



**Narrative Information Sheet for FY25 EPA Job Training (JT) Grant**

*“City of Worcester Justice40 Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Program: Engaging, Training, and Placing Residents of Disadvantaged Communities in Priority Climate-Critical Jobs”*

**A. Applicant Identification:** (ref. RFA Section III. A. & B., Threshold Criteria)

City of Worcester, Executive Office of Economic Development MassHire  
Central Region Workforce Board  
554 Main Street, Suite 401  
Worcester, MA 01608  
UEI: ZDFNGC6F65L3

Per 26 US Code Section 115, governmental income received by the City of Worcester is exempt from federal taxation. (ref. narrative Appendix F: Certificate of Exemption from State Tax)

**B. Grant Type:** Brownfields Job Training Grant

- a. A minimum 80 enrollees will take **required** OSHA 40-hr HAZWOPER training  
(ref. narrative pages 3, 4, 5, 8, 9)
- b. All participants will be offered relevant environmental remediation and job/career development trainings  
(ref. narrative pages 4, 5, 8, 9)

**C. Project Period and Funding Request:** (ref. RFA Section III.B.5., Threshold Criteria)

- a. Length of proposed project period: Five (5) years, starting FY25 and ending FY30
- b. Amount of federal funds requested: \$499,160.46 (ref. narrative Section III, p. 7)

**D. Coalition Members:** N/A

**E. Website URL:** <https://www.masshirecentral.com>

**F. Population/Target Area Data:** (ref. narrative Section I.A., p. 1)

- Worcester County: 866,866 (source: U.S. Census Bureau, 7/1/23)
- City of Worcester: 207,621 (source: U.S. Census Bureau, 7/1/23)

**- Focus area discussed in the Narrative:** (ref. narrative Section I.A., pages 1-2)

Focus areas of the proposed program (specific trainings on Training Curriculum Chart, see narrative p. 6) are in the City of Worcester (per RFA Section III.B.8) and represent the City's six urban core Opportunity Zone Census Tracts: CTs 7305.00, 7313.00, 7314.00, 7317.00, 7325.00, and 7328.01.

**- Anticipated address, or census tract, where the training facility will be located.**

MassHire Central Region Workforce Board  
554 Main Street (Suite 401)  
Worcester, MA 01608

**G. Contacts:**

- a. **Project Director:** Jeffrey Turgeon (Executive Director), 508-799-1509, [turgeonj@masshirecentral.com](mailto:turgeonj@masshirecentral.com), 554 Main Street (Suite 401), Worcester, MA 01608
- b. **Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Official:** Eric D. Batista (City Manager), 508-799-1175, [citymanager@worcesterma.gov](mailto:citymanager@worcesterma.gov), City Hall Room 306, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

**H. N/A**

**I. Other Factors:** *Applicants claiming one or more of the other factors please identify with an X for any of the items below and provide a summary in the Narrative on the applicable other factor(s). Please identify which of the below items apply to your community/proposed project by noting the corresponding Narrative page number.*

Other Factors Table		Narrative page #
<input type="checkbox"/>	Applicants that propose to serve a community population of 10,000 or less.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whether the applicant is new (i.e., has not received an EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant since 2015).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whether the applicant is a federally recognized Indian Tribe or U.S. Territory, or is an organization that will primarily serve tribal or territorial residents.	
X	Applications that seek to serve veterans.	12, 13
X	Whether the target area is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.*	10, 14
<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the above apply.	

\*Norton Powerhouse is a coal-fired power station privately owned and operated by the Saint-Gobain Norton Company (a French multinational construction materials manufacturing corporation). The plant powers the company's abrasives manufacturing plant in CT 7301. Its closure is imminent.

The proposed project does not duplicate other federally funded environmental job training programs (ref. narrative Section 7.C.i., p. 13). The applicant is currently in the fourth and final (reporting) year of a EPA Environmental Workforce Development Job Training (EWDJT) grant (Cooperative Agreement #00A00554, project period 10/01/2021 – 09/30/2024).

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Turgeon, Executive Director  
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board



<b>AGENCY</b>	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)
<b>TITLE</b>	FY25 BROWNFIELDS JOB TRAINING (JT) GRANTS
<b>ACTION</b>	REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)
<b>RFA NO.</b>	EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-02
<b>ASSISTANCE LISTING NO.</b>	66.815
<b>AMOUNT REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$499,160.46</b>

## 1. Community Need

### A. Community Description

Foundries, factories, and mills in the City of Worcester and Central Massachusetts forged America's Industrial Revolution more than a century and a half ago. Established as a city in 1848, Worcester is in the northernmost part of Massachusetts' Blackstone River Valley, which the National Park Service recognizes as the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution ([www.nps.gov/blac/learn/historyculture/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/blac/learn/historyculture/index.htm)). Access to the Blackstone Canal and a robust railway network fueled the City's industrial capacity, powering machinery, textiles, and wire exported worldwide. The manufacturing megaliths propelled regional prosperity and positioned America and the Blackstone River Valley as the world's industrial leaders.

Following World War II, manufacturing in Central MA waned. By the mid-20th century, most factories and mills shuttered. The closures resulted in lost jobs, economic decline, and blighted Brownfields sites that created legacy environmental burdens that continue to plague specific City neighborhoods. According to MassDEP, hundreds of Brownfields sites dot the City of Worcester (see graphic)—numbers reflected in [EPA's EnviroAtlas Interactive Map](#). A plethora of evidence supports the contention that Massachusetts sustained the nation's most deleterious economic and health damages from Industrial Revolution pollution. Beyond choking the region's economic growth and vitality, Brownfields sites damage residents' health and cause negative socioeconomic conditions.

Today, **Worcester** ("The Heart of the Commonwealth") is **New England's second largest city**. According to the EPA Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), the City of Worcester is

designated as disadvantaged. Federal, state, and municipal sources and studies show the City's distress levels in education, poverty, income, and unemployment exceed state and federal levels. 2023 data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that approximately 14% of the City's population had not completed high school; 19.5% of residents live in poverty; and average per capita income was \$33,592 versus the state's average of \$53,513.

Focus areas of this grant are the City's six urban core Opportunity Zone Census Tracts (per Section III.B.8): CTs 7305.00, 7313.00, 7314.00, 7317.00, 7325.00, and 7328.01—all (except CT 7328.01) are identified as disadvantaged Justice40 communities. For all CTs, EJScreen data show unemployment rates at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the rest of the U.S. and a high percentage of people of color (all rank in the 70<sup>th</sup>-90<sup>th</sup> percentile versus the U.S.). The [EDA-Census Poverty Status Viewer](#) classifies most of the focus neighborhoods as "High Poverty" (20% of the population or more below poverty level) or "Possible High Poverty Area".

Additional data show the generational environmental burdens borne by these communities and the damage of legacy environmental pollution (lead, toxic waste, particulate matter, and others) in these OZ-sensitive and EJ populations (sources: EPA [IRA Disadvantaged Communities map](#) and [EnviroAtlas Eco-Health Relationship Browser](#)). EPA's EJScreen tool ranks the focus areas nationally in the 90<sup>th</sup> - 100<sup>th</sup> percentile for "Proximity to Hazardous Waste Sites" and "Lead Paint" and in the 80<sup>th</sup> - 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for "Underground Storage Tanks". Worker exposure to asbestos in textile mills, power plants,

factories, and office buildings has earned Massachusetts 11th place in the U.S. for asbestosis deaths ([asbestos.com/Massachusetts](https://asbestos.com/Massachusetts)). Since 2000 in the City of Worcester alone, there have been more than 20,000 asbestos removal projects (source: MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Data Center). Overlaying CEJST demographic data for the focus areas and Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) residences illuminates the disproportionate exposure among people of color, low income, employment rates, and/or less than a high school degree.

The Urban Institute's May 2024 report, "[\*Equitable Access to Quality Climate Infrastructure Jobs: A Framework for Collaborative Action\*](#)" posits that because educational attainment, age, race, and gender are interconnected with access to job opportunities, historically marginalized populations generally face greater challenges. Residents in our focus area have been marginalized not just historically, but also economically, educationally, and in terms of health. Hence, a top priority of this proposal is addressing and overcoming systemic, generational marginalization. EPA JT funds will enable the applicant to offer trainings, supports, and job and career opportunities to residents of EJ populations who most need—and are most deserving of—the increased economic mobility opportunities made possible by these funds.

The Training Curriculum Chart (p. 6) shows how the applicant and our partners intend to create sustainable job and career opportunities for residents of neighborhoods affected by more than 150 years of disinvestment and legacy pollution. Activities and trainings will advance EPA's FY22-26 Strategic Plan, notably Goal 6 (Safeguard and Revitalize Communities), Objective 6.1 (Clean Up and Restore Land for Productive Uses & Healthy Communities). The program will also advance the Justice40 Initiative, which sets a goal that 40% of the benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, water, and wastewater infrastructure flow to disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

The poverty levels and household income disparities described below are widely known in Worcester but almost as often overlooked. While EPA's [\*IRA Disadvantaged Communities map\*](#) drily explains that "low-income and minority populations in the U.S. are disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards" it doesn't show the boarded-up buildings, fenced-in properties, and 'Caution Environmental Hazard: Do Not Enter' signs that are frequent fixtures in our focus area (appendices B, C, and D also cite EPA's [\*EnviroAtlas Eco-Health Relationship Browser\*](#)). July 2024 data from [\*CEJST\*](#), [\*EJScreen\*](#) and a [\*November 2022 updated\*](#) map of EJ populations in MA show:

- ✓ CT 7313\* (Block Groups 1, 2, & 3): EJ populations with the criteria English isolation, Minority, and/or Income:
  - Median household income (MHI) in each Block Group is 20%, 44%, and 45% of MA Median Household Income [MHHI], respectively
  - 36.2% of residents reported below poverty level income in the past 12 months
  - [\*EJScreen\*](#) ranks Block Group 1 in the 91<sup>st</sup> percentile in unemployment (vs to U.S. percentile)
- ✓ CT 7314 (Block Groups 1 & 2): EJ populations with English isolation, Minority, and Income:
  - MHI is 17% and 27% of MA MHHI, respectively
  - 37% of residents reported below poverty level income in the past 12 months
  - [\*EJScreen\*](#) ranks the entire CT above the 70th percentile for "people of color"
- ✓ CT 7317 (Block Groups 1, 3, & 5): EJ populations with the criteria Minority and Income:
  - MHI in each is 58%, 52%, and 41% of MA MHHI, respectively
  - 33.6% of residents reported below poverty level income in the past 12 months
  - [\*EJScreen\*](#) ranks the entire CT above the 70th percentile for "people of color" and parts above the 80th percentile in unemployment
- ✓ CT 7325 (Block Groups 1 & 2): EJ populations with the criteria Minority and Income:
  - MHI in each is 35% and 39% of MA MHHI, respectively
  - 33.6% of residents reported below poverty level income in the past 12 months
  - [\*EJScreen\*](#) ranks parts of the CT above the 80th percentile in unemployment

While data underscore the urgent need for environmental remediation and expanded economic mobility opportunities in our focus area, the numbers are a short chapter in Worcester's 150-year

hazardous waste story—a tale EPA has recognized since the inception of EPA’s Brownfields program in 1995. In almost 30 years, Massachusetts has been awarded \$152M in funding ([MassLive](#), July 10, 2023). The funds have spurred more than \$1.5B in public and private cleanup redevelopment investment and helped create 7,300 jobs in assessment, cleanup and construction. The City of Worcester received at least 25% of those funds. In fact, the applicant is in the fifth and final year of a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields JT grant which trained 62 individuals for new jobs and careers in environmental remediation. Trainings proposed in this application were discussed, chosen, and designed to build on the applicant’s success and expand entry-level opportunities for EJ populations.

## **B. Labor Market Demand**

The proposed trainings for job seekers and incumbent staff in climate critical occupations reflect current quantitative and qualitative data; the training curriculum are aligned with regional workforce development priorities to fill jobs in climate-critical fields. The labor market information (LMI) below verifies and validates current and future training/hiring needs in fields like Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 47-0000 (“Construction and Extraction Occupations”) and others (see chart, p 4).

Insofar as baby boomers aging out of the workforce are causing general labor shortages nationwide, MA reflects America’s broader employment trends. The MA Clean Energy Center’s (MassCEC) [2023 Clean Energy Industry Report](#) says the state’s clean energy industry must add more than 38,000 clean energy workers by the end of the decade to meet the state’s climate targets—requiring 37% growth in the current clean energy workforce of 104,000 workers. While the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not offer wage or employment data for environmental remediation workers, O\*Net Online reports “Bright Outlook” for hiring in three focus SOC’s ([53-7062.04](#), [49-9071](#), [53-1042.01](#)). All three fields require a high school diploma or equivalent, likely increasing access for most job seekers in our focus area. Labor market demand in the Central MA Workforce Development Area (WDA) is highlighted by the MA Department of Economic Research’s projection of 8.3% growth in Construction Laborers (SOC 47-2061)—ranking it among the region’s fastest growing occupations. As of June 2024, [Lightcast](#) (global leader in labor market analytics) described the regional employment outlook for Construction and Extraction Occupations as “aggressive hiring competition over an average supply of regional talent.” In a September 2023 report (“[Reinventing Worcester: Changes in the Community and the Economy over the Decades through Decennial Census Data](#)”), the Worcester Regional Research Bureau found that from 1990-2021, eight of Worcester’s 11 major industry categories saw declines but the construction industry increased by more than 77%. The City’s “[Green Worcester Sustainability & Resilience Plan](#)” (2021) sets environmental and sustainability priorities with short- and long-term recommended actions. Finally, new state laws are driving demand for qualified environmental remediation workers: In August 2022, the MA legislature approved laws to create local clean energy economies and modernize the grid, setting targets for the electric, natural gas distribution, transportation, commercial and industrial buildings, residential buildings, and industrial processes sectors. Taken together, there is demonstrated labor market demand for entry-level workers who have environmental remediation training and certifications.

Reflecting this demand, and as the region's federally designated Workforce Development Board under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the applicant’s Regional Workforce Development Blueprint lists SOC 47-0000 as a priority occupational field (hence **inclusion of required OSHA-40 HAZWOPER** [pages 3, 4, 5, 7, 9] **training**).

To validate quantitative labor market demand and determine employer hiring needs, the applicant sought and got qualitative data from partners: surveys and input from MCRWB industry consortia (partner groups the applicant convenes that meet quarterly: e.g., Transportation, Logistics, and Warehousing Consortium). In FY23 and FY4 meetings, members shared concerns about how the limited supply of qualified candidates in “green jobs” makes it harder to fill open jobs—concerns echoed by partners such as Central MA Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), WHA, MassCEC, and MassHire Career Centers (MHCC). The table shows projected labor market demand nationally and in



MA (2022-2032) in SOCs for which the applicant proposes offering *related* training.

Occupation Fields	Projected Growth (Nat'l): % / Total Jobs Added through 2032	Projected Growth (MA): % / Jobs Added Annually through 2032	Sources
47-0000: Construction & Extraction Occupations	2.5% / 7.5M	N/A	<a href="#">BLS</a>
47-4041: Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	0.8% / 49K	Little Change / 5,200	<a href="#">BLS</a> <a href="#">O*Net Online</a>
47-2061: Construction Laborers	4.4% / 1.5M	2%-4% / 129,400	<a href="#">BLS</a> <a href="#">O*Net Online</a>
49-9071: Maintenance & Repair Workers	3.6% / 1.7M	22% / 3,350 "Bright Outlook"	<a href="#">BLS</a> <a href="#">O*Net Online</a>
53-7062.04: Recycling & Reclamation Workers	5.3% / 3.1M	22% / 6,500 "Bright Outlook"	<a href="#">BLS</a> <a href="#">O*Net Online</a>
53-1042.01: Recycling Coordinators	4.7% / 629K	18% / 1,190 "Bright Outlook"	<a href="#">BLS</a> <a href="#">O*Net Online</a>

Based on this data and the fact that demand for remediation workers is growing commensurate with a rise in identifying Brownfields sites, the applicant and partners will offer job training and placement supports for individuals seeking jobs in climate critical roles—focusing specifically on employers offering roles aligned with Good Jobs Principles. For example, the applicant and WHA currently co-manage a three-year, \$370,470 MassCEC Equity Workforce Training grant in which EJ populations earn certificates that prepare them for jobs in climate critical fields.

## 2. Training Program Description

To generate outcomes and outputs below, the applicant will invest grant funds in direct programmatic costs via a two-phase plan that reflects current labor market info and demand, employer hiring needs and projections, regional Blueprint priorities, input from partners and Community Development Corporations in focus CTs, and lessons learned during our current MassCEC grant and the performance period (FY20-24) of our sunseting EPA EWDJT grant (Cooperative Agreement #00A00554). The proposed trainings—and *how* and *where* we plan to offer them—reflect the needs of residents in our focus area and are designed and structured to help enrollees secure jobs across a spectrum of Brownfields-related activities (per eligible uses: RFA Section I.C.). In addition to requiring OSHA 40-hour HAZWOPER for all enrollees, the plan builds in flexibility over the four-year training period. Trainings will build awareness of environmental stewardship and justice to promote and increase community involvement in assessment, cleanup, and reuse of Brownfield sites. Trainees will either be U.S. citizens or Green Card holders residing permanently in the U.S.

**Training Curriculum Chart**

Training (hours)	Level of Training	Total # of Courses Offered	EPA Cost (total)	Certification Earned	Percentage of Budget
OSHA HAZWOPER (40)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$58,400	Federal	11.7%
OSHA Const. Safety (10)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$24,800	Federal	4.9%
Asbestos Hazard Awareness (2)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$3,600	Federal	0.7%
LEED Green Associate (self-paced; two weeks)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$29,250	Federal & State	5.8%
Hoisting Licenses 1A & 2C (8)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$22,800	State	4.5%
First Aid/CPR-AED (8)	Awareness	8 (2/yr)	\$10,000	Federal	2%



Per the RFA (section I.D., “Eligible Trainings with Brownfields JT Grant Funds”), at least 80 enrollees will take the required OSHA 40-hour HAZWOPER (in-person). We will also offer OSHA 10-hour Construction Safety (in-person), Asbestos Hazard Awareness (online), LEED Green Associate (online, self-paced), Hoisting Licenses 1A & 2C (blended), First Aid/CPR/AED (blended) and BOUNCE career readiness training (in-person). Although no certifications or licenses are required for Recycling Workers or Construction Laborers, we will offer the LEED Green Associate certification—a foundational credential considered advantageous for entry-level “green energy” workers and a step to more advanced training. Proposed training descriptions:

- ✓ **OSHA 40-hr HAZWOPER:** All enrollees will take this required course in-person. Training is structured for workers involved in clean-up operations, emergency response operations, and storage, disposal, or treatment of hazardous substances or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.
- ✓ **OSHA 10-hr Construction Safety:** In-person course covers the safety of workers in high-risk industries and increases trainees’ awareness of identifying and preventing workplace hazards. Most of our employer partners cite this as a basic credential they require of new hires.
- ✓ **Asbestos Hazard Awareness:** Online course for workers who conduct custodial or maintenance activities in areas which may bring them in contact with asbestos-containing materials (ACM).
- ✓ **LEED Green Associate:** Online training in green infrastructure. Certification conveys candidates’ understanding of green construction concepts and practices and how to apply them in the field.
- ✓ **Hoisting Licenses:** Blended training and exam prep for Hoist 1 C-Telescoping Booms without cables and Hoist 2A - Excavators. These licenses prepare and qualify staff to transport hazardous waste at storage, construction, and Brownfields sites safely and securely.
- ✓ **First Aid/CPR-AED:** Blended training meets OSHA workplace & government regulatory requirements.

Offering in-person, blended, online, and self-paced courses, the proposed program is designed so participants can finish in four weeks but builds in flexibility for trainees with time or other constraints. Participant surveys after the applicant’s other career development trainings (CDL, Pharmacy Tech, IT, construction trades, etc.) show that programs offering flexibility and support stipends generate higher rates of participant retention, completion, and satisfaction (especially for residents in our focus area). If a cohort is <10 trainees, the applicant will offer partners seats for current staff (first-come, first-serve) to enhance their career prospects. As in our sunseting EWDJT grant and per our mission, the applicant and MHCC staff will provide job search and placement support well beyond the program end date.

**Phase 1 (Years 1, 2, 3, 4): Plan, Recruit, Train, Place, & Track Participants.** To start, program staff and partners will plan and implement outreach to recruit EJ populations. We will also offer graduates from our sunseting EPA EWDJT grant available seats. Guided and informed by reports like The Urban Institute’s [“How to Expand Access to Good Clean Energy Jobs among Women and People of Color”](#) (April 2024) and EPA’s [“Advancing Equitable Development in Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment”](#) (August 2023), the PM will work with partners to inform, engage, recruit, screen, and enroll 10 trainees in one cohort each in April and June of CY25, CY26, CY27, and CY28. Each annual cycle has two cohorts: 10 trainees/cohort = 20 trainees/cycle x 4 years = 80 trainees). Our minimum “yield” goal is 64 graduates who earn at least one certification (80% of enrollees). The yield goal is based on attrition and graduation rates from our sunseting EWDJT grant: We anticipate 10% of trainees will withdraw from or drop out of each cohort (= 8-10 trainees over the training period).

Projected Trainee Enrollment	Trainees Who Will Earn at Least One (1) Certification	Graduates Placed and/or Promoted in FT Environmental Remediation Jobs
80	64 (80% of enrollees)	56 (70% of enrollees)

**Phase 2 (Year 5): Place, Retain & Track Graduates; Collect, Aggregate, & Report Data.** To achieve our minimum placement goal of 56 trainees in FT environmental remediation roles, during the grant lifespan and at least one year after, the PM will solicit job openings from employer partners and share them via email and



in person with program trainees and graduates. The PM may personally refer selected graduates—an approach that was very effective during our sunseting EWDJT grant. In each cycle, the PM will schedule “mini-job fairs” during which employer partners will informally discuss and share job/career opportunities with trainees and graduates. To maximize job retention, the PM will (as necessary) engage employers and *discretely* connect graduates to community-based organizations that offer resources to help graduates stay in training and jobs. The applicant’s relationships and personal engagement with partners are a strong foundation upon which we build future career trainings: for example, partnerships nurtured during our sunseting EPA EWDJT grant led directly to our current MassCEC grant with WHA (see Letter of Support).

During and after training, the PM will connect participants and graduates to job search and placement services. Co-located in one building, the applicant has immediate access to MHCC career counselors and Business Engagement Services Team (BEST) staff. MHCC and BEST staff apply decades of experience and personal connections with employer partners who recruit, interview and often hire qualified candidates from underserved communities. For example, in April 2024, Southbridge Career Center staff placed 17 Haitian immigrants living in a Sturbridge, MA shelter in jobs at FedEx in Wilmington, CT. The new arrivals gained work experience and family-sustaining benefits in a safe, accessible environment—showing how the applicant, MHCC, and BEST staff prioritize braiding “[Good Jobs Principles](#)” such as DEIA initiatives, Skills and Career Advancement, and Job Security and Working Conditions into the full range of workforce development efforts and initiatives we conduct.

Our top priority is providing trainees a flexible and realistic path (with stipends and supports) to complete all courses in four weeks or during the overall performance period. Another priority is filling each cohort to capacity. If there are open seats in a course, *before* the course starts and based on the maximum number of enrollees allowed by technical training providers, the PM will offer open seats first to partners and then to the general public (both first-come, first-serve). This approach will maximize EPA JT funds, increase availability of trainings to people with time constraints, improve career prospects for underemployed staff, and offer employer partners flexibility. Classroom training will be at MHCC in Worcester; hands-on technical training at a WHA facility in Worcester. WHA is also the backup classroom site if the Worcester Career Center is unavailable. All sites are accessible via public transportation and have modular furniture, A/V, and wi-fi to serve diverse learning and teaching styles. Per MA Department of Career Services policy, the applicant prioritizes and integrates sustainable practices (e.g., recycling and reusing training materials) in all programming.

The proposed budget includes *reasonable* participant support stipends of up to \$300 per trainee. Support stipends will not duplicate funds trainees receive through other programs. Trainees will earn \$100/week stipends for completing the first two weeks of in-person training and an additional \$100 for LEED Green Associate training (\$50 for completing training and \$50 for passing the exam), up to \$300/trainee max. Some of the trainee stipends will be paid through leveraged funds from the WJF for income eligible residents

of Worcester (up to 7 trainees per cycle X 4 years) to help reduce grant costs to the EPA (LLSIL chart shows income eligibility standards). EPA funds for participant support costs = 3.1% of the total requested.

### 3. Budget

MCRWB fiscal staff provide oversight and controls (staff qualifications, sections 7A & 7B). Under our fiscal management team, the applicant has never had an adverse audit finding or significant concern regarding grant management compliance. The City of Worcester has no adverse audit findings about management of its Brownfields grants. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.319, the applicant does not list

2023 70% Lower Living Standard Income Levels (LLSIL) As determined by U.S. Department of Labor Effective 2023			
Family Size	Boston-Brockton-Nashua, MA/NH/ME/CT	Northeast Metro	Northeast Non-Metro *
1	\$13,712	\$12,691	\$12,523
2	22,473	20,799	20,527
3	30,855	28,546	28,179
4	38,082	35,238	34,778
5	44,944	41,588	41,046
6	52,556	48,632	47,994
Over 6 Increment	7,612	7,044	6,948



names of technical training providers. The budget categories, tasks, totals, and explanations below are extrapolated from costs incurred during our sunseting EWDJT grant and our current MassCEC grant and reflect publicly available training provider info (market research from at least three potential providers).

To ensure alignment with the budget, work plan, and goals, the PM will reconstitute an *ad hoc* Project Advisory Board (PAB) that provided guidance and support for our sunseting EWDJT grant. Led by the PM, the PAB will include program staff, training providers, and partner representatives (we will also invite EPA Region 1 staff). For three consecutive months before training starts in CY25 and quarterly thereafter, the PM will convene PAB meetings during which members will discuss programmatic issues including the work plan, outreach to EJ populations, recruitment, retention, completion, and job placement.

As budgeted, contractual training costs represent 55% of the total amount requested (67% with License and Exam fees). To select the most advantageous providers, the PM will work with the City's Purchasing Department to procure technical training services in accordance with public bidding regulations (see City [Open Bids webpage](#)). Qualified MBE/WBE providers in our focus area will be encouraged to submit bids for services. To ensure budget and process compliance, the PM will:

- ✓ Review the budget monthly and report any issues to the fiscal team.
- ✓ Write and share with partners and PAB members updated work plans that reflect program goals, design, and execution. The workplan will help partners stay compliant with program requirements.
- ✓ Develop, update, and share with partners and PAB members Monthly Program Reports that include budget updates, identify areas of concern, and reflect progress towards outputs and outcomes.
- ✓ Compile and submit updated work plans and quarterly reports on time as required.

**Budget Table**

	Budget Category	Project Tasks			
		Outreach, Recruitment, & Retention	Instruction/ Training	Program Management	Placements and Tracking
Direct Costs	Personnel (salaries)			\$216,606	
	Fringe Benefits			\$55,947	
	Staff & Fringe (total)				\$272,553
	Travel*			\$12,000	
	Contractual (all)		\$149,920		\$1,600
	Equipment			\$1,600	
	Supplies			\$1,600	
	Participant Support Stipends	\$15,600			
	LEED Green Assoc. Exam fees			\$20,000	
	Hoisting Licensing & Exam fees			\$12,000	
	Digital/Social Media Outreach	\$2,500			
	<b>Total Direct Costs**</b>	\$18,100	\$148,050	\$319,753	\$1,600
	<b>Indirect Costs**</b>				\$9,787.46
<b>Total Budget (Direct Costs + Indirect Costs)</b>					<b>\$499,160.46</b>

\*Per RFA: "Travel to Brownfields-related training conferences is an acceptable use of grant funds"

\*\*2% City of Worcester indirect (per RFA requirement that admin costs do not exceed 5% of total requested funds)

**a. Travel\*:** Covers PM and staff travel over the grant lifespan, including two trips/year to attend National Brownfields conferences, one trip/year to attend national Environmental JT Symposia, and others such as NEWMOA and [GreenBuild](#). Accommodations, *per diem*, and local mileage at contemporaneous federal rates. (\$2,400/yr x 5 years = \$12,000)

**b. Contractual (Technical Training)**

- **OSHA 40-hour HAZWOPER (to be taken by all trainees):** Three classroom days at MHCC Worcester, two hands-on days at WHA. (avg \$14,600 x 4 cycles [2 cohorts/cycle] = \$58,400)

- **OSHA 10-hour Construction Safety:** Two classroom half-day sessions at MHCC Worcester; includes card fee for each trainee who passes multiple choice exam. (avg \$6,200 x 4 cohorts [2 cohorts/cycle] = \$24,800)

- **Asbestos Awareness Training:** Two-hour online course. (\$45/trainee x 80 trainees = \$3,600)

- **LEED Green Associate:** Self-paced, two-week course using [U.S. Green Building Council's Study Bundle](#): LEED Green Associate Exam Prep Guide (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.) and LEED Core Concepts Guide. Translations in Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, French, and Spanish. (\$369/trainee x 80 trainees = \$29,520)

- **First Aid/CPR/AED:** Certification cards issued to trainees who complete and pass all online and in-person training and practical exam. (\$115/trainee x 80 trainees = \$9,200)

- **Hoist IC and 2A:** One-day classroom training; includes sample tests for license exams and in-person help from an industry expert. (\$285/trainee x 80 trainees = \$22,800)

- **Graduate placement & tracking:** Vendor who provides SSN Trace services (e.g., [Checkr](#)) to track graduates' employment status using Social Security Numbers. Capped at 20 graduates (most trainees will have to provide their SSN to verify eligibility for support stipends). (\$80/grad SSN x 20 graduates = \$1,600)

Paying licensing and exam fees below will alleviate the burden of fees on program participants:

- **LEED Green Associate exam:** 2 hour, multiple choice (passing score: 170/200); trainees may test at a Prometric Testing Center or home (online, remote proctored). (\$250/exam x 80 trainees = \$20,000)

- **Hoisting Licensing and exam:** Multiple-choice; trainees must score 70% or better to pass. **Note:** There is no practical component on the state exam. \$75/exam; trainees will take both exams at the same time. (\$150/trainee x 80 trainees = \$12,000)

**c. Equipment:** Materials to ensure/improve student safety, participation, affordability, and retention (e.g., personal safety gear: work boots, gloves, eye/ear pro). PM will distribute funds per demonstrated need during four years of training. (Avg \$20/trainee x 80 trainees = \$1,600)

**d. Supplies:** Materials to improve trainee attendance, retention, and outcomes (e.g., textbooks/copies for technical training courses; Heavy stock paper and presentation folders for graduate certificates, and replacement certification/license cards). (\$20/trainee x 80 trainees = \$1,600)

**e. Other**

- **Participant support stipends:** In each cycle of two cohorts of 10 trainees each, all participants will receive a support stipend of \$100/week for completing the two weeks of in-person training, plus an additional \$100 for LEED Green Associate training (\$50 for completing training and \$50 for passing the exam) for a maximum total stipend of \$300/trainee (x 10 trainees x 2 cohorts/cycle x 4 cycles) = \$24,000. In each cycle, WJF will (subject to availability of funds and trainee eligibility) will offset \$2,100 of this cost (\$8,400 over the grant training period). We request \$15,600 in EPA funds (\$3,900/cycle x 4 cycles).

- **Trainee/Employer Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement:** \$750/yr for digital/social media outreach to inform and recruit trainees and employer partners, support trainee/employer orientations, promote trainings at career fairs and with community leaders and Community Development Corporations, and publicize availability of program grads. (\$500/yr x 5 years = \$2,500)

#### 4. Program Structure, Anticipated Outputs, and Outcomes

##### A. Outputs and Outcomes



Funds will enable the applicant to provide environmental remediation training that generates in-demand certifications to at least 80 residents in focus EJ populations. The PM will work with partners to place program graduates in climate-critical positions offering family sustaining wages, enhance participants' economic mobility, and achieve outputs and outcomes below. The outputs and outcomes reflect, connect to, and are designed to address challenges in "Community Need" (p. 2).

- **Outputs:** *Plan and execute* 56 trainings across 7 courses in 4 years to prepare residents of EJ populations for FT entry-level environmental remediation jobs; *Recruit, train, certify, and prepare* for employment in entry-level jobs at least 80 residents from communities impacted by legacy pollution; a minimum 64 trainees (80% of enrollees) will *earn at least one certification*; *place* at least 56 certificate earners (80%) in FT environmental remediation jobs at an average \$21/hour starting wage; 80 entry-level environmental remediation workers will *earn OSHA 40-hour HAZWOPER certification*; *generate* cost savings for employer partners by offering free trainings to incumbent staff to facilitate career growth; measurably grow pipeline of qualified environmental remediation workers to meet future demands.

- **Outcomes:** Offer trainings that lead to sustainable employment in climate-critical jobs; enhance economic mobility of participants from EJ populations; increase capacity of municipal entities and employer partners to address EJ concerns by placing residents of IRA Disadvantaged Communities in jobs created by the assessment, clean up, and management of Brownfields and solid/hazardous waste sites; expand good-paying jobs aligned with regional workforce priorities and the Departments of Commerce and Labor's [Good Jobs Principles](#); grow community involvement in environmental projects and build on current sustainable partnerships; enhance career stability and promotions for current workers; increase participation in Justice40 Initiative; empower residents in focus EJ populations to promote environmental health and occupational safety on the job, in the City of Worcester, and throughout Central MA.

## **B. Recruitment, Screening, and Retention**

Factoring in experiences from past and current job training programs and input received from Community Development Corporations in focus areas while crafting this application, the applicant will recruit at least 25 applicants to generate 10 trainees/cohort (filling in cohorts as described above). The PM will use culturally sensitive tactics and tools to achieve program recruitment, application, screening, and retention goals:

- **Recruitment:** Leveraging the applicant's relationships with more than 90 community-based organizations that serve and work in focus areas (see letters of support), the PM will promote trainings via career/job fairs, personal contacts and referrals, and paid/unpaid media. In addition to social media (Facebook posts on the Worcester County Bulletin Board [10.3K members], Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce page [7.5K followers], and MHCC page [3K+ followers]; Twitter/X posts on the Board feed [1,500 followers]), the PM will send weekly emails during each recruitment phase (February – April) with links to the secure online application. Staff will also promote trainings in regional media (print, radio, TV).

- **Application:** To determine eligibility and suitability for training, aspiring trainees will complete a secure online application that asks for basic personal and professional info (paper copies provided to people lacking computer access or who cannot complete the form online). The Worcester and Southbridge career centers have free computers for candidate use. Required eligibility documents:

- ✓ Proof of U.S. Citizenship/Permanent Residency: Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, U.S. Passport
- ✓ Age 18+: Birth Certificate, Driver's License, MA Identity Card, etc.
- ✓ Proof of City of Worcester residency (for WJF program support stipends): Birth Certificate, Driver's License, MA Identity Card, etc. **Note:** The MCRWB does not require drug testing as a eligibility criterion.

The PM will ensure documents (online and/or physical) with trainee Personally Identifiable Information (PII) are locked in a cabinet with access limited to the PM, Program Assistant, Fiscal, and others demonstrating legitimate need (e.g., to process stipend requests or resolve eligibility issues).

- **Intake/screening:** After applying, prospective participants will attend a mandatory in-person info session or an in-person interview with the PM during which they will review their application for

completeness and identify and coordinate resources to reduce/remove barriers to participation and completion. Applicants lacking a HS degree or equivalent will be administered the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) with a minimum 8<sup>th</sup> grade English language proficiency required for enrollment.

The PM, program staff, and PAB members will review complete applicant packages and candidly discuss applicants' motivation to finish training and pursue/retain a job or career in environmental remediation—using quantitative and qualitative measures (TBD) to select each 10-member cohort. The PM will (if necessary) create a “wait list” for future JT courses. Candidates not selected will be referred to other MHCC services/programs or community supports (at no cost to EPA).

- **Retention:** The PM will work *discretely* with trainees and technical training providers to identify challenges and improve program retention by coordinating stipends and/or wraparound supports.
- **Participant Fees & Wraparound Supports:** The program is free for eligible trainees. The budget includes funds for materials, supplies, and license/exam fees, as well as participant support stipends (partially offset by leveraged funds from WJF). The PM will verify, monitor, and track stipends disbursed to help enrollees ameliorate participation and retention barriers such as childcare and transportation.
- **Accessibility:** In-person training will be at the MassHire Career Center in downtown Worcester (alternate site is WHA). Hands-on training will be at WHA. Both facilities are accessible via public transportation and offer either free (WHA) or paid (MHCC) parking. If a natural/man-made crisis requires online learning, the MCRWB will loan laptops to trainees at no cost to them or the EPA.

### **C. Program Support for Job Placement**

This project draws from the applicant's strong partnership with MassHire Career Centers and partners mentioned throughout. For example, MassHire BEST staff will inform environmental employers and general contractors about the availability of trained entry-level workers and promote hiring or tax incentives for which employers may qualify (Work Opportunity Tax Credit, MA Economic Development Incentive Program, OJT). Leveraging these relationships, the PM will connect trainees with potential employers, offer personal referrals/recommendations, and marshal MHCC resources that already help fill workforce needs in priority industries (including SOC's listed above, p. 4). While this competition neither requires cost sharing nor matching, the proposed program bakes in BOUNCE work readiness training and MHCC job placement services at no cost to EPA.

Appendix A (Milestones) illuminates the applicant's collaborative approach to job placement, which features events like exclusive "mini job fairs" in which trainees and graduates engage with employers (and vice versa), larger in-person job fairs, online job fairs (via Premier Virtual), and more. Since MCRWB's inception more than 20 years ago, these events have boosted job placement, grown career development and job training opportunities, and improved partner satisfaction.

PAB members have committed to participate in “mini job fairs”, to interview and/or hire program graduates based on projected need, and to work together to enhance graduate job readiness and retention. To verify job placement for graduates who can be difficult to engage after training, the PM will hire a service provider (TBD) to track employment status via Social Security Number (SSN).

### **D. Program Sustainability**

As detailed in the Workforce Blueprint, the applicant recognizes the need to provide a steady stream of certified entry-level environmental remediation workers to fill openings in priority fields. Reflecting federal, state, and municipal workforce priorities, the applicant partners with employers and community organizations that serve residents in our focus area. Our current MassCEC Equity Workforce Planning grant is just one example of our demonstrated commitment to program sustainability long after funds expire from this JT grant. The proposed trainings will position the applicant to meet partners' projected needs for dozens of entry-level environmental workers:

- [Worcester Business Development Corporation](#) (WBDC): In November 2022, Worcester County (and worldwide) manufacturer Saint-Gobain donated to WBDC a 51-acre site contaminated with



metals, inorganic materials, PCBs, and volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds. In 2023, WBDC received a \$2M Brownfield remediation grant to clean up the site; WBDC shared that its subcontractors plan to hire dozens of qualified environmental remediation workers. Saint-Gobain owns and operates Norton Powerhouse, a coal-fired power station in CT 7301; its closure is imminent.

- [MassCEC](#): To achieve goals in the [Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030](#), MassCEC offers \$27M annually for workforce training programs to meet clean energy employer needs.
- [Commonwealth Corporation](#): Funds partnerships with Career and Technical Education schools to provide adult learners (especially unemployed and underemployed individuals from underserved populations) career training and technical skills to meet MA employer needs.
- [WPI](#): In July 2024, Worcester Polytechnic Institute earned national recognition for its work advancing sustainability and innovation in the Clean Tech/Climate Tech sector. Five companies with WPI ties were named to *TIME* magazine's list of [America's Top GreenTech Companies of 2024](#). The applicant works with WPI on job training, education, and community engagement programs and initiatives.

## 5. Partnerships

If awarded, the applicant's second JT grant will build on previous partnership experiences and successes. Partners have committed to support program outreach, recruitment, retention, completion, and job placement efforts (see appendix E). Employer partners will interview, refer, and/or hire program graduates and participate in networking events. Job Readiness/Life Skills partners (MHCC & WJF) will provide job placement assistance and BOUNCE life/career skills training (at no cost to EPA). To recognize current and inspire future partners, we will share partner and participant success stories during media outreach, info sessions, meetings, on social media, and in short videos.

Partner & Contact	Partner Type	Partner Commitments
MassHire Central Region Career Centers: Janice Ryan Weekes, Executive Director	Community Job Readiness	PAB member; Program promotion and recruitment; Provide classroom space; Job search, referrals, & placement
Worcester Jobs Fund: Arianna Drummy, Executive Director	Community Job Readiness	PAB member; Program promotion and recruitment; Job referrals and placement; BOUNCE life skills; Support stipends
Worcester Housing Authority: Alex Corrales, Chief Executive Officer	Community Job Readiness Employer	PAB member; Program promotion and recruitment; Provide training space; Job search, referrals, & hiring (# TBD)
City of Worcester DPW&P: Jay Fink, Commissioner	Environmental Employer	PAB member; Program promotion and recruitment; Interview/hire 4-6 grads/yr (CY25-29); Job retention

Space constraints prevent us from including Letters of Support from other committed partners:

- **CMRPC** (Janet Pierce, Executive Director): Community and Environmental partner. Will serve on PAB; help with program promotion and recruitment; provide job referrals and placement
- **WBDC** (Roberta Brien, Executive Director): Community and Employer partner. Will serve on PAB; help with program promotion and recruitment; interview and grads (at least 10/yr, CY25-29)
- **We Fix It Renovate, Inc.** (Antonia Vaughan, Owner—MBE/WBE): Will serve on PAB, help with program promotion and recruitment; interview and potentially hire grads (# TBD)
- **Resource Options, Inc.** (Barclay Gammill, COO): Employer partner. Local construction staffing firm (placed grads from our sunseting EWDJT grant); interview and potentially place 4-6 grads/cycle.

### A. Collaboration with Environmental Entities

The applicant's collaborations with environmental entities include more than two dozen partners from municipal agencies, employers, and community-based organizations. While developing this



proposal, the applicant consulted staff from partner organizations who are deeply familiar with managing Brownfields programs: WHA (current training partner) and CMRPC (plans and supports Central MA Brownfield assessment and revitalization projects and operates an EPA-funded site assessment program). City of Worcester environmental partners include the Departments of Housing & Health Inspections, Health & Human Services, and Trash & Recycling.

**B. Collaboration with Job-Readiness/Life Skills**

As a local Workforce Development Board, the applicant collaborates with organizations that provide job readiness and life skills to diverse constituents: MHCC, WJF, MA Dept of Transitional Assistance, MA Executive Office of Veterans Services, and MA Rehabilitation Commission. MHCC (WIOA partner), WJF, and WHA offer clients and residents free job readiness and search skills, resume building workshops, and referrals to employers. The applicant also partners with education institutions and vocational trainers (Worcester Public Schools, WPI, The Fieldstone School, and others) for job- and career-specific trainings such as BOUNCE.

**C. Collaboration with Community**

The applicant and affiliated MHCC staff have earned national, state, and municipal awards for innovative and mutually beneficial community collaborations. While drafting this application, we engaged community based organizations including the United Way of Central MA and Veterans, Inc. The applicant routinely partners with these and 90+ other organizations to determine and promote workforce development trainings in priority fields, recruit participants, and connect participants with support services that have proven to enhance course retention, completion, and job placement.

**D. Collaboration with Employers**

Most of the more than 30 employers who participated in the applicant’s sunseting EWDJT grant have agreed to support this proposed JT program (Appendix E, Letters of Support). While preparing this application, the PM requested and received feedback on proposed trainings and shared projected hiring needs from employer partners. Input included:

- Three surveys to ascertain satisfaction with our sunseting EWDJT grant and find out projected future environmental remediation training/hiring needs (June 2022, June ‘23, July ‘24).
- April – July 2024: Coordinated with WHA re. outreach, recruitment, retention, placement, and logistical support and briefed City of Worcester EOED and DPW&P many times. Correspondence with WBDC revealed hiring needs of subcontractors (“dozens of workers”) for the Brownfields program WBDC oversees (below).
- "We Fix It Renovate" (MBE/WBE) provided insights and guidance on best practices to inform, recruit and retain female trainees, especially women of color (July 2024).

**6. Leveraging**

Per the table below, we will leverage resources equaling 9.1% (\$45,500) of requested funds. All services from the City's Procurement and Legal Departments are provided in-kind (see IV.F. below).

**Leveraged Funding Table (Optional)**

Organization	Leveraged Services (committed)	Leveraged Funding Amount	% of Total Funds Requested
WJF	BOUNCE life/career skills training; participant support stipends; job referrals	\$35,000	7%
MHCC	Facilities; job preparation help/referrals; job placement and retention support	\$10,500	2.1%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$45,500</b>	<b>9.1%</b>



## 7. Programmatic Capability

### A. Grant Management System

The applicant has never had an Audit finding, significant concern, or disallowed cost in any audit or yearly review from the State of MA. The City of Worcester does not have any adverse audit findings regarding the management or implementation of its Brownfields grants. Staff who will manage this grant have decades of experience implementing, stewarding, and ensuring accountability for dozens of grants. The team includes Executive Director Jeff Turgeon (20+ years in workforce development and program management with three years as a U.S. DOL Program Manager); Senior PM Maria Sanchez (13 years managing workforce and educational programs); Fiscal Director Carlene Godfrey (more than 28 years' experience managing and supervising grants); Senior Accountant Heather Mahall (more than 27 years' experience managing grants). City of Worcester EOED staff have more than 25 years' combined experience with Brownfields redevelopment (Peter P. Dunn--Chief Development Officer and Paul D. Morano, Jr.--Asst. CDO, Special Projects). The City's Legal, Purchasing, and Budget departments have substantial experience monitoring/auditing grants, processing payment requisitions, and purchasing. Applicant staff work with the City's Legal Department to ensure contracts and procurement procedures align with all laws and requirements.

### B. Organizational Experience

The applicant has won state and municipal awards for providing area residents workforce services including pre-employment skills development, career/job training, and job placement. Program Managers have shepherded dozens of job training programs--many of which exceeded enrollment and placement goals. In the past five years, MHCC staff served more than 10,000 job seekers annually and placed more than 1,500 in stable, FT positions. MHCC offers services in multiple languages and virtually (online). A majority of individuals served by WJF reside in our focus area. Since the applicant lacks organic resources to provide the proposed trainings (except BOUNCE), we will draft and publicize RFPs seeking technical training providers to deliver courses through the City Purchasing Department. The solicitation, bidding, and selection process will comply with EPA standards and applicable Federal, state, and municipal regulations. The PM will coordinate with EPA Region 1 staff to ensure training curriculum align with goals in this application and work plans TBD.

### C. Past Performance and Accomplishments

#### i. Previous EPA EWDJT Grant Recipient:

In 2021 the applicant was awarded a \$200K EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grant (Cooperative Agreement #00A00554); we are now in the fourth and final (reporting) year and have less than \$1K in spend-down funds remaining. Over the three year training period, we provided free job trainings in climate-critical occupations to un- and underemployed people with a focus on recruiting the unemployed, re-entering citizens, veterans, and women of color from EJ populations.

**Accomplishments (to date) Data Table**

Cooperative Agreement #	Project Period	Funds Expended	Participants Trained	Participants Placed	% placed in FTE	Data Updated in ACRES (y/n)
00A00554	FY21 – FY24	\$137,111.91	62	27	56%	N/A

Overall, the applicant **exceeded projections** for number of trainees enrolled (64 vs. 60) and number of trainees who earned at least one certification (62 vs. 54). As of June 2024, we have placed 56% of graduates (27 of projected 48) in FT environmental remediation jobs. During the grant lifespan, we generated 76 workplan drafts (all reviewed and approved by Region 1 staff) and submitted all required reports on time. Our implementation and compliance earned recognition from EPA Region 1 officials and others. While the grant sunsets in FY24, the applicant continues efforts to place program graduates (for

example, the previous PM solicits job openings from employer partners and shares them with program graduates). Finally, the applicant complied with all grant terms and conditions.

The proposed training project does not duplicate other federally funded programs for environmental job training in our focus community, including EPA's Superfund Job Training Initiative (SuperJTI); EPA's EJ Justice Small Grants Program (Assistance Listing 66.604); and EPA's Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to Environmental Justice Grants Program (Assistance Listing 66.309). The proposed training neither duplicates National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Hazardous Waste Worker Training programs in our focus communities nor DOL grant funds that include Brownfields remediation, renewable energy, HVAC, or other energy-related or wastewater treatment operator trainings.

From a program management perspective, the City of Worcester has implemented the EPA's Brownfields RLF program using prudent lending practices, leveraging public and private funds, exceeding cost-share requirements, and providing in-kind personnel support for financial oversight and contract creation. To date, the City has completed 3 loans and 13 subgrants which generated the following significant outcomes:

- ✓ **Properties Remediated:** 13
- ✓ **Residential Units Created:** 184 (94 Affordable and 90 Market-rate apartments)
- ✓ **Commercial Space Renovated/Created:** 463,146 square feet
- ✓ **New Local Property Taxes Generated Annually:** \$1,000,000+

Past grants have supported redevelopment projects such as Gateway Park, a technology, bioengineering, and office park that won EPA's 2007 Brownfields Phoenix Award; the former Wyman Gordon Company properties which were remediated and transformed into a \$240M public/private development initiative that included Polar Park, home of the Worcester Red Sox (recognized as a [R1 Brownfields Success Story](#), July 2024). WBDC currently oversees a \$2M Brownfields project at the former Saint-Gobain Norton Company site (1 New Bond Street).

**Current:**

- 1) The City is administering its \$1,250,000 FY19 RLF (Cooperative Agreement BF-00A00392) and \$2,700,000 FY23 RLF (Cooperative Agreement 4B-00A01133).
  - At this time, the City's uncommitted RLF dollars under Cooperative Agreement BF00A00392, Cooperative Agreement 4B-00A01133, and Program Income = \$66,181.27.

**Past:**

- 2) Cooperative Agreement BF98191101, FY03 Revolving Loan Fund (ended 9/30/2021)
  - Total award: \$2,979,273 (final close-out report submitted 9/6/2022)
- 3) Cooperative Agreement BF00A00160, FYI 7 Assessment Grant (ended 9/30/2021)
  - Total award: \$300,000

**IV.F. Leveraging:** To support the proposed training and achieve job placement goals, we will leverage resources equaling 9.1% (\$45,500) of the requested funds (see Table section 6). All services rendered through the City's Law Department and Budget Office are provided in-kind.

**IV.G. Narrative Attachments:** The six narrative attachments do not exceed fifteen (15) total pages.

- Appendix A: Milestones & Timeline for Key Actions/Deliverables

- Appendix E: Partnership Letters (Letters of Support)



- Affirmative statement that all trainees in the proposed program will be provided the OSHA 40-Hour HAZWOPER training (ref. [Section III.B.4.](#))
  - ✓ All trainees in the proposed program will be provided the OSHA 40-Hour HAZWOPER training (ref. narrative pages 6, 7, 10, 11).
- Statement of the federal funds requested and estimated project period (ref. [Section III.B.5.](#))
  - ✓ **Federal funds requested:** \$499,160.46 (see narrative Section III, pages 3, 9)
  - ✓ **Estimated project period:** Five (5) years, starting FY25 and ending FY30
- Indicate the page(s) on which you include the training curriculum chart (ref. [Section III.B.7.](#))
  - ✓ The Training Curriculum Chart is on page 6 of the complete application package.
- Description of the target area the applicant is proposing to serve (ref. [Section III.B.8.](#))
  - ✓ Focus areas of the proposed program are in the City of Worcester (per RFA Section III.B.8) and represent the City's six urban core Opportunity Zone Census Tracts: CTs 7305.00, 7313.00, 7314.00, 7317.00, 7325.00, and 7328.01.
- Statement of when the applicant was last awarded a Brownfields Job Training Grant; or an affirmative statement that the applicant has never received a Brownfields Job Training Grant (ref. [Section III.B.9.](#))
  - ✓ The applicant is currently in the fourth and final (reporting) year of a EPA Environmental Workforce Development Job Training (EWDJT) grant (Cooperative Agreement #00A00554).
- Documentation of the available balance on each open Brownfields Job Training Grant; or an affirmative statement that the applicant does not have an open Brownfields Job Training Grant (ref. [Section III.B.10.](#))
  - ✓ The project period of the applicant's current EPA EWDJT grant is 10/01/2021 – 09/30/2024; we have less than \$1K in spend-down funds remaining.

### Appendix A: Milestones & Timeline for Key Actions/Deliverables

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline (dated from receipt of award notification)</b>	<b>Key Actions / Deliverables</b>
Draft work plan aligned with grant application	Within 14 days of award notification	Revise work plan from sunseting EWDJT grant; send to EPA R1 for review
Program Leadership meetings (PM, Board, MHCC staff)	Initial meeting within 14 days of award notification, monthly thereafter	Review work plan, goals, outputs/ outcomes; confirm program policies, processes, and reporting
Draft and post RFPs for technical training providers	Within 30 days	Coordinate w/ City of Worcester Legal and Purchasing departments; identify, invite, prioritize MBE/WBE
Receive bids; review, select, notify; draft contracts for technical training providers	Within 60 days	PM: Coordinate w/ City of Worcester Legal and Purchasing departments
Project Advisory Board (PAB) meetings	Three consecutive months before 1 <sup>st</sup> cohort; then quarterly and <i>ad hoc</i>	PM: Establish/confirm member commitments; set/share meeting schedule, agendas, minutes
Employer Partner recruitment, outreach, & engagement	60 days (ongoing thereafter)	Reconfirm partners from sunseting grant; engage/recruit new partners
Plan, create, and orchestrate trainee outreach, engagement, and recruitment	Within 90 days	Create/share info materials (flyers, emails, social media content); conduct PR; engage community partners
Finalize program webpages; beta test and launch secure online application	Within 120 days	Update pages to reflect new application, training schedule and courses; promote (digital/social media)
Recruit from EJ populations; plan & conduct info sessions	Three within 180 days	Prep & share materials w/ partners; schedule/hold info sessions; follow ups
CY25 (April & June) applicant review, vetting, screening	Within 180 days	Per process in RFA & work plan
Prepare/share Program Reports	Monthly	Per process in RFA & work plan
Conduct Environmental Remediation trainings CY25-28	First cohort within 180 days; Two cohorts/year CY25-28	PM: Confirm days, times, locations w/ technical training providers
Plan and hold “mini job fairs” for employer partners	Final week of each cohort	PM: Schedule days/times with employer partners and training providers
Survey program grads and employer partners	After each cycle (CY25, 26, 27, 28); after end of program (CY29)	PM: Prepare/send survey; compile and share results; propose/implement program improvements
Graduate placement, tracking, and participant support stipends	During each cohort; after each cycle; at least 1 year after end of program	PM and WJF staff: Verify trainee eligibility; ensure eligible trainees receive; record & track disbursements
Program sustainment efforts beyond grant period	End of Phase 1; during Phase 2; after end of program (CY29)	PM/partners: Research, identify, choose, apply for potential funding
Quarterly reports to EPA	During grant lifespan	PM: Submit on time per EPA process; share with partners & PAB
Final project report	Within 30 days of program end	PM: Submit on time per EPA process; share with partners & PAB



## Appendix E: Partnership Letters (Letters of Support)

### Community Partners

- 1: MassHire Central Region Career Centers (MHCC): Janice Ryan Weekes, Executive Director  
2: Worcester Jobs Fund (WJF): Arianna Drummy, Director

### Employer Partners

- 3: Worcester Housing Authority (WHA): Alex Corrales, Chief Executive Officer  
4: City of Worcester Department of Public Works & Power: Jay Fink, P.E., Commissioner



Janice Ryan Weekes  
Executive Director

554 Main Street, Suite 300 • Worcester, MA 01608 • 508.799.1600  
14 Mechanic Street, Suite 330 • Southbridge, MA 01550 • 508.765.6430

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Mr. Matt Wosje  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Mail Code: 5105T  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Wosje:

I am writing in support of the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board's application for the Environmental Protection Agency's Job Training (JT) grant, EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-02. As the federally designated One-Stop Career Centers serving the Central MA Workforce Development Area (WDA), MassHire Central Career Centers and Business Engagement Service Team (BEST) staff, in Worcester and Southbridge, work closely with MCRWB staff to provide job training and employment services to residents of the City of Worcester and the 38 surrounding towns and communities, in our service delivery area.

Over the past five years, our career centers have served approximately 10,000 job seekers annually, achieving more than 1,500 confirmed placements. Our staff has strong relationships with employers and community organizations. The proposed EPA Job Training program aligns perfectly with our mission to provide innovative and effective job training programs that meet the needs of our diverse constituents. We are particularly excited to work with the MCRWB to offer trainings to unemployed and underemployed job seekers from our city's disadvantaged demographics to offer valuable skills and credentials needed to secure full-time employment in climate-critical jobs.

We will support this project by:

- Participating in the Project Advisory Board (PAB) and suggesting and advancing continuous improvement efforts over the five-year grant performance period.
- Coordinating closely with Senior Program Manager, Maria Sanchez to engage and recruit participants through our contacts at Community Development Corporations in focus areas.
- Providing job search skills, resume and cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, job matching, and referrals.
- Providing certified BOUNCE work readiness trainers and training at no cost to the EPA.
- Providing program graduates, job placement and retention support that includes identifying and engaging current and new employer partners.
- Facilitating program graduate placement and job tracking.

We are confident this grant will help us alleviate current chronic shortages and expand the pipeline of certified, trained environmental remediation workers to meet future demand, as well as provide new opportunities for job seekers in our community. Based on our previous productive partnerships in other job training projects and grants, we believe this joint effort will be a model for successful collaboration between workforce development organizations, employer partners, and community-based organizations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[www.MassHireCentralCC.com](http://www.MassHireCentralCC.com)



Worcester Jobs Fund  
554 Main Street, Suite 401  
Worcester, MA 01608

August 5, 2024

Matt Wosje  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Mail Code: 5105T  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Wosje,

The Worcester Jobs Fund offers this letter of commitment to support the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board's FY25 BROWNFIELDS JOB TRAINING (JT) GRANTS (EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-02). WJF is housed administratively in the MCRWB and guided by a committee of representatives from the City of Worcester EOED, MassHire Central Career Centers, Worcester Community Labor Coalition, and the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce—several of which will be *de facto* partners in the proposed training program.

Over the performance period, the WJF will help promote the program, identify and refer potential participants, provide certified instructors for BOUNCE career/life skills trainings, serve on the Project Advisory Board, and help place program graduates in stable, secure, and fulfilling jobs at \$21/hr or more. Subject to funding availability, we will also provide eligible trainees \$100/wk for each week of training they complete plus an additional \$100 for LEED Green Associate training (\$50 for completing the course and \$50 for passing the exam). We will

Program Year	Weekly Stipend x # of City of Worcester trainees	Total \$/Cycle
Year 1	\$100/wk x 2 weeks (+\$100 LEED) x 7 trainees =	\$2,100
Year 2	\$100/wk x 2 weeks (+\$100 LEED) x 7 trainees =	\$2,100
Year 3	\$100/wk x 2 weeks (+\$100 LEED) x 7 trainees =	\$2,100
Year 4	\$100/wk x 2 weeks (+\$100 LEED) x 7 trainees =	\$2,100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28 trainees</b>	<b>\$8,400</b>

We are confident the MCRWB's proposal will prepare residents from the City's most disadvantaged neighborhoods for jobs in climate-critical fields where employer partners inform us they have immediate hiring needs. We look forward to working with PM Maria Sanchez and project partners to help City of Worcester residents and WJF clients gain valuable certifications that will enhance their economic mobility and improve our shared environment.

Sincerely,

Arianna Drummy, Director  
Worcester Jobs Fund





**Board of Commissioners**

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**Jose Ramos**  
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Member

**Rané Bracey-Westbrook**  
Member

**Alex Corrales**  
Chief Executive Officer

August 08, 2024

Matt Wosje  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Mail Code: 5105T  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Wosje,

The Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) is pleased to provide this letter of support and partnership for the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board's (MCRWB) EPA Job Training (JT) grant application. The WHA is a state and federally funded entity that manages 3,000 units in 24 separate communities across the City of Worcester (see map next page). Our mission is to enhance the Worcester community by creating and sustaining decent, safe, and affordable housing that champions stability and self-sufficiency for WHA residents. Our mission, service area, and programs align closely with those of the MCRWB; we look forward to offering free environmental remediation trainings to WHA residents.

WHA and the MCRWB currently partner to manage a three-year, \$370,470 Equity Workforce Training grant awarded by the Mass Clean Energy Council (MassCEC); the grant funds career pathway trainings that lead to employment in climate critical priority occupations—which are identified in the MCRWB's Central Region Workforce Blueprint.

Because the accessibility of training sites is a significant consideration for WHA staff and residents, we offer MCRWB a facility (classrooms and hands-on training) that is ADA-compliant easily accessible via public transportation and equipped with the latest audio/visual assets to cater to individuals with diverse learning styles (including neurodivergent individuals).

As a partner in this grant application, we have contributed significantly to the proposed plan, providing content, feedback, and information regarding our projected training and hiring needs. We believe this partnership will not only benefit our residents but also contribute to the overall goal of creating a more sustainable and equitable community.

WHA will help Program Manager Maria Sanchez engage and recruit WHA residents and incumbent workers, ensuring that residents referred to the trainings have completed our "A Better Life" (ABL) program, ABL includes job readiness and life skills, resume building workshops, and referrals to potential employers who have demonstrated their desire to hire ABL "graduates".

We strongly support the MCRWB's EPA Job Training grant application and believe it will positively impact our residents' lives. We look forward to partnering with the MCRWB to make this vision a reality. Please contact me if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Alex Corrales, written in a cursive style.

Alex Corrales  
Chief Executive Officer

*The Worcester Housing Authority provides reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities.*  
630A Plantation Street • Worcester, MA 01605 • (508) 635-3106 • TDD (508) 798-4530 • Fax (508) 635-3186



## The City of Worcester

### Department of Public Works & Parks

Jay J. Fink, P.E., Commissioner  
20 East Worcester Street, Worcester, MA 01604  
P| 508-799-1430 F| 508-799-1448  
311@worcesterma.gov

8/5/2024

Matt Wosje  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Mail Code: 5105T  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Wosje,

On behalf of the City of Worcester Department of Public Works and Parks (DPW&P), I am honored to express our support for the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board's (MCRWB) proposed Brownfields Job Training (JT) Grant (EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-02). The City of Worcester recognizes the critical need to address the challenges faced by un/underemployed individuals who are seeking living-wage employment. For this reason, we wholeheartedly endorse the MCRWB's initiative.

As a committed partner, DPW&P is prepared to share job openings with MCRWB as they become available and to report any placements of EPA program graduates, including: position titles, salaries, and start dates. Additionally, we will assist the MCRWB with the recruitment of eligible candidates for the training and offer connections to relevant community services and resources when necessary.

The City of Worcester DPW&P firmly believes that the funding provided by this grant will address the region's need for skilled, qualified workers. This initiative will also provide much-needed access to training, education, and job placement services for Central Massachusetts residents seeking to earn a living wage through fulfilling and stable employment.

We appreciate this opportunity to support MCRWB's grant application and kindly request your favorable consideration. Please let me know if I can provide further input or assistance.

Sincerely,

Jay J. Fink, P.E.  
Commissioner

Department of Public Works & Parks • 20 East Worcester Street, Worcester, MA 01604

P| 508-508-799-1430 F| 508-799-1448 • [www.WorcesterMa.gov](http://www.WorcesterMa.gov)





**Threshold Criteria Responses for FY25 EPA Job Training (JT) Grant**

*“City of Worcester Justice40 Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Program: Engaging, Training, and Placing Residents of Disadvantaged Communities in Priority Climate-Critical Jobs” (submitted as attachment)*

- Statement of applicant eligibility if a city, county, state, or Tribe (ref. [Section III.B.1.](#))
  - ✓ Per section III.A. of the RFA and in accordance with Assistance Listing (CFDA) 66.815, the applicant is a General Purpose Unit of Local Government (City of Worcester Executive Office of Economic Development). The agency managing this grant is the City of Worcester MassHire Central Region Workforce Board.
- Documentation of applicant eligibility if other than a city, county, state, or Tribe; e.g., resolutions, statutes, Intertribal Consortium documentation, or documentation of 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status or qualified community development entity (ref. [Section III.B.1.](#))
  - ✓ N/A
- Statement of applicant’s 501(c)(4) tax-exempt status and, if applicable, legal opinion regarding lobbying activities (ref. [Section III.B.1.](#))
  - ✓ Per 26 US Code Section 115, governmental income received by the City of Worcester is exempt from federal and state taxation (ref. narrative Appendix F: Certificate of Exemption from State Tax).
  - ✓ Applicant does not lobby within the meaning of the Lobbying Disclosure Act 2 USC 1601 *et. seq.*
- Coalition Agreement or a signed letter of commitment from each coalition member, if applying as a coalition (ref. [Section III.B.2.](#))
  - ✓ N/A
- Demonstration that proposed project does not duplicate other federally funded environmental job training programs (ref. [Section III.B.3.](#))
  - ✓ Proposed training project does not duplicate other federally funded programs for environmental job training in our focus area, including EPA’s Superfund Job Training Initiative (SuperJTI); EPA’s EJ Justice Small Grants Program (Assistance Listing 66.604); and EPA’s Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to Environmental Justice Grants Program (Assistance Listing 66.309). The proposed training neither duplicates National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Hazardous Waste Worker Training programs in our focus area nor DOL grant funds that include Brownfields remediation, renewable energy, HVAC, or other energy-related or wastewater treatment operator trainings.