1. **Applicant Identification**
   Will County Center for Economic Development
   203 N. Ottawa Street, Suite 100
   Joliet, IL 60432

2. **Funding Request**
   a. **Assessment Grant Type**: Community-wide
   b. **Federal Funds Requested**
      i. $400,000
      ii. Not Applicable

3. **Location**
   a) City of Joliet, Lockport, and Rockdale
   b) Will County
   c) Illinois

4. **Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information**
   Target Area: CT 8813.02, CT 8807.02, City Limits of Rockdale

   Priority Sites:
   Site 1: 350 Ward Avenue, Joliet, IL, 60432 (Census Tract 8813.02)
   Site 2: Canal Road Area of Lockport/2601–2701 Canal Street, Lockport, IL 60441 (Census Tract 8807.02)
   Site 3: City of Rockdale/303 Mound Road, Rockdale, IL, 60436

5. **Contacts**
   a. **Project Director**
      Doug Pryor, Vice President, Will County Center for Economic Development
      (815) 723-1800
      Doug.Pryor@willcountyced.com
      203 N. Ottawa Street, Suite 100
      Joliet, IL 60432

   b. **Chief Executive**
      John Grueling, President & CEO, Will County Center for Economic Development
      (815) 774-6060
      John.Grueling@willcountyced.com
      203 N. Ottawa Street, Suite 100
      Joliet, IL 60432
6. **Population**

7. **Other Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
<th>Page #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community population is 10,000 or less.</td>
<td>1 (Target Area Rockdale), 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States territory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>street, road or other public thoroughfare separating them.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind,</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solar, or geothermal energy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning activities for priority brownfield site(s) within the target area.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>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**
   NA
October 28, 2021

Will County Center for Economic Development
Attn: Doug Pryor, Vice President Economic Development
203 North Ottawa Street, Suite 100
Joliet, IL 60432

Dear Mr. Pryor,

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) has received your request for a letter of acknowledgement for an upcoming Community-wide Assessment Grant application to U.S. EPA. Will County Center for Economic Development is applying for a $400,000 Community-wide Assessment Grant.

The grant will be a Community-wide Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substances and Petroleum.

Illinois EPA acknowledges Will County Center for Economic Development’s efforts to obtain federal Brownfields funds for this project. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at the above address or telephone number, or at Jenessa.N.Conner@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

Jenessa Conner

Jenessa Conner, Project Manager
Voluntary Site Remediation Unit
Remedial Project Management Section
Division of Remediation Management
Bureau of Land
1. **PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**
   
a. **Target Area and Brownfields**
   
i. **Background and Description of Target Area:** The Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) serves Will County (population 689,315) in the northeastern part of Illinois. It covers 837 square miles and comprises 38 municipalities.¹ The County has a 27% minority population with a high rate of poverty and unemployment.² Will County is the fourth most populous County in Illinois, and includes Joliet (County Seat), the third most populous City in Illinois. Historic US Route 66, the Main Street of America, Interstate 80, Interstate 355, and other major roads run through Will County. The Kankakee, DuPage, and Des Plaines rivers run through the County and join on its western border. The Illinois and Michigan (I&M) Canal and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal run through Will County. In the late 1800s, laborers and developers flocked to Will County hoping to profit from commercial activity along these waterways. Will County became known for mining and then steel production. In the early 1900s, the region’s economic base began to shift from coal and limestone mining to steel production. Most of the coal generated power plants have been closed or converted, including the Joliet 29 Generating Station that was converted from coal powered to natural gas in 2016. In the early 1930s, the region shifted again to refinery development and, soon after, WWII military production. In the 1970s and 1980s, the area known as the “rust belt” suffered changing economic conditions and the population fell. Large manufacturers like the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant (late 1970s), US Steel (1986) and Caterpillar (2019) closed, resulting in thousands of job losses. The once booming business areas that included refineries, steel mills, shipyards, and boat manufacturers along the Des Plaines River corridor now host vacant properties and are blight. Will County has tremendous growth potential due to its extensive highway, rail (largest inland port in North America), water, and air transportation assets. In recent years, logistics parks and warehousing development have spiked, with usage increasing significantly during COVID and the e-commerce boom. Brownfield redevelopment will address the environmental and human health issues in the blighted areas, promote environmental justice, private investment, create jobs, and encourage growth in abandoned, historically industrial sections within the County’s communities.

To engage the County’s stakeholders in solving this serious problem, the CED has conducted community outreach for over a decade, including holding a virtual brownfield webinar on June 10, 2020. Despite the pandemic, over 100 people attended. CED and several Will County communities followed up on the webinar and determined three target areas in the **Des Plaines River Corridor** in the cities of Joliet, Lockport, and Rockdale in the central portion of Will County. The **Near East Side of Joliet (Census Tract (CT) 8813.02)** is a 102-acre area adjacent to the Des Plaines River and directly south of the abandoned Old Joliet Prison. The dilapidated prison has been a source of criminal activity for years, including trespassing and arson. The historically industrial-use area is primarily vacant today. Lockport is located just north of Joliet, and the **Canal Road Area of Lockport (CT 8807.02)** is a 1-square mile area along the Des Plaines River that has been historically used as junkyards and other construction and storage-based businesses. The **City of Rockdale (population of 1,979)** is a 0.79-square mile City immediately south of Joliet that has been historically an industrial town where many properties were used for WWII manufacturing and have been left abandoned and dilapidated.

These three target areas were selected due to: (1) high underserved minority population; (2) high number of identified and potential brownfield sites; (3) proximity to existing redevelopment projects; (4) existing economic development strategies and revitalization plans; and (5) proximity to five federally designated Opportunity Zones (OZ) with environmental justice inadequacies.

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¹ [https://illinois.hometownlocator.com/counties/cities.cfips,197,c.will.cfm](https://illinois.hometownlocator.com/counties/cities.cfips,197,c.will.cfm); US Census: 2015–2019 America Community Survey
ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The decline of local industries and resulting job loss created an abundance of brownfield sites that are visible in the target areas and pose environmental and health threats to the community. During an initial windshield survey, brownfield sites identified by the CED include seven auto body service shops, three gas stations, two laundromats, and 10 industrial sites. More sites will be identified and prioritized during a thorough site inventory process involving the project partners and target-area residents. The CED has identified three priority sites.

**Site 1: 2601–2701 Canal Street in Lockport** is an 8-acre, floodplain site that has been used as a junkyard/auto salvage facility for decades and is now abandoned. The site currently has two dilapidated buildings and hundreds of destroyed and abandoned cars, trucks, and boats. The site boundary is unfenced, making it accessible to residents, especially children. The site is along the I&M Canal Trail and near the Des Plaines River and is a priority for the City to redevelop into an open public green space area. **Site 2: 350 Ward Avenue in Joliet** is a 1.2-acre site with a building from 1939 first used for metal fabrication and later for auto repair. It is immediately adjacent to train tracks and within walking distance to a residential neighborhood, several churches, a medical clinic, and a recreation center. The site has over 40 poorly conditioned cars left on it, is overgrown with vegetation, and the building is in disrepair. The site is unfenced, making it easily accessible by residents in a high foot-traffic area and raising serious safety concerns. **Site 3: 303 Mound Road in Rockdale** is a 14-acre site that has operated since the 1930s as a supply storage yard, truck service facility, autobody shop, and truck and car sales. Currently the site is abandoned and contains old buildings with unsafe structures. The site is overgrown and is unfenced, making access to the hazardous site easier for nearby residents and children. The site is near the Des Plaines River, railroad tracks, and the Rockdale Village Park, a large open space area used for baseball games and other recreational activities. It is also adjacent to I&M Canal trail parking lot where hikers park their cars.

At all three priority sites, the potential toxic chemicals that might have seeped into the ground and been carried throughout the target areas by ground water, stormwater runoff, and soil vapor, include, but are not limited to, volatile organic compounds (VOCs); semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) including polynuclear aromatics (PNAs); and metals (i.e. lead, chromium, arsenic, etc.). At some historical industrial operations, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) can also be a severe issue. Potential contamination associated with railroad maintenance may include herbicides, PNAs, and metals such as arsenic. Possible orphaned Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs) might be at these three sites due to the historical operations allowing some VOCs, PNAs and lead to leak into subsurface soil, groundwater, and soil vapor. The likely existence of asbestos and lead based paint in the old building structures at these sites may impact nearby residents and children passing the sites. The migration pathways of these contaminants include direct contact, inhalation, and ingestion through surface and groundwater, soil, soil vapor, and air. All these contaminants can cause significant environmental impact and pose threat to human health, especially the sensitive population in the target areas.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area

i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Target-area communities recognize the need to redevelop the areas along the Des Plaines River Corridor by addressing potential brownfield sites. Plans incorporating community-member input, which will further the areas’ revitalization and prosperity have been developed; such plans include the Joliet Correctional Center Redevelopment Plan, Heritage Park Redevelopment Plan, Open Space Element, Will County Energy Efficiency & Conservation Plan, and Will County Transportation Plan. A key revitalization strategy in the target areas, as stated in the Heritage Park Redevelopment Plan, is to use the 4.5-mile stretch of land from Lockport to Joliet to provide
Will County Center for Economic Development  
FY2022 US EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant

the critical link in the trail system and capitalize on the unique historical, natural, and industrial resources of Joliet and Lockport as these cities plan for future growth and revitalization. The three priority sites in the target areas will be redeveloped into a public park/open space showcasing historical ruins of industry as well as natural areas along the river that would offer hiking, biking, fishing, boating, and swimming. Connecting a park to the existing I&M Canal Trail is also being planned. The Correctional Center Redevelopment Plan was created by interviewing stakeholders and includes the target area of the Near East side of Joliet and priority site 350 Ward Avenue. A partnership with the Joliet Plan and the Heritage Park Plan committees will explore ways to also provide more pedestrian, bike, and other connections to the canal trial. The plan recommendation would “retain the site primarily as open space for recreation.” The Heritage Park Plan includes the areas where priority sites 350 Ward Avenue in Joliet and 2601–2701 Canal Road in Lockport lie. The Open Space Element Plan states in initiatives #4 and #6 that trail corridors provide clear and safe connections to Will County’s existing and future open spaces and brownfield sites will be identified to be converted into open space. Priority site 303 Mound Road in Rockdale is a candidate for aligning with these initiatives in the Open Space Plan. The Will County Transportation Plan discusses allocation of funds from The Rebuild Illinois Plan that will make investments in roads, bridges, and railroads, provide jobs and revitalize local economies. I-80 will receive much needed reconstruction and improvements that enhance and ease the main transportation corridor into the target areas and priority sites of 350 Ward Avenue, Joliet; 2601–2701 Canal Road, Lockport, and 303 Mound Road, Rockdale.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Ultimately, the redevelopment efforts of brownfield in Will County depend on removing the stigma of the presence of contaminants. Addressing environmental and human health concerns of the sensitive populations living in these disadvantaged communities throughout the target areas by the process of site assessments and cleanup allows CED to support the growth of the target areas by improving the environment, human health, and quality of life for the low income populations that have high unemployment due to the closing of industries including transitioning energy plants. The assessment and remediation of sites in the target areas will make properties available for redevelopment, which will help to continue the mission of the Heritage Park Plan by creating new tourism attractions as well as providing recreational open space for target-area residents. Fortunately, the Joliet Near East side target area is surrounded by five federally designated OZs, which the City of Joliet and CED intend to continue to market to developers to spur the revitalization needed. Revitalization benefits from EPA assessment funding also include creating open green space and revitalization of the existing I&M trail (non-economic benefit) that runs throughout the Des Plaines River Corridor. As with the many other brownfield sites identified in the target areas, the goal is to create equitable and sustainable communities by creating greener, healthier neighborhoods, improved access to recreational areas, and to improve property values by reducing blight and eliminating the risk of environmental contamination and threat to public health. Consistent with the County’s sustainable redevelopment goal and per the Will County Energy & Conservation Plan, redevelopment and revitalization in the target areas and the priority sites aligns with the vision of being a leader in intergovernmental efforts to foster alternative energy development and energy conservation that helps assure the quality of the area’s growth and development. Further, Will County has set a goal to increase the production and use of renewable energy by 25% by 2025. Addressing environmental and social concerns of the target areas through site assessments and cleanup planning allows Will County to support the growth of the disadvantaged communities by improving the environment, human health, and quality of life (non-economic benefits) for its residents in these distressed neighborhoods and promote environmental and social justice.
c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources  
i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The CED is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), eligible to apply for county, state, and federal grant funding. The City of Joliet is developing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for further target-area redevelopment. CED is working to secure additional funding to further their Brownfield Program redevelopment goals and is currently exploring the following funding opportunities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Funding Purpose</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal HUD Community Development Block Grant (up to $500,000)</td>
<td>Demolition of dilapidated buildings at the brownfield sites and contribute to potential affordable housing initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal US EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant (up to $500,000)</td>
<td>Remediation of sites after assessment and remediation planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Illinois Department of Natural Resources</td>
<td>Create/enhance recreational amenities, synergetic effort with brownfield assessment, cleanup and redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)</td>
<td>35 local road transportation projects and 121 State Highway projects in Will County including bridge and roadway reconstruction and maintenance. Improves infrastructures in the target areas and by the priority sites; and are catalysts to the brownfield assessment, cleanup and redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Illinois EPA Revolving Loan Fund (up to $1M per site)</td>
<td>Cleanup of brownfield sites in target areas after the assessment, and ensures full cycles of assessment, cleanup and redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Illinois Department of Commerce &amp; Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>Supports economic development and community development; concurrent with concert with brownfield assessment, cleanup and redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Will County</td>
<td>Infrastructure Improvements to assist in brownfield redevelopment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Target-areas redevelopment will have access to existing City Utilities including streets, bridges, power supplies, sewer, thus facilitating the use of the sufficient existing infrastructure. In the event infrastructure improvements are needed, CED will work with the Cities to apply for additional grant funding.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
a. Community Need
i. The Community’s Need for Funding: According to the Times Weekly, due to the Corona virus crisis, Will County unemployment skyrocketed from 2,614 claims in March 2019 to 24,244 in March 2020, an 827% increase.³ Due to the high unemployment rate from the lingering unemployment effects of Covid and the loss of outdated industries, the communities throughout the target areas need assistance and revitalization. The City of Rockdale has a low population of 1,979 with limited resources and opportunities. According to the US Census, the three census tracts (CTs) within the target areas have an average per capita income of $20,065 and an average median household income of $48,138, significantly below the Country ($34,103/$62,843) averages. Of the impoverished families within CT 8813.02, 63% have children under 18 in a single mother household,⁴ which demonstrates the need to enhance the quality of life for the residents in the target areas. Funding for environmental assessments is not available from CED as they are a nonprofit and their funds are used for day-to-day operations. Will County and City funds are currently being used for basic services such as police, fire, sanitation, etc. The EPA Brownfield assessment grant will be used to spur economic development the County will otherwise be unable to fund.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Within the target areas, the sensitive populations include the impoverished and minorities. The average Hispanic population in the target areas is 52%, within CT 8813.02 at 91% (State 17%). The target

areas have an average median household income of $48,138 (Will County $86,961). According to Joliet Quality of Life Plan, the east side of Joliet (target area) has the lowest median household income in the City of Joliet. In addition, the target areas’ average family poverty level (15%) and households receiving food stamp assistance (24%) is much higher than the Country (9%/11%). Living in poverty and relying on food stamps in an area that is in a food desert with some of the population lacking access to vehicles and public transportation is affecting the sensitive populations ability to make healthy choices.

To make matters worse, very few residents take advantage of the trails nearby because access is hindered by blighted brownfield sites. The sedentary lifestyle due to a lack of accessible outdoor activity has contributed to Will County’s higher than normal heart disease rate. According to Will County Community Health Status Assessment, heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death in Will County. Obesity is at 31% in Will County compared to 28% in the nation. Residents in CT 8807.02 also avoid the trails because of safety concerns around the blighted junkyard along the trail that prohibit people from getting exercise using this resource and therefore increase an unhealthy sedentary lifestyle, leading to heart disease. In the last five years Lockport has seen increasing violent crime, including 39.2 assaults per 100,000. Furthermore, US EPA’s Environmental Justice Report indicated the presence of 43 hazardous waste sites in the County from industrial sites that have closed and need addressing.

Vacant and blighted sites along the Des Plaines River throughout Will County create opportunities for criminal activity, as evident by the Chicago Tribune article citing the numerous abandoned building trespassing arrests made throughout the years in the target areas. According to Joliet Police Department, violent crime remains pervasive including aggravated discharge of a firearm and reckless discharge. The unpredictability of these incidents causes personal trauma for residents. In the past three years, the target area in Joliet has experienced 53% of all gun fire in the City. Therefore, it is imperative to redevelop the three target areas in the blighted Des Plaines River Corridor not only to decrease criminal activity but also to reduce hazards to the impoverished minority population that resides along the River. The planned assessment and redevelopment of the priority sites will not only identify contaminates, but will also reduce threats to the residents’ health and safety by creating an environment that will reduce crime, promote community pride, healthy lifestyle changes, and increase safe access to fresh food and recreational sources.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Sensitive populations such as the target-area non-white minority (46%) and single parent poverty-stricken households with children (64%) are disproportionately impacted by disease and adverse health conditions associated with exposure to environmental concerns including herbicides, petroleum products, solvents, heavy metals, and other hazardous substances. The target areas rank in the 86th percentile in the state and 88th percentile in the EPA Region for lead paint indicator and 70th–80th percentile for cancer risks. Each of the priority sites is potentially contaminated with lead-based paint from old structures and cars left rusting on site. Lead exposure can result in severe health and developmental consequences in infants and children, and asbestos exposure is well documented to result in many forms of cancer. According to Will County Community Health Status Assessment, the County (census tract/target area health data not available) had an infant mortality rate of 6.7 (per 1,000 live births) higher than the State rate (6.4). The cancer mortality rate in Will County is 166.6 (per 100,000 people) compared to the US rate of 160.9. Annual hospitalizations for asthma in Hispanics in Will County are 200 (per 100,000 people), nearly twice the State average (110). Herbicides, PNA's, and metals from the historical operations

5 City-data.com
7 EPA EJ Screen – Will County Target Area
at the priority sites in Joliet, Lockport, and Rockdale, can cause asthma, ADHD, and cancer including leukemia and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. VOCs, SVOCs/PNAs and metals, are known to cause cancer and damage the kidneys, liver, central nervous, circulatory, reproductive, and respiratory systems. In the priority sites identified, the petroleum and hazardous substances on those sites are concerns that affect the health of the sensitive populations in the target areas and environment. Activities under this assessment grant will result in identification and remediation of contaminants to reduce exposure to contaminants, leading to a reduction of potentially life threatening health risks in the target areas.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: Due to the negative environmental consequences caused by the plethora of abandoned steel and manufacturing facilities along the Des Plaines River, redevelopment has not occurred for the target-areas distressed neighborhoods. This is evident by the target areas’ low per capita income ($20,065) and high poverty rate among female householders (64%). The average of the target areas is 46% minority population, 44% low income and 23% that has less than a high school education, significantly higher than the State of Illinois averages (29%/35%/17%). CT 8813.02 includes a 90% Hispanic population that experience linguistic isolation. The trails planned for the Heritage Park Redevelopment Plan will bring people together physically and emotionally by being an inclusive community activity. Spanish signage in the park will make it possible for the Hispanic residents to understand the community and site history. In addition, crime rate in CT 8807.02 is higher than 72.3% of U.S. Cities. Brownfield assessment, cleanup and redevelopment will eliminate trespassing and reduce crime in the area.

The target areas average is in the 77th percentile of the national average for particulate matter. According to the New York Times article, “Pollution is Killing Black America,” dirty air is associated with lung disease including asthma, as well as heart disease, premature death and now COVID-19. Environmental issues associated with the target areas include VOCS, SVOCs/PNAs, metals (i.e. lead, arsenic, etc.) and asbestos. At some historical industrial sites, PCB is a health hazard. The migration pathways of these contaminants include direct contact, inhalation, and ingestion through surface and groundwater, soil, soil vapor, and air. Furthermore, the contaminants release vapors that linger in the soil and groundwater for years, which can detrimentally affect children, pregnant women, and those with weakened immune systems, creating environmental justice challenges in the poverty-stricken and minority target-area populations. Assessment, remediation, and redevelopement of the priority sites made possible by the EPA Brownfield grant funding will not only address these serious environmental and public health concerns but will further the land reuse plans Will County has in place. The Heritage Park Redevelopment Plan is an open space initiative that will improve the EJ indicator by providing a safe place for target area populations to exercise and increase quality of life.

b. Community Engagement /ii. Project Involvement and Project Roles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Org.</th>
<th>Point of Contact</th>
<th>Specific involvement in the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Community Center</td>
<td>Veronica Gloria</td>
<td>The Spanish Community Center helps improve life for Latinos, immigrants, and low-income people through educational and social services. The organization will assist with outreach, advertising, speaking engagements for program exposure, translate for the Hispanic minority population in the target area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joliet Park District</td>
<td>Brad Staab</td>
<td>The District’s mission is to provide quality recreational programming and events. They will assist with site identification, prioritization and future reuse planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 EPA EJ Screen – Will County Target Area
10 City-Data.com
The District’s mission is to enrich the quality of life of the community by providing leisure opportunities for people to learn, play, and grow. They will assist with site identification, prioritization and future reuse planning.

The League is a not-for-profit organization that provides a forum for municipalities to discuss and resolve regional issues of mutual concern. Assist with community outreach and cleanup reuse planning. Disseminate information to target-area residents.

The Chamber is dedicated to making Lockport a better place to live, work, and do business. Keep local businesses informed of project status, events, and brownfield sites available for redevelopment on their website and printed materials.

The District’s mission is to stimulate the intellectual growth of students. Assist with project outreach and education.

iii. Incorporating Community Input: The CED has been working to strengthen Will County’s Brownfield Program. On June 10, 2020, the CED held a virtual brownfield webinar with over 100 stakeholders and community members in attendance. The webinar was held virtually due to COVID-19 in-person gatherings guidelines. Going forward, all in person events will follow Will County and CDC COVID guidelines. CED has continued outreach activities in 2021 via the Citizen Advisory Group, comprised of community members and other stakeholders. The group has been meeting three times a year for over 10 years to discuss redevelopment in Will County. The Greater Joliet R3 (Restore, Reinvest, Renew Program) meets monthly and brownfield target sites are discussed, most recently on September 7th, 2021. Will Economic Network meetings have been held quarterly for many years with economic and community development professionals discussing brownfield sites. CED will host events in line with COVID times such as a modified tour of the target areas, creating a video to share during a webinar. Community members will be encouraged to submit videos and photos for incorporation into the video. The CED plans to conduct several community meetings during the grant duration within the target communities. Community meetings will educate target-area residents, project partners, local organizations, and stakeholders on brownfield issues throughout Will County. These meetings will encourage input from target-area residents on site inventory and prioritization and discuss cleanup alternatives and future land reuse that further the Cities’ and County’s redevelopment plans. Input from target-area residents will be recorded in meeting minutes and evaluated during CED/Project Partner meetings to prioritize the assessments in conjunction with the community redevelopment plans. CED will respond to each individual’s comments/concerns within two weeks. To share the project progress, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to describe the planned community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players for the brownfield project. Residents can review the CIP at the CED office. Communication and outreach to target-area residents and project partner organizations will be optimized through all available outreach tools and methods. The CED will use multiple avenues to communicate with citizens, including traditional methods such as public postings, advertising, and utility inserts. The CED also uses more updated techniques like a website and social media. A translator from the Spanish Community Center will attend every community meeting due to the large Hispanic population.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The Will County CED is requesting a US EPA Brownfield Community-wide Assessment Grant in the amount of $400,000 for assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1: Outreach</th>
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<tr>
<td>i. Project Implementation: The CED’s Brownfield Project Director will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the quality-based procured environmental consultant (consultant) in accordance with all appropriate regulations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CED staff will lead the community meetings (virtual/online during COVID-19 and in-person post COVID-19) to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts), and software to manage the grant.

### ii. Anticipated Project Schedule
CIP will be created within three months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings will be held quarterly throughout. Website and Outreach Materials will be created in the 1st quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project.

### iii. Task/Activity Lead
CED: Doug Pryor - VP of CED/Brownfield Project Director

### iv. Outputs
- CIP, Brownfield Website, 12 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Community Meetings minutes, sign in sheets, and handouts.

### Task 2: Site Inventory

#### i. Project Implementation
The CED’s Brownfield Project Director will work with the residents living in the target areas during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Although over twenty potential sites have been identified, additional abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target areas will be researched further by CED staff and consultants using the property appraiser’s website. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with CED staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine the order in which the sites will be addressed.

#### ii. Anticipated Project Schedule
Community meeting to be held in 1st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process that began with this application, with the evaluation ranking process taking place in the 3rd quarter and continuing throughout the grant project.

#### iii. Task/Activity Lead
CED: Doug Pryor - VP of CED/Brownfield Project Director

#### iv. Outputs
- Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List

### Task 3: Assessment

#### i. Project Implementation
After getting eligibility determination approval from the US EPA and securing site access, the consultant will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting with the three priority sites listed in this application. Activities include ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which will include the site specific (SS)-QAPP or a Sampling and Analyses Plan (SAP).

#### ii. Anticipated Project Schedule
Assessment activities will start in the 2nd quarter and will continue throughout the grant project.

#### iii. Task/Activity Lead
The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the CED: Doug Pryor - VP of CED/Brownfield Project Director.

#### iv. Outputs
- 15 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP/SAP, Site Access Agreements and Property Eligibility Determinations.

### Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning

#### i. Project Implementation
For projects identified for cleanup, the consultant will prepare the Analysis for Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs and determining site appropriate remediation/reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The consultant will assist the CED in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions (virtual or in-person depending on COVID restrictions) for key properties.

#### ii. Anticipated Project Schedule
Plans and Charrettes will begin in the 8th quarter and will continue throughout the grant project.

#### iii. Task/Activity Lead
The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the CED: Doug Pryor - VP of CED/Brownfield Project Director.

#### iv. Outputs
- 4 ABCAs/Cleanup Plans, 4 Vision Sessions/Charrettes

### Task 5: Programmatic Support

#### i. Project Implementation
The CED will procure an environmental consultant to assist with the technical portions of the Brownfield Assessment grant. The CED’s Brownfield Project Director will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. The consultant will assist the CED in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional
Programmatic Support for the three-year term of the grant. The CED staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend two national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.

ii. **Anticipated Project Schedule:** ACRES Reporting begins in the 1st quarter and Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in 5th quarter, 9th quarter, and during final closeout.

iii. **Task/Activity Lead:** CED: Doug Pryor - Vice President/Brownfield Project Director

iv. **Outputs:** ACRES Database Reporting, 3 Annual Financial Reports, 12 Quarterly Reports, 3 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period. Two staff to attend two conferences.

**b. Cost Estimates:** Below are anticipated cost estimates for this project based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks. The budget for this project includes travel, supplies and contractual costs only. **The CED commits to spending over 80% of the budget on the Assessment Activities.**

**Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Community Involvement Plan 4,000 (40 hrs x $100), Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts $2,000 (20 hrs x $100), Community Education Meetings, planning and research $7,000 (50hrs x $140) ($583/meeting and associated research). **Supplies:** Outreach Supplies (software, printouts, etc.) $2,000. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: $12,000 (80hrs x $150) **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 15 Phase I ESAs (to include site eligibility/access agreements) $5,000 each for a total of $75,000. 1 Generic QAPP $8,000. 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP or SAP at $30,375 each for a total of $243,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 4 ABCAs/Cleanup Plans $5,000 for a total of $20,000. 4 Vision Sessions/Charrettes $7,000 ($1,750/meeting). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period $15,000 (120hrs x $125). Travel: Two staff to attend two conferences $5,000 (flights at $500 each, 3 nights in hotel at $200/night, incidentals and per diem at $150, 2 attendees for 2 conferences participation).

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Outreach</th>
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<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Remediation/Reuse Planning</th>
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c. **Measuring Environmental Results:** To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule, the CED Brownfield Project Team, which will include the selected consultant, will meet quarterly to track all outputs identified in 3.a using an Excel spreadsheet and will report all progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the three-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and community partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and cleanup redevelopment plans when appropriate. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project is not being achieved in an efficient manner, the CED has countermeasures in place (e.g., alternative properties) to address this problem. The CED will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer, and if needed, will create a Corrective Action Plan to help the project to get back on schedule.
4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE
   
a. Programmatic Capability
   
i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, and iii. Description of Key Staff: Will County CED is governed by a Board of Directors that is the policy-making body of the organization supporting the officers in carrying out the objectives of the CED. The CED has the capacity and experience to execute the assessment project as they have completed hundreds of community improvement projects. CED’s VP of Economic Development, Mr. Doug Pryor, has been with the CED for over four years and will serve as Brownfield Project Director and be responsible for the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of the projects. Mr. Pryor leads the CED’s business retention and recruitment program, which includes development of leads and prospects, assistance with site selection, incentives, and local municipality coordination. He was previously County Administrator in Central Illinois. Ms. Kristin Erickson has been with the CED for seven years and will serve as Brownfield Project Manager. Ms. Erickson supports the Brownfield Project Director, and additional responsibilities include administrative roles for Will Economic Network Council, business retention program, CED events, and trainings. She also manages CED’s website and social media channels and coordinates promotional and marketing materials. They will be assisted by Ms. Michele Kubitz, the CED’s Accountant, who will serve as Brownfield Finance Manager and be responsible for managing grant finances and grant drawdowns on ASAP.gov. She has been with the CED for over 21 years and is responsible for the day-to-day accounting activities for the CED’s $1.2M annual budget, Will County Economic Development Foundation, and Joliet City Center Partnership. Her responsibilities include preparation of financial statements, accounts payable, and payroll. An environmental consultant will assist with technical and reporting portions of the project.
   
iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Using local contracting requirements and procurement process, following all appropriate regulations, the CED will procure a qualified environmental consultant to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment, in addition to other contractors (if needed) to complete the project. The CED will ensure compliance with the EPA’s “Professional Service” procurement process.
   
b. Past Performance and Accomplishments
   
ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfield Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements
   
(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: The CED was awarded a freight study grant in 2017 in the amount of $35,000 to support the development of the Will County Community Friendly Mobility Plan. The funds came from three organizations including Three Rivers Association of Realtors ($15,000), Illinois Soybean Association ($10,000), and Will County Governmental League ($10,000) and were spent completely by CED in 2018. The purpose of the multimodal freight plan is to provide strategies and goals to guide freight policies, programs, projects, and investments throughout Will County in a community-friendly manner. The CED was the project coordinator for the freight study plan. CED brought parties together, executed the consulting agreement for the scope of the document, and provided input and coordination throughout the duration. 
   
(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: All three grants were handled properly regarding compliance with work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions. All three grants were fully expended within the agreed upon timeframe and met all the objectives. Ms. Kubitz tracks all project results individually and will be able to manage the requirements for tracking projects in ACRES if awarded a grant from the EPA. The CED has discussed with other communities and stakeholders with significant brownfield management experience to gain insights and good practices. With the experience of direct federal funding management and coordination with other funding agencies including IDOT with millions of dollars funding in Will County, CED has the experience and capabilities managing the brownfield grants if awarded.
FY22
Threshold Criteria
Threshold Criteria

1. **Applicant Eligibility**
   Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfield Community-wide Assessment grant as a nonprofit organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please see attached 501(c)(3) Articles of Incorporation.

2. **Community Involvement**
   Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) will work with the Cities of Joliet, Rockdale, and Lockport as well as Project Partners to assist in site inventory, selections prioritization, future reuse of sites, community education, and informing the public regarding project status and updates. Furthermore, CED will work with target-areas residents and local organizations to gather public input for assisting in site identification and sharing information with other residents. CED will create a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to describe upcoming community engagement activities, schedule of events, project background, and key players. The CIP will be made available for review at the CED office.

   CED has and will continue to attend and provide project information during regularly scheduled public meetings to discuss the Brownfield Program by defining brownfield; addressing potential sites identified within Joliet, Lockport, and Rockdale; discussing brownfield project milestones; and informing the target-area residents on how they can be involved in the process. Information gathered by the target-areas residents will be recorded and compiled by meeting minutes and thoroughly considered and evaluated as the CED works with the Cities and Project Partners in identifying and prioritizing sites for the Brownfield Program. CED will discuss all individual comments and will respond to concerns within 2 weeks. A translator will be provided for non-English speaking members of the community when needed.

   CED held virtual brownfield webinars in 2020 due to COVID and, going forward, all in-person events will follow Will County and CDC COVID guidelines. In 2021 CED has been able to meet in person for brownfield outreach at community meetings including the Citizen Advisory Group, the Greater Joliet R3, and Will Economic Network. CED understands the importance of using several forms of media to communicate Brownfield Program information to ensure a wide reach throughout the County. The CED website, Facebook page, and Twitter have reached a growing audience due to the increase in usage, creating a solid platform for sharing Brownfield Program information. Additionally, CED will hand out fliers explaining the projects and the Brownfield Program, which will be distributed at community events and placed at City offices. Upcoming public meetings, meeting minutes, materials from past brownfield meetings, and project updates will be posted on CED’s website and Facebook page. Local media press releases will keep the community updated on brownfield assessment project milestones.

3. **Named Contractors and Subrecipients**
   NA

4. **Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds**
   Will County Center for Economic Development affirms that there are no active EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants or Multipurpose Grants for the Organization.