



Narrative Information Sheet

Department of Housing and Economic Development

Administration

100 Australian Avenue
Suite #500

West Palm Beach, FL 33406

(561) 233-3600

www.pbcgov.com

Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

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Mayor

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Vice Mayor

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Maria Sachs

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County Administrator

Verdenia C. Baker

"An Equal Opportunity

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1. Applicant Information
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
301 N Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type Community-wide Assessment Grant
 - b. Federal Funds Requested
 - i. \$500,000
 - ii. Not applicable

3. Location Palm Beach County, Florida

4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

The proposed project covers the entirety of the County, but **focuses on the specific Target Corridor Area within the historic urban and industrial corridor created between the Florida East Coast (FEC) and Chessie Seaboard (CSX) Railways**. The Target Corridor runs north/south for approximately 28 miles by 1 mile. Far from the images of glitzy beachfronts, this urbanized, inland Corridor encompasses 14 Federal Opportunity Zones, 11 Community Redevelopment Agencies, concentrations of impoverished residents subjected to decades of environmental injustices, and a collection of abandoned and underutilized properties. Palm Beach County pledges to utilize awarded funds to exclusively benefit underprivileged, underrepresented populations, with the goal of promoting equitable redevelopment in underserved communities. The Target Corridor includes the following census tracts: 13.02; 14.02; 14.03; 14.04; 18.01; 22; 24; 26; 28; 33; 37; 44.01; 44.02; 51.01; 51.02; 55.01; 55.02; 56.01; 56.02; 57.01; 57.02; 61; 62.01; 62.02; 63; 65.01; 65.02; 66.02; 67; 68.01; 68.02; 69.06; 71; 72.01; 72.02; 72.03; 76.02; 76.03; 76.04; and 76.05.

- Priority Site 1 : **Riviera Beach Assemblage**

1101 Avenue E; 120 W 11th Street; 130 W 11th Street; 928 W 7th Street; and 1148 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Riviera Beach, FL 33404

A cluster of 0.15-0.25 acre, CRA-owned vacant and abandoned lots, within federally-qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ) 1403 & 1404.

- Priority Site 2: **Mangonia Park**

1415 45th Street, Riviera Beach, FL 33407

A 45.5 acre parcel located in QOZ 1402. In the early 1900s, the site was a mango grove and in 1955, it became the Town's main attraction for 40 years (the Town is one square mile in size and the project is 8.4% of total Town land area): the Palm Beach Jai-Alai Fronton.

- Priority Site 3: **Lake Worth Tri-Rail Property**

1803 Lake Worth Road, Lake Worth Beach, 33461

A 9.9-acre site, adjacent to a Tri-Rail Station, with 1.1 million sq. ft. of dilapidated industrial space from the 1930s, including a former industrial dry cleaner.

5. Contacts

a. Project Director

Alan Chin Lee, Economic Sustainability Special Projects Manager
 Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability
 Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
 100 Australian Avenue - 5th Floor, West Palm Beach, FL 33406
 Phone (561) 233-3607
 AChinLee@pbcgov.org

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Robert S. Weinroth, Mayor
 Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
 301 N. Olive Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33401
 Phone (561) 355-2204
 RWeinroth@pbcgov.org

6. Population (2020 U.S. Census)

Palm Beach County	1,492,191
City of Lake Worth Beach	42,219
City of Riviera Beach	36,829
Town of Mangonia Park	2,142

7. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
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).	3
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
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.	
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.	

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority. Attached

9. Releasing Copies of Applications Not Applicable



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Bob Martinez Center
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jeanette Nuñez
Lt. Governor

Shawn Hamilton
Secretary

October 20, 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 Palm Beach County's 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 County'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 County consider including Brownfields sites or areas that could potentially receive federal funding in a state-designated Brownfield area. The County is also encouraged to contact Norva Blandin, the Southeast District Brownfields Coordinator, at (561) 681-6728 to learn more about the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Crain".

Kelly Crain, Environmental Manager
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

KC/jc

cc:

Alan Chin Lee, Palm Beach County – achinlee@pbcgov.org
Norva Blandin, DEP Southeast District – norva.blandin@floridadep.gov

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields

i. Background and Description of Target Area Palm Beach County (County), located in southeast Florida, is the second largest and third-most populous County in the state, with 47 miles of Atlantic shoreline. The proposed project covers the entirety of the County, but **focuses on the specific Target Corridor Area within the historic urban and industrial corridor created between the Florida East Coast (FEC) and Chessie Seaboard (CSX) Railways.** The Target Corridor runs north/south for approximately 28 miles by 1 mile. Far from the images of glitzy beachfronts, this urbanized, inland Corridor encompasses 14 Federal Opportunity Zones, 11 Community Redevelopment Agencies, concentrations of impoverished residents subjected to decades of environmental injustices, and a collection of abandoned and underutilized properties.

The FEC railway was developed in the 1890's by Henry Flagler, railroad tycoon, to support coastal hotels built for the ultra-wealthy of the Gilded Age. In the 1920's, CSX also provided passenger service and further connected inland coastal municipalities. However, both railways primarily served freight trains, bringing industry and contamination into what became overwhelmingly minority neighborhoods. Zoning maps from as far back as 1946 show that industrial uses, including lumber mills, cold storage facilities, laundries, gas stations, automotive repair yards, junkyards, and railroad yards were permitted directly adjacent to minority and low-income neighborhoods along the Target Corridor. This legacy of land-use planning placed the least desirable, most environmentally concerning industries and landfills in the backyards of African-Americans within the Target Corridor, leaving them to live with the environmental effects of these brownfield areas. Around the 1950s, automobile ownership spurred suburban sprawl, with newer development moving further inland and west of Interstate-95, into previously undeveloped areas of the County. This trend further compounded disinvestment and decline in the older coastal jurisdictions, whose residents whether due to finances, or redlining, could not afford to move away. However, recent renewed interest in these urban areas has led to intense redevelopment pressures, oftentimes resulting in gentrification that prices out existing residents. **The County will capitalize on these newfound redevelopment opportunities to leverage public/private resources within the Target Corridor's 14 federally-qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs) and 11 Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs).** CRAs are dependent special districts established pursuant to State law by local government, in areas of documented persistent blight, disinvestment, inadequate structures, infrastructure, and housing. The average poverty rate of the CRAs and the Targeted Railway Corridor is 23.4% (American Community Survey (ACS), 2015-2019). Although redevelopment interest within the Target Corridor has improved, the biggest obstacle to redevelopment is the historical environmental contamination. As such, the need for EPA funds has become critical. Palm Beach County pledges to utilize awarded funds to exclusively benefit underprivileged, underrepresented populations, with the goal of promoting equitable redevelopment in underserved communities. **The County will focus on priority sites within the Riviera Beach CRA, the Town of Mangonia Park, and the City of Lake Worth Beach with the Lake Worth Beach CRA.**

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s) Each CRA and municipality within the Target Corridor has revitalization plans to catalyze redevelopment within their respective areas. The County estimates 15 brownfield sites and areas or 17.5% of the area within the Target Corridor. In all cases, the blighted buildings associated with the sites raise a myriad of environmental and social concerns given prior industrial uses. Buildings are unsightly and encourage transient individuals, prostitution, drug sales/use and other illegal activities, increasing crime and the likelihood of residents to be victimized. **Priority brownfield sites are all located within the focused, Target Railway Corridor (1.a.i) and have all been selected based on secured site access, community feedback, need for environmental assessment, and potential redevelopment that will help meet additional housing needs (including affordable), provide**

access to jobs, and further infill development. All listed projects are located in FEMA flood zones X or AE, with redevelopment plans that are consistent with land use and zoning requirements of the County and the respective cities. **Riviera Beach Assemblage**, a cluster of five 0.13-0.32 acre, CRA-owned, vacant, abandoned lots within QOZs 1403 and 1404, to be assembled for development of affordable single-family homes for low-to moderate-income households to support home ownership, a statutory objective for CRAs. Previously developed as residential in the 1950s, assessments are needed due to proximity of railway tracks, with concerns of historic creosote, herbicides, and petroleum, and the nature of historical uses identified in 1.a.i above. **Mangonia Park**, a one-square mile town abutting Riviera Beach, is targeting a 45.5 acre parcel (8.4% of total Town land area) in QOZ 1402. The site was a mango grove the early 1900s and became the Palm Beach Jai-Alai Fronton in 1955, the Town's main attraction for 40 years. Once a major employment center, the site is now used for over flow parking for an adjacent Tri-Rail commuter rail station. The vacant 61,600 sq. ft. facility may contain asbestos and lead-based paint. Additional environmental issues consist of railway concerns discussed above, herbicide and pesticide impacts from its agricultural use, and PFAS, an EPA emerging contaminant of concern, from fire-fighting foam when the original building burned down in 1973. Proposed end use is a mixed-use transit-oriented development with commercial, office, and at least 628 housing units with commensurate greenspace. This site will contribute to diversified job creation, and the County's affordable housing goal with both market rate and affordable housing units. A Brownfields Reuse Plan is being budgeted to assist with plan finalization, with building footprints potentially used as remedial engineering controls. The **Lake Worth Tri-Rail** property is a 9.9-acre site, adjacent to a Tri-Rail Station with 1.1 million sq. ft. of dilapidated industrial space from the 1930s, and includes a former industrial dry cleaner which operated for decades. Potential contaminants include PERC, VOCs, asbestos, and lead-based paint. The site, located in Lake Worth Beach, is in a designated FL Brownfields Area, and is contiguous to Lake Osborne. This project is consistent with the City's Citizens' Master Plan. Proposed development includes an estimated 5,000,000 sf of mixed-income residential (35%), a hotel (15%), and 50% commercial and office space.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area

i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The Corridor's importance was recognized in 1994 with the establishment of the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida. The South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Transportation Authority), in collaboration with the County and the local Transportation Planning Authority (TPA) are leading community-engagement and planning efforts for the Palm Beach County Tri-Rail Coastal Link project. The project is improving connectivity throughout south Florida with up to 25 new rail stations. The strong public and private reinvestment spurred by these efforts provides the perfect environment for catalytic brownfield redevelopment to occur and expands access to education and better employment opportunities. The reuse strategy of this project is consistent with the CRAs' redevelopment and County's and Municipalities' Comprehensive plans that include equitable redevelopment, economic revitalization, improving infrastructure, returning vacant and foreclosed properties to productive use, replacing substandard housing, reducing crime rates and facilitating brownfield redevelopment. **The County's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, stringent Building Code, and Office of Resiliency, accounts for flood zone and hurricane resilience, and long range planning for climate change.** Projects located in flood zones are required to comply with minimum first floor elevations, and demonstrate that any fill or other site improvements will not adversely impact or exacerbate flooding potential on any adjacent properties. The County continues to maintain and update some of the most stringent hurricane hardening standards within building code for both new construction, and renovated developments. The Target Corridor furthers the County's 2017 amended Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Authority's Tri Rail Coastal Link Plan, by stimulating new and viable development interest in this

area. The restoration of passenger rail service along the FEC and CSX Railways enables a commute alternative that reduces congestion on streets and highways. This offers a much-needed transportation link to the brownfield redevelopment proposed in the Target Corridor, wherein 5.5% of households are without a vehicle as compared to the County at 2.8% (ACS 2019). The goal of the priority sites with end uses of affordable housing and mixed-use development, will contribute to equitable redevelopment for the Target Corridor’s underserved communities. Other benefits include access to training programs and higher paying, sustainable (non-tourism-based) employment. Continuous infill patterns, increased mix of uses, higher density, transit access, and provision of safe alternative modes of transportation all work to accomplish objectives of local revitalization plans and to expand the regional economy with private investment tax benefits in the Corridor’s CRAs and QOZs. Redevelopment of the priority sites directly supports the reuse strategy for the County, Target CRAs, Transportation Authority and EPA’s goal to mitigate contaminated sites to accommodate job creation development.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The underserved communities of the Target Corridor have substantial socioeconomic needs, particularly in terms of access to jobs, affordable housing for rental and home ownership, and accessibility to community goods and services. The proposed project will enable redevelopment of the priority brownfield sites, producing outcomes and benefits that directly meet community needs while addressing environmental contamination that impacts the health and economic prosperity of the Corridor. **Access to Education** Tri-Rail, in conjunction with Palm Tran bus service, provides accessibility to the County’s public colleges, universities, trade schools, and even public secondary magnet schools. Palm Beach State College is known for its high graduation rate of minority students. **Jobs** The new rail stations open access to existing jobs to residents in the *14 QOZs and 11 CRAs* along the Target Corridor. Even more impactful are the jobs that will be created at and around the priority brownfield sites. CRA residents will have more employment options within their neighborhood and in other developments accessible by train. The Community Caring Center, a community partner, has an employment training center that will aid in resident training and placement in newly created jobs. **Affordable Housing** Per Florida Statute 163, CRAs are responsible for the development of affordable housing for neighborhood residents, reducing gentrification. Proposed projects include the development of 357+ affordable units. **Access to Commercial Goods & Services** Access to basic services (including fresh food grocers, health care facilities & medical offices) is enhanced through development of an estimated 4+ million sf of commercial space. **Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency** Priority site redevelopment will include energy-efficient building practices through implementation of County building standards (some of the most stringent nationwide) that prioritize hazard resiliency and energy efficiency. In 2017, Lake Worth Beach showed their dedication to renewable energy, becoming the state’s first municipality to own and operate a solar farm. The Tri-Rail priority brownfield sites will be powered by solar. **Waterway improvements** The entire Target Corridor Area, which includes the Mangonia Park and Lake Worth Tri-Rail priority brownfield sites, lies within drainage basins that discharge via canals and the intra-coastal waterway into the Atlantic Ocean. Eliminating coastal contaminants will improve regional water quality. **Greenspace** Local Zoning Codes require upwards of 35% permeable area. Redevelopment of two of the almost entirely paved priority sites will add 11.1 acres of permeable greenspace. **Quantifiable Estimates** for full-time equivalent jobs, housing units, sf of commercial space (goods, services & healthcare facilities), and greenspace added are provided below.

Priority Site	Jobs	Housing Units	Comm/Office Space (sf)	Greenspace
Mangonia Park Site	TBD	~628 (20% affordable)*	TBD*	9.1 acres
Lake Worth Tri-Rail Site	1,407	1,098 (20% affordable)	2,513,493	2.0 acres
Riviera Beach Assemblage	0	12 (low-income owner-occupied)	0	Retain Same

Estimates from: Lake Worth Beach CRA, Riviera Beach CRA, and Metro Council data; *economically viable outputs for the Town of Mangonia Park will be determined during brownfields reuse planning.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The County has had historic success in leveraging various private and public funds to redevelop sites. However, the County lacks a source of assessment dollars. With new private development interest spurred by the TriRail Link projects within the Target Corridor, **this is the time to add assessment capability to the County’s menu of redevelopment incentives.** At the completion of assessment, the following are secured funding tools the County and CRAs have available for use to support the completion of remediation, and reuse of the viable priority sites: **US Federal Transportation Authority Sustainability & Economic Growth Grant:** \$1,250,000 for redevelopment planning along CSX/Tri-Rail Corridor; **Tax Increment Financing:** \$6,792,808 for Target Corridor CRAs for infrastructure improvements; **Palm Beach County EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund:** \$426,034 for remediation of contaminated sites; **Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOME Investment Partnership Program:** \$2,391,052 in FY 20-21 for construction, acquisition and/or rehabilitation of affordable housing; **State Housing Initiative Program:** \$7,333,993 in 2021-22 for owner-occupied rehabilitation, emergency repair assistance, and foreclosure prevention. The County utilizes funds to help mitigate the displacement of existing residents that often occurs post redevelopment, through the creation and maintenance of affordable housing.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Planning efforts by the County and partners encourage economic growth and community redevelopment in urban areas of existing infrastructure. All priority sites are infill redevelopment projects with sidewalks, roads, water/sewer, street lights and utilities already in place. Building materials will be recycled when feasible. Increased intensity and density (particularly to ensure affordable housing components) infrastructure impacts will be assessed and infrastructure upgrades and additions will be determined by public and private engineers. Reusing existing public infrastructure will lead to substantial financial and time savings. The County and Target Corridor CRAs are actively upgrading infrastructure for the success of the priority brownfield sites’ plans. If additional infrastructure needs are identified, the potential sources referenced in Section 1.c.i. above, such as HUD HOME funding, will be used and augmented with other grants, such as the Economic Development Authority. The County will lead these efforts and provide guidance to CRAs.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. Community Need

i. The Community’s Need for Funding: The Target Corridor CRAs along the Railway tracks are some of the poorest in the County with poverty rates double or nearly double the national (12.3%) and County (11.4%) rates: Lake Worth Beach CRA, 24.4%; Riviera Beach CRA, 21.9%; and Mangonia Park, 29.1% (ACS 2015-2019). CRAs are state designated areas with documented persistent blight, disinvestment, inadequate structures, infrastructure, and housing. A myriad of issues exist in these communities, which resulted in the formation of 11 CRAs and 14 QOZs along the Target Railway Corridor. Distressed economic conditions coupled with tenuous low wage, service industry employment and a lack of affordable, quality housing, and health insurance were exacerbated by the recent Covid-19 pandemic, which highlighted the disparities confronting these residents. The County experienced record unemployment with 155,868 claims in just the 2nd and 3rd quarters, ranking fourth in Florida for job loss and creating a downward spiral in the economy. The Target Corridor residents, where median rent (\$1,498) equates to nearly half of median monthly income (\$3,192) had no contingency plan for this unexpected health and financial crisis. The County Clerk’s office reports 6,260 filed and in-process evictions as of June 2021, since the pandemic began. Of course, renters are not the only ones at risk. The County, through its CARES Act funds, created a mortgage assistance program for households unable to make payments due to

COVID. 1,289 assistance applications were received by mid-October, 2020. The application breakdown by race are: Asian 10.6%, Black 39.8%, Other 10.7%, White 38.9%; and by ethnicity are: Hispanic/Latino 22%; Non-Hispanic/Latino 61%, Other 17%. This distribution indicates that financial strain is heavier within minority groups. The County and CRAs lost significant sales tax revenues through the shutdowns. At a time when social needs run high, local government coffers are slowly recovering. Reduced tax revenues, coupled with strained budgets from COVID-19 impacts, have greatly hindered the County’s ability to fund environmental projects. The small and impoverished CRAs in the Railway Corridor communities are unable to fund environmental assessments, stalling site redevelopment. As such, assessment funds are invaluable for site acquisition due diligence, prior to partnering with private developers to create employment-intensive mixed-use projects with affordable residential, office, and retail space components.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Brownfields have promoted a number of health, safety and welfare concerns along the Target Corridor communities and CRAs, particularly for its sensitive population’s minority and low-income residents. Blighted buildings are unsightly and encourage transient individuals, prostitution, drug sales/use and other illegal activities; increasing crime and the likelihood of residents to be victimized. As a result, crime rates within the target CRAs along the Railway Corridor far exceed County rates. Using a national index of 100, based on annual reports by NeighborhoodScout and supported by data from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Lake Worth Beach was found to be the 31st most dangerous city in the U.S.A. with residents having a 1 in 73 chance of becoming a victim of violent crime versus 1 in 232 in Florida. As evidenced by the statistics below, compared to the County, the Target Corridor is comprised largely by African-American residents and those who suffer from poverty, lack of high school education, and/or no health insurance. Many residents have the inability to own a home due to low household (HH) incomes and lack of affordable purchasing options. The legacy of land-use planning placed the least desirable, most environmentally concerning uses (industry and landfills) in the backyards of African-Americans, leaving them to live with the environmental effects. This makes identification and subsequent remediation of sites in these areas to be a critical need, in concert with accomplishing the targeted CRAs redevelopment plans.

Location/ Indicator	Race: Black	% Below Poverty	<9th Grade Ed	Median HH Income	No Health Insurance	% Renter
USA	12.4%	12.3%	5.3%	\$65,712	9.2%	34.3%
Palm Beach County	17.6%	11.4%	5.8%	\$66,623	13.9%	31.4%
Target Corridor	39.0%	23.4%	21.3%	\$38,302	22.4%	58.03%

*ACS 2015-2019; **Bold values** are approximately double or greater than the US and/or County indicators.

Demographic Indicator	Target Corridor	State	EPA Region
People of Color (Minority) Population	61%	46%	39%
Low-Income Population	46%	35%	33%
Linguistically Isolated Population	8%	3%	3%
Population < High School Education	22%	13%	13%

EJSCREEN Polygonal Capture of the exact target corridor. Accessed October 22, 2021.

This grant will directly facilitate the identification of environmental effects from legacy land uses and will create plans to reduce them. Brownfields sites will be catalytic redevelopments towards addressing the health and welfare impacts of the target area by providing more affordable housing options and increasing household incomes through greater employment and job training opportunities, as outlined in Section 1.b.ii.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Target Area residents, who are medically underserved, are subject to higher rates of respiratory diseases and low-birth weights. Residents within the target area have higher exposure to air pollution emitting from vehicular traffic on Interstate 95 that runs parallel to and within the Target Corridor.

EJSCREEN ranks this area in the 97th percentile for traffic proximity and volume. Further EJSCREEN ranks the Target Corridor in the 76th percentile for both Air Toxics Cancer Risk and NATA Respiratory Hazard Index. Traffic studies conducted by Inrix, specialists in transportation analytics, document that the target corridor has the 10th most congested roads in the world and the 5th worst in the nation, with particle concentrations that are 29 times higher than those found in areas with free-flowing traffic. Air pollution contributes to a host of respiratory diseases as suggested by a health assessment performed by the County's Health Care District and Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HRSA). This assessment, identified the following: racial minority composition (16.5-84.9% target areas vs. 12.7% USA), homelessness (19% target areas vs. 9.1% County), asthma (0.67% target areas vs. 0.38% County), and **low birth weight (8.8% target areas vs. 1.4% County)**. Low birth weight has been tied to dry cleaning solvents and petroleum products, contaminants of concern at the Tri Rail priority site in several recent studies that present explanation and potential causation within the target area according to Occupational and Environmental Medicine (OEM), an international peer reviewed journal. In addition, 22.4% of the target areas' population has no health insurance compared to 9.2% in the Nation. While the health impacts from the target area along the Railway Corridor cannot be fully quantified, it is clear that the health of residents is at an elevated risk. Possible soil and groundwater contamination from brownfield properties could be negatively impacting their health. With possible exposure to contamination compounded by limited opportunities for health care and recreational activities, many health issues can likely be traced to effects emanating from contaminants found on these kinds of sites. The communities located adjacent or proximate to the Railway Corridor are all Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs), designated by HRSA. MUAs have shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers and are low income/Medicaid eligible. By virtue of this MUA designation, it is implicit that the incidence of health issues, some exacerbated by brownfields conditions, in these Target Areas is greater due to lack of treatment options. The brownfield project will lead to contaminant reduction, thus diminishing these health threats, such as asthma and low-birth weight. Further, the project will reduce traffic with walkable/transit-oriented developments, thereby reducing CO₂ emissions and improving respiratory issues. Medical access for residents will be improved within the new commercial areas, with the inclusion of Federally Qualified Health Centers, which are federally-funded to provide primary care services in underserved areas.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: As evidenced above, few areas are more economically impoverished and disproportionately impacted than the residential population of the targeted Railway Corridor. These CRAs and QOZs evidence greater than Countywide rates with regard to poverty and crime and lower than Countywide rates with regard to income (see table, Section 2.a.ii.1). Additionally, as referenced in 2.a.ii. (2) above, there is evidence to correlate the relationship between environmental conditions and the incidence of respiratory illness and low birth weights within the target area. The Target Area is located along historic railway tracks where strong indicators for health-associated impacts related to pollutants linked to railways and historic industrial uses exist. The systematic location of incompatible uses, interstates and railway tracks through economically disadvantaged, minority communities is a harsh reality and an unfortunate truth for the Target Area. EJSCREEN places the Target Area in the 86th and 83rd percentile for RMP (potential chemical accident management plan facilities) and Hazardous Waste Proximity, respectively. This grant will facilitate assessment and cleanup planning of environmental impacts as the first step towards reducing those threats through remediation and promoting environmental justice within the target area. The County will incorporate environmental justice efforts with economic development projects for the benefit of the target area residents. No longer is economic impact and the number of quality jobs created the only driving forces in development approvals at

the planning and zoning level. Public participation and community involvement span the project lifecycle in the planning and approval process for development projects.

b. Community Engagement

i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles The County, in collaboration with its community partners, the Brownfield Steering Committee (established under the County’s EPA RLF), and local Transportation Planning Authority, have led community-engagement and planning efforts for the RLF project within the Target Corridor, where residents have provided input on the priority brownfield sites. For this Brownfields project, the County will build on these existing community-driven efforts. The Target Corridor does not have many community groups as underserved communities are generally not very well organized. However, residents and stakeholders are actively involved in CRA meetings, which have been successful in garnering support and input for redevelopment plans. The table below identifies community groups committed to active involvement in shaping the identification of and redevelopment of brownfield sites in their areas.

Partner Name	Point of Contact	Specific Role
Downtown Jewel Neighborhood Association (Tri Rail Site neighborhood)	Jon Faust, President, downtownjewelneighborhood@gmail.com , 561-772-9643	Disseminating information, encouraging community input & involvement
Northwest Community Consortium (Mangonia Park & Riviera Beach)	Teresa Johnson, President, 561-275-7001	Inform residents; identify sites; outreach; marketing; identify redevelopment potential
Community Caring Center	Ricky Petty, Project Director, Ricky@htpbc.org , 561-732-2377	Train residents for jobs/career advancement; job placement
Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation	Annetta Jenkins, Executive Director, ajenkins@rbcr.com , 561-844-3408	Acquires, rehabilitates & operates affordable housing for low/mod income families
The Guatemalan-Maya Center	Micaela Martin, Outreach Supervisor & Case Manager, 561-547-0085	Community meeting support, encouraging input & involvement
Compass Community Center	Julie Seaver, Executive Director, Compass@CompassGLCC.com , 561-533-9699	Disseminating information to the LGBTQ community, encouraging input & involvement
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church	Ann Kreucher, Office Manager, [REDACTED] 561-582-6609	Encouraging involvement from congregation & info dissemination

Quarterly brownfields meetings will be hosted in conjunction with monthly CRA meetings within the Target Corridor. As COVID persists, outdoor meetings will be held at the respective meeting venues, and the County will be adaptable and flexible as conditions change. The meeting locations will rotate to encourage collaboration and engagement between Target Corridor residents throughout the project. The County will be at every meeting to provide project updates, and to respond to any questions that are posed, as well as evaluate all public comments. This model has been very effective with the County’s RLF program.

iii. Incorporating Community Input: Each Target Corridor CRA has regularly-held monthly meetings (averaging 20 resident attendees) that are advertised by word of mouth, on County and CRA webpages, social media, through local organizations (churches & schools), with postcards and flyers in English and the prevailing foreign language of the area. Interpreter(s) attend meetings as-needed. Project progress will be communicated by the Target Corridor CRAs and County to the local community at these meetings, with the request that residents share the information with their neighbors and peers. Additionally, progress updates to the CRA and County websites and social media platforms will broaden the informational reach. Nextdoor, a neighborhood based social media app has recently been popularized and can provide an additional method of disseminating targeted information to specific neighborhoods within the Target Area. Post pandemic, a touring in-person community meeting series for comments and concerns would provide additional

opportunity for community input. Meetings will be used to solicit input regarding site selection, site cleanup, and reuse planning through open conversations, and electronic and paper surveys. Project progress will be regularly updated on the County’s website. Jill Alvarez, the County’s Website Specialist, handles all social media and web postings. As neighborhood attendees typically do not fill out comment cards, staff will make notes on individuals’ responses, optimizing participation from attendees. A running log of input will be maintained and assessed by the Brownfield Steering Committee during the quarterly meetings to determine follow-up actions. Each Target Corridor CRA’s Director will be responsible for responding to input with the County’s assistance within their CRA. If it is outside a CRA’s jurisdiction, the County will respond.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

i-iv. Project Implementation; Anticipated Project Schedule; Task/Activity Lead(s);

Outputs

Task 1 – Programmatic Support
i. Project Implementation. <i>EPA-funded</i> : Cooperative agreement oversight; Quarterly and annual reporting; MBE/WBE forms; EPA ACRES database updates; conference attendance/travel for County staff; <i>Non-EPA-funded</i> : contractor procurement; Work Plan development; and, post-grant closure ACRES updates.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Pre-Award Contractor/QEP procurement: Spring 2022; Work Plan: June 2022; Quarterly, annual and programmatic reporting Oct. 2022 – Sept. 2025; ACRES updates continuing after grant closure.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Mr. Chin Lee, Project Director, will be responsible for programmatic activities and will ensure compliance with the Work Plan and schedule. The selected QEP will provide assistance.
iv. Output(s): 3 attendees at National or EPA Region IV Brownfield Conferences, 11 quarterly reports, 1 close-out/12 th quarter report, ACRES updates, forms and reporting to maintain grant compliance.
Task 2 - Outreach
i. Project Implementation. <i>EPA-funded</i> : Community Involvement Plan (CIP); quarterly brownfields meetings rotated thru target corridor CRAs; as-needed meetings site-specific meetings will be under Task 4.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: CIP: pre-award - month 2 with community outreach immediately following; Brownfield meetings quarterly and as-needed (virtual, outdoors, or inside) throughout project period.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): The selected QEP, directed by the County, will prepare the CIP. Mr. Chin Lee will oversee the CIP and outreach activities, and coordinate rotating quarterly and any as-needed meetings.
iv. Output(s): Community Involvement Plan; Project brochures and social media updates/outreach in English, Spanish, and Creole (as-needed by residents), 12 quarterly brownfields meetings, and as-needed meetings.
Task 3 - Site Assessment
i. Project Implementation. <i>EPA-funded</i> : Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); 9 Phase I and 6 Phase II ESAs with Site Specific QAPPs and health and safety plans (3 of the Phase I & II ESAs at Priority Sites).
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Generic QAPP: pre-award; Phase I ESAs: pre-award - month 28 (Priority Sites pre-award - month 2); Site-specific QAPPs, H&S plans, & Phase II ESAs: months 3–30.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): All tasks will be overseen by the Brownfields Project Director. The selected QEP will complete the Generic QAPP and site assessment activities in accordance with current ASTM standards and All Appropriate Inquiry. County staff will secure site access, as-needed. The Brownfields Steering Committee will prioritize and approve assessment activities.
iv. Output(s): 1 Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); 9 Phase I ESAs with site access agreements; 6 Phase II ESAs with Site-Specific QAPPs and health and safety plans.
Task 4 – Cleanup/ Reuse Planning
i. Project Implementation. <i>EPA-funded</i> : Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) and reuse/concept plans on 3 Priority Sites and 3 additional brownfield sites; 2 asbestos/lead-based paint abatement plans
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Cleanup/Reuse Planning for Priority Sites: months 5-12. Riviera Beach Assemblage is anticipated to have the first ABCA and Reuse Plan to prepare for a FY24 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant proposal submission in fall 2023; Remaining reuse plans months 12-34 (Sept. 2023 – Jul. 2025)

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Qualified Environmental Consultant, planners, and market analysts with oversight from Brownfields Project Director.
iv. Output(s): 6 ABCAs; 2 asbestos/lead-based paint abatement plans; and 6 Brownfields Reuse Plans.

b. Cost Estimates: The County will consider supplies as an in-kind leveraged resource. Hourly personnel and consultant costs are included at average rates of \$45 and \$125/hour, respectively.

Task 1 - Programmatic Support \$24,900 (5% of total budget): *Personnel: \$16,200* (program implementation; quarterly, closeout, and financial reports @ 10 hrs/month for 3 yrs = 360 hrs @ \$45); *Travel: 3* attendees at National or Regional brownfields conferences at average cost of \$1,400 = **\$4,200** (breakdown: \$400 for registration, \$500 for 3 nights hotel, \$200 for 4 days per diem, and \$300 air and taxi); *Contractual: ACRES* updates and MBE/WBE forms = **\$4,500** (12 hrs/yr @ \$125).

Task 2 - Outreach \$27,200 (6% of total budget): *Personnel: outreach \$8,100* (60 hrs/yr for 3 yrs = 180hrs @ \$45 hr); *Contractual: brochure* development/printing **\$3,650**; Community Involvement Plan **\$3,950**; 12 quarterly brownfields meetings (rotating locations) at \$750 = **\$9,000**; as-needed meetings **\$2,500** (20 hrs @ \$125 hr). Costs for Reuse Planning community meetings are budgeted under Task 4.

Task 3 - Site Assessments \$270,500 (54% of total budget); *Personnel: \$4,500* for report reviews and securing site access (100 hrs @ \$45); *Contractual: 1* Generic QAPP for **\$4,000**; 3 Priority Sites: Phase I ESAs **\$10,500** (3 @ \$3,500), Phase II ESAs **\$85,500** (3 @ \$25,500-\$30,000 due to varying complexity), asbestos and lead-based paint surveys **\$18,000** (1 @ \$6,000 & 1 @ \$12,000), supplemental Phase II ESAs to delineate impacts **\$45,000** (3 @ \$15,000); Additional sites: 8 Phase I ESAs **\$28,000** (\$3,500 each); 3 Phase II ESAs **\$75,000** (3 @ avg. \$25,000); Site Specific QAPPs/H&S Plans costs of \$3,500 each are included in the provided Phase II ESA costs.

Task 4 - Cleanup/Reuse Planning \$177,400 (35% of total budget); *Personnel: \$5,400* (40 hrs/yr = 120 hrs @ \$45); *Contractual: 3* Priority Sites + 3 additional sites: 6 ABCAs (cleanup plans) **\$30,000** (\$5,000 each), asbestos/lead-based paint abatement plans **\$15,000** (2 @ \$7,500), 6 Brownfield Reuse Plans **\$127,000** (\$12,000-\$40,000 dependent on how far along redevelopment plans are and scale of impacts, an economic study is included for Mangonia Park); Site specific community meeting/charrette costs are included with Reuse Plans.

Project Tasks (\$) Direct Costs Only					
Budget Categories	1. Programmatic Support	2. Outreach	3. Site Assessments	4. Cleanup & Reuse Planning	Total
Personnel	\$16,200	\$8,100	\$4,500	\$5,400	\$34,200
Travel	\$4,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,200
Contractual	\$4,500	\$19,100	\$266,000	\$172,000	\$461,600
Total (%)	\$24,900 (5%)	\$27,200 (6%)	\$270,500 (54%)	\$177,400 (35%)	\$500,000

(Note Equipment, Supplies, Other (subawards) and Indirect Costs not shown as amounts are zero.)

c. Measuring Environmental Results: The County’s Brownfields Project Director, Mr. Chin Lee, will be responsible for tracking, measuring, and evaluating progress through measurable outcomes and outputs. A spreadsheet of expected outputs and outcomes will be maintained by the County and updated quarterly in ACRES. Anticipated outputs include number of: sites added to site inventory; community meetings/charrettes held; ACRES entries; Phase I ESAs, Phase II ESAs, ABCAs, site reuse/cleanup plans, and market analyses completed; and quarterly reports, MBE/WBE forms, and closeout reporting. Anticipated outcomes include number of: attendees at community meetings/events, sites/acres able to be marketed with understanding environmental conditions, sites made available for reuse, jobs created, dollars leveraged, contaminant concentrations reduced, acres of green space created, and sites redeveloped. Qualitative measures of long-term community health, job accessibility, and overall improvement of quality of life will

be monitored through surveys. Progress will be measured against meeting anticipated deadlines and community satisfaction.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Capacity & ii. Organizational Structure & iii. Description of Key Staff:

Palm Beach County has the programmatic, administrative, and organizational experience and capacity to manage project implementation, administrative tasks, fiscal management and compliance with all federal award conditions and requirements within the 3-year performance period. The grant will be administered through the County's Department of Housing and Economic Development. County staff Alan Chin Lee, Project Director, has over eight years of experience with brownfields redevelopment projects, including planning, site assessments, cleanups, and grant administration. Mr. Chin Lee will be responsible for the efficient and timely expenditure of funds while ensuring all technical and administrative tasks are completed within budget. Valerie Alleyne, Fiscal Manager, has over 25 years of experience with asset management, financial accounting/reporting and grant compliance management. Ms. Alleyne will be responsible for financial reporting and drawdowns through EPA's ASAP system. This team currently manages the County's EPA Brownfields RLF program that received \$1 million in funds, then \$300,000 and \$100,000 in supplement funds in 2015 and 2016. The County was a partner in the South Florida Brownfields Coalition's closed FY15 Assessment Grant for which Mr. Chin Lee was the Project Manager. **iv. Acquiring Additional Resources:** In the spring (2022), the County will select highly-qualified brownfields environmental consultants through a competitive bid process in compliance with all federal/state regulations. Selected firm(s) will have extensive brownfields assessment/remediation experience, including planning. The County has procurement procedures in place in the event that additional resources are required to successfully complete the grant.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

(1) Accomplishments: The County currently administers an EPA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and has two sites with petroleum contaminants. Due to the County's ability to quickly encumber \$700,000 in petroleum funding for a loan and sub-grant, two supplemental awards totaling \$400,000 were received. Site 1, located at 2401 Broadway, West Palm Beach (one of 9 parcels), is remediated and received a Site Rehabilitation Completion Order on July 15, 2020, from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and is now ready to be redeveloped as a mixed-use development, creating 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. This project will leverage approximately \$16,000,000 in private funds to create 75 residential units and 10,000 sq. ft. of office/retail space. On October 2, 2020, a waiver request was submitted to EPA to add an additional \$109,000 in sub-grant funds to site 2, located at 480 US 27 N, South Bay. This project, with \$150,000 capital investment, will be redeveloped as a restaurant, creating 6 FTE jobs. EPA approved a 24 month extension to the RLF on August 27, 2020, due to this project's timeline and the loan application submitted for the pipeline project below.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The County is compliant with all of the terms and conditions of the RLF cooperative agreement and approved workplan to conduct all project activities, including awarding loans and sub-grants, programmatic requirements, community involvement and attending brownfields workshops and conferences. To date, all quarterly reports, SF-425 financial reports and 5700-52a forms have been submitted in a timely manner. Information on the accomplishments, outcomes and work performed (outputs) has been entered into ACRES as necessary. The grant balance is \$469,243 with \$426,034 remaining to be loaned, prior to the grant expiring on September 2022. The County's remaining Hazardous RLF funds will be encumbered for a Spring 2022 asbestos abatement for the Historic Gulfstream Hotel. The County has already exceeded its required cost share.



**Department of Housing and
Economic Development**

Administration

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Suite #500

West Palm Beach, FL 33406

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**Palm Beach County
Board of County
Commissioners**

Robert S. Weinroth
Mayor

Gregg K. Weiss
Vice Mayor

Maria G. Marino

Dave Kerner

Maria Sachs

Melissa McKinlay

Mack Bernard

County Administrator

Verdenia C. Baker

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**III.B. Threshold Criteria Responses
for Community-wide Assessment Grants
Palm Beach County, Florida**

1. Statement of Applicant Eligibility

Palm Beach County as the lead applicant is an eligible entity as a county, defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.

2. Community Involvement

The County, in collaboration with its community partners, the Brownfield Steering Committee (established under the Palm Beach County's EPA RLF), and local Transportation Planning Authority, have led community-engagement and planning efforts for the RLF project within the target corridor, where residents have provided input on the priority brownfield sites. For this Brownfields project, the County will build on these existing community-driven efforts. The Target Corridor Area does not have many community groups as underserved communities are generally not very well organized. However, residents and stakeholders are actively involved in CRA meetings, which have been successful in garnering support and input for redevelopment plans.

Quarterly brownfields meetings will be hosted in conjunction with monthly CRA meetings within the Target Corridor. As COVID persists, outdoor meetings will be held at the respective meeting venues, and the County will be adaptable and flexible as conditions change. The meeting locations will rotate to encourage collaboration and engagement between Target Corridor residents throughout the project. The County will be at every meeting to provide project updates, and to respond to any questions that are posed, as well as evaluate all public comments. This model has been very effective with the County's RLF program.

Each Target Corridor CRA has regularly-held monthly meetings (averaging 20 resident attendees) that are advertised by word of mouth, on County and CRA webpages, social media, through local organizations (churches & schools), with postcards and flyers in English and the prevailing foreign language of the area. Interpreter(s) attend meetings as-needed. Project progress will be communicated by the Target Corridor CRAs and County to the local community at these meetings, with the request that residents share the information with their neighbors and peers. Additionally, progress updates to the CRA and County websites and social media platforms will broaden the informational reach. Nextdoor, a neighborhood based social media app has recently been popularized and can provide an additional method of disseminating targeted information to specific neighborhoods within the Target Area. Post pandemic, a touring in-person community meeting series for comments and concerns would provide additional opportunity for community input. Meetings will be used to solicit input regarding site selection, site cleanup, and reuse planning through open conversations, and electronic and paper surveys. Project progress will be regularly updated on the County's website. Jill Alvarez, the County's Website Specialist, handles all social media and web postings. As neighborhood attendees typically do not

fill out comment cards, staff will make notes on individuals' responses, optimizing participation from attendees. A running log of input will be maintained and assessed by the Brownfield Steering Committee during the quarterly meetings to determine follow-up actions. Each Target Corridor CRA's Director will be responsible for responding to input with the County's assistance within their CRA. If it is outside a CRA's jurisdiction, the County will respond.

3. Named Contractors and Subrecipients

In the spring (2022), the County will select highly-qualified brownfields environmental consultants through a competitive bid process in compliance with all federal/state regulations. Selected firm(s) will have extensive brownfields assessment/remediation experience, including planning. The County has procurement procedures in place in the event that additional resources are required to successfully complete the grant.

Named subrecipients are:

- The **City of Lake Worth Beach**, with its Lake Worth Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), are eligible as a subrecipients as a local government and a Dependent Special District.
 - *The Resolution creating this CRA is attached.*
- The **Town of Mangonia Park** is eligible as a subrecipient as a local government, and
- The **Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment Agency** is eligible as a subrecipient as a Dependent Special District created by the City of Riviera Beach pursuant to Florida State Statute, Chapter 163, Part III.
 - *The Resolution creating this CRA is attached.*

4. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

Palm Beach County does not have an active EPA assessment grant.