



Jay Pateakos
Executive Director

CITY OF TAUNTON
**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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Assistant Director

R01-24-A-013

**City of Taunton, Massachusetts - Narrative Information Sheet
USEPA FY24 Brownfields Assessment Grant Application**

1. Applicant Identification: City of Taunton, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, Massachusetts 02780
2. Funding Requested:
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
3. Location: Taunton, Bristol County, Massachusetts
4. Target Area & Priority Site Information:

Target Area: Weir Village, an 18-acre area located along West Water Street, Weir Street, and the Taunton River

Census Tract: 25005613902

Priority Sites: 1) Yankee Chemical, 600 West Water St., Taunton, MA 02780
2) Taunton Gas Works, 650 West Water St., Taunton, MA 02780
3) TGN Property, 491 West Water St., Taunton, MA 02780
5. Contacts:
 - a. Project Director: Jay Pateakos, Executive Director
City of Taunton, OECD
15 Summer Street, Suite 302
Taunton, Massachusetts 02780-3056
Telephone: 508-821-1030
Email: JPateakos@taunton-ma.gov
 - b. Chief Elected Official: Shaunna O'Connell, Mayor
City of Taunton
15 Summer Street, Suite 400
Taunton, Massachusetts 02780
Telephone: 508-821-1000
Email: soconnell@taunton-ma.gov
6. Population: 59,922 (Census.gov)

7. Other Factors Checklist:

Other Factors	Page #
Community Population is 10,000 or less.	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory	N/A
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	1-3,6-7
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	2,3,7
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy form wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3-4
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	6
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	N/A
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing.	N/A

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

9. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not applicable.

Attachments: MassDEP Acknowledgement Letter



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

100 Cambridge Street Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114 • 617-292-5500

Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca L. Tepper
Secretary

Bonnie Heiple
Commissioner

November 3, 2023

Via Email

Heather Rios, Grant Manager
Office of Economic and Community Development
City of Taunton
15 Summer Street
Taunton, MA 02780

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
City of Taunton
Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant

Dear Ms. Rios:

I am writing to support the application submitted by the City of Taunton under the Fiscal Year 2024 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant Program. We understand that the City is planning to undertake several assessment projects to promote redevelopment across the community with a focus in West Water Street neighborhood. EPA funding will facilitate Brownfields redevelopment by providing resources to assess properties, conduct cleanup planning and redevelopment planning at properties where actual and perceived contamination exist that inhibit potential future development within the City's target areas.

In Massachusetts, state and federal agencies have developed strong partnerships and work together to ensure that parties undertaking Brownfield projects have access to available resources and incentives. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), through our regional offices, provides technical support to Brownfield project proponents when regulatory issues arise. If this proposal is selected, MassDEP will work with our state and federal partners to support the City of Taunton to help make this project a success.

We greatly appreciate EPA's continued support of Brownfield efforts in Massachusetts.
Sincerely,

David Foss, CPG, LSP

Statewide Brownfields Coordinator, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup

cc: Dorrie Paar, US EPA
Jim Howland, Asst. Director
Angela Gallagher, MassDEP Southeast Regional Office
Kathryn Carvalho, MassDEP Southeast Regional Office

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields

i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

Founded in 1639, the City of Taunton, Massachusetts is among the oldest municipalities in the United States and the largest city by land area in its state.¹ Taunton has been designated one of Massachusetts' 26 'Gateway'² cities because they provided communities with good jobs and a "gateway" to the American dream during the industrial age. Taunton was once a regional and national leader in many industries including bog iron, shipbuilding, textiles, stoves, locomotives, and perhaps most notably, silver. Taunton, like the rest of the Gateway Cities, has faced extreme challenges in both rebounding economically, as well as coping with the environmental footprint, stigma, and contamination left behind from this era of industry, which hinders and impedes redevelopment and revitalization. The city has 10 documented Brownfield sites spanning a total of 78.61 acres, four of those sites are located in the target area for this application, the Weir Village neighborhood, which currently contains 18 acres of Brownfields along the Taunton River watershed.

The Weir Village is an urban neighborhood with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial properties in a relatively dense area. Residents in the target area are considered Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities, representing racial and ethnic minorities and individuals who live in households that have a median household income of 65% or less than the state median household income.³ With an abundance of land available for remediation and redevelopment, the Weir Village is poised to be an up and coming neighborhood.

Funding to assess these sites would allow for the City of Taunton to determine the hazards which exist in the neighborhood, their impact on abutting properties and waterways, and determine the best and safest course of remediation, giving way to planning for clean-up and eventual economic redevelopment, job creation, housing, and recreational space. As a community with limited transportation access, walkability to nearby grocery stores and other amenities is crucial for the health and wellbeing of its residents. Without funding, this overhaul of 18 acres would not be possible and the remediation of these sites would continue to be delayed and contamination exacerbated over time.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

For over 200 years, the Weir has been home to a variety of industrial sites including Yankee Chemical, Sheridan Silversmiths, Robertson Curtain Factory, F.B. Rogers Silversmiths, Staples Coal, Weir Stove Corporation, Bacon Felt and Nu-Brite Paint and Chemical. Many of these sites have been determined to have air, water, and soil contaminants including lead paint, asbestos, cyanide and heavy metals such as copper, silver and zinc, and various volatile organic compounds linked to adverse health impacts. Our priority properties in the Weir Village include:

¹ Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: "Information and Historical Data on Cities, Towns and Counties in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts". <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisctlist/ctlistidx.htm>

² <https://massinc.org/our-work/policy-center/gateway-cities/about-the-gateway-cities/>

³ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/environmental-justice-populations-in-massachusetts#interactive-maps-about-environmental-justice-populations>

- **Priority Site One: Yankee Chemical (600 West Water Street • RTN: 4-0000162)**

This one acre of city-owned land contains an abandoned structure dating back to 1900. The parcel is located in the FEMA 1% annual chance flood zone⁴. The site has unknown Contaminants of Concern (COCs) but its former use as a chemical corporation leads us to believe the site also contains carcinogenic materials. By testing and assessing this site, we can get a picture of what currently exists on the property, and what is potentially coming from additional industrial sites via ground water, proactively protecting the Taunton River, a US Department of Interior designated Wild and Scenic River.

- **Priority Site Two: Taunton Gas Works (650 West Water Street • RTN: 4-0000165 & 4-0013489)**

This vacant parcel of 6.5 acres abuts 600 West Water Street and overlooks the Taunton River. The Massachusetts Brownfield Tracking Spreadsheet last updated in December of 2018, identified cyanide, petroleum, and other volatile organic compounds as COCs. By assessing this site we can continue to address hazards to the River and within the flood zone.

- **Priority Site Three: TGN Property (491 West Water Street • RTN: 4-0000207)**

This parcel is 7.43 acres and was once home to a Tannery. The current structure remaining on the land dates back to 1960 and is used for storage. The site contains metals and other volatile organic compounds. Cobb Brook runs under the property, upstream from priority site one. We will work with TGN Property Management for the assessment of this property. By assessing this site proactively protecting the river.

- iii. Identifying Additional Sites

In addition to the initial priority sites noted above, the City also plans to use the assessment grant funds for additional Brownfield sites identified within City limits, whether in the target areas or beyond. The City will notify the community of fund availability through the methods detailed in Section 2.b. below and will encourage applications for assessment funding from owners, developers, and/or prospective purchasers. The City has already developed an application during prior grants and will update it to include criteria such as site history, redevelopment plans, expected leveraged funds, alignment with the City’s revitalization and reuse plans noted below, and whether the site is located within or serves an underserved community or disadvantaged census tract, as identified in Section 2 below, both in terms of environmental and climate justice.

- b. **Revitalization of the Target Area**

- i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

In the City’s most recent Master Plan, *Taunton Tomorrow (2018)*, facilitated by the City’s Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD), one of the goals is to maintain a diverse stock of affordable housing for individuals and families of varying ages, incomes and needs including the identified underserved low-income communities in our target area. One of the action items for this goal is to “continue to use the city’s brownfields program to promote adaptive reuse of former industrial sites”⁵. The plan also states that “the city has a larger percentage of brownfield/contaminated sites than comparison cities and towns, and a lower share of greenfield sites suitable for development”. The Master Plan notes that since many of Taunton’s brownfield

⁴ FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search by Address. <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search#searchresultsanchor>

⁵ *Taunton Tomorrow*: City of Taunton Comprehensive Master Plan, 2019-2040, page 84. https://www.taunton-ma.gov/sites/tauntonma/files/uploads/taunton_comprehensive_master_plan_-_optimized.pdf

sites are in older neighborhoods, they would make great candidates for conversion to affordable residential housing or mixed-use because of their “walkable village character”.

The Weir Village is the prime example of impacted Brownfields land that is impeding economic redevelopment, thus assessment for its best use is pertinent. The City is looking to have a site reuse market study for revitalization of the Weir Village to help ensure the development avenues, such as affordable housing and commercial redevelopment that create good paying jobs are the most successful for the identified underserved populations. There is currently a high need for affordable housing, phasing out industrial use of these parcels could help pave the way to private development. The priority sites are industrial-zoned and, with the proper environmental assessment, could be on a path to remediation, reuse, and returned to the tax rolls. However, without assessment of these sites, their best use cannot be determined.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

Activities for assessment on the priority sites can begin immediately, following the proper permitting. There is no foreseen displacement of residents or businesses in the remediation and redevelopment activities. The remediation of the priority Brownfield sites noted above will eliminate public access to hazardous materials, asbestos, and lead paint, and address heavy metals and volatile organic compounds in soils and groundwater, mitigating pollution to the Taunton and Mill Rivers. The assessment will allow the City to identify and eliminate inflow and infiltration (I&I) sources into the municipal sewer system in accordance with MA 314 CMR 12.04(2), the state law governing wastewater treatment and discharge standards. In addition, the assessment and clean-up of these priority sites will help eliminate hazards that are contributing to ozone depletion in the area. This reduction in ozone levels that protect the Earth’s surface also exposes our residents and community investments to the harmful effects of the sun’s UVB radiation.⁶ By cleaning the priority sites, we will help the local ozone heal and protect residents and economy from any additional burdens caused the COCs.

In the long term, the potential reuse or rezoning of the priority sites in the target area for housing will make great strides in addressing the current shortage of affordable and market-rate rental housing in the region. The Master Plan notes that Taunton’s zoning codes in the last half century have discouraged the development of all housing types other than single family detached and that this has led to suburban sprawl and a shortage of quality rental housing in older, more walkable neighborhoods. Today, however, that trend is reversing, and many young adults and senior citizens are actively seeking residence in a walkable, urban settings. Fortunately, Taunton has the bones to accommodate this demand and is working to make adjustments so that the redevelopment of the priority sites in the Weir Village like Taunton Gas Works can capitalize on this emerging market.

To encourage this development, a 2013 city zoning ordinance change created incentives for the redevelopment of old mill buildings by offering a 15% density bonus for developments “on a brownfield site and/or the renovation and reuse of a building more than 50 years old”⁷. Rehabilitated or newly constructed properties including the priority sites in the target area will also be required to implement climate resilient building and redevelopment techniques particularly

⁶ <https://www.epa.gov/ozone-layer-protection/health-and-environmental-effects-ozone-layer-depletion>

⁷ City of Taunton Zoning Ordinance, Section 10.4.6: Development Density.

along the watershed of the Taunton River, which is susceptible to flooding from increased weather events. Redevelopment of these sites will also meet the MA Energy Code and will be encouraged to meet the LEED standards for energy conservation. In 2021, Taunton voted to adopt the state's Property Assessed Clean Energy Program, which allows property owners to finance solar and energy efficiency investments to existing commercial, industrial and multifamily buildings over twenty years through a betterment on their tax bill. This is a valuable tool available to developers and property owners in Taunton looking to make cleaner energy investments in their buildings and help combat impacts from climate change.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

Assessment of the target brownfields sites will provide key information necessary for determining the viability of private reinvestment. The City will utilize Assessment funding towards Phase I and II site assessments, cleanup and reuse planning, and the development of remediation plans to foster site cleanup and redevelopment. After assessments are completed, private developers would have a much better gauge on the cost of remedial action at each site, which will further entice the reuse of the target brownfield sites. Developers will also have the option of financing the cleanup with the City's available Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program income funds. To continue having a successful Brownfields RLF program, it's imperative to also have a successful assessment program to provide for the proper ongoing assessment, characterization, and cleanup planning of a site in support of ultimately completing remedial actions and redeveloping the Brownfields sites in our target areas; the two programs often run in tandem with one another in order to be successful and sustainable.

The City is currently engaged in MassDevelopment's Brownfields Program, where we are remediating another site for redevelopment into much needed housing units. Within the program, the City is eligible for \$250,000 of assessment funding and \$500,000 in clean-up. Mass-Development funding could also be utilized as gap funding for additional assessment and cleanup of our identified priority sites.

In addition, the city has a Housing Development Incentive Program zone which allows new market-rate housing developments in that zone to petition the City Council for a reduced tax rate on incremental increased value. An incentive used by the City in recent years for industrial development is Tax Increment Financing (TIF), where a developer petitions the City Council for a reduced tax rate for a fixed term of years on the increase in taxable value from their project. With EPA funds for assessment, the City would provide a transparent assessment of the brownfield condition that could be utilized to encourage and secure the commitments with private developers and further educate them on the full value/success of these supplemental funding resources. We will also continue to seek other funds, such as HUD, EDA, CDBG, historic tax credits, EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) program, and we will advocate for potential funding for developers/owners through federal, state, and local grants/loans.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure

Existing city infrastructure including public water, sewer, electricity and high-speed internet has the capacity to serve and is already available at all aforementioned locations and is sufficient to support the reuse of each property. The increased usage that will result from the reuse of these

sites will add more water and sewer ratepayers to the system as well as additional tax revenue for better upkeep of the existing infrastructure and roads that already provide access to each brownfield site.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. Community Need

i. The Community's Need for Funding

Compared to the state average, Taunton residents face a higher rate of poverty (13.5% v 10.4%) and have a lower median household income (\$66,787 v \$89,026).⁸ This economic disadvantage associated with low-income communities can result in “higher levels of violence, discrimination, and material deprivation—including the lack of housing, heat, water, and electricity. These communities have more environmental pollutants, under resourced schools, and higher rates of unemployment and incarceration.”⁹ In August 2023 that the unemployment rate in the Taunton-Middleboro-Norton area were in fact higher than the state (3.2% v 2.6%).¹⁰

If challenges of unemployment were not enough to impede income, Taunton is further restricted in its revenue-generating capacity by Proposition 2 ½, a Massachusetts statute which limits a municipality's ability to increase property taxes. The name of the law refers to the maximum 2.5% annual limit on the increase of both the levy limit and ceiling that the municipality is permitted. Most of the city's infrastructure and public buildings were constructed at a time before modern environmental protection and human accessibility laws were in place, rendering many of its facilities out of compliance with today's standards. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that public facilities be accessible to people of all abilities. The City has spent millions of dollars of its allotment of transportation funds from the state towards making repairs to all of its buildings, schools, and public properties to make them ADA-accessible. These mandatory expenses have detracted from the city's available road and sidewalk maintenance funds.

Since 2003, the City has completed at least one major I&I¹¹ reduction contract annually totaling over \$55M spent on I&I removal since that time. The City is currently under an administrative consent order from MassDEP and an order of compliance from US EPA, both of which mandate the City to reduce I&I in the municipal sewer system. It costs the City over \$500K per year to pump and treat I&I products, leaving little budgetary space for additional brownfield remediation.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Since the three priority sites are only 700 ft. from one another, a pin was dropped at the midway point using the EJSCREEN tool and a one-mile radius report was generated from that point (hereafter, referred to as the study area within our target area). According to EJSCREEN, census block 25005613902, exceeds the state average in 7/8 socioeconomic indicators. The number of children under age five in the area ranks in the 79th percentile of Massachusetts and the 74th percentile nationally. Another high indicator is limited English speaking households, which ranks

⁸ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MA,tauntoncitymassachusetts/HSG650221#HSG650221>

⁹ <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20180817.901935/#:~:text=The%20communities%20in%20which%20low,rates%20of%20unemployment%20and%20incarceration.>

¹⁰ https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ma_taunton_nd.htm

in the 83rd percentile in the US. The number of adults in the study area with less than a high school education as well as those unemployed are both overrepresented compared to state and national level. In addition to socioeconomic barriers, the target area contains 15 water dischargers, 17 air pollutants, 3 brownfields and 4 toxic release inventories that are report to EPA. Remediation of priority sites closest to the river a will protect water ways (natural resources) and mitigate human exposure, particularly vulnerable children, to identified COCs.

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

The City is designated as one of the higher risk communities by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)'s Childhood Lead Paint Poisoning Prevention Program. Of the 23,844 housing units in Taunton, 16,367 (71.5%) were built prior to the ban of lead paint (Census 2010). As a result, the state rate of elevated blood lead levels for children between 6 months and 5 years of age is 0.3, while the Taunton area rate is 0.4. The actual rate of lead poisoning cases for the same age group for the state is 0.3, while the Taunton area is almost three times higher at 0.8.¹²

According to the Morton Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) of 2021, lung cancer death was the highest level of mortalities compared to other types of cancer. MDPH Health reports indicate that between the years of 2008 and 2015, the City of Taunton has seen a significant increase in the expected and observed incidences of cancer. In particular, Thyroid cancer and lung and bronchus cancers¹³. Cyanide exposure (a target area COC) and Thyroid issues have been linked¹⁴ⁱ. Further air pollutants from such COC's could be linked to other air-related health concerns. A MDPH report states that as of December 2018, Taunton has an asthma emergency department visit rate of 97.2 for every 10,000 people, in comparison to the state average of 70.9. The prevalence of pediatric asthma in Taunton is 14.2%, above the state's 12.1%.¹⁵

The EJSCREEN report for the study area places it in the 96th state percentile for ozone pollution. The closest hazardous waste facility is 2 kilometers from the pin and the toxicity of wastewater discharge is overrepresented compared to both state and national averages. As previously mentioned, the remediation work on a different Weir site in the target area made evident the releases coming from this area are likely discharging into the Taunton River, which could result in various downstream pollution effects to residents living in the area. Remediating the hazards at the priority sites would reduce the likelihood of area residents exposure to toxic chemicals.

(3) Environmental Justice

(a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues

All of the priority brownfield sites identified in the target area are located in EJ areas based on income and the number of households that are of racial, ethnic or linguistic minority. This means that at least 25% of households in that tract earn 65% or less than the state median income and that 20% or more of households speak a language other than English. The residents of the Weir target

¹² Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Community Health Information Profile (MassCHIP), Kids Count Profile,

¹³ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/cancer-incidence-city-town-supplement>

¹⁴ <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=71&toxid=19#:~:text=Exposure%20to%20high%20levels%20of%20of%20the%20thyroid%20gland.>

¹⁵ Massachusetts Department of Public Health: Environmental Health Tracking. Community Profile for Taunton. Report created December 4, 2018. <http://www.mass.gov/dph/mattracking>

area face disproportionate environmental pollution issues. According to EJSCREEN, 11 out of 12 EJ indices exceed the state average and 8 exceed the national average, with air quality indicators being particularly high.

Assessing the priority brownfield sites will give the City an accurate picture of what the remediation costs would be, and is therefore, a critical first step in the remediation of these environmental justice areas. Cleaning these sites would make environmental conditions safer for residents who live nearby, as they may be currently exposed to contaminants in their soils, air, and groundwater. Yankee Chemical is located in 1% annual chance flood zones. Flood events, which are becoming increasingly more common due to climate change, heighten the risk of contaminants being released from these sites into the Taunton River and Cobb Brook; this risk would ultimately be eliminated following the proper assessment and cleanup of this site.

(b) Advancing Environmental Justice

Clean up of this area would provide residents with a safer environment to live, work and play. Individuals living in the Weir target area are already at a disadvantage due to poor diet, lack of access to services such as health care, transportation and opportunities for exercise via green spaces. By remediating the Weir Village, the city can help address the welfare of its residents.

b. Community Engagement

i. and ii. Project Involvement and Roles

- The Taunton Diversity Network, spearheaded by April Funches (tauntondiversitynetwork@gmail.com, 774-218-4657) will provide outreach to diverse and disproportionately impacted populations.
- Taunton Redevelopment Authority, spearheaded by OECD's Executive Director will help with for receiving, redeveloping, and selling real estate on behalf of City.
- Taunton Housing Authority's Residence Services Department (508-824-0315) Provide outreach to residents in public housing.
- Taunton River Watershed Alliance overseen by Joe Callahan, trwa_staff@verizon.net, 508-828-1101 Provide biological and environmental consultation regarding the rivers adjacent to both target sites.
- Barrett Planning Group LLC Judi Barrett, judi@barrettplanningllc.com (781) 934-0073 ext. 07 Ms. Barrett is currently contracted with the city for a housing production plan, we will consult for possible reuse of parcels for housing development

iii. Incorporating Community Input

Upon notice of award, a core team will be convened which will include OECD staff, the City Planner, a City Building official and representatives from the aforementioned partner entities. The core team will immediately look to plan and schedule a public meeting with a Zoom attendance option to present the grant guidelines and solicit feedback on priority brownfield sites for assessment activities. In addition, the City will offer a brief online survey to local residents that will request feedback on each of the priority sites. The meeting and survey option will be advertised by way of circulars posted at local shops and community centers, social media outlets, the City website, and formal notifications in the local newspaper. Notifications will be translated into Spanish and Portuguese and translators will be available at the meeting. As key milestones are reached, these items will be updated on the City website and various community partners will post

updates to their social media outlets. The OECD will further serve as the primary repository for all program documents related to the various sites.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task I: Cooperative Agreement and Oversight
<p>i. Project Implementation: Core team will be established where necessary and list of sites will be prioritized. OECD staff will begin procurement process for LSP/QEP. Formal site access agreements will be prepared by the City Attorney and authorized by the respective property owners, QEP will assist with quarterly MBE/WBE reporting, ACRES updating and maintenance. OECD staff and City attorney 58 hours at \$150/hour = \$8,700; Travel to 2 conferences @ \$2,925 = \$5,850; OECD supplies \$1,500; + QEP ACRES quarterly reporting, 8 quarters x \$650 = \$5,200 Total: \$21,250</p>
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: <6 months with continued ACRES updates</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: Executive Director, OECD</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: Authorization of EPA/Municipal cooperative agreements; prioritization of investigative priority list; procurement of QEP / LSP; preparation of quarterly reports.</p>
Task II: Community Engagement
<p>i. Project Implementation: OECD & QEP will host public forums to provide information and solicit comments about the identification, inventory, and prioritization of sites where assessment is needed. These events will be advertised in local newspapers, various social media outlets, and the City’s website. The City and QEP will create a Community Relations Plan (CRP) in conjunction with any remediation plan developed as a result of the assessment findings and redevelopment of the site. OECD staff 75 hours at \$150/hour = \$11,250; OECD supplies \$1,500; QEP @ \$700 x 4 forums = \$2,800 and \$1,900 x 7 CRP = \$13,300. Total: \$28,850</p>
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: <6 months</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: Grants Coordinator, OECD</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: Conduct meetings or attend community meetings in targeted neighborhoods to explain the assessment and evaluation process; record attendees and their input relative to identification, inventory, and prioritization of sites for assessment.</p>
Task III: Site Selection & Phase I & II Site Assessments
<p>i. Project Implementation: The City will ensure Phase I Site Assessments are conducted in accordance with the All Appropriate Inquiries Final Rule at 40 CFR Part 312. A Licensed Site Professional (LSP), the MA equivalent of a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), procured through a competitive bidding process in accordance with MA state law chapter 30B, will conduct Phase I environmental site assessments in accordance with ASTM E 1527-21 and EPA (all appropriate inquiry standards). This process will consist of site reconnaissance, contact with regulatory agencies, site review, interviews with persons knowledgeable of the site and prepare Phase I reports. Phase I reports will include a summary of recognized environmental conditions along with recommended Phase II activities. A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be prepared as necessary and submitted to EPA. The Phase II assessments are expected to include sampling and laboratory analysis of soil, sediment, groundwater, surface water, soil gas, indoor air quality where applicable and potentially hazardous building materials. OECD staff 178 hours at \$150/hour = \$26,700; OECD supplies \$1,000; The City estimates \$4,600 for a typical Phase I ESA (14 sites @ \$4,600/site = \$64,400) and \$32,100 for a typical QAPP/Phase II ESA (8 sites @ \$32,100/site = \$256,800). Total: \$348,900</p>

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: 1.5-2 year period to begin after completion of Tasks I and II.
iii. Task/Activity Lead: Project Manager, OECD
iv. Outputs: Completed Phase I & II reports for top target properties outlining specific contaminants found.
Task IV: Site Reuse and Cleanup Planning
i. Project Implementation: The Phase II data will be used to generate specific cleanup plans with integrated Analysis of Brownfields Clean up Alternatives for each targeted site, based on the specific or anticipated reuse of the property. Clean up plans will identify specific remedial actions necessary to address the environmental hazards encountered. A Market Study will also be conducted for the target area priority sites. OECD staff 40 hours at \$150/hour = \$6,000; OECD supplies \$1,000; The City estimates \$6,500 per site for remedial planning (7 sites @ \$6,500/site = \$45,500) and one Market Study @ \$48,500. Total: \$101,000
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 2-3 of grant performance period.
iii. Task/Activity Lead: Project Manager, OECD
iv. Outputs: An interactive plan for remedial activity including cost estimates based on the anticipated reuse.

b. Cost Estimates

<i>Budget Categories</i>	<i>Agreement Oversight Task I</i>	<i>Community Engagement Task II</i>	<i>Phase I / II Site Assessments Task III</i>	<i>Reuse / Cleanup Planning Task IV</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ 8,700	\$ 11,250	\$ 26,700	\$ 6,000	\$ 52,650
<i>Travel</i>	\$ 5,850	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 5,850
<i>Supplies</i>	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,000
<i>Contractual</i>	\$ 5,200	\$ 16,100	\$ 321,200	\$ 94,000	\$ 436,500
<i>Total</i>	\$ 21,250	\$ 28,500	\$ 348,900	\$ 101,000	\$ 500,000

Note: A breakdown of costs is presented in the task descriptions under 3.a. above.

c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

Our anticipated outputs will be technical and quantitative reports that will provide the City with the next steps to move these sites toward a remediation phase. Outcomes will include developer purchase of sites for cleanup and reuse. All data shall be entered into the ACRES reporting database as quarterly reports. The City will track the outcomes of these projects beyond the limits of the EPA Assessment grant by measuring and documenting increases in tax revenue, housing units, jobs created, and the development of open space. Additionally, progress will be measured and tracked through the approved work plan to ensure milestones are met.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPACITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability

i.-iii. Organization Capacity, Structure, and Key Staff

This grant will be managed through the City’s Office of Economic and Community Development. The current staff of five full-time employees have managed EPA Assessment and RLF grants for the City for over twenty years and multiple grant awards. Staff roles include Executive Director Jay Pateakos, Assistant Director Jim Howland, Grants Manager Heather Rios, Fiscal Manager Radka Barter, and Principal Clerk Tori Carter. This municipal department administers \$1.5 million

annually in HUD block grants as well as many state and federal competitive grants. The Executive Director will convene and drive the core team, the Assistant Director will oversee the Phase I & II assessments, the Grants Manager will file quarterly reports and the Fiscal Manager will perform the fund drawdowns. In addition to the departmental staff, the City has retained the firm TRC Environmental as its representative QEP to review all brownfields activities both public and private projects.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources

The City of Taunton has a dedicated Procurement Department that handles all bids and purchasing for the entire organization. This Department has standard operating procedures that conform to federal, state, and all applicable procurement laws and regulations. If additional resources are required, OECD staff will work closely with Procurement to obtain what is needed in an efficient and compliant manner.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

(1) Accomplishments

Using federal EPA grants, as well as HUD funding, state grants and municipal resources, the City of Taunton and its community partners have successfully completed site assessments of nine properties covering 30.32 acres. The City has assisted with a number of assessment and clean-up actions. Five (5) properties totaling 15.13 acres were completed through our RLF/Sub-grant program. The outputs/outcomes are accurately reflected in ACRES.

Examples of major clean-up projects include:

Nu-Brite Paint and Chemical Plant – City provided assessment and RLF sub-grant funding to our non-profit community partner The Neighborhood Corp to perform the assessment and remediation of the 2.7-acre site, resulting in the construction of eight affordable housing units.

Robertson on the River Mill – The City provided assessment and RLF sub-grant funding to the non-profit Neighborhood Corporation to clean and redevelop the 6.6 acre former Robertson Curtain Factory site, resulting in the development of 64 affordable residential units and 18,000 square feet of commercial space for small businesses.

F.B. Rogers Silver Mill – The City, using EPA Assessment, RLF loan funding and other state/municipal funding sources performed the demolition and cleanup of the 2.26 acre site along the Wild & Scenic Taunton River resulting in the development of the Weir Village Riverfront Park.

(2) Compliance with Grants Requirements

Taunton has been in full compliance with current and past work plans, submitted quarterly reports, financial status reports, and property profile forms to our EPA Project Manager and completed Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) and, the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system reports on a timely basis. Our previous compliance with four Revolving Loan Fund awards (*BF 97180001*: totaling \$2,300,000) and one Assessment for Hazardous Substances award (*BF 00A00083*: \$200,000) can showcase Taunton's ability to successfully implement and close an award in line with standards set by the EPA and other stakeholders.

ATTACHMENT A

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

**City of Taunton, Massachusetts
EPA FY2024 Brownfields Assessment Grant Application**

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Taunton, Massachusetts (City) is a municipality (General Purpose Unit of Local Government) eligible to apply for Brownfields Assessment funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Grant Program.

2. Community Involvement

Upon notice of award, a core team will be convened which will include OECD staff, the City Planner, a City Building official, QEP, and representatives from the partner community organizations. The core team will immediately look to plan and schedule a public meeting with a Zoom attendance option to present the grant guidelines and solicit feedback on the priority brownfield sites identified for immediate assessment activities. In addition, the City will offer a brief online survey to residents that will request feedback on each of the priority sites and gain an understanding of what members of the immediate neighborhood would like to see. The meeting and survey option will be advertised by way of circulars posted at local shops and community centers, social media outlets, the City website, and formal notifications in the local newspaper.

As key milestones are reached, these items will be updated on the City website and various community partners will post updates to their social media outlets. The OECD will further serve as the primary repository for all program documents related to the various sites. The City of Taunton will also hold periodic public meetings (in addition to regular Town Council meetings) during the grant period regarding the progress or status of the assessment grant activities. At these meetings, we will provide general information on the Brownfield program (initially related to our Priority Sites), solicit comments and feedback from the public, and respond to any public comments which have been received. Written responses to questions will be assembled and posted on the City's website and will be distributed with other community outreach materials such as tri-fold brochures and handouts, as necessary. Public meetings will be held at the City Hall and/or via Zoom teleconferencing.

We will also communicate the progress of our Brownfield assessment program to citizens through regular status updates, which will be available on the Town's website; will make meeting minutes and responses to public comments publicly available; and will prepare press releases, legal ads, and other public notices, as needed. Notifications will be translated into Spanish and Portuguese and translators will be available at the meeting. Translated paper copies will be available through community partners such as the Taunton Housing Authority and the Taunton Diversity Network. Taunton and its partners are also prepared to use Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants fact sheet (August 2020) as a resource for alternatives to face-to-face meetings (e.g., Zoom meetings, conference calls, QR codes, flyers, local TV, phone, and radio).

3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

The City of Taunton affirms that it does not have an active U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not applicable. The City chooses not to name procurement contractors, consultants, or subrecipients as part of this application. The City will select contractors in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, and the EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements. We do not anticipate subrecipients as part of this grant.