



Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico
Gobierno Municipal de Barceloneta
Oficina de la Alcaldesa

R02-24-A-015

IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification:

- a. **Municipality of Barceloneta, Puerto Rico**
P.O. Box 2049 Barceloneta, P.R. 00617
(787) 846-3400

2. Funding Requested:

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide Assessment Grant
b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000

3. Location:

- a. Municipality of Barceloneta
b. Barceloneta
c. Puerto Rico

4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

- a. Target Area: Northern District (ND)
b. The Northern District is bordered to the north by the coast, to the east and west by land of agricultural use, and to the south by the PR-22 highway. the ND covers an area of 2.45 mi² and is located within Census Tracts (CT) 72017590100, 72017590200 & 72017590300. The ND includes portions of the main urban, industrial/commercial, and tourism sectors of Barceloneta.
c. Priority Sites Addresses:
i. Abra del Pimiento Buildings – PR6140, Barrio Pueblo, Barceloneta, PR 00617
ii. Former Hospital – PR140, Barrio Pueblo, Barceloneta, PR 00617
iii. AAFET Center – PR640, Barrio Pueblo, Barceloneta, PR 00617
iv. Roque Isle Center – PR681, Barrio Punta Palmas, Barceloneta, PR 00617
v. Former Playtex – PR669, Barrio Pueblo, Barceloneta, PR 00617

5. Contacts:

- a. Project Director:
Eris Galan, Director of Environmental Management
Municipality of Barceloneta
P.O. Box 2049 Barceloneta, P.R. 00617
(787) 846-4012
egalan@barceloneta.pr.gov

- b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
Wanda Soler Rosario, Mayor
P.O. Box 2049 Barceloneta, P.R. 00617
(787) 846-3400
wsoler@barceloneta.pr.gov

6. Population: Municipality of Barceloneta – 22,657 (US 2020 Decennial Census)

7. Other Factors Checklist

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 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).	Page 2
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	Page 2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Page 3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing.	

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority.

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

9. The Municipality of Barceloneta is not making any claims for confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, in this application/document.



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

17 OCT 2023

Hon. Wanda J. Soler-Rosario
Mayor
Municipality of Barceloneta
PO BOX 2049
Barceloneta, PR 00617

Honorable Mayor Soler-Rosario:

ACKNOWLEDGMENT LETTER FOR THE INTENTION TO APPLY FOR FY-24 US EPA BROWNFIELD'S PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ASSESSMENT AT THE MUNICIPALITY OF BARCELONETA, PUERTO RICO

The Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) Superfund Program has received a letter from the Municipality of Barceloneta informing us of its intention to apply for a Brownfields Multipurpose Grant. DNER acknowledges and supports the initiative taken by the municipality.

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

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Edwin O. Malavet-Santiago, Environmental Emergencies Response Area Manager, at (787) 999-2200, extensions 5900, 5915 or by email at edwin.malavet@drna.pr.gov.

Cordially,

Anaís Rodríguez Vega
Secretary

EMS
EOMS/OESS

C Teresita Rodríguez, USEPA

1. Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization, a. Target Area & Brownfields, i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area:

Founded in 1881, the Municipality of Barceloneta (Barceloneta) is located in northern coast of Puerto Rico (PR) in a predominantly rural region 30 miles west of the San Juan Metropolitan Area. With a population of 22,836 (2021 ACS 5-Year Est.) and an area of ± 32 mi², Barceloneta has had a long history of agricultural and industrial exploits. Currently, Barceloneta has one of the largest pharmaceutical production complexes in the world, thanks to manufacturing companies that came to operate in PR through valuable tax exemptions (Section 936 of the US tax code). The US government eliminated this incentive in 2006, as a result companies in Barceloneta have been leaving (e.g., Abbot, Pfizer, Bristol Myers, Merck, Teva, Avon, Sam's, etc.) to more tax-friendly countries. This has resulted in a loss of about 1,600 skilled labor jobs and driven Barceloneta into a deep recession, lasting over 15 years, leading to population decline as people left for the US mainland for employment. Two more large pharmaceutical employers announced their cease of operations for 2024, further impact to Barceloneta (\$2M in tax losses and 750 jobs). Hurricanes (Maria-2017 & Fiona-2022) severely impacted Barceloneta, intensifying extreme socioeconomic and financial pressures. Damaged properties released chemicals like lead paint, petroleum, and other environmental hazards. Power and water services were discontinued for months. The unstable economy coupled with climate-change induced natural disasters contributed to the demise of our commercial and residential vitality. Our current challenges are attracting and retaining commerce, in part, due to the many brownfields in the municipality and incentivizing acquisition of sites where these companies operate to prevent the abandonment of industrial structures.

Target Area: Northern District (ND) – bordered in the north by the coast, in the east and west by agricultural land, and in the south by the PR-22 highway, the ND covers an area of 2.45 mi² and is located within Census Tracts (CT) 5901, 5902 & 5903. The ND includes portions of the main urban, industrial/commercial, and tourism sectors of Barceloneta, with high visibility due to its location near two major interchanges at PR-22 and PR-2 make the ND a natural “gateway” to the municipality. Unfortunately, that gateway does not currently portray a very appealing image. Our ND contains numerous unattractive, shuttered, and underutilized properties in our commercial/industrial district. Past economic struggles brought brownfield challenges: abandoned buildings, legacy pollution (Table 1), blight, increased crime, and strain on public resources. Brownfields add to financial burdens (reduced income, increase poverty, lower tax revenue and wages, etc. – 2.a.i) and health disparities (higher cancer rates and infant mortality – 2.a.ii(2)) on ND residents. According to the 2010 and 2020 US Dec. Census, the ND population has declined by 7.4% since 2010 (from 19,082 to 17,716), due to job losses in the municipality, and residents relocating for an improved quality of life elsewhere. Residents living among brownfields in the ND experience low income (Median Household Income (MHI) is less than 26% of that in the US) and high poverty (over 4x higher than in the US (2021 ACS)) (see 2.a.ii).

We recognize the redevelopment potential of the ND and are making a focused effort to address priority brownfields (1.a.ii) and leverage additional funding for this hardest hit part of our community where redevelopment investment has the greatest opportunity for success. We are already working hard to repurpose and reshape the businesses and commerce of the ND including: a \$15.9M redevelopment of public infrastructure and municipal offices; recent flood mitigation around Rio Grande River and road reconstruction/improvements (urban center). We believe that strategic investment of EPA assessment funds along with the funds that will be leveraged as a result will revitalize the ND, making our downtown more attractive to new businesses, developers, visitors, and residents. Since the economic downturn, the federal government made a significant investment to facilitate redevelopment and resilience in PR, including the ND, but much of these funds remain unusable until EPA grant funded environmental assessment and cleanup (if needed) is completed on the properties targeted for reuse. Once priority sites are redeveloped, our economy will no longer be influenced by the negative impacts of brownfields.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Table 1 presents our priority sites that offer the greatest opportunity to trigger successful reuse/resurgence in our target area. However, numerous other brownfields are also present in the ND. The historical/current uses, likely environmental issues, potential health effects from exposure to these sites, and planned reuses are listed below.

Table 1 – Priority Brownfield Sites and Impacts

Priority Site, Size, Proximity to Target Area Residents	Historic Use/Current Use & Condition/Planned Reuse	Suspected Contaminants*
Abra del Pimiento Buildings - 0.9 acres in commercial area; adjoins low-income, minority neighborhood; in FEMA flood plain	Hardware store and residential / abandoned, deteriorated / multi-tenant commercial	VOCs, PAHs, metals, petroleum, asbestos
Former Hospital - 0.47 acres in commercial area; surrounded by low-income, minority neighborhood	Former hospital/ vacant and deteriorated / Commercial redevelopment	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, lead paint
AAFET Center - 10.2 acres south of urban center; 250ft south of low-income, minority neighborhood	Business incubator / Vacant / Mixed-use redevelopment	VOCs, PAHs, metals, petroleum, asbestos
Roque Isle Center – 4.7 acres in mixed-use area; 100ft north of low-income, minority neighborhood, adjoins bodies of water, in FEMA flood plain	Former Recreation Center and tourism venue / Underutilized / Greenspace and tourism/commercial reuse	VOCs, PAHs, asbestos, metals, lead paint
Former Playtex – 3.2 acres in low-income minority neighborhood; in FEMA flood plain	Clothes manufacturer / vacant, deteriorated structure / low-income housing	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, asbestos

**According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the contaminants listed in Table 1 pose a real threat to human health. Health threats include damage to skin, liver, kidneys, heart, spleen; nervous, respiratory, hormonal, blood, & immune systems; may also cause neurological damage, birth defects and cancer (www.atsdr.cdc.gov).*

These highest priorities sites will meet the ND’s immediate needs, align with our revitalization plans, and redevelopment is imminent due to funding already committed (approximately \$2M from public investors). The investment to redevelop residential/mixed-use commercial assets, and tourism/greenspace amenities on priority brownfield properties in the ND and throughout Barceloneta (preliminary inventory of 19 brownfield properties covering ±60 acres) will serve as examples of success, triggering further investment. For example, the Former Playtex industrial site potentially impacts the adjoining neighborhood with PCBs, solvents, or other industrial chemical releases. The municipality has plans to repurpose this site, removing the environmental and health threats and transforming it into energy-efficient low-income housing, bringing needed affordable housing that is walking-distance to the urban center (as specified in our Revitalization Plans (1.b.i.)).

1.a.iii. Identifying Additional Sites: If grant funds remain after addressing target area/priority sites, we may choose to invest in properties outside the ND (but within the census tracts noted in Table 1 or census tract 5904) that become a priority during the grant period. Additional sites will be identified using the brownfield inventory and community/stakeholder input and will be prioritized based on how similar demographic and environmental justice conditions around additional sites are to the ND. Similar to the ND, demographics in census tract 5904 have significant environmental justice challenges and disadvantaged residents (91st percentile for flood risk, 96th percentile for proximity to superfund sites, 98th percentile for low income and poverty, and 94th percentile for unemployment per EPA CEJST).

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area, i. Reuse Strategy & Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Our 2016 Territorial Plan and 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan (Revitalization Plans) specify the ND revitalization as a key initiative and outline critical infrastructure and renovations to transform the urban center as a regional commercial and economic hub. Redevelopment of brownfields into commercial/residential in the ND will allow residents to live, work, shop, and recreate within their neighborhoods in Barceloneta. The reuse plans of our priority brownfield sites are consistent with our Revitalization Plans. We will diversify and modernize our employment sectors to minimize future job cutbacks/closures and create housing and commercial development. This will provide support services for the commercial base of the area and residential options desperately needed in the ND. Our Revitalization Plans call for land reuse that addresses economic and environmental concerns while addressing equity issues for primarily low-income residents and minorities. With funding already secured, these reuse activities will address our need for jobs and residential options and will encourage people to return to Barceloneta to restore our community and enjoy the redevelopment benefits.

Barceloneta is requesting \$500,000, most of which will be used for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), providing the initial, highest risk investment necessary for brownfields reuse. These funds will help us reach reuse goals in our Revitalization Plans, tackling environmental challenges associated with the highest priority sites within the ND, triggering further

environmental and redevelopment funding (1.c.i). Increasing our stock of owner-occupied, moderate-income housing and mixed-use commercial/residential properties near our urban, industrial, and tourism center will alleviate our housing shortage and aligns with our goal to increase the walkability/connection of our downtown to area neighborhoods. The revitalization efforts for our priority sites will create needed jobs, affordable housing, and walkable greenspace within our target area, improving our residents' quality of life and meeting the vision outlined in our Revitalization Plans. Significant resources have already been pledged for reuse of ND properties (1.c.i), including a leveraging commitment for redevelopment of public infrastructure and municipal offices; recent flood mitigation around Rio Grande River and road reconstruction/improvements (urban center). With EPA funds to cover environmental assessment and planning costs, we will realize the outcomes and benefits outlined below.

1.b.ii Outcomes & Benefits of Reuse Strategy: **The full redevelopment of Table 1 priority sites will create an estimated 180 construction jobs, 105 permanent jobs, 85 low-income housing units, modern commercial development, an estimated \$685K in annual tax revenue and eliminate threats to less fortunate and vulnerable residents.** Redevelopment of the Former Hospital and Abra del Pimiento Buildings will remove environmental contamination (PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, lead paint) and eliminate a health hazard to the adjoining neighborhood. Removing blight will help end criminal activity (2.a.i) that is lured by abandoned property. Once this site is redeveloped into commercial space, jobs will be created, lifting area residents from poverty. New development and capital investment in the Roque Isle Center will create more high paying jobs and increased tax revenue by attracting tourist dollars to area businesses.

During all phases of the revitalization process, we will encourage the reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure, implementing building codes that require or promote energy efficiency measures: energy efficient lighting, low-flow showers/toilets, geothermal heating/cooling, etc. Residents will benefit from increased property values or may seek housing with energy efficiency and less maintenance costs. Addressing priority sites in the ND will create affordable and sustainable housing, workforce development (new jobs), and remediate/reduce legacy pollution in areas with high concentrations of low-income residents. **EPAs investment in brownfields in the ND will help meet Justice40 goals by creating energy efficient, sustainable development, conserving and preserving greenfields, improving health by reducing exposure to contaminants, and turning brownfields into assets. This will deliver justice to disadvantaged residents (due to low-income, high minorities, distressed neighborhoods, disproportionate exposure to environmental impacts from brownfields, etc.).**

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources, i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The municipality has a history of leveraging investment in projects throughout the community. For example, **Barceloneta has leveraged over \$6.4M in grant funding to improve energy and stormwater infrastructure, create a resiliency hub, and establish resident-owned solar energy systems in the past years to help revitalize the community.** Our Municipality currently has \$3.13M available to invest in the ND. In addition, Barceloneta is eligible for and will seek additional funding from the following sources that support anticipated assessment, cleanup, infrastructure, and redevelopment: EPA Brownfield Clean-up and Multipurpose grant funds (\$5M/\$1M), US Dept. of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (\$300K grants/\$1M in loans for community and economic development aid), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), CDBG-DR (Disaster Relief) of which over \$9M is available to Barceloneta for demolition, infrastructure, and economic development of brownfields, Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency (FEMA) (over \$10M available for hurricane-related clean-up and redevelopment), US Economic Development Administration (USEDA), Dept. of Transportation (DOT) grants, and new funding opportunities/incentives available in the future. Funding from these resources is available for remediation, demolition, site development, infrastructure improvements, streetscape improvements, building rehabilitation, job training, etc., to encourage and complete our reuse strategies. Should EPA funds be awarded for environmental assessment, the EPA grant qualifies as required match to CDBG-DR, FEMA, and other funding discussed above, further leveraging resources for brownfields redevelopment. Additionally, some funding sources require environmental assessment prior to becoming available and would be unlocked with the use of EPA assessment funds on the properties.

We will also seek funds from the Puerto Rico Economic Incentives Act, which will be used to encourage investment and development of commercial businesses as planned for some of our priority

brownfields. All target properties are located within an Opportunity Zone (OZ), and we will market brownfields as excellent tax shelters under OZ tax incentives, attracting private funds in our low-income areas. As properties are assessed, it will stimulate partnerships with many agencies (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FEMA, PR Dept. of Housing, PR Dept. of Economic Dev. & Commerce, etc.) to fill funding gaps such as demolition funding and reuse incentives, ensuring successful redevelopment. A detailed funding plan will be developed based on individual status and eligibility for each brownfield site or area as assessment projects are realized. CDBG, CDBG-DR, and FEMA funds were just recently released, and we will seek to utilize them immediately. Other funding noted above will also be sought as it becomes available. These funds coupled with insurance funding and the EPA Assessment Grant will enable us to realize and document revitalization success within the next 2-4 years.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Our Revitalization Plans emphasize the build-out of existing parcels, and rehabilitation and infill before additional land is considered for development. All priority sites have utilities already present including 3-Phase electricity, water and sewer services, telephone, and fiber optic service. Redevelopment will utilize these existing services and other physical infrastructure such as roads, curb cuts, parking, and commercial corridors (PR-22, PR-2, & PR-694) to attract new investment in area brownfields, reducing redevelopment costs of these sites. Traditional transportation infrastructure will be complemented by pedestrian connectivity, bicycle improvements, and universal accessibility as per our Revitalization Plans. Our utility infrastructure is large and robust enough to handle the added capacity and need brought by the planned redevelopment in the ND. For example, existing infrastructure currently servicing the Playtex and AAFET Center has adequate service to support the mixed-use commercial/affordable housing planned. With revitalization ranging from mixed-use commercial/residential to tourism, existing infrastructure will allow for easy access to development and enable residents the opportunity to work and live in the same neighborhood. Additional funding for roads, trails, or infrastructure necessary for planned reuse will be sought from the US DOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program, the Infrastructure and Jobs Act, commonwealth funds (when available), and CDBG funds.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement, a. Community Need, i. The Community's Need for Funding: Barceloneta does not have the funds for site assessments in our budget. The only available resource to address brownfield assessments is federal funding. A large portion of our community is low income, with **52.2% of ND residents falling below the poverty line and MHI is more than 3.5X less than the US (2.a.ii.)** making brownfields investment an impossibility for us. The large number of vacant buildings on ND brownfields has resulted in an estimated twofold increase in crime within the ND compared to other parts of Barceloneta (according to community estimates), further limiting local government resources due to additional public safety services (police and fire calls) to brownfield sites. After over 15 years of setbacks and significant economic decline, we have fewer jobs, reduced tax revenues, damaged infrastructure, and limited local government resources. The recession has also left the territorial government with no resources to commit to brownfields reuse. Locally, we estimate tax losses to be over \$4.2M annually, and more than 1,600 jobs were cut in the aftermath of the 936 Exemption and the hurricanes. The municipality operates on a \$35M annual budget, which cannot fully fund essential services, let alone much needed infrastructure repair and maintenance. Moreover, local governments in PR do not have funding resources commonly available to governments on the mainland (e.g., Tax Increment Financing), Incentivizing redevelopment through payment of environmental due diligence is attractive to developers, but we have no tools at a local or territorial level. Brownfield sites add to the financial burden borne by residents, suppressing property values, and adding to municipal expenditures through reduced tax base and additional public safety services to brownfield sites for criminal activity as indicated by the high crime in the ND (70% of total crime of Barceloneta).

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations, (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Our community's most sensitive populations (minorities, low-income residents, and individuals living in poverty, especially children & elderly), live in and around often unsecured ND brownfield sites and risk exposure to toxic chemicals, asbestos, soil and groundwater contamination, and unsafe structures. According to the 2021 ACS, 52.2% of ND residents are living in poverty, and MHI is just over 1/4 of the United States (Table 2), Target area residents suffer dramatic wage disparities, as observed with our sensitive populations, such as children and the elderly. Barceloneta has a very high percentage of

minorities. This is more evident in the ND, where nearly all of the population is minority. Proximity to

Table 2	US¹	PR¹	ND¹
Median Household Income	\$69,021	\$21,967	\$18,925
Percent Minority	40.6%	99.1%	99.8%
Individuals Living in Poverty	12.6%	42.7%	52.2%
Children Living in Poverty	17.0%	56.3%	71.4%
Elderly Living in Poverty	9.6%	38.5%	28.9%
¹ Stats from 2021 ACS			

ND brownfields are potentially causing harm to our sensitive populations in area schools and recreational spaces, some of which adjoin some priority sites. Our priority sites are believed to be impacted with metals, VOCs, PAHs, PCBs, lead paint, asbestos, and other contaminants (i.e. former hospital, former Playtex, AAFET center) known to cause various cancers, asthma, and low birth

weight which are experienced by Barceloneta’s residents at a higher rate than the nation (see 2.a.ii(2)). An infusion of funding from this EPA grant will provide much needed capital for the assessment of blighted properties, clearing the way for remediation and revitalization of the ND to include much needed affordable housing, commercial options, and greenspace. This grant will better inform us of the environmental conditions at our brownfields by considering impacts on neighboring properties when developing reuse plans. Risk of exposure will be reduced, sources of contamination will be eliminated, the ecological health of our community will be improved, and livability and equitable development principles will be incorporated.

2.a.ii(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Sites such as the former Playtex and AAFET Center are impacted by contaminants (PCBs, PAHs, metals, and nitrates) the Center for Disease Control (CDC) links to digestive system cancer. Digestive system cancer incidences and deaths are 18% and 12% more common than in PR. Incidence of colon and rectal cancer in Barceloneta is 12% higher than in Puerto Rico. Suspected contaminants on priority sites like PAHs and nitrates that have been linked to colon and rectal cancer incidence (cancer stats from PR Central Cancer Registry). 60.4% of the housing stock was built prior to 1979 according to the 2021 ACS and older homes have a greater risk for high lead levels from paint. Mercury, lead, and other metals, as well as lead paint, asbestos, VOCs, PAHs, and petroleum constituents are believed to be present on priority sites. These are linked to higher incidences of cancer, kidney disease, and asthma and known to be a threat to unborn children and infants. Infant mortality and low birthweight rate in Puerto Rico are 25% and 22% higher than the US according to the CDC and the PR Dept. of Health. The Arecibo region (which includes Barceloneta) ranks 1st in Puerto Rico for asthma incidence and death, while Puerto Rico ranked 10th highest (among 54 states and territories) in the US (CDC). Although low birth weight and asthma data is not available at the municipality level, this data is representative of Barceloneta. Currently, there are 41 Barceloneta properties with environmental records in EPA’s EnviroFacts database, including 4 sites in the EPAs National Priorities List within 4 miles or less from the ND. **Identification and removal of environmental contaminants present at brownfields in our target area will reduce exposure of our underserved populations to these materials and in turn, reduce disproportionate incidences of disease and other poor health outcomes these residents currently experience.**

2.a.ii(3) Environmental Justice (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: The proximity of brownfields to low-income neighborhoods in our ND drives down housing values, suppresses commercial investment, and limits residents’ access to adequate employment, resulting in a disadvantage for ND residents. The public health impact from ND brownfields and industrial operations, and their proximity to our underserved populations, including low-income and minority residents, has disproportionately exposed them to environmental pollutants, resulting in an inability to maintain their health and wellbeing. EPA’s EJScreen tool indicates that ND residents are in the 78th and 38th percentile for Traffic Proximity/Volume; 71st percentile for Underground Storage Tanks; 98th and 82nd percentile for Superfund Proximity; 82nd for Toxic Releases to Air, and 92nd and 80th percentile for Hazardous Waste Proximity than the US and PR. The CEJST identifies the ND as Disadvantaged for 4 categories including: Housing, Legacy Pollution, Energy, and Workforce Development due to their proximity to hazardous waste facilities, Risk Management Plan facilities, and Superfund sites; lack of indoor plumbing; energy cost; low income, poverty; and unemployment). These conditions have a direct impact on the health, prosperity, and wellbeing of ND residents, as evidenced by their poor health (2.a.ii(2)), poverty status (2.a.ii(1)), exposure to environmental contaminants, etc. **All the ND priority sites in 1.a.ii are located within a disadvantaged CEJST census tract.**

2.a.ii(3)(b) Advancing Environmental Justice: Brownfield assessment, cleanup, and reuse strategies will improve the welfare of our sensitive populations in the ND by identifying and eliminating the health risks they pose. The EPA grant will play a crucial role in this, reducing threats by funding environmental investigation work needed to trigger stalled cleanup and end disinvestment in the ND. Repurposing the Abra del Pimiento Building and Roque Isle Center will provide needed mixed-use commercial/residential development and provide greenspace in the community. Grant funds will assess lead-based paint, spurring other federal programs (e.g., CDBG) to help fund lead-based paint abatement and other residential improvements. New tax revenue will be generated and reinvested in the community. The Former Hospital’s redevelopment will create employment opportunities for ND residents when the commercial development is complete, and bring additional tax revenue to the community. Increased employment, higher wages, and new development on brownfield properties will create a sense of pride and ownership of the neighborhood, incentivizing investment in other area properties. New jobs in our target area will create gainful employment for residents, reducing poverty, and improving the state of our housing by redeveloping some sites as low-income residential. **Health indicators such as deaths from cancer and kidney disease, childhood asthma, and very low infant birthweight (2.a.ii(2)) will no longer be influenced by environmental impacts caused by ND brownfields. This will be accomplished in areas where low income and minority populations are concentrated, supporting environmental justice for all Barceloneta residents.** To minimize the displacement of underserved residents and businesses, reuse plans will include affordable housing for all income levels, competitive-wage jobs, and the attraction of potential consumers through commercial development. Residents will be involved in the planning through community engagement, where their input into brownfield design and reuse will be sought. Reuse plans will always preserve federally subsidized housing programs.

2.b. Community Engagement, i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: Several community organizations have pledged supporting roles for our brownfields program and grant (Table 3). This diverse assemblage of community groups is suited to engage stakeholders at a grassroots level. They have regional influence and local ties, maximizing the benefits they bring to the project. A brownfield committee is being assembled from residents, members of the public, developers, etc., to provide input into the inventory and site prioritization, reuse plans, economic development, and community engagement efforts, etc. The committee will meet 2-4 times/year to discuss our brownfields program.

Table 3 – 2.b.ii – Project Partners and Roles

Partner Name	Point of Contact	Description and Project Roles
Centro Cultural	Sonia García 787-362-2443 sgarcia@barceloneta.pr.gov	Non-profit organization with knowledge of historical land uses in the ND and will use this info to aid with site identification and selection (provide environmental records research assistance)
Fraternidad Socio Cultural de Barceloneta	Miguel Cordero 787-846-2242 E2, Urb. Catalana, Barceloneta	Local grassroots neighborhood beautification & advocacy group representing ND residents who will provide guidance regarding preservation of historic and culturally significant assets throughout the redevelopment process
Barceloneta Department of Tourism	Diego de Jesus ddejesus.@barceloneta.pr.gov 787-846-3400	Municipal department in charge of tourism who will provide input on cleanup needs of the Roque Isle Center and oversee the redevelopment of the property, providing project progress updates at community engagement events
Club de Leones Barceloneta	Lu M. Domínguez 787-244-8651 clubdeleonespuertorico@gmail.com	Community business advocate who will provide outreach meeting facilities and educate public on brownfields & benefits of reuse/redevelopment
Asociacion de Pescadores	Norberto Gutiérrez, 787-934-5308 [REDACTED]	Local neighborhood commerce and recreation group representing ND residents who will provide input on site selection and their impacts of brownfields on local natural assets, and will participate in community engagement

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Barceloneta has a culture of community involvement that we will maintain throughout this grant. **A total of 8-12 public meetings will be held during the 4-year grant period** to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather input on site selection,

prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from the cleanup and redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms, ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. In the event social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management *Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). The community will be updated on progress throughout the grant and will have the opportunity to share input through comments on municipality and community partner websites. For residents with limited internet or cellular network access, paper surveys will be available at local businesses, enabling community input without access to digital resources. The municipality has multi-lingual personnel available to advertise meetings, interpret presentations, or translate documents in Spanish or other languages. We have begun engaging ND residents, business owners, not-for-profits, churches, and other community advocates to solicit their input regarding our brownfield project and will continue to do so during the grant period. A public meeting will be held in the first two quarters of the grant period to discuss the goals of the grant, initial planned activities, and a schedule for future community involvement. For subsequent meetings, personal invitations will be sent to residents directly impacted by priority sites, neighborhood groups, lenders, area businesses, and developers to maximize the engagement of these stakeholders. Regional developers will be contacted through the Municipal Planning & Zoning Department, with help from the PR Dept. of Economic Development to bring awareness of the redevelopment opportunities priority sites offer. When developers are identified, they will be invited to attend public meetings to describe their plans for reuse. As a project progresses, we will involve target area stakeholders in the decision-making process regarding site prioritization, assessment, site marketing, cleanup planning, and feedback on reuse. As stakeholder input is received, we will evaluate it against our development goals and available resources, adopting input that feasibly meets these criteria.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, & Measuring Progress, a. Description of Tasks/Activities &

Outputs: Barceloneta will begin activities immediately upon award confirmation, working to prepare a Work Plan approved by the EPA PM/PO. No subawards or participant support costs are planned. After the Cooperative Agreement period begins, Barceloneta and its QEP will complete the following tasks:

Task/Activity 1: Program Management, Training Support, Brownfield Inventory/Prioritization

i. Project Implementation: Barceloneta staff will travel to the PR Brownfields Week and the National Brownfields Conference, participate in calls, meetings, and correspondence between Barceloneta, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement. 8-12 public meetings to update communities on the grant and seek public input and involvement; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc. We will complete Quarterly, DBE, Annual reports, and ACRES database entries, and will track contractor costs, comparing to the budget, expenditures, project progress, and milestones to ensure timely expenditure of funds within the prescribed 4-year project period. Barceloneta, with QEP support, will continue to develop a brownfield inventory and will use it to help accomplish reuse goals. Inventoried sites will be prioritized based on criteria discussed with stakeholders: 1) reuse potential, 2) environmental or health impact and environmental justice (EJScreen and/or CEJST), and 3) community input. Additional sites will be identified by Barceloneta, community leaders, local governments, redevelopment investors, and through community outreach. Priority will be granted to sites within areas identified as disadvantaged by EJScreen and/or CEJST and sites near residential areas that pose health risks to underserved communities. Priority will also be considered for sites that have a higher chance of redevelopment and a greater economic impact potential within our target area.

ii. Schedule: QEP will be selected through a competitive bidding process (compliant with federal procurement regulations - 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326 and "Brownfield Grants: Guidance on Competitively Procuring a Contractor – May 2023") before Cooperative Agreement begins; correspondence will occur at least monthly (more frequently as specific project activities require) throughout the grant; update and prioritize brownfield inventory the first 2 quarters, then as necessary for the remainder of the grant; ACRES updates will be conducted at least quarterly throughout the grant.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Barceloneta & QEP

iv. Outputs: Travel-Municipal staff to regional/national brownfields conferences/meetings; prioritized inventory; project performance reports: 16 Quarterly Reports, ACRES entries, 4 DBE reports, 4 annual financial reports, etc.; calls, meetings, and correspondence between Barceloneta, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement.

Task/Activity 2: Environmental Investigation

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

ii. Schedule: Obtain site access, request eligibility determinations & finalize site access to initial sites for investigation-early 2nd Quarter of Grant period; Begin Phase I ESAs-2nd Quarter of Grant period; Submit QAPP to EPA for review/approval; QAPP approval & Phase II ESAs begin-3rd Quarter of Grant period; all Phase I ESAs completed-end of 15th Quarter of Grant period; all Phase II ESAs completed, and final contractor invoices submitted-45 days before end of grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Barceloneta & QEP

iv. Outputs: 12 Phase I ESAs; QAPP and SAP/HASP; estimated 9-11 Phase II ESAs.

Task/Activity 3: Clean-up/Reuse Planning:

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

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

iii. Task/activity Leads: Barceloneta & QEP

iv. Outputs: 6-10 cleanup planning and/or reuse documents and 1 design charette/visioning session.

Task/Activity 4: Community Outreach & Involvement:

i. Project Implementation: 8-12 public meetings will be held during the grant period to update the community on ESA progress and seek public input/involvement. Print and mail material for project/site information and marketing documents will also be funded under this task. The municipality will complete this task, assisted by the QEP, who will manage the technical aspects of the community outreach program and will attend/participate in outreach events. Social media outlets and other online media will be developed/maintained, and outreach efforts will inform the public on the progress of investigation/cleanup planning activities and provide marketing resources for future development. Additional sites will be identified during public community outreach meetings. These meetings will be focused on public engagement including what sites the community views as a priority for redevelopment. Priority will be granted to sites identified by underserved communities, especially when those sites are within areas identified as disadvantaged by the EJSscreen and/or CEJST.

ii. Schedule: 2-4 brownfield committee meetings planned per year and 2-3 public meetings planned per year with the 1st planned for the 2nd Quarter of the grant period.

iii. Task/activity Leads: Barceloneta & QEP

iv. Outputs: 8-12 public meetings to update the community on the brownfield assessment progress and seek public input and involvement; 8-16 brownfield committee meetings to provide input into the inventory and site prioritization, reuse plans, economic development, and community engagement efforts; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc.

We will work diligently to assure startup activities are completed per the tasks and schedule above. The municipality will allocate all grant funds to project properties before the final quarter of the grant period to assure that grant task activities are completed before the end of the 4-year Cooperative Agreement contract. Because there is a high demand for assessments and site access has already been obtained for two of the priority sites in Table 1, it is likely that funds will be spent prior to the end date. We are proactively communicating with representatives of privately-owned brownfields to gain access and resolve issues in anticipation of this grant funding as well as non-grant funded assessment activities.

Such communication initiates the process for eventual property transfer and redevelopment. These discussions create a positive dialog between property owners, local government, and impacted citizens.

3.b. Cost Estimates: We will allocate \$407,100 to Phase I and II ESAs (or 81.4% of total grant funding assigned to ESAs). The costs outlined in Table 4 were developed anticipating tasks necessary to efficiently identify, characterize, and plan for the remediation of the priority sites listed in Table 1.

Table 4 Budget	Budget Categories ¹	1. Program Mgmt, Training Support, Inv / Prioritization	2.Phase I / II ESAs	3. Clean-up / Reuse Planning	4. Community Outreach & Involvement	Budget Category Total
Direct Costs	Travel	\$4,000	0	0	0	\$4,000
	Supplies	0	0	0	\$325	\$325
	Contractual ²	\$20,995	\$407,100	\$55,000	\$12,580	\$495,675
TOTAL BUDGET		\$24,995	\$407,100	\$55,000	\$12,905	\$500,000

¹Table 4 only includes budget categories with costs. ²In accordance with Federal, State, and local procurement regulations.

Tasks will be completed at the anticipated unit costs with the following anticipated outputs/outcomes:

1. Program Management & Training Support, Inventory/Prioritization: \$24,995 – *Travel:* Attend National Brownfield Conf.: airfare x 2 @ \$1,400, 2 rooms, 3 nights lodging @ \$1,700, meals @ \$650, ground transportation @ \$250 = \$4,000, Municipality staff time for administering the grant will be provided as in-kind support, *Contractual:* total \$20,995, includes approximately 125 hrs. \$85/hr. = \$10,625 for inventory, & approximately 122 hours \$85/hr. = \$10,370 for program mgmt.

2. Env. Investigation: \$407,100 – *Contractual:* 12 Phase I ESAs at an average cost of \$3,800 each = \$45,600, & 9-11 Phase II ESAs at an estimated cost of \$30,000-\$45,000 (depending on site complexity/environmental conditions) = \$361,500 (@ \$36,150 average cost). Though our budget will support 12 Phase I's and 9-11 Phase II ESAs, we understand that large sites may need more investment requiring us to realign the budget during the grant period. Areas of focus will include those already determined in the inventories as priority sites listed in 1.a.ii.

3. Clean-up & Reuse Planning: \$55,000 – *Contractual:* 6-10 ABCAs/clean-up plans expected to cost \$5,000 each = \$40,000. 1 Design Charette expected to cost \$15,000 each = \$15,000.

4. Community Outreach & Involvement: \$12,905 – *Supplies:* printed flyers, advertising, grant fact sheets, outreach visual aids, advertising, postage, etc. = \$325, *Contractual:* approx. 148 hours at an estimated \$85/hr. = \$12,580.

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

4. Programmatic Capability & Past Performance, a. Programmatic Capability, i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure & iii Description of Key Staff: The Environmental Management and Federal Programs Departments of the Municipality handle most programmatic management activities and will seek assistance from a QEP, as needed. These offices have previously managed many other economic development resources valued at well over \$17M over the past 6 years. These offices, along with other municipality staff, have the technical, financial, and administrative ability in place to implement this grant project successfully. Mrs. Eris Galan, Director of Environmental Management, will serve as the Municipality's Grant Manager. Mrs. Galan holds an M.S. degree in Environmental Sciences with specialization in Environmental Management. She has worked with the municipality on projects for 16 years, 7 in her current position. Mrs. Eris Galan will be assisted by Mrs. Glorimar Villamil

Carrión, Director of Federal Programs. Mrs. Villamil has been with Barceloneta for 10 years and has managed many funding programs, including the response efforts of Hurricane Maria. Galan and Villamil will use their experience working in several programs together to manage the grant and seek redevelopment opportunities for brownfield properties in the ND and throughout Barceloneta. Mr. Noel Gutierrez, Office of Finances Director, will serve as the Grant Financial Manager and be responsible for accounting and financial reporting. He has been with the municipality for over 25 years and served as manager for many other grant and loan programs for the municipality. The Office of Planning and Office of Economic Development will provide grant management support, as needed. In the unlikely event that a member of the team leaves their job prior to the completion of grant tasks, the depth of the municipality’s team will allow for a seamless transition to other experienced members.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: The aforementioned staff will oversee the QEP procurement process and the acquisition of additional resources. Through a competitive bidding/procurement process, we will select a QEP according to federal procurement regulations (2 CFR 200.317 through 200.326 and “Brownfield Grants: Guidance on Competitively Procuring a Contractor – May 2023”) and experience conducting environmental investigation and working with the PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). We will make every effort to contract with Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (women and/or minority owned) and consultants/contractors who employ disadvantaged people, when possible, and we will require our QEP to make every effort to do the same. Barceloneta will also engage with Invest in Puerto Rico, a nonprofit investment promotion organization created by law, via Act 13–2017 to increase investment in the region. The team and execution plan outlined above will ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds within the 4-year project. As appropriate, we will utilize visioning sessions and other assistance/advice offered by the Technical Assistance for Brownfields (Region 2 TAB) to maximize the incorporation of community input. We will work with the PR Small Business Administration (PRSBAs) to identify small businesses in the area with strong labor practices who have been vetted by the PRSBAs as qualified to perform remediation activities and other contracted services. We will invite the vetted contractors through the competitive bidding process noted above. We will also work with Pathstone (see 2.b.iii) to link our community members to job opportunities related to the investigation, remediation, redevelopment, and ultimate reuse of brownfields.

4.b. Past Performance & Accomplishments, ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements (I) Purpose & Accomplishments: Barceloneta has never received an EPA Brownfields grant. However, we have received other federal and non-federal assistance agreements as indicated in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Past Federally/Non-Federally Funded Assistance Agreements

Awarding Agency	Project	\$ Received	Accomplishments/Outputs/Outcomes/Measures of Success
Community Development Block Grants - Covid Relief	Distribution of food supply and batteries for solar (among other)	\$553,105	Food and supplies for 720 Elderly citizens Implement batteries for solar for 139 elderly and critical condition citizens
CDBG - Disaster Recovery Funds	Urban infrastructure rehabilitation	\$9,513,594	Rehabilitation and improvements of infrastructure of 6 public services center, with upgrades for community necessities
FEMA 404 (Mitigation Grant Programs)	Hazard Mitigation / Resiliency upgrades for communities and public services	\$6,391,588	Mitigation projects impacting 11 communities with projects for the improvement of stormwater management, alternative energy, resiliency hub, and emergency response center affecting over 18,000 residents

4.b.ii(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: All funding assistance agreement terms and conditions were met for the above-mentioned projects, including reporting of the number of residential units constructed and who/where/how many received section 8 vouchers under the HUD program, financial reports, quarterly progress reports, and final reports were completed. HUD quarterly and final reports are similar to the EPA Brownfields Grant program’s and are due at the same time; therefore, a coordinated effort will be used to create a synergy in reporting outputs/outcomes of both when we have funding from these programs simultaneously. **All goals, outputs, and outcomes (Table 5) in the workplans of the previous grants were achieved, and reports discussed were completed in a timely manner.** Because goals, outputs, and outcomes were met without incident, no corrective measures were necessary or taken. The municipality was fully compliant with the terms and conditions of these grant programs and follows all reporting and performance protocols.

III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

III.B.1 Applicant Eligibility

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

III.B.2 Community Involvement

Involving our community and soliciting feedback regarding Brownfields activities and redevelopment plans are essential to our community's Brownfields program's success. Communication is a two-way process, and our ultimate goal is to keep the community informed and involved so they remain aware of potential concerns, questions and solutions. 8 to 12 outreach events (2-3 per yr.) will be held throughout the grant period to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather public input on site selection and prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from cleanup/redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms (earned media and other low-cost, no-cost or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA's Office of Land and Emergency *Management Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). See Section IV.E.2.b. of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria for further information.

III.B.3 Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

This criterion is not applicable as Municipality of Barceloneta is not a current EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant recipient.

III.B.4 Contractors and Named Subrecipients

The Municipality of Barceloneta has not procured/named any contractors or subrecipients.