Applicant Identification:
- City of Lake Wales – 201 W Central Ave, Lake Wales, FL 33853

Funding Requested
- Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
- Federal Funds Requested
  - $500,000
  - Not Applicable

Location
- City of Lake Wales
- Polk County
- Florida

Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information – Community-wide
- Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency area – downtown Lake Wales
- Census Tracts: 143.01; 143.02
- 137 Sessoms Ave E; 2) 340 Dr JA Wiltshire Ave West; and 3) North Scenic Hwy.

Contacts
- Project Director
  - Mark Bennett (863) 678-4182 mbennett@lakewalesfl.gov
- Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
  - Mayor Eugene Fultz – (863) 528-2711, efultz@lakewalesfl.gov

6. Population
- 17,001
7. Other Factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information on the Other Factors</th>
<th>Page #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority 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></td>
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<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
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<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority site(s) within the target area.</strong></td>
<td><strong>8, 9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

9. Releasing Copies of Applications
The applicant understands that the information included will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR §2.203. No passages are considered confidential.
October 6, 2021

Cindy Nolan  
Brownfields Program  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
61 Forsyth Street, S.W. 10th Floor  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960  
nolan.cindyj@epa.gov

Dear Ms. Nolan:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the City of Lake Wales’ Brownfields grant application for a Community-Wide Hazardous Substance and Petroleum or Petroleum Products Assessment Grant. The Department understands that this application has been prepared in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) guidance document EPA-OLEM-OBLR-21-04, titled “Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants.” This letter of acknowledgement addresses the requirement for a “Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority,” described in SECTION IV.D.8. EPA Brownfields grant funding will strengthen the City’s cleanup and redevelopment efforts. This federal grant effort also supports Florida’s Brownfields Redevelopment Act and the Department’s role in administration of site rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

The Department encourages EPA grant recipients to use the incentives and resources available through Florida’s Brownfields Redevelopment Program with EPA grant funding to enhance the success of their Brownfields project. The Department recommends that the City of Lake Wales consider including Brownfields sites or areas that could potentially receive federal funding in a state-designated Brownfield area. The City is also encouraged to contact Yanisa Angulo, P.E., the Southwest District Brownfields Coordinator, at (813) 470-5757 to learn more about the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Program.

Sincerely,

Kelly Crain, Environmental Manager  
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

KC/jc

cc:  
Cheryl Baksh, City of Lake Wales – cbaksh@lakewalesfl.gov  
Yanisa Angulo, P.E., DEP Southwest District – vanisa.angulo@dep.state.fl.us
1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields

i. Background and Description of Target Area

Lake Wales is a character-rich city that embodies the Florida experience. Located in the center of the state and at the midpoint of a 150-mile white sand ridge that bears its name, Lake Wales has played a prominent role in the history of Florida and is well positioned to be an important city in the 21st century. The initial survey of the land, where the city now sits, was conducted in 1879 by Sidney Irving Wailes. The City was incorporated in 1917 and saw a connection to the Atlantic Coast Railroad completed in 1925 followed by the completion of Bok Tower in 1929. The economic narrative of Lake Wales from the 1920s-1960s mirrors that of Florida; with agricultural (including citrus) and light industrial origins that were later bolstered through tourism. The prosperity gained through the citrus industry including Florida’s Natural Growers and a cluster of regional attractions including Bok Tower, Cypress Gardens, Chalet Suzanne, Spook Hill and the Great Masterpiece manifested into a charming southern town with thriving neighborhoods, local businesses, public spaces, churches, and civic buildings. The City’s Downtown was iconic and offered a true sense of place that expressed the values and character of Lake Wales.

The construction of Interstate 4, running from east to west across Central Florida, was completed in 1965. Over the last fifty plus years, the predominant growth and development in Central Florida has occurred along the I-4 corridor more than 20 miles north of Lake Wales leaving closed businesses, abandoned warehouses, and industrial buildings in its wake. In the CRA (Community Redevelopment Area) in which the priority sites are located, 20% of the existing land houses abandoned industrial structures with a legacy of brownfields contamination based on their former uses. (Lake Wales Connected Plan, 2019). Like many small town main streets throughout the country, Downtown Lake Wales began to transition from an active retail center to a small business district with little activity on weekends or after 5:00pm dotted with vacant buildings contributing to an overall sense of blight and decay.

The Great Recession, from 2007-2012, stalled private development in Lake Wales, Florida and most of the United States. Over time, as activities moved out from the center of town, vacant buildings began to mix into City street scenes, and less activity was found on area sidewalks, particularly after the end of the workday. The design of the urban environment and quality of physical conditions contributes to feelings of disconnectedness felt today. Wide vehicular lanes on streets between Downtown, the Northwest Neighborhood, and surroundings produce fast through-moving vehicles, making streets and intersections uncomfortable for pedestrians and cyclists. Crumbling, disconnected sidewalks make it uncomfortable to cross the railroad tracks, producing a barrier between Downtown and the parks, lakes, and parking supply found east of the tracks. In spite of this Lake Wales retains the “bones” of its once thriving historic center. Downtown Lake Wales offers historic architecture, access to parks and open space, a rich arts culture and relative low-cost of entry; which combine to create a compelling setting for a vibrant experiential retail district. The establishment of a downtown CRA and the CRA Redevelopment Plan seeks to revitalize the Downtown Area to bring in retail, arts and dining establishments as well as Affordable Housing and the creation of a Pedestrian and Bicycle Friendly District.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

The targeted sites in this Brownfields assessment grant are located within this CRA along Sessoms Avenue and Scenic Highway North. Their former uses have made the need for assessment of potential environmental hazards a key first step in reuse and redevelopment into a walkable, lively downtown arts and dining destination featuring affordable housing and fresh food markets for its residents. Under Florida law (Chapter 163, Part III), local governments are able to designate areas as
CRAs when specific conditions exist, such as the presence of blight and slums; substandard or inadequate structures: a shortage of affordable housing; inadequate infrastructure: insufficient roadways, and inadequate parking. All of the conditions describe Downtown Lake Wales. The CRA does provide the City with the tools needed to foster and support redevelopment of the targeted area. Lake Wales has suffered a steady decline in commercial, industrial, residential, and social activity, resulting in a mostly stagnant tax base and dispirited citizenry. As identified above 20% of the current land use within the CRA consists of vacant industrial properties contributing to blight and isolation for the current residents. The City, with its community partners, has engaged area residents to create a plan for the targeted area, the Lake Wales Connected – Northwest and Downtown Revitalization Plans (2019) that will serve the needs of current residents. The goals and activities outlined in the plan were determined through community input and needs assessment conducted as part of the Lake Wales Connected Revitalization Plan process. The plan aims to attract new investments in the community. The City will focus this project’s effort to address the following catalyst sites identified by stakeholders during the planning process:

**Priority Site #1: 137 Sessions Ave E** – Located adjacent to the N. Scenic Highway Assemblage (priority site 3), this site was the home of a former Fiberglass Boat Manufacturing plant. The site is believed to be contaminated with VOC’s, styrene, and formaldehyde all of which have the potential to have leached into the soil and ground water. These contaminants are known to have adverse health effects ranging from respiratory distress, neurological symptoms and cancer. The site is also located adjacent to a rail line, which presents a potential presence of arsenic or degreasers. The site is also within 100 yards of an affordable housing complex with multiple units and a social services provider. Redevelopment Concept: The City is seeking to develop mixed-use commercial retail and quality affordable housing. Jobs would be created during construction as well as ongoing in the commercial sites.

**Priority Site #2: 340 Dr JA Wiltshire Avenue West** – Also located adjacent to the Scenic Highway sites this site contains an abandoned gas station. There is concern that hazardous substances, including petroleum have leaked into the soil and water table on the property from underground storage tanks. Assessment and removal must take place before any redevelopment can be considered. The site is located within 100 feet of private residences. Redevelopment concept: This site has been targeted for fresh food, grocery and affordable housing development. Construction jobs would be created as a result of the project and ongoing in the retail sector.

**Priority Site #3: North Scenic Highway Assemblage**– This corridor consists of 13 parcels along North Scenic Highway. Its former uses include a former cement factory and buildings used in the Rock Industry. Potential contaminants include: heavy metals, carbon compounds and nitrogen. Pesticides are also likely due to historic agricultural activity in the area. Because of blight, the community has targeted this area for redevelopment. Redevelopment Concept: In line with the CRA Plan this area is targeted for pedestrian and bicycle pathways with mixed-use commercial properties to allow for a thriving downtown community experience for residents and visitors alike.

**b. Revitalization of the Target Area**

i. **Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans**

Together, the City of Lake Wales and their community partners have received input from a broad representation of residents, business owners, community leaders and governmental agencies to create a renewed downtown area which will include quality, affordable work force housing, and access to grocery and fresh fruit and vegetable markets and mixed use commercial retail, restaurant and arts spaces. In addition to improved physical and visual access to the historic
downtown area, the plan calls for pedestrian and bikeways, enhanced outdoor open space and park amenities for seniors, families and children. The framework for such an undertaking was delineated through collaborative discussion, including community visioning. Today, the Lake Wales Connected Plan(s) represent redevelopment plans that outline a hopeful and achievable future for the families, neighborhoods and local businesses that call Lake Wales their home. The Lake Wales Connected Plans establish not only a vision for the future, but also a development implementation framework, for current and new residents of the target area who will want to be part of a diverse and vital community of new opportunity and enhanced quality of life. The assessment of brownfield properties is one of the first steps to implement this plan to facilitate the redevelopment of the proposed sites into affordable housing, mixed-use commercial properties including a grocery store and fresh foods markets, walking and bike paths with recreational greenspaces. This project will work to revitalize and redevelop the neighborhood for the benefit of its residents. The Lakes Wales Connected Plan provides a new model for urban living without displacing current residents. It will benefit the community in multiple ways. By developing a network of open spaces, parks, trails, infrastructure, mixed-income residential units, and commercial sites that will create jobs, access to healthy foods and recreational spaces.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy
The proposed reuse strategy targets two of the largest needs in this area: jobs and access to healthy fresh foods. The City of Lake Wales has 18.1% of its residents living below the poverty level as compared to a 12.1% poverty rate for the Nation. The unemployment rate in Lake Wales is 59% higher than the nation (https://data.census.gov). Additionally the entire Polk County School District qualified for free or reduced lunch—prior to the Covid Pandemic. As detailed below, the area ranks low in healthy lifestyle activities that can be addressed through increasing access to fresh food markets and recreational areas. Revitalizing and reusing vacant and blighted properties to create commercial and professional plazas which can bring a grocery store, professional office spaces and a thriving arts and restaurant community has the potential to create jobs both during construction and ongoing once businesses open, as well as solving the need for access to healthy nutrition and recreational spaces.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources
i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse
The City of Lake Wales took full advantage of the Florida State Law and established a CRA for the targeted areas. This allows them access to Tax Increment Fund (TIF) Revenues. A total of $1.1 million dollars in TIF are received annually, and significant increases are expected as redevelopment continues. The City may also pursue Florida, Department of Environmental Protection Recreation Grants to finance the development of public space and parks in line with the CRA Development Plans. The City will be applying for Florida Department of Transportation grants for infrastructure improvements for the connectivity and streetscape improvement aspects of this project. The Florida Job Growth Grants Funds programs also have grant opportunities both for workforce training and infrastructure development which can be used for this project as its goals include increasing employment in the area. The City will also consider utilizing and encouraging the private and non-profit sector to designate brownfield redevelopment sites within the CRA for State Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credits in an amount of up to 95% of cost incurred for the assessment and remediation of such sites. Sales tax credits can be used for affordable housing projects within the CRA.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure
When possible, historic buildings will be rehabilitated and reused to maintain the unique culture and feel of the downtown. New sidewalks, bike paths and greenways are necessary as per neighborhood interviews and in consistency with the Lake Wales Connected Plans.
Infrastructure funding is possible with grants through Florida Job Growth Grants Funds for those roads and sidewalks that will serve commercial properties that provide jobs to the area. Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection Recreation grants are also available for enhancing the greenspaces and parks called for in the redevelopment plans.

2. **COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
   
   **a. Community Need**
   
   **i. The Community’s Need for Funding**
   
   This assessment proposal focuses on the investigation of real or potential contamination in the West Lake Downtown CRA, a low-income area. A CRA by definition (as described above) is an area in need of investment: Within Lake Wales, 18.1% of residents live in poverty compared to 12.3% in the US (American Community Survey (ACS)). The per capita income in Lake Wales is 38% lower than the national average and the median income is 31% lower than the national average (https://www.areavibes.com/lake+wales-fl/employment/) additionally the poverty rate is 59% higher and the Unemployment rate is 89% higher than the National average. Polk County qualified for 100% participation in the free and reduced school lunch program even before the Covid Pandemic made this universal.

   With the onset of the Coronavirus outbreak in March 2020 the job market in Florida began an unprecedented contraction when a large part of the state’s economy began to shut down, sending workers home to slow the spread of Coronavirus. Employment dropped by nearly 1.2 million jobs in March and April, a decline of 13.0 percent over the two months. Protected by the federal stimulus programs and a partial recovery in consumer demand, some—but not all—of these jobs have returned. While total non-farm payroll employment expanded over the entire period covering May, June and July, the gains in those three months offset less than one-half (48.6 percent) of the Jobs lost in March and April. Of the remaining jobs, some may not be restored until the leisure and hospitality industry returns to some semblance of normalcy, and others may not return at all due to the sped-up restructuring towards a more digitized economy

   The state's unemployment rate dropped to 2.8 percent in February 2021, which, together with the January 2020 and November 2019 rates, became the lowest unemployment rate since 1976. With the onset of the Coronavirus outbreak, the unemployment rate spiked to 13.8 percent in April 2020, reaching a new series high. The change was breathtaking. Over the space of two months, the unemployment rate shifted from a near 50-year low to a near 50-year high. By July, the state's actual unemployment rate had dropped back to 11.3 percent, matching the high for the Great Recession and markedly higher than the 10.2 percent for the nation as a whole. The State expects the unemployment rate to peak in early Fiscal Year 2020-21 and then gradually drop to 7.8 percent by the last quarter of the state's fiscal year. Thereafter, the rate continues its slowdown but remains at 8.8% in Lake Wales. This reduction in employment and business has reduced City revenue in taxes. This reduction in revenue is not expected to fully recover until the tourism and hospitality industries fully recover.

   **ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations**

   **(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations**

   The citizens of Lake Wales are poorer than elsewhere in Florida. The poverty rate for the City is 18.1% versus 12.7% for the State as a whole which places the targeted areas in the 96th percentile for low-income residents as per the EPAEJScreen. They lack jobs, access to healthy food and housing as well as parks and greenspaces for recreation. 100% of the school age children in Polk County qualified for free/reduced lunch (.https://nces.ed.gov) even before the Covid pandemic. With 22.9% of the population over the age of 65 vs 20.9% for the State of Florida and 16.5% Nationally - The City of Lake Wales is both older and younger -23.6% residents under the age of 18 in Lake Wales vs
19.7% for Florida and 22.3% Nationally- than the state and the nation (https://data.census.gov). The EPAEJScreen places the targeted area in the 85th Percentile for Children under 5. Additionally Lake Wales has a higher concentration of Minorities (31.3%) than either the County (21.2%) or the State (22.7%). The area is in the 88th percentile for people of color as per the EPAEJScreen tool. The County of Polk divides populations into Quadrants depending on health needs with one being the healthiest and four being the least healthy. Polk is in the 4th Quadrant for Adult Obesity, Adults who engage in at least Moderate Activity and Adults who eat three or more servings of vegetables daily. All of these issues correlate with the lack of healthy fresh foods and walking/bicycle pathways and parks for recreational activity. (Community Health Assessment Report, Polk County, 2018)

These sensitive populations are disproportionately impacted by the environmental concerns and economic realities of living in an impoverished and potentially contaminated area. The assessment and reuse of the targeted sites would reduce potential exposure to VOC’s, styrene, formaldehyde, petroleum, heavy metals, carbon, sulfur, and nitrogen all of which have adverse health effects on these sensitive populations. The reuse of these areas as commercial spaces, affordable housing, and recreational spaces can provide access to healthy foods, homes, and jobs as well as healthy activities to help alleviate the negative impacts.

(2)  Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions
Elevated Public Health risks are found within the City of Lake Wales and surrounding areas. As previously reported Polk County is in the 4th quadrant for adult obesity, sedentary life style and lack of access to fresh foods. It also is in the 4th quadrant for hospitalization from chronic lower respiratory disease, asthma and hospitalizations from asthma. It is in the 3rd quadrant for deaths from lung cancer. Cancer is the Second Highest Cause of Death in Polk County with a higher than average (35.8%) death rate from Lung Cancer than the State (33.4%). The high concentration of people of color in the area could contribute to this statistic. The hazardous substances found in the targeted area including VOC’s, Formaldehyde, Carbon, Sulfur and Nitrogen are all known to have adverse effects on the respiratory system in Humans ranging from COPD to Cancers. Additionally, Styrene exposure is presumed to be carcinogenic (https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiledocs/index.html). The proposed project would directly address these concerns: identify and eliminate contaminants that may be contributing to elevated rates of cancers and other environmentally influenced health conditions; improve living conditions; increase employment opportunities; and greatly improve access to recreation areas and affordable housing.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice
The target area has the following EJ Screen percentiles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ozone</th>
<th>NATA Cancer Risk</th>
<th>Lead Paint Indicator</th>
<th>NATA Respiratory HI</th>
<th>Facilities with Risk Management Plans</th>
<th>Superfund Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
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</table>

As indicated by EPA EJ Screen, the target area is in an area greater environmental risk for cancer, lead related illnesses, and respiratory health problems, which correlates with its industrial history and low-income population. Additionally the area is in the 90th percentile for proximity to High Risk facilities and 70th percentile for Superfund Sites. Historically environmentally hazardous industries have been placed in low income and minority communities. With its ranking in the 96th Percentile for low income and 88th percentile for black and brown residents, this environmental injustice appears to have certainly been the case in the targeted area. Additionally the adverse health conditions above are particularly exacerbated in the black and brown communities found in the targeted areas. According to Census Bureau projections, the 2020 life expectancies at birth for blacks are 77.0 years, with 79.8 years for women, and 74.0 years for men. For non-Hispanic whites the
projected life expectancies are 80.6 years, with 82.7 years for women, and 78.4 years for men. The death rate for Blacks/African Americans is generally higher than whites for heart diseases, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and homicide (https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov). Additionally the Florida Department of Health (2019) identified the following health disparities in Polk County: Blacks were more likely to be hospitalized than Whites for Asthma 1393 per 100,000 vs 878 per 100,000; had higher rates of strokes: 7% vs 5.9% and had higher rates of both fetal 14.7% vs 5.7% and infant mortality 10.8% vs 5.6%. The disproportionate health and mortality rates between races is an environmental justice issue. Using brownfield grant funding, Lake Wales can combat environmental justice issues by completing environmental site assessments and cleanup planning to identify potential contaminants, migration pathways, and containment measures to reduce environmental risks. Encouraging the reuse of the sites, as outlined in our CRA plan, will attract new commercial and residential developments that will create local jobs, new diverse housing opportunities, and healthier communities by drawing much needed fresh food markets to a revitalizing economy. Specifically, the redevelopment of the Sessoms Avenue priority site will eliminate blight and exposure pathways, and replace asbestos and lead paint debris with new affordable housing stock constructed with environmentally friendly materials. The redevelopment of the Dr J A Wiltshire priority site will eliminate underground storage tanks and petroleum exposure while creating healthy food markets and additional housing. Lastly, the redevelopment of the Scenic Highway sites will create greenspaces and walking and biking pathways to encourage active and passive recreational activities for this currently underserved environmental justice area.

Additionally, the reuse strategies directly address the disproportionate suffering of groups in the City of Lake Wales by providing access to jobs, healthy foods, walkable downtown area, and affordable housing. The goals are to revitalize the downtown area to create thriving retail, restaurant, grocery and arts businesses, a walkable pedestrian area to best enjoy these local businesses, and affordable housing so current residents—especially those with low incomes and the minority community—can continue to enjoy the new amenities without the fear of being priced out of the housing market.

b. Community Engagement

i. Project Involvement and ii. Project Roles

The below groups will be instrumental in providing input and assistance to the project team in the listed capacities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Point of contact</th>
<th>Specific involvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B Street Community Center</td>
<td>Ray Leathe, ED</td>
<td>Host Community Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:royaleather@gmail.com">royaleather@gmail.com</a>, (863) 528-5595</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Community Development</td>
<td>Sara Jones, Pres</td>
<td>Marketing and Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sara@joneslawjustice.com">sara@joneslawjustice.com</a>, (850)590-2555</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>Michelle Threatt</td>
<td>Recruit residents for community meetings, Marketing and advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Mthreatt3@verizon.net">Mthreatt3@verizon.net</a>, (813) 763-2645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Wales Mainstreet</td>
<td>Karen Thompson,</td>
<td>Marketing and Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:KThompson@lakewalesfl.gov">KThompson@lakewalesfl.gov</a>, (863)-280-8987</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Skip Alford,</td>
<td>Marketing and Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Director, (863) 646-3445</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:skip@lakeschamber.com">skip@lakeschamber.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Wales History Museum</td>
<td>Jennifer D'Hollander, (863) 676-1759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:JDhollander@lakewalesfl.gov">JDhollander@lakewalesfl.gov</a></td>
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ii. Incorporating Community Input

The City of Lake Wales has developed CRA plans and a Master Plan for the areas identified as
Target Sites for this Assessment Grant. In doing this, the City incorporated input and feedback from Multiple Community Stakeholders including elected and nonelected officials, public hearings and community drop in days at locally convenient public locations. Using this example, the City believes community input and participation are essential components to any project undertaken by the City. The City will continue to build upon the success of these efforts to involve the community stakeholders and property owners in the brownfields project. The City will meet with neighborhood and community groups directly within the Target Areas to further identify and prioritize additional brownfield sites for assessment and planning efforts. As assessments and cleanup plans are developed, the City will solicit input on specific cleanup plans and strategies. The City will then work with community stakeholders to create revitalization plans and property-specific redevelopment concepts that account for site constraints, community and market needs, and potential funding strategies. The City will communicate project updates at least quarterly via City Council briefings, social media, the City’s website, and articles in traditional media. The City’s project team will consider community concerns at their monthly meetings and respond to any questions and concerns raised in a timely manner. Due to the still fluid COVID-19 situation opportunities for community participation via video conferencing, web forums and other non-face to face methods will remain in place as long as necessary to allow for community input while still respecting CDC and local health department guidance.

### 3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

#### 3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task/Activity 1: Programmatic Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>i. Project Implementation:</strong> Project management of EPA-funded activities for the priority &amp; non-priority site(s), cooperative agreement oversight; budget management; scheduling and coordinating of subcontractors; monthly team meeting; conference/workshops travel for purposes of staff development and efficiency improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</strong> in-kind resources including project team staff effort</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</strong> Months 1-33, project activities will commence immediately upon issue of cooperative agreement. The project team will meet bimonthly throughout the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):</strong> Project Director with support from QEP and project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>iv. Output(s):</strong> quarterly reports, ACRES data entry; notes from monthly team meetings complete and accurate project information repository</td>
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<td><strong>Notes:</strong> Given the pre-emptive community engagement activities and community input on sites, the City expects to complete assessment project activities in 30 months and closeout the grant within 33 months.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>i. Project Implementation:</strong> Coordination and delivery of active community engagement throughout the project lifetime that builds on previous efforts of the City, including securing site access; community engagement meetings that educate community members on brownfields and the importance of addressing these sites; site selection through community input. Discussion of EPA-funded activities for non-priority site(s), if applicable: Development of comprehensive Community Involvement Plan (CIP); A minimum of four community engagement meetings that will include a brownfields education program; community input on site recommendations, suitable reuse and redevelopment of assessed sites; and meeting planning with community partners and members. Updates and presentations given at public meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</strong> in-kind resources including project team staff effort and efforts of community partners who will host and promote participation of community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</strong> Months 3 through 30, first meeting will happen within 4 months</td>
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</table>
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with support from QEP and project staff
iv. Output(s): Community Involvement Plan; meeting summaries; community input for reuse plans

**Task/Activity 3: Assessments**

i. Project Implementation: *EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s):* Based on community site recommendations, Phase I ESAs will be completed and Phase II ESAs as appropriate based on Phase I findings and Recognized Environmental Conditions. EPA-funded activities for non-priority site(s): An inventory of brownfields sites will be conducted. Identical work will be completed at sites that are identified in the public engagement and brownfields inventory processes.

*Non-EPA grant resources needed:* in-kind resources including staff time for oversight of the QEP and review of all findings/reports/technical activities

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Months 2-24, assessment of the priority site initiated prior to month 6

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): QEP with oversight by the City project director

iv. Output(s): site inventories; 12 Phase I and 6 Phase II environmental site assessment reports; Asbestos and Lead Based Paint surveys (as needed); Generic Quality Assurance Plan (QAPP); 6 sites-specific QAPPs

*Notes:* QEP has been contracted through an open bid process as described in section 4.a.iii, which means that the City is poised to initiate activities upon submission of a work plan and execution of cooperative agreement. Pre-award services will be specified in the work plan, including the completion of Phase I ESAs relative to the three target sites. (Access agreements are in place).

**Task/Activity 4: Remediation and Reuse Planning**

i. Project Implementation: *EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s):* cleanup planning at a specific site; 6 ABCAs, 6 site reuse plans with visual renderings, priority site market studies, 1 Target Area Brownfields Redevelopment Strategy

EPA-funded activities for non-priority site(s): identical work will be completed at sites that are identified in the public engagement and brownfields inventory processes, if warranted and as funds allow

*Non-EPA grant resources needed:* in-kind resources - staff effort

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Months 3 through 24

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): project director with assistance from QEP

iv. Output(s): Three Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs); Market Feasibility Study for the focus the City; an investment/redevelopment funding strategy report; two community planning charrettes. **30% of the budget will focus on planning.**

**3.b Cost Estimates:** The following cost estimates are based on past project management experiences and with input from our experienced brownfields QEP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Table</th>
<th>Project Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Categories</strong></td>
<td>1: Project Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Costs were estimated with the City’s QEP that has more than 20 years of brownfields project experience. The proposed program will consist of the completion of four tasks:

**Task 1 Project Management:** $5,000 for travel to two EPA National Brownfields conferences and/or regional brownfields events for one City staff member (includes approximate costs of $800 in registration fees; $2,000 for 8 nights @ $250/night in the conference hotel, $1,200 airfare for 2 round
trip tickets, $400 ground transportation/parking, and $600 per diem expenses for 8 days @ $75 per day). Any remaining travel funds will be utilized by city staff for travel to meet with local/regional developers or property owners. $15,000 contractual support is also allocated to this task for the QEP to support city staff in drafting reports, updating EPA ACRES, scheduling meetings and overall project management activities ($125 per hour for 120 hours over the three-year project period). Total: $20,000

Task 2 Community Involvement: One Community Involvement Plan (CIP) at a set fee of $4,000; five community engagement meetings with contractual support in planning and delivery at $16,000 ($125 per hour for 128 hours of work over the three-year project period). Total: $20,000

Task 3 Brownfield Site Assessment: Brownfields GIS-based inventory of sites across the City ($25,000); 12 ASTM-AAI compliant Phase I ESAs at $3,500 each (total $42,000); one Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan at $5,000; 6 Site Specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) at $4,000 (total $24,000); 6 Phase IIs (total $214,000; cost will vary based on complexity with an average of $30,000-$40,000). Total: $310,000

Task 4 Site-specific Cleanup and Reuse Planning: 6 ABCAs at $5,000 each (total $30,000) & 6 Reuse plans with visual renderings at $5,000 each (total $30,000); priority site market studies ($30,000); and 1 Target Area Brownfields Redevelopment Strategy ($60,000).Other planning activities identified in the public engagement strategy, as budget will allow. Total: $150,000: 30% of the budget is allocated to planning

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results: The Project Director with support from key staff and the QEP will document, track, and evaluate the following outputs and outcomes continually through quarterly progress reports, annual disadvantaged business enterprise reporting, and in monthly communication with the EPA Project Officer. The activities and outcomes are tracked through a project management and invoice management system. Outputs: Number of sites assessed (Phase I/II ESAs); Number of ABCAs; Number of formal community meetings, updated Community Involvement Plan; ACRES data entry Outcomes: Number of sites for which property title transfers are facilitated; Acres of land redeveloped and square footage of buildings positioned for adaptive reuse; Amount of private investment and other funding leveraged; Jobs created or retained; Increased property and sales tax revenue generated. An overall gauge of success will be the creation of jobs and the improvement in environmental justice conditions. Should the project run into delays or obstacles, the City will work the assigned EPA Project Officer and the QEP to implement countermeasures, such as budget reallocation.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Capacity and iii. Description of Key Staff

Mark J. Bennett, AICP, FRA-RP - Project Director, Mark Bennett is the City’s Development Services Director. In addition to being a certified planner, Bennett is a certified redevelopment specialist with more than 20 years of public and private sector experience. He has also served as Deputy Director of Development Services and Community Redevelopment Agency Manager, overseeing the day-to-day Planning and Building Department operations and CRA programs. Mike Manning – Assistant to the City Manager will act as the Financial Director for the project. He currently supports management of approximately $30 million in loans, most of which are low-
interest state loans used to upgrade utilities infrastructure and provides financial support for the City with a total annual budget of $82,500,000.

Cheryl Baksh will act as **Technical Director**. She is the Administrative Assistant for the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency. The CRA supports leveraging public funds to encourage and leverage private funds to encourage development in this community. She reviews agreements and reports, which is essential in terms of the brownfield project. **She will oversee a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).** The City will obtain and utilize the services of a QEP in accordance with federal requirements who has previous extensive Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Experience.

**ii. Organizational Structure**

The City will manage this grant through its Development Services Department that includes the Building Division, Planning Division, Code Compliance Division and the Community Redevelopment Agency where target sites are located. This will allow the City to have a holistic approach and provide for comprehensive support for all of these divisions within the target area also will allow for leveraged resources to be implemented from multiple divisions and the Community Redevelopment Agency.

**iv. Acquiring Additional Resources**

The City will be responsible for the ensuring the procurement process meets all local, state and federal procurement requirements, including that of retaining a qualified environmental professional (QEP) to conduct all technical activities of the project. Any contracts approved under this grant will be fully consistent with federal procurement requirements. The City’s process includes the issuance of a RFQ to procure Brownfields environmental services from a QEP experienced in brownfields redevelopment projects. Contractor procurement complies with state requirements and federal requirements (2 C.F.R. 200 and EPA’s rule at 2 C.F.R. 1500).

**b. Past Performance and Accomplishments**

**ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Award Amount</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Grant Accomplishments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY19 CDBG</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td>C Street Sewer Phase 2</td>
<td>Successful Completion of sewer improvements in the target area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY18 FDOT</td>
<td>1,129,837</td>
<td>Airport Taxiway Extension</td>
<td>Successful Completion of taxiway extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Polk County:</td>
<td>88,000</td>
<td>Pioneer Days Advertising</td>
<td>Successful Completion of community event campaign resulting in an increase event attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Development Council</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**2. Compliance with Grant Requirements**

The City of Lake Wales was in compliance with all grant requirements including established timetables, reporting, acceptable spending items and close out procedures required by funders on the above grants.
1. **Applicant Eligibility**

City of Lake Wales is an eligible entity as a city, defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.

2. **Community Involvement**

The City of Lake Wales has developed CRA plans and a Master Plan for the areas identified as Target Sites for this Assessment Grant. In doing this, The City incorporated input and feedback from Multiple Community Stakeholders including elected and nonelected officials, public hearings and community drop in days at locally convenient public locations. Using this example, the City believes community input and participation are essential components to any project undertaken by the City. The City will continue to build upon the success of these efforts to involve the community stakeholders and property owners in the brownfields project. The City will meet with neighborhood and community groups directly within the Target Areas to further identify and prioritize additional brownfield sites for assessment and planning efforts. As assessments and cleanup plans are developed, the City will solicit input on specific cleanup plans and strategies. The City will then work with community stakeholders to create revitalization plans and property-specific redevelopment concepts that account for site constraints, community and market needs, and potential funding strategies. The City will communicate project updates at least quarterly via City Council briefings, social media, the City’s website, and articles in traditional media. The City’s project team will consider community concerns at their monthly meetings and respond to any questions and concerns raised in a timely manner. Due to the still fluid COVID-19 situation opportunities for community participation via video conferencing, web forums and other non-face to face methods will remain in place as long as necessary to allow for community input while still respecting CDC and local health department guidance.

3. **Named Contractors and Subrecipients**

The City of Lake Wales has not named procurement contractors or subrecipients in our application. If awarded, the City affirms that it will comply with all federal procurement procedures in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500.

4. **Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**

The City of Lake Wales does not have an active assessment or multipurpose grant.