

RATON

R06-24-A-008

NEW MEXICO

P.O. BOX 910 RATON, NEW MEXICO 87740 (575) 445-9451/9551

1. Applicant Identification: City of Raton
2. Funding Requested:
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
3. Location:
 - a. City of Raton
 - b. Colfax County
 - c. New Mexico
4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information:

Community-wide Assessment Grant applicants:

 - Target Area(s) discussed: Priority sites in the Raton City Limits Target Area
 - Census tract numbers: US Census Tracts (CT) 35007950500 and 35007950600
 - Addresses of the priority sites:
 - Millie's Market, 1189 South 2nd Street, Raton, .84 acres
 - Former La Mesa Racetrack, 555 HWY, Rural, Raton, 214.5 acres
 - Old Hospital, 200 Hospital Drive, Raton, 6.6 acres
5. Contacts:
 - a. Project Director:

Jaden Welch, City Manager
Address: 224 Savage Avenue, P.O. Box 910, Raton, NM 87740
Phone: (575) 445-9551
Email: jwelch@cityofraton.com
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:

James Neil Segotta, Jr., Mayor
Address: 224 Savage Avenue, P.O. Box 910, Raton, NM 87740
Phone number: 575-445-9551
Email address: nsegotta@cityofraton.com
6. Population: 6,082



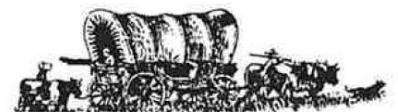
7. Other Factors:

Sample Format for Providing Information on the Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less	1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe of United States territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (ie., 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 for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
The reuse of priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar or geothermal energy	3, 4, 6
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	4
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	3, 4, 6
At least 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A, for priority sites within the target area(s).	8,9
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.	

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

9. Releasing Copies of Applications:

The applicant understands that the information included will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR §2.203. No passages are considered confidential.





MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

JAMES C. KENNEY
CABINET SECRETARY

October 10, 2023

George Riley, Director
Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement
224 Savage Avenue
Box 910
Raton, New Mexico 87740
Email: griley@cityofraton.com

Re: FY24 Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant – State Acknowledgement and Support Letter for the City of Raton

Dear George Riley:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) acknowledges and enthusiastically supports the City of Raton's U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant proposal. This letter serves as acknowledgement from NMED that the City of Raton is submitting an application to the EPA for funding assistance under the Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant Program to conduct assessment and brownfields planning activities. NMED understands that the City is applying for \$500,000 to fund these activities.

NMED would like to take this opportunity to encourage EPA's positive decision in making a grant award to the City of Raton for assessment activities. Raton has been active for many years in redevelopment of their brownfield properties and has been proactive in accessing state brownfield resources through NMED. A successful award would greatly assist the City of Raton in its revitalization efforts.

NMED will continue to support the City by providing technical assistance and outreach as needed. NMED looks forward to a favorable response from EPA on your application. If you have any questions, please contact me via email at gail.cooke@env.nm.gov or at (505) 670-1143.

Sincerely,

Gail Cooke Digitally signed by Gail Cooke
Date: 2023.10.10 08:23:18
-06'00'

Gail Cooke, Program Manager
Remediation Oversight Section
Ground Water Quality Bureau

cc: ROS Reading File

SCIENCE | INNOVATION | COLLABORATION | COMPLIANCE

Ground Water Quality Bureau | 1190 Saint Francis Drive, PO Box 5469, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-5469
Telephone (505) 827-2900 | www.env.nm.gov/gwqb/

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Overview of Brownfields Challenges and Description of Target Area: The City of Raton, New Mexico (pop. 6,082) proposes to conduct eligible brownfields activities within the target area, **US census tracts (CT) 35007950500 and 35007950600, both designated as disadvantaged census tracts** according to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). This target area covers the Raton city limits and focuses on anchor properties in the two census tracts that would encourage community engagement and, when redeveloped, would result in the provision of a significant number of sustainable jobs and housing units needed to support a revitalized city center. Raton is the county seat and the only incorporated city in rural Colfax County (NE New Mexico, pop. 12,387). The city contains half the County's population and is the logistical center for dealing with **multiple FEMA disasters** like the recent Las Tusas (FM-5465-NM) and Echo Ridge (FM-5461-NM) Fires. Raton is a logistical center for natural disasters that are happening at greater frequency at a time when the city itself is struggling to survive and support its own citizens.

With railroad growth in the late 1800s and early 1900s and the abundance of coal, came an influx of workers and Raton developed civically and culturally. The coal industry was the driving force behind Raton's prosperity and the catalyst for the economic decline. The city entered the current period of decline as a direct result of the mine closures in the 1990s and the cascading impact on the local railroad industry, losing approximately 18% of its population between 1990 and 2022 (US Census, 1990 vs. 2022 five-year est.). Raton has slowly withered along with the mainstays of the economy. The decline in population and revenue have contributed to Raton's many brownfield sites.

Today Raton hosts annual mountain man re-enactments and the International Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally with scant town amenities to offer visitors. In short, we are unable to effectively leverage tourist dollars from our annual events due to blight and lack of investment in businesses that attract tourism. Trains stop at Raton's historic 1910 rail depot several times a day and revitalization would offer visitors the chance to enjoy Raton, much like visitors who take the Rail Runner from Albuquerque to Santa Fe to shop and eat at restaurants within walking distance to the station.

Raton is strategically transitioning from a coal mining, railroad, ranching/agricultural driven economy to a tourism, film, and outdoor recreation economy through relationships with El Raton MediaWorks and Moss Adventures. El Raton MediaWorks is a media workforce development and training nonprofit focused on a wide range of community and workforce development opportunities to bring film, television, and media projects to northern New Mexico to invigorate the local economy. The City of Raton is already in partnership with El Raton MediaWorks to develop the Kearny Film School, a film studio and education center in the old Kearny Elementary School building with the support of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham. Moss Adventures is an outdoor adventure company that moved its headquarters from Florida to Raton in 2022. Raton's partnership with Moss Adventures continues to grow with a shared interest in bringing in new business and employment opportunities in the tourism/outdoor sector. Grant funding for the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the priority sites will help the economic transition toward a film, tourism, and outdoor recreation focused economy.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): **City staff conducted a windshield survey and have estimated that at least 33 potential brownfield sites exist in the two target census tracts. The priority sites account for nearly 320 acres (0.5 sq mile) of brownfields, a significant portion of our eight-square-mile city.** The owners of each of the properties have agreed to provide access to the properties and participate in the assessment grant process.

Site #1: Millie's Market (Target Area CT 35007950500), 1189 South 2nd Street, Raton (.84 acres): Once a thriving family-run market, Millie's went out of business in the early 1980s and is a vacant, derelict eyesore. The roof is collapsing and is in dangerous proximity (50 feet) to adjacent residences. Located on the business loop of I25 next to the Raton Tourist Information Center, this gateway property gives visitors

a negative impression of Raton. Environmental concerns include asbestos and lead-based paint, and aging petroleum storage tanks. The proposed reuse concept is commercial, and its excellent location next to the Tourist Information Center is ideal for outdoor recreation tourism commercial venues like Moss Adventures. The venue could also promote and sell in-demand *Certified New Mexico True* local products and products from other small businesses in Raton and Colfax County.

Site #2: Former La Mesa Racetrack (Target Area CT 35007950600), 555 HWY, Rural, Raton (214.5 acres): La Mesa Park, the first thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing track in New Mexico, closed its gates in 1992 fueling the economic decline of Raton with a loss of 600 jobs and related revenue from feed/maintenance, vet services, tourism, and service industries. This site is 214.5 acres with many decrepit structures including dilapidated grandstands that need to be demolished. The site is currently unusable, despite its prime commercial location next to I25 and proximity to downtown. The potential contaminants include pesticides, fertilizer, petroleum constituents, arsenic, and asbestos and lead associated with the site buildings. The reuse plan includes commercial, professional, healthcare facilities and residential uses. The site would also support safe and appropriate workforce housing and affordable aging-in-place options for seniors. Integrated parks for public use with sustainable native plants will buffer highway air and noise pollution, adding much-needed public recreational space to Raton. The site could offer additional vendor space for events like the annual International Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally, allowing Raton to leverage this event to bring in more revenue. Tourists staying in Raton could walk to the International Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally vendor stalls and other events, encouraging visitors to spend time and money in Raton. The grant would fund a reuse plan for the site that would summarize environmental conditions, economic potential, and community needs identified through intentional community engagement events.

Site #3: Old Hospital (Target Area CT 35007950600), 200 Hospital Drive, Raton (6.6 acres) The Old Hospital building is currently vacant and is a potential site for El Raton Mediaworks for media production workforce development. It is conveniently located just west of I25 and south of La Mesa. In its current state, the building is unusable due to potential exposure from deteriorating asbestos-containing building materials and lead-based paint. Assessment grant funding will fund the critical first step in readying the building for reuse. The Old Hospital would offer El Raton Mediaworks production offices and editing suites to bring film, television, and media projects to Raton and northern New Mexico, invigorating the local economy, and creating a wide range of community and workforce development opportunities. Leveraging Raton's existing relationship with El Raton Mediaworks, the Old Hospital could offer essential spaces to attract other media companies, a satellite location for the New Mexico Film Office, and event offices for Raton's annual events. The film industry is one of the fastest growing and most profitable industries in the state and Raton could greatly benefit from having spaces ready for all aspects of the industry, leveraging existing media relationships.

The priority sites in the target area have the greatest potential for business development, job creation, and suitable, safe housing within the city limits. They were selected based on the potential for contamination, proximity to sensitive populations and potential to generate replicable improvements for our residents, stakeholders, and visitors through assessment, remediation, and redevelopment.

1.a.iii Identifying Additional Sites

In the event that grant funds remain after addressing the priority sites, Raton will meet with the Brownfield Task Force consisting of one representative from community groups mentioned in Section 2.b.i and two representatives from the City of Raton to identify and prioritize additional sites for selection, based on consideration criteria that include the site's ability to create economic growth, to promote climate resiliency, and positive change for underserved and disadvantaged census tracts. These additional sites will be presented at quarterly community meetings and ranked for future site selection based on the approved Community Involvement Plan (CIP). Community input garnered from community engagement meetings and activities will inform the final Task Force ranking with City of Raton staff approving final ranking.

1. b. Revitalization of the Target Area

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

Raton's *Economic Development Strategic Plan* (2021) assesses how the city can continue to support existing and new businesses. The reuse plans for the three priority sites align with this strategic plan by leveraging existing relationships (El Raton Mediaworks, Moss Adventures, Annual International Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally, annual mountain man re-enactments) and attracting new business opportunities through the revitalization of Millie's Market, the Old Hospital and La Mesa. These sites provide economic anchors with the greatest potential for initial economic impacts that utilize existing relationships and would spur replicable economic impacts on future sites.

The 2020 *New Mexico Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* identified both *Film/Arts & Entertainment* and *Tourism/Outdoor Recreation* as focus areas for the state. Our priority sites focus on the entertainment industry (Old Hospital) and tourism/outdoor recreation (Millie's Market and La Mesa Park). Without assessing environmental hazards at key anchor sites in the Target Area, our community will be stuck in the blighted remnants of our past and our population will continue to age and decline.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Assessment and revitalization plans will stimulate economic development, create new opportunities to attract businesses, and leverage existing business relationships with El Raton MediaWorks and Moss Adventures and leverage existing annual events like the Annual Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally and mountain man event. A redeveloped La Mesa, Millie's Market, and Old Hospital will make Raton more attractive to residents, investors, and visitors alike while increasing revenue for Raton by providing collaborative workspace, new living and park space, property tax revenue, and new jobs, particularly in the media and outdoor recreation/tourism sector.

Millie's Market will encourage visitors from the Tourist Information Center to learn about outdoor recreation options and buy local products that support local businesses. **La Mesa will provide a park for citizens** and seniors residing in the proposed onsite affordable housing, for healthcare workers at the proposed healthcare facilities, and offer venue space for the International Santa Fe Trail Balloon Rally and other festivals. **At least 100 acres of green/recreational space** will be created at La Mesa. The Old Hospital will capitalize on our existing relationship with El Raton MediaWorks, a vital relationship to our economy. These sites **will improve local climate adaptability** by using solar panels and native plants at all revitalized sites. New Mexico leads the nation in solar energy and our projects will capitalize on solar. **Raton has built a 300-kilowatt solar panel system** and are actively seeking funding to build a 1 mega-watt solar array with 1 mega-watt of battery storage.

Displacement will not occur due to grant activities, but Raton has a plan in place should unforeseen displacement occur. We intend strong, early community engagement about the brownfields reuse process, so community input will lead to decisions that avoid displacement. Should any displacement occur due to unforeseen circumstances, those displaced will be offered equivalent or improved living options through the affordable housing proposed at La Mesa Racetrack. Additionally, a community benefits agreement (CBA) would incorporate residents' needs and desires within the planning process and address how the community will benefit once the project moves from assessment to remediation/redevelopment.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Community partners have been identified with whom Raton has past relationships that will encourage the redevelopment and reuse of the priority sites and future sites identified by the community. We have access to funds such as: Raton Capital Outlay funds, North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD) funds, and HUD funds. The grant will help stimulate and leverage additional public and private funding. El Raton MediaWorks will contribute private funds as needed to complete remediation and reuse of the Old Hospital. Raton is currently using Capital Outlay funds to restore the historic rail depot in historic downtown and Raton Capital Outlay funds will be used as needed for Millie's Market to complete remediation and a reuse strategy. Congresswoman Teresa Isabel Leger Fernandez has assisted our community with securing HUD funding on a past project with El Raton MediaWorks and she will continue to help us leverage HUD funding for affordable housing at La

Mesa. Raton has an existing relationship with New Mexico Environment Department and will apply to the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund for additional funding as needed to remediate and finish a reuse strategy for La Mesa. Moss Adventures and Raton are partnering on upgrades to rehabilitate the historic Coors Building in downtown Raton. The lease will be for five years at \$100 a year, increasing after the first five years. Raton plans to leverage and replicate this partnership on additional sites that align with the brownfield revitalization plan.

These resources will augment the outcomes of the proposed assessment projects in a manner that will enhance the City's ability to further leverage funds necessary to move the priority sites closer to impactful redevelopment.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Assessment activities and reuse planning for priority sites will use existing infrastructure like roadways and utilities (electrical power, water, and municipal sewer service) in the redevelopment of the sites for housing, tourism, outdoor recreation space and commercial purposes. Additionally, the project will use existing infrastructure by recycling brownfield buildings and sites in urban areas rather than building new sites near the Interstate, which also reduces land costs. The priority sites will incorporate **energy efficient building materials and techniques** and **be responsive to climate change** by reducing the need to build new structures that contribute negatively to climate change through deforestation and emissions.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. Community Need

2. a.i. The Community's Need for Funding: Raton, with its high percentage of low-income residents and small population, cannot independently finance the efforts that will be funded by the Community-wide Brownfield Assessment grant, as the existing financial burdens in our city are too great. The current city budget cannot be stretched to cover these proposed activities. City revenues for 2023-2024 are \$5,806,494, and expenses are \$7,545,020, leaving no discretionary funding. The City approved use of general fund reserves of \$1,671,679 which have been obligated to address city building repairs, city ballfield complex and abatement for slum like conditions that do not qualify for grants. Expenses related to Emergency Services for Fire, Police and Dispatch alone consume ½ of the city's general fund budget.

City tax revenues have been in steady decline since the closures of La Mesa Park in 1992, followed by the closure of the York Canyon Mine in 2002, were the economic death rattle for our city. Raton has yet to recover.

The mine closure resulted in 291 jobs lost and “an annual labor income loss of \$10 million” (*Mining Bottoms Out, Raton Waits for Windfall*, 2002). According to CEJST, Raton (CT 35007950500 and 35007950600) is a disadvantaged community in the 80th percentile for low-income households. According to the US Census, 2020 five-year estimates, Raton has much higher rates of poverty (26.6%—double the national average), and high rates of food insecurity (16% of households). According to the American Community Survey (ACS) 2020 5-Year Data, a shocking 50% of children under 18 are living in households with Supplemental Security Income (SSI), cash public assistance income, or Food Stamps/SNAP assistance. In the past 12 months, 10% of households have received Food Stamp/SNAP benefits and **a staggering 78.8% of families with children under the age of 5 have incomes below the poverty level** (ACS 2022 est.) The dire economic data and our city's demographic makeup of low-income residents who are not enrolled in higher education (EJ Screen 94th percentile) exacerbate the economic crisis in our city. There is no institution of higher education located in our county. Without an educated workforce that can transition to new industries, city poverty will persist. Leveraging our relationship with El Raton MediaWorks and Moss Adventures by providing facilities and onsite training and jobs is our lifeline.

The median Raton salary is \$35,766 which is half the national average of \$69,717 (2021 ACS 5-year Est). The median value of owner-occupied housing is a mere \$100,000 in contrast to the median US home value of \$281,400 (2021 ACS 5-year estimates). Housing vacancies are high at 15% compared to the US average of 11.19%. These disparities in housing value, housing vacancies and resident income are

reflected in the low tax base.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Both census tracts are considered disadvantaged communities, and both tracts are in the 82nd percentile for people over age 64 and in the 58th percentile for those under age 5 (CEJST). In addition, 56% are People of Color (POC) and 24% are disabled (EJ Screen). **The Old Hospital and La Mesa Park** priority sites are on the west side of Raton (CT 35007950600), according to EJ Screen this tract is in the **84th percentile** in EPA Region 6 for **Underground Storage Tanks** and the **86th percentile for lead paint**. The priority site **Millie's Market** is on the east side of Raton (CT 35007950500) with EJ Screen values in the **83rd percentile for Underground Storage Tanks**, in the **74th percentile for ozone**, and the **84th percentile for lead paint**. Lead is a potential contaminant at all target area sites. Even low levels of lead in the blood of children can result in permanent damage to the brain and nervous system, leading to behavior and learning problems. **Arsenic** is a potential site contaminant with exposure linked to skin, lung, and bladder cancer.

Sensitive populations (disadvantaged communities, those over 64, under 5, POC, disabled) are more susceptible to exposure to environmental contamination suspected at the priority sites. Residents in the Target Area are exposed to dangerous contaminants in a variety of ways. Dust storms are an increasing problem for our region and airborne contaminants, like lead paint flakes, are a concern. Soils contaminated with heavy metals may spread via windblown dust or stormwater runoff. Threats to the health and welfare of sensitive populations include natural disasters such as wildfires (Little Bear Fire, Ute Park Fire, Las Tusas, Echo Ridge) which have had devastating effects on our residents. Wildfires are a constant threat in the dry months of the year, particularly late summer to early fall. Environmental contaminants and natural disasters threaten the health and welfare of sensitive populations who have nowhere else to go.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Colfax County has been designated as a Medically Underserved Area by the US Health Resources and Service Administration. MUAs are those areas with high needs designated for primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health professionals (hrsa.gov). City-level data is not always available, but half the county lives in Raton; hence, county-level data generally mirrors Raton's data. According to New Mexico's Health Indicator Data & Statistics (NMBIS), the county ratio of 1.1 healthcare providers per 1000 patients is at the root of the low health outcomes faced by residents. Colfax County has 7 deaths per 100,000 population rates for **bladder cancer** which is nearly double the 4.2 per 100,000 age-adjusted rates for the US. Colfax County is the fourth highest county in NM for bladder cancer and also has the second highest incidence of **brain and central nervous system cancers** of any New Mexico County at 8.8 per 10,000 (NMBIS 2015-2019). NMIBIS ranks Colfax County lowest in New Mexico for access to prenatal care in the first trimester with a mere 52.3% of women receiving care (2019). In Colfax County, **16.1% of newborn babies have low birthweight**—the highest percentage for any New Mexico County (NMBIS 2017-2019), double the national average. The **lead paint indicator** for Raton is **87** compared to 73 for the USA. Disturbingly, **3.9% of children under 6 in Colfax County had Elevated Blood Lead Levels** between 5 and 10 mcg/dL (EJScreen) which means that our most vulnerable population has the second highest toxicity burden compared to all NM counties. According to the Urban Institute, “vacant properties and neighborhoods with persistent blight create a climate of social and psychological disorder that attracts criminal activity and violence... deleterious effects on area residents, including mental distress (e.g., depression, elevated rates of intentional injury); higher rates of chronic illness...and mass retreat of area residents into unhealthy eating and exercise habits.” (“Urban Blight and Public Health”, de Leon and Schilling, p.11, 2017) Colfax County had 35.5% of children in grades 9-12 who felt sad/hopeless in 2019—in adulthood, 22.3% of adults were diagnosed with a depressive disorder (NMIBIS 2018-2020).

The blight of brownfields in combination with the lack of economic opportunity and medical care means residents suffer from greater than normal incidence of disease and adverse health conditions like low birth weight, high cancer rates, and poor mental health. Brownfield revitalization would reduce potential

exposure to asbestos, lead, petroleum products, and hazardous substances, all of which have adverse health effects on these sensitive populations.

(3) Environmental Justice:

(a) Identification of EJ Issues: Census tracts in the target area are identified as disadvantaged communities (CEJST). 26% are adults 64 and over (twice the national average), 56% are People of Color and 24% are disabled (EJ Screen). Members of sensitive populations are disproportionately affected by the blight of brownfields within our city, due to youth/old age, disability, impoverishment, and minority status. As a disadvantaged community with much higher rates of poverty (26.2%—double the national average US Census, 2021 five-year est.), residents are particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of blight and contamination and are more likely to live near brownfields, be exposed to contamination, and not have adequate health care. The most glaring environmental justice issues in our city are the prevalence of underground storage tanks (potentially leaking), lead paint, and ozone. The Environmental Justice Indexes for both census tracts for underground storage tanks is in the 84th percentile, 86th percentile for lead paint, and 76th percentile for ozone. (EJ Screen EJ Index National Percentile) Climate Change is another EJ Issue disproportionately impacting sensitive populations. CEJST reinforces EJ Screen showing that both census tracts that divide the city into East (35007950600) and West (35007950500) are disadvantaged economically and environmentally with combined projected losses of population in the 71st and 91st respectively percentile due to climate change.

(b) Advancing EJ Issues: The proposed projects will advance environmental justice issues by improving the environment for sensitive populations, through improved air quality, remediating lead and UST issues, and increasing climate resiliency by using solar panels, adding public park space and native plants at all priority sites. Advancing EJ issues includes embracing input from community members, stakeholders, and residents without regard to race, income and employment status, disability status, age, or gender; by reducing negative impacts of environmental contamination to our sensitive populations while providing job training, living wage jobs, educational opportunities, and the ability to prosper and engage in a higher quality of life.

2. b. Community Engagement

2. b.i. Project Involvement and ii. Project Roles: Raton has a **Brownfield Task Force** made up of City of Raton staff and members of several local organizations engaged in revitalization who will support and advance community grant efforts. All members of the Task Force will identify and prioritize additional sites for selection, based on consideration criteria that include the site’s ability to create economic growth, and positive change for underserved and disadvantaged census tracts. Community input will inform the final Task Force ranking.

Organization	Point of contact	Specific involvement/Role
Raton Main Street / Raton Arts and Humanities Council Inc.	Brenda Ferri, 575-445-2052 director@ratonarts.org	Role: Support Raton with leveraging state brownfield grant dollars
Center for Community Innovation	Patricia Duran, 575-245-9000 patricia@centerci.org	Role: Support community engagement efforts among program participants
Community Housing	Charles Barkley, 505-363-3434	Role: Support in housing plan at La Mesa
Regional Agency Intervention Network	Paul Jenkins, 575-447-4561 paul.jenkins@raincolfax.org	Role: Identify resources for redevelopment
Raton Ambassadors	Laura Brewer, 575-707-0395 ratonambassadors@gmail.com	Role: Attracting new Raton businesses interested in purchasing brownfield sites

Raton Rotary Club	Bob Schaefer, 575-447-8851	Role: Planning activities, particularly with city beautification efforts.
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2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Raton hosted a public meeting in October 2023 during which time business owners, residents, and property owners expressed continued support for brownfield redevelopment. The Task Force will seek public input and will develop a written Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to formalize information sharing and public input. Community input will be sought at quarterly meetings for priority sites and future site selection. All input will inform the Task Force’s decisions on priority sites, additional site selection, and considered to guide plans as appropriate. Written and verbal responses will be provided in a timely manner. These meetings will be in person with a virtual option to keep the community informed of progress, answer resident questions about ongoing work, and obtain information about resident perceptions/concerns. A central printed repository of information will be established at the project office to allow those without computer access to view plans, voice concerns, and provide input toward redevelopment. Meetings will have translators for the high percentage of Spanish speakers in our community, with meeting notices and information available in Spanish. Responses to community input will be provided at our public engagement meetings and on our social media platforms. The community has worked tirelessly to identify the opportunities presented by the growing tourist industry and proximity to the Interstate and a little assessment funding can make a significant difference in helping revitalize urban infill brownfield sites in our community.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3. a.i. – v. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:

Task/Activity 1: Project Implementation
i. Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s): cooperative agreement implementation and oversight; CIP finalization; schedule monthly Task Force meetings and quarterly community meetings; procure Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) for Phase I and Phase II assessments; secure non-EPA grant resources, in-kind resources.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: City and Task force will perform program management work over the 4-year period of the Grant. Project implementation will be over Months 1-6.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with support from Task Force, QEP, and project staff.
iv. Output(s): quarterly reports, finalized CIP, ACRES data entry; notes from monthly Task Force and quarterly community meetings, decision on QEP.
Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement
i. Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s): community engagement activities and meetings using CIP; site selection discussion of EPA-funded activities for the non-priority site(s), if applicable: <i>Non-EPA grant resources contributed:</i> in-kind resources – project team staff effort.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Community engagement will occur throughout the 4-year period of the Grant. First quarterly community meeting will occur in the first 3 months.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director with support from Task Force, QEP, and project staff.
iv. Output(s): community meeting summary; community input for additional sites, ranking of additional sites based on reuse and redevelopment potential.
Task/Activity 3: Environmental Site Assessments
i. Project Implementation: <i>EPA-funded activities for priority sites(s):</i> Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) for priority sites. <i>EPA-funded activities for the non-priority site(s):</i> Identical work will be completed at sites that are identified in the public engagement and Task Force processes. <i>Non-EPA grant resources contributed:</i> in-kind resources–staff time for oversight of the QEP.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Environmental Site Assessments will occur months 6-30, and assessment of priority sites within 6-12 months. Phase I and Phase II assessments will be conducted within

the first 12 months of the Grant period for priority sites with additional sites identified and assessed in months 12-18. Additional (Nine Phase I and two Phase II) assessments to be completed in months 12-18.

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): QEP with oversight by the Project Director and Technical Director.

iv. Output(s): GIS-based site inventory for 12 Phase I and five Phase II ESAs; Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint surveys (as needed); Generic Quality Assurance Plan (QAPP) and five sites specific QAPPs.

Notes: Given the ages of priority sites, it is anticipated that Asbestos and Lead surveys will be required.

Task/Activity 4: Cleanup Planning and Reuse Planning

i. Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities for the priority site(s) will include city-wide future cleanup and reuse planning at specific sites; three reuse plans for the priority sites; Land Use Assessment to analyze local, county, and state land use regulations for priority site reuse; and a brownfields revitalization plan for the target area with redevelopment strategies/new regulations. EPA-funded activities for the non-priority site(s): identical work will be completed at sites that are identified in the public engagement and brownfields inventory processes, if warranted and as funds allow. *Non-EPA grant resource contributions:* in-kind resources—planning department/economic development staff.

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Months 12 through 45.

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Director, Task Force, with assistance from QEP.

iv. Output(s): Brownfields cleanup/reuse plans for priority sites and at least six additional sites, site-specific land use assessments; and visual renderings for priority sites. **Note: Proposed planning efforts equal 30% of the budget allocation.**

3. b. Cost Estimates: The following estimates are based on past project management experience and input from the Region 6 TAB provider.

Task 1 – Program Management: *Travel:* **\$9,900** in travel expenses for attendance for two people at one national and one regional brownfield-related training conference/workshop. *National Brownfields Conference attendance* = \$4,000 [Breakout - \$1,600 hotel (2 persons X 4 nights x \$200 per night), \$700 registration (\$350 per person), \$900 flights (\$450 per person), \$600 per diem expenses (\$75 per person X 2 for 4 days) and \$200 ground transport (parking and airport transfers, taxis). *Regional brownfields conference attendance* = \$3,500: \$1,400 hotel (2 persons X 4 nights (including travel days) x \$175 per night), \$400 registration (\$200 per person), \$900 flights (\$450 per person, or mileage for drivable location), \$600 per diem expenses (\$75 per person X 2 for 4 days) and \$200 ground transport. Remaining travel funds would be applied to *local or regional travel/mileage to meetings* with property owners, and developers or to public meetings by GRANTEE staff members (@\$.50-mile X 1000 miles = \$500). *If workshops are held virtually, the GRANTEE will apply any excess funds towards community engagement and assessment.* *Supplies:* **\$2,000** is allocated to typical office supplies, including stationery, paper, ink, printing, and postage for all administrative and programmatic tasks over the three-year grant project. *Contractual:* **\$18,100** is budgeted for program support by a contracted QEP, which will provide 200 hours at \$100 per hour over the four-year project period. The GRANTEE, with support from the QEP, will complete EPA quarterly reports, MBE/WBE forms, & EPA ACRES database, and other programmatic support with contractor assistance while providing oversight

and review of the programmatic grant elements. **Task 1 Total: \$30,000**

Task 2 – Community Engagement: *Contractual:* QEP support is budgeted for developing a Community Involvement Plan (**\$2,500**) and approximately 175 hours (over three years) at \$100 per hour (**\$17,500**) for community-wide meetings, meeting planning, outreach, focus groups & visioning sessions as well as for meetings with site owners and potential developers. *GRANTEE and QEP are experienced in online virtual community engagement activities.* **Task 2 Total: \$20,000**

Task 3 – Assessment: *Contractual:* QEP to conduct Environmental Site Assessment activities: 12 ASTM-AAI compliant Phase I ESAs @ \$3,500 each = **\$42,000**; an additional **\$13,000** is allotted for three to five supplemental lead/asbestos assessments; one Generic Quality Assurance Plan (QAPP) = **\$5,000**; five Site Specific QAPPs (@ \$5,000 each)=**\$25,000** and five Phase II ESAs (approx. \$25,000-\$50,000 per site,

costs vary due to the complexity of sites) = \$215,000.

Task 3 Total: \$300,000

Task 4 – Planning: Develop site-appropriate remediation/ reuse plans to reduce health & environmental risks for selected sites. Community vision and input will continue to be considered in planning. GIS-based brownfields opportunities inventory that can be used as a resource to future developers, set fee of \$25,000; Five Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) @ \$5,000 each = \$25,000; Reuse planning and renderings for three priority sites, set fee = \$25,000; Site Disposition Strategy Plans for larger target properties set fee= \$75,000.

Task 4 Total: \$150,000

Budget Table					
Project Tasks	1: Programmatic	2: Community	3: Assessment	4: Planning	Total
Travel	\$9,900				\$9,900
Supplies	\$2,000				\$2,000
Contractual	\$18,100	\$20,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$488,100
Category subtotals	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$500,000

3. c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: The Project Director with support from key staff and the QEP will document, track, and evaluate the following outputs and outcomes continually through quarterly progress reports, annual disadvantaged business enterprise reporting, and monthly communication with the EPA Project Officer. The activities and outcomes are tracked through a project management and invoice management system.

Outputs: Number of sites assessed (Phase I/II ESAs); Brownfield Inventory; Number of ABCAs; Number of formal community meetings, Community Involvement Plan; ACRES entry. **Outcomes:** Number of sites for which property title transfers are facilitated; Acres of land redeveloped, and square footage of buildings positioned for adaptive reuse; Amount of private investment and other funding leveraged; Jobs created or retained; Increased property and sales tax revenue generated. An overall gauge of success will be the creation of jobs, increased climate resiliency through solar power, and the improvement in environmental justice conditions. These successes will be tracked through the growth of city property and sales tax revenues captured in annual City budgets. In the event the project is not being completed in an efficient manner, the City has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The Cooperative Agreement work plan will include a dedicated section that speaks to corrective action planning which states that the City has established procedures in place to address this problem. The project team will evaluate the project progress semi-annually against the goals in Section 3.a and, if goals are not being met or are off schedule, will meet with local stakeholders and the environmental consultant to discuss the shortcomings and adjust the project approach and schedule, as needed. We will coordinate with our Project Officer to address any issues that arise and develop a corrective action plan to ensure project goals are met.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i-iii Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure, and Description of Key Staff

The team will participate in monthly project meetings and solicit ongoing input in the decision-making process from a QEP and EPA Project Officer. We will rely on EPA and Region 6 TAB to enhance our knowledge and skills with any available technical assistance and training. Should the project run into obstacles, the City will work with the assigned EPA Project Officer and QEP to implement countermeasures, such as evaluating project management strategies to resume the workplan schedule. Our team, with decades of experience, has the organizational capacity to carry out and manage the programmatic, administrative and financial requirements of the project and grant.

Project Director: Mr. Jaden K. Welch, PMP, City of Raton Community Director of Engineering, will serve as Project Director. Mr. Welch manages procurement and grant identification for Raton, reviews and approves engineering plans and specifications, prepares site plans and project requirements. In addition to

providing technical support to Raton’s Water and Power departments, he assists in managing public works and all facilities departments. With over a decade of experience managing design, development, and optimization of radiation hardened power supplies, Mr. Welch will leverage his technical and management experience to ensure project success.

Deputy Project Director: Dr. Richard Mestas, DPA, Raton City Manager, will serve as Deputy Project Manager. Dr. Mestas manages all of Raton’s city government departments, leading successful City initiatives. Dr. Mestas will draw on decades of experience in the military and federal government to ensure proactive communication and successful implementation of all project goals.

Technical Director: Mr. Jason Phillips, Public Works Director for the City of Raton, will assist with program administration and will serve as the Technical Coordinator. He has over 20 years of experience managing federal, state, and local grant programs like Community Development Block, Federal Aviation Administration Grants, New Mexico Environment Department, and New Mexico Department of Transportation grants. Mr. Phillips has managed grant and community development projects in the areas of streets, buildings, wildfire remediation, and stream restoration.

Financial Manager: Mrs. Michael Anne Antonucci is the City of Raton Treasurer and will be responsible for the fiscal management of the EPA Brownfield funds. She has 15 years of experience in public finance.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: To successfully administer this grant project and obtain the necessary brownfields expertise, the City will secure the services of a professional and experienced Brownfield QEP through a fair and open bid process that complies with state and federal requirements (2 C.F.R. 200 and EPA rule 2 C.F.R. 1500).

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

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments:

Grant: Federal Aviation A.I.P Grant No. RTN-SWG-3-35-0033 022-2021 (FY 21) **Amount:** \$356, 090 **Purpose:** Pavement Rehabilitation of Runways 2-20 and 7-25. **Accomplishments:** The project has been completed and the grant has been closed out. Pavement successfully completed.

Grant: U.S.D.A. Rural Utility Service Grant (FY 2020) **Amount:** \$829,000 **Purpose:** Water Treatment Plant Upgrades to bring the plant into compliance with current regulations **Accomplishments:** The project has been completed and the grant has been closed out. The plant is operating as designed with upgrades.

Grant: H.U.D. Community Development Block Grant (FY20); Grant No. 19-C-NR-I-01-G-16 **Amount:** \$842, 607.47 **Purpose:** Reconstruction of streets, curbs, gutter, sidewalks, and ADA Ramps **Accomplishments:** The project has been successfully constructed and the grant is in the closeout phase.

2)Compliance with Grant Requirements: Project staff has a history of timely compliance with all federal/state grants. The city closely monitors project progress and conducts annual audits. As stated, no adverse audit findings have been determined. All grant terms and conditions are met promptly and by set work schedules. Reports and financials have been submitted promptly to date and applicable grants have been closed. No adverse findings were reported about grant awards/financial assistance programs, internal controls or audits, compliance, or any other matters as per the FY 2022 A-133 audit completed by SJT Group, LLC accountants for the period ending June 30, 2022. Raton is currently working with auditors on the FY23 report which is not due to the State auditor until December 15, 2023.

City of Raton, New Mexico

FY24 EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Raton, New Mexico is a general-purpose unit of local government and therefore an eligible entity as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64 pursuant.

2. Community Involvement

The City acknowledges that broad-based support and community participation in the process will be essential to ensure the overall acceptance and success of the Brownfield Program, and we recognize that it is essential to include community residents and stakeholder input throughout all phases of project planning, decision-making, and implementation. To guide this process, a formal Community Involvement Plan will be updated and adopted within 60-90 days of issuance of the cooperative agreement for the grant. Up to four community meetings are planned to occur within the project period. Upon the issuance of the cooperative agreement, the City, with support from the QEP, will draft a Community Involvement Plan that will provide a formal communication strategy to solicit input from residents of the target area, as well as serve as a platform to communicate project progress. Notice of all public meetings will be consistent with the City's established process for public notices. For those requiring social distancing, meetings will also have a virtual option via Zoom. Further, outdoor community engagement activities will be planned, including presenting Brownfields at community events in the target areas. Through community meetings, public input will be sought on project planning, site selection and prioritization (for additional sites as funds permit), cleanup decisions (ABCAs), and reuse planning. A central printed repository of information will be established at the project office to allow those without computer access to view plans, voice concerns, and provide input toward redevelopment.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City of Raton does not have an open EPA Brownfields grant.

4. Named Contractors and Subrecipients

Named Contractors – Not applicable.

Named Subrecipients- Not applicable.