



Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification: The proposed recipient of the EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant monies is the City of Wildwood with offices located at 100 North Main Street, Wildwood, Florida 34785.

2. Funding Requested

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

3. Location: The community we propose to serve is the City of Wildwood, Sumter County, Florida.

4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

Target Area	Census Tract	Address	PIN
Downtown Railyard District	12119911301 and 12119911302	300 Shopping Center Drive	G06-063
		111 N Main and 113 N Main Street	G06L143
		405 S Main Street	G07A021
Target Area 2: Uptown District		Address	PIN
Uptown District	12119911302	412 S. Main Street	G07-025
		410 Gray Street	G06J049
		415 Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue	G06J052
Target Area 3: The Junction		Address	PIN
The Junction	12119911301	400 Roy Street	Various, Inc. G06J001

5. Contacts

- a. Project Director: Jason McHugh, City Manager, 100 North Main Street, Wildwood, FL, 34785; Phone: 352-330-1332; Email: JMcHugh@wildwood-fl.gov
- b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official: Ed Wolf, Mayor, 100 North Main Street, Wildwood, FL, 34785; Phone: 352-303-5252; Email: EWolf@wildwood-fl.gov

6. Population: Our population is 17,731 persons (U.S. Census Bureau, July 1, 2022 Estimates).

7. Other Factors:

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
The priority 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).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
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.	X, p. 3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	
30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities for priority site(s) within the target area.	X, p. 8
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed or is closing.	

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

9. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not applicable.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jeanette Nuñez
Lt. Governor

Shawn Hamilton
Secretary

November 1, 2023

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

Dear Ms. Vargas:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the City of Wildwood's Brownfields grant application for a Community-Wide Hazardous Substance and Petroleum or Petroleum Products Assessment Grant. The Department understands that this application has been prepared in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidance document EPA-OLEM-OBLR-23-12, titled "Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants." This letter of acknowledgement addresses the requirement for a "Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority," described in SECTION IV.D.8. EPA Brownfields grant funding will strengthen the City's cleanup and redevelopment efforts. This federal grant effort also supports Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Act and the Department's role in administration of site rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

The Department encourages EPA grant recipients to use the incentives and resources available through Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Program with EPA grant funding to enhance the success of their Brownfields project. The Department recommends that the City consider including Brownfields sites or areas that could potentially receive federal funding in a state-designated Brownfield area. The City is also encouraged to contact Lu Burson, the Central District Brownfields Coordinator, at (407) 897-2912 to learn more about the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Billy Hessman".

Billy Hessman, P.G., Environmental Manager
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

BH/jc

cc:

Jason McHugh, City of Wildwood – jmchugh@wildwood-fl.gov

Lu Burson, DEP Central District – lu.burson@floridadep.gov

Wildwood, FL – Community Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant (FY24)
Wildwood Railyard District Revitalization

IV.E. Narrative/Ranking Criteria

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Overview of Background Challenges and Description of Target Area:

Wildwood is a charming old railroad town in the heart of Florida. The community is located in Sumter County, FL, 90 minutes from either the Gulf of Mexico or Atlantic Ocean. Wildwood is often referred to as “The Crossroads of Florida,” and is strategically located at the juncture of Interstate 75, Florida’s Turnpike, State Road 44, and U.S. Highway 301, providing easy access to both coasts and the major metropolitan areas of Tampa, Orlando, and Gainesville. The city occupies 57.26 square miles and serves a population of 30,627 (2023 Bureau of Business and Economic Research – University of Florida) a 450% increase from 2010 (6,709, 2010 US Census). Notably, the city of Wildwood includes portions of The Villages® development, a rapidly growing retirement community that encompasses multiple counties and municipalities. The population of Wildwood is on the rise as The Villages® popularity has increased, and City officials estimate the population is close to 32,000 residents including sectors of The Villages® that are within the City’s geographical boundaries. The City has two major regional infrastructure corridors bisecting the community, namely, U.S. Highway 301 and the CSX rail line. Over the years, these barriers have been more than geographical boundaries, but related socioeconomic and demographic boundaries which isolate our most under-represented populations. While recent investments and rapid growth have caused a resurgence in our economy, significant socioeconomic disparities still exist between those on the “other” side of the tracks (west) and those living east of the tracks. The east side, including our historic downtown, enjoys the benefits of public amenities, schools, parks, and infrastructure which are notably absent on the west side of the CSX tracks. While Wildwood is excited to welcome new residents, we need to address the growing disparity between our more affluent populations in the northeast and disadvantaged minority populations (17.5% of the total population) to the southwest. A divide is being felt across the community as older Wildwood neighborhoods struggle with rising consumer prices, increasing housing costs, and diminished incomes, while new development surges in other areas of the community, largely benefiting from The Villages®. Wildwood’s schools and major parks are located on the east side of the tracks and are not easily and safely accessible to those living west of the CSX rail line. The City has been investing what limited tax funding is available into community facilities to promote health and wellbeing on the west side. Still, the presence of brownfields in our western neighborhoods is driving disinvestment that is in stark contrast to other areas of the City.

Our goal is to eliminate brownfield barriers on sites that can be redeveloped into essential public facilities, like parks and neighborhood centers, along with affordable housing and commercial development. The “Downtown Wildwood Railyard District” is our focus area, encompassing 445-acres bisected by Main Street (US Highway 301), stretching east and west approximately two blocks each direction. The focus area includes our Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) district, encompassing three Target Areas: The **Downtown Railyard District** represents a long railroad history in Wildwood, paralleling Main Street and the CSX tracks from Ross Street on the north to Hall Street on the south. The **Uptown District** is the gateway to downtown and located adjacent to Main Street from Hall Street south to Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. This area also extends west on including MLK Avenue across the railroad tracks through a low-income, underserved area of Wildwood. The **Junction** stretches south along Main from MLK Avenue to E. Kentucky Avenue, which includes vacated CSX rail spur land.

This focus area has numerous underutilized properties such as the CSX rail station and line, unused rail yards, rail spurs, large vacant parking lots, and underutilized commercial buildings. Additionally, there are numerous vacant sites, aging auto repair shops, a vacant grocery store, and shuttered gas stations. Once a bustling railroad area, our focus area has transformed into a neglected expanse of vacant buildings, buffeted by the relentless roar of highway traffic, which has led to a decline in housing quality and spiraling business growth. We have an overwhelming sense of disquiet concerning pedestrian safety as U.S. Highway 301, a state highway designed for heavy truck traffic, divides the downtown railyard district, further compounding obstacles to pedestrian safety. The northern part of the downtown neighborhood, once a charming, small-town haven with tree-lined streets and quaint railroad theme, now stands as a shadow of its former self. West of the tracks are multiple vacant and aging houses, and service facilities that are in disrepair. The Junction neighborhood is home to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, which was built many years ago over a former dump site, capped by playgrounds and ball fields. The park now has visible trash and debris exposed through the grass and turf, in direct contact with residents that use this park. It is also notable that there is only one primary transportation access (Huey Street/ Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Ave.) that connects the east and west sides of Wildwood, which serves to limit access of our disadvantaged and underserved residents with essential public services. Connecting the east and west sides of Wildwood to providing an increased quality of life for our disadvantaged residents remains one of the City’s top priorities.

The City will use the EPA grant to pursue revitalization in the heart of our community. Our priorities include creating opportunities for new affordable housing and revitalizing downtown to attract visitors and increase the tax base benefitting both sides of the railroad. Our brownfield initiative will be geared toward redevelopment, reuse, and infrastructure improvements that connect the City, and improve public spaces in **The Junction** target area. Specifically, EPA grant funds would be used for site-specific assessments, remediation planning, revitalization planning, outreach, and partnership activities to facilitate further private and public investments. We will identify areas for affordable housing and services, commercial development, and safer transportation modes for our residents. The City of Wildwood is a rapidly changing community with enormous potential that wants to spur equitable investment and redevelopment within its target areas to bring our residents together.

Wildwood, FL – Community Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant (FY24)

Wildwood Railyard District Revitalization

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):

Our focus area includes the center of Wildwood, specifically portions of Census Tracts (CT) 1301, 1302, and 1402. The area includes over 445-acres of residential and commercial properties, many of which are believed to be affected by hazardous substances and petroleum impacts in groundwater, soils, and soil vapors. Despite the community processing thousands of building permits every year, developers tend to overlook our target areas in favor of pursuing greenfield development in the outskirts of the community. Our inner-city neighborhoods on the west side of the rail (CT 1302) are rife with diminished housing stock, vacant and underutilized commercial buildings, and empty lots. Through a Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant, Wildwood will focus efforts on these seven priority sites:

Target Area: 1 Downtown District	Address	Area	PIN
<p>The City's downtown district is in the heart of the community celebrating the rich railroad history of Wildwood and embracing our historic architecture and green space. Hundreds of cars pass by it each hour moving to the affluent neighborhoods. Concern of contaminants from the railroad (petroleum hydrocarbons, chlorinated solvents, asbestos, and lead-based paint) has resulted in vacant and underutilized buildings across our downtown. Providing a "clean bill of health" or even an understanding of the environmental conditions would be key to convincing developers to take on these multiple historic buildings that have been vacant for years. Many of our downtown buildings have been in a condition of disrepair and exposed to the elements resulting in structural deterioration. Instead of favoring the many downtown districts being constructed in The Villages® it is important to attract development to areas where our lower income residents live and work. Parcels in proximity to the CSX rail line and unused spurs also provide valuable revitalization opportunities with sufficient assessment, planning and remediation. Old gas stations, dry cleaners, and derelict buildings make up this area of the community. Key properties in the downtown include:</p>			
Site 1.1	Strip Mall/Wildwood Mall	300 Shopping Center Drive	11 acres G06-063
<p>Site Info: This 10.97 Acre Shopping Center was built in 1966 and 1977 with over 141,000 square feet of floor space. The buildings have not been assessed for asbestos and lead-based paint and many of the former stores sit vacant and unused as concerns of contamination dissuade redevelopment over green fields. Additional concerns include former dry-cleaning operations. The area is ripe for redevelopment and reuse for our many residents. This area would be a prime location for affordable housing and support services for our residents. The property would also tie in well to the new park trails that were built to the edge of our community but stopped when lower income areas were encountered.</p> <p>Environmental Considerations: Health risks from potential hazardous substances from historic operations including asbestos and lead-based paint, chlorinated solvents, and other unknown potential hazards.</p>			
Site 1.2	N. Main Street	111 N Main and 113 N Main	0.13 acres G06L143
<p>Site Info: 111 N Main and 113 N Main have sat vacant for several years with concerns of asbestos, lead-based paint, structural deficiencies and more. These buildings sit directly across from our City Hall and are white stucco buildings but have boarded up windows, bars across the doors, and are an unattractive site for anyone visiting our community. Used as former refinishing shop, train shops, and more, the level of contamination is unknown and a huge concern for developers. Environmental Considerations: The health risks to community includes asbestos containing materials, lead-based paints, and mold. In addition, due to past uses, potential concerns with volatile organic carbons, specifically chlorinated solvents used in painting and refinishing also exist.</p> <p>Additional sites in this vicinity include 115 N. Main Street to 434 S Main Street includes numerous turn-of-the-century, historic commercial developments. Properties like those with historic commercial architecture on Main Street, while charming, have been left vacant, underutilized, and unattractive. The City has been proactive in looking for redevelopers and even has acquired several of these properties but struggles to find funding to kick-start their adaptive reuse. Some private owners of the vacant and abandoned sites are interested in selling or improving the land, but do not understand the environmental regulations associated with redevelopment and are fearful of fees or fines. By providing incentive to perform the necessary assessment that will catalyze redevelopment, in the form of Phase I and II ESAs and strategic planning and visualization efforts, an EPA Brownfields Assessment grant will help meet the needs of a community that has limited ability to draw on other sources of funding. In addition, south main contains numerous former gas stations, auto repair shops, car washes, and more. Additional properties include: 201 S Main, 299 S Main, 311 S Main, 405 S Main, which are all apparent former gas stations with scarring in their concrete and unknown determination if underground storage tanks have been removed.</p>			
Site 1.3	Liquor Store	405 S Main	0.5 acres G07A021
<p>Site Info: This store sits on a prime corner in our downtown (S Main Street and Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Ave) and directly next to the railroad tracks. The property is an old gas station with concrete scars showing remnants of fuel pumps. Concern of remaining underground storage tanks and piping remain at the site. Environmental Considerations: Concerns from developers include remnants of petroleum and underground storage tanks, soil and groundwater contamination including vapor intrusion, coal ash, lead, arsenic, and more that should be assessed to attract developers.</p>			
Target Area: 2 Uptown District	Address	Area	PIN
<p>The Uptown District is the gateway to our downtown, welcoming guests and residents. Low-income housing west of CSX Rail line and north of Conrad Yelvington aggregate distribution site (101 Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Ave to 415 Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Ave). Existing homes are within 500 feet of the CSX rail line. CSX rail line and easement areas. Physical safety to residents crossing the rail line to access schools and parks on the east side and health risk due to potential hazardous substances. Key properties in the Uptown include:</p>			

Wildwood, FL – Community Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant (FY24)

Wildwood Railyard District Revitalization

Site 2.1	Suburban Propane Shop	412 S. Main	0.24 acres	G07-025
<p>Site Info: A Suburban Propane Shop sits at 412 S. Main with concerns of contamination and air quality. This property sits at a prime location where a trail was discontinued at a low-income neighborhood due to concerns of contamination.</p> <p>Environmental Considerations: Health risks that should be evaluated include air quality, asbestos, lead-based paint in the building, and the site should have an environmental assessment to provide confidence in continuing the trail system.</p>				
Site 2.2	Refuse Shop	410 Gray Street	0.64 acres	G06J049
<p>Site Info: This former refuse shop is an industrial area near low income residential (includes an aggregate site) and CSX rail line. This location is slated for redevelopment as a new overpass but concerns of environmental contamination from former uses including repair and refuse are delaying the project. An approximately 4500 sf building also sits on the property. Environmental Considerations: Health risks from potential hazardous substances, former above-ground storage tanks, petroleum hydrocarbons and unknown risks from refuse (asbestos, freon, poly-chlorinated biphenyls, dioxins, furans, and volatile organic carbons) should be evaluated before redevelopment.</p>				
Site 2.3	Future Ped. Overpass	415 Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue	3.4 acres	G06J052
<p>Site Info: This site is the location of a future pedestrian overpass area across USH 301 and CSX Rail at Oxford Street CSX rail line and includes easement areas.</p> <p>Environmental Considerations: Health risks from this site include safety to residents crossing the rail line and health risk due to potential hazardous substances from historic operations including potential hazardous substances, asbestos and lead-based paint, chlorinated solvents, and other unknown potential hazards.</p>				
<p>Target Area: 3 The Junction</p> <p>The Junction is a low-income neighborhood west of the tracks that includes many underutilized areas occupied by the unused rail spur and older businesses within the “Y” along Main Street. Areas of the Junction neighborhood area was also built over a former dump where playgrounds and ball fields including the City’s Martin Luther King Jr. Park now see seepage of trash and debris coming up through the grass and turf. It is also notable that there is only one direct access along Huey Street/ Dr. M.L.K. Jr Ave that connects the east and west sides of the community. Children often walk across the tracks at informal crossing points to access the schools and parks. Connecting the east and west side of town remains the City’s top priority. This area needs affordable housing and amenities for this primarily minority neighborhood to meet the growing needs of the City. Key sites in the Junction include:</p>				
Site 3.1	CSX “Y” Property at Huey Street (44A)	400 Roy St	17 acres	Various, inc. G06J001
<p>Site Info: Various parcels adjacent to this “Y” could be available for redevelopment with the proper assessment.</p> <p>Environmental Considerations: Health risks from potential hazardous substances include physical safety to residents crossing the rail line and health risk due to potential hazardous substances from the railroad including coal dust and heavy metals in addition to chlorinated solvents and petroleum.</p>				

1.a.iii. Identifying Additional Sites:

The City has a well-established outreach plan for this grant. We will engage and work with the City Development Services department, who has already developed an initial inventory of key properties for redevelopment. We will also develop a steering committee of key stakeholders and community-based organizations to identify the key brownfields sites located within the Target Areas that will benefit the most disadvantaged community members. Site prioritization will be based on several factors, including potential for contamination cleanup, blight elimination, economic development opportunity, and quality of life enhancement. Care will be exercised to include representation from our low-income residents as we identify and prioritize additional sites. After initial identification, each of the potential sites will be compared against US EPA eligibility criteria to determine funding eligibility. Prior to the expenditure of grant funds, all eligibility determinations will be prepared and submitted to the FL DEP and USEPA for both petroleum and hazardous substances sites to verify their eligibility, respectively.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area:

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:

The City’s vision for reuse has been well documented in our 201 Wildwood Downtown Master Plan. In fact, our target areas were initially highlighted in this plan, along with the revitalization strategies. Our brownfield approach is tailored to help the community make the best use of resources by providing clear and precise implementation steps that explain how to move from planning to action. We find the best way to accomplish that is by aligning previous local efforts and associated data to inform the next steps forward. The following potential priority brownfield site reuses are identified to address many of the community issues Wildwood’s disadvantaged populations are experiencing:

Target Area: 1 Downtown District				
Site 1.1	Strip Mall/ Wildwood Mall	300 Shopping Center Drive	11 acres	G06-063
<p>Reuse: Revitalization would reactivate vacant spaces and create the potential for additional retail outparcels. We estimate that 3-5 additional businesses could locate in the space creating jobs and tax revenue.</p>				
Site 1.2	N. Main Street	111 N Main and 113 N Main	0.13 acres	G06L143

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Reuse: With its key location in the community, these spaces could accommodate small businesses or services aligned to the local neighborhood needs. Cleanup of derelict automotive uses in the area would help increase property values.				
Site 1.3	Liquor Store	405 S Main	0.5 acres	G07A021
Reuse: As a prime focal point between east & west neighborhoods, this area is ideal for essential services and streetscape improvements, including enhanced sidewalks/pathways.				
Target Area: 2 Uptown District		Address	Area	PIN
Site 2.1	Suburban Propane Shop	412 S. Main	0.24 acres	G07-025
Reuse: Key opportunities include connection of the regional trail connecting neighborhoods. Downtown plan indicates the potential for affordable housing investments in this vicinity, up to 300 mixed market rate and affordable residential units, plus 10,000 SF of commercial space and amenities with urban plazas and pedestrian oriented street networks.				
Site 2.2	Refuse Shop	410 Gray Street	0.64 acres	G06J049
Reuse: Downtown plan envisions housing opportunities and neighborhood services.				
Site 2.3	Future Pedestrian Overpass area	415 Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue	3.4 acres	G06J052
Reuse: Areas around the overpass location provide an opportunity to provide park/gathering spaces.				
Target Area: 3 The Junction		Address	Area	PIN
Site 3.1	CSX "Y" Property at Huey Street (44A)	400 Roy St	17 acres	Various Inc. G06J001
Reuse: Downtown plan indicates the potential for affordable housing investments in this vicinity, up to 300 mixed market rate and affordable residential units, plus 10,000 SF of commercial space and amenities with urban plazas and pedestrian oriented street networks.				

The Railyard District in downtown Wildwood has been the focus of the 2021 Downtown Master Plan (<https://wildwooddowntown.com/>) with public investments for small parks and open spaces, to spur redevelopment activity adjacent to the rail line. This plan also identified and recommended the pursuit of EPA Brownfield Assistance, based on the prevalence of sites. All seven of the Priority Sites are identified in the Plan, along with the planned reuse vision identified above.

Adding green space along Main Street, Lynam Street and in other key neighborhood locations would result in rising land values and, consequently, an increased tax base. It also helps provide connectivity and non-motorized transportation options with adjoining trail connections. A key component of the Downtown Master Plan is the multimodal green corridor along Gamble Street linking the Greenway along 44A and the bike trail on Cleveland Avenue. This path connects key civic assets within the City including the Wildwood Middle School, City Hall, and Sumter Prep Academy. In the future, there is an expectation that new businesses and activities will be located in this walkable downtown location, which will in turn increase local character and tourism, as well as establish a stable workforce with nearby housing options. Our Downtown Master Plan proposes that the **Downtown Railyard District** focus on "creating historic building facades and developing attractive public spaces to draw from the placemaking elements of the planning process." In the **Uptown District**, we are working to create a more welcoming, vibrant area for shopping, community events, and local cuisine supported by a strong affordable housing residential base. With a focus on residential and commercial redevelopment, we are creating a sense of place that encourages a live/work lifestyle. Lastly and most importantly, in **The Junction**, we want to create a more walkable and thriving neighborhood for families, supported by a variety of community amenities. The vision includes a concept for transforming US 301 into a complete street, with design and funding now approved by FDOT, supported by our 2020 Main Street Complete Street Plan.

The recent collaborative planning efforts for the Downtown Master Plan and the Complete Streets plan have further established community support. Our plan for these areas focuses on social gathering areas near City Hall and the CSX rail station, where there is an aspiration to have a rail museum. The City will keep the original character of the historic downtown through the preservation and highlighting of historic buildings and rail while converting brownfield sites into uses that will strengthen and expand the core of the community. Targeted reuses include retail, offices, restaurants, civic uses, and affordable housing. This vision is also well aligned with the investment priority targets identified in our 2006-2007 Community Redevelopment Area Plan.

Through EPA assessments and the creation of an Area-Wide Plan, we will delve deeper into new development opportunities on the west side of the tracks, helping to create a destination for local neighbors to gather, shop and dine. By welcoming these properties downtown, we can create additional reasons to connect our community. The City is enthused to support this connection with quality public infrastructure, including complete streets principles that will enhance walkability and access. Specifically, we look to redevelop sites around the vacant CSX rail spur, which we are calling the Railyard Commercial Commons. This space will exemplify the type of vibrant, walkable, and pedestrian-friendly spaces downtown Wildwood wants to be known for. Assessment and planning of this space will help to bring a large expanse of remnant land back to productive use for the benefit of current and future generations. Properties on the north end of Main Street adjacent to the CSX Rail Station will also be the subject of our visioning activities to help generate momentum for investment.

Wildwood will explore energy efficiency measures as part of our brownfield revitalization efforts, which may be achieved through passive design principles, energy-efficient building materials, renewable energy sources like solar panels, efficient HVAC systems, as well as smart grid integration. Additionally, focusing on water efficiency, promoting sustainable transportation options, and adhering to regulations that support energy-efficient development are feasible steps in our climate and regulatory context. These measures will help create environmentally responsible and energy-efficient developments.

The City positively engaged with key stakeholders including CSX Rail and FDOT to get consensus and move forward with the City's

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downtown revitalization aspirations. The FDOT recently funded our downtown Main Street complete streets project in their work program for planning and design in FY 24 followed by construction in FY 27. The City has also recently updated its Strategic Plan (2023) and Comprehensive Plan (2020) and is further modifying the land development codes to facilitate a modern and balanced approach to revitalization that meets current demands for affordable housing and access.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:

Many of the sites within our target area are strongly positioned for redevelopment based upon their accessible, visible locations. Yet progress is limited due to the significant challenges posed by real or perceived environmental concerns and constraints imposed by the railyard, former spurs, vacant right-of-way, U.S Highway 301, and blight. This EPA grant has the potential to benefit Wildwood in diverse ways that directly impact the local economy. Remediating and redeveloping brownfield sites will minimize contaminant exposure, enhance public health, raise property values and promote infill redevelopment. If we addressed only the seven priority sites above, we would put almost 33 acres, in strategic locations throughout disadvantaged areas of the City, back into productive reuse. And, if statistics hold, Wildwood could leverage almost \$10M (\$19.78 leveraged per every \$1 of EPA brownfield funds spent) to continue the revitalization of our most in-need areas.

One benefit of our reuse strategy is that our target areas lie within the City's designated CRA. Any improvements resulting from the adaptive and productive reuse of brownfield sites will have a compounding effect on the City's tax revenues. These funds (estimated up to \$10M total) can be directly invested back into the CRA area to leverage the return on investments. Redevelopment of our focus area has the potential to raise property values, offer amenities and services to underserved populations, and provide connectivity to our downtown core, ensuring the sustainability of our revitalization efforts. Focusing on our priority sites will yield revitalization of 20k SQ FT of mixed commercial space and amenities with associated urban plazas and pedestrian oriented street networks, a one-acre park, a 2k FT overpass that is desperately needed to connect disadvantaged residents to amenities, employment, and services, over 375 market rate and affordable housing units. Barriers to redevelopment include potential environmental conditions that stigmatize our target sites and the area as a whole. The largest benefactor and outcome will be the residents of Wildwood, particularly residents on the west side who would see new jobs created, potential for affordable housing, community connections between the east and west side, linking schools and parks on both sides of the city, remediation and productive reuse of abandoned or underutilized properties on Main Street, property code compliance, and the resurgence of a downtown community that people here could take pride in.

Local and state governments would benefit from our reuse strategy through increased property and sales taxes due to increased tourism. A November 2015 study by the Fiscal and Economic Research Center noted the following impacts from brownfields funds at a state level: a \$27 leveraged to \$1 ratio in grant funds awarded; business investment of 14-fold investment return on redevelopment of brownfield sites; generation of \$88.5 million in new tax revenue on redeveloped brownfield sites; and 3.5 times higher property values compared to pre-development condition. Most notably, 66% of sites redeveloped were in low-income areas with 12,400 jobs being created. On the softer side, brownfields redeveloped for uses such as parks and environmental buffers afford mental and physical health benefits to community and regional users.

1. c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources:

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse:

The CRA Plan and TIF district created in 1997 and updated in 2006 covers most of the downtown district extending to 2,000 acres, including our three target areas. The City's 2021 taxable value in the CRA is \$123.6 million, which is \$48.5 million over the base year taxable value of \$75.1 million. TIF funds can provide gap financing, future grant match monies, and offset public improvements for the direct purpose of redevelopment. The City intends to align TIF infrastructure projects with brownfield strategy to ensure tactical allocation of funds for catalytic infrastructure. Florida's State-funded voluntary cleanup tax credit program will also be used to offset costs for private development and will be used to further entice partnerships in remediation and redevelopment. Wildwood also intends to use various funding mechanisms through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO). These include CDBG, Neighborhood Stabilization, and state Brownfield programs, as well as greenways and trails funding sources.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure:

The City of Wildwood is committed to Smart Growth and embraces the concept that strong connections between transportation, housing, the environment, and economic development will create a healthy and more livable City. Our target areas and priority sites are in locations with access to municipal infrastructure. The City maintains a comprehensive Utility System Master Plan, which guides the provision and development of the City's infrastructure in a coordinated manner. The latest utilities master plan update, undertaken in 2019 and being updated in FY 23-24, identifies potential system deficiencies, and prioritizes capital improvement projects (CIP) needed to meet future system demands in conjunction with the City's Future Land Use Plan. The City currently operates 6 water treatment plants and 2 wastewater treatment facilities. The improvement of these brownfield sites would further utilize the existing roads and utilities infrastructure accessible by these sites. Access improvements, utilities tie-ins and stormwater management measures will need to be accommodated as per the final development plan for each site.

2. Community Need

2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding:

The City of Wildwood has a high population of low-income and minority residents, neighborhoods impacted by vacant or contaminated properties. Considering the rapid growth rate stressing our budget, we simply do not have the means to provide the necessary environmental assessments that will help redevelop our community. Our City performs significantly below the national and state averages on several economic indicators: over 47% of our residents are low-income (compared to 33% state-wide), a median household income of roughly \$42,000 compared to \$55,660 in Florida and \$62,843 nationally; and 16.6% persons in poverty, versus 12.7% in Florida and 11.4% nationally. These statistics demonstrate that Wildwood is unable to put resources behind what we consider

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essential: brownfield assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. According to the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), both of our “west” census tracts (CT) are identified as “disadvantaged” (CT 1302, 0100) as well as CT 1301 located south and southeast of downtown Wildwood. In particular, our main western CT 1302 has our residents in the upper 80th percentile for low income as compared to state peers. We are also significantly impacted when it comes to rent burdened families – clocking in at the 92nd percentile for family income spending more than 30% of their total income on housing. We are in the 91st percentile for low median income, and 92nd percentile for unemployment as compared to state peers. It is abundantly clear that reinvestment of our west neighborhoods/districts and resolution of the rail and highway transportation barriers that separate our city is our number one goal <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#15.1/28.86073/-82.08845>.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:

Wildwood’s brownfield initiative target focus area has a high population of low income and minority residents, whose neighborhoods are plagued by brownfields. The most sensitive populations in Wildwood include: low income (34%); people of color (26%); and persons with disabilities (16%). Our City otherwise performs significantly below the national and state averages on several economic indicators: almost 23% of our population under 65 is without health insurance, compared to 16.3% in Florida and 10.2% nationally; a median household income of roughly \$42,000 compared to \$55,660 in Florida and \$62,843 nationally; and 16.6% persons in poverty, versus 12.7% in Florida and 11.4% nationally.

In Block Group 121199113021, located west of the tracks, low income populations represent 63% of the area’s 1,255 residents. Nearly 71 percent are people of color, the average per capita income is \$22,426, with a life expectancy of 66 years. Eight of the thirteen “Supplemental Indexes” for this area exceed the 90th percentile in the State or National comparison. (Only two indexed indicators are below the 80th percentile – Superfund proximity, and Wastewater discharge.) When asked what threats there are to our elderly, children, and single mothers, it would be easier to identify the few elements that aren’t a threat. Diesel particulates, Air toxics cancer risk, Air toxics respiratory, Toxic releases to air, RMP proximity, and Underground storage tanks are all at or above the 90th percentile nationally. (EJScreen.)

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

As evidenced above, Wildwood performs significantly below the national and state averages socioeconomically. These statistics certainly translate to greater incidences of disease and adverse health conditions, especially when 34% of our population is aged over 65 years – twice the national percentage. Below are significant health indicators of greater than normal incidences:

Indicator (source EJScreen Tool)	Health Value	State Average	US Average
Heart Disease	9.7	7.2	6.1
Cancer	9.6	6.9	6.1
Persons with Disabilities	16.3%	13.9%	13.4%

Additionally, according to the most recent Sumter County Community Health Assessment (2018), Sumter County fares worse than the state in age-adjusted hospitalization rates per 100,000 population when it comes to coronary heart disease, heart attack, assault, and firearm. Additionally, the cancer incidence data for Sumter County shows that the county fares worse than Florida in few cancer types or sites, including cervical cancer, oral cavity and pharynx cancer, and prostate cancer. In reviewing the CEJST tool, the discrepancy between “west” and “east” Wildwood is also evident in health demographics. In CT1302, residents are in the 88th percentile for diagnosed asthma as compared with state peers, and astounding 96th percentile for diabetes, 82nd percentile for heart disease, and 99th percentile for life expectancy. In CT1301, residents are in the 95th percentile for diabetes, 99th percentile for heart disease, and the 94th percentile for low life expectancy <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#11.68/28.8522/-81.9982>. A short drive east to the “other side of the tracks” (CT 1400) paints a different health picture. Here residents are only in the 10th percentile for asthma, 44th for diabetes, 51st for heart disease, and 36th for life expectancy. Brownfields located in the Railyard District and across the City pose numerous health concerns to residents, summarized in the above demographics. This grant will serve to identify brownfield-related and site-specific threats our target areas and will facilitate the remediation of sites with known environmental contaminants and pollutants that contribute to the health statistics above, while positioning properties for redevelopment into resources that fill critical service gaps in Wildwood including transportation, employment, and affordable housing.

(3) Environmental Justice:

(a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues:

The disproportionate vulnerability of marginalized communities in Wildwood is exacerbated by hazardous substances, contaminants, and pollutants. City-wide, 34% of our population are low-income, 26% are people of color, and 16% are persons with disabilities. Zooming into Census Tracts within our target areas, these already dismal statistics are exacerbated. In CT1302, 63% of the population are low-income and 71% are people of color. Expanded to include CT1301 (collectively what is referred to elsewhere in this grant as west Wildwood, 53% of the population are low-income, 32% are people of color, and 17% are persons with disabilities. According to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, both CTs are considered disadvantaged because they meet more than 1 burden threshold AND the associated socioeconomic threshold. These CTs also have high Social Vulnerability Index Scores (0.83 in CT1301 and 0.76 in 1302). The 2020 Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) tracts 16 social factors and the scores combine four different themes rated on a score of 0.0 to 1.0, with 1.0 being the highest level of vulnerability. In reviewing the EPA EJScreen Tool, west Wildwood residents also have far greater exposure to diesel particulate matter than residents in east Wildwood (80% vs 48%), closer traffic proximity (51% vs 39%), closer Risk Management Program (RMP) Facility Proximity (90% vs 77%), and closer proximity to hazardous wastes (82% vs 68%). Until we’re able to address

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brownfields in our target areas and put them into active reuse in ways that serve our disadvantaged populations, environmental harm continues to be inequitably distributed in Wildwood.

(b) Advancing Environmental Justice:

The City intends to invest in target areas and Census Tracts within Wildwood that are the most disadvantaged. Our priority is to reinvest in these areas with the goal of improving quality of life through increased connectivity, enhanced environmental health, improved infrastructure, and added amenities including housing, connectivity to transportation, and employment. Through brownfield revitalization, we will meet our disadvantaged and sensitive populations where they are, to minimize their displacement and advance environmental justice. Our reuse strategies are not anticipated to displace residents or businesses and it is hoped the strategies will increase opportunities for the current population.

Bringing jobs, affordable housing, and beautification to the Railyard District will help cultivate a more equitable community, positively impacting our most vulnerable residents including low income, people of color, and persons with disabilities. We are putting plans in place to build on this USEPA Assessment grant to catalyze growth throughout the Wildwood area and encourage thorough assessment, remediation, and revitalization of key properties that are perpetuating local environmental injustices. Redevelopment of our priority sites will help to broaden local economic opportunities, which will help lift residents out of poverty, provide free or low-cost recreation opportunities, and enhance overall quality of life. Lastly, we believe that redevelopment of our downtown target area will provide diversification of our workforce and industries and allow important new businesses to occupy both affordable and dynamic spaces, providing residents with well-paying and safe jobs.

2.b. Community Engagement: 2.b.i. Project Involvement and 2.b.ii. Project Roles

PARTNER	POINT OF CONTACT	SPECIFIC ROLE IN PROJECT
Sumter County Historical Society	Carolyn Shaw, President, 352-793-3962, schsfllive.com	Provide resources and consultation for assessment and revitalization planning of priority sites on North Main Street.
Wildwood Development Services	Melanie Strickland, Development Serv. Director, 352.330.1334, devsvsinfo@wildwood-fl.gov	Assist financing redevelopment in downtown. Provide blighted determinations, funding (TIF) support, work with property owners and developers.
Wildwood Affordable Housing Center	Denna Lafferty, Housing Coordinator, 352-689-4400, denna.lafferty@sumtercountyfl.gov	Help us create programs near schools in low-income neighborhoods to learn about housing and mobility options for their future.
Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)	Aaron Watkins, Executive Director – Central District, 407-897-2963, Aaron.Watkins@FloridaDEP.gov	Consult throughout the regulatory process and potential funding for other necessary assessment and cleanup.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input:

Wildwood regards community engagement as a crucial component of any public improvement project – we do not just solve our brownfield issues through individual organizations, we solve them collectively as a community. Project goals in terms of our community engagement and partnership efforts are to achieve the following: 1) assist the public in contributing to and understanding the decision-making process during project planning, assessment, and cleanup, and Wildwood’s role in that process; 2) give the public accessible, accurate, timely, and understandable information about our Brownfield initiative; 3) ensure adequate time and opportunity for the community and community groups to provide informed and meaningful participation and for that input to be considered; 4) reflect community concerns, questions, and information needs; and 5) respect and fully consider and include public input. Much of the infrastructure for successful outreach has already been put into place through other project efforts. We will leverage these resources, including a Steering Committee, email outreach list, and creation and continued updates to a Brownfield GIS StoryMap website, available through the City’s website, to continue building successful engagement. We have outlined key milestones that align with our commitment to water conservation, sustainability, and equitable access to housing. Our workshops and outreach are proposed as follows:

KICKOFF: This event will help introduce the community to EPA Brownfields, demystifying the process and elevating comfort levels to encourage participation. Following a Brownfields 101 presentation, we will review our inventory of priority properties and solicit community input about general reuse ideas, and outline support for property owners interested in participating.

NEW FUTURES INVENTORY PROPERTY WORKSHOP: This multi-day event seeks to explore redevelopment opportunities and empower property owners to activate brownfields, identify locations for affordable housing and community services, and generate economic investment. This workshop will also explore walkability and connectivity in our target areas to explore how we can better join residents with jobs and services.

AREA-WIDE PLANNING WORKSHOP: Various stakeholders can come together to discuss an overall revitalization approach for the City during this workshop. Meeting with key stakeholders including representatives from Sumpter County planning department, key government officials from the City, CSX railroad, real estate agents, economic developers, and developers, as well as the public will ensure knowledge and perspective is best leveraged in an efficient way. Our mission

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during this workshop will be to tour the area and then gather input on best reuse, resources, walkability, social wellbeing, and redevelopment.

DOWNTOWN PLANNING WORKSHOP: Our downtown planning workshop will focus specifically on the three target areas in the Railyard District. This workshop will be coordinated between downtown business owners, real estate agents, Florida Main Street personnel, and the City. The workshop will focus on reactivating sites and buildings and attracting the Core services needed for a vibrant downtown.

WRAP UP: This will serve as the conclusion of the brownfield redevelopment initiative, where participants come together to reflect on the project's achievements and lessons learned. This session is an opportunity to summarize the collective experience, celebrate successes, and discuss strategies for continued growth and sustainability in Wildwood. The focus remains on leveraging the project's impact positively, promoting ongoing collaboration, and innovatively shaping future endeavors for lasting environmental and community benefits.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task 1 – Training and Grant Management	iii. Lead: City of Wildwood with Assistance by QEP	
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> 1) Prepare Work Plan, 2) Execute Cooperative Agreement (CA) 3) Retain a qualified environmental professional (QEP) to assist in managing the activities funded by the EPA grant. 4) Complete ACRES updates, quarterly reports, financial reporting and accountability, annual MBE/WBE reports, and financial audits. 5) Upon completion, development of grant closeout report summarizing accomplishments, expenditures, outcomes, outputs, and resources leveraged. 6) Conduct financial draws 7) Travel & Training (brownfields related meetings, training sessions, conferences). 8) Monthly calls with advisory committee QEP, and other relevant stakeholders. 9) Establish Steering Committee.		
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Work Plan within 1 month of notification of award, CA within 3 months of award, QEP by October 1, 2024, Quarterly and Annual reporting (including MBE/WBE and Federal Financial reports) within 30 days of reporting period, ACRES updated as both priority and non-priority sites are assessed or cleaned or redeveloped, Closeout reporting would be completed upon end of performance period; Travel & training throughout the grant term; management calls monthly, Steering Committee establishment within Q1 2025.		
<i>iv. Outputs:</i> Work Plan, CA, BAC, Quarterly progress reports (16) with budget and schedule status; annual reports including financial and MBE/WBE (4 total); ACRES reporting; and Grant Closeout Report		
Task 2 – Site Inventory/Community Outreach	iii. Lead: City of Wildwood staff led, with QEP Assistance	
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> 1) Kickoff meeting with Steering Committee 2) Create GIS StoryMap Website for Grant 3) Incorporate Site Inventory into GIS and include in StoryMap 4) Promote submittal of non-priority sites from public or private development community 5) Develop criteria and score non-priority sites 6) Develop Community Involvement Plan (CIP). 7) Community outreach meetings with local, county, or regional organizations (see Community Input section; 5 outreach meetings are anticipated).		
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Website created in Q1 2025, develop scoring criteria in FY2025, inventory and outreach activities ongoing throughout grant, CIP created in FY 2025.		
<i>iv. Outputs:</i> Updated brownfields inventory and prioritization, GIS StoryMap, CIP, Community workshop summaries		
Task 3 – Environmental (Site Assessments and Remediation Planning)	iii. Lead: QEP	
<i>i. Project Implementation:</i> Priority sites and additional sites evaluated through Phase I or Phase II ESAs conducted in accordance with ASTM E1527-21, All Appropriate Inquiry, or other applicable standards, QEP to prepare Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and submit to EPA for approval. Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) and Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) prepared for Phase II ESAs. Secure site access for Phase II ESA assessments. Coordination on results with QEP, City of Wildwood, community, and FL DEP. Completion of ABCAs as needed.		
<i>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Phase I and II ESAs and ABCAs completed throughout performance period, Phase II's to begin upon approval of QAPP and SAPs. QAPP completed by Q3 2025.		
<i>iv. Outputs:</i> One QAPP, 12 Phase I ESAs, 6 Phase II ESAs (incl HASPs/SAPs for each), 4 Draft ABCAs		
Task 4 – Site and Area-Wide Revitalization Planning	iii. Lead: QEP with City assistance	
3-Day Revitalization Workshop - exploration of redevelopment opportunities, including affordable housing, in all target areas and	Q4 2025	Workshop Summary Report

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community-wide. Review existing planning documents, inventories, and ongoing projects, and relevant case studies. Include business owners and developers in a mobile tour to discuss priority sites and target areas.		
Site-Specific Revitalization Planning (site concepts, infrastructure needs assessments, financial pro-forma for catalyst sites including economic development analyses and sustainable reuse scenarios, funding roadmaps, and other eligible planning activities as deemed necessary on Brownfield sites)	Ongoing	5-8 Revitalization Plan Reports
Downtown Railyard District Visioning - Review of properties, connectivity to surrounding areas, branding opportunities to catalyze redevelopment, exploration of compatible reuses, resource roadmapping.	Q2 2026	1 Target Area Summary Report
Uptown District Visioning – Review of properties, connectivity to surrounding areas, branding opportunities to catalyze redevelopment, exploration of compatible reuses, resource roadmapping.	Q3 2026	1 Target Area Summary Report
The Junction Visioning – Review of properties, connectivity to surrounding areas, branding opportunities to catalyze redevelopment, exploration of compatible reuses, resource roadmapping.	Q4 2026	1 Target Area Summary Report
Community-wide review and summary created & published including redevelopment profiles for catalyst sites.	Q3 2027	Community-Wide Summary Report
Reflections Workshop. Grant closeout workshop and presentation of final Area Wide Plan deliverables	Q3 2028	Workshop Summary Report

3.b. Cost Estimates

Within Task 4 we allocated 30% of the budget to area-wide planning. 50% of the total grant award is allocated to Environmental (Task 3). 5% of our grant costs are estimated for programmatic costs (included in Task 1). Costs were confirmed with a QEP and planning consultant and verified by our planning staff and recent project experience.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		Task 1: Training and Management	Task 2: Inventory/ Outreach	Task 3: Environmental	Task 4: Planning	
Direct Costs	Travel	\$6,000				\$6,000
	Contractual	\$25,000	\$69,000	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$494,000
	Other					
Total Budget		\$31,000	\$69,000	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$500,000

Personnel Costs: Personnel costs for grant management will be provided as in-kind services. The estimated hours are approx. 6 hrs./week, totaling 936 hours/3 years with a blended hourly rate of \$42.00 for a total estimated value of \$39,312.

Task 1 – Training and Grant Management

- Travel includes an assumed \$2,000 per trip for two staff to attend two National Brownfield Conferences (Each staff, per conference: \$500 flight, \$200/night hotel x3, Registration @ \$250, Meals @ \$50/Day x3 = \$6,000)
- Contractual assumes approximately \$750 each quarterly report (12), \$1,000 each annual report (3), and \$3,000 closeout report. QEP coordination on calls and advisory committee meetings throughout grant period. QEP, 100 hours @ \$150/hour and 80 hours @ \$125/hour, totaling \$25,000.

Task 2 – Site Inventory/Community Outreach (contractual)

- StoryMap creation and updates (80 hours @ \$125/hour = \$10,000)
- Updated site inventory and scoring criteria (40 hours @ \$150/hour = \$6,000)
- Creation of CIP (30 hours @ \$125/hour = \$3,750)
- Development and publishing of outreach materials (40 hours @ \$150/hr, 20 hours @ \$125/hr = \$6,000, and \$750 printing = \$9,250)
- Community outreach meetings (5 meetings at 30 hours per staff, \$150/hour (1) and 14 hours at \$125/hr (2) = \$40,000)

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Task 3 – Environmental (contractual)

- QAPP @ average cost of \$5,000
- 12 Phase I ESAs @ average cost of \$4,000 each = \$48,000
- 6 Phase II ESAs (including HASP and SAP) @ average cost of \$30,000 each = \$180,000
- 4 ABCAs @ average cost of \$4,250 each = \$17,000

Task 4 – Planning (contractual)

- Revitalization Workshop (50 hours per staff, \$150/hour (1) and \$125/hr (2) = \$20,000)
- Site Specific Planning (6 Revitalization Plan reports at an average cost of \$10,000 each = \$60,000)
- Target Area Visioning (3 areas at an average cost of \$15,000 per exercise = \$45,000)
- Area-Wide Planning (estimated 1 staff @ 25 hours @ \$150/hour (1) and 2 staff @ 45 hours @ \$125/hr = \$15,000)
- Reflections Workshop (25 hours per staff, \$150/hour (1) and \$125/hr (2) = \$10,000)

3.c. Plan to Measure Environmental Progress and Results

In cooperation with the EPA Regional staff and a QEP, we will develop a work plan and timeline for activities under the grant. Our team understands the ACRES system and will develop quarterly and annual reports and a final report to track, and document grant-related activities and outputs. The program manager will track, measure, and evaluate the accomplishments/outputs compared to work plan schedule and meet with those involved in each task to make sure activities stay on schedule. The program manager will take corrective actions should an activity fall behind. We will track the number of jobs created and funding leveraged through the economic reuse of sites as well as the number of acres made ready for reuse. Additional results will include new businesses, parks or green spaces, housing developments, and transportation and connectivity investments in the target areas. We will track the number of brownfield sites assessed and that change ownership, private investment dollars leveraged, and increased property/sales tax revenue generated. We will meet to review/compare the schedule progress against the work plan schedule/goals and determine if corrective actions are needed to remedy any issues. Our project team will evaluate project progress semi-annually against our goals and if goals are not being met or are off schedule, will meet with our consultant to adjust the project approach and schedule, as needed.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i. Organizational Capacity, 4.a.ii. Organizational Structure, 4.a.iii. Description of Key Staff:

Wildwood has the systems, processes, and procedures in place to effectively manage the grant as demonstrated by our ability to successfully manage this and other state and federal grants. We plan on instituting regular monthly or twice-monthly calls with our project team and contractor. This will help keep the project on track and ensure that all technical, administrative, and financial requirements are met. Our team will collaborate with the consultant to deliver required quarterly and annual reports along with reporting through the ACRES system. Key personnel include **Jason McHugh, AICP, CPM (City Manager)**, a graduate of University of Central Florida and over 20 years' planning experience, who will oversee the grant. He has been intimately involved with Wildwood's downtown revitalization efforts and has experience managing projects with large budgets, long time limits, and broad scopes, and will offer technical, environmental, and administrative support to the other City staff. **Wendy Then, AICP, CFM (Assistant Planning Director)** is a graduate of the University of Central Florida and has over 17 years planning experience. She will assist with planning elements of the grant, and in keeping our Brownfields initiative in alignment with our ongoing planning efforts. **Cassandra Smith (Assistant City Manager and Chief Financial Officer)** for Wildwood. Her skills are in fiscal management, accounting, supervision, record keeping and will support our budget tracking for this grant.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources:

In accordance with 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, a QEP experienced in brownfield projects will be procured and contracted through a competitive process. It is the desire of the City to move quickly on this project to ensure that all goals and milestones are met as efficiently as possible, so the procurement process is expected to commence shortly after notice of award. The QEP will aid Wildwood in the management and technical aspects of this grant and will help ensure the highest rate of project success.

4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.b.ii. Has not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance:

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Wildwood has never received an EPA Assessment Grant but is active in managing numerous other grants, including State and Federal grants. The City uses a tracking spreadsheet to help monitor the grants, including recent awards from FDEP Capitalization Grant for State Revolving Loan Funds; \$200,000: This funding award was for an SRF loan to design a sanitary sewer force main. This loan funded the design of a force main that extended wastewater services to residents within Wildwood's utility district. A FDEP Capitalization Grant for State Revolving Loan Funds; \$2.2M: This funding award was for an SRF loan to construct a sanitary sewer force main. The funding also included a partial loan forgiveness component of \$439,359. A FDEP Capitalization Grant for State Revolving Loan Fund for \$7.5M. This funding award was for an SRF loan to construct a water treatment plant. The City has maintained the accounts mandated by the funding agreement and has made the appropriate monthly transfers as required by the agreement.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: We successfully completed requirements and compliance of the aforementioned grants with workplan, schedule, terms, and conditions, progress reports, and meeting expected results on time.

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility:

- a. The applicant for this combined EPA Community Wide Assessment Grant is the City of Wildwood, Florida. The City fulfills the definition of an “eligible entity” by being a recognized political subdivision as defined by the State’s legislative definition of a political subdivision per 40 CFR stats. 35.6016 (a) (31). The City of Wildwood is a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined in the eligibility requirements for this grant.
- b. The City is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement: Wildwood regards community engagement as a crucial component of any public improvement project – we don’t just solve our brownfield issues through individual organizations, we solve this collectively as a community. We will have citizens-at-large join our Steering Committee and contribute to our community outreach strategies that include walking tours and community forums, along with educational workshops targeted at business and property owners. Using traditional low-tech tactics, we will reach our target low-income population. We will utilize newsletters, presentations, and online publications, including multiple social media platforms, to solicit information and comments from residents and business owners and inform them of opportunities and progress and how their input was considered in the assessment/reuse decisions. We’ve had success post-COVID in implementing engaging virtual meetings that include real-time polling options and video presentations to keep people actively engaged. Our goals through these approaches include exchanging relevant information regarding the location and status of our brownfields, soliciting assistance with site prioritization, brainstorming necessary and effective action steps, engaging the entire community’s network of needs, and engaging business contacts to develop solutions impacting our broader community members. The dominant language in the study area is English and is the language used by local newspapers to print legal announcements. Our collective community has been very clear: Wildwood wants a healthy, safe, thriving community. Assessing, remediating, thoughtfully planning for, and redeveloping our brownfields with their help and EPA funding support will provide one, and the more we can engage our small and tight-knit community, the more diverse perspectives we’ll have and the better our solutions will be.

3. Expenditures of Assessment Grant Funds: The City of Wildwood does not have an open Assessment Grant.

4. Discussion on named contractors and subrecipients: Contractors or subrecipients have not been procured or named.