Narrative Information Sheet -  
FY22 EPA Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

1. **Applicant Identification:** Mount Rogers Planning District Commission  
   1021 Terrace Drive  
   Marion, Virginia 24354

2. **Funding Requested:**  
   a. **Assessment Grant Type:** Community-wide
   b. **Federal Funds Requested:**  
      i. $500,000
      ii. N/A.

3. **Location:**  
The Mount Rogers Planning District Commission region includes the following seven counties and two independent cities: Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe Counties and the Cities of Bristol and Galax.

4. **Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information:**  
   Community-wide Assessment Grant  
   a. **Town of Marion**  
      Buster Brown Manufacturing Plant  
      618 Dover Street  
      Marion, VA 24354  
   b. **Baywood (unincorporated area in Grayson County)**  
      Baywood Elementary School  
      247 Grammar Lane  
      Galax, VA 24333  
   c. **Town of Damascus**  
      Damascus Manufacturing Facility  
      22641 Jeb Stuart Highway  
      Damascus, VA 24236  
   d. **Town of Wytheville**  
      American Screw Factory  
      345 East Marshall Street  
      Wytheville, VA 24382
5. **Contacts:**
   - Project Director: Brian Reed
   - Deputy Director: 1021 Terrace Drive
   - Marion, Virginia 24354
   - breed@mrpdc.org
   - 276-783-5103
   - Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Official: Aaron Sizemore
   - Executive Director: 1021 Terrace Drive
   - Marion, Virginia 24354
   - asizemore@mrpdc.org
   - 276-783-5103

6. **Population:** (data from the 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate)
   - MRPDC Regional Population: 186,722
   - Initial Target Area Populations:
     1. Marion, Smyth County (Census Tract 303.02): 3,582
     2. Grayson County (Census Tract 601.02): 3,954
     3. Damascus, Washington County (Census Tract 109): 4,466
     4. Wytheville, Wythe County (Census Tract 501): 5,340

7. **Other Factors Checklist:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.</td>
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<td>The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated floodplain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.</td>
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<td>30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse planning activities for priority brownfield 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 plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing.</td>
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8. **Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority:** Attached

9. **Releasing Copies of Applications:** N/A. This application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.
November 9, 2021

Aaron Sizemore, Executive Director
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission
1021 Terrace Drive
Marion, Virginia 24354

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Subject: Acknowledgement and Support
USEPA’s Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant
EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission

Dear Mr. Sizemore:

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is in receipt of your request for support to the above referenced Brownfields Grant application. The request will be for a community-wide EPA Brownfields Assessment grant on behalf of the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC). As you know, DEQ partnered with MRPDC to implement a very successful FY18 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant administered by DEQ in your district. We are thrilled to add our support for the subject EPA grant proposal and to see the momentum for regional brownfields revitalization move forward.

It is our understanding the MRPDC Community-wide Brownfields Assessment Project will serve the entire MRPDC region with an initial focus on target areas in Baywood, Damascus, Marion, and Wytheville. The target areas include former industrial, commercial, and institutional properties that will benefit from assessment and planning. The MRPDC Brownfields Project will support the region’s revitalization by facilitating the brownfield redevelopment with a focus on community enhancement, tourism, manufacturing, and agribusiness. DEQ realizes these grant funds are absolutely critical to moving sites forward and encouraging redevelopment.

The DEQ Brownfields Program is pleased to provide our support for this grant proposal and feels that if successful, the grant funds will play a vital role in continuing the revitalization and redevelopment efforts for these communities. It is our sincere hope that your EPA proposal
Acknowledgement and Support
USEPA’s Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant
EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission

will be successful, and the MRPDC will be able to continue leveraging funds to stimulate economic development and revitalization within the target area and region that has been hit hard with a changing economy over the last several decades. If I can be of further assistance, please don’t hesitate to call me at (804) 698-4064.

Sincerely,

Vincent A. Maiden, CPG
Brownfields Program Coordinator

c: Stacy Bowers, Shon Pritchard – DEQ-SWRO
Meade Anderson – DEQ - CO
Joe Morici – Cardno
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields

i. Background and Description of Target Area: The Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC) region of Virginia was once a thriving industrial area with numerous textile and furniture operations supporting thousands of families. It is still rich with culture, music, craft, history, scenic beauty, and opportunities for outdoor recreation that are at risk with the declining economy and population. Over the last 20 years, the area has been hit with major losses of employment due to the closing of most of these factories. According to the US Census, the MRPDC region lost nearly 12,500 manufacturing jobs since 1999 – a 49% decrease in employment. This exodus of jobs has been devastating to the area and left the region lagging behind the rest of Virginia and the US in terms of the unemployment rates. Small towns that once flourished around the large manufacturers languished as unemployment rose, property values fell, and workers sought employment elsewhere. Since 2000, the MRPDC region’s population has declined by 1.5%. However, excluding Washington County, where Abingdon is experiencing growth, the remaining MRPDC region’s population has declined by 4.1%. With declining populations and lower student enrollments, many schools were consolidated into larger, centrally located schools within the counties, breaking the community bonds and small-town pride the local schools once fostered. The negative economic effects that rippled through these small communities are visible in the derelict factories, commercial properties, and old school buildings with unknown environmental issues (brownfields) left abandoned, blighted, or underutilized across the MRPDC region.

The MRPDC region is now working to improve conditions through economic diversification, job creation, and improvements to the quality of life for its residents. The communities are working together, with the assistance of the MRPDC, to bring this revitalization effort to life. The MRPDC is a state-authorized regional planning district, serving six counties (Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington) and two independent cities (Bristol and Galax) in southwest Virginia. For this project, the MRPDC is working to address several priority brownfield sites in four individual communities within the overarching MRPDC region. With a common history, challenges, and vision for the future, the MRPDC will use the brownfield funding to transform the economies of these communities which will in turn elevate the surrounding region. While the project will include the entire MRPDC area, the initial Target Areas include the communities surrounding priority sites in Marion, Baywood, Damascus, and Wytheville.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites

Our target communities worked with the MRPDC to identify and prioritize brownfield sites based on their impact to the community, redevelopment potential, and need for environmental assessment to facilitate reuse. The following four sites were identified as initial priorities:

   **Buster Brown Manufacturing Plant** – Located in the Town of Marion, the former Buster Brown Shoe manufacturing plant sits on 4 acres in the middle of a residential block, surrounded by single-family homes. The shoe factory once employed over 300 people, many of whom walked to work from the adjacent homes. Global economic pressures forced the factory to close in 1999. No longer an attractive location for industrial use, the property is currently owned by the Town and underutilized as a storage facility for various town materials (such as Christmas decorations). Potential environmental concerns include solvents, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), adhesives, and finishes, used in the manufacturing operations; and, soil contamination, contaminated storm water runoff, and migration of contaminated groundwater are potential exposure pathways for the many residents that share a property boundary with the site.

   **Baywood Elementary School** - Located in an unincorporated rural area of Grayson County, the former Baywood Elementary School is a multi-story, brick building on approximately 5 acres,

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Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

surrounded by single-family residences. With budget shortfalls and declining enrollment, the school closed at the end of the 2017-2018 academic term due to deteriorating conditions within the structure, including chipped and peeling paint and water leaks. Built in 1954, the school is believed to have lead-based paint and asbestos in building materials, and soil and groundwater may have potential impacts due to petroleum use and storage for boilers used to heat the building. The deteriorating conditions of the building raise concerns of potential wind-blown particulates presenting exposure hazards to nearby residences.

_Damascus Manufacturing Facility_ – Adjacent to the Virginia Creeper National Recreation Trail, this 50,000-ft² former manufacturing facility lies on 7.5-acres at the western gateway to the Town of Damascus along Laurel Creek. The property is currently owned by a private developer, who is exploring options to revitalize the site into a residential and commercial mixed-use development. However, concerns of heavy metals, solvent and petroleum use during the site’s industrial history are inhibiting its reuse; assessment is needed to determine impacts to the site and the adjacent creek.

_American Screw Factory_ – Located in the Town of Wytheville, the factory once manufactured fasteners, primarily for the automobile industry. Opened in 1962, the factory eliminated 162 jobs when it closed in 2009, due to declining demand and global competition. At its peak, the 170,000-ft² factory on over 11 acres employed over 200 people. Onsite operations historically included metal plating processes, resulting in environmental concerns of heavy metals, VOCs and SVOCs, and petroleum contaminants. Single-family homes are located to the northwest across Marshall Street, and Scott Memorial Middle School is located to the northeast across 7th Street.

Additional potential sites identified within the overall MRPDC region include former manufacturers, commercial properties, schools, gas stations, and auto service garages. As funding allows, the MRPDC will continue to work with community stakeholders to identify and prioritize additional sites for assessment and cleanup and reuse planning.

b. **Revitalization of the Target Area**

i. _Redevelopment Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans_

The projected redevelopments of the target sites align with specific goals for land use and revitalization developed by the MRPDC communities through several planning efforts, such as the development of the 2018-2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the 2019 Southwest Virginia Creative Economy Plan. The plans are built upon a vision for the MRPDC region as a place “in renewal; with opportunities for industry, tourism, and young families.” The MRPDC region outlined four key areas to focus revitalization efforts on: community enhancement, tourism, manufacturing, and agribusiness. The MRPDC then created 5-6 goals for each key focus area. Individual communities created initiatives to achieve the vision and goals set forth in the plans. As a result, our target communities identified four priority sites as opportunities to achieve the goals.

The _Buster Brown Manufacturing Plant_ is essentially land-locked by the surrounding residential neighborhood; therefore, any reuse plans for the property need to complement and enhance the community that encompasses it. Preliminary discussions with residents indicate a desire for a community center and recreational park to serve the neighborhood. This aligns with Goal 2 under Community Enhancement, “Enhance the overall health and wellness of the community.”

The _Baywood Elementary School_ is envisioned for reuse as a much-needed technical center to support agricultural, workforce, and technical training as well as afterschool STEM programs provided by Virginia Tech and Radford University (such as robotics, drones, and LEGO camps). The planned redevelopment will prepare the next generation workforce. This aligns with Goal 2 under Agribusiness, “Equip the region’s youth and adults for employment in the agribusiness industry” and Goal 5 under Manufacturing, “Create a stronger workforce with the necessary skills.”

The developer of the _Damascus Manufacturing Facility_ plans to transform the property into a mix of luxury condominiums, affordable housing, and commercial retail space. The site will capitalize on the growing tourism industry in the town as well as its location adjacent to the Virginia
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

Creeper Trail (one of the most popular trails in the state for hiking and biking) and Laurel Creek (a world-class fly-fishing destination). The Appalachian Trail also travels through town, and another popular attraction, the local microbrewery, is located across the street from the site. This aligns with Goal 3 under Tourism, “grow and attract new tourism businesses for visitors and investment.”

The American Screw Factory offers 170,000-ft² of manufacturing and warehousing space, potentially to support the local agribusiness economy, in a location with easy access to interstates I-77 and I-81. The building can be sustainably reused with minimal up-fitting required, depending on the future use once the environmental concerns are resolved. This aligns with Goal 2 under Manufacturing, “attract new manufacturers” and Goal 1 under Agribusiness, “Advance economic opportunities in agriculture, food, and natural resources.”

With funding from this brownfield project, plans for each of the sites will be further refined based on the findings of environmental assessments, community input, and data gathered through redevelopment planning efforts.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Redevelopment Strategy

The target communities (see Section 2.a.i) are considered disadvantaged with persistent levels of poverty and high unemployment. These communities struggle with low incomes and distressed neighborhoods adjacent to the priority sites. The eventual redevelopment of the targeted sites will stimulate economic development in both the individual communities and the MRPDC region as a whole by putting underutilized or vacant buildings and acreage back into productive reuse, attracting capital investment, and increasing property values, employment, and tax revenues; while also improving the quality of life for residents. For example, the additional greenspace or a new community center envisioned for the Buster Brown Manufacturing Plant in Marion will improve the health and welfare of residents surrounding the property with increased access to community amenities and recreational greenspace for exercise and neighborhood events. The Baywood Elementary School will benefit the community in the short term by providing access to previously unavailable technology and trade skills training, preparing students for higher education in STEM fields, and training more community members for the local workforce. In the long term, the project will lead to an increased number of businesses locating in the region due to the availability of a skilled workforce. Development of the Damascus Manufacturing Facility into the planned mixed-use development will lead to increased jobs, property values, and a stronger tax base. The developer plans to sustainably repurpose the 50,000-ft² building to include approximately 35 energy-efficient, 1,000-ft² apartments with the remaining square footage dedicated to retail and commercial uses. Data from Housing Forward Virginia predicts this level of investment will yield a short term estimated local economic growth of $3.2 million with 54 short-term jobs created and an expected long-term economic growth of $197,000 annually.\(^3\) The sustainable reuse of the American Screw Factory for new industrial, warehouse, or distribution use will spur additional capital investment. A light industrial manufacturing reuse at the site is estimated to support 300 jobs, while a distribution warehouse reuse could create 88 new jobs.\(^4\) With 170,000-ft² of space, the building is also well-suited to be fitted with rooftop solar panels, as many national light industrial and distribution center operators are now seeking “green” solutions for their expensive power needs. In addition, the redevelopments of each site will directly benefit the target area communities by mitigating the blight and environmental concerns associated with each.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

The MRPDC, as a state authorized planning district, is eligible for multiple state and federal funding sources, which are often restricted in scope and unable to be used for environmental assessments. This project will enable the MRPDC to continue to seek and secure funding to facilitate

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2. Institute for Transportation Engineers and the National Association for Industrial and Office Parks.
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the cleanup and redevelopment of the brownfield sites throughout the region. For any supplemental assessment work required beyond the financial means of this project, the MRPDC may pursue funding from the Virginia Brownfield Assistance Fund (VBAF), which provides assessment and planning grants of up to $50,000 and remediation grants of up to $500,000. The grants require a 1:1 match, which our small communities are often unable raise; however, the funds expended under this project can count as match and be leveraged to secure a VBAF grant. For site cleanup, the MRPDC may pursue VBAF grants, EPA Brownfield Cleanup grants, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Enterprise Zone Real Property Improvement Grants, and Appalachian Regional Commission funding. For site redevelopment, CDBG funding, Virginia Department of Health and Community Development (DHCD) Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) grants, Enterprise Zone Real Improvement Grants, and grants from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) can all be leveraged. For example, the developer of the Damascus Manufacturing Facility is currently exploring the potential for an IRF grant for the building renovations. Grayson County is working with DHCD to potentially fund building renovations and workforce-training classes at the Baywood Elementary School. Marion may pursue grants from DCR, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund to transform the Buster Brown Manufacturing Plant into a community center and park. The American Screw Factory is located in an Opportunity Zone and as such, can leverage investments from qualified Opportunity Zone funds for redevelopment. Additionally, InvestSWVA, a public-private partnership focusing on energy innovation and “future of work” style jobs can aid in marketing efforts aimed at attracting high-tech and advanced manufacturing jobs to the sites, such as the American Screw Factory.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure

As former industrial and institutional properties, the priority sites have existing water, sewer, and electrical services with the needed size and capacity to be re-used for the proposed redevelopments. Additionally, high speed, fiber internet connections are being implemented in areas that are lacking as part of a broadband expansion program in the MRPDC region. Each site is located within communities and will reuse the existing street grids and sidewalks (where available). The Damascus Manufacturing Facility will leverage the existing Virginia Creeper Trail, and the American Screw Factory will leverage its location with existing easy access to two interstate highways. No additional infrastructure is needed.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. Community Need

i. The Community’s Need for Funding

Over the past two decades, the MRPDC region has experienced significant job losses and a declining population. The disadvantaged target communities have small populations that are experiencing disproportionately lower levels of income, less educational attainment, and higher levels of poverty and unemployment (see table). The target areas’ and region’s per capita and median household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic Statistics</th>
<th>Marion Census Tract 303.02</th>
<th>Baywood Census Tract 601.02</th>
<th>Damascus Census Tract 109</th>
<th>Wytheville Census Tract 501</th>
<th>MRPDC Region</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>3,582</td>
<td>3,954</td>
<td>4,466</td>
<td>5,340</td>
<td>186,722</td>
<td>8,535,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Elderly</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% College Diploma</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$41,528</td>
<td>$32,792</td>
<td>$39,219</td>
<td>$50,634</td>
<td>$44,319</td>
<td>$76,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$23,609</td>
<td>$15,275</td>
<td>$25,337</td>
<td>$26,030</td>
<td>$25,005</td>
<td>$40,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Below Poverty Threshold</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median House Value</td>
<td>$111,600</td>
<td>$115,400</td>
<td>$126,300</td>
<td>$136,500</td>
<td>$122,422</td>
<td>$288,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Unemployed*</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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</tbody>
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American Community Survey – 2019 5-year Estimates

* Pre-COVID Unemployment Numbers
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incomes significantly lag behind Virginia’s. The target areas also have a significantly higher percentage living in poverty and significantly higher unemployment numbers. With a tax base consisting of small, low income populations, the region struggles to provide basic services and does not have access to resources needed to address brownfields. With limited staffing, our communities leverage the MRPDC to assist with identifying, securing, and managing grants to implement projects, and the majority of the MRPDC budget is tied directly to grant-funded activities or contracts for our services. With restricted funding and without taxing authority, the MRPDC does not have the financial resources to fund brownfields assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment without grant funding.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

As the previous table shows, the target areas have a higher percentage of elderly residents and a higher percentage living below the poverty threshold, as compared to the state. The target areas also have significantly lower per capita and median household incomes than the state. The target areas are home to an aging, low-income population with less educational attainment, as many younger, college-educated individuals have left the area in search of better employment opportunities. These sensitive populations (elderly and low income) are especially susceptible to impacts from the environmental contaminants suspected on the priority sites. As the next table shows, all four of the target areas, and consequently the sensitive populations, have higher incidences of cancer than the state; and three of the areas have higher rates of asthma and heart disease compared to the state. In addition, the welfare of the target areas have been negatively impacted through depressed property values (e.g., Buster Brown is surrounded by houses), higher unemployment (closure of Buster Brown, Damascus Manufacturing, and American Screw), and the closure and consolidation of schools (Baywood Elementary). By encouraging the redevelopment of brownfield properties, this project will not only help mitigate potential environmental exposure to contaminants on the sites, but also create new employment and educational opportunities and affordable housing near new and existing recreational amenities that will help retain and attract younger professionals to the region.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

The target communities suffer from higher incidents of lung cancer and higher rates of asthma hospitalizations, heart disease, and premature death than the state. (See following table – due to the small populations, only County level health data is available.) Many residents were born and raised in the region, resulting in long-term potential exposure to the potential contaminants and carcinogens on brownfield sites. For example, the suspected PAHs at Buster Brown are specifically known to cause lung cancer, of which Marion (Smyth County) has a higher incidence rate. Exposure to heavy metals and solvents, suspected at Buster Brown, Damascus Manufacturing Facility, and American Screw, are linked to increased rates heart disease, which all three target areas exhibit. Exposure to airborne particulates, such as wind-blown contaminated soils and asbestos from the Baywood School, may contribute to and/or complicate asthma in Grayson County. Wythe County (Wytheville target area) has higher incidence of Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, which has been linked to exposure to benzene found in petroleum and some solvents, which are concerns at the Former American Screw Factory. The assessment and eventual remediation and reuse of these properties will reduce the

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County (Target Area)</th>
<th>Smyth County (Marion)</th>
<th>Grayson County (Baywood)</th>
<th>Washington County (Damascus)</th>
<th>Wythe County (Wytheville)</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incidence Rate of Lung Cancers¹</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidence Rate of Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-adjusted Rate per 10,000 for Adult Hospitalizations Due to Asthma²</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate per 100,000 for all ages death due to heart disease³</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>137.1</td>
<td>166.7</td>
<td>211.1</td>
<td>151.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature Death – Years of Potential Life Lost Rate⁴</td>
<td>11,100</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>8,600</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>6,400</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant targeted communities’ exposure risk to the suspected contaminants and help lower the incidence of cancers and rates of asthma complications, heart disease, and premature death in the MRPDC region.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice

Data from the EPA EJSCREEN tool (see following table) indicate Census Block-groups surrounding our target properties are, in particular, disproportionately impacted by the percentage of housing built prior to 1960 (lead-based paint risk), while the block-group around Buster Brown and American Screw are in the higher percentiles for proximity to hazardous waste facilities. In addition, the American Screw area is in a higher percentile of proximity to facilities with Risk Management Plans. The block-groups all have a higher percentile of low income populations, and some have higher percentiles of elderly and those with less than a high school education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EJSCREEN Demographic and Environmental Indicators, Census Block-Group of Target Sites</th>
<th>Buster Brown</th>
<th>Baywood School</th>
<th>Damascus Manufacturing</th>
<th>American Screw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Indicators (percentile)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School Education</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than age 64</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Indicators (percentile)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Paint Indicator</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMP Proximity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous Waste Proximity</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EJSCREEN Mapper Tool accessed October 2021

According to recent (2017) research out of the University of Virginia, rural Appalachia, including the MRPDC region, is disproportionately impacted by environmental health issues and the resulting health outcomes. Cancer incidence has declined in much of the country since 1969 — but not in rural Appalachia. Here, the cancer mortality rate is 19% higher than it is for urban, non-Appalachian people in the rest of the country. People in much of rural Appalachia are more likely to die within three to five years of their diagnoses than those in urban areas across the US. Researchers point to economic, social, and environmental factors, including the historic heavy industrial and rail operations in the area, as reasons behind the disparities. The target areas have all been impacted by industrial operations, and all but Baywood have been impacted by rail operations. Widespread poverty and lack of education make it difficult to overcome these barriers, which the MRPDC region has been battling for decades. This project will help address some of those environmental justice challenges, by encouraging the redevelopment of brownfield sites to mitigate health risks, diversify the economy, and create jobs for the region. The proposed redevelopment of Buster Brown will provide additional recreational space for residents to develop healthier exercise habits, while the repurposing of the Baywood School will provide the region’s population with alternative higher educational and workforce training opportunities. The redevelopment of the Damascus Manufacturing Facility into quality, affordable housing will provide new lead-based paint free housing options. Finally, the reuse of the American Screw Factory will create well-paying jobs and new economic opportunities for the target area. These funds will provide the communities the needed catalyst to overcome the barriers to these redevelopments.

b. Community Engagement

i. Project Involvement and ii. Project Roles

The MRPDC will work with the target areas to establish a Steering Committee composed of local staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders to guide the projects. In addition, the following partners, among others, will be actively involved in the implementation of this project.

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Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

Community Project Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Name</th>
<th>Point of contact</th>
<th>Specific role in the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marion Downtown</td>
<td>Rexanders (276-783-4113, <a href="mailto:randers@marionva.org">randers@marionva.org</a>)</td>
<td>Participate in reuse planning for Buster Brown Plant site, identify and prioritize additional sites, assist with outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyth County Chamber</td>
<td>Sarah Gillespie (276-783-3161, <a href="mailto:gillespie@smythchamber.org">gillespie@smythchamber.org</a>)</td>
<td>Support outreach to Marion (Smyth County) residents and businesses, identify potential sites, help prioritize sites, encourage reuse, and take part in reuse planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus Business Group</td>
<td>Trey Waters (406-531-5888)</td>
<td>Participate in reuse planning for Damascus Manufacturing Facility, identify and prioritize additional sites, support business recruitment, encourage brownfield site reuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wythe-Wytheville-Bland Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Jennifer Atwell (276-223-3366, <a href="mailto:jennifer@wytheville.org">jennifer@wytheville.org</a>)</td>
<td>Support reuse of American Screw Factory, assist with outreach to the Wytheville (Wythe County) businesses, residents, and development community, assist with business recruitment, and identify community and business needs for redevelopment planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baywood Technical School Committee</td>
<td>Travis Belton (276-730-4172, <a href="mailto:TBelton@moog.com">TBelton@moog.com</a>)</td>
<td>Lead the redevelopment of Baywood Elementary School, support outreach, host events, assist with additional site identification and prioritization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendota Community Association</td>
<td>Helene Holbrook (276-696-0023)</td>
<td>Support outreach to residents in Damascus (Washington County), identify new sites, help with prioritization and redevelopment planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitetop Community Group</td>
<td>Tom Revels (980-253-0681)</td>
<td>Lead outreach to Grayson County (Baywood) residents, identify and prioritize additional sites, encourage reuse, and participate in reuse planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proposed Steering Committee will be comprised of representatives from each of our target communities. Members of the Steering Committee will serve as brownfields ambassadors and advisors throughout the project, focusing various areas of expertise into this revitalization effort while bringing individual local concerns to the table. The Committee will meet quarterly (either in person, virtual, or a hybrid combination of virtual/face-to-face due to COVID restrictions) to review the project progress, ensure project alignment with individual community interests and needs, and communicate with project staff. Committee members will be also charged with the role of information conduit, disseminating information to and from their respective community. Based on feedback from individual communities, the Committee will identify and prioritize additional sites for assessment, discussing redevelopment plans, and inviting public comment. In this manner, each target community will have a seat at the decision-making table, ensuring their individual needs are met and project funds serve each community.

iii. Incorporating Community Input

While the Steering Committee will serve as the main conduit for disseminating information and encouraging public participation, the project team will also hold public meetings and visioning workshops specifically focused on the development of revitalization plans. In addition, in-person and/or virtual open house meetings will be scheduled to occur at appropriate intervals throughout the 3-year project period. These advertised public meetings will be conducted during evening hours to encourage participation by the entire community. With a focus on residents and business owners potentially affected by the project, these meetings will include project updates by community group members, project staff and consultants about project status, and will provide an open forum for engagement and education. Accommodations will be made if and when non-English speaking communities are identified in the project area, and meetings will be held at facilities with ADA accommodations. With a large elderly and poor population, easily accessible, low-tech communication methods will be most effective. Therefore, in addition to social media and website updates and presentations to the various county and town councils, the Steering Committee will distribute information via local church bulletins, newspaper press releases, brochures/flyers, and presentations to community and civic groups to communicate progress, where appropriate. The Steering Committee will maintain meeting sign-in sheets for follow-up communication, public
3. **TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS**

a. **Description of Tasks and Activities**

The MRPDC Coalition is prepared to complete the following tasks within the three years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1: Project Management &amp; Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. The MRPDC’s Project Manager will oversee the grant administration and compliance with EPA cooperative agreement terms and conditions. He will ensure tasks are completed efficiently and will be responsible for the procurement and oversight of the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and other consultants, as needed to complete the project tasks. He will meet monthly with the project team to ensure project goals are met and tasks remain on schedule to be completed within the period of performance, making corrections as needed. The MRPDC will complete EPA quarterly reports, Federal Financial Report (FFR) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization forms, and ACRES database entry/updates, and a final summary report. MRPDC staff will also attend national and regional training workshops to learn and share success stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Schedule: October 2022 – September 2025, monthly meetings, QEP procurement in July 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Task/Activity Lead: MRPDC’s Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Outputs: 36 monthly project team meetings, 12 Quarterly Reports, 3 FFR and DBE forms, regular ACRES updates, final summary report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 2: Community Outreach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. The MRPDC’s Project Manager will lead the Steering Committee and the community outreach efforts with contractor support. Specific tasks include facilitating Steering Committee meetings, outreach to community and civic groups, and preparation of success stories and press releases. Steering Committee meetings will occur approximately quarterly, and at least three public meetings will be held at appropriate intervals (to introduce the project, discuss assessment results, and/or invite input for redevelopment plans). The project team will also meet with property owners and developers, as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Schedule: October 2022 – September 2025; quarterly Steering Committee meetings; public meetings in Spring 2023, 2024, and 2025; community meetings begin in 2nd quarter; success stories and press releases begin in 4th quarter and will continue through the end of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Task/Activity Lead: MRPDC’s Project Manager with QEP Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Outputs: 12 Steering Committee meetings, 3 public meetings, 6 meetings with community groups, 6 success stories or press releases, 6 meetings with site owners and/or developers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 3: Site Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. The project team will confirm the brownfields inventory and prioritization with input from the Steering Committee at the first quarterly meeting. Phase I and II Eligibility Forms will be completed for EPA approval, and petroleum determinations will be obtained from Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ). Phase I ESAs will be performed by the QEP and in accordance with ASTM E1527-13 and the EPA All Appropriate Inquiries Final Rule. Phase II ESAs will be conducted by the QEP in accordance with ASTM E1903-19. Prior to any Phase II ESA, a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), and Health and Safety Plan (HSP) will be prepared by QEP and reviewed and approved by EPA and the VDEQ, as applicable. ACM/LBP surveys and other assessments may be completed, as needed, at priority sites. No health monitoring will be conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Schedule: Phase I ESAs will be initiated in the 2nd quarter and continue as funding allows until the 9th quarter. Surveys and Phase II ESAs will be initiated in the 3rd quarter after approval of QAPPs, SAPs, and HSPs and will continue as funding allows until the 10th quarter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Task/Activity Lead: QEP with oversight from the MRPDC’s Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Outputs: 10 Phase I ESAs, 7 ACM/LBP Surveys, 6 SAPs, 6 HSPs, and 6 Phase II ESAs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 4: Cleanup &amp; Redevelopment Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. If contamination is identified, cleanup plans will be developed for high priority sites. The Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) will identify potentially applicable remediation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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alternatives for the site, based on potential reuse scenarios. The project team will compare potential land uses with the environmental impacts associated with properties and steps required to redevelop the property. The level of remedial action can then determine how to best meet community needs. Additionally, we will create individual redevelopment concepts for the specific brownfield property. The level of remedial action uses with the environmental impacts associated with properties and steps required to redevelop the alternatives for the site, based on potential reuse scenarios. The project team will compare potential land uses with the environmental impacts associated with properties and steps required to redevelop the property. The level of remedial action can then determine how to best meet community needs. Additionally, we will create individual redevelopment concepts for the specific brownfield property.

ii. Schedule: ABCAs and other plans will be completed after Phase IIs, anticipated to begin in the 5th quarter and continue through the 11th quarter.

iii. Task/Activity Lead: QEP with oversight from the MRPDC’s Project Manager

iv. Outputs: 6 ABCAs and 6 Site-specific Market/Reuse Studies

b. Cost Estimates

The following cost estimates are based on the expenses incurred on VDEQ’s 2018 Brownfields Assessment Project. MRPDC is also requesting 5% in administrative costs to cover indirect and overhead expenses.

Task 1 – Project Management:
Personnel: Average of 50 hours of staff/quarter (50x8x$28.5/hr) = $11,400
Fringe: Personnel x PDC’s approved fringe rate ($11,400 x 33%) $3,762
Travel: 2 staff attend 3 regional workshops (2x3x$500/person = $3,000), 4 staff attend national conference (4x$1,500/person = $6,000) = $9,000
Contractual: 36 project team meetings (36x$325 = $11,700); 1 final summary report ($3,300); quarterly ACRES updates (12x$250 = $3,000) = $18,000

Task 2 – Community Outreach:
Personnel: Average of 16 hours of staff/quarter (16x12x$28.5/hr) = $5,472
Fringe: Personnel x PDC’s approved fringe rate ($5,472 x 33%) $1,806
Supplies: Materials (posters, flyers, etc.) for meetings (12x250 = $3,000) = $3,000
Contractual: 12 Steering Committee Meetings (12x$750=$9,000); success stories and press releases (6x$750=$4,500); 12 media updates (12x$250=$3,000) = $16,500

Task 3 – Site Assessments and Cleanup Planning:
Contractual: 10 Phase I ESAs (10x$3,500 = $35,000); 7 ACM & LBP Surveys (7x$4,000 = $40,000); 1 QAPP ($3,000); 6 SAPs (6x$3,500 = $21,000); 6 HSPs (6x$500 = $3,000); 6 Phase II ESAs (6x$36,418.50 = $218,511) = $308,511

Task 4 – Cleanup & Redevelopment Planning:
Personnel: Average of 10 hours of staff/quarter (10x12x$28.5/hr) = $3,420
Fringe: Personnel x PDC’s approved fringe rate ($3,420 x 33%) $1,129
Contractual: 6 ABCAs (6x$3,500 = $21,000); 6 Site Reuse/Marketing Plans (6x$12,000 = $72,000) = $93,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Categories</th>
<th>Project Tasks</th>
<th>PM</th>
<th>Comm. Out</th>
<th>Site Assess.</th>
<th>C&amp;R Plan.</th>
<th>Total $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td></td>
<td>$11,400</td>
<td>$5,472</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,240</td>
<td>$20,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,762</td>
<td>$1,806</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,129</td>
<td>$6,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual</td>
<td></td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
<td>$308,511</td>
<td>$93,000</td>
<td>$436,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Direct Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td>$42,162</td>
<td>$26,778</td>
<td>$308,511</td>
<td>$97,549</td>
<td>$475,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$44,662</td>
<td>$28,278</td>
<td>$324,511</td>
<td>$102,549</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Measuring Environmental Results

The MRPDC will hold monthly conference calls with the project team to review progress and take corrective actions, when necessary, to ensure the funds are expended in an efficient and timely manner. The Steering Committee will meet quarterly to review community priorities, address any community concerns, and guide the project. The MRPDC will submit Quarterly Reports, detailing
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Brownfields Assessment Grant

the outputs and outcomes of the project, and enter and track site-specific information in the online ACRES database. At a minimum, outputs to be tracked include the number of Steering Committee meetings, public meetings, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and redevelopment plans; and, the outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Structure, and iii. Key Staff:

The MRPDC is a state-authorized regional planning district, serving six counties (Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington) and two independent cities (Bristol and Galax) in southwest Virginia. The MRPDC has a lengthy and successful history of the programmatic, administrative, and financial management of grant funds since its inception in 1969. Brian Reed, Deputy Director of the MRPDC, will serve as the Project Manager and will be responsible for overseeing all grant activities and funds, submitting all required reports to EPA, and ensuring all project activities are in accordance with the work plan and the grant’s terms and conditions. He has over 25 years of experience as a public administration specialist/planner at the MRPDC and holds a bachelor’s degree in geography from Emory and Henry College. He will be assisted by Jordan Powers, Regional Planner for the MRPDC. Mr. Powers holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from Emory and Henry College and focuses his efforts at the MRPDC on planning, grant requests, and grant reporting.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources

The MRPDC regularly procures services and goods to support projects. MRPDC will follow the procedures detailed in 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 1500 to procure a QEP brownfields consultant. The MRPDC will release a competitive, public Request for Qualifications and select a QEP prior to July 2022. The selected firm will provide technical and programmatic support for all aspects of the proposed project. If additional resources are needed, the MRPDC will follow a similar process.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

ii. The MRPDC has not previously received an EPA Brownfields Grant; however, MRPDC served as the lead community partner for VDEQ’s 2018 EPA Brownfields Assessment Project. MRPDC also has an extensive history of managing grant funds. The following are three recent examples.

1. Purpose and Accomplishments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Awarding Agency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>Specific Outputs And Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td>Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DCHD)- SWVA Water/Wastewater Program</td>
<td>$715,010</td>
<td>Funded 5 technical assistance and construction projects, which were matched with over $4.7M in state/local funds</td>
<td>Improved water service to 6,586 connections and wastewater service to 4,800 connections. Helped create 10 new jobs and retain 300 existing jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td>Virginia DHCD – Region I Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation</td>
<td>$763,977</td>
<td>Received state “High Achiever” award for completing the most projects</td>
<td>Rehabilitated and/or built twelve houses for low-income residents Virginia’s PDCs 1-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY21-23</td>
<td>Virginia Housing – Mount Rogers PDC Housing Development Program</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>The PDC has worked closely with Virginia Housing to address local housing needs and initiatives that will ensure the availability of affordable housing.</td>
<td>The Program will result in the development of 20+ single-family and/or multifamily affordable housing units for individuals or families whose incomes do not exceed 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements

The MRPDC met all of the requirements and conditions of the grant funding described above, including constant and open communication with the granting agencies project managers, completing the projects according to the work plans and schedules, achieving and reporting the expected results, and submitting all required reports in a timely manner.
THRESHOLD CRITERIA

1. Applicant Eligibility
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC) is a planning district commission authorized under the Virginia Regional Cooperation Act and is defined by EPA as a General Purpose Unit of Local Government under 2 CFR 200.64. The MRPDC serves Bland County, Carroll County, Grayson County, Smyth County, Wythe County, and Washington County and two independent cities of Bristol and Galax.

2. Community Involvement
The MRPDC will work with project partners in our target areas to establish a Steering Committee composed of local staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders to guide the project. Members of the Steering Committee will serve as brownfields ambassadors and advisors throughout the project, focusing various areas of expertise into this regional revitalization effort. The Steering Committee will meet quarterly (either in person, virtual, or a hybrid combination of virtual/face-to-face due to COVID restrictions) to review the project progress, ensure project alignment with community interests and needs, promote the project to the overall MRPDC region, and communicate with project staff.

While the Steering Committee will serve as the main conduit for disseminating information and encouraging public participation, the project team will also hold public meetings and visioning workshops specifically focused on the development of revitalization plans. In addition, in-person and/or virtual open house meetings will be scheduled to occur at appropriate intervals throughout the 3-year project period. These advertised public meetings will be conducted during evening hours to encourage participation by the entire community. With a focus on residents and business owners potentially affected by the project, these meetings will include project updates by community group members, project staff and consultants about project status, and will provide an open forum for engagement and education. Accommodations will be made if and when non-English speaking communities are identified in the project area, and meetings will be held at facilities with ADA accommodations. With a large elderly and poor population, easily accessible, low-tech communication methods will be most effective. Therefore, in addition to social media and website updates and presentations to the various county and town councils, the Steering Committee will distribute information via local church bulletins, newspaper press releases, brochures/flyers, and presentations to community and civic groups to communicate progress, where appropriate. The Steering Committee will maintain meeting sign-in sheets for follow-up communication, public comments and input will be considered and incorporated (if applicable) into the project. All public comments/inquiries will be addressed by the Steering Committee and responded to by the project team in a timely manner.

3. Named Contractors and Subrecipients
N/A. The MRPDC did not name a contractor in the narrative portion of this grant application.

4. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds
N/A. The MRPDC does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.