IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification:
   
   **Municipality of Corozal, Puerto Rico**
   Calle Sixto Febus #9, Corozal, PR 00783
   (787)-859-3060

2. Funding Requested:
   
   a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide Assessment Grant
   b. Federal Funds Requested:
      i. $400,100
      ii. Indicate if you are requesting a waiver of the $200,000 limit (Site-specific Assessment Grant applicants only). N/A

3. Location:
   
   a. Municipality of Corozal
   b. Corozal
   c. Puerto Rico

4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information
   
   a. Target Area: Corozal Downtown (CD)
   b. Corozal Downtown is contained within portions of **Census Tracts 5301, 5302, and 5303**, consists, primarily, of downtown Corozal and extending west along PR818 for 1.75 miles. Located in the central sector of Corozal, the CD is the most urbanized area of the Municipality, and where the vast majority of commercial and industrial activity occurs.
   c. Priority Sites Addresses:
      i. Former Slaughterhouse – PR 159 Interior, Corozal, PR 00783
      ii. Abraham Lincoln School – #37, PR 891, Corozal, PR 00783
      iii. Rafael Martinez Nadal School – #38, PR 891, Corozal, PR 00783
      iv. Howard T. Jason Complex – Santo Domingo St., Corozal, PR 00783
      v. Vacant Lots – PR 818, Km 2.1, Corozal, PR 00783

5. Contacts:
   
   a. Project Director:
      Jorge A. Martinez, Director of Federal Programs
      Municipality of Corozal
      Calle Sixto Febus #9, Corozal, PR 00783
      (787)-859-2242
      federalescorozal@yahoo.com

   b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
      Luis A. Garcia Rolon
      Calle Sixto Febus #9, Corozal, PR 00783
      (787)-859-3060
      Luis.garcia@corozal.pr.gov

7. **Other Factors Checklist**
   None of the Other Factors listed below apply to the proposed project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
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<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or</td>
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<td>United States territory.</td>
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<td>The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
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<td>The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the</td>
<td>Table 1, Page 2</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 a</td>
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<td>street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).</td>
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<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.</td>
<td>Table 1, Page 2</td>
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<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind,</td>
<td>Page 3</td>
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<td>solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
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<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.</td>
<td>Page 3</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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<td>area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority</td>
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<td>site(s) within the target area.</td>
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<td>The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power</td>
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<td>plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing.</td>
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8. **Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority.**

   a. Letter from the Puerto Rico Department of Environmental and Natural Resources is attached.

9. **The Municipality of Corozal is not making any claims for confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, in this application/document.**
29 NOV 2021

Hon. Luis A. García Rolón
Mayor
Municipio de Corozal
9 Calle Cervantes
Corozal, PR 00783

Honorable Mayor García-Rolón

MUNICIPALITY OF COROZAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER FOR THE INTENTION TO APPLY FOR FY-22 US EPA BROWNFIELD'S PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT

The Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) Superfund Program has received a letter from the Municipality of Corozal informing its intention to apply for a Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant.

DNER acknowledges and supports the initiative taken by the Municipality. The identification, inventory development, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of Brownfields sites will provide an opportunity to enhance the social, economic and environmental conditions in this municipality. DNER encourages the Municipality of Corozal to maintain an open communication with federal and state agencies and to request any support needed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Eng. Melvin Menéndez Figueroa, Environmental Emergencies Response Area Manager, at (787) 999-2200, extensions 5900, 5901 or by e-mail at melvinmenendez@jce.pr.gov.

Cordially,

[Signature]

Rafael A. Machargo Maldonado
Secretary

MMF/MAG
IV.E. NARRATIVE/RANKING CRITERIA

1 Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization, a. Target Area & Brownfields, i. Background & Description of Target Area: Founded in 1804, the rural Municipality of Corozal (Municipality) in central Puerto Rico (PR), has a population of 34,571 (2020 Decennial Census) and is 19 miles southwest of San Juan. Our municipality is a working-class community known for the agricultural production of plantains and other starch vegetables as well as the manufacturing of textiles and plastics. Beginning in the 1970’s, industrialization allowed for a robust workforce and fostered commercial and industrial growth. Our economy was vibrant, in part, due to Section 936 (936 exemption) of the US tax code, which incentivized US companies to operate in PR through valuable tax exemptions. These incentives were eliminated in 2006, causing many companies to leave PR for more tax-friendly countries like Singapore and Ireland. These losses drove Corozal into a deep recession that has lasted over a decade, leading to job losses and population decline as people left for the US mainland for employment. While residents have seen household income remain mostly unchanged (US Census) from 2009 to 2019, the cost of living increased 19% over the same period. Our residents still feel the impacts of these losses.

In September 2017, Hurricanes Irma and Maria ravaged Corozal, exacerbating extreme socioeconomic and financial pressures. Maria’s devastating winds and rains destroyed buildings and caused catastrophic landslides and flooding of the Cibuco River. All electric power and drinking water services were destroyed as were over 500 homes. 20% of commercial properties (many are now brownfields), and 100% of the transportation infrastructure was either blocked by debris or damaged. Basic public services were halted for months, and thousands of residents were forced into temporary shelters due to the total loss of their homes. Many of these properties became brownfields, releasing chemicals like lead paint, petroleum, and other environmental hazards. The storm followed a decade-long economic decline as evidenced by population loss (14% after Maria – Center for PR Studies), business closures, and abandoned homes. This decline resulted in abandoned commercial and industrial properties, school closings due to fewer students, and shutting of other facilities such as a slaughterhouse, all of which deteriorated as investors and development halted due to concerns of contamination. Residents who remained or have returned have been recovering from a decade of losses and are enduring a difficult job market with dozens of employers unable or unwilling to reopen businesses after the economic decline, in turn, driving our unemployment rate to 11.6% compared to 4.1% in the US (06/21, Bureau of Labor Statistics). These challenging conditions have resulted in numerous brownfields in our community as businesses close and caused brownfield redevelopment to slow as resources have been reallocated to more urgent needs.

As employers shuttered their doors after the 936 exemption repeal and hurricanes marred our community, brownfields have steadily become more prevalent. The worst-hit area, where redevelopment investment has the greatest potential, is the Corozal Downtown (CD) This target area is where grant funding will have the greatest impact. A focused effort has been made to invest in the CD, creating detailed reuse plans to maximize investments and leverage funding. If properties outside the target area (below) become high priority during the Cooperative Agreement period, we may choose to invest grant funds on them as well; however, the redevelopment focus for this grant will remain in the CD.

The CD (portions of Census tracts 5301, 5302, and 5303) consists, primarily, of downtown Corozal and extending west along PR 818 for 1.75 miles. Located in the central sector of Corozal, the CD is the most urbanized area of the Municipality, and where the vast majority of commercial and industrial activity occurs. For this reason, the CD was hardest hit by the elimination of the 936 exemption. The economic downturn of the past decade has directly impacted our workforce who earn significantly less than those in the US and PR. The Median Household Income (MHI) of CD residents is 30% less than that of PR, and almost ⅓ of the US (see 2.a.ii). When Maria hit, after the power outages, water shortages, building damage, and loss of basic government services, many CD businesses that closed were never able to reopen, leaving many derelict brownfield properties behind. Local officials also state that almost 75% of property crime activity in the Municipality occurs in the CD. The CD is the location of the priority sites listed in Table 1. Redeveloping the CD will revitalize this portion of our community and reduce area crime, making it more attractive to new businesses, developers, visitors, and residents.

1a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The target area has a significantly higher concentration of brownfields (estimated 20 in the CD) compared to the rest of our community with the highest priority sites offering the greatest opportunity for successful reuse. Although we have worked
hard to address brownfields, dozens remain, including former schools, closed gas stations, a former slaughterhouse, and the underutilized sports facilities. These sites force already financially stressed residents to suffer through the blight that remains. The historical uses our priority sites, likely environmental issues, and potential health effects on those exposed to these uncontrolled sites are summarized in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Sites, Size, Location, &amp; Proximity to Target Area Residents</th>
<th>Historic Use/Current Use &amp; Condition / Planned Reuse (further discussed in Section 1.b.i.)</th>
<th>Suspected Contaminants*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Slaughterhouse – PR 159 interior, 5.82 acres, adjoins Corozal River, low income &amp; minority residential</td>
<td>Former slaughterhouse of livestock/ Vacant, deteriorating structure, damage from hurricane / Housing Complex for the elderly</td>
<td>asbestos, lead paint, sulfates, chlorides, mercury, VOC's, PAHs, PCB's, petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Lincoln School - #37, PR 891, 1.85 acres, adjoins low income &amp; minority residential</td>
<td>School / Vacant, deteriorating structure / Emergency Center and offices</td>
<td>VOCs, PAHs, PCBs, metals, asbestos, lead paint, petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafael Martinez Nadal School - #38, PR 891, 0.05 acres, adjoins low income &amp; minority residential</td>
<td>School / Vacant, deteriorating structures / Small Business Incubator</td>
<td>VOCs, PAHs, PCBs, metals, asbestos, lead paint, petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard T. Jason Complex – Santo Domingo St. 4 acres, adjoins low income &amp; minority residential, Corozal River, &amp; floodplain</td>
<td>Baseball Park / Vacant lot, damaged structures/ Commercial development of Community sports district</td>
<td>VOCs, PAHs, metals, petroleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lots – PR 818, Km 2.1, 23.69 acres, adjoins Cibuco River</td>
<td>Livestock farm then unofficial dump/ Vacant lot/ Low-income Housing Complex</td>
<td>asbestos, lead paint, metals, VOC's, PCB's, PAHs</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), identifies these contaminants as threats to human health. Health threats include: skin damage, liver, kidneys, heart, spleen, nervous, respiratory, hormonal, blood, and immune systems, and may also cause neurological damage, birth defects and cancer (www.atsdr.cdc.gov).

These sites are our highest priorities because they meet immediate needs in our community, align with our revitalization plans, and redevelopment is imminent due to funding already committed ($9M has already been secured) from Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief CDBG-DR and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) programs to redevelop residential and commercial assets and a refugee center on properties in the target area (1.c.i)). Increasing our low-income housing stock through the remediation and redevelopment of the Vacant Lots and Former Slaughterhouse will help those hardest hit by job losses and the hurricanes and adding a small business incubator aligns with our goal to incentivize the economic development of the community. Once redeveloped, they will serve as examples of success, triggering more investment. With the EPA’s grant funding the initial, high-risk due diligence investment on these sites, the likelihood of a successful redevelopment is much higher.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area, i. Reuse Strategy & Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The 2016 Corozal Territorial Plan (referred to as Revitalization Plan) specifies the reuse of existing vacant and underutilized urban space as a key initiative, creating urgently needed low and moderate income housing, additional commercial development, incentivizing business growth, promoting tourism and becoming a regional destination for sports activities. Our Revitalization Plan calls for land reuse that addresses economic and environmental concerns while also addressing equity issues for residents, primarily low-income residents, elderly, and minorities.

Consistent with our Revitalization Plans, we will grow and diversify and modernize our employment sectors to minimize the impacts of future employer cutbacks/closures and we will create affordable housing and commercial development. This will provide location options for support services for the industrial and commercial base of the area and residential options desperately needed in the CD. Our Revitalization Plan calls for an increase in low-income housing, providing residential stock constructed with modern techniques. These reuse activities will directly address our need for more jobs and residential options and will encourage people to live in Corozal, participate in the restoration of our community and enjoy the redevelopment benefits.

Corozal is requesting $400,100, most of which will be used for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), providing the initial, highest risk investment necessary for brownfields reuse. This approach further environmental and redevelopment work with other funding as noted in 1.c.i. An example is the plans to redevelop the Howard T. Jason Complex into a new Sport District Center. This will create an opportunity for community activities, encourage more commercial development, attract tourist dollars to the Municipality, and invigorate our unique sports scene. This, in
turn, will attract tourism and commerce, which, per our Revitalization Plans, will play an important role in the future prosperity of our community (IV.E.1.b.ii). Putting redevelopment resources in the heart of the target area will increase the likelihood of growth and reuse in this struggling area of our community. EPA-funded assessment of this property will help leverage funding for its revitalization where it will be most beneficial. The Vacant Lots present an excellent opportunity for the development of low-income housing and are ready for redevelopment; however, the perceived contamination has proven an obstacle to site reuse. Development of the Vacant Lots into a low-income housing will meet another important need due to the scarcity of residential options after Maria damaged so many homes. The reuse of the Rafael Martinez Nadal School into a small business incubator will increase tax revenue and create jobs by providing small businesses with free or low-cost workspace, mentorship, expertise, and access to investors and loans.

1.b.ii Outcomes & Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Reuse of brownfields will generate higher tax revenue for the Municipality. The target sites already have a total of $9M in additional funding from CDBG and ARPA, which has been committed to redevelopment once environmental investigation funds are secured. All 5 priority sites are in an Opportunity Zone (OZ), making the reuse of these sites attractive to investors. Based on previous, similar development projects in our community, the full redevelopment of Table 1 priority sites will create 400 construction jobs, 150 permanent jobs, 100 low income and elder care housing units, modern commercial development, an estimated $180K in annual tax revenue, and eliminate threats to less fortunate and vulnerable residents such as the poor, elderly, and children. Using these sites as examples, this success story can be replicated on other sites in the community. Redevelopment of the Former Slaughterhouse will remove real and perceived environmental contamination (see Table 1) and eliminate an environmental threat to the nearby Corozal River. Removing blight will help eliminate the crime that is attracted by abandoned properties. Once this site is redeveloped into an elderly housing complex, it will become an asset to the Municipality. Temporary jobs will be created through construction work to remediate and redevelop the site. Over 50 permanent, high paying jobs will be created when the facility opens, and the Municipality will have the needed space to house our growing elderly population. Emergency planning is an important function of the Municipality. Developing an emergency center in the Abraham Lincoln School site will create a haven for residents displaced by emergencies or catastrophes, and offering an opportunity to improve our emergency preparedness in the CD where it is best positioned to aid those in need. More jobs will be created when the former Rafael Martinez Nadal School is reused as a business incubator, providing an opportunity for small and startup businesses with the resources to grow and prosper; diversifying jobs and adding the next generation of companies for which our residents can find quality job opportunities.

Redevelopment of our priority sites will create affordable and sustainable housing, improve economic competitiveness of the CD, create sustainable, commercial developments and jobs (workforce development), and land recycling opportunities by remediating/reducing legacy pollution, and leverage current and future investments. Residents and commercial property owners will benefit from increased property value, improved energy efficiency, and lower maintenance costs associated with new construction. New, energy efficient construction on priority sites, including the use of solar and LEED certification, will reduce energy usage and operating cost on sites where new construction is planned (Former Slaughterhouse, Vacant lots, Howard T. Jason Complex) which will create jobs, reparation, and increase wages for Corozal residents. EPA investment in brownfields in the CD will help meet Justice40 goals by creating energy efficient, sustainable development, conserving and preserving greenfields, improving health by reducing exposure to contaminants, and turning idled brownfields into new hubs for the growth of our economy. These accomplishments will deliver justice to disadvantaged (due to minority population, low-income, high unemployment/underemployment, distressed neighborhoods, disproportionate exposure to environmental impacts from brownfields, etc.) residents.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources, i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Our municipality has secured and committed $9M to advance our Revitalization Plans to aid in brownfield redevelopment. Corozal is eligible for and will seek additional funding from the following sources that support anticipated assessment, cleanup, infrastructure, and redevelopment: EPA Brownfield Clean-up grant funds ($500K), US Dept. of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants ($300K grants/$1M in loans for community and economic development aid), Community Development Block
Grants (CDBG), CDBG-DR (Disaster Relief) of which over $9M is available to Corozal for demolition, infrastructure, and economic development of brownfields, Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency (FEMA), ($1.2M available for hurricane-related clean-up and redevelopment), US Economic Development Administration (USED), Dept. of Transportation (DOT) grants, and new funding opportunities/incentives available in the future. Funding from these resources is available for remediation, demolition, site development, infrastructure improvements, streetscape improvements, building rehabilitation, job training, etc., to encourage and complete our reuse strategies. Should EPA funds be awarded for environmental assessment, the EPA grant may qualify as required match to CDBG-DR and other funding discussed above, further leveraging resources for brownfields redevelopment.

We will also seek funds from Puerto Rico Economic Incentives Act, which will be used to encourage investment and development of commercial businesses as planned for some of our priority brownfields. All target properties are located within an Opportunity Zone (OZ), and we will market brownfields as excellent tax shelters under OZ tax incentives, attracting private funds in our low-income areas. We have identified 2 Opportunity Funds in Puerto Rico and will engage them as brownfield redevelopment progresses. We will also attract investors using tax credits through New Markets Tax Credit Benefits. Using EPA funding for the initial high-risk environmental assessment of these sites, brownfield redevelopment will be successful. As properties are assessed, it will stimulate partnerships with many agencies (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FEMA, PR Dept. of Housing, PR Dept. of Economic Dev. & Commerce, etc.) to fill funding gaps such as demolition funding and reuse incentives, ensuring successful redevelopment. A detailed funding plan will be developed based on individual status and eligibility for each brownfield site or area as assessment projects are realized. CDBG, CDBG-DR, and FEMA funds were just recently released, and we will seek to utilize them immediately. Other funding noted above will also be sought as it becomes available. These funds coupled with insurance funding and the EPA Assessment Grant will enable us to realize and document revitalization success within the next 2-4 years.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Our Revitalization Plans’ land use goals emphasize the build-out of existing parcels, and rehabilitation and infill development before additional land is considered for development. Modern utility infrastructure is present to the priority sites and in the target area (3-phase electricity, natural gas, city water and sewer, telephone and fiber optic service), providing connectivity to new development. Infrastructure damage has since been repaired. Infrastructure damaged by hurricanes have since been repaired and is robust enough to handle the added capacity required by planned reuses and will utilize existing services and other infrastructure (roads, curb cuts, on/off-street parking, & nearby utilities) to attract new investment in area brownfields, reducing site reuse costs. With revitalization ranging from residential to industrial, existing infrastructure will allow for easy access for commercial/industrial development, enabling residents the opportunity to work and live in the same neighborhood, creating a walkable community. All priority sites in 1.a.ii adjoin or are near heavily traveled PR159, PR891, and PR818. Additional funding for roads, trails, or other infrastructure necessary for planned reuse will be sought from the US DOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program, the recently enacted Infrastructure and Jobs Act, local funds (when available), and CDBG funds.

2. Community Need & Community Engagement, a. Community Need, i. The Community’s Need for Funding: Corozal does not have the funds for site assessment in our budget. The only available resource to address brownfield assessments is federal funding. A large portion of our community is low income, with over 71% of CD residents falling below the poverty line and MHI almost ⅕ that of the US, making investment in our brownfields is an impossibility for our community. After a decade of setbacks, resulting in significant economic decline, we have fewer jobs, reduced tax revenues, damaged municipal buildings and infrastructure, and limited local government resources. We estimate the tax losses locally to be $1.2M, and over 1,300 jobs were lost in the aftermath of the storm. The Municipality operates on a $10.6M annual budget, which cannot fully fund essential services, let alone much needed infrastructure repair and maintenance. Simply collecting debris from the hurricanes cost $6.3M (61% of our annual budget). Brownfield sites add to the financial burden borne by residents, suppressing residential property values, and adding to municipal expenditures through reduced tax base and additional public safety services to brownfield sites for criminal activity as indicated by the high concentration of crime in the CD compared to Corozal as a whole. Because of the decade long, island wide recession, the territorial
government has no resources to commit to brownfields reuse. Moreover, local governments in PR do not have funding resources commonly available to local governments on the mainland (e.g. Tax Increment Financing), so incentivizing reuse through payment of environmental due diligence is attractive to developers, but we have no tools available at a local or Commonwealth level.

The reuse goals for Corozal’s priority brownfield sites are to create greatly needed low and moderate income housing, modern commercial development, high wage jobs, and increased tourism-focused development. With a budget currently only able to provide essential services and much-needed infrastructure maintenance, we lack the discretionary funds necessary to complete the proactive assessment and planning activities that this grant will provide, including clarifying environmental issues on brownfield sites, encouraging developers to seek out and invest in them, and eliminating the risk to the health and wellbeing of our residents and environment. Target area residents have high unemployment and low income where new jobs created by brownfield redevelopment will maximize return-on-investment. Ultimately, this EPA grant will allow us to fulfill our revitalization needs for our target area.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Population, (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: For decades, Corozal has suffered extraordinarily low wages and a very high poverty rate. The devastation left by the hurricanes added unprecedented financial burdens to our already poor residents through storm damage costs, loss of work, loss of basic necessities, and very slow recovery. The loss of once thriving industries has left a void in the community, especially in the CD. According to the 2019 ACS, 56.0% of Corozal residents live in poverty compared to 13.4% in the U.S. 71% of the UA residents are living in poverty, and the MHI is $13,857, 32% below that of PR ($20,539) and just over 1/5 of the United States ($62,843). Target area residents suffer dramatic wage disparities. Corozal has a very high proportion of minorities and poor. This is even more evident in the CD, where nearly 100% of the population is minority, and over 70% live in poverty. Other sensitive populations are also impacted. 43% of the CD households have one or more people over 65 compared to 30% in the US (2019 ACS). Potential contaminant pathways from brownfields (e.g. vapor intrusion, groundwater and surface water used for drinking, irrigation, etc., and surface soil exposure) are a threat to residential neighborhoods. Historic development did not consider environmental impacts on nearby neighborhoods, and now, contaminants suspected in our brownfields (Table 1) are potentially causing unknown harm, raising significant environmental justice issues. The result is the exposure of many of our less fortunate residents to soil, water, and air contamination present on these brownfields with little ability to improve their condition. For example, the Former Slaughterhouse site is located adjacent to a low-income, minority neighborhood, and the Corozal River (a drinking water source for area residents). Its potential contaminants are known to cause various cancers and low birth weight which are experienced by Corozal’s residents at a higher rate than the nation (see 2.a.ii(2)). The proximity of brownfields to low-income neighborhoods in our target area drives down housing values, suppresses commercial investment, and limits residents’ access to adequate employment, resulting in a distinct disadvantage.

This grant will help better inform us of the environmental conditions at our brownfields and considering impacts on neighboring properties when developing reuse plans will help reduce the risk of exposure, eliminate sources of contamination, improve the ecological health of our community, and incorporate livability and equitable development principles.

2.a.ii(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease & Adverse Health Conditions: Sites such as the former schools and the Former Slaughterhouse are known or believed to be impacted by asbestos. Studies on the health effects of exposure to asbestos has been linked to higher incidences of lung cancer, which in Corozal (27.9/100,000), are over 17% higher than PR. The Vacant Lots are believed to be contaminated with petroleum products, which are known to affect the liver. Liver & bile duct cancer incidences in Corozal are 26% more common than in PR. Moreover, mercury, lead, and other metals, as well as VOCs, PAHs, sulfates, chlorides, and petroleum constituents are believed to be present on priority sites like the Former Slaughterhouse, which is adjoining the Corozal River. These are known to be a threat to unborn children and infants, and the low birth-weight rate in Corozal is 32% higher than the US according to the CDC and the PR Dept. of Health. Health data at the Municipality level is extremely difficult to find, but the data identified does indicate a greater than normal incidence of disease and adverse health conditions in Corozal. Each of the priority sites contain at least one of these contaminants, and every priority site adjoins low-income neighborhoods potentially directly linking adverse health
conditions to disadvantaged populations.

Currently, there are 22 Corozal properties that have environmental records in the EPA’s EnviroFacts database. More than half (50.4%) of the housing stock was built prior to 1979 according to the 2015-2019 ACS and older homes have a greater risk for high lead levels from paint. Because of the presence of toxic chemicals and their inevitable impact on the environment near residents’ homes, many operating commercial and industrial facilities add to the environmental threat. Removal of environmental contaminants at brownfields in our community will reduce exposure to our residents, which will help to reduce the greater than normal incidences of disease and other poor health outcomes that disadvantaged populations are currently experiencing.

2.a.ii(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: The public health impact from target area brownfield properties and industrial operations, and their proximity to impoverished and minority residents has disproportionately exposed them to environmental pollutants, resulting in an inability to improve or in some cases, maintain their health and wellbeing. Per the Urban Institute/Center on Society and Health (2015), low-income residents become sick more frequently and more quickly, and die at younger ages on average than those in more affluent communities. The EPA’s EJScreen tool indicates that the CD residents are in the 88th percentile for lead paint exposure, the 95th percentile for toxic wastewater discharge exposure, and the 88th percentile for traffic proximity compared to PR as a whole. Our brownfield assessment, cleanup, and reuse strategy will improve the welfare of our residents by eliminating the health risk they pose. The EPA grant will play an important role in this, reducing threats by funding environmental investigation work needed to trigger stalled cleanup and end disinvestment in our community. Health indicators such as increased lung cancer, liver cancer, and low birth weight (2.a.ii(2)) will no longer be influenced by environmental impacts caused by target area brownfields. This will be accomplished in areas where the disadvantaged, such as low income and minority populations, are highly concentrated, supporting environmental justice goals. The accompanying negative economic impacts resulting from these brownfields will also be eliminated.

New jobs in the target area will create gainful employment for target area residents, reducing the unemployment and poverty rate and increasing household income. Opportunities will be created to improve the state of our housing by redeveloping some sites as low income residential, such as the Vacant Lots, which when complete, will add 50 housing units. The Former Slaughterhouse, of which there is heavy suspicion of contamination and is adjoining the Corozal River (threatening drinking water resources), will become a much needed housing complex for the elderly, a growing population that is unfortunately marginalized. Adding housing will also accommodate the population growth expected as redevelopment take place and new jobs are created. The Emergency Center redevelopment plan will provide a haven for people affected by catastrophic events and other unforeseen tragedies. A small business incubator at the heart of the CD will provide the help that disadvantaged businesses need to further develop economic stability and prosperity. Other housing improvements will be made by taking advantage of other federal programs (e.g. CDBG) to fund lead paint abatement and other residential improvement. Increased employment, higher wages, and new development on brownfield properties will create a sense of pride and ownership of the neighborhood, incentivizing further investment and increasing property values. New tax revenue will be generated and reinvested in the community, multiplying investment in the target areas. Funding from an EPA grant will help stimulate investment in brownfields by funding environmental due diligence, a common stumbling block for land recycling in our community, greatly improving the economic status and health of residents near brownfields.

2.b. Community Engagement, i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: Several community partners will support our brownfields program (Table 2). This assemblage of organizations is best suited to engage the community at a grass roots level. They also have regional influence and local ties, maximizing the benefits they bring to the project. A brownfield committee is being assembled from these and other entities, including members of the public, to provide input in the inventory and site prioritization, redevelopment plans, economic development, and community engagement efforts, among others. The committee plans to meet 2-4 times/year to discuss our brownfields program.
Table 2 – Project Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Org. Name</th>
<th>Point of Contact</th>
<th>Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programa de Rastreo Municipal</td>
<td>Charimar Santiago 787-409-9861</td>
<td>Municipality-based organization monitoring health and statistics in the community, will be involved in health monitoring in the Municipality as well as sharing of information and participating in community engagement events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Charimar.santiago@corozal.pr.gov">Charimar.santiago@corozal.pr.gov</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperativa de Ahorro y Credito La Sagrada Familia</td>
<td>Eddie William Alicea Saez 787-859-7985 <a href="mailto:ealieoa@sagradacoop.com">ealieoa@sagradacoop.com</a></td>
<td>Financing Cooperative native of Corozal that may be involved in providing finance options for investment, redevelopment, and related activities. They may also help in involving the community since it has worked together with the Municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consejos Comunitarios de seguridad de la Policía de PR</td>
<td>Policía Juan M. Rivera 787-314-0442 <a href="mailto:guelorivera.76@gmail.com">guelorivera.76@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Service to citizens, community help through the Police Department of Puerto Rico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education, Regional Office of Bayamón</td>
<td>Magaly Rivera Rivera (787) 785-6455 <a href="mailto:Riveramag@de.pr.gov">Riveramag@de.pr.gov</a></td>
<td>Partner has transferred properties that are in the Priority Brownfields Sites list, may provide more properties through transfers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Corozal has a well-established community involvement program that we will maintain for this grant. A total of 6-9 meetings will be held during the 3-year grant to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather input on site selection, prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from the cleanup and redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. In addition, 2-4 brownfield committee meetings will be held each year. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, newspapers, radio, and social media (earned media and other low-cost/no-cost, or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA’s Office of Land and Emergency Management Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). The community participants will be updated on advances throughout the grant, as well as have the opportunity to share input through comment opportunities on municipal and partner websites. For residents with limited internet or cellular network access, paper surveys will be available at local businesses, enabling community input without access to digital resources. Because we have a large non-English speaking population, Corozal has multi-lingual staff to interpret presentations and translate documents in Spanish and English. We have already begun engaging target area residents, business owners, and community advocates to solicit their input regarding our brownfield project and will continue to do so during the grant period. A public meeting will be held in the second quarter of the grant period to discuss goals, planned activities, and a schedule for future community involvement. For subsequent meetings, personal invitations will be sent to residents directly impacted by priority sites, neighborhood groups, lenders, area businesses, and developers to maximize stakeholder engagement. We will contact regional developers to bring awareness of the reuse opportunities priority sites offer. When developers are identified, they will attend public meetings to share their redevelopment plans. Corozal staff will catalog stakeholder input for reference when determining assessment and redevelopment priorities. As the project progresses, we will involve stakeholders in the decision-making process regarding prioritization, assessment, site marketing, cleanup planning, and feedback on reuse. When stakeholder input is received, we will evaluate it against our development goals and available resources, adopting feedback that feasibly meets these criteria.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, & Measuring Progress, a. Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs: Corozal will begin grant-related activities immediately upon award confirmation, working to prepare a Work Plan approved by the EPA PM/PO. After the Cooperative Agreement period begins, Corozal and its QEP will complete the following tasks:

Task/Activity 1: Program Management, Training Support, Brownfield Inventory/Prioritization
i. Project Implementation: Municipality staff will travel to the Puerto Rico Brownfields Week and the national brownfields conference, participate in calls, meetings, and correspondence between the Municipality, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant’s Cooperative Agreement. We will complete
Quarterly, DBE, Annual reports, and ACRES database entries, and carefully track contractor costs, comparing to the budget, expenditures, project progress, and milestones. This will ensure the timely expenditure of grant funds within the prescribed 3-year project period. The Municipality, with QEP support, will also update/prioritize the inventory under this task.

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: QEP will be selected through a competitive bidding process (compliant with federal procurement regulations - 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326) before Cooperative Agreement period begins; correspondence will occur at least monthly (more frequently as specific project activities require) throughout the grant period; update and prioritize brownfield inventory the first 2 quarters, then as necessary for the remainder of the grant period; ACRES updates will be conducted at least quarterly throughout the grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Corozal & QEP

iv. Outputs: Travel-Municipal staff to regional and national brownfields conferences/meetings; prioritized inventory; project performance reports: 12 Quarterly Reports, ACRES Entries, 3 DBE reports, 3 annual reports, etc.; calls, meetings, and correspondence between the Municipality, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement.

Task/Activity 2: Environmental Investigation

i. Project Implementation: Prior to applying for site eligibility under the grant, an access agreement will be prepared and executed for each site being considered. Eligibility determinations will be completed under this task, and the QEP will complete Phase I ESAs activities on sites selected by the Municipality. All Phase I ESAs will be conducted by/in accordance with the applicable ASTM standard (anticipated E1527-21) and the All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) rule. Areas of focus will include those already identified as priority sites listed in Table 1. The QEP will prepare a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) as well as Sampling & Analysis Plans/Health & Safety Plans (SAP/HASP) for EPA approval. Once approved, the QEP, directed by the Municipality, will complete Phase II ESAs (after the completion and EPA approval of the Sampling & Analysis Plan/Health & Safety Plan (SAP/HASP) based on environmental conditions identified in the preceding Phase I ESAs.

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Obtain site access, request eligibility determinations & finalize site access to initial sites for investigation-early 2nd Quarter of Grant period; Begin Phase I ESAs-2nd Quarter of Grant period; Submit QAPP to EPA for review/approval; QAPP approval & Phase II ESAs begin-3rd Quarter of Grant period; all Phase I ESAs completed-end of 11th Quarter of Grant period; all Phase II ESAs completed, and final contractor invoices submitted-45 days before end of grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Corozal & QEP

iv. Outputs: 10 Phase I ESAs; QAPP and SAP/HASP; estimated 7-9 Phase II ESAs.

Task/Activity 3: Clean-up Planning:

i. Project Implementation: The QEP, directed by the Municipality, will prepare site specific clean-up plans/documents, including: Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives, remediation plans, site closure letter requests, and clean-up funding development (1.c.i).

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Prepared after Phase I and II ESAs are complete, contamination is present, and cleanup is even necessary. Task 3 activities will continue throughout the grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Corozal & QEP

iv. Outputs: 5-10 cleanup planning documents

Task/Activity 4: Community Outreach & Involvement:

i. Project Implementation: 6-9 public meetings will be held during the grant period to update the community on ESA progress and seek public input/involvement. Print and mail material for project/site information and marketing documents will also be funded under this task. The Municipality will complete this task, assisted by the QEP, who will manage the technical aspects of the community outreach program and will attend/participate in outreach events. Social media outlets and other online media will be developed/maintained, and outreach efforts will inform the public on the progress of investigation/cleanup planning activities and provide marketing resources for future development.

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: 2-4 brownfield committee meetings planned per year and 1-2 public meetings planned per year with the 1st planned for the 2nd Quarter of the grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Corozal & QEP

iv. Outputs: 6-9 public meetings to update the community on the brownfield assessment progress and seek public input and involvement; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc.
We will work diligently to assure that activities are completed per the tasks and schedule above. The Municipality will allocate all grant funds to project properties before the final quarter of the grant period to assure that grant tasks are completed before the end of the Cooperative Agreement. The Cooperative Agreement period is 3 years, however, because there is an extremely high demand for assessments and site access has already been obtained for all the highest priority sites in Table 1 it is likely that funds will be spent prior to the end date. We are proactively communicating with representatives of privately-owned brownfields to gain access and resolve issues in anticipation of this grant funding as well as non-grant funded assessment activities. Such communication initiates the process for eventual property transfer and redevelopment. These discussions create a positive dialog between property owners, local government, and impacted citizens.

3.b. Cost Estimates: The costs outlined in Table 3 were developed anticipating tasks necessary to efficiently identify, characterize, and plan for the remediation of the priority sites listed in Table 1. The City will allocate $337,500 to Phase I and II ESAs (or 84% of total grant funding assigned to ESAs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3 Budget</th>
<th>Budget Categories</th>
<th>1. Program Mgmt, Training Support, Inv / Prioritization</th>
<th>2. Phase I / II ESAs</th>
<th>3. Clean-up / Reuse Planning</th>
<th>4. Community Outreach &amp; Involvement</th>
<th>Budget Category Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual</td>
<td>$16,400</td>
<td>$337,500</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$395,900</td>
<td>$20,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BUDGET</td>
<td>$20,400</td>
<td>$337,500</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$400,100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 only includes budget categories with costs. In accordance with Federal, State, and local procurement regulations.

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results: We will track, measure, and evaluate progress through meeting minutes, Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports, quarterly review/analysis of grant performance, ACRES entries, and completion of Work Plan tasks. If planned outputs/outcomes are not achieved or milestones/project schedule (outlined in 3.a) are not being met, we will create a corrective action plan to identify deficiencies and make the appropriate adjustments necessary to achieve the anticipated outputs on schedule. Further, the Assessment Grant will have the following measurable outcomes: sites/acreage assessed, jobs created/retained, redevelopment complete, number of parcels, acreage made ready for greenspace/recreation, and leveraged monies. These and other statistics will be included in quarterly reports and ACRES submittals as data becomes available, which will allow the EPA to better evaluate and highlight the grant program success. At the close of the grant, the Municipality will provide a final report to the EPA and our residents summarizing project outputs and outcomes. Subsequent outputs and outcomes following the close of the grant will be uploaded to EPA’s ACRES page for continued monitoring of the program’s success.

4. Programmatic Capability & Past Performance, a. Programmatic Capacity, i. Organization Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure & iii Description of Key Staff: Corozal’s Dept. of Federal Programs (DFP) will manage this grant. This office has previously managed many other economic development resources valued at over $26M in the past 10 years, including those listed in 4.b.ii(1).
The DFP, supported by other staff have the technical, financial, and administrative ability in place to implement this grant successfully. Mr. Jorge A. Martinez, Director of Federal Programs will serve as the Project Manager and will handle the day-to-day programmatic tasks, oversee/manage the work performed by the contracted environmental consultant, and will lead community outreach activities. Mr. Martinez has handled the Municipal Secretary Office and Federal Programs Office of Corozal for 8 years, giving him significant grant management experience, including managing over 14M in funds from the ARRA program. He has been integral to the success of many other grant programs in which Corozal has participated, including those listed in 4.b.ii(1), and has extensive experience managing grant activities for Corozal. Mr. Martinez will be assisted by Wanda Ortiz, Assistant to the Director of Federal Programs who has 18 years experience in the role. Both Martinez and Ortiz will use their previous brownfield redevelopment and economic development experience to seek reuse opportunities for those sites without secured redevelopment contracts. Corozal’s Director of Finance, Nilda Vazquez, will serve as the Grant Financial Manager and will be responsible for accounting and financial reporting. She has provided these services on many other grant and loan programs benefiting the Municipality for over 25 years. Mr. Martinez will be assisted by the Corozal Department of Finance and Federal Programs’ staff. Staff assigned to this project have all worked for the Municipality for at least 10 years. The Municipality workforce is stable with little staff turnover.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: The Municipality staff will oversee the application process as well as the acquisition of additional resources. Through a competitive bidding/procurement process, we will select a QEP according to federal procurement regulations (2 CFR 200.317 through 200.326) and with experience with EPA Brownfields Grants and working with the PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). The team and execution plan outlined above will ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds within the prescribed 3-year project period. This team will be supported by other municipal departments including finance, utilities, engineering, the legal department, and the office of the Mayor. As appropriate, we will utilize visioning sessions and other assistance/advice offered by the Technical Assistance for Brownfields (Region 2 TAB program) to maximize the incorporation of community input.

4.b. Past Performance & Accomplishments, ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements, (1) Purpose & Accomplishments: Corozal has not received an EPA Brownfields grant, however, we have received other federal/non-federal assistance agreements. Table 4 lists some agreements received in the past 5 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarding Agency</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>$ Received</th>
<th>Accomplishments/Outputs/Outcomes/Measures of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HUD Section 8 Program</td>
<td>Low Income Housing Construction</td>
<td>$683,700</td>
<td>125 families provided with safe, affordable housing units yearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</td>
<td>Repavement of public roads</td>
<td>$747,090</td>
<td>Repavement of 16.6 kilometers of public roads, with 6,554 tons of asphalt to improve the transit system in the Municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Housing demolition and rebuilding</td>
<td>$1,593,000</td>
<td>Projects for demolition and rebuilding of 365 housing units that suffered the effects of devastating hurricanes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.b.iii(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: All funding assistance agreement terms and conditions were met for the above-mentioned projects, including reporting of the number of residential units constructed and who/where/how many received section 8 vouchers under the HUD program, financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and final reports were completed. HUD quarterly and final reports are similar to the EPA Brownfields Grant program’s and are due at the same time; therefore, a coordinated effort will be used to create a synergy in reporting outputs/outcomes of both when we have funding from these programs simultaneously. All goals, outputs, and outcomes (indicated in Table 4) in the workplans of the previous grants were achieved, and reports discussed were completed in a timely manner. Because goals, outputs, and outcomes were met without incident, no corrective measures were necessary or taken. The Municipality was fully compliant with the terms and conditions of these grant programs and follows all reporting and performance protocols.
III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

III.B.1 Applicant Eligibility
The Municipality of Corozal meets the definition of a Local Government under 2 CFR 200.64 and is a political subdivision of Puerto Rico. It is therefore eligible to apply for and receive U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding.

III.B.2 Community Involvement
Involving our community and soliciting feedback regarding Brownfields activities and redevelopment plans are essential to our community’s Brownfields program’s success. Communication is a two-way process, and our ultimate goal is to keep the community informed and involved so they remain aware of potential concerns, questions and solutions. 6 to 9 outreach events (2-3 per yr.) will be held throughout the grant period to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather public input on site selection and prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from cleanup/redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms (earned media and other low-cost, no-cost or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA’s Office of Land and Emergency Management Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). See Section IV.E.2.b. of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria for further information.

III.B.3 Named Contractors and Subrecipients
The Municipality of Corozal has not procured/named any contractors or subrecipients.

III.B.4 Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds
This criterion is not applicable as Municipality of Corozal is not a current EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant recipient.

III.C. Additional Threshold Criteria for Site-Specific Proposals Only
This criterion is not applicable for a U.S. EPA Community-wide Brownfields Assessment Grant application.

III.D. Additional Threshold Criteria for Community-wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes Only
This criterion is not applicable because Corozal is a local unit of government, not a State or Tribe.