Village of Valley Falls, NY – old Thompson Mill Site
Narrative Information Sheet

1) Applicant Identification:
   a) Village of Valley Falls, New York, PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY 12185

2) Funding Requested:
   a) Community-wide Brownfield Assessment
   b) $500,000 Federal Funds

3) Location: Village of Valley Falls, located partially in the Town of Pittstown, and partially in
   the Town of Schaghticoke in Rensselaer County NY.

4) Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information: Target area is the historic Village of
   Valley Falls (Census Tract 0518.00), zip code 12185. Priority Site for Community-wide
   assessment - Old Thompson Mill, Three tax parcels/sites (22.16-3-2.1, 22.16-3-1.2, and
   22.16-3-1.1) in Valley Falls, NY 12185 identified as 273 Poplar Street. Secondary sites are
   the former Valley Falls Dry Cleaner (11 Lyon Street) and Jim’s Auto facility (Rt. 67).

5) Contacts
   a) Project Director

      Kristina Younger
      518-527-6577
      vfthompsonmillprojectmanager@gmail.com
      PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY. 12185

   b) Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:

      Mayor Jay Overocker
      vvfrusteejpo@gmail.com
      518-753-6230
      PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY. 12185

6) Population
   i) Village of Valley Falls – 466 (2010 Census)
   ii) Town of Pittstown – 5,735
   iii) Town of Schaghticoke – 7,679

7) Other Factors Checklist:
Other Factor                                      | Page #  
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None of the Other Factors are applicable.        |  
Community population is 10,000 or less.          | 4  
The priority site is adjacent to a body of water.| 1  
The priority site is in a federally designated flood plain. | 1,2,8  

A letter from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation is attached.

No portion of this application is confidential, privileged, or sensitive.

Thank you for this opportunity. Because a picture is worth a thousand words, I hereby submit the essence of our proposal.

We want to get rid of this to allow public access to this.

Sincerely,

JR Overrocker

Mayor Jay Overocker
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Division of Environmental Remediation, Bureau of Program Management
625 Broadway, 12th Floor, Albany, NY 12233-7012
P: (518) 402-9764 | F: (518) 402-9722
www.dec.ny.gov

November 19, 2021

Kristina Younger
Village of Valley Falls
PO Box 157
Valley Falls, NY 12185

Dear Ms. Younger:

This is to acknowledge that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received a request from the Village of Valley Falls, dated October 28, 2021, for a state acknowledgement letter for a Federal Year 2022 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfields grant.

I understand that the Village of Valley Falls plans to submit a Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment grant application for hazardous substances and petroleum in the amount of $315,000. Focus of the funding will be to conduct a Phase II Assessment, including building demolition, for the old Thompson Mill site. Secondary sites include the Valley Falls Dry Cleaner and Jim's Auto facility. Funding will also be allocated for reuse planning and community involvement activities. Please note that the USEPA criteria for an assessment grant specifies that, if selected, the Village of Valley Falls may only expend up to $200,000 of the grant on a specific site.

DEC encourages initiatives to redevelop brownfields with the goal of mitigating any environmental and health impacts that they might pose.

Sincerely,

Karen Diligent
Director, Bureau of Program Management

ec:  T. Wesley, USEPA Region 2
     A. Devine, USEPA Region 2
     G. Burke, DEC Albany
     C. O'Neill, DEC Region 4
1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

1.a Target Area and Brownfields

i. Background and Description of Target Area: Valley Falls, a historic village on the National Register in the township of Pittstown, New York, is a modest rural community of 179 households and a total population of 457 residents (Census tract 0518.00). The Village of Valley Falls, the Target Area, is only 0.5 square miles and is divided by the Hoosic River. The Village was founded at the turn of the 20th century initially due to its prominent location on the River. By 1863, the Village was a mini-industrial center with rail line access, the availability of water and waterpower for several mills, the largest being the Thompson Textile Mill, general stores, hotels, foundry, cartwright, farrier, and blacksmith shops. Unfortunately, the Village today is a shadow of its former self - a bedroom community with only a small residential tax base. There are no retail establishments, healthcare services, grocery stores or other amenities remaining in the Village, causing residents to travel to meet their basic needs. The closest senior center is in Hoosick Falls, 16 miles away. There is no public transportation in the Village, although senior transportation is provided on a limited basis. Village life centers on the Free Library, churches, and the Community Hall. Broadband access is also lacking. The housing stock is dominated by houses dating back to or before the turn of the century.

The Thompson Mill represented the soul of the Village of Valley Falls. For over 100 years, ending in 1992, the mill defined the town – employing most of its residents. According to the Pittstown Historical Society, “The Thompson Mill was the heartbeat of the small Village of Valley Falls, and even if you did not work there you were aware of the morning, noon, and evening whistles. …. Most workers lived close by in the village and walked to work in the morning, home for lunch, and home again at night. It was the one common thread that tied most folks together.” When James Thompson & Company moved its textile operation to Mexico, the old mill sat derelict for 25 years, and then in 2009, it went up in arson-created flames. The Village similarly declined. However, its location on a remarkably scenic bend of the Hoosic River, at a significant entry point to the Village, where Native American artifacts and Revolutionary War history abound, provides hope for a different future.

Prior to the late 1800’s when the mill complex was developed, nearby properties were developed for mixed residential and commercial uses that are long gone. The area is struggling from the many effects associated with abandoned and underutilized brownfields, including dry cleaners, automotive repair facilities and other former commercial and/or industrial uses that left a wide array of known or suspected environmental contaminants. As a result, the Thompson Mill, located in the heart of the Target Area is a visual reminder of the blight and other environmental challenges faced by this small community following years of decline, resulting in little to no redevelopment, decreased property values, safety issues, diminished investment, and exposure to these contaminants. These Brownfields sites are often found to be contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), heavy metals (including lead) and oil. Known contaminated sites in the area are also impacted polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) as well hazardous building materials (HBM) including asbestos, lead-based paint and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Sensitive populations living in the Target Area include families with children and women of childbearing age, low-income and minority residents and seniors. The Hoosic River is a productive fishery, but contamination threatens its health. The extent of contamination is not known, and the presence of these Brownfields sites is an obstacle to revitalization efforts.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites: The Village has identified three (3) of the (4) parcels (multiple lots within the mill building footprint where impacts are known to exist) that comprise the 23-acre Thompson Mill site located at 273 Poplar Street, as well as an adjacent landlocked privately owned parcel potentially impacted by the former mill as its top priority sites. In addition, nearby Former Jim’s Auto Facility and Valley Falls Dry Cleaner properties are secondary
priority sites. Located in the center of the Target Area and adjacent to the Hoosic River, much of the Thompson Mill Site is in the federal floodplain. Former mill activities on the site included fabric dying and other manufacturing and milling operations. In addition, portions of the Site have been used for illegal solid waste disposal and dumping. Known contamination identified during limited investigation activities includes heavy metals (chromium, lead, mercury, and others), PAHs and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), PCBs, lead-based paint and asbestos in building materials. Impacted building debris is located in soils around the former mill facility, and the adjacent privately owned parcel, due to building collapses after a major fire in 2009 that exacerbated the extent and comingling of contaminants and significantly damaged the buildings, which are now a magnet for vandalism, crime and a significant safety hazard. A structural analysis has deemed the building unsafe and is to not be accessed by anyone. Furthermore, recent investigation activities around the building could not be performed within the ‘fall zone’ of the building or the building footprint. Future investigations to be performed closer to the building and/or below the foundation, where potential impacts are expected, will require the structure to be demolished prior to investigation activities being performed. Since petroleum storage and heating sources were co-located with other mill operations, and because of the fire, there may be residual petroleum compound comingled with hazardous compounds at this site. The Village wants to reclaim its riverfront and reuse this property to build a park-like passive recreational green space that will provide river access to the public and includes walking trails, fishing/boat access, and historical displays of the significance of the Mill in the Village’s history. Evaluation of the sites in this application are critical to implementing this revitalization plan.

Upgradient of the Mill are the former Valley Falls Dry Cleaner (11 Lyon Street) and Jim’s Auto facility (Rt. 67) Sites. There is a known VOC impacted groundwater plume, including tetrachloroethylene (PCE), associated with the former dry-cleaning facility that impacted local drinking water. In addition, the unknown environmental conditions associated with the petroleum Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) formerly used at Jim’s Auto Facility are also a concern to the Target Area Village. Additional investigation activities would evaluate the potential impacts to residents and the environment, including the Hoosic River, from these sites if funding is available. The former dry cleaner was remediated in 2000, but is still being monitored by NYSDEC, and reuse as small business space will be considered once it is formally cleared of contamination. The desire from the community is for the Auto Facility to retain its current use. The encouragement of small businesses that serve Village resident needs is a priority for the Village.

The negative impacts associated with these Priority Brownfields Sites are significant. The mill’s peak production years were prior to the advent of environmental regulation. In fact, environmental requirements were a reason that the former owner, the James Thompson Company, cited when it abandoned operations in Valley Falls and moved manufacturing to Mexico and other locations in 1992. In addition, the Hoosic River is a productive fishery, which host bass and other sensitive fish and wildlife species in which the types of contaminants released from this site have the potential for bioaccumulation and that Target Area residents eat. There is a (currently unoccupied) bald eagle’s nest on the shoreline of the Mill property. There are also several areas at the Mill Site where there are known archeological artifacts and potential exists for significant artifacts to be uncovered in other areas of the Site where paleosol soils were identified. If the Thompson Mill site remains unremediated, future flood events could further spread the known contaminants at the Site downstream to other communities. These Priority Sites need to be assessed and evaluated for cleanup/reuse options to facilitate the beneficial reuse of these sites which is critical to the Village’s survival and revitalization of the Target Area and local community.

i.b. Revitalization of the Target Area
i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The Village’s vision for a passive recreational green space can only be realized if the hulking skeleton of a burned-out old mill occupying the southern bank of the river, and its impact to the environment, are cleaned up. It is a safety hazard and an eyesore. Village Board discussions and community forums on alternate uses of the site and revitalization of the
village core have led to the successful Historic District designation, application for nomination as Brownfield Opportunity Area, and plans for the riverfront park. However additional assessment and cleanup planning is needed before the Village can seek clean-up funds from New York State, the EPA, and other sources. Once the cleanup is complete, the New York State program for park development through the Environmental Protection Fund, paired with other fundraising, will build the park according to plan refined in this assessment. With community involvement at every step in this tight-knit community, success is guaranteed.

The Village is making a concerted effort to implement its plans, bring these properties back to beneficial reuse and enhance local public-private engagement, stimulate an improved quality of life, and spur investment and economic activity in the Target Area. The proposed riverfront park, with walking trails, boat launch, and historic signage, will dramatically transform the Target Area with the removal of blight, environmental, health and safety concerns associated with the burned-out mill, the introduction of a recreational greenspace, preservation and enhancement of river ecology, and the creation of a destination for local tourism. The Village does not have a formal Master Plan due to its small size and lack of resources.

**ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:** With a 23-acre waterfront park as an anchor, the historic Village of Valley Falls will retain a stable population and improve housing values. It will attract visitors that stimulate the establishment of park-related businesses, such as kayak rental, coffee shops, restaurants, and private investment in the historic village, bringing in jobs. Redevelopment of underutilized properties will be a more productive use, increase area property values, generate local tax revenue and an expanded tax base, create job opportunities, generate community pride, and spur economic activity and growth within this small Village. When paired with the 2018 National Register designation, the application to the NYS Department of State in July 2021 to nominate the area for the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program will more fully articulate and quantify the economic benefits of this renewal. [Note: BOA awards announcement will be in December 2021.]

The Village sees the Assessment Grant spurring private investment in the housing stock. The inherent walkability and structural integrity of the historic district make it attractive for today’s families. The EPA EJSCREEN tool indicates that the lead paint indicator (81 percentile in US, due to high proportion of pre-1960 housing stock) and high proportion of children under 5 (66th percentile) support this strategy. The lack of commercial activity and broadband access are the two largest economic drags to further such development. Cleaning up the eyesore at the Village entrance will increase community attractiveness to residential and recreation serving commercial development.

**i.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

**i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse:** Site re-use resources needed for the mill site depend on the magnitude of contamination found in the building footprint and are currently estimated at $2-$5M for abate, demolition and remediation alone. Park development of the current schematic design is ~$250,000. The EPA Cleanup Grant is one of the building blocks and the Village is seeking eligibility and support from as many programs as possible. We obtained pro bono assistance in preparing this application, demonstrating our ability to leverage community resources. There are fund sources at the state and regional level to support clean-up efforts and park development. These include **US EPA Cleanup Grants, the NYS Brownfields Program, the NYS Environmental Protection Fund, the Hudson River Foundation Hudson River Improvement Fund, the Hudson River Greenway, and the Restoration Fund administered by the Hudson River Natural Resource Trustees.** The project’s location on a major tributary to the Hudson River opens potential fund sources. Seeking NY State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) designation, developing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, and gaining listing National Register are all part of the strategy to bring the necessary resources for site reuse to the table.

**ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure:** The development of the park at the Mill Site will not require major
new infrastructure development. Reuse plans do not include buildings or other facilities requiring electricity, water, or sewer, as passive recreation only is envisioned. However, the existing at-grade railroad crossing on the private road leading to the site will require safety upgrades to accommodate public use. There is a dedicated NYS transportation funding resource for this purpose that the Village would apply for. The Village will be able to use existing municipal infrastructure readily available at the other Priority Sites as well as at the streetscape in the greater Village area, such as water, sewer, gas, and electricity to support proposed redevelopment and reuse activities in the Target Area. Existing infrastructure in the area has the capacity to handle this expansion, as well as any additional domino redevelopment projects.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement
2.a Community Need
i. Community’s Need for Funding: Due to its extremely small size, the Village does not have the financial capacity to complete the brownfields assessment and cleanup/reuse planning activities requested in this grant. The projected cost of assessment, $500,000, is approximately three times the entire annual operating budget of the Village ($168,200). In addition, a fee is levied on some Village properties to cover the $104,500 annual debt service and maintenance costs of the small sewage treatment plant and sewer system built in 2004. This $2.1 million project was a significant undertaking for a Village this small; but was done to address raw sewage being dumped into the Hoosic River by 25 properties attached to an ancient sewer line. Public loan funding was secured for much of the project, but debt service costs alone currently being borne by the Target Area users of the system will continue for the next ~15 years. While offering evidence of the Village’s willingness and capability to handle large infrastructure projects, the existing debt obligations for the sewer add financial strain on the Village with extremely limited revenue options.

The Village’s small size (<500 people; 179 households) limits its ability to leverage the needed capital from its residents, as does the fact that there are no non-residential land uses since the mills ceased operations and those industries died. Other than 15 residents who worked from home or walked to work, all remaining 253 workers commuted to their place of employment, with an average commute time of 40 minutes, 43 percent longer than the average commute time for the metropolitan area of 28 minutes. The Bureau of Economic Analysis data on Personal Income provides data that shows that personal income in Rensselaer County on a per capita basis is dropping relative to the rest of New York State, dropping from 19th in 2012 to 27th in 2013.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Population:
1. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: As of the 2010 census, there were 466 people in 179 households in the Village of Valley Falls, continuing a downward trend in population while the number of households has remained the same. The racial makeup of the village was 95.71% non-Minority. Of the 179 households, 36.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them and 51.9% were married couples living together. 12.3% had a female householder with no husband present. 22.9% of all households were made up of individuals and 5.0% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.6. The EPA EJSCREEN tool highlights the lead paint indicator (81st percentile), wastewater discharge indicator (83rd percentile), and population under 5 (66th percentile) as area of concern.

In the village, the population includes 28.5% under the age of 18 and 15.0% who were 65 years of age or older. 16.67% of children 5 and under and 5.3% of the population were below the poverty line. This brownfield program will allow the Village to reduce exposure to contaminants including hazardous building materials. The Village welfare is directly impacted by the safety hazard of the abandoned mill. This rural historic village will benefit through the elimination of welfare issues that currently inhibit redevelopment opportunities such as the arson crime that burned the mill, trespassing complaints that the State Police handle, vandalism, crime and illegal dumping at the site.

2. Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease & Adverse Health Conditions: Given the very small size of
the Valley Falls community, data on health conditions are simply not available from reliable public information databases. There is evidence at [www.statecancerprofiles.gov](http://www.statecancerprofiles.gov) that Rensselaer County has a **higher rate of cancer incidence** (536.3 per 100,000) than New York State (487.7) or the US (453.8) which translates into higher mortality from cancer (187.9 per 100,000 vs. 162.3 for NYS). Data on a more fine-grained level is not readily available. However, the asbestos presence at the Thompson Mill site increases potential exposure to trespassers and potential offloading into the Hoosic River.

Although statistics are limited, due to the known Brownfields sites in Target Area, it is reasonable to presume Target Area residents are adversely affected from exposure to VOCs (liver, kidney, nervous system damage; **birth defects; cancer**), heavy metals – including lead (immune, cardiovascular, developmental, gastrointestinal, neurological, reproductive, respiratory, kidney damage; **cancer**), petroleum (nervous system, immune, liver, kidney, respiratory damage; **cancer**), PAHs (liver disorders; **cancer**), as well HBM including asbestos (lung scarring, mesothelioma and lung **cancer**) and PCBs (immune, hormone and neurological system; liver and skin disease). **High prenatal exposure to PAHs is associated with cognitive disfunction**, childhood **asthma** and **other adverse birth outcomes**. The cleanup/redevelopment of the Target Site as a recreational park, as well as the secondary sites, will reduce these threats, create recreational opportunities, and improve the overall physical and mental health of Target Area residents and visitors that use the park.

**Promoting Environmental Justice:** The population in the target area have environmental justice challenges and/or disproportionately share the negative environmental consequences resulting from the abandoned industrial operations. The mill abandonment and deterioration has hurt the Village’s revitalization potential and adds to the burden faced by sensitive populations in town. This grant will directly address the primary threat of contamination from these priority sites, mitigate exposure, eliminate blight, and provide an outlet for recreation in nature – a documented mental health booster! Implementation of this Assessment Work Plan will reduce the loss of population, discourage disinvestment, improve property values, and possibly increase job opportunities.

**2.b Community Engagement**

**Project Partners / ii. Project Partner Roles:** The Village of Valley Falls Board, together with its Brownfields Advisory Committee, a panel of citizen advisors drawn from community organizations making partnership commitments to this project, will use three basic strategies in our tool kit – public meetings and workshops that follow COVID-19 protocols, web-based publication, and smaller meetings and consultations. This is consistent with COVID-19 protocols and reflects the lack of broadband access in the Village to provide live on-line events. The Village of Valley Falls partnerships with community organizations to encourage involvement in the planning and implementation of this project are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of organization / entity / group</th>
<th>Point of contact (name, email, and phone)</th>
<th>Specific role in the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rensselaer Land Trust, Inc</td>
<td>Bob Crowley, 518-659-5263</td>
<td>Reuse planning / Park design and outreach support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoosic River Watershed Association</td>
<td>Andy Kawaszk, 413-664-6545</td>
<td>Outreach support, volunteer labor, participate in cleanup and reuse planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Falls Free Library</td>
<td>Ralph Marino, 518-753-4230, <a href="mailto:ramarino@nycap.rr.com">ramarino@nycap.rr.com</a></td>
<td>Outreach support, meeting space and Information Repository</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Falls United Methodist Church</td>
<td>Richard Palmer, 518-753-4848</td>
<td>Outreach support, volunteer labor, meeting space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittstown Historical Society</td>
<td>Constance Khell,</td>
<td>Outreach support, historic information and advise, cleanup/reuse planning activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Falls VFW Post 1938</td>
<td>Harry Rifenburg, 518-753-7707</td>
<td>Outreach support, volunteer labor</td>
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There are no business organizations in the Village because there is little commercial activity. Because the desired future use for the top priority mill property is public green space, realtor involvement would come into play as there are several properties currently for sale, where the burned-out mill at the major entrance to the Village is an obstacle to housing sales and a downward influence on home values. The Village will collaborate with area realtors to present and promote plans to assess, remediate and improve the mill site to improve property values in the Village.

iii. Incorporating Community Input: The Village will contractually require the qualified environmental professional (QEP) engaged for the Assessment to produce a project newsletter suitable for distribution to the public at three milestones – completion of the contamination assessment, draft clean-up strategy recommendations, and when a site reuse proposal is available. This newsletter, which will be subject to Village review and approval prior to distribution will be in both paper and electronic formats. Electronic versions will be distributed through our community organization partners, as the Village does not have a website. Paper copies will be made available at Town Hall, the Free Library, the Fire Hall and the Community Hall – the hubs of Village life. The Village Free Library will serve as the Information Repository and location for hard copies of all program-related documents for review by the public. The library is located in the Target Area. The Village population is a mixture of education levels, with 45% holding a high school diploma or less, 35% holding college degrees. As a rural area, internet service is via satellite or phone lines and is not universally subscribed in residences, which is why the village is prioritizing the use of paper-based communication in addition to electronic communication. There is a local paper covering the area – the Express – and this media outlet will be used. Inclusion of flyers in sewer bills will also be considered if warranted. The Village has a Facebook page that has achieved 291 followers, which has been a valuable tool to announce and promote the program, communicate progress, solicit input, provide feedback, and advertise meetings. A local monthly news flyer has also been initiated.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

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<th>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight</th>
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| **EPA-funded activities for the priority sites:** The Village will procure and manage Project Manager (PM) and Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEPs); ACRES, Quarterly Reports, Annual MBE/WBE/DBE & FFR reports and Final grant close out reporting; Eligibility Determinations, Access Agreements, comply with Section 106 Historic Preservation Act requirements; Brownfield Advisory Committee; Attend EPA and state workshops, and national conference; Coordination with QEP, property owners, and relevant State agencies; Maintain financial records and complete drawdowns; maintaining project files and information repository. *EPA-funded activities for non-priority sites:* Same as priority sites if sufficient funds remain after the assessment at Priority Sites and additional non-priority sites are needed to be included in the program. *Non-EPA funded resources needed to carry out task/activities:* Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff time for additional cooperative agreement oversight activities beyond those that have been budgeted for task.

**Schedule:** Competitive procurement of PM & QEP by 12/20/22. Other activities to be conducted throughout the 3-year grant period. Quarterly Reports submitted within 30 days after the end of each reporting period (Jan / April / July / Oct). Annual FFR and M/W/DBE reports submitted by October 30 of each grant year. ACRES updated when assessments are started/completed, new information becomes available and other major milestones. Advisory Committee meetings. Final Closeout report submitted within 90 days after end.

**Task/Activity Lead:** Village will lead procurement tasks. Contracted PM will lead Brownfields Advisory Committee and oversee QEP with Village supervision; QEP will provide technical & programmatic assistance (QRs/ACRES/eligibility/etc.)

**Outputs:** RFQ. Procure QEP; 12 Quarterly Reports; 2 BAC Meetings; Updates ACRES to track program measures; 3 annual M/W/DBE & FFR reports; Site eligibility determinations; Closeout Report; Grant drawdown requests; executed access agreements. Attend National Brownfields Conference
Task 2: Community Engagement

**EPA-funded activities for the priority sites:** The Village, PM and Brownfields Advisory Committee will provide community outreach and engagement, and focus gathering input from the Target Area residents on site selection and cleanup/reuse planning for priority sites. Outreach materials will be prepared for posting throughout the Village. Newsletters will be generated to provide updates and general Brownfield Assessment Program information. The Village will publicize meetings and ensure the Target Area audience is fully engaged, as well as the broader community. The Village will conduct outreach to local and regional press/media outlets. *EPA-funded activities for non-priority sites:* Same as priority sites if additional sites are needed. *Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out task/activity:* Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff and materials/supplies for any community engagement activities beyond those that have been budgeted for as part of their task.

**Schedule:** Community engagement activities are expected to begin Winter/Spring 2023 and continue throughout the life of the grant. The Village anticipates a minimum of three (3) public meetings to educate and inform the community about the grant, to present assessment results and next steps and solicit feedback from the community regarding potential sites and/or redevelopment/reuse options.

**Task/Activity Lead:** The PM with assistance from the Village will lead this task. Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) and QEP will be the Village’s partners, providing support with technical expertise and other community outreach assistance, as well as helping identify and prioritize potential sites, if applicable.

**Outputs:** Engage the community in the site selection and assessment process, conduct a minimum of three (3) public meetings, meeting minutes, presentation materials, newsletters, flyers, handouts, brochures, etc.

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<tr>
<th>Task 3: Phase I and Phase II Assessments</th>
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<td><strong>EPA-funded activities for the priority sites:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Schedule:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Task/Activity Lead:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Outputs:</strong></td>
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<th>Task 4: Cleanup &amp; Reuse Planning</th>
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<td><strong>EPA-funded activities for the priority sites:</strong></td>
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EPA-funded activities for non-priority sites: Same as priority sites if needed. *Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out task/activity: Village does not anticipate needing non-EPA grant resources to carry out this Task. If necessary, Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff time for any personnel activities beyond those that have been budgeted.

Schedule: Final 18-36 months. Village is confident all work can be completed within 3 years.

Task/Activity Lead: The QEP will complete ABCA/Reuse Plans. Village and PM, with assistance from the BAC, will review reports for accuracy and completeness.

Outputs: One (1) Cleanup Plan / ABCA and one (1) Reuse Plan

a. Cost Estimates

i. Development of Cost Estimates / 3.b.ii Application of Cost Estimates / 3.b.iii. Funds Allocated Toward Environmental Assessment: The Village requests a $500,000 community wide assessment grant. The Village and/or its non-profit partners will provide in-kind services to allow more funds to be spent directly on assessment and outreach. Costs have been estimated based upon scopes provided under past grants, experience with tasks, and estimates from contractors. 5% Indirect costs will cover Village administration.

Task 1 – Cooperative Agreement Oversight/Program management: Travel: $3,500 [One person to attend National Brownfield Conference ($2,100 for mileage, hotel, per diem and incidentals, plus project-related local mileage at federal rate of $0.575/mile (2435 miles over 3-year period = $1,400).] Supplies: $1,000 (Project related including printing and postage). Contractual – Legal: $2,500 (Legal services will be contracted, if needed, regarding site access and/or other legal issues). Contracted Project Management: $15,000 (The Village will contract for program management support activities following federal procurement guidelines as it does not have the inhouse resources to do so. Project Management support includes assistance in completing EPA quarterly reports, MBE/WBE forms, and EPA ACRES database. Other activities include completion of EPA work plans, attending EPA and state workshops, and national conference; Coordination with QEP, property owners, and relevant State agencies and other programmatic support necessary to maintain compliance with EPA cooperative agreement terms and conditions. Planner @ $50/hour, 300 hours total over the three-year grant period to perform EPA reporting/records management and facilitate progress meetings. Additional hours required will not be charged to the grant.) QEP: $11,200 [(~$104/hr x 4 hrs per quarter for 12 quarters = $5,000 to provide technical elements of quarterly reporting and ACRES. QEP will also provide general Programmatic Oversight Assistance, including but not limited to site Eligibility Determination research and forms, Access Agreements, compliance with Section 106 Historic Preservation Act requirements; Assume (62 hours x $100/hour = $6,200).]; TOTAL = $33,200, plus $1,660 in indirect costs.

Task 2 - Community Outreach: Contractual: The Village’s contractual Program Manager will perform and lead all community engagement work (Planner @ $50/hr, 50 hrs total over life of 3-year grant = $2,500) with assistance from the QEP ($3000/meeting @ 3 meetings, includes presentation preparations and attendance, + $2000/newsletter @ 2 = $13,000]). Additional hours required to complete task will be provided via in-kind services by the Village. TOTAL = $15,500, plus $775 in indirect costs. Task 3 – Phase I / II Assessment: Contractual - QEP: $387,500 (QEPs is anticipated to complete a minimum of 2 Phase I and 3 Phase II assessments. Based on past assessment program and recent discussions with state agencies and QEPs, we expect that Phase Is will average ~$7,500 per site. Phase II costs are much more variable but are anticipated to average approximately $87,250 per site, including Work Plan, HASP and QAPP. However, $198,000 is earmarked for the Thompson mill as partial demolition is required to adequately assess the site. The cost estimate for partial building demolition for the purpose of assessment was prepared by demolition subcontractors by calculating the total cost of demolition and factoring it down. Due to the unsafe structural condition of the building, partial demolition is imperative to fully define contamination nature and extent within the building footprint. TOTAL = $387,500, plus $19,375 in indirect costs. Task 4 – Cleanup & Reuse Planning: Contractual - QEP: $40,000 [Up to three (3) Remedial Action Plans / Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) will be produced. The cost for developing an ABCA
is estimated at $7,500 each. In addition, Site Reuse Planning activities for the Dry Cleaner Site will also include a sustainability assessment and conceptual reuse design alternatives for redevelopment. The estimated cost of this Reuse Planning Task is approximately $17,500 (~140hrs X ~$125/hr). These plans will be used to leverage cleanup funds from either the U.S. EPA, the Restore New York Communities Initiative, or other sources]. Plus $1,990 in indirect costs. TOTAL = $41,990.

<table>
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<th>Budget Categories</th>
<th>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight/Program Management</th>
<th>Task 2: Community Outreach</th>
<th>Task 3: Phase I &amp; II Assessments</th>
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b. Measuring Environmental Results

ACRES, quarterly reporting and monitoring of the Work Plan and project schedule are the primary tools to measure the Assessment environmental results. The system established in the previous EPA contract will continue to be used to achieve project goals, effectively manage schedules and costs in order to ensure timely and effective use of funds. The Village will track the results of this Brownfield project by regularly scheduling team progress meetings and producing progress reports. If a project is not on schedule, the reasons will be documented in the quarterly report and a corrective action plan to get the project back on track will be implemented. Future leveraging funding to clean up the mill site and build the park, two critical accomplishments will also be tracked. The additional priority sites (former dry cleaner, auto repair) evaluation will also provide community with a blueprint for action.

The location of the mill site adjacent to the Hoosic River is of concern in times of high water – such as extreme weather events. If the site remains unmediated, the contaminants now contained within the site could be spread downstream to other communities if/when the site floods. With the increase in the number and severity of major storm events due to climate change, the removal of this risk is a significant benefit. The removal of hazardous materials from the site will improve health conditions and allow the site to be open to the public. New river access will increase river awareness and care of that natural resource. Reuse as green space will provide environmental benefits in terms of flood resiliency, increased wildlife habitat, and improved water quality. Return of the site to vegetation will mitigate climate change. The possibility that the other community sites could be reused for commercial enterprises to benefit community residents is a clear benefit to the Village. Long-term outcomes such as the number of jobs created, the number of acres made ready for reuse; the volume of soil remediated, etc. will continued to be measured and tracked.

The park will extend the already good walkability of the Village. As a parallel to the development of the
wastewater treatment plant, the reclamation of the mill site will provide significant storm water runoff benefits that will support sustainable development in the Village. Addressing the blight in the center of the Village will support and value the existing historic community in the Village. Its reuse as a public park will increase residence access to not just greenspace – but the riverfront. With the virtually the entire southern riverfront in the Village being contained in this single site, the clearing of hazardous conditions and public ownership will open recreational opportunities to support healthy lifestyles. Retaining residents – and attracting new residents that will value that kind of asset – will be a result.

4) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

4.a Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Structure / ii. Description of Key Staff: The Village of Valley Falls has the experience, knowledge, resources, and ability to obtain and supervise/control those resources it lacks in house to ensure successful completion of all required aspects of this project and grant by procuring resources strategically.

Project Management and Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) oversight services will be competitively procured by the Village. This is consistent with Village practices and was successfully completed for the administer the previous site-specific EPA assessment grant, which was completed on time and on budget. Project financial oversight will be provided by the Village Treasurer, Julie Weston, with progress reports to the Board of Trustees. Annual trainings on accounting, legal, and regulatory matters for Continuing Education Credits are a requirement of the Treasurer position.

iii. Acquiring Additional Resources: Upon award, the Village will initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to competitively procure a PM and QEP. The Village will use a QEP overseen by the Village Board of Trustees and PM to assist with outreach and cooperative agreement oversight activities and to accomplish the assessment and cleanup and reuse planning activities at Priority Sites. The QEP will be competitively procured and be contractually responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable federal and state requirements of the project and the funding sources. This will explicitly include reporting, community outreach, and safety tasks. Any legal services required, will also be arranged through a competitive contract, as the Village does not employ an attorney. This is consistent with past legal services.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

ii. Has Received a recent EPA Brownfields Grant

1. Accomplishments: Valley Falls received an EPA Brownfields Site Specific Assessment grant in 2017 that was 100% expended and closed by the EPA on July 21, 2021. These grant funds allowed Valley Falls to complete All Appropriate Inquiries and a Phase I ESA Report prior to: attaining site ownership of the Thompson Mill after foreclosure on the delinquent owner; generated a SAP, HASP, QAPP and a Phase II report, which were all reviewed and approved by EPA. EPA and the QEP identified significant remaining data gaps following the Phase II ESA, due to the need/requirement to demolish the building in order to complete an adequate assessment of the property; The site was fenced and warning signs were posted to prevent potential exposure to hazardous materials and prohibit unauthorized access to the site; A site-specific hazardous waste variance was applied for and approved from the NYSDEC; The Village procured legal services to investigate prior owner liability. Conceptual site reuse plans were generated and updated based on community input; and community outreach and progress on site activities occurred throughout the duration of the project and community input was sought at major project milestones.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements: The Village complied with the work plan, schedule and terms and conditions of the EPA grant, with one request for an extension due to a delay relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Quarterly reports were submitted on time and were complete. ACRES database is up to date. All grant funds were fully expended.
1. Applicant Eligibility
The Village of Valley Falls NY is a general-purpose unit of government, incorporated in 1904.

2. Letter from the State
See attached latter dated November 19, 2021 from Karen Diligent, Director, Bureau of Program Management, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

3. Community Involvement
The Village of Valley Falls Board, together with its panel of citizen advisors drawn from community organizations making partnership commitments to this project will use three basic strategies in our tool kit – public meetings and workshops that follow COVID-19 protocols, web-based publication, and smaller meetings and consultations. This is consistent with COVID-19 protocols and reflects the lack of broadband access in the Village to provide live on-line events. The Village of Valley Falls has established partnerships with community organizations to encourage involvement in the planning and implementation of this project. A full description of the Community Engagement and Partnerships in this project is contained in the narrative starting on page 5.

The Village of Valley Falls held a Public Information Meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2020 to discuss the findings of the assessment thus far and to describe the project application and seek input. This was advertised using flyers at key community locations and the Village Facebook page. 10 people attended following COVID-19 protocols (Face masks required, 6 ft. spacing). The rural nature of this small village, where internet access is limited, precludes the use of virtual workshops. The Village posts critical items on its Facebook page. It does not have a website. The Village intends to continue holding such meetings at critical project milestones, following current COVID 19 protocols.

In addition, as part of the grant application submission to the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area Program (BOA) to the New York State Department of State via the Consolidated Funding Application process for the purpose of developing a BOA nomination for the Village focusing on the old Thompson Mill site the Village published notice of its intent to apply in the local paper, accepted written comments, and held a public meeting on July 6, 2021. Over 65 public comments were received in support of the proposed application and the need for designation as a BOA. These comments are available for review.

4. Named contractors and subrecipients: There are no named contractor or subrecipients in this application. Competitive procurements will be conducted.

5. Available balance on existing Assessment Grant: Valley Falls has no open grants.