



1969 Central Ave., Lake Station IN 46405

R05-24-A-014

IV.D. Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification:

City of Lake Station
1969 Central Avenue
Lake Station, IN 46405

2. Funding Requested:

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$400,000

3. Location:

- a. City of Lake Station
- b. Lake County
- c. Indiana

4. Target areas:

- Central Ripley Corridor (CRC) – bordered to the north by E. 22nd St., to the east by S. Union St., to the south by Riverside Dr., and to the west by S. Parke St., the CRC covers an area of 0.35 mi² (CT #18089041700, #18089041800). The CRC contains numerous unattractive, shuttered, and underutilized commercial properties in our business district, expressed most dramatically in low-income and minority neighborhoods and mixed-use areas. Its high visibility due to its location near a major interchange at I-80/94 makes the CRC a natural “gateway” to our community. Unfortunately, that gateway does not currently portray an appealing image of Lake Station.
- Priority Sites:
Former Dry Cleaner, 2316 Ripley Street, Lake Station, Lake County, IN
Vacant Lot, 2334 Ripley Street, Lake Station, Lake County, IN
Vacant Lot, 3440 Central Avenue, Lake Station, Lake County, IN
Auto Repair Shop, 2497 Ripley Street, Lake Station, Lake County, IN
Gentlemen’s Club, 2491 Ripley Street, Lake Station, Lake County, IN
Former Auto Repair Shop, 2200 Ripley Street, Lake Station, Lake County, IN

5. Contacts:

- a. Project Director:
Mr. Chip Greenberg
Grants Administrator
219-973-1494
cgcatalyst@gmail.com
1969 Central Avenue
Lake Station, IN 46405

b. Chief Executive:
 Mayor Bill Carroll
 219-962-2081
bcarroll@lakestation-in.gov
 1969 Central Avenue
 Lake Station, IN 46405

6. Population:
 City of Lake Station, Lake County, IN – 13,292
 (2021 ACS 5-YR Estimates)

7. Other Factors:

Other Factors	Page#
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
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).	Page 2 Table 1
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	Page 2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Page 3
30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing.	

8. Letter from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana Brownfields Program (attached).

9. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not Applicable



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

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Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Brian C. Rockensuess
Commissioner

November 8, 2023

Mayor Bill Carroll
City of Lake Station
1969 Central Avenue
Lake Station, Indiana 46405

Re: IDEM Acknowledgement Letter
U.S. E.P.A. Brownfields Grant Proposal
Community Wide Assessment Grant
City of Lake Station
Lake County

Dear Mayor Carroll:

This letter is provided in support of the City of Lake Station (Lake Station) proposal to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) for Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant funding. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) acknowledges that Lake Station is requesting \$400,000 for hazardous substances and/or petroleum assessment.

IDEM understands that Lake Station has demonstrated its commitment to redeveloping brownfields by taking advantage of financial and technical assistance offered through the Indiana Brownfields Program (Program) and that Lake Station, based on the information it has provided with its request, believes it has the capability to perform the proposed grant-funded activities. The requested community wide assessment grant funding will help Lake Station with community outreach, evaluating and prioritization site inventory, conducting Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, and developing site-specific cleanup and reuse plans within the Ripley Street Corridor (RSC).

The City of Lake Station as identified the RSC as their target area in the community to be a focal point for environmental assessment based on need and development goals. The RSC represents a congregation of vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial sites near each other, areas in need of redevelopment, and businesses no longer in operation. Lake Station believes that this area represents the best opportunities for quality redevelopment, mitigation of potential health hazards, and value added to the community in terms of enhanced property values, residential and commercial development, and new jobs.

Since Lake Station has not yet selected/indicated the specific sites that will benefit from U.S. EPA brownfield grant funding, IDEM cannot make site-specific eligibility determinations at this time. However, should Lake Station be awarded the requested grant funding, the Program will work together with U.S. EPA and Lake Station to determine site eligibility once Lake Station has established the sites intended for funding.

IDEM has worked with Lake Station on several projects. IDEM recognizes that Lake Station is committed to working with the Program and/or the IDEM Voluntary Remediation Program for technical oversight of grant-funded site activities as applicable during the grant project period. The Program and IDEM are committed to continuing to support brownfield redevelopment within Lake Station by providing technical and other assistance through the Program.

Based on the information submitted, IDEM considers the City of Lake Station an excellent candidate to receive U.S. EPA assessment grant funding to continue its brownfields redevelopment efforts, which support Indiana's brownfields initiative. IDEM looks forward to continuing its partnership with Lake Station and its constituent communities. For further assistance, please contact John Morris of the Indiana Brownfields Program directly at (317) 234-0235 and at jmorris@ifa.in.gov.

Sincerely,



Andrea Robertson Habeck
Technical Staff Coordinator
Indiana Brownfields Program

ARH/JTM

cc: *(via electronic transmission)*
Mr. Len Hinrichs, BCA Environmental Consultants

1. Project Area Description & Plans for Revitalization, a. Target Area & Brownfields, i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area:

The City of Lake Station (city) is located in northwest Indiana in a highly urbanized region within commuting distance of Chicago located approximately 40 miles to the northwest. With a population of 13,292 (2021 ACS 5-Year Est.). Lake Station covers approximately 8.4 mi² and is near 3 major interstate arteries (I-80/94, I-90 & I-65) and several rail lines, including the South Shore Line, connecting Lake Station to surrounding communities in the Northwest Indiana region, Chicago, and Detroit. Although Lake Station is not a traditional “rust belt” city, we have historically depended greatly on industry in other nearby cities and towns to provide quality employment for our residents, over time, becoming a bedroom community for residents commuting to work locally at industries along Lake Michigan or in Chicago, East Chicago, Gary, etc. Unfortunately, as surrounding industry has waned since its peak in the 1950’s, our has experienced a steady decline in prosperity due to the transfer of manufacturing jobs overseas, increased automation, and the decline of the US steel industry on which Lake Station residents depended for employment and prosperity for so many years. Closures and manufacturing/service industry reductions at local facilities (US Steel, Arcelor Mittal, Cleveland Cliffs, Harsco Metals, Horseshoe Hammond, etc.), resulted in over 7,500 jobs lost in the last 15 years, devastating our community that has never recovered from deindustrialization that started in the 1980s and escalated after the 2008 global financial crash.

According to the 2000 and 2020 US Dec. Census, Lake Station’s population has diminished by 5% since 2000, due in part to job losses within the city and region, and residents relocating for better opportunities and an improved quality of life elsewhere. Additionally, 40% of the city around Deep River lies within the 100-year floodplain – making redevelopment of brownfields sites essential. As the city’s commerce has dwindled, much of the decline has centered on the downtown intersection of Ripley St. and Central Ave. **Left behind are dozens of brownfields throughout our downtown, totaling more than 20 acres of blighted/underutilized land, within or adjoining poor neighborhoods, resulting in a charmless strip of used car lots, liquor stores, boarded auto repair centers, and pawn shops.**

If awarded, Lake Station will utilize funding from this FY24 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant throughout the extent of our corporate limits. We have chosen our Central Ripley Corridor as our focus where EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding will have the greatest initial impact, and move these sites towards redevelopment.

Central Ripley Corridor (CRC) – bordered to the north by E. 22nd St., to the east by S. Union St., to the south by Riverside Dr., and to the west by S. Parke St., the CRC covers an area of 0.35 mi² and is located within Census Tracts (CT) 41700 & 41800. The CRC contains numerous unattractive, shuttered, and underutilized commercial properties in our business district, expressed most dramatically in low-income and minority neighborhoods and mixed-use areas. Its high visibility due to our location near a major interchange at I-80/94 make the CRC a natural “gateway” to the city. Unfortunately, that gateway does not currently portray a very appealing image of our community.

Residents living among brownfields in the CRC experience low income (Median Household Income (MHI) is 26% less than the US) and high poverty (44% higher than the US and IN). We also have a higher minority population, especially Hispanics (70% and 435% higher than the US and IN respectively) (see 2.a.ii)(2021 ACS). The financial challenges experienced by CRC residents have perpetuated a cycle of low-quality jobs; inadequate affordable housing; unhealthy nutritional options; insufficient park/recreational space; and poor community walkability, resulting in social and economic constraints that threaten their physical and financial wellbeing. We recognize the great redevelopment potential of the CRC and are making a focused effort to address priority brownfields (1.a.ii) and leverage additional funding for this hardest hit part of our community where redevelopment investment has the greatest opportunity for success. We are already working hard to repurpose and reshape the businesses and commerce of the CRC including: \$11.3M brownfield redevelopment of the Lake Station Municipal Complex; recent flood mitigation around Deep River; highway reconstruction (County Line Rd & Central Ave); and establishment of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district encompassing the CRC. We believe that strategic investment of EPA assessment funds will revitalize the CRC, making our downtown more attractive to new businesses, developers, visitors, and residents.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Table 1 presents our priority sites that offer the greatest opportunity to trigger successful reuse/resurgence in our target area. However, numerous other

brownfields are also present in the CRC. The historical/current uses, likely environmental issues, potential health effects from exposure to these sites, and planned reuses are listed below.

Table 1 – Priority Brownfield Sites and Impacts

Priority Site, Size, Proximity to Target Area Residents	Historic Use / Current Use & Condition / Planned Reuse	Suspected Contaminants*
2316 Ripley St - 0.5 acres in commercial area; 50 ft south of low-income residential; borders rail line	Former dry cleaner / Auto repair shop, poss. building reuse / Multi-tenant commercial	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, asbestos
2334 Ripley St - 0.49 acres in commercial area; 150 ft south of low-income neighborhood	Vacant land, adj. to former dry cleaner / Vacant lot / Commercial redevelopment	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs
3440 Central Ave - 1.2 acres in commercial area; 250ft south of low-income neighborhood Borders RR Track	Vacant land, adj. to former dry cleaner / Vacant lot - auto storage / Commercial or mixed-use redevelopment	VOCs, petroleum
2497 Ripley St - 3 acres in commercial area; 550 ft. from church; borders Deep River; floodplain	Auto repair / Underutilized / Greenspace or mixed-use redevelopment	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, asbestos
2491 Ripley St – 1.2 acres in commercial area; 400 ft. from church; borders Deep River; floodplain	Gentlemen’s Club / Underutilized / Greenspace or mixed-use redevelopment	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, asbestos
2200 Ripley St – 0.61 acres; adjoins low-income neighborhood; 750 ft. from school	Former auto repair / Vacant, possible building reuse/ Commercial or mixed-use	PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, asbestos

**According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the contaminants listed in Table 1 pose a real threat to human health. Health threats include damage to skin, liver, kidneys, heart, spleen; nervous, respiratory, hormonal, blood, & immune systems; may also cause neurological damage, birth defects and cancer (www.atsdr.cdc.gov).*

These sites are our highest priorities because they will meet immediate needs in the CRC, align with our revitalization plans, and redevelopment is imminent due to funding already committed (approximately **\$800K** from public investors). The investment to redevelop historic structures, residential/mixed-use commercial assets, and greenspace amenities on priority brownfield properties in the CRC and throughout Lake Station (we have an inventory of 15 brownfield properties) will serve as examples of success, triggering further investment. For example, the Dry Cleaner site potentially impacts the adjoining neighborhood with historical solvents or other industrial chemical releases. The city has plans to repurpose this site, removing the environmental and health threats and transforming it into a much-needed multi-tenant commercial development, bringing desperately needed high-paying employment to this part of our community (as specified in our Revitalization Plans (1.b.i)).

1.a.iii. Identifying Additional Sites: Our focus at the outset of this grant will be the CRC. If we complete assessment of all priority sites, additional sites will be identified using the brownfield inventory and community input and will meet the demographic and environmental justice conditions used to define our disadvantaged CRC (they will be in an underserved community or a disadvantaged census tract (as defined by EJScreen and/or CEJST).

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area, i. Reuse Strategy & Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Our 2019 Economic Development Plan and 2015 Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (Revitalization Plans) specify the CRC revitalization as a key initiative and outline critical infrastructure and renovations to transform the gateway of Lake Station at I-80/94 and enhance our role as a regional transportation/economic hub. This mix of brownfield to commercial/residential redevelopment and increased walkability/connectivity in the CRC will allow target area residents to live, work, shop, and recreate in their neighborhoods and throughout Lake Station.

Lake Station is requesting \$400,000 in grant funding, which is essential to complete environmental assessments of target area priority brownfields. The key to revitalization of our CRC and other portions of our community is brownfields reuse, for which this EPA brownfields grant is vital. These funds will help us reach redevelopment goals outlined in our Revitalization Plans, tackling environmental challenges associated with the highest priority sites within the CRC, triggering further environmental and redevelopment funding (1.c.i). Increasing our stock of owner-occupied, affordable housing and mixed-use commercial/residential properties near our commercial center will alleviate our housing shortage and aligns with our goal to increase the walkability/connection of our downtown to area neighborhoods. Revitalizing the former Auto Repair Shop (2497 Ripley St) and the adjoining Gentlemen’s Club (2941 Ripley St) to become a potential greenspace or community facility along Deep River, or mixed-use establishment, will connect our residents to nearby Riverview, Veterans,

and Bicentennial parks. Other plans are underway to revitalize the former Guys Garage (2220 Ripley St) into a mixed-use, residential/commercial property to revitalize the CRC and provide much needed housing and new commercial business. The revitalization efforts for our priority sites will create jobs, affordable housing, and walkable greenspace in the CRC, improving our residents' quality of life and meeting the vision outlined in our Revitalization Plans. Significant resources have already been pledged for reuse of CRC properties (1.c.i), including a leveraging commitment for intersection improvements at the Fairview Rd./Central Ave. intersection located in the heart of the CRC. With EPA funds to cover environmental assessment and planning costs, we will realize the outcomes and benefits outlined below.

1.b.ii Outcomes & Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Assessment and reuse of priority sites such as the former Dry Cleaner site (2316 Ripley St) will remove environmental threats, eliminate blight, reduce crime, and stimulate private sector investment in surrounding properties. This in turn will be linked to successful reuse outcomes, creating equitable, affordable housing; improving the economic competitiveness of our target area; leveraging current and future investments; and creating unique, healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods, particularly in the CRC, where the largest number of our low-income, minority, and other sensitive populations reside, supporting environmental justice goals. Reuse of brownfields will also generate higher tax revenue for the city, and through increased investment, new jobs will be created, new residential units will be constructed, and property values will rise. **Reuse/redevelopment of all Table 1 properties will create an estimated 125 construction jobs and 100 permanent jobs and will generate more than \$335K in annual income tax revenue, according to projections. Additionally, since these priority sites are in a designated Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, incremental increases in property taxes retained for redevelopment purposes by the city could generate up to \$425K in annual incremental tax revenue which will be reinvested in the CRC.**

During all phases of the revitalization process, we will promote/encourage the re-use of existing buildings and infrastructure, including implementing building codes that require or promote energy efficiency measures such as energy efficient lighting, low-flow showers/toilets, geothermal heating/cooling, etc. Residents will benefit from increased property values or may seek housing with energy efficiency and less maintenance costs. Addressing priority sites in the CRC will create affordable and sustainable housing, workforce development (new jobs), and remediate/reduce legacy pollution in areas with high concentrations of low-income residents. **EPA's investment in brownfields in the CRC will help meet Justice40 goals by creating energy efficient, sustainable development, conserving and preserving greenfields, reducing carbon emissions by enhancing our parks network, encouraging green transportation, and turning idled brownfields into new hubs for the growth of our economy. These accomplishments will deliver justice to disadvantaged residents (due to low-income, high minorities, distressed neighborhoods, disproportionate exposure to environmental impacts from brownfields, etc.).**

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources, i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The city has a history of leveraging investment in projects throughout the community. For example, over \$1.55M (82%) of the cost for a \$1.9M project to make significant sewer system improvements was leveraged from outside funding sources. **Lake Station has leveraged over \$5.3M in grant funding to improve streets, sidewalks, greenways, and other infrastructure over the past several years to help revitalize the community.** Our Redevelopment Commission currently has \$800k to invest in our city's redevelopment. The following are potential funding sources to tackle brownfields in our community:

- *Private Funding* – see above
- *City of Lake Station Tax Increment Financing (TIF)* -- Property tax revenue used to subsidize redevelopment, infrastructure, and other improvements. The Lake Station RDC has nearly \$1.5M to aid in the redevelopment of brownfields after properties are assessed.
- *EPA* - Additional EPA Assessment, Cleanup, and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to further the brownfield reuse goals of the city (\$300K-\$1M)
- *Federal Highway Administration* - Infrastructure improvements like streets & pedestrian/bicycle pathways (Est. \$5M+)
- *Indiana Economic Development Corp.* - Tax credits & other incentives to help communities create a climate where pressures from taxes, investment costs, & red tape are lower (Est. \$1M+)

- *Indiana Brownfields Program* - Low-interest/partially forgivable loans for brownfield investigation and cleanup through the EPA-funded Revolving Loan Fund (Est. \$1M)
- *Indiana Finance Authority* - SRF funding generated from an interest rate discount on wastewater improvement project loans. The savings realized through the rate reduction can be used to remediate brownfield sites (\$500K+)
- *Indiana Brownfields Program (IBP)*: Petroleum Orphan Site Initiative (POSI) funding may be used to complete the investigation of sites identified and partially assessed in this Grant and other sites in the target area (Est. \$75K)
- *Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs* – Main Street Revitalization Program (Est. \$500K); Blight Clearance Program for demolition of unsafe structures (\$500K)
- *Excess Liability Trust Fund* - State insurance funding for investigating and remediating eligible petroleum contaminated sites with underground storage tanks (up to \$2M)
- *Liability Insurance Funding* - Indiana courts have ruled that historical general liability policies must cover assessment and remediation costs on sites known to be contaminated. Using EPA Assessment Grant funding to demonstrate the presence of contamination will help trigger viable liability insurance policies to fund cleanup of environmental damages. The city will make efforts to apply this funding source to all eligible sites, including privately and municipally owned property (often \$1-3M/site). Insurance coupled with EPA assessment funding has been used on brownfields in many communities in Indiana, commonly leveraging hundreds of thousands, or even millions in assessment and cleanup funding.

A detailed funding plan will be developed for brownfield sites/areas as assessment projects progress, and each site will have a unique funding plan due to individual status and eligibility.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: Land use goals in our Revitalization Plans emphasize the build-out of existing parcels, and rehabilitation and infill development in our city's core neighborhoods in the CRC before additional land is considered for development. All priority sites have full utilities already present including 3-Phase electricity, natural gas, city water and sewer, telephone, and fiber optic service. Redevelopment will utilize these existing services and other physical infrastructure such as roads, curb cuts, on- and off-street parking, commerce (I-90, I-80/94, & US 6), and Lake Station's greenway trail systems to attract new investment in area brownfields, reducing redevelopment costs of these sites. Traditional transportation infrastructure will be complemented by pedestrian connectivity, bicycle improvements, and universal accessibility. Our utility infrastructure is large and robust enough to handle the added capacity and need brought by the planned redevelopment in the CRC. TIF funding is also available for infrastructure improvements in the target area. With revitalization ranging from mixed use commercial/residential to light industrial existing infrastructure will allow for easy access to developers and enable residents the opportunity to work and live in the same neighborhood.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement, a. Community Need, i. The Community's Need for Funding: The City of Lake Station needs EPA's financial assistance because we are a small community with many low-income residents and do not have the necessary funds for environmental assessments in our general budget (\$4.2M FY23) to address brownfields anywhere in our community, let alone in our target area. Indicators of need in the CRC are evident in numerous key economic-demographic factors: **MHI is \$50,852 (26% and 18% less than the US & IN respectively); poverty is 18.1% (44% higher than in the US & IN); and our Hispanic population is 30.9% (70% and 435% higher than the US and IN respectively)** (see 2.a.ii) (2021 ACS). The large number of vacant buildings on CRC brownfields has resulted in an estimated twofold increase in crime within the CRC compared to other parts of Lake Station (according to community estimates), further limiting local government resources due to additional public safety services (police and fire calls) to brownfield sites. Lake Station's priority brownfield sites further add to the financial burden of target area residents by suppressing residential property values and straining municipal budgets through a reduced tax base. **In addition, the loss of over 7,500 quality jobs (US Steel, Arcelor Mittal, Cleveland Cliffs, Harsco Metals, Horseshoe Hammond, etc.) in the region since 2008** (IN Dept. of Workforce Dev.), adds substantially to the economic challenges facing our city, diminishing local income and property tax revenues, and increasing poverty in our communities. With budgets barely able to provide essential services and needed infrastructure maintenance, Lake Station lacks the discretionary funds necessary to

complete the proactive assessment and planning activities that this grant will provide, including clarifying environmental issues on brownfield sites, encouraging developers to seek and invest in them, and eliminating risk to the health and wellbeing of our residents and environment. Ultimately, this EPA grant will allow Lake Station to fulfill the revitalization needs for our target area, creating unique, healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations, (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Our community’s most sensitive populations (low-income residents and individuals living in poverty, especially children & elderly) (Table 2) live in and around our CRC brownfield sites that are often unsecured, and trespassers (including children), risk exposure to toxic chemicals, asbestos, soil and groundwater contamination, and unsafe structures. Contaminants such as PCBs, metals, petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, glycols, lead paint, and asbestos are potentially causing harm to our sensitive populations. 85% of houses in the CRC were constructed before 1980, making them much more likely to contain lead-based paint, a significant threat to young children and pregnant women. **For example, the former Guys Garage (2200 Ripley St.), adjoining a low-income neighborhood, is potentially impacted with petroleum, VOCs, PAHs, metals, asbestos, and other contaminants that are known to cause various cancers, kidney diseases, asthma, and very low infant birthweight, all of which are experienced by Lake Station residents at higher rates than Indiana and the US (2.a.ii(2)).** The

Table 2	US ¹	IN ¹	CRC ¹
Median Household Income	\$69,021	\$61,944	\$50,852
Percent Hispanic	18.2%	7.1%	30.9%
Individuals Living in Poverty ²	12.6%	12.5%	18.1%
Children Living in Poverty ²	17.0%	16.8%	22.3%
Elderly Living in Poverty ²	9.6%	7.7%	12.1%
¹ Stats from 2021 ACS ² Last 12 months			

proximity of brownfields to low-income neighborhoods in our CRC drives down housing values, suppresses commercial investment, and limits residents’ access to adequate employment, resulting in a disadvantage for CRC residents with no relief in sight.

An infusion of funding from this EPA grant will provide much needed capital for the assessment of blighted properties, clearing the way for remediation and revitalization of the CRC to include much needed affordable housing, increased greenspace, and connectivity through our growing trail system. The resulting resurgence of commerce will support new and revitalized local retail businesses which in turn will boost local employment with quality diversified jobs. Redeveloping our brownfields will increase tax revenues which will directly benefit Lake Station’s underserved and sensitive populations, including removal of blight, reducing exposure to toxic chemicals, lowering crime, providing safer neighborhoods, and better access to public services, ultimately improving the health of our community.

2.a.ii(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Contaminants from target area brownfields are affecting the health of our residents. Many of the priority sites are believed to be impacted by PCBs, VOCs, PAHs, petroleum, metals, asbestos, lead paint, and/or other chemicals. Studies on the health effects of exposure to these contaminants has been linked to higher incidences of cancers, kidney disease, heart disease, diabetes, and infant birth issues. As Table 3 below shows, **Lake County has high incidences of cancers, kidney disease, ER visits for Children due to asthma, and very low infant birthweight, all potentially linked to impacts from nearby brownfields.** Though not available at the municipal level, this data is believed to be representative of our target area due to the large number of economically vulnerable people living in it.

Table 3 – Health Indicators

Disease/Health Condition ²	Lake Co. Rate	Rank ¹	Difference	IN Rate
Prostate Cancer	108.7 ³	8 th	21% higher	89.9 ³
Colorectal Cancer	49.1 ³	17 th	16% higher	42.4 ³
Kidney Disease	22.4 ³	9 th	29% higher	17.4 ³
ER Visits for Children due to Asthma	46.9 ⁴	9 th	28% higher	34 ⁴
Very Low Infant Birthweight	1.6 ⁵	15 th	19% higher	1.3 ⁵
¹ Out of 92 IN Counties ² 2016-21 IN State Dept. of Health Stats Explorer ³ Per 100K Res. ⁴ Per 10K Res. ⁵ Percent of Live Births				

There are 103 Lake Station properties with environmental records on IDEM’s Virtual File Cabinet (VFC) including 38 sites listed for leaking underground storage tanks in the CRC. The cumulative effects of

these sites likely contribute to the adverse health conditions impacting our residents. **Removal of sources of environmental contaminants on target area brownfields will reduce exposure of our underserved populations to these materials and in turn, reduce disproportionate incidences of disease and other poor health outcomes these residents currently experience.**

2.a.ii(3) Environmental Justice (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: The public health impact from CRC brownfields and industrial operations, and their proximity to our underserved populations, including low-income and minority residents, has disproportionately exposed them to environmental pollutants, resulting in an inability to maintain their health and wellbeing. EPA’s EJScreen tool indicates that CRC residents are in the 90th to 93rd percentile for Traffic Proximity/Volume; 81st to 86th percentile for Underground Storage Tanks; 76th to 81st percentile for Particulate Matter 2.5; and 77th to 80th percentile for Lead Paint compared to the US and IN. The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) identifies the CRC as Disadvantaged for 3 categories including: Health, Housing, and Transportation (low life expectancy, historic underinvestment, low income, and traffic proximity & volume). In addition, **Lake County ranks highest in Indiana for homicide rate (18.45/100K), double the US (7.77/100K) and nearly double that of IN (9.69/100K) (world life expectancy.com).** All the CRC priority brownfields sites in 1.a.ii are located within a disadvantaged CEJST census tract.

2.a.ii(3)(b) Advancing Environmental Justice: Brownfield assessment, cleanup, and reuse strategies will improve the welfare of our sensitive populations in the CRC by eliminating the health risks they pose, and this EPA grant will play a crucial role, reducing threats by funding environmental investigation work needed to trigger stalled cleanup and redevelopment on priority sites. New jobs in the target area will create gainful employment for residents, reducing poverty, minimizing displacement, and improving the state of our housing by redeveloping some sites as low-income residential. For example, repurposing the former dry cleaner (2316 Ripley St) and adjoining parcels (2334 Ripley St & 3440 Central Ave) will provide needed mixed-use commercial/residential development and provide greenspace as a gateway park in the community. Grant funds will assess lead-based paint, spurring other federal programs (e.g. CDBG) to help fund lead-based paint abatement and other residential improvements. Increased employment, higher wages, and new development on brownfield properties will create a sense of pride and ownership of the neighborhood, incentivizing investment in other area properties. New tax revenue will be generated and reinvested in the community. **Health indicators such as deaths from cancer and kidney disease, childhood asthma, and very low infant birthweight (2.a.ii(2)) will no longer be influenced by environmental impacts caused by CRC brownfields. This will be accomplished in areas where low income and minority populations are concentrated, supporting environmental justice for all Lake Station residents.**

2.b. Community Engagement, i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: Several community organizations have pledged support roles for our brownfields program and grant (Table 4). This diverse assemblage of community groups is well suited to engage the community and public at a grassroots level. They have regional influence and local ties, maximizing the benefits they bring to the project.

Table 4 – Project Partners and Roles

Partner Name	Point of Contact	Description and Project Roles
Lake County Economic Development	Tim Brown 219-755-3255 brownta@lakecountyin.org	Community business advocate - Provide meeting facilities, educate the public on brownfields & benefits of reuse, dissemination of information, assist with site selection
Little Calumet River Basin Dev. Comm.	Dan Repay 219-595-0599 drepay@littlcalumetriverbasin.org	Local sponsor for the Little Calumet River, Indiana Flood control and Recreational project - Provide information regarding brownfields reuse/redevelopment and will aid in site selection.
Habitat for Humanity Porter County	Dawn Michaels 219-531-0359 ed@nwhabitat.org	Local housing advocate - disseminate information regarding brownfield reuse; provide meeting space. They will be interested in any land we can free up for their residential builds.
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission	Kathy Luther 219-254-2513	Regional planning and workforce development organization -- site selection & prioritization; identify potential buyers; connect workers to job opportunities created by environmental

	kluther@nirpc.org	redevelopment and end use of brownfields
Lake County Housing Taskforce	Jean Ishmon 219-750-1206 jean@ishmon.com	Fair housing advocacy group committed to affordable housing – identify brownfield sites suitable for affordable housing; provide; disseminate information about the grant

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Lake Station has a culture of community involvement that we will maintain throughout this grant. **A total of 8-12 public meetings will be held during the 4 -year grant period** to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather input on site selection, prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from the cleanup and redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms (earned media and other low-cost, no-cost or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. In the event social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA’s Office of Land and Emergency Management *Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). The community will be updated on progress throughout the grant and will have the opportunity to share input through comment opportunities on city and community partner websites. For residents with limited internet or cellular network access, paper surveys will be available at local businesses, enabling community input without access to digital resources. The city has multi-lingual personnel available to advertise meetings, interpret presentations, or translate documents in Spanish or other languages as needed. We have already begun engaging CRC residents, business owners, not for profits, churches, and other community advocates to solicit their input regarding our brownfield project and will continue to do so during the grant period. A public meeting will be held in the first two quarters of the grant period to discuss the goals of the grant, initial planned activities, and a schedule for future community involvement. For subsequent meetings, personal invitations will be sent to residents directly impacted by priority sites, neighborhood groups, lenders, area businesses, and developers to maximize the engagement of these stakeholders. Regional developers will be contacted through the City Planning & Zoning Department, Plan Commission, and Northern Lake Area Chamber of Commerce to bring awareness of the redevelopment opportunities priority sites offer. When developers are identified, they will be invited to attend public meetings to describe their plans for reuse. As a project progresses, we will involve target area stakeholders in the decision-making process regarding site prioritization, assessment, site marketing, cleanup planning, and feedback on reuse. As stakeholder input is received, we will evaluate it against our development goals and available resources, adopting input that feasibly meets these criteria.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, & Measuring Progress, a. Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs: The city will begin activities immediately upon award confirmation, working to prepare a Work Plan approved by EPA’s PO. No subawards or participant support costs are planned. After the Cooperative Agreement period begins, Lake Station and its QEP will complete the following tasks:

Task /Activity 1: Program Management, Training Support, Brownfield Inventory/Prioritization

i. Project Implementation: City staff will travel to regional and national brownfields conferences/meetings, participate in calls, meetings, and correspondence between the city, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant’s Cooperative Agreement. We will complete Quarterly, DBE, Annual reports, and ACRES database entries. We will carefully track contractor costs, comparing to budget, expenditures, and project progress, to ensure that grant funds will be utilized within the prescribed 4-year project period. The city, with QEP support, will update its existing brownfield inventory to use as a tool to help accomplish reuse goals. Inventoried sites are prioritized based on the following criteria, in no order: 1) reuse potential, 2) potential for environmental or human health impact and environmental justice, and 3) community input. Additional sites will be identified by the city, community leaders, local governments, redevelopment investors, and through community outreach. Priority will be granted to sites within areas identified as disadvantaged by the CEJST and to sites near residential areas that pose health risks to an underserved community. Priority will also be considered for sites that have a higher chance

of redevelopment and a greater economic impact potential within our target area.

ii. Schedule: QEP selected through a competitive bidding process (compliant with federal procurement regulations - 2 CFR 200.317 - 200.326) before Cooperative Agreement period begins; correspondence will occur at least monthly (more frequently as specific project activities require) throughout the grant period; update and prioritize brownfield inventory the first 2 quarters, then as necessary for the remainder of the grant period; ACRES updates will be conducted at least quarterly throughout the grant period

iii. Task/activity Leads: Lake Station & QEP

iv. Output(s): Travel - city staff to regional/national brownfields conferences/meetings; prioritized inventory; project performance reports: 16 Quarterly Reports, ACRES entries, 4 MBE/WBE reports, 4 annual reports, etc.; calls, 8-12 public meetings to update communities on the brownfield program, and correspondence between the city, QEP, EPA, etc. to manage the grant's Cooperative Agreement.

Task/Activity 2: Environmental Investigation

i. Project Implementation: Prior to applying for site eligibility, an access agreement will be prepared and executed for each site being considered. Eligibility determinations will be completed under this task and the QEP will complete Phase I ESAs activities on sites selected by the city. All Phase I ESAs will be conducted by/in accordance with the applicable ASTM standard (E1527-21) and the All Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) rule. Areas of focus will include those already determined in the inventories as priority sites listed in Table 1. The QEP will prepare a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) as well as Sampling & Analysis Plans/Health & Safety Plans (SAPs/HASPs) for EPA approval. Once approved, the QEP, directed by the city, will complete Phase II ESAs based on environmental conditions identified in the Phase I ESAs.

ii. Schedule: Obtain site access, request eligibility determinations & finalize site access to initial sites for investigation-early 2nd Quarter of Grant period; Begin Phase I ESAs-2nd Quarter of Grant period; Submit QAPP to EPA for review/approval; QAPP approval & Phase II ESAs begin-3rd Quarter of Grant period; all Phase I ESAs completed-end of 15th Quarter of Grant period; all Phase II ESAs completed, and final contractor invoices submitted-45 days before end of grant period.

iii. Task/activity Lead(s): Lake Station & QEP

iv. Outputs: 11 Phase I ESAs; QAPP, SAPs/HASPs, estimated 8-10 Phase II ESAs.

Task/Activity 3: Clean-up & Reuse Planning:

i. Project Implementation: The QEP, directed by the city, will prepare site specific clean-up plans/documents including: Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives, remediation plans, site closure letter requests, and clean-up/reuse funding development (1.c.i).

ii. Schedule: Prepared after Phase I and II ESAs are complete, contamination is present, and if cleanup is necessary. Task 3 activities will continue throughout the grant period.

iii. Task/activity Lead(s): Lake Station & QEP

iv. Output(s): 5-10 cleanup planning documents

Task/Activity 4: Community Outreach & Involvement:

i. Project Implementation: 8-12 public meetings will be held at various venues throughout Lake Station during the grant period to update ESA progress and seek public input/involvement. Print and mail material for project/site information and marketing documents will also be funded under this task. The city will complete this task, assisted by the QEP, who will manage the technical aspects of the community outreach program, and will attend/participate in outreach events. Social media outlets and online media will be developed/maintained, and outreach efforts will inform the public on the progress of brownfield investigation/cleanup planning and provide marketing resources for future development. Additional sites can be identified during public community outreach meetings. These meetings will be focused on public engagement including what sites the community views as a priority for redevelopment. Priority will be granted to sites identified by underserved communities, especially when those sites are within areas identified as disadvantaged by the CEJST.

ii. Schedule: 2-3 public meetings planned per year with the 1st planned for 2nd Quarter of grant period.

iii. Task/activity Lead(s): Lake Station & QEP

iv. Output(s): 8-12 public meetings to update communities on the brownfield assessment progress and

seek public input and involvement; supplies: printed flyers, advertising, postage, etc.

We will work diligently to ensure startup activities are completed per the schedule above. The city will allocate all grant funds to project properties before the final quarter of the grant period to assure that grant task activities are completed before the end of the 4-year Cooperative Agreement contract. Because there is an extremely high demand for assessments and site access has already been obtained for some of the highest priority sites in 1.a.ii, it is likely that funds will be spent prior to the end date. We are proactively communicating with representatives of privately-owned brownfields to gain access and resolve issues in anticipation of this grant funding as well as non-grant funded assessment activities. Such communication initiates the process for eventual property transfer and reuse, and creates a positive dialog between property owners, local government, and impacted citizens.

3.b. Cost Estimates: The costs outlined in Table 5 were developed anticipating tasks necessary to efficiently identify, characterize, and plan for the remediation of the priority sites listed in Table 1. The city will allocate \$334,300 (84% of total grant funds) to Phase I and II ESAs.

Table 5 Budget	Budget Categories ¹	1. Program Mgmt, Training Support, Inv / Prioritization	2.Phase I / II ESAs	3. Clean-up / Reuse Planning	4. Community Outreach & Involvement	Budget Category Total
	Travel	\$3,000				\$3,000
	Supplies				\$400	\$400
	Contractual ²	\$19,550	\$334,300	\$30,000	\$12,750	\$396,600
TOTAL BUDGET		\$22,550	\$334,300	\$30,000	\$13,150	\$400,000

¹Table 5 only includes budget categories with costs. ²In accordance with Federal, State, and local procurement regulations.

Grant tasks will be completed at the anticipated costs per unit with the following anticipated outputs/outcomes:

1. Program Management & Training Support, Inventory/Prioritization: \$22,550 – *Travel:* Attend National Brownfield Conf.: airfare x 2 @ \$1,000, 2 rooms, 3 nights lodging @ \$1,400, meals @ \$450, ground transportation @ \$150 = \$3,000, *Contractual:* total \$19,550, includes approx. 110 hrs. \$85/hr. = \$9,350 for inventory, & approximately 120 hours \$85/hr. = \$10,200 to assist with program management.

2. Env. Investigation: \$334,300 – *Contractual:* 11 Phase I ESAs at an average cost of \$3,800 each = \$41,800, & 8-10 Phase II ESAs at an estimated cost of \$30,000-\$45,000 (depending on site complexity/environmental conditions) = \$292,500 (@ \$32,500 average cost). Though our budget will support 11 Phase I’s and 8-10 Phase II ESAs, we understand that large sites may need more investment requiring us to realign the budget during the grant period. Areas of focus will include those already determined in the inventories as priority sites listed in 1.a.ii.

3. Clean-up & Re-use Planning: \$30,000 – *Contractual:* 5-10 ABCAs/Clean-up plans or Re-use plans expected to cost \$3,000-\$6,000 each = \$30,000.

4. Community Outreach & Involvement: \$13,150 – *Supplies:* printed flyers, advertising, grant fact sheets, outreach visual aids, advertising, postage, etc. = \$400, *Contractual:* approx. 150 hours at an estimated \$85/hr. = \$12,750.

3.c. Plan to Measure & Evaluate Environmental Progress & Results: We will track, measure, and evaluate progress through meeting minutes, Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports, quarterly review/analysis of grant performance, ACRES entries, and completion of Work Plan tasks and compare to planned outcomes. If planned outputs/outcomes are not achieved or milestones/project schedule outlined in 3.a are not being met, we will create a corrective action plan to identify deficiencies and make appropriate adjustments to achieve anticipated outputs on schedule. The Assessment Grant will also have the following measurable outcomes: sites/acreage assessed, jobs created/retained, redevelopment complete, number of parcels cleaned up/redeveloped, acreage made ready for greenspace/recreation, and leveraged monies. These and other statistics will be included in Quarterly Reports and ACRES submittals as data becomes available, which will allow the EPA to better evaluate and highlight the grant program success. At the close of the grant, city staff will provide a final report to the EPA and our residents summarizing project outputs and outcomes. After evaluation of sites is done, it is in the city’s best interest that redevelopment happens, and as such, close monitoring of subsequent actions will be done diligently.

Outputs and outcomes following the close of the grant will be uploaded to EPA's ACRES page for continued monitoring of the program's success.

4. Programmatic Capability & Past Performance, a. Programmatic Capability, i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure & iii Description of Key Staff: The Lake Station Redevelopment Commission (RDC) will manage this grant. They previously managed numerous economic development resources (including a FY2015 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant) valued at well over \$20M in the past 10 years. The RCD, along with other city staff, have the technical, financial, administrative ability and systems in place to implement this grant project successfully. Mr. Chip Greenberg, Grants Coordinator, will serve as the city's Grant Manager. Mr. Greenberg holds a degree in Public Relations and is a licensed mortgage banker/realtor. He's worked with the city on projects for 6 years. Mr. Greenberg will be assisted by Mr. Adrian Vera, Lake Station Chief of Staff. Mr. Vera has been with the city for 9 years and was formerly Lake Station Superintendent. Greenberg and Vera will aggressively use their brownfields and small business growth experience to seek redevelopment opportunities for brownfield properties in the CRC and in Lake Station. Ms. Brenda Samuels, Clerk/Treasurer, will serve as the Grant Financial Manager and will be responsible for accounting and financial reporting. She has been with the city for over 10 years and served as manager for many other grant and loan programs for the city, including it's 2015 EPA Assessment Grant and other grant and loan programs benefiting the city. In the unlikely event that a member of the team leaves their job prior to the completion of grant tasks, the depth of the city's team will allow for a seamless transition to other experienced members.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Lake Station and our QEP will make every effort to contract with disadvantaged business enterprises (women and/or minority owned) and consultants/contractors who employ disadvantaged people, when possible, and we will require our QEP to make every effort to do the same. City staff has a history of working cooperatively with state and federal environmental agency personnel and engaging qualified environmental consultants. Through a competitive bidding and procurement process, the city will select a QEP with experience administering EPA Brownfields Grants and working with IDEM/IBP. The team and execution plan outlined above will ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds within the prescribed 4-year project period. This team will be supported by other city departments including planning, finance, utilities, engineering, legal, and the office of the Mayor. We will work with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to identify small businesses in the area with strong labor practices who have been vetted by the SBA as qualified to perform remediation activities and other contracted services. We will invite vetted contractors through the competitive bidding process noted above. We will also work with NIRPC (2.b.ii) to link our community members to job opportunities related to the investigation, remediation, redevelopment, and ultimate reuse of brownfields.

4.b. Past Performance & Accomplishments, i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant, (I) Accomplishments: Lake Station previously received an FY15 EPA Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant (**BF00E01549 - 10/01/15-09/30/18 for \$350K**). Skillful execution of the Work Plan resulted in expending 100% of grant funds by the end date, resulting in inventorying and prioritizing over 30 properties and the completion of 4 Phase I and 8 Phase II ESAs. At the time of this submission, all outputs and outcomes related to the grants (completed brownfield inventory, community engagement, 4 Phase I ESAs, QAPP, 8 Phase II ESAs, remedial planning, reporting and ACRES entries) have been met and are accurately reflected in the ACRES system. To date, over \$500K has been leveraged from work performed during the FY15 grant with more leveraging imminent.

4.b.i(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: All Work Plan goals, outputs, and outcomes of the previous EPA Brownfields Grant were achieved, and all reports including Quarterly & Annual Reports, MBE/WBE Utilization Reports, ACRES submissions, etc. were completed in a timely manner, and no corrective measures were needed. The city was fully compliant with the terms and conditions of their previous Cooperative Agreement. As with our previous grant, Lake Station has a clear plan to aggressively address targeted brownfields in the community, and firm leveraging commitments to redevelop sites into viable assets. Due to budget constraints, lower tax revenues, and pressures to complete projects necessary to maintain our infrastructure, EPA grant funding is the only way we will successfully redevelop brownfields.

III.B. Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

III.B.1 Applicant Eligibility

The City of Lake Station meets the definition of a Local Government under 2 CFR 200.64 and is a political subdivision of Indiana. It is therefore eligible to apply for and receive U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding.

III.B.2 Community Involvement

Involving our community and soliciting feedback regarding Brownfields activities and redevelopment plans are essential to our community's Brownfields program's success. Communication is a two-way process, and our ultimate goal is to keep the community informed and involved so they remain aware of potential concerns, questions, and solutions. 8 - 12 outreach events (2-3 per yr.) will be held throughout the grant period to maintain stakeholder engagement and continue to gather public input on site selection and prioritization, assessment needs, cleanup decisions, mitigation measures from cleanup/redevelopment activity, and reuse planning. Outreach events, open to the general public, will be advertised through municipal and partner websites, local papers, radio, and social media platforms (earned media and other low-cost, no-cost, or in-kind methods) ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. When social distancing or other restrictions limit in-person community meetings due to COVID-19 or other causes, we will follow existing recommendations/guidance including EPA's Office of Land and Emergency Management *Socially Distant Engagement Ideas for EPA Brownfield Grant Applicants* that discusses Virtual Tools (online meeting platforms, social media, QR codes, web page or email updates, etc.) and Non-Digital Approaches (phone or conference calls, flyers, newspaper ads, local TV, and radio, etc.). See Section IV.E.2.b. of the Narrative/Ranking Criteria for further information.

III.B.3 Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

This criterion is not applicable as the City of Lake Station is not a current EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant recipient.

III.B.4 Named Contractors and Subrecipients

The City of Lake Station has not procured/named any contractors or subrecipients.