

# NCICG

North Central Illinois Council of Governments

613 W. Marquette, Ottawa, IL 61350 # Phone: (815) 433-5830 # Fax: (815) 433-5832 # www.ncicg.org

## NARRATIVE INFORMATION SHEET: North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG)

### 1. Applicant Identification:

North Central Illinois Council of Governments  
613 W. Marquette Street  
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

### 2. Funding Requested:

- a. Grant Type: Assessment Coalition
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,500,000

### 3. Location:

- a. City: City of Marseilles, City of Peru, City of Streator, City of Mendota
- b. County: Bureau, Grundy, LaSalle, Marshall, Putnam, Livingston, and Stark Counties
- c. State: Illinois

### 4. Coalition Members' Target Area and Priority Site Information:

- **List the Coalition Members and Target Areas:**
  - Coalition Members: North Central Illinois Council of Governments, City of Marseilles, City of Peru, City of Streator, and City of Mendota
  - Target Areas: Mendota Downtown Corridor, Streator Central Business District, Marseilles Downtown Riverfront, and Peru Riverfront
- **For each Target Area that is smaller than a city/town, list the census tract number(s) within the target area:**
  - Marseilles: 17099962500
  - Mendota: 17099961900
  - Peru: 17099963200
  - Streator: 17105960300
- **Provide the address of the Priority Site(s) proposed in the Narrative**
  - Former Nabisco Facility, 224 N. Main Street, Marseilles, Illinois
  - 810-818 Main Street, Mendota, Illinois
  - Former Westclox Complex, 300 Block of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Peru, Illinois
  - Former Railyard Sites, South Smith Douglas Road, Streator, Illinois

**5. Contacts:**

**a. Project Director:** Mr. Richard Norwood, Community Planner  
613 W. Marquette Street, Ottawa, Illinois 61350  
Phone: 815.433.5830  
Email: [richardn@ncicg.org](mailto:richardn@ncicg.org)

**b. Chief Executive:** Mr. Kevin Lindeman, Executive Director  
613 W. Marquette Street, Ottawa, Illinois 61350  
Phone: 815.433.5830  
Email: [klindeman@ncicg.org](mailto:klindeman@ncicg.org)

**6. Population:** 254,029 (US Census, 2020 – Geographic Boundary Population)

**7. Other Factors Checklist:**

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 10,000 or less	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory	N/A
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land	1
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).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures	N/A
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments	N/A
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).	N/A
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing	N/A

**8. Letter from the State Environmental Authority:**

Please find attached the Letter of Acknowledgement from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency regarding North Central Illinois Council of Governments’ Coalition Assessment Grant Application.

**9. Releasing Copies of Applications:**

Not Applicable. This application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information included that cannot be shared.



**Subject: State Acknowledgement Letter for The North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG)  
FY2024 US EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant Application**

11/7/2023

North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG)  
ATTN: Kevin Lindeman  
613W. Marquette Street  
Ottawa, IL 61350

Dear Mr. Kevin Lindeman,

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) has received your request for a letter of acknowledgement for an upcoming Assessment Coalition Grant application to U.S. EPA. North Central Illinois Council of Governments is applying for a \$1,500,000 Assessment Coalition Grant on behalf of the cities of Streator, Marseilles, Peru, and Mendota.

The grant will be an Assessment Coalition Grant for Hazardous Substances and Petroleum.

Illinois EPA acknowledges NCICG's efforts to obtain federal Brownfields funds for this project. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at the above address or telephone numbers below, or at [Jacob.fink@illinois.gov](mailto:Jacob.fink@illinois.gov).

Sincerely,

Jacob Fink  
Brownfield Program Administrator  
Bureau of Land/Office of Site Evaluation  
Office# (217) 785-8726  
Cell# (217) 986-0818  
[Jacob.fink@illinois.gov](mailto:Jacob.fink@illinois.gov)



## **1: PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION & PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION:**

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### **1.a. Coalition Members, Target Areas, and Brownfields**

#### **1.a.i. Coalition Members**

The North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) is the lead Coalition Member of the North Central Illinois Coalition (Coalition) and applicant for this US EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant. The Coalition members include the City of Streator, Illinois, the City of Marseilles, Illinois, the City of Peru, Illinois, and the City of Mendota, Illinois. Streator, Marseilles, Peru, and Mendota provide essential government services to their respective municipalities, while working with NCICG on planning, economic development, and funding services. While all members of the Coalition understand the importance and impact of brownfields redevelopment, the members do not have the staffing capacity to fully undertake a Brownfields Assessment grant project of this size on their own. Through the development of the Coalition these communities have collectively agreed to work together for the betterment of the region with NCICG leading and managing the brownfield assessment activities. The North Central Illinois Council of Governments is a non-profit entity that provides planning and technical assistance to counties and communities within a seven-county area in North Central Illinois. NCICG primary community development services in seven counties in North Central Illinois. These include: Bureau, Grundy, LaSalle, Marshall, Putnam, Livingston, and Stark counties. The Council provides planning services to current member counties and communities and contract services to non-member counties and communities within this coverage area. NCICG is the most effective and efficient choice as the lead Member of this Coalition Assessment application.

#### **1.a.ii. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas**

NCICG's seven-county service area is the geographic boundary of this application, and is comprised of 254,029 people located throughout the Illinois grand prairie area, a robust agricultural area, with the Vermilion, Fox, and Illinois Rivers winding throughout the region. The area has a rich economic history made up of quarries, mining, brick factories, glass factories, and railroads. The Illinois River attracted early settlers to the region, who used the river as a means of life for transportation, trade, and food. The State of Illinois' industrial prowess began with the I&M Canal, due to the Canal's river transportation capabilities and proximity to a rich bounty of natural resources, including coal, limestone, and sand. In digging the Canal, large quantities of a magnesium-rich limestone called dolomite were exposed. Within a few years, a new industry was born and dozens of quarries opened, creating thousands of new jobs throughout the geographic boundary. For much of the region's history, coal mining and glass production dominated the local economy. Streator, Illinois, one of the Coalition Member communities, was even once known as the "Glass Manufacturing Capital of the World." The Coalition region's early growth from mining and glass manufacturing established its status as a midwestern railroad hub. Several railroads had lines that crossed throughout the region, so the area has numerous current and former rail land parcels of all shapes and sizes. Large-scale commercial mining ended after World War I in the region, and the beginning of disinvestment in the area began. With the mining, glass, and clay (brick) industries gone, the region is left to deal with the impacts of these shuttered economic engines - the communities in the seven-county geographic area are dotted with abandoned coal mines, shuttered factories, severely underutilized properties, and clay extraction pits. The abandoned coal mines and clay pits have been neglected, becoming a place for deliberate dumping and consequently contamination. The legacy of the manufacturing and industry hangs heavy in the region in the form of potential and known brownfields sites. The brownfield sites range from former corner gas stations and dry cleaners to the massive former manufacturing facilities and companies like Nabisco. No matter what community you are in, you will come across a brownfield site in our region – a vacant lot, an abandoned building, or a blighted, underutilized site. Many of the communities in the geographic area of this Coalition are settled along the riverfronts, and have been subjected to flooding throughout the years. Most recently in 2013, Coalition Member community Marseilles suffered a devastating hardship; much of the town was flooded. The flood was caused by several levees that were breached along the river. The levee breach occurred after nine (9) barges broke loose from tug boats and slammed into a nearby dam along the Illinois River. The collision caused severe damage causing four (4) of those barges to sink. 1,500 people evacuated, which is about a third of the town. Much of Marseilles resembled a scrapyard: piles of debris were taller than people. The water from the Illinois River was a rushing torrent, powerful enough to sweep away homes' foundations and close the town's only school indefinitely. This flooding event only exacerbated the existing problems that the area was already facing with brownfields, and in fact, created more brownfield sites to be addressed in Marseilles.

The Coalition is in urgent need of Brownfields Coalition Assessment funding to assess environmental conditions in four Target Areas where contamination from brownfields pose serious risk to sensitive populations and contribute to economic distress in the area. The four Target Areas for this grant are: **(1) Mendota Downtown Corridor** – Mendota's Downtown Corridor, specifically Census Tract 9619 and

9620, has a low-to-moderate income population of approximately 45<sup>1</sup>%. Per the US Census Data, Census Tract 9619 has a population of 4,290, a Per Capita Income of \$38,385, a Median Household Income of \$64,219 with 6.3% of people living in Poverty. Census Tract 9620 has a population of 3,665, a Per Capita Income of \$26,873, a Median Household Income of \$57,832, and a 15.3% of people living in Poverty. Each of these demographic figures are far worse than those of the State of Illinois with a Median Household Income of \$72,205 and a poverty level of 11.9%. This Target Area is blighted, and filled with underutilized and vacant brownfield properties. In the Target Area, brownfield sites are located immediately adjacent to residential properties. This poses a particular threat of residential exposure to contaminants via direct contact, inhalation, vapor intrusion, or ingestion. The brownfields sites in the Target Area threaten the public health and the environment of the City, and also impose a blighting effect that leads to further distress, negative perceptions, and disinvestment in the City; **(2) Streator Central Business District** - The Central Business District Target Area is located on the east side of Streator's central business district, and is characterized by mixed-use properties and many former railroad and abandoned industrial parcels. Given their proximity to the central business district and residential neighborhoods, these properties have the most promise for redevelopment, specifically affordable housing, which the City is in desperate need of. Streator received a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank to assist in the rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes in this area, which complements the reuse plans for new construction multi-unit housing. Additionally, the city has begun acquiring abandoned parcels in this target area so that it can control entire blocks with the intent of developing sorely needed senior housing. Several of these tracts are believed to be contaminated, which is a barrier to the City's ability to get the parcels redeveloped into senior housing units; **(3) Marseilles Downtown Riverfront** - While Marseilles has made various efforts to position the Downtown Riverfront Target Area for redevelopment, lack of funding for environmental assessment and remediation remains a major barrier to moving the City's overall redevelopment efforts forward. This Target Area starts at the Illinois riverfront, leads through the downtown and some residential neighborhoods, before ending at the commercial/industrial Route 6. Although there are a number of brownfield-impacted areas in Marseilles, the City has selected the Downtown Riverfront area of this application for the following reasons: The Target Area has the highest concentration of brownfields and potential brownfields in the community; The Target Area has the highest low-to-moderate (LMI) income populations, reaching up to 64.05% LMI<sup>2</sup> and a poverty rate of 20.3%, with 32.1% of those in poverty under the age of 18 years old<sup>3</sup>; The Target Area has the highest percentage of sensitive populations that are directly affected by the potential brownfield sites in the area. With 19.2% of the Target Area population consisting of people age 65 and older, and 32.1% of the Target Area population aged 18 and under living in poverty, these grant funds will directly benefit these disadvantaged populations; and **(4) Peru Riverfront** - the Peru Riverfront Target Area has a population of 2,663 people, with a minority population of 21%. Peru's Riverfront Target Area is on the south side of the City, and the health of the riverfront is critical to the Coalition's geographic area. Bounded to the west by Highway 251, the south by Water Street, to the east by the City limits and the north along 5<sup>th</sup> Street (US Way 6). The City of Peru owns and manages the Starved Rock hydroelectric power station—the only such energy generating facility on the Illinois River. The city has owned and operated its own electric generation, transmission, and distribution system continuously since 1891.

### 1.a.iii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites

The Coalition has identified four priority sites, one for each of the Coalition Members. **Site 1: Former Railyard Sites – Streator, Illinois:** The former railroad sites are abandoned rail yards and corridors. The estimated acreage of the two former railroad sites (combined with city-owned adjoining lots) together/combined is just under five acres. These sites are currently vacant and unused sites. They have no buildings or structures on them—other than fragments of a few low concrete platforms that were adjacent to rail sidings in a previous century. The former rail sites were identified as priority sites because of their redevelopment potential. Due to the sites' proximity to the downtown, they are a great spot for the development of much-needed affordable senior housing in the City. This reuse plan will enhance the livability of Streator's Central Business District and meet community needs for senior housing with the development of affordable, multi-unit rental housing on the former rail sites. **Site 2: Former Nabisco Building – Marseilles, Illinois:** The former Nabisco Building is located on Main Street in Marseilles, which falls in their Downtown and along their Riverfront. This 4.8 acre site still has closed, abandoned buildings on-site that are deteriorating and are subject to chronic vandalism. With potential contaminants like PNAs, heavy metals, and asbestos suspected on-site, it is vital to the community to address the assessment and remediation of this property as soon as possible. The planned site reuse is mixed-use redevelopment in the Marseilles Downtown and along the Riverfront that will

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ffd0597e8af24f88b501b7e7f326bedd>

<sup>2</sup> HUD LMI Mapping Tool - <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ffd0597e8af24f88b501b7e7f326bedd>

<sup>3</sup> Climate & Environmental Justice Mapping Tool - <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#12.81/41.32537/-88.70315>

include Retail, Housing, Restaurant, and Greenspace included in redevelopment plans. **Site 3: 810 to 818 Main Street – Mendota, Illinois:** This site was subject to a complete fire loss in 2022, and is currently vacant after structures were removed. This site is adjacent to the historical Campbell Cleaners site, where drycleaner solvent contamination has been identified in soil, groundwater, and soil vapor. A 2022 Preliminary Phase II ESA identified PNAs, metals, and PCE in soil, PCE and TCE in groundwater, and PCE in soil vapor; **Site 4: Former Westclox Complex – Peru, Illinois:** This sprawling former watch factory has been partly redeveloped along the north portion of the complex on 5<sup>th</sup> Street that includes art, distillery, photography, hair salon and yoga small business. However the balance of the complex toward the riverfront is undeveloped. The site experienced a massive fire in 2012 that destroyed the center portion of the complex original buildings. Arson was the cause. The original complex was built from 1910 to 1956 and included 44 structures. The facility closed in 1980. A group of investors bought the property and sold the property to developers in 2006. The site has not reached full development partly because of the unknown environmental condition of the property that caught fire. There is also a separate portion the site overlooking the river that is used for cold storage that is not reaching full redevelopment potential.

#### **1.a.iv. Identifying Additional Sites**

NCICG will create a comprehensive brownfield inventory for the Coalition members. If assessment funds are still available after the Priority Sites and Target Area sites are assessed, NCICG, its Coalition members, and community partners will determine where next to apply assessment grant funds based on site location, its ability to provide health and economic benefit to underserved populations and disadvantaged census tracts in the Coalition's geographic seven-county geographic boundary, and the site's redevelopment potential.

#### **1.b. Revitalization of the Target Areas**

##### **1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans**

The North Central Illinois Council of Governments Economic Development District (NCICG EDD) is comprised of six counties in the north central Illinois region that comprise the geographical area of this Coalition. This includes the counties of Bureau, LaSalle, Livingston, Marshall, Putnam, and Stark – Grundy County will be added to this plan. The Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is part of an extensive locally based regionally driven planning process designed to engage all area economic stakeholders both from the public and private sectors to form and execute common goals and objectives, and to develop strategies for growth, resilience, and sustainability, and will be the document that guides the reuse strategy and revitalization plans of the Coalition. The regional goal is to help counties and communities grow, be sustainable, resilient in their endeavors, increase the quality-of-life measures, and develop a framework focused on Economic Development collaboration. The NCICG CEDS provides an assessment of the economic climate of the region, while providing goals and objectives to strengthen the regional economy. Goals and objectives including "assist and support attraction and retention of businesses in the region" is the driving force for the redevelopment of brownfield sites, specifically the priority and target area sites, in this application. Additionally, another goal's objective is "to assist communities in improving the quality of life of residents and provide support to develop healthy communities and business activity which will lead to economic prosperity and stability." An action item for this goal will include the work described in this application – the completion of environmental site assessments and cleanup plans to ensure residents of the target areas live in a healthy community free of exposure to contamination. Streator's priority site's reuse plan is the development of much-needed affordable senior housing in the City. Marseille's priority site's reuse plan is mixed-use redevelopment in the Marseilles Downtown and along the Riverfront that will include Retail, Housing, Restaurant, and Greenspace included in redevelopment plans. The Mendota and Peru sites are priorities due to the lack of stability in the existing structures that remain after fires and significant damages. First and foremost, the sites need to be made safe. Reuse of the priority sites will help meet redevelopment goals along downtowns and riverfronts in the region. This site reuse will also help enhance tourism by eliminating blighted, vacant, and derelict buildings that are near local tourism attractions along the riverfront's of the non-lead Coalition members. Revitalization plans will improve the quality of life for residents by assessing environmental conditions, developing a remediation plan, remediating, and redeveloping these priority sites.

##### **1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy**

The Coalition will utilize brownfields funding to (1) Characterize, assess, and plan for remediation and reuse of brownfields sites and their buildings within the identified target areas to aid in the redevelopment of distressed, blighted, and otherwise underutilized properties; (2) Maintain the brownfields inventory; (3) Prioritize secondary sites for the program; and (4) Conduct community engagement activities. This program will return brownfield sites back to economic vitality for the public's use and enjoyment. This is not only expected for the priority sites but also for nearby properties that have been impacted by their proximity to these sites. The eventual remediation of these sites will minimize risk of exposure both at

the site and on adjacent properties. Additional expected outcomes will be new investment, job creation, housing opportunities, and an increased tax base which will benefit these disadvantaged target areas. Renewable and energy efficiency measures will be incorporated into the reuse/marketing plans. Area leaders will encourage developers to utilize renewable and energy efficiency measures wherever possible. This funding will allow for the repurposing of these sites, making the entire area more appealing, which in turn will increase the land value and tax rate.

### **1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

#### **1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse**

To date, the Coalition and its community partners to date have leveraged over tens of millions of dollars for initiatives throughout the target areas. Additional funding from various sources (identified below) will be sought for the four priority sites, including the financial resources listed below:

- **State funding from DCEO, DNR, and DOT** for public infrastructure construction, greenspace and recreational development activities, and transportation and alternative modes of transportation throughout the Coalition's geographic boundaries.
- **Federal Funding Opportunities:** US EDA, USDA, SBA, US DOT, and US EPA's Targeted Brownfields Assistance (TBA) program area all expected resources to support various projects within the Target Areas.
- **Enterprise Zones:** Existing and potential businesses within an enterprise zone may be eligible to receive economic benefits including state and local tax incentives, regulatory relief, and improved governmental services. There is an Enterprise Zone in LaSalle County that encompasses Marseilles and Streator, and another Enterprise Zone in the Upper River Valley Development Authority that encompasses Mendota and Peru for eligible projects.
- **Revolving Loan Funds:** A revolving fund loan is a financing tool that is used to bridge the gap between the dollar amount a bank will loan for an eligible activity and the financial need of a business and/or property owner. This tool helps stimulate economic growth by assisting with the retention and growth of the existing industrial and commercial base, providing needed capital to new start-up businesses, encouraging the development of minority and female-owned businesses, and assisting new or existing businesses with creating and retaining jobs.
- **Opportunity Zones:** The Opportunity Zones program encourages long-term investment and job creation, by reducing capital gains taxes for individuals and businesses who invest in qualified opportunity zones. It is the hope that opportunity zones will unleash investment in these qualified zones throughout the country.

#### **1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure**

Reuse of the priority sites will have access to existing infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity, transportation, broadband etc.), as they are all infill sites. Where possible, the reuse of existing buildings will be encouraged and adaptive reuse methods utilized. However, where new development is the only option, developers will be encouraged to implement practices to minimize landfill debris and implement green/sustainable building practices.

## **2: COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

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### **2.a. Community Need**

#### **2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding**

The NCICG geographic area is limited in its ability to assess brownfield sites without US EPA assistance. A limited population and subsequent tax base hinder the counties and communities comprising the region to complete assessment and/or remediation activities that are so desperately needed to stimulate reuse projects. The need for this funding is more prevalent in the Coalition Member communities – the most recent Census data is utilized when describing the needs below. **Mendota:** The widespread economic downturn, closings of factories, along with subsequent employment and population losses have also left many properties in Mendota's Target Area vacant, abandoned, and completely underutilized. These vacant and abandoned sites generate much less tax revenue than productive uses. Attempts have been made to attract development to Mendota, and many have failed due to the uncertainties related to the presence of contaminants on brownfield sites. Mendota's median household income is only \$58,974 – or almost \$15,000 less than the Illinois figure. This affords Mendota residents very little income to spend on community goods and services, which worsens the economic problems suffered by the City. Mendota's Target Area's demographics are much more dire than the City as a whole, specifically Census Tract 9619 and 9620. Per HUD's low-to-moderate income tracking tool, the target area's Census Tract Block Group has a low-to-moderate income population of approximately 45<sup>4</sup>%. Per the US Census Data, Census Tract 9619 has a population of 4,290, a Per Capita Income of \$38,385, a Median Household Income of \$64,219 with 6.3% of people living in Poverty. Census Tract

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ffd0597e8af24f88b501b7e7f326bedd>



9620 has a population of 3,665, a Per Capita Income of \$26,873, a Median Household Income of \$57,832, and a 15.3% of people living in Poverty. **Marseilles:** 20.3% of the population of Marseilles lives below the poverty level, which is almost 10% higher than the State of Illinois' poverty rate, and illustrates the desperate need of revitalization and redevelopment efforts in Marseilles. For the City as a whole, Marseilles has a Median Household Income of \$51,835, which is almost \$20,000 less than the State's Median Household Income. Brownfields contribute to impoverishment and unemployment in the City, and their heavy concentration in the City's Target Area complicates the City's ability to solve vital redevelopment issues. The brownfields that exist in the City's Target Area represent lost opportunities for job development, economic diversification, and much-needed additional property and sales tax revenue. These sites hinder the expansion of the City's housing opportunities, particularly for the elderly and low-income populations. In addition, brownfields sites have the potential to create unhealthy living conditions, which can complicate residents' ability to work and prosper. **Streator:** Streator is a small community (population 12,791) with limited financial resources. Streator has one of the lowest Per Capita Incomes (\$22,721), the lowest Median Household Incomes (\$41,612), and the highest poverty rate (20.9%<sup>5</sup>) in LaSalle County. The City's Median Household is approximately \$15,000 less LaSalle County at \$56,243 and more than \$20,000 lower than the State of Illinois at \$63,575. The 20.9% of families living below the poverty line almost doubles the 10.5% figure for the entire United States. **Peru:** Peru's Median Household Income (\$56,238) is almost \$20,000 less than that of the State of Illinois. The city also has a city-wide poverty level of 11.6%. The region is not a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement community and requires grant funding to come through a competitive application process. Pressures to keep local tax burdens low, partly based on low wages and declining quality life, limit the government's funds for economic development. The Region does not have the capacity to fund environmental assessments given the number of potential brownfield sites located throughout the area. Brownfield sites within the target areas are contributing to the overall economic decline of the region and preventing redevelopment. Blighted vacant buildings display broken windows and decay that remain depressed and frozen in disrepair. However, with environmental site assessment and reuse planning these sites could be the catalyst for positive economic growth the region needs.

## 2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

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

The people living in the Target Areas, mostly sensitive populations, are immediate neighbors to the Coalition's most potentially harmful brownfield sites. In the Marseilles Target Area, up to 25% of the population is living in poverty - of that 25% of people living in poverty, 35% of those are women, minority populations; and adults with lower levels of educational attainment<sup>3</sup>. The Target Area has a 22.7% children aged 0-18 population, and 32.1% of those children live in poverty. 17.9% of the Target Area population is made up of adults aged 65 and over. In the Mendota Target Area, US Census data shows that 31% of the population is comprised of Hispanic or Latino residents. Furthermore, more than 40% of the female population in the Target Area is comprised of women of child bearing age. In Streator, there is a 20.9% city-wide poverty rate is almost 50% higher than the State. The Target Area has a 37.2% poverty rate, illustrating the impact to 44% of low-income residents who live near the priority sites (per EJ SCREEN). Brownfields throughout Target Area have substantial impacts on the health and welfare of sensitive population residents living there, leading to significant environmental justice issues, including exposure to:

- *Ingestion/Inhalation of Contaminated Material.* Potential ingestion, inhalation and dermal contact with contaminated soil pose a public health risk, particularly to children.
- *Impacts to Groundwater.* Groundwater contamination poses a risk to public water supplies.
- *Neighborhood Safety and Disinvestment.* The concentration of abandoned, potentially contaminated sites has caused disinvestment and decline throughout the Target Area.

By addressing the environmental contaminant, particular asbestos and lead based paint, issues in the Target Area with these grant funds, any threat of exposure by nearby sensitive populations to contaminants via direct contact, inhalation, vapor intrusion or ingestion will be eliminated.

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

Per the Climate & Environmental Justice Screen Tool<sup>6</sup>, and due to Marseilles' industrial and manufacturing history, the Marseilles Target Area population is located in a higher cancer risk percentile than other areas of the City – 50% higher percentile. In addition, the Marseilles Target Area features the following health percentiles: Asthma – 40<sup>th</sup>, Diabetes – 56<sup>th</sup>, Heart Disease – 69<sup>th</sup>, and Low Life Expectancy – 57<sup>th</sup>. Per the Climate and Economic Justice Screening tool<sup>7</sup>, Mendota's Target Area

<sup>5</sup> US Census, 2022 ACS

<sup>6</sup> Climate & Environmental Justice Mapping Tool - <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#12.81/41.32537/-88.70315>

<sup>7</sup> CEJST tool - <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#10.81/41.5437/-89.0961>



include the following health burdens and their percentiles: Asthma – 40<sup>th</sup> percentile, Diabetes – 69<sup>th</sup> percentile, Heart Disease – 78<sup>th</sup> percentile, and Low Life Expectancy – 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile. Identifying and developing a cleanup plan for the Coalition priority sites is the first step in reducing the risk of exposure to contaminants in and around these sites.

**(3) Environmental Justice**

**a. Identification of Environmental Justice Issues:**

Brownfield sites add to the environmental justice challenges that continue the cycle of disinvestment and poverty within the target areas. According to EPA’s EJSCREEN all the target areas experience at least one environmental burden above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile when compared to the state. Many of these environmental risk factors can be attributed to the target areas having a high prevalence of disease, including asthma, diabetes, cancer, and poor mental health. Securing this grant funding is critical to the Coalition’s ability to serve these target areas most impacted by brownfields through positive redevelopment of these vacant and underutilized properties.

**b. Advancing Environmental Justice:** The North Central Illinois Council of Governments seeks to promote environmental justice with this grant funding by: collaborating with community partners to address environmental and health-related challenges; work with our community partners and neighborhood leaders to enhance the understanding of environmental and health-related issues at the community level; and by providing accessible and culturally appropriate opportunities for low-income, minority and linguistically isolated stakeholders to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes on brownfields sites.

**2.b. Community Engagement**

**2.b.i. Project Involvement and 2.b.ii. Project Roles**

Organization Name	Point of Contact (name and email)	Specific Role in the Project
<b>Streator Chamber of Commerce</b>	Courtney Levy Email: streatorchamber61364@gmail.com	The Streator Chamber of Commerce will be a strong community advocate for the Streator region by connecting businesses to available brownfield site resources and advocating for business with a unified voice.
<b>Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce</b>	Bill Zens Email: billzens@ivaced.org	Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development has served the region for 112 years, helping businesses locate, grow, and sustain. IVACC will help NCICG prioritize sites, coordinate community engagement, and connect developers to available brownfield sites.
<b>Mendota Chamber of Commerce</b>	Sam Setchell Email: president@mendotachamber.com	The strength of the Mendota Chamber lies in the active involvement of its membership. Both large and small businesses are represented and influence the direction of the organization – these assets will be helpful in NCICG’s inventory and community outreach process.
<b>Illinois Valley Community College</b>	Tracy Morris Email: Tracy_Morris@ivcc.edu	Illinois Valley Community College will help host community engagement activities, and will be a resource for workforce development opportunities for grant related activities.
<b>North Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation</b>	Gina Czubachowski Email: gina@edcnci.org	NCIEDC’s specialty is marketing the region for economic development progress and success – this group will have valuable site prioritization input, and will help NCICG market available brownfield sites after assessment activities are complete.

**2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input**

Through the management of their previous federal and state awarded grant funds, NCICG has developed processes and "infrastructure" to meaningfully involve citizens, civic organizations, and communities in the assessment, cleanup, and reuse decision making process. NCICG will include the affected neighborhoods and their respective residents, property owners, and business owners as vital partners in their assessment and cleanup planning activities. Neighborhood organizations and citizen’s groups will have the opportunity to express their concerns, identify their needs, and create and implement reuse plans. NCICG will partner with a Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Committee (BRAC) and Project Partner organizations to assist with community notification efforts. As NCICG’s grant moves forward with site assessments, the Coalition will work with it’s Qualified Environmental Consultant, and their community partners to hold three (4) public meetings and develop three (4) fact sheets on the status of assessment activities at important junctures. NCICG will post these fact sheets on their website and utilize any necessary social media to notify the public with a link to the City’s webpages for more detailed information. If NCICG is awarded this grant, they will continue with the utilization of diverse notification methods (i.e. social media, website, postings) to ensure that they reach a broad audience. It will also be a priority for NCICG to describe their activities, and progress in ways that are easily

understood by its residents, who will most likely be unfamiliar with environmental and scientific terminology. In addition, NCICG will seek out translation services for any households directly impacted by any assessment-related work.

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS:**

**3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

We have carefully evaluated and planned grant activities to ensure that they are grant compliant and appropriate to our overall goals. We will prioritize four sites in the defined Target Areas of this application before assisting others. We will use our extensive in-house grant management, planning, and economic development skills, and access to other partner resources to augment the EPA grant funds to spur redevelopment and revitalization in our jurisdiction. To demonstrate our commitment to the effective use of these brownfield funds, we have added dedicated and experienced Coalition Partners to our grant. No health monitoring activities are planned as part of this brownfields project at this time, but the need for such activities will be evaluated based on the findings of the planned environmental assessments.

<b>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight</b>
<b>i. Project Implementation:</b> This task is comprised of the following: develop and monitor the grant’s Work Plan, oversight of the Cooperative Agreement, Quarterly and Annual Reporting to US EPA, coordination between the North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) and EPA, updating of the appropriate GIS systems as the brownfields inventory is developed, data entry into EPA’s ACRES program, procurement of a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), documentation of the site assessment selection process, management of the coalition’s brownfields inventory, and sending two staff to the annual National Brownfields Conferences.
<b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> QEP will be retained within 60 days of award. Quarterly Reports and ACRES updates will be submitted at the close of each quarter and an Annual Report will be submitted within 30 days of fiscal year-end.
<b>iii. Task/Activity Lead:</b> Program Management will be led by our Executive Director, Kevin Lindemann, and the selected Qualified Environmental Professional.
<b>iv. Outputs:</b> Anticipated outputs of this Task include: 16 Quarterly Reports to US EPA, 4 Annual MBE/WBE Reports to US EPA, and the number of sites in the Brownfields Inventory.

<b>Task 2: Community Engagement</b>
<b>i. Project Implementation:</b> The Community Engagement Task is comprised of activities that encourage and facilitate the project’s community involvement and outreach plans early in the program. A Community Outreach Plan will be established under this task, and the Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Committee (BRAC) will also be created under this task. The BRAC will meet at least twice a year to keep the brownfields inventory current, ensuring that the highest priority sites are being assessed and made ready for reuse. As the project progresses, our Project Partners will play key roles in both the BRAC and Community Outreach activities. We will hold 2 Community Meetings in each of the coalition communities of Marseilles, Mendota, Peru and Streator to ensure the residents are aware of project activities and developments. The Community Meetings will be coupled with the release of project Fact Sheets, which will be distributed by the NCICG, Project Partners, and posted on the NCICG website as well as the other partners. The priority projects identified in this proposal will take precedence in this task. The Community Engagement Plan will include a method for collecting and responding to community feedback on our assessment grant project.
<b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> There will be 2 BRAC Meetings each year and one Community Meeting annually. Fact Sheets will be disbursed immediately after Community Meetings and Project Progress activities will continue throughout the four year project period.
<b>iii. Task/Activity Lead:</b> Community Outreach task activities will be led by the NCICG, with the Qualified Environmental Professional assisting with the BRAC and Project Partners assisting with Community Outreach and site prioritization/reuse efforts.
<b>iv. Outputs:</b> Anticipated outputs of this Task include: 8 BRAC Meetings, 8 Community Meetings, and 4 Fact Sheets distributed to the community regarding the program.

<b>Task 3: Inventory &amp; Prioritization</b>
<b>i. Project Implementation:</b> We will create an inventory of sites and update the list throughout the grant period. The NCICG, the QEP and BRAC will then develop prioritization criteria and then use the criteria to rank the sites. This task will help the NCICG prioritize properties based on their specific reuse plans, potential for

redevelopment, and the health and social impacts to the partner communities most disadvantaged populations.
<b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> This Task will take place in the first year of the project period. The NCICG will continue to add brownfield sites as they are identified to their inventory throughout the four year project period. Prioritization will take place at the bi-annual BRAC Meetings.
<b>iii. Task/Activity Lead:</b> This task will be led by the selected Qualified Environmental Professional with assistance from the Executive Director, Kevin Lindeman.
<b>iv. Outputs:</b> The anticipated outputs of this task include: a current and prioritized Brownfields Site Inventory for the region.

<b>Task 4: Revitalization Planning</b>
<b>i. Project Implementation:</b> This Task includes the development of four (4) revitalization plans in the Target Areas of coalition partners. This would include the Central Business District Target area in our partner community Streator. Downtown River Front target Area in our partner community Marseilles. The Downtown Target Area in our partner community Mendota as well as the Riverfront Area in Peru.
<b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> This Task will start in the first year of the project period. The NCICG will give the procured Planning Consultant one year to complete their Revitalization Studies for the Target Area.
<b>iii. Task/Activity Lead:</b> This task will be led by the Executive Director Kevin Lindeman, the Project Director Richard Norwood, and the selected Planning Consultant Firm(s) that will work with the selected QEP.
<b>iv. Outputs:</b> The anticipated outputs of this task include: four (4) revitalization plans located in the Target Areas of our partner communities.

<b>Task 5: Environmental Site Assessments &amp; Cleanup Plans</b>
<b>i. Project Implementation:</b> Before any assessment can be complete an Eligibility Determination must be complete for each site. Hazardous Substance sites are submitted to USEPA for approval. Petroleum EDs are submitted to IEPA. Once EDs are approved Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA's) will be conducted on sites to move them towards cleanup and/or redevelopment. All Phase I ESA's will be performed in compliance with the requirements of All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) as well as the applicable ASTM standards and practices. The Target Areas in Marseilles, Streator, Peru and Mendota will utilize assessment funds first and will consist of 28 Phase I ESAs, and then the NCICG will pursue other sites are positioned for redevelopment. Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA's) will be conducted on eligible sites to position them for cleanup and redevelopment. Prior to conducting any Phase II work, a Sampling & Analysis Plan will be prepared and submitted to US EPA for approval. All Phase II ESA's will be performed in compliance with the requirements of All Appropriate Inquiry as well as applicable ASTM standards and practices. Some Phase II work may be more focused on the hazardous building materials such as, but not limited to, asbestos and lead based paint. With these grant funds, the NCICG anticipates conducting up to 15 Phase II Environmental Site Assessments to Recognized Environmental Conditions were identified in the Phase I ESAs. The NCICG priority sites in each target area will be considered for Phase II Assessment work first, and will then pursue other sites in the Target Area before venturing to other locations in the community. If contamination is identified at problematic levels, the NCICG will seek to enroll the impacted sites in the IEPA voluntary cleanup program for further investigation and remedial planning. The NCICG anticipates the enrollment of four to six sites into the voluntary cleanup program. Site-Specific Health and Safety and Sampling Analysis Plans will be prepared for all Phase II Environmental Site Assessment activities. A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will also be prepared by the contracted QEP in accordance with the US EPA's guidelines. The NCICG will evaluate cleanup by preparing a Remedial Objectives/Remedial Action Plan for use under the IEPA voluntary Site Remediation Program. Any site in need of cleanup will have an Alternatives to Brownfields Corrective Action (ABCA) completed. The priority sites will utilize these task funds first. The NCICG anticipates completing seven (7) Hazardous Substances Remedial Action Plans and three (3) Petroleum Remedial Action Plans with these grant funds.
<b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Phase I and II ESA's will start in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of the project's first year and will continue as needed throughout the four year project period.
<b>iii. Task/Activity Lead:</b> This Task will be led by the City's Qualified Environmental Professional.

**iv. Outputs:** Anticipated outputs of this Task include 28 EDs, 28 Phase I Site Assessments, 15 SAPs, 15 Phase II ESAs and 10 RAPs. The number of acres of sites accessed with also be tracked and entered into ACRES.

**3.b. Cost Estimates**

Budget Categories		Project Tasks					TOTAL
		Task 1: Cooperative Agreement	Task 2: Community Engagement	Task 3: Inventory & Prioritization	Task 4: Revitalization Planning	Task 5: Environmental Assessments & Cleanup Plans	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$11,750		\$39,250
	Fringe Benefits	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$3,750	\$5,875		\$19,625
	Travel	\$6,000					\$6,000
	Equipment						
	Supplies						
	Contractual	\$10,800	\$9,700	\$14,900	\$300,000	\$999,725	\$1,352,750
	Other (IEPA Fees)					\$82,375	\$82,375
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>\$31,800</b>	<b>\$24,700</b>	<b>\$26,150</b>	<b>\$317,625</b>	<b>\$1,099,725</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>

**Development of Cost Estimates**

**Task 1:** This budget includes \$10,000 of personnel time at \$50/hour plus \$25/hr for fringe benefit that totals \$5,000. This will provide approximately 200 hours of staff time for all reporting and cooperative agreement management activities over the four years of the grant. The remaining \$6,000 is for Staff to attend a National Brownfield Conference. Air far is estimated at \$750/ticket with two trips for two people. Hotel is estimate at \$300/night for two people for 3 days to two conferences and meals at \$100/day per person for 12 days. The \$10,800 for contractual work is 80 hours of QEP time (\$135/hr x 80 hrs. = \$10,800)

**Task 2:** This budget includes \$10,000 of personnel time at \$50/hour with fringe benefits totaling \$5,000. This will provide 200 hours of staff time for the development of Fact Sheets, Website updates, and conducting Public Meetings. The \$9,700 for contractual work is for 80 hours of QEP assistance (\$135/hour x 24 hours and \$95/hour for 68 hours).

**Task 3:** This budget includes \$7,500 of personnel time at \$50/hour along with fringe benefits for \$3,750 for 110 hours of staff time to be part of site prioritization. This will provide 40 hours of staff time to review the inventory and guide site prioritization process with the community and our selected QEP. The \$14,900 for contractual work is for 40 hours of QEP assistance at \$135/hour and 100 hours at \$95/hour totaling \$14,900).

**Task 4:** This budget includes developing 4 revitalization plans. This will provide a qualified urban planning firm for the revitalization planning that will work with our select QEP to ensure the planning and environmental impairment items are considered in concert, provide pertinent information for planning efforts, and work alongside the QEP. The \$300,000 for contractual work is for a Planning Consultant to create 4 Revitalization Plans for the Target Areas – this fee includes 4 plans at \$75,000 each totaling \$300,000. This budget includes \$11,750 of personnel time at \$50/hour along with fringe benefits for \$5,875 for 59 hours of staff time to be used towards each revitalization plan.

**Task 5:** This task includes conducting 28 Eligibility Determinations (EDs) at \$900 each totaling \$25,200. Complete 28 Phase I ESA's at \$3,500 each for a total of \$98,000, a Quality Assurance Project Plan and Health & Safety Plans for \$4,900, 14 Sampling & Analysis Plans coupled with Phase II ESA's at \$38,500 each for a total of \$539,000 and 6 supplement site investigations and Site Investigation Reports for SRP enrolled sites that would be \$38,500 for each, for a total of \$219,000; This task also includes completing 5 ABCAs and Remedial Action Plans at \$30,000 each by our QEP and submittal to the IEPA SRP. This would also include IEPA review fees \$20,000 per site for 5 sites totaling \$100,000.

**3.c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results**

Tracking and measuring progress throughout the period of performance will ensure that NCICG achieves the intended project results in an efficient manner. The table below summarizes the proposed project outcomes and method for tracking project progress. The anticipated outputs for each task were described in the previous section. The tasks and outcomes for this grant include:

PROJECT OUTCOMES & PROGRESS TRACKING		
TASK	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS TRACKING
<b>Cooperative Agreement Oversight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of progress</li> <li>• Efficient project management</li> <li>• Accurate / timely data for EPA</li> <li>• Ready data for Coalition Member use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Reports to EPA</li> <li>• Annual Reports to EPA</li> <li>• ACRES data entry</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More informed and educated stakeholders</li> <li>• Increased program buy-in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share Fact Sheets/Web Postings/Meetings on Project Progress and Milestones with EPA</li> </ul>
<b>Site Inventory &amp; Prioritization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete, Prioritized list of potential Brownfield sites in the Coalition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brownfield Inventory presented at Project Partner Meeting/Public Meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of RECs; AAI compliance</li> <li>• Safe, efficient and reliable assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set Assessment Schedule</li> <li>• Schedule for Priority Site Assessments</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterization of contamination; AAI compliance</li> </ul>	
<b>Revitalization Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze cleanup alternatives</li> <li>• Sites ready for cleanup / reuse</li> <li>• More efficient activities through 3<sup>rd</sup> party oversight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share ABCA and Remedial Action Plans for sites positioned for reuse with EPA</li> </ul>

**TASK 4: PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY & PAST PERFORMANCE:**

**4.a. Programmatic Capability**

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

NCICG has previously received federal and state grant funding, and stands ready to administer this assessment grant when awarded. NCICG has the ability and capacity to manage this grant. NCICG has extensive experience facilitating and managing redevelopment projects and will utilize that experience to support the most strategic use of the grant funds. If awarded this funding, NCICG will effectively manage the grant and successfully perform each phase of work on the project. Executive Director Kevin Lindeman will serve as the Coalition’s Project Manager for this project, serving as the primary contact and responsible for submitting quarterly reports, financial reports, progress reports, and the final summary report to EPA Region 5 Staff with the assistance of the Coalition’s environmental consultant. Upon award of the cooperative agreement, NCICG staff will prepare a draft Work Plan. After the US EPA approves the work plan, NCICG will retain the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in compliance with all applicable federal and local procurement requirements. The QEP will assist with grant and program management and will conduct assessment activities and participate in project reporting and community engagement activities. NCICG will work with IEPA to provide independent oversight of assessment activities conducted under this program, to ensure all assessment is conducted appropriately and with consideration for public health and welfare. Mr. Kevin Lindeman, Executive Director of NCICG, will serve as Project Manager. Mr. Lindeman has worked for NCICG for 23+ years and has been involved in the implementation and administration of grants throughout that time. He wholeheartedly understands the importance of grant administration and timely recordkeeping. NCICG’s has a plan for management continuity in the event of any personnel change relies on an experienced and readily available Project Manager on staff. Mr. Lindeman has successfully administered other Federal and State for the NCICG and the communities they serve.

**4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources**

NCICG will identify, coordinate and leverage any public and private resources needed to complete the described grant tasks. NCICG will follow EPA’s procurement policies to hire a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to effectively and efficiently assist NCICG in managing the Assessment grant project. The QEP will assist NCICG in preparing bid documents needed to select a contractor to conduct the assessment work, and manage the project as it commences. All procurement will follow the federal processes along with all additional requirements needed for procurement under an EPA Cooperative Agreement. The Project Manager Kevin Lindeman will work with the Coalition to ensure that plan is in place if there are any changes in management at the Coalition level – this will alleviate any potential issues or gaps in the project schedule or federal reporting on the project. In addition, if additional technical assistance is needed, NCICG will reach out to IEPA’s office of site evaluation for brownfields related work and the County Health Departments for additional health data and community engagement.

**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 Agreements**

NCICG has vast grant funding experience, both with federal and state grants.

**(1) Accomplishments:** NCICG is a regional government-supported agency located in the City of Ottawa in LaSalle County, Illinois. This organization has been providing planning, technical assistance, and grant writing services to counties, townships, and communities since 1979. NCICG and its Coalition partners apply for and are regularly awarded grants from federal and state agencies. NCICG submits applications to carry out planning, public infrastructure, and business development services for the region. NCICG has successfully obtained and managed funding from the State of Illinois from: Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources. NCICG has successfully obtained and managed federal grant funding from: US EDA, US DOT, and US HUD.

**(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements:** NCICG has received several state and federal grants, making NCICG very aware of the programmatic requirements involved in successfully managing a Brownfields grant. NCICG will spend all of their grant funds in the respected project periods. NCICG will strictly adhere to the workplan and comply with the schedule, terms & conditions, and reporting requirements which include quarterly reports, federal financial reports, ACRES, DBE reports, and where appropriate, HASP and QAPP, and finalizing the Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternative (ABCA) report. NCICG will create a positive reputation with US EPA, ensuring to adhere to all requirements to protect the excellent reputation established with its federal partners.

## THRESHOLD CRITERIA

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### 1. Applicant Eligibility:

The North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) is a group of general purpose units of local government established under Federal, State, or Local Law (e.g., councils of governments) to function as a single legal entity with authority to enter into binding agreements with the Federal Government. NCICG's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws are attached.

### 2. Number and Eligibility of Coalition Members:

- Lead Member: North Central Illinois Council of Governments
- Non-Lead Member:
  - City of Streator
  - City of Mendota
  - City of Peru
  - City of LaSalle

### 3. Target Areas:

The Target Areas for this grant are: **(1) Mendota Downtown Corridor** – Mendota's Downtown Corridor, specifically Census Tract 9619 and 9620, has a low-to-moderate income population of approximately 45%. Per the US Census Data, Census Tract 9619 has a population of 4,290, a Per Capita Income of \$38,385, a Median Household Income of \$64,219 with 6.3% of people living in Poverty. Census Tract 9620 has a population of 3,665, a Per Capita Income of \$26,873, a Median Household Income of \$57,832, and a 15.3% of people living in Poverty. Each of these demographic figures are far worse than those of the State of Illinois with a Median Household Income of \$72,205 and a poverty level of 11.9%. This Target Area is blighted, and filled with underutilized and vacant brownfield properties. In the Target Area, brownfield sites are located immediately adjacent to residential properties. This poses a particular threat of residential exposure to contaminants via direct contact, inhalation, vapor intrusion, or ingestion. The brownfields sites in the Target Area threaten the public health and the environment of the City, and also impose a blighting effect that leads to further distress, negative perceptions, and disinvestment in the City; **(2) Streator Central Business District** - The Central Business District Target Area is located on the east side of Streator's central business district, and is characterized by mixed-use properties and many former railroad and abandoned industrial parcels. Given their proximity to the central business district and residential neighborhoods, these properties have the most promise for redevelopment, specifically affordable housing, which the City is in desperate need of. Streator received a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank to assist in the rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes in this area, which complements the reuse plans for new construction multi-unit housing. Additionally, the city has begun acquiring abandoned parcels in this target area so that it can control entire blocks with the intent of developing sorely needed senior housing. Several of these tracts are believed to be contaminated, which is a barrier to the City's ability to get the parcels redeveloped into senior housing units; **(3) Marseilles Downtown Riverfront** - While Marseilles has made various efforts to position the Downtown Riverfront Target Area for redevelopment, lack of funding for environmental assessment and remediation remains a major barrier to moving the City's overall redevelopment efforts forward. This Target Area starts at the Illinois riverfront, leads through the downtown and some residential neighborhoods, before ending at the commercial/industrial Route 6. Although there are a number of brownfield-impacted areas in Marseilles, the City has selected the Downtown Riverfront area of this application for the following reasons: The Target Area has the highest concentration of brownfields and potential brownfields in the community; The Target Area has the highest low-to-moderate (LMI) income populations, reaching up to 64.05% LMI and a poverty rate of 20.3%, with 32.1% of those in poverty under the age of 18 years old; The Target Area has the highest percentage of sensitive populations that are directly affected by the potential brownfield sites in the area. With 19.2% of the Target Area population consisting of people age 65 and older, and 32.1% of the Target Area population aged 18 and under living in poverty, these grant funds will directly benefit these disadvantaged populations; and **(4) Peru Riverfront** – the Peru Riverfront Target Area has a population of 2,663 people, with a minority population of 21%. Peru's Riverfront Target Area is on the south side of the City, and the health of the riverfront is critical to the Coalition's geographic area. Bounded to

the west by Highway 251, the south by Water Street, to the east by the City limits and the north along 5<sup>th</sup> Street (US Way 6). The City of Peru owns and manages the Starved Rock hydroelectric power station—the only such energy generating facility on the Illinois River. The city has owned and operated its own electric generation, transmission, and distribution system continuously since 1891.

**4. Existing Brownfields Grants to Non-Lead Members**

The North Central Illinois Council of Governments does not have an open EPA Brownfields Grant, and none of the non-lead Coalition Members have an open EPA Brownfields Grant either. No member of this Coalition is the recipient of an open cooperative agreement for MARC grant funding or a MARC grant that closed in 2016 or later.

**5. Coalition Agreement**

Each non-lead Coalition Member has signed a letter to NCICG agreeing to be a part of the Coalition. These letters are attached.

**6. Community Involvement:**

Through the management of their previous federal and state awarded grant funds, NCICG has developed processes and "infrastructure" to meaningfully involve citizens, civic organizations, and communities in the assessment, cleanup, and reuse decision making process. NCICG will include the affected neighborhoods and their respective residents, property owners, and business owners as vital partners in their assessment and cleanup planning activities. Neighborhood organizations and citizen's groups will have the opportunity to express their concerns, identify their needs, and create and implement reuse plans. NCICG will partner with a Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Committee (BRAC) and Project Partner organizations to assist with community notification efforts. As NCICG's grant moves forward with site assessments, the Coalition will work with its Qualified Environmental Consultant, and their community partners to hold three (4) public meetings and develop three (4) fact sheets on the status of assessment activities at important junctures. NCICG will post these fact sheets on their website and utilize any necessary social media to notify the public with a link to the City's webpages for more detailed information. If NCICG is awarded this grant, they will continue with the utilization of diverse notification methods (i.e. social media, website, postings) to ensure that they reach a broad audience. It will also be a priority for NCICG to describe their activities, and progress in ways that are easily understood by its residents, who will most likely be unfamiliar with environmental and scientific terminology. In addition, NCICG will seek out translation services for any households directly impacted by any assessment-related work.

**7. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds:**

Not Applicable. The North Central Illinois Council of Governments does not have any existing US EPA Brownfields Grant funds open.

**8. Named Contractors and Subrecipients:**

Not Applicable. The North Central Illinois Council (NCICG) of Governments did not name Contractors or Subrecipients in this Grant Application Proposal. The NCICG has not undergone any procurement or entered into any agreements with Contractors or Subrecipients for this project.