



-THE CITY OF-
EASLEY
SOUTH CAROLINA

R04-24-A-033

1. Applicant Identification
City of Easley, South Carolina
205 North First Street
Easley, SC 29640
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
3. Location
 - a) City of Easley b) Pickens County c) South Carolina
4. Target Area and Priority Site Information
 - Target Area: Census Tracts **45077010802, 45077010803, 45077010804, 45077010805, and 45077010806.**
 - Priority Sites
 - Magnolia Properties – 115 Folger Avenue, Easley, SC 29640
 - Custom Cleaners – 214 N. West Main Street, Easley, SC 29640
5. Contacts
 - a. Project Director
Mario DiPietro, City Planner
864-655-7900
mdipietro@cityofeasley.com
205 North First Street
PO Box 466
Easley, SC 29640
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
Butch Womack, Mayor
864-655-7900
mayor@cityofeasley.com
205 North First Street
PO Box 466
Easley, SC 29640
6. Population
City of Easley, SC – 22,643 (US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey)



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7. Other Factors

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 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).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	3
At least 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area.	N/A
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing.	N/A

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

9. Releasing Copies of Applications
 Not Applicable.



November 3, 2023

Sara S. Janovitz, Manager
Brownfields and Land Revitalization
United States Environmental Protection Agency
61 Forsyth Street S.W. 10th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

RE: EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant
City of Easley, South Carolina

Dear Ms. Janovitz:

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the State's environmental authority, acknowledges and fully supports the City of Easley's application for a Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant. The funding will focus on redevelopment of Brownfields properties in the downtown area.

The Department appreciates your consideration of the application and hopes for a favorable outcome. Your positive response will assist the City in its efforts to revitalize properties in the community. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Robert Hodges, member of my staff at (803) 898-0919 or hodgesrf@dhec.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

Henry J. Porter, Chief
Bureau of Land and Waste Management

cc: Elizabeth Basil, BEHS
Robert Hodges, Manager, Brownfields Program



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: The City of Easley (City), chartered in 1874, is in the heart of upstate South Carolina. With a population of 22,643,¹ residents and businesses alike find Easley a prime location to live, work, and play; however, such growth from humble beginnings has not come easy. The textile boom created a thriving Main Street and a railroad corridor with many manufacturing opportunities, but as time went on, a majority of the South's textile manufacturing left the country. Mills began to close, jobs were lost, and properties were left vacant. Presently, with tremendous growth potential in the region, City leadership recognizes an opportunity for revitalization unlike any it has had in the past. But this opportunity is dependent on addressing brownfield challenges.

With the loss of the textile industry along the railroad, blighted properties are plentiful and inhibit redevelopment efforts. The **geographic boundary** for this grant application is the city limits of Easley with a **target-area focus** on the **downtown Easley area**, which includes sites located along the **Railroad Corridor and Doodle Trail Corridor** (Census Tracts [CTs] **45077010802, 45077010803, 45077010804, 45077010805, and 45077010806**). Two **Justice40 Disadvantaged CTs** are located within the target area. The **Railroad Corridor**, located along an active rail line, has several properties in need of assessment so the City can move forward with planned redevelopment of three sites located in the heart of the downtown area. The **Doodle Trail Corridor**, a Rails-to-Trails project within Pickens County, has several priority sites located within feet of the multiuse trail where visitors of all ages partake in outdoor recreation activities. The environmental stigma associated with the sites is a hindrance to the redevelopment of the area. The City's prior EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant had successfully established a strong Brownfields Program and has made significant progress towards addressing the City's Brownfields problems, assessing over 44 acres, with 16 acres ready for reuse or actively being redeveloped; however, **over twenty sites still exist in the target area that present brownfield challenges due to perceived environmental impacts**. Several sites have received Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) during the previous grant and are awaiting Phase II assessment. Therefore, another EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant is needed to continue this successful Brownfields Program and help the City achieve its redevelopment goals. Once assessment and cleanup of brownfield properties takes place, **redevelopment of these sites will create opportunity for affordable housing, new businesses, better access to jobs, and extension of multiuse trail systems**, assuring a bright and prosperous future, free of blight, for generations to come.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The City estimates up to 20 additional brownfield sites need assessment in the target area. These properties could pose a serious health **risk due to potential contaminants like petroleum products, volatile organic compounds, asbestos, lead-based paint and others** to residents and visitors of recreational areas such as the Doodle Trail. The priority brownfield sites include **Custom Cleaners and the Magnolia Properties**.

Magnolia Properties – 115 Folger Avenue: One block from historic Main Street in the Railroad Corridor on approximately **8 acres** sits a **former metal plating facility** (Palmetto Plating) that operated from the early 1980s through October 2022 and is currently vacant. Former operations at the site include electroplating, anodizing, and coloring/finishing of metals and formed products. A spur of the Doodle Trail (which connects a former textile mill recently revitalized into apartments to dining/retail and the main Doodle Trail) adjoins the site and puts trail patrons within proximity of potential contaminants. Contaminants associated with this type of industry include **petroleum products, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semivolatile**

¹ US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey (ACS)

organic compounds (SVOCs), and heavy metals. The City’s redevelopment plan for this site is to create a **multipurpose development that complements the downtown** area with townhomes, apartments, shops, and restaurants.

Custom Cleaners – 214 N. West Main Street: This site is located on **0.3 acres** in the heart of the historic Main Street, developed with a **3,764-square-foot** 1940s-era building. A dry-cleaning facility has operated in the building since 1942. Due to the historic use of chlorinated solvents, the environmental stigma surrounding dry cleaners is highly negative, especially for a dry cleaner that has operated in the same location for over **80 years** as this one has. Common contaminants of concern associated with this type of property include **chlorinated solvents and asbestos**. The City envisions redeveloping the site and the surrounding City-owned properties into a **new municipal complex**.

iii. **Identifying Additional Sites:** During the FY19 Assessment Grant site inventory, 26 target-area properties were identified that have yet to be assessed. These sites include former textile mills, fuel distributors, a concrete plant, a drycleaner, an auto-body service shop and a farm supply store. In addition, during the FY19 grant an evaluation ranking tool was created to determine the order in which sites would be addressed based on redevelopment plans and US Census data showing the financial need. Once the target-area sites have been completely addressed, abandoned and underused properties identified by the residents throughout the geographic boundary will be researched further by City staff using Pickens County’s GIS website. Once a list is compiled, the environmental contractor (EC) will work with City staff and residents to determine the order in which the sites will be addressed. Additional sites will be identified and prioritized during a thorough site inventory process involving community partners and residents with an emphasis on the **Justice40 Disadvantaged CTs**.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area i. **Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:** With the City’s prior Brownfields Assessment Grant acting as a catalyst, the City has made strides in revitalizing the historic downtown and the Railroad Corridor. But the problem of vacant and underused properties persists. Successful redevelopment must start with a plan that reflects current City conditions and addresses residents’ concerns. The City created the **2022 Comprehensive Plan** to focus on several **Core Values**. The first of the core values is **Strong Sense of Community**, with concern that projected growth could threaten this quality. The community has expressed both its strong family-friendly values and a desire to embrace and preserve Easley’s history. The second core value is **Diversity**. With this core value the City will seek to make decisions that “include as many voices and perspectives as possible to ensure outcomes that are more equitable and just.” The third core value is **Resourceful**, in which the City will strive to make the most of its greatest strengths and assets and encourage growth that respects and builds from our assets while helping to achieve progress. The final core value is **Connectivity**. This core value reflects the City’s desire for a transportation network that accommodates all users and modes of transportation; it includes facilities for safe walking and biking, for transportation and recreation. The City will build upon these **Core Values** as defined in the Comprehensive Plan to develop a **Brownfields Revitalization Plan**. The creation of such a plan would ensure the City has a firm foundation on which to continue their success in championing brownfields revitalization. This plan will couple the vision of the City with the input of the community to take actionable and feasible steps toward spearheading redevelopment in the target area.

These core values in the **2022 Comprehensive Plan** align with the City’s goal of implementing a successful Brownfield Program. The reuse plans for the **Magnolia Properties** site are to redevelop the site as townhomes, apartments, shops, and restaurants. With a planned affordable

house component, this site reuse will help meet future demands and uplift the **underserved** population within a **disadvantaged CT**. This site will foster the value of **Strong Sense of Community**, where the residents of Easley can find a place to “Live, Work, and Shop.” The **Diversity** value is fostered by bringing affordable housing to the target area. The **Connectivity** value aligns with the extension of the Doodle Trail spur along the site boundary, where community members can walk, bike, and run. The **Custom Cleaners** site-reuse plan to develop the site into a municipal complex aligns with the **Strong Sense of Community, Diversity, and Resourceful** values. Redeveloping the site into a municipal complex will centralize all the City’s departments under one roof, allowing the City to more efficiently serve the community especially for transportation-challenged citizens who need City services.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The assessment and remediation of brownfield sites throughout the city limits will further the City’s redevelopment goals by removing blight and negative environmental stigma and by encouraging business development, bringing the much-needed boost to the economy the locals have been waiting for since the mill closures. A **Brownfields Revitalization Plan** will assist the City in reaching the redevelopment goals and finding solutions for the displacement of its businesses and residents throughout the process.

Site reuse plans will have a strong positive impact on quality of life (**noneconomic benefits**) for the **underserved** community, including the addition of affordable housing, access to trails and green space, as well as walkability to local employment and nonprofit services. Redevelopment plans for the **Magnolia Properties site, including the extension of the multiuse trail, townhomes, apartments, shops, and restaurants, directly aligns with the City’s Strategic Objective** and will benefit all residents by creating a safe environment for a healthy lifestyle. **Economic benefits** include the creation of jobs and an increased tax base. New businesses will form, increasing revenue and taxes in the area, which will help fund future redevelopment.

Redevelopment at the priority sites (retail and restaurants at the Magnolia site) will bring an **economic benefit of new jobs for this low-income, sensitive population, thus addressing the issues of low income (high/persistent poverty) and high unemployment** and stimulating income for target-area **residents and businesses**. In addition, the City will work with developers to ensure incorporation of **energy-efficiency measures** into the redevelopment designs to promote sustainable redevelopment. Developments like the Magnolia site will have both an **economic and noneconomic benefit**, with a **reduction of the carbon footprint** as well as the **reduction of energy cost** that can burden low-income residents, while simultaneously helping with climate mitigation. The proposed redevelopment of the **Custom Cleaners** site into a new municipal complex for the City will also incorporate energy-efficiency measures and **renewable energy sources**. The City will explore the option of **solar outdoor lighting** in addition to other **renewable energy** options throughout the redevelopment of the municipal complex and all redevelopment sites within the target area. “Green” energy savings will reduce operating costs and allow the City to better steward taxpayer funds (**economic benefit**). By exploring climate adaptation and mitigation capacity in each redevelopment, the City will create a better resilience to protect not only the community but also the future of their investments.

c. **Strategy for Leveraging Resources** i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City as a local unit of government is eligible to apply for county, state, and federal grant funding. Easley is making every effort to secure additional funding to further their Brownfield Program redevelopment goals and is currently pursuing the following funding opportunities:



	Agency	Funding Purpose
Federal	Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (up to \$500,000)	Demolition of remediated brownfield sites, contribution to affordable housing initiatives, expansion of housing opportunities (Magnolia priority site), and infrastructure upgrades.
Federal	EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant (up to \$2,000,000)	Funds the cleanup of brownfield sites throughout city limits.
State	South Carolina’s (SC) Brownfield RLF	Via the Catawba COG to fund the cleanup of brownfield sites throughout the city limits.
State	SC Recreational Trails Program (up to \$100,000)	Multiuse trail creation throughout the city limits (Magnolia priority site).
State	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) Brownfield Voluntary Cleanup Program	Encourages developers to utilize brownfields sites through tax incentives, credits, or exemptions.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The City intends to redevelop using existing infrastructure (roads, power, water/sewer) within the target area and at the priority sites. Interested developers wish to maintain the history of several of the brownfield properties in need of assessment and remediation and will repurpose existing structures and contribute to on-site infrastructure upgrades as needed. The planned trail additions throughout the target area will use existing sidewalk infrastructure and railroad right of ways that are no longer in use. In the event existing infrastructure needs repair or to be replaced, the City will look to state funding sources.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **Community Need** i. The Community’s Need for Funding: Blighted properties at the center of small mill villages are desolate reminders of the greatness that was but is no longer there. Unemployment is a stark likelihood here. Some communities rise above unemployment woes, but others struggle for generations to break the cycle of poverty. The **low-income** communities throughout the target area are not the exception; they show a significant need for redevelopment. The five target-area CTs have an **average per capita income of \$34,252 and median household income of \$50,704**, which are less than the **national averages (\$37,638 per capita; \$69,021 median)**.² The **Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)** indicates two of the target-area CTs (45077010801 and 45077010803) are considered **Justice40 disadvantaged areas** and are in the **81th percentile for low income**.³ Additionally, **the poverty level for all people (13.1%) in the target area is higher than the City (11.8%), which demonstrates the need to enhance quality of life for residents**. The City strives to operate within a balanced budget and therefore has no surplus funds available for assessing brownfields sites. The City’s budget for FY2022–2023 already allocated nearly \$2,000,000 from the general fund for many needed capital improvements. Furthermore, the City is keeping a close eye on inflation and recommendations to add an extra \$100,000 to the budget to cover rising fuel costs. While the City did raise the millage rate to 66.5, it avoided raising the millage to a revenue neutral rate of 70 because that amount would overburden taxpayers on fixed incomes. Low income and high poverty make it impossible for residents to afford tax increases to fund redevelopment projects, but with the help of the EPA Assessment Grant funding, the City’s planned redevelopment can prosper.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Within the target area, the **sensitive populations include *the impoverished, minorities, and elderly***. The target area has a higher population of **people with income below the poverty level (13.1%)** than the City (11.8%) as well as a higher **African American (12.2%)** population than the county (6.4%) and a higher **Hispanic/Latino (9.6%)** population than the City (4.6%) and county (4%).² The

² US Census: 2017–2021 ACS

³ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov>



percentage of residents age **62 years and over (21.6%)** is also higher than the national average (19.7%).⁴ Two of the census tracts within the target area are **disadvantaged** census tracts that rank in the **81st percentile** for low-income and **71st percentile** for unemployment.⁵

Welfare issues such as blight, substandard housing, and crime abound within the target area. As the population of the upstate continues to grow, the need for **newer and more affordable housing is crucial**. Currently within the target area, **10.5% of homes are vacant** and **43% of all homes were built before 1979** (before the 1978 federal lead-paint and 1989 asbestos bans took effect).⁴ Many target-area homes are located in the “mill hill” areas of the City and are in desperate need of repair. After years of poverty and neglect caused by the mill closings, many **underserved** residents end up abandoning their homes, adding to the blight problem. Compounding the issue, the two disadvantaged target-area CTs rank in the **97th percentile** for **lack of indoor plumbing**.⁵

Vacant and blighted properties throughout the target area create potential for illegal activity, causing concern for community safety. In 2021 **Easley’s violent crime rate was 4.3 per 1,000 residents, with a property crime rate at 36 per 1,000**.⁶ Theft within the City is a huge problem, with a rate of **30 incidents per 1,000, more than two times more** than the national average of 14.⁶ The City’s police department is certain, however, that crime will be mitigated when brownfield sites are assessed, remediated, and redeveloped. **By identifying and reducing blight and threats of crime**, residents will spend more time walking throughout the target area to schools, parks, churches, and their places of employment. **Redevelopment of potential brownfield sites** within the target area will not only address the crime issues but will also create an environment that **will improve the local economy, increase the availability of affordable housing, and promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging physical activity on multiuse trails** for generations to come.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Brownfield sites and the potential for contaminants on those sites are concerning, especially when the contaminants can affect the health of sensitive populations. **The EJ Screen Report for cancer risk** places CT 45077010804 in the **90th percentile in the US**. Pickens County ranks **fourth for all cancer incidences in the state**,⁷ and the Upstate ranks as the **third highest region in the state for minority cancer mortality rates**.⁸ In Pickens County, **lung cancer** was the most common cancer diagnosis and the **leading cause of cancer death** from 2012 to 2016.⁷ According to the **EJ Screen**, CT 45077010803 is in the **82nd percentile for asthma** and CTs 45077010805 and 45077010806 are in the **75th percentile for asthma**. Furthermore, residents living in CTs 45077010805 and 45077010806 are in the **95th percentile for low life expectancy** according to CEJST.

The need for affordable housing in the target area exacerbates the health issue caused by **lead-based paint (LBP)**. The target area is in the **77th percentile** in the state for the **EPA EJ Screen Report Lead Paint Indicator**. **LBP** exposure can cause many health effects such as poor brain development, kidney damage, birth defects, and fertility issues, and is known to be a cancer-causing agent, as well as being linked to asthma.⁹ **Substandard housing** impacts the sensitive population’s ability to find safe housing free from **LBP**. Potential contaminants such as **petroleum (gasoline, heating oil, diesel, coal), chlorinated solvents, heavy metals, lead paint, and asbestos** from the priority sites that plague this underserved community are contributing factors to these health issues. Assessing and remediating brownfield sites will mitigate these serious health

⁴ US Census 2017–2021 American Community Survey

⁵ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov>

⁶ Neighborhood Scout: <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/sc/easley/crime#data>

⁷ SCDHEC Pickens County Cancer Profile <https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Pickens%20Cancer%20County%20Profile%202019.pdf>

⁸ SCDHEC Upstate Region Cancer Profile <https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Upstate%20Region%20Cancer%20Profile%202019.pdf>

⁹ Protect Your Family document: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/documents/lead-in-your-home-portrait-color-2020-508.pdf>



concerns affecting this underserved community by **identifying and removing potentially life-threatening contaminants and redeveloping blighted structures.**

(3) Environmental Justice (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: Easley's **disadvantaged** populations within the target area, suffering **low income (81st percentile in US)**¹⁰ **and substandard housing**, have yet to experience the benefits of the economic growth sweeping through upstate South Carolina. Within the target area, including the area of both priority sites, the **CEJST has designated two CTs as Justice40 Disadvantaged CTs**. This is due in part to the negative environmental consequences resulting from the past activities and practices of textile and manufacturing operations. This impact is evident by the **low per capita income of \$34,252**.¹¹ The historical waste-and-solvent-disposal practices of the textile and manufacturing industries, notoriously known for “back door” or on-site disposal practices, have created environmental issues affecting the sensitive populations. These past industrial practices are causing a **disproportionate environmental stressor burden and high cumulative impacts** for families, especially the youth in the surrounding mill villages who live and play in areas where toxic chemicals have seeped into the ground and have been carried throughout the area by groundwater and soil vapor. With the target area being in the **EJ Screen's 84th percentile for Wastewater Discharge Indicator and 67th percentile for Superfund Proximity** for the state, this is a cause for concern. With the environmental justice (**EJ**) issues such as **low-income, high unemployment, substandard housing, and distressed neighborhoods**, the effect of the environmental issues on the target area and the **underserved** residents have taken a toll. With the help of a Brownfield Assessment Grant, the City will be able to continue to reduce the EJ issues facing the **disadvantaged** community.

(b) Advancing Environmental Justice: The proposed reuse of the priority sites as **retail, affordable housing, and a municipal complex** will enhance the health and wellbeing of residents and remedy many environmental and socioeconomic justice issues affecting the **underserved** community in the target area such as **high housing cost burden and substandard housing, low income, high/persistent poverty, and high energy cost burden and low energy access**. The negative environmental consequences and threats will be reduced and, in some cases, reversed upon the identification, assessment, and remediation made possible by the EPA Brownfield Grant funding removing the unknowns and bringing new life and business opportunities to the area. The EPA Brownfield Grant Program will help the City reduce the **EJ issues** plaguing it and align with the **Justice40 initiatives** by addressing **low-income issues, high unemployment, and distressed neighborhoods** and creating a safe, prosperous community that will benefit this **disadvantaged** community for generations to come. In addition, the proposed reuse of the target sites will help residents' health and wellbeing and remedy the many environmental and socioeconomic justice issues affecting the disadvantaged/underserved community.

Displacement of businesses may result from the proposed plans for the Custom Cleaners site. For the Custom Cleaners, the City will work with the property owner to settle on a fair market price to purchase the property. The City will also assist the owner of Custom Cleaners to find and relocate to another property within the downtown Easley area. The displacement of residents caused by the redevelopment of priority sites will be minimal to none.

b. Community Engagement i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: The following have been identified by the City as project partners who will assist in the process of site selection and prioritization, cleanup, and future redevelopment of the priority brownfield sites.

¹⁰ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>

¹¹ US Census: 2017-2021 ACS



Name of Org.	Point of Contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Easley Chamber of Commerce	Cindy Hopkins: chopkins@easleychamber.com	The Chamber of Commerce plays an important role in helping build and maintain a positive business climate for the Easley area. They will assist local businesses with fundraising and inform local businesses of project status.
Downtown Easley Business Council	Tara McMullen: ecc@easleychamber.org	The Council supports all businesses and community members with a focus specifically on downtown Easley. They will assist with property identification and prioritization of sites for assessment .
United Way of Pickens County	Neal Collins: [REDACTED]	This nonprofit fights for the education, financial stability, and basic needs of every person in our community. They will help engage legislative bodies regarding future reuse of properties and education for the public.
School District of Pickens County	Karla Kelley: karlakelley@pickens.k12.sc.us	The school district is the public education provider for Pickens. They will host meetings and educational outreach .
Easley Presbyterian Church (EPC)	Dr. Bill Seel: bill@easleypresbyterian.org	This local church serves the residents of the target area (adjacent/walk distance to priority sites). They will assist with community outreach through the use of their facilities for public meeting for target-area residents.

iii. **Incorporating Community Input:** The City has a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) in place that was developed during the FY2019 grant. The City consistently includes residents in their decision-making processes. Leadership understands the importance of gathering public input when making changes within a community, as community buy-in is critical for redevelopment success. To share the progress of the Brownfield Program, the CIP will be updated to describe the planned community-engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Residents can review the CIP in City Hall. The City held council meetings to discuss brownfields initiatives and how this grant will help with the planned revitalization efforts. City staff will continue to solicit the community’s assistance for site identification during regularly scheduled City Council and target-area community meetings (in-person and online). The City will use the input and information gathered from the community meetings, project partner meetings, and vision sessions to advance the City’s Brownfield Program. All information gathered from concerned citizens, local organizations, and entities during community outreach will be presented at the quarterly Brownfield Project Team meeting and responded to within two weeks of the meeting. The City realizes that using multiple forms of media for communication is vital to success. The City will continue to use its municipal website as well as social media to share Brownfield Project information. In addition, a brochure explaining the project will be shared both online and throughout the community, being strategically placed at City offices and recreational facilities. Local media press releases will keep the community up to date on project milestones and events. City staff will also continue to provide brownfield information during regularly scheduled City Council and community meetings that will take place in the target area and online.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The City of Easley, SC, is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for community-wide assessment.

Task 1: Outreach	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The City’s Brownfield Project Director will update the FY19 Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental contractor (EC). City staff will lead the community meetings to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts), office supplies, and software to manage the grant.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP updated in 1st quarter. Community meetings held quarters 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, & 15. Website updated 2nd quarter. Outreach materials created in 1st quarter and posted throughout the grant.



iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Updated CIP, Brownfield Website, 7 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Summary of Community Meetings in EPA required Quarterly Reports.
Task 2: Site Inventory	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The City’s Brownfields Project Director will work with target-area residents during community meetings to update the existing site inventory for assessment. Once a list is compiled, the EC will work with City staff to utilize the existing evaluation ranking tool with the help of residents to determine the order in which sites will be addressed, with sites in underserved areas being prioritized.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in the 1 st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process that began with this application and continues throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List
Task 3: Assessment	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The EC will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting with the two priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which include the SS-QAPP. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval obtained.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Assessment activities begin 2 nd quarter and continue throughout the grant.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 18 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP, 10 Asbestos/Lead Paint Surveys including SS-QAPP, Site Access Agreements and Property Eligibility Determinations.
Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> For projects identified for cleanup, the EC will prepare the Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site appropriate remediation/reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The EC will assist the City in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions to be held for key properties. A planner will prepare a Brownfields Revitalization Plan.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes to begin in 6 th quarter and continue throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 4 ABCAs, 2 Vision Sessions, 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan
Task 5: Programmatic Support	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The City will procure an EC to assist with the Brownfield Grant Project. The City’s Brownfields Project Director will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. The EC will assist the City in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the four-year term of the grant. The City staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend four national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins 1 st quarter, and Quarterly Reporting begins 2 nd quarter and continues throughout the grant. Annual Reporting & Forms created in the 5 th , 9 th , 13 th quarters and final closeout.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 4 Annual Financial Reports, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period. Two staff to attend four conferences.

b. Cost Estimates: Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.* The budget for this project includes travel, supplies and



contractual costs only. **Of the budget, 66% will be spent on site-specific work through the Assessment Task. Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Updated Community Involvement Plan \$1,500 (15hrs x \$100), Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure, Social Media Posts \$2,000 (20hrs x \$100), 7 Community Meetings \$9,100 (91hrs x \$100; \$1,300/meeting). Supplies: Outreach Supplies (\$400/software, \$600/printouts) \$1,000. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: Brownfield Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool Creation \$4,000 (40hrs x \$100) **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 18 Phase I ESAs \$3,800 each for a total of \$68,400. 1 Generic QAPP \$5,000. 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$25,000 each for a total of \$200,000; 10 Asbestos/Lead Paint Surveys \$5,900 each for a total of \$59,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 4 ABCAs \$7,000 for a total of \$28,000. 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$10,000 (\$5,000/meeting); 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan \$75,000 (Planner: 149hrs x \$250; Market Analysts: 110hrs x \$125, Environmental Professional: 120hrs x \$200). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period \$25,000 (200hrs x \$125). Travel: Two staff to attend four conferences \$12,000 (\$1,500 per person per trip = flight at \$700, 3 nights in hotel at \$300 per trip, incidentals and 4 days per diem at \$125/day).

Category	Tasks					Totals
	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Site Inventory</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Remediation/Reuse Planning</i>	<i>Programmatic Support</i>	
Travel					\$12,000	\$12,000
Supplies	\$1,000					\$1,000
Contractual	\$12,600	\$4,000	\$332,400	\$113,000	\$25,000	\$487,000
Total Budget	\$13,600	\$4,000	\$332,400	\$113,000	\$37,000	\$500,000

c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule the City’s internal Brownfields Team, which will include the EC, will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a.** using an Excel spreadsheet and will report all progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the four-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and community partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs and cleanup redevelopment plans, including a Brownfield Revitalization Plan. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. If the project is not being completed in an efficient manner, the City’s has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The City will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer and if needed create a Corrective Action Plan to help the project get back on schedule.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii.

Description of Key Staff: The City operates under a Mayor-Council form of municipal government. The City has the organizational capacity to handle a project through the office of City Administrator with support by the City’s government officials (City Council) led by the Mayor. City Planner/City Engineer, **Mr. Mario DiPietro, PE**, will be responsible for day-to-day activities, timely and successful expenditure of funds, and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the project as the **Brownfield Project Director**. Mr. DiPietro has a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Northeastern University and has over 30 years of engineering and project management experience. He has been with the City of Easley as the City Planner/City Engineer since August 2022 and is responsible for planning, grant administration,

special projects, and community outreach. Prior to working with the City, Mr. DiPietro worked with several engineering firms in upstate South Carolina (since 1989). Assistant City Administrator **Mr. Tommy Holcombe** serves as the **Brownfield Project Manager** for the City's Brownfields Project Team, assisting Mr. DiPietro with the administration of the City's Brownfields Program. Mr. Holcombe has over 40 years of experience working in local government for the City of Easley. They will be assisted by the City's Finance Manger **Ms. Emily Lollis**, who serve as the **Brownfield Finance Director** and will be responsible for managing the finances and all drawdowns through ASAP.gov for this EPA Grant project. Ms. Lollis has worked with the City for over a year, is experienced with working in local government, and is proficient in the City's accounting software, online banking service, accounting, payroll, accounts payable, and reporting. An EC will assist with the technical portions of the Brownfield Project.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Using local contracting requirements and procurement process, the City will procure a qualified EC to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community Wide Assessment, in addition to any other contractors needed to complete the project. The City will ensure compliance with the EPA's "Professional Service" procurement process. The City has a system in place to appropriately acquire any additional expertise and resources (e.g., contractors or subrecipients) required to successfully complete the project via the city's Procurement Policy as defined in the City's Code of Ordinances. The City will make an effort to hire/procure local or minority/woman-owned businesses and local/minority/female individuals for opportunities in brownfields assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant (1) Accomplishments: The City of Easley was awarded an EPA Community-wide Assessment Grant in 2019 of \$300,000 to complete assessment activities on properties located in the downtown area along the "Railroad Corridor & Doodle Trail Corridor." The application's described goals were to assess and prepare sites in the community for redevelopment. These sites were the **Former Mayfair Mill, Former Getty's Middle School, the NE Main Street Property, West End Hall, Northview Property, and the Gulf Street Properties**. By the closing of the prior grant, assessment activities had resulted in the completion of Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) of eight sites, two Phase II ESAs (or equivalent), five asbestos and lead paint surveys, one asbestos abatement design, one wetland delineation, and two sites enrolled/applied in the state Voluntary Cleanup Program. **Forty-four (44) acres have been assessed and 16 acres have been made ready for reuse**. Two success stories of land ready use is the **Former Getty's Middle School** and the **Former Mayfair Mill**. The **Getty's** site has been redeveloped into a multifamily apartment complex, which provided much need housing for the area. The **Mayfair Mill** site has been slated for redevelopment in the near future as a mixed-use development that will bring both residential and retail opportunities to the underused site. The assessment provided through the grant was a major catalyst for these sites. Community members, City officials, developers, and real estate professionals were invited to a Brownfields Lunch & Learn that had nearly 15 attendees. Project outputs and outcomes have been recorded in the ACRES system and will continue to be recorded as additional progress is made.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements Easley has completed the project goals and milestones of the prior assessment grant, including the Work Plan and compliance with all terms and conditions. Quarterly reports and ACRES data entry were completed in a timely manner. The grant period began on October 1, 2019, with an end date of September 30, 2022; however, due to difficulties arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, an extension through September 30, 2023, was granted. **The grant was closed on September 30, 2023, with all grant funds expended.**



-THE CITY OF-
EASLEY
SOUTH CAROLINA

**City of Easley, SC
FY24 Brownfields Assessment Grant
Threshold Criteria**



Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The City of Easley, South Carolina, is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.
- b. The City of Easley, South Carolina, is **not exempt** from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement

The City has a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) in place that was developed during the FY2019 grant. The City consistently includes residents in their decision-making processes. Leadership understands the importance of gathering public input when making changes within a community, as community buy-in is critical for redevelopment success. To share the progress of the Brownfield Program, the CIP will be updated to describe the planned community-engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Residents can review the CIP in City Hall. The City held council meetings to discuss brownfields initiatives and how this grant will help with the planned revitalization efforts. City staff will continue to solicit the community's assistance for site identification during regularly scheduled City Council and target-area community meetings (in-person and online). The City will use the input and information gathered from the community meetings, project partner meetings, and vision sessions to advance the City's Brownfield Program. All information gathered from concerned citizens, local organizations, and entities during community outreach will be presented at the quarterly Brownfield Project Team meeting and responded to within two weeks of the meeting. The City realizes that using multiple forms of media for communication is vital to success. The City will continue to use its municipal website as well as social media to share Brownfield Project information. In addition, a brochure explaining the project will be shared both online and throughout the community, being strategically placed at City offices and recreational facilities. Local media press releases will keep the community up to date on project milestones and events. City staff will also continue to provide brownfield information during regularly scheduled City Council and community meetings that will take place in the target area and online. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City of Easley affirms that they do not have an open Assessment or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.