting for revitalization, after decades of deterioration, due to the loss of industry. Most importantly, there are multiple brownfield parcels (0 Boulder Drive and 88-94 Boulder Drive) that represent over 2 acres abutting the Nashua River that separate this critical waterway from downtown. The City of Fitchburg previously worked with the EPA on efforts to create Riverfront Park on the site of a former rubber factory, located just on the other side of the river. Were these
parcels to get redeveloped, the City could finally connect Riverfront Park with the downtown, expanding the transformation of Fitchburg’s waterfront, which was once site to one of the most polluted rivers in the country. 85 River Street is a 1.2 acre site bordering the North Nashua River and within the floodplain. Today it is the site of a lumberyard, but this family-owned business has plans to close due to retirement. This site sits adjacent to a planned 2.6 acre, 66-unit housing development that has recently been permitted by the City. The developer has inquired about expanding the footprint of the development by purchasing this property, but is cautious because of its potential contamination issues. Expanding the project to include this site would add much-needed housing units and enhance the project’s desirability by connecting it to the River and removing its proximity to industrial uses.

Another municipally-owned site worth noting, located in the eastern end of the city is 0 Crawford Street referred to locally as the “The Sandpit.” The site encompasses 43.5 acres and has had a variety of historical industrial uses: most importantly, it once served as a dumping ground for the paper industry to deposit “paper sludge” byproduct. It is one of the largest development opportunities in Fitchburg, but has significant environmental concerns. Assessment and remediation work is essential to prep the site for development, especially considering its proximity to the Nashua River, its location partially within a flood zone.

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The reuse strategy for these sites involves a two-pronged approach. The first involves industrial sites, such as The Sandpit. The goal will be to develop these properties into job-producing industrial centers, major enhancements to the City’s commercial tax-base. On the other hand, sites within Fitchburg’s historic interior Environmental Justice Communities are critical opportunities for Smart Growth infill development that works to revitalize the city’s historic urban core. Redeveloping brownfield sites has long been a focus of City planning efforts, and is a core element of both the City’s Master Plan, and Urban Renewal Plan. More recently, an Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) was developed to tighten the City’s strategic focus, laying out a series of goals to guide development over the next three to five years. Of those, a few key priorities align with brownfield reuse.

One goal identified was to improve the quality of life in Fitchburg neighborhoods and, specifically, finding solutions for the city’s “problem properties.” The City has convened an intradepartmental group that includes Community Development, Police, Fire, and the Health Department, to identify properties that are acute threats to health and safety in Fitchburg’s neighborhoods. Many of these properties are eventually taken by the City through nonpayment of taxes, and often end up being identified as brownfield sites. Within Fitchburg’s Environmental Justice Communities, those problem properties disproportionately are burdened with environmental contamination, due to previous uses and building age. This results in long-vacant properties, already difficult to develop, becoming even more challenging to market to potential buyers. They then sit vacant as a burden to the neighborhood, with environmental hazards compounding the many quality of life issues already posed by vacant, blighted properties.

Another of the EDSP’s core goals is the “thoughtful development of vacant or underutilized properties, and conducting a land use inventory of those properties.” Given the City’s industrial heritage, it is not surprising that this inventory shows a clear correlation between underutilized sites and environmental liabilities, particularly in the older neighborhoods of the City. In particular, Census Tracts 7106 and 7107 were selected because of their development potential and
the associated planning that has been done in the past decade. Revitalizing the downtown is one of the core goals of the EDSP. Tract 7107 is Fitchburg’s downtown and Urban Renewal District. While previous EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants have helped the City to make some progress, there is still significant work needed to prepare this area for revitalization. Nearly 40% of the commercial properties, and roughly 23.3% of the housing units, sit vacant. A public-private partnership, known as ReImagine North of Main (RNoM), which began with a grant award from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s Working Cities Challenge in 2014, has developed a clear set of priorities and engaged community members in this district. This partnership will serve as a useful tool for both selecting properties and ensuring the redevelopment is aligned with community needs.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The proposed project will stimulate economic development in the City of Fitchburg and create a number of important benefits. Certain larger sites (e.g. The Sandpit) will function as major job-producers when developed, both for the city and the region, and will help bolster the City’s commercial tax base. Many residents travel a considerable distance for work, which is a burden on workers time and finances, the roads, and the environment, as public transportation is not feasible for all workers. According to the 2016 American Community Survey, Massachusetts workers have the 4th longest commute times in the country, with Central Massachusetts workers having a longer commute than residents closer to the larger urban centers.

Other sites have the potential to have a major impact on quality of neighborhood life. Many underutilized sites essential to Fitchburg’s revitalization, including its “problem properties”, are brownfields. These sites have environmental hazards in neighborhoods that, as environmental justice communities, are already rife with environmental liability. Developing an understanding of the issues on these properties, provides a valuable step forward in bringing these sites to productive reuse.

This project also provides the City an opportunity to advance its Smart Growth objectives, and develop within its existing growth boundaries. One of the core goals in the City’s EDSP is the need to sustainably develop within its existing urban fabric; however, given the nature of Fitchburg’s industrial history, these sites often contain environmental liability. Fitchburg’s downtown suffers from 40% vacancy in its existing structures, and given the downtown’s industrial history, brownfields are one of the many issues preventing development at those sites, and encouraging development in the City’s more rural and suburban periphery. In this neighborhood, the City is aggressively pursuing Smart Growth policies to encourage dense housing near the City’s commuter rail station, which will reduce the number of vehicles on the street, both for commuting but also to access local amenities. But these resources are critical to incentivize environmentally-sustainable growth in the right places. All construction will be done in accordance with the Massachusetts “Stretch Code”, which was adopted by Fitchburg and emphasizes energy performance and is designed to result in cost-effective construction that is more energy efficient than that built to the "base" energy code.

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City will use a variety of resources to redevelop these sites, including leveraging local dollars. In some cases, this will come in the form of local budget allocations, which the City has historically used both for remediation and demolition efforts on brownfield sites. The City is also a CDBG entitlement community, receiving over $1,001,125
in entitlement funds in FY21, and has similarly invested in demolition and brownfields work. The City will continue to utilize both budget allocations and CDBG funding to support brownfields work. The City will also continue to seek funding through the State Brownfields Redevelopment Fund, which the City has utilized to contribute over $600,000 towards site remediation efforts in recent years. However, the remaining need far surpasses the City’s ability to leverage these limited resources.

To incent redevelopment at these sites, a variety of resources will be pursued, including Massachusetts’ EDIP program, which allows for state tax credits and tax-increment exemptions for private investments. This tool will be aggressively pursued for large sites (e.g. The Sandpit) that have the potential for job creation and capital investment. Sites may also be eligible for the Commonwealth’s “Site Readiness” program, which allows for technical assistance and development support to stimulate industrial development. By providing more clarity regarding environmental liability at these sites, this grant will allow the City to leverage these assessments to obtain funding through these other sources, as these sites are located in census tracts where the private market alone cannot support redevelopment, and public funding streams are critical.

Sites within Fitchburg’s focused census tracts are eligible for a number of resources. The City’s downtown tract is currently designated a target investment district by the State, which allows for a number of state loans, grants, and technical assistance resources for developers seeking to move into the downtown. Fitchburg’s target census tracts also include additional benefits, such as: a Smart Growth District (streamlined permitting and state bonus payments for housing development), a Market-Rate Housing District (state tax-credits and local tax breaks), and no-interest CDBG business loans for business development, and are designated Opportunity Zones.

The City’s ownership of a number of these sites will also be used as a tool for redevelopment. City ownership allows the municipality to put a property out to a Request for Proposals (RFP), seeking the most desirable reuse of a site, which accomplishes the above-mentioned objectives while maximizing the benefit to Fitchburg’s residents and business community. Any environmental investigations performed on City-owned properties would be incorporated into the RFPs to remove developer uncertainty and ensure that end-users will have a clear plan to remediate these sites. Utilizing this method, the City can prioritize environmental cleanup over purchase price, thus subsidizing the cost of remediation for the developer.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The focus areas identified are located within Fitchburg’s historic urban neighborhoods, and therefore the bulk of the sites are under-utilized “infill” development. Utilizing this type of Smart Growth is critical to Fitchburg’s development goals, and is why the City has partnered with Smart Growth America for a series of technical assistance workshops, including the Opportunity Zone Academy, and a 2017 effort focused on downtown revitalization. Fitchburg is fortunate to have an abundance of infrastructure in its core urban census tracts: ample sewer and water, a high-quality road network, broadband access, and proximity to Fitchburg’s Intermodal Center, which includes bus and commuter rail access, allowing for easy travel into Boston. According to EJScreen, census tracts 7106 (79%) and 7107 (91%) have a Traffic Promixity and Volume Percentile much higher than the national average, and so it is critical to promote Smart Growth to reduce the number of vehicles on the road.
2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a.i. The Community’s Need for Funding: The City of Fitchburg is a medium-sized city with a population of 40,702 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS), with 53.35% of the City defined as low-moderate income. At one time, Fitchburg was a thriving industrial/manufacturing city, but according to the City’s Master Plan since 1960 70% of those jobs are now gone. With much of the former manufacturing gone, the city has been left with many vacant sites that developers see as risky, considering past uses. Property values have historically been lower in Fitchburg than in much of Massachusetts. The community has a poverty rate of 15.7%. 12.9% of non-elderly residents are disabled, and only 66.2% of the population over 16 are in the workforce, with most leaving the city to work (2019 ACS). Lower property values and higher poverty rates have often meant that the City’s budget is stretched thin to accommodate the many acute needs in the community. During the Great Recession the City nearly fell into receivership because of its financial state; although circumstances have improved, the budget is still tight, and little to no funding is available for proactive brownfields assessment and remediation.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations: As noted above, the City has been a more affordable community than the surrounding area for residents of limited means, but high costs of living and aging infrastructure continue to present challenges to the City’s most disadvantaged residents. With 43% of households earning under $40,000 a year, there are high levels of non-elder disabled residents and residents living in poverty. Minorities make up 36% of the population, and 11% of Fitchburg’s residents are foreign-born. These populations are more likely to have limited choice in where they can live, and are often forced to live in low-quality housing of last resort, in blighted neighborhoods that disproportionately include brownfield sites. According to Massachusetts Environmental Public Health Tracking, 61.2% of Fitchburg’s population resides in a block group where one or more Environmental Justice criteria is met, compared to the statewide average of 12.1%. Several of our potential project sites reside in block groups with very high percentages of low/moderate income households (LMI); the downtown properties noted earlier are over 90% LMI. Data from EJScreen shows clear health disparities in the focus census tracts. Lead paint prevalence is high in 7106 (86%) and 7107 (89%) as a percentile of the national average. The same is true for Traffic Proximity and Volume (79%, 91%) and Hazardous Waste Proximity, where both 7106 (78%) and 7107 (90%) are much higher than the national average. With regard to cancer risk, 7106 (82%) and 7107 (85%) are significantly higher than the state average.

As a whole, the two focus tracts (7106, 7107), both of which are Environmental Justice Communities, encompass some of the most economically-distressed neighborhoods in the city, and indeed within the region and the state. Assessing the potential hazards on these sites, remediating them and working with developers to redevelop the areas provides both reduced risk to those vulnerable populations as well as, in some cases, the potential for more housing choice and economic development.

2.b.i/ii. Project Involvement and Project Roles: The City of Fitchburg will be the lead applicant for the project, but will engage a number of community partners to identify potential sites and promote their redevelopment. One key partner will be ReImagine North of Main (RNoM), the public-private partnership that has been focused on the development of Fitchburg’s downtown. RNoM includes a number of key community partners, each of whom performs a vital role for this project. Currently, it receives funding through local philanthropy, and as fiscal agent for a state
accelerator program. RNoM provides a host of resources, thought leadership, and technical assistance support for redevelopment within Fitchburg’s downtown. Each partner provides unique skills and resources for projects both within and outside of downtown. NewVue Communities, a Community Development Corporation, will play a key role as a developer in identifying and developing properties within the project area. Through its Community Engagement division, NewVue can also help the City engage its various constituencies throughout the planning process, to ensure that the sites identified, and their reuse plans, correspond with the needs of the community. NewVue’s Community Organizing programs are robust and reach a variety of populations. RNoM includes a number of private sector partners, such as a local developer and the Chamber of Commerce, and provides a direct line of communication to the business community, which will serve as a useful tool in identifying and redeveloping these properties. The Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority (FRA), is an Urban Renewal Agency focused on Fitchburg’s downtown tract (7107). The FRA is a key landlord in the downtown and has eminent domain authority to purchase properties. They are also familiar with brownfields properties, having been a lead implementer of EPA Brownfields grants in the past.

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<tr>
<th>Partner Name</th>
<th>Point of contact</th>
<th>Specific role in the project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Fitchburg Community Development and Planning (CDP)</td>
<td>Tom Skwierawski <a href="mailto:TSkwierawski@FitchburgMA.gov">TSkwierawski@FitchburgMA.gov</a> 978-829-1892</td>
<td>Administrative support; Liaison between QEP and City; Prepare Requests for Proposal (RFP) to prep sites for development; Conduct community meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NewVue Communities</td>
<td>Marc Dohan <a href="mailto:MDohan@NVComm.org">MDohan@NVComm.org</a> 978-342-9561</td>
<td>Source of potential sites; Potential site developer; Community engagement support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Roy Nascimento <a href="mailto:RNascimento@NorthCentralMass.com">RNascimento@NorthCentralMass.com</a> 978-353-7600</td>
<td>Connection to private-sector; Source of potential assessment sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority</td>
<td>Meagen Donoghue <a href="mailto:M.Donoghue@DiscoverFitchburg.com">M.Donoghue@DiscoverFitchburg.com</a> 978-345-9602</td>
<td>Source of potential sites; Potential site developer; Community engagement support</td>
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<tr>
<td>ReImagine North of Main</td>
<td>Joe Ferguson 978-665-4797</td>
<td>Funding Support; Source of potential sites; Community engagement support; Marketing</td>
</tr>
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2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Several methods will be used to communicate progress to the local community, project partners, and residents. The City will utilize existing methods for community engagement, such as the regularly-conducted public meetings as a component of its CDBG planning process. The City has returned to in-person meetings, with hybrid participation options. Residents may also provide feedback in person, by phone, mail, online comment portal, or e-mail. Language services will be provided by bilingual City staff, partner agencies, or the
translation service contracted by the City, as appropriate. Comments will be responded to in the manner in which they were received, or through the preferred method of the commenter. These public hearings are held several months apart, and the project team will solicit comments at appropriate points throughout the project. Updates on this project will be provided to relevant audiences to ensure residents and businesses are aware of the project’s progress and have the opportunity to provide feedback. The City will also employ electronic communication to disseminate information about the program, including social media, local-access TV and radio, and monthly newsletters. Communications will be available in both English and Spanish. City officials also work closely with the local newspaper to highlight projects and updates as they are available. Other City outreach locations include the Fitchburg Public Library, Senior Center, Community Bulletin Board, and Veterans Services Office, and the Fitchburg Public Schools. While implementing this project, City officials will use these resources to update on progress, gather input, and solicit potential projects for inclusion. The City will also utilize its existing networks, such as the RNoM partnership, relationships with local nonprofit organizations, and the Fitchburg Housing Authority to ensure the program’s benefits are well-understood and widely-distributed across the City.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Project Implementation/Anticipated Project Schedule/Task/Activity Lead

Task 1, Cooperative Agreement Oversight: The City of Fitchburg’s (COF) Community Development and Planning Department (CDP) will manage all financial and reporting tasks under this program. Tasks include management of the EPA/COF Cooperative Agreement, overall project coordination, and managing related environmental professional agreements in order to further develop our Brownfields Assessment Program with the ultimate goal of redeveloping and revitalizing our underutilized Brownfields sites. The City has recently undergone a competitive process for selecting firms to provide Environmental Services, resulting in three on-call contracts. This preparation allows us the ability to enter into an agreement with a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) upon receipt of this grant. The city will maintain a partnership with the selected QEP throughout the three years of the grant program. With the help of the QEP the City will establish a Brownfield Site Selection protocol that includes City Officials, including Health and Community Development, the selected QEP, community partners, as well as consultation with MADEP. The agreement with the QEP will be in place within one month of grant receipt and site selection protocol development will be completed within three months of funding award.

CDP staff will attend at least one EPA National Brownfields conference as well as any relevant MADEP training seminars. CDP staff will perform all program oversight and will be the lead for all communications with community stakeholders, local public health officials and the public. CDP staff, in coordination with the QEP, will also prepare performance and financial reports, quarterly reports, and update EPA’s Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) online database throughout the three-year grant period and will ensure that all requirements of the EPA Cooperative Agreement are met.

Task 2, Community Outreach and Engagement: In accordance with our community engagement plan noted above, the City will notify residents, adjacent landowners, target populations, and community partners of public information meetings and assessment schedules through mailings, social media, email blasts, announcements on our local public access channel and information on
the COF webpage. CDP staff will organize public meetings to inform, educate, and update the target community regarding assessment and redevelopment activities and respond to areas of concern from the community. City staff and the QEP will prepare public outreach materials including a Brownfields program general informational brochure (to be developed immediately upon finalization of site selection protocol) and develop public service announcements to promote the program. For each Brownfields site, City staff and the QEP will conduct site-specific outreach with the community during key milestones in the assessment process. Community outreach will be performed throughout the duration of the three-year grant period. The majority of the time that CDP spends on outreach activities will be in-kind contribution to the project.

**Task 3, Site Selection and Phase I and II Site Assessment Activities:** Fifteen potential priority sites have been identified. For these and other sites identified through our site selection protocol, the QEP, in coordination with the CDP, will prepare an EPA Brownfields Assessment Site Eligibility Form for EPA’s approval. The COF plans to coordinate the development of approximately thirteen Phase I site assessments and seven Phase II site assessments on approved sites.

A Site-Specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be prepared and approved by EPA for each site where environmental sampling is scheduled to occur prior to each Phase II. The chosen QEP will conduct all assessments. The CDP will ensure that the selected QEP has a generic QAPP approved by EPA prior to this phase of work. CDP staff will work with owners to coordinate site access for sites not already under city control. Staff will also review consultant work and coordinate with EPA and DEP for review. Results of studies will be shared with owners and potential developers as appropriate.

**Task 4, Cleanup and Site Reuse:** Thorough review of the Phase II site assessments will be undertaken including the recognized environmental site conditions, professional opinions regarding the site and recommended follow up activities with consideration given to feasible reuse options based on the location, site characteristics, community need based on input collected, and current and anticipated market conditions. Remedial alternatives will also be evaluated in part based on cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in protecting human and environmental health.

**3.a.iv. Outputs:** It is anticipated that thirteen (13) Phase I and seven (7) Phase II assessments will be completed on brownfields within the City of Fitchburg. In addition to the environmental assessment reports outlined, the City anticipates environmental status reports will be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the EPA, when appropriate.

### 3.b.i/ii Development & Application of Cost Estimates

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<td><strong>$24,450.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$300,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 1:** 350 hours of CDP personnel time ($40/hr) has been budgeted for cooperative agreement oversight. Related fringe ($25/hr) will be provided in-kind. Travel accounts for two city staff to attend an EPA National Brownfields Conference. QEP support for this task is budgeted. Any supplies needed for this effort will be supplied in-kind by the city.

**Task 2:** The City of Fitchburg, along with their partners, has extensive experience with public engagement and outreach activities. This allows a comprehensive effort to be undertaken expeditiously utilizing existing frameworks and resources. Personnel and travel costs associated with this effort will be an in-kind contribution to this project. Supplies such as brochure design and printing are within this budget as is a small amount of QEP time for public engagement.

**Task 3:** 58 hours of CDP personnel time ($50/hr) is estimated for site selection and overseeing assessment work. Fringe ($25/hr) will be provided in-kind. Working with a QEP, the City has estimated 13 Phase I assessments ($3,750/site) and 7 Phase II assessments ($28,000/site). The majority of this grant (83%) will be spent on this phase of the project.

**Task 4:** 59 hours of CDP personnel time ($50/hr) has been budgeted for reuse planning (fringe in-kind), with QEP Support.

**3.c. Measuring Environmental Results:** Upon receipt of grant funds, the CDP will devise a workplan to ensure alignment with outputs and outcomes stated in the application. Project outputs will be monitored through working meetings with the Project Manager, QEP, and the Community Development Director. The Project Manager will update the Community Development Director on a monthly basis, regarding project progress and alignment with long-term outcomes. On a quarterly basis the project team, in collaboration with community stakeholders, will review the workplan—spending, achieved outputs and outcomes—to identify areas of improvement, or if course-corrections are needed to ensure the program operates effectively.

**4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

**4.a.i/ii/iii. Organizational Capacity/Organizational Structure/Description of Key Staff:** The CDP office is well-versed in project and grant management, and has extensive experience with brownfields assessment and remediation. Over the last five years, the CDP has managed over $10 million in state and federal grant funding. The Housing and Development Division is the annual recipient of over $1.3 million in CDBG and HOME funding, and ensures that these funds are spent in a timely and efficient manner. Its Economic Development Division works to encourage development that will stimulate the tax base, improve economic competitiveness, and increase job opportunities. Its Planning Division develops long-term planning for the City, and serves as liaison to both the City’s Planning Board and Conservation Committee. CDP has previously been awarded EPA brownfields funding. In addition, the City worked with the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority for years to utilize their EPA Brownfields assessment funds in identifying the hazards
on several suspect City tax-title acquired sites, which produced reports that allowed the City to take needed action to remove contamination and allow for potential redevelopment.

The Housing and Development Division will be primarily responsible for the administration and monitoring of this grant. Amy LeBlanc, Senior Project Manager, will oversee the process. Amy has two decades of experience in the City’s CDP Department, and has expertly-managed a wide-range of projects, from streetscapes and parks, to rail trails, demolition, and brownfields. Currently, Amy is responsible for the management of three brownfields sites in the City, and is well-versed on state and federal brownfields law, procurement law, and possesses a wide range of grant and project-management expertise. The other divisions will be responsible for identifying potential sites for assessment, and working with the Senior Projects Manager to identify reuse potential for those sites. The Executive Director will oversee this process.

4.a.iv. **Acquiring Additional Resources**: In the event that the City of Fitchburg requires the services of a contractor or subrecipient, the City would comply with all applicable procurement laws and guidelines. The CDP works closely with the City’s Procurement Department to ensure the use of best practices and compliance. All procurement notices are advertised in the COF website, State Publications, CommBuys (the state procurement hub), and the local newspaper. Notices are also sent to the local Chamber of Commerce, bid notification subscribers, and posted on the City’s Facebook and LinkedIn pages. Competitively procured on-call engineering contracts are also available for general use by all City departments.

4.b.i. **Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant**: The City of Fitchburg received an EPA Brownfields Cleanup grant of $150,500 in October 2008 for petroleum at 465 Westminster Street. The grant was further amended to add an additional $49,500 for cleanup of other hazardous substances. The workplan included removal of a 100,000 gallon fuel oil UST, testing and removal of contaminated soils in several areas on the site, paving, and submitting a deed restriction on the site and submitting a closure report. The grant amendment was proposed to abate asbestos containing materials, but with costs of abatement quoted at over $860,000, significantly higher than the grant and match funds, the City received approval to use funds to board and secure the Central Steam Plant buildings and fence the area off from public access. Reports were submitted and the project was satisfactorily completed and closed out in the ACRES system in September 2011. The City completed its Brownfields work plan while adhering to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, City staff reported on progress in the ACRES system in a timely manner, grant funds were fully expended and the grant was closed out within the grant contract period.
**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

1. **Type of Submission:**
   - [ ] Preapplication
   - [x] Application
   - [ ] Changed/Corrected Application

2. **Type of Application:**
   - [x] New
   - [ ] Continuation
   - [ ] Revision
   - [ ] Other (Specify):

3. **Date Received:** 12/01/2021

4. **Applicant Identifier:**
   - City of Fitchburg, MA

5a. **Federal Entity Identifier:**

5b. **Federal Award Identifier:**

**State Use Only:**

6. **Date Received by State:**

7. **State Application Identifier:**

**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

- **a. Legal Name:** City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
- **b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):** 04-6001388
- **c. Organizational DUNS:** 9492870720000

- **d. Address:**
  - Street1: 718 Main Street
  - City: Fitchburg
  - County/Parish: Worcester
  - State: MA: Massachusetts
  - Province:
  - Country: USA: UNITED STATES
  - Zip / Postal Code: 01420-3125

- **e. Organizational Unit:**
  - Department Name: Community Development
  - Division Name:

- **f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**
  - Prefix: Mr.
  - * First Name: Tom
  - Middle Name:
  - * Last Name: Skwierawski
  - Suffix:
  - Title: Executive Director, Community Development
  - Organizational Affiliation: City of Fitchburg
  - * Telephone Number: 978-829-1892
  - Fax Number: 978-829-1963
  - * Email: TSkwierawski@FitchburgMA.gov

**Tracking Number:** GRANT13509381
**Funding Opportunity Number:** EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04
**Received Date:** Dec 01, 2021 05:02:16 PM EST
**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**
- City or Township Government

**Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:**

**Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:**

**Other (specify):**

**10. Name of Federal Agency:**
- Environmental Protection Agency

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**
- 66.818

**CFDA Title:**
- Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements

**12. Funding Opportunity Number:**
- EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04

**Title:**
- FY22 GUIDELINES FOR BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANTS

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

**Title:**

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

**15. Descriptive Title of Applicant’s Project:**
- Fitchburg, Massachusetts Brownfields Assessment Project, Focusing on Downtown Census Tracts

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.
### Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**
- **a. Applicant:** MA-03
- **b. Program/Project:** MA-03

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

**17. Proposed Project:**
- **a. Start Date:** 07/01/2022
- **b. End Date:** 06/30/2025

**18. Estimated Funding ($):**

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Applicant</td>
<td>20,325.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. State</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Local</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Program Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. TOTAL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**
- [ ] a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on.
- [ ] b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- [X] c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt?** *(If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)*
- [ ] Yes
- [X] No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

**21. By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

[**I AGREE**]

**The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.**

### Authorized Representative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>* First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name</th>
<th>* Last Name</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Tom</td>
<td></td>
<td>Skwierawski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| * Title | Executive Director, Community Development |

| * Telephone Number | 978-829-1892 | Fax Number | 978-829-1963 |

| * Email | TSkwierawski@FitchburgMA.gov |

| * Signature of Authorized Representative | Cynthia Dalton | * Date Signed | 12/01/2021 |