



DeSoto Parish Police Jury

101 Franklin Street, Mansfield, Louisiana 71052
PHONE: (318) 872-0738 FAX: (318) 872-5343
www.desotoppj.com

R06-24-A-017

1. Applicant Identification:
DeSoto Parish Police Jury (DeSoto Parish)
101 Franklin Street
Mansfield, Louisiana 71502
2. Funding Requested:
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Assessment Coalition
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,500,000
3. Location:
 - a) Village of South Mansfield & City of Mansfield
 - b) DeSoto Parish
 - c) Louisiana

4. Coalition Members' Target Area and Priority Site Information

| Coalition Member | Target Area | Census Tract(s) | Priority Site |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| DeSoto Parish (lead) | Census Tracts | 22031950600, 22031950300 | Former Military Auxiliary Landing Strips: 211 Independence Avenue, Grand Cane, LA 71502 |
| City of Mansfield (non-lead) | Jenkins/Polk Commercial Corridor | 22031950400 | Former DeSoto Foundry & Machine Company: 816 Jenkins Street, Mansfield, LA 71502 |
| Village of South Mansfield (non-lead) | Village Limits | 22031950500 | Former Oak Hill Commissary: 315 Oak Hill Road, South Mansfield, LA 71502 |

5. Contacts
 - a. Project Director
Mr. Brian Durbin, Grant Writer
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bdurbin@desotoppj.com
101 Franklin Street, Mansfield, Louisiana 71052
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
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6. Population (US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey)

- Target Area 1: (Unincorporated) Desoto Parish, LA – 5,298
- Target Area 2: City of Mansfield, LA – 4,608
- Target Area 3: Village of South Mansfield, LA – 546

7. Other Factors

| Other Factors | Page # |
|--|---------------|
| Community population is 10,000 or less. | 1 |
| The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory. | NA |
| The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land. | NA |
| 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). | NA |
| The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain. | NA |
| The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy. | 5 |
| The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures. | 5 |
| The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments. | 5 |
| 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. | 10 |
| 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. | NA |

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached.

9. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable.



State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

October 20, 2023

Brian Durbon, Grant Writer
DeSoto Parish Police Jury
101 Franklin Street
Mansfield, LA 71052

RE: Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality acknowledgement of DeSoto Parish Police Jury's FY24 Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant Application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Mr. Durbon:

Thank you for your efforts to enhance Louisiana's environment, economy, and quality of life by addressing environmental concerns at vacant and underutilized sites in your community through the Brownfields Program. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) acknowledges DeSoto Parish Police Jury's application for a Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant to address sites under the federal Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act and the Brownfields Utilization, Investment and Local Development Act, and recognizes that DeSoto Parish Police Jury will be conducting assessment activities in LDEQ's jurisdiction. In addition to providing regulatory oversight of your projects, LDEQ will provide technical assistance to your Brownfield Program as resources permit.

We look forward to partnering with you to facilitate the redevelopment of Brownfield sites in Louisiana! Please contact me at (504) 736-7069 or Rebecca.Otte@LA.gov if you have any questions or need further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca Otte".

Rebecca Otte
Brownfields Coordinator
Remediation Division, Office of Environmental Assessment

cc: Imaging Operations – IAS AI 178641



DeSoto Parish, Louisiana
FY24 Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant
Narrative



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Coalition Members, Target Area and Brownfields i. Coalition Members: The City of Mansfield (City) and the Village of South Mansfield (Village) will be the non-lead members of the coalition. Both non-lead members are general-purpose units of local government as defined under 2 CFR §200.64. The non-lead members are located within DeSoto Parish (Parish) and are committed to working in partnership with the Parish to create a much-needed Brownfield Program. The City is the Parish seat and operates under a razor thin budget due to a reduced tax base with an extremely low-income population and a high unemployment rate. The total population of the City is 4,608.¹ As a result, the City does not have the capacity to apply for or manage its own Brownfields Grant. Nonetheless, the City has many brownfield sites that add to the challenges needing to be addressed related to low-income and safe affordable housing, recreational and green space, walkable community, and employment opportunities. The City recognizes the need to apply for additional resources, such as brownfield funding, to serve its disadvantaged community.

Likewise, the Village, as a small community, population 564, with an even smaller annual budget, is extremely limited in time and staffing for any type of grant management.¹ The Village seeks to support and provide enhancements to their business community, create recreational green space, a walkable community, and obtain economic growth from a community perspective, allowing the region to retain industry. However, the Village recognizes that with an ever-growing number of potential brownfield sites, it will need to obtain additional resources to make this goal a reality. While the Village supports the growth and progress necessary to grow the region, it understands that in order to best address the brownfields sites across the Parish, partnering with the City of Mansfield and DeSoto Parish is the only way to do so.

ii. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas: **The geographic boundaries for this Coalition Grant are the boundaries of DeSoto Parish.** DeSoto Parish is governed by the DeSoto Parish Police Jury (DPPJ). The Parish, founded in 1843, was named after Marcel DeSoto who first brought settlers to the area. The population of the entire Parish is **26,919**.¹ Due in part to the amount of agriculture, the Parish historically hosted a large number of slaves. The Black population was nearly double the white population in 1860 and 1870. Today, **the target areas' Black population average (66%) is more than five times the US average (13%), and nearly double the Parish (35%).**¹ A majority of the 856-square-mile Parish is oak uplands with hills, lakes, and bayous in the west and is made up of 10 small cities/villages. During the 19th century, with the induction of the railroad, the timber, cotton, dairy, and beef industries thrived. By the early 20th century, the Parish saw an oil boom and then a massive uptick in industry. Throughout this time, DeSoto Parish became known as a trendsetting area west of the Mississippi River, from opening the first women's college in 1855 to opening the first steel foundry and hosting the first major trailer manufacturer, which also invented the fifth-wheel trailer. Unfortunately, the economy tides have changed in the Parish, which has caused a **constantly decreasing population**. Where there was once a thriving commercial, industrial, and agricultural area, there are now **vacant and abandoned buildings, blight, increased environmental hazard concerns, and an underserved and disadvantaged population** who are barely surviving. Potential environmental hazards for the geographic boundary include **petroleum hydrocarbons (PHC), chlorinated volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, metals, lead-based paint (LBP), and asbestos-containing materials (ACM).**

The target area of this coalition grant are the census tracts (CTs) 223031950300, 223031950400, 223031950500, and 223031950600. All four of these CTs are designated **Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities** by the **Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool**

¹ US Census: 2017–2021 ACS



DeSoto Parish, LA
FY24 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant

(CEJST). The target area for the Parish (lead coalition member) are the boundaries of CT 223031950300 and 223031950600. The City's target area (non-lead member) is CT 223031950400 and includes Jenkins/Polk Street Commercial Corridor. The Village's target area (non-lead member) is the incorporated village limits, which lie in CT 223031950500.

Based on the Parish's history of industrial/commercial sites, agricultural land use, and its longstanding railroad industry, the Parish requires additional funding to address the myriad of contaminated and abandoned properties sprinkled throughout the target areas. The Parish believes a collaborative planning effort with coalition partners, supported by EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant funding, will allow for additional inventory and refined prioritization, assessment, and cleanup planning to push redevelopment of blighted and abandoned brownfields, bringing prosperity back to this **disadvantaged** community.

iii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The Parish has identified 30 potential brownfield sites within the designated target areas, not including the identified priority sites. These four CTs that make up the designated target areas include mothballed manufacturing facilities, former fuel stations, dry cleaners, a World War II auxiliary airfield, former railroad servicing facilities, and a variety of vacant buildings believed to contain ACM and LBP. Because of the large variety of brownfield properties throughout the target areas, a wide array of environmental concerns are present ranging from hazardous materials such as ACM and LBP to PHCs at former fuel stations and volatile contaminants at drycleaning facilities and former manufacturing facilities. Due to the sheer number of sites associated with regulatory agencies, the Parish needs additional coalition resources and EPA funding to address these sites in a feasible and effective manner.

The **first priority site** is the **Former Military Auxiliary Landing Strips** located at **211 Independence Avenue in Grand Cane, Louisiana**. This site, located on approximately 40 acres, will serve as the **Parish's** priority site (**lead member**). In 1943, the US Government provided funding along with the Parish to construct the airport as an auxiliary landing field for Barksdale Air Force Base, home of the B-52 Bombers in Bossier City, Louisiana. The field included two crosswind runways and one north-south runway. After the US Air Force phased out operations on February 5, 1947, the DPPJ signed a lease with the US Government Department of the Army to allow use of the airport again for an auxiliary landing field, with the lease expiring on October 28, 1952. During 1955, 1956, and 1957 the airport was made available to the Department of the Army for training maneuvers. While the adjoining land strip and DeSoto Parish Airport remain active, the landing strips and associated buildings and areas used by the Air Force and Army have remained largely unused, with fears of contamination and hazardous materials hampering any redevelopment efforts from potential investors as the buildings and pavements continue to deteriorate. **Facilities of this type are often associated with jet fuel and other petroleum releases from storage and use of fuels, used oils, hydraulic fluids, and parts cleaners that may contain chlorinated solvents. Depending on the training operations, there may also be residual munition contaminants and fire suppressants. Also, the age of the building brings environmental concerns of LBP and ACM.** The site sits adjacent to the DeSoto Parish Business and Civic Park and is owned by the Parish, so access is readily available.

The **second priority site** is the **Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company** located at **816 Jenkins Street in Mansfield**. This site will serve as the City's priority site (**non-lead member**). This facility was established in 1906 as a gray iron foundry serving the sawmill industry in Louisiana and surrounding states. In 1909, the facility turned to the production of commercial steel castings and became the first steel foundry west of the Mississippi River. The facility has manufactured a number of steel products over the years; however, it was shuttered in 2011 causing a devastating job loss to the community. Since that time, the property with over 200,000 square



feet of manufacturing space located on over 18 acres has remained vacant. This site serves as a daunting reminder of one of the Parish's most successful companies, having operated for over a century. The property is fenced and has not yet become a dilapidated danger to the community, causing many residents to hold out hope that the property that once hosted over 250 direct jobs and 400 indirect jobs will once again be in operation. **The processes involved in manufacturing steel parts has changed over the decades as environmental rules and new technologies came about; however, numerous chemicals, solvents, fuels, and hydraulic equipment have always been present to one extent or another.** Due to the age of the buildings, **LBP and ACM** are also of concern. The site is a priority due to its proximity to the **Mansfield High School** and a **residential neighborhood** across the street and a larger **residential neighborhood** immediately across the railroad tracks to the south.

The **third priority site** is the former **Oak Hill Commissary** located at **315 Oak Hill Road in South Mansfield**. This site will serve as the Village's priority site (**non-lead member**). This abandoned property has sat vacant since approximately 2003. The former commissary includes two buildings, one 2,500-square-foot structure that has partially collapsed and a larger 5,500-square-foot shop building that is dilapidated and overgrown with vegetation and trees. The property is believed to have been originally developed in the 1960s and sits on an approximate one acre. **Structures constructed during this timeframe are often associated with containing LBP and ACM. The site is unsecure and easily accessed by the neighboring apartment residents. The site is a priority as it is located adjacent to both DeSoto Parish Housing Authority and Mansfield Housing Authority apartment communities.**

iv. Identifying Additional Sites: Coalition members will focus on identifying additional eligible sites for assessment throughout the target areas' four census tracts that are all designated **Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities by CEJST**. In preparation of this grant application, coalition team members conducted a windshield survey of the target areas and identified **30** potential brownfield sites. During this grant project, a more in-depth, grant-funded site inventory and evaluation ranking criteria process will be established, as the coalition members will work diligently with target-area residents to identify and prioritize sites within the **underserved** community. Those properties will be researched further by staff using the Parish's appraiser's website. The evaluation criteria used to determine which sites are added to the inventory will be based on community need, project partner and resident input, and **CEJST and US Census data** to ensure **underserved and disadvantaged** communities are benefiting from the project. In the event all target-area sites have been addressed with grant funding, the coalition will work with project partners and residents throughout the **geographic boundary of the Parish** to identify abandoned and underused properties. Once they are identified, the coalition will apply the already established evaluation ranking criteria, with priority given to the **underserved**, to determine the order in which sites will be addressed.

b. Revitalization of the Target Areas i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: DeSoto Parish was once home to numerous sawmills and a thriving manufacturing base of steel products and trailers. While many of the industries have left for good, the Parish has been able to make the most of the natural gas production opportunities located in the Haynesville Shale, a geological formation under DeSoto Parish that holds natural gas. The Parish was the most active parish in Louisiana that underwent exploration, hydraulic fracturing, and production activities; however, the influx of monies did not reach far into the **disadvantaged communities** and primarily further deepened the pockets of the exploration and production companies and larger landowners in the Parish. The **2019 DeSoto Parish Parks & Recreation Masterplan (Plan)** outlines its goals to interweave revitalization efforts through its greatest asset, its outdoor



recreational opportunities. The proposed reinvestment in its parks and recreation system with its programs and facilities will provide multiple forms of recreation, athletics, leisure, education, skills, services, events, festivals, and jobs, both full-time and part-time, and will generate economic impact, various tax revenues, increased tourism, attraction for new business and residents, reduced crime, a positive community spirit, and career paths for youth and adults. The Plan outlines both the creation and improvements to multiple neighborhood parks, library parks, special-use parks, and a regional multiuse park at the DeSoto Parish Business and Civic Park near the **Former Auxiliary Landing Strip** site (lead priority site). The **Oak Hill Commissary** site (Village non-lead priority site) is planned to be redeveloped into a new park and green space as well. Redevelopment of these brownfield sites will not only align with the Parish plan of creating a safe, healthy, and active community, but they will also contribute greatly to the ever-increasing need to increase tourism and tax revenues. Several of the Parish's existing facilities host annual trade and agriculture show events that bring large groups of people to the area. This will allow the Parish to better leverage community assets so that it may continue to support economic resiliency and growth.

The communities of DeSoto Parish have another major impact affecting the disadvantaged residents: unemployment. The plan outlines how investing in community assets will create jobs but the Parish understands that understands that reviving the Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company site for a new major commercial/industrial employer is desperately needed. This non-lead priority site once hosted over 400 good paying jobs in the City of Mansfield. **Reusing the Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company site as commercial/industrial redevelopment** will initiate bringing these jobs back to community. Removing the negative environmental stigma associated with the length of time in operation is needed to ensure investors can see past environmental redevelopment hurdles.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Redevelopment of these priority sites will seek to build off of the Plan's goal to reinvest in community assets and bring in new local employment opportunities. Many of the brownfield sites across the Parish are in prime locations for redevelopment; however, the Parish and local municipalities lack the necessary means to redevelop the sites in a safe manner. By using Brownfield Grant money to assess and determine contamination on site, the resulting redevelopment will provide increased opportunities to create or expand community parks or provide small business owners the opportunity to provide a critical service to their community. These intended reuses for the priority sites are addressing the greatest needs of the Parish by using its greatest assets, its natural beauty and its disadvantaged residents.

The redevelopment of the **Former Military Auxiliary Landing Strips** into the **DeSoto Parish Multiuse Park** will include a variety of outdoor sport fields and indoor courts and a natatorium. This model has seen great success in locations across the south for hosting local, regional, and national tournaments spanning the different sports that have grown in popularity. The **Oak Hill Commissary** site will also provide a new local park and green space for the Village's disadvantaged residents. New local recreational facilities, parks, and green space (noneconomic), along with new tourism, tax base, and local employment (economic) as well as cleaning up blighted, abandoned buildings and space (noneconomic) will bring a priceless new sense of community pride (noneconomic) to this disadvantaged community. The **Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company** site will be reused as **commercial/industrial redevelopment**. This reuse will add key new local employment (economic), new commercial/industrial tax revenue (economic), a cleaned-up site without blight (noneconomic), and a revived community outlook (noneconomic).



The coalition will work with and encourage developers to redevelop in a way that will improve **climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience**. Park and recreation redevelopments will use renewable energy and be built in a sustainable manner, while the redeveloped **Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company** will incorporate renewable and efficient energy in the form of LED lights, green building materials, energy-efficient materials, and reuse of old buildings. Improving **green space** and connecting and **improving the walkability** of the Parish to help **reduce pollutants** will improve the environment and the quality of life for all residents. By working to ensure developers are using **energy-efficient measures** in their redevelopment designs, **promoting sustainability**, encouraging use of **renewable energy** through use of **solar lighting or wind energy**, the Parish and coalition will ensure to build a resilient community that will continue to help grow the Parish for many years to come.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The Parish is a local government organization and is eligible to apply for state and federal grant funding. The coalition will work to rally local communities and leaders to strategically focus assessment and cleanup efforts in areas that pose the most risk to human health and development while having the potential for redevelopment. The coalition will leverage a variety of funding sources in order to successfully implement and administer this assessment opportunity. The Parish's 2019 Master Plan identified multiple grant opportunities to assist in redevelopment and rehabilitation of the park and recreation facilities, ranging from federal sources to aid in creation of new parks to a grant for basketball courts from the NBA New Orleans Pelicans basketball team (in progress). The Parish can solicit the Louisiana Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for funds that are available for the removal of blight, demolition, infrastructure, and affordable housing redevelopment. The Parish has access to the Community Water Enrichment Fund (CWEF) to support the addition of water lines, meters, and other items to ensure access to safe drinking water. The coalition will also seek to specifically use the state of Louisiana's Department of Environmental Quality's Targeted Brownfields Assessment (LDEQ) that assists in funding any additional assessments that may be needed. Once sites are assessed, the coalition will apply for EPA Brownfield Cleanup funding.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The Parish intends to use pre-existing infrastructure within all three priority sites including water/sewer, transportation, and power. Through the coalition, all entities will be able to support the proposed redevelopments in the target area, and because of that, additional funds will not be utilized to establish any form of additionally needed infrastructure. In the event additional infrastructure improvements are needed, the Parish will look to state and federal funding.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. Community Need i. The Community's Need for Funding: The geographic Parish area has experienced a decline in population and development over the past few years. Numerous abandoned and neglected industrial, commercial, and agricultural sites are scattered throughout the target areas, and the Parish does not have the extra funds to address them in a safe and effective manner. Currently for the Parish and coalition partners, inadequate budgets are allocated for salaries and services such as solid waste, police, and fire. This reality coupled with the **high unemployment rate** and **extreme low-income status** of the target areas and Parish residents means the Parish and coalition partners lack the funding for assessments that would allow for the redevelopment of this **underserved** community. With no additional funding for assessments, these **underserved** residents will continue to endure the **negative health effects and blight** currently controlling this **disadvantaged** target areas.



The target-area population is **10,088**.² Within the target areas' four designated **Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities**, the **average median household income is less than half of the US average at \$31,440**, DeSoto Parish's (geographic area) is \$45,364, while the US's is \$69,021.² The average **per capita income for the target area is \$19,959**, DeSoto Parish's (geographic area) is \$26,151, while the US per capita income is \$37,638.² The blight and poor economic status of these underserved residents and the geographic area is evident when you consider that they rank in the **89th percentile for low income** and have a **91st percentile unemployment rate**.³ The overwhelming amount of brownfield inventory and strain on local budgets will prevent these sites from receiving the important planning efforts and revitalization they need to support historically excluded communities with redevelopment opportunities. Therefore, Brownfield Assessment Grant funding would give the Parish the ability to provide resources, identify environmental hazards, and generate revitalization to create opportunities and a brighter future for these established **underserved** communities.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: The target areas **sensitive population** consists of **minorities, individuals living on government assistance, and individuals living below poverty** in these **Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities**. The target areas' **Black population** average is more than **five times** the US average at **66%**, Parish (35%), US (13%).² The **target-area population** has significantly elevated poverty levels, with the percentage of **all families living below poverty at 26%**, compared to the Parish (16%) and US (9%).² CEJST shows that the target areas average in the **91st percentile** for people **living with incomes at or below poverty**. Within the target areas, an elevated number of residents depend on **government food assistance, over 36%** compared to the US at 11%.² The reliance on the government and overall health concerns for these underserved families are magnified since the target areas are also considered **food deserts**.³ The Parish's Park and Recreation Plan acknowledges the low income and poverty levels, further recognizing the dire need for local, free community gathering spaces to recreate in a safe and healthy manner.

The target area has an **unemployment rate in the 91st percentile**, with an average of **21% of residents who are 25 years or older and have less than a high school diploma**.⁴ The addition of new local, well-paying employment opportunities will allow more of the underserved residents to have an opportunity to access higher paying jobs that are not dependent on a degree. Once revitalized, the target areas' reuses will create jobs, grow small businesses, increase the opportunity for affordable housing, and protect property values, all while cleaning up the blight and abandoned areas. This revitalization will give a whole new sense of empowerment and community to these disadvantaged and underserved residents that has never been a part of their lives. The City's priority site, the Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company, has the potential to bring several hundred direct good paying jobs to the disadvantaged community while the investment in the parks and recreation system in the Parish will also add both direct and indirect jobs through the ability to host state and regional events.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The target areas suffer greatly from **asthma-related illness**, shown by their ranking in the **89th percentile** for people who have been told they have asthma.³ The target areas also demonstrate health concerns with an **87th percentile** ranking for **low-life expectancy**, **94th percentile in heart disease**, and **96th percentile for diabetes**. Residents of the target area **are economically distressed, suffer from high unemployment figures, lack easy access to groceries, and live with a greater risk of health issues** caused by negative environmental conditions and a disinvestment in their

²US Census: 2017–2021 (ACS)

³ EPA EJ Screening Tool

⁴ CEJST



underserved, disadvantaged communities. The target areas all have **sensitive** populations are in the **98th percentile in air toxic cancer risk** and face the greatest risk of **cancer and asthma** due to the related environmental concerns and hazards that are prevalent at brownfield sites.⁵ The target areas also have an **elevated age adjusted incidence cancer rate of 264/100K** versus Louisiana (252/100K) and the US (225/100K).⁶ With **dilapidated, old buildings and abandoned sites that comprise the target areas, LBP and ACM** are all of great concern. Along with the other area prior land uses come associated environmental hazards such as **numerous chemicals and additives including accelerators, oils, antioxidants, vulcanizers, antiozonants, pigment blends, plasticizers, chemical byproducts, reinforcing agents, resins, extenders, solvents, fillers, USTs, petroleum, waste oil, and VOCs**. With the help of brownfields funding at the redevelopment and revitalization priority sites and throughout the target areas, the new site uses will contribute to improving overall health conditions by **removing environmental harms and blight, providing for infill development, and creating new job opportunities** that are walkable to community resources, along with a green and resilient infrastructure.

(3) Environmental Justice (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: All of the Parish's target area CTs included in this Assessment Coalition Grant are **designated as Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities by CEJST**. The underserved residents in these target areas average in the **90th percentile in poverty, 91st percentile unemployment, and 89th percentile low income** per the CEJST. The hardships created by these statistics added to the **ongoing environmental concerns, blight, abandoned buildings, and vacant lots** have taken a toll on this disadvantaged community. **EJ issues** are prevalent, such as **extremely low income, high unemployment rates, lack of transportation options, and distressed neighborhoods**. These **EJ hardships** have never allowed these **underserved** residents the opportunity to grow and flourish and achieve their full potential as a community. With help from a Brownfields Assessment Grant, the target areas will grow and flourish while work to reduce the EJ issues facing this **underserved, disadvantaged** area continues.

(b) Advancing Environmental Justice: The EPA Brownfield funding will provide assessment and cleanup planning to promote the remediation and revitalization of this community for its **sensitive and distressed** population. The proposed reuse of the **Former Military Auxiliary Landing Strips and Oak Hill Commissary** priority sites as **community parks and recreational sports developments and redeveloping of the Former DeSoto Foundry and Machine Company facility into new commercial/industrial** will enhance the health and well-being of residents and remedy many environmental and socioeconomic justice issues affecting the target areas' **disadvantaged and underserved** community. Bringing new life and business opportunities back to the target areas will help negate the environmental consequences and threats by the identification, assessment, and remediation made possible by the EPA Brownfield Grant funding. By creating **new employment opportunities with better wages, improving walkability with local employment, promoting tourism and economic stability, and creating new recreational and green space**, the Parish will address the **Justice40 Initiatives** that have plagued the **underserved** residents of this area and create a hope for a bright future for generations to come. **The priority sites are currently abandoned and vacant; therefore, no displacement of businesses or residents** will occur. If other sites are identified that could cause displacement, the City will work with the business or resident to find a place to relocate.

⁵ EPA EJ Screen Report

⁶ National Cancer Institute – www.statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov



b. Community Engagement i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: The following project partners will play a vital role in assisting the Parish with site selection, prioritization, cleanup, and redevelopment of brownfield sites for this assessment project.

| Name of Org. | Point of Contact | Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided |
|---|---|--|
| DeSoto Parish Tourist Bureau | Ms. Charlotte Miller Desototourism@gmail.com 318-872-1177 | The DeSoto Parish Tourist Bureau is dedicated to creating a healthy and prosperous tourism environment for the DeSoto Parish. They will assist with future site reuse planning, community outreach, and education activities. |
| Moore’s Chapel Baptist Church (City of Mansfield) | Reverend Fred Pea, Pastor mooreschapelbc@gmail.com 318-872-5746 | Moore’s Chapel Baptist Church has a robust ministry of community involvement. They will provide assistance with community outreach and education and provide a meeting location. |
| DeSoto High School Alumni Association | Ms. Demetris Drain [REDACTED] 318-518-7692 | The DeSoto High School Alumni Association’s mission is to develop and implement innovative educational, cultural, recreational and social events. They will assist with site identification, future site reuse planning, and community outreach. |
| Historic Grand Cane Association (DeSoto Parish) | Ms. Kathleen Davis grandcane@bellsouth.net 318-858-2556 | The Historic Grand Cane Association meets regularly to strategize and plan for the promotion and development of the DeSoto Historic District. They will assist with site identification, future site reuse planning, and site inventory assistance. |

iii. Incorporating Community Input: In an effort to gain community support and inform the local coalition-member communities, meetings were held to discuss the need for Brownfield Assessment Grant funding on October 2, 2023, and October 16, 2023. Over the past year, the coalition members have discussed the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within the coalition member target areas.

DeSoto Parish and the coalition members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by the coalition members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield coalition meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website. Target-area, resident-identified sites will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and the future land-use redevelopment plans. Comments/questions gathered during Brownfield Program meetings from residents, especially those underserved residents most affected by the project, will be collected and addressed through the Parish Facebook page, brownfield website, and at the Parish meetings **every month** throughout the grant period.

Coalition member and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the coalition member areas. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the program’s status. To share the coalition’s Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in the Parish office, coalition members’ offices and on the brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared throughout the community at coalition members’ public meetings held within the target areas and local libraries. The program director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly council meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.



Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual and in-person meetings to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual and in-person small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The Parish is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant in the amount of \$1,500,000.

| | |
|---|---|
| Task 1: Outreach | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The Parish’s Brownfield Project Director will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) and outreach materials. The Brownfields Project Manager will work to develop a Brownfield Project website and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental contractor (EC). Parish 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) and office supplies to manage the grant. |
| ii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP created in the 1 st quarter. Community Meetings held in the 1 st , 3 rd , 5 th , 7 th , 9 th , 11 th , and 13 th quarters. Each member will have one meeting per year in its respective target area. Website and outreach materials created in the 1 st quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant. |
| iii. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Parish: Mr. Brian Durbin, Brownfield Project Director |
| iv. | <i>Outputs:</i> CIP, Brownfield Website, 12 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 Parish’s Brownfields Project Manager will work with target-area residents during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Abandoned and underused properties identified by the residents will be researched further by Parish staff and appropriately compiled, with priority given to sites located within an area of sensitive populations. Once a list is compiled, the EC will work with Parish staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine, with the help of residents, the order in which the sites will be addressed. |
| ii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in 1 st quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process, which began with this application. Evaluation ranking process takes place in the 2 nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. |
| iii. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Mr. Michael Rister, Brownfield Project Manager |
| 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 first with the three priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs, which will include the SS-QAPP. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be 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 Parish: Mr. Brian Durbin, Brownfield Project Director |
| iv. | <i>Outputs:</i> 40 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 25 Phase II ESAs 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, developing an inventory of site assets and infrastructure, identifying potential brownfield site reuse options, assessing market conditions, analyzing opportunities and constraints, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site-appropriate remediation/reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The EC will assist the Parish in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions |



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| | to be held for key properties. A planning contractor will work with the underserved community to create Site Reuse Plans, a Market Study, and the Brownfield Revitalization Plan. |
| ii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes begin 6 th 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 Parish: Mr. Michael Rister, Brownfield Project Manager |
| iv. | <i>Outputs:</i> 10 ABCAs, 6 Vision Sessions/Charrettes, 6 Site Reuse Assessments, 3 Market Studies, 1 Brownfield Revitalization Plan |
| Task 5: Programmatic Support | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The Parish will procure an EC to assist with the Brownfield Grant Project. The Parish’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 Parish 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 Parish staff travel budget allows for four staff to attend three national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops. |
| ii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins in the 1 st quarter, and Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2 nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in the 5 th , 9 th , and 13 th quarters and during final closeout. |
| iii. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> Parish: Ms. Lilliana Garcia, Brownfield Finance 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. Four staff to attend three 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. Of the budget, 61% will be spent on the Assessment Task. Thirty percent (32%) of the budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities within the target areas.*

Task 1 Outreach: Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$4,000 (32hrs x \$125); Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$3,500 (28hrs x \$125); 12 Community Education Meetings \$18,000 (\$1,500/meeting). Supplies: Outreach Supplies \$2,000 (printed brochures \$1,200 [1,200 x \$1.00]; printed display boards \$600 [6 x \$100]; notebooks, paper, pens, other miscellaneous office supplies \$200). **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: Potential Brownfield Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool Creation \$16,000 (128 hrs x \$125). **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 40 Phase I ESAs \$4,000 each for a total of \$160,000; 1 Generic QAPP \$5,500; 25 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$30,000 each for a total of \$750,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 10 ABCAs \$5,500 for a total of \$55,000; 6 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$12,000 (\$2,000/meeting); 6 Site Reuse Assessments \$30,000 each for a total of \$180,000 (Planner: 40hrs x \$150; Market Analyst: 168hrs x \$125; Contractor: 24hrs x \$125); 3 Market Studies at \$20,000/each for a total of \$60,000; 1 Brownfield Revitalization Plan \$180,000 (Planner: 500hrs x \$150; Market Analysts: 350hrs x \$150; Environmental Professional: 350hrs x \$150). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period \$30,000 (200hrs x \$150). Travel: Four staff to attend three conferences/events – \$24,000 (flights at \$800, 3 nights in hotel at \$300/night, incidentals and per diem at \$100 per day [3 days] x 4 attendees x 3 events).

| Category | Tasks | | | | | Totals |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | <i>Outreach</i> | <i>Site Inventory</i> | <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Remediation/ Reuse Planning</i> | <i>Programmatic Support</i> | |
| Travel | | | | | \$24,000 | \$24,000 |



| | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Supplies | \$2,000 | | | | | \$2,000 |
| Contractual | \$25,500 | \$16,000 | \$915,500 | \$487,000 | \$30,000 | \$1,474,000 |
| Total Budget | \$27,500 | \$16,000 | \$915,500 | \$487,000 | \$54,000 | \$1,500,000 |

c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule, the **Brownfield Advisory Board** which will include the contractor, 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. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project is not being completed in an efficient manner, the Parish has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The Parish will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer and, if needed, will create a Corrective Action Plan to help the project to 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 Parish has a long history of grant management expertise with local, state, regional, and federal grants. The Parish will use three staff members to manage and oversee the majority of the grant implementation process. The DeSoto Parish Police Jury Grant Writer, **Mr. Brian Durbin**, will be the **Brownfield Project Director**. Mr. Durbin has been with the DeSoto Parish Police Jury since 2017. He has been held several key positions with the Police Jury as Tax Auditor, Assistant to the Parish Administrator, and currently is the Grant Writer. Mr. Durbin is responsible for the oversight and management of all grants, financial reporting, community partnerships, and grant writing for the DeSoto Parish Police Jury. Mr. Durbin will be responsible for the day-to-day activities, timely and successful expenditure of funds, and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the Brownfields Program. The DeSoto Parish Engineer, **Mr. Michael Rister, P.E.**, will be the **Brownfield Project Manager**. Mr. Rister has over 16 years of experience as a civil engineer and joined the DeSoto Parish team in 2020. He has extensive experience with overseeing projects from the initial design phase through to completion. Mr. Rister grew up in DeSoto Parish, but worked as a Project Engineer for the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development before returning home to the Parish. Mr. Rister is responsible for overseeing all aspects of construction projects for the DeSoto Parish as well as promoting community improvement within the Parish. He will assist Mr. Durbin with the administration of the Parish’s Brownfields Program. The **Brownfield Finance Director** will be **Ms. Lilliana Garcia**. Ms. Garcia has been the Parish’s Treasurer since 2013. Ms. Garcia came to the DeSoto Parish Police Jury with over 25 years of governmental experience in fields including community development, code enforcement, permits, finance, and purchasing. Ms. Garcia is proficient in the Parish’s accounting software, online banking service, accounting, payroll, accounts payable, and reporting. Ms. Garcia will be responsible for managing the finances and all drawdowns through ASAP.gov for this EPA Grant project. An environmental contractor will assist with the technical portions of the Brownfields Project.

The coalition will be supported by the **Brownfield Advisory Board (BAB)**. The proposed BAB is a nine-person committee that includes representatives from each coalition member and project partners. The BAB will advise on the implementation of this grant and use of funds in respect to



the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed upon by coalition partners. The coalition partners will work in conjunction to identify sites for assessment and support local communities; fund assessment needs; work with private, public, nonprofit, and local stakeholders to create awareness of the coalition and their associated resources; and provide regular reporting for granting agency requirements. The Parish will hold, administer, and disperse loan funding in a way that abide by the coalition's MOU and best practices. The BAB will work to ensure adequate representation from the coalition members and other vital parties so the **underserved** population is represented. The coalition will welcome the perspective of members that have brownfield assessment, clean-up, and development knowledge and experience and will work collaboratively to address the brownfield sites across the Parish.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Using local contracting requirements and procurement process, the Parish will procure a qualified environmental contractor to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant, in addition to any other contractors needed to complete the project. The Parish will ensure compliance with the EPA's "Professional Service" procurement process. The Parish will promote strong practices, local hiring, and will link members of the community to potential employment opportunities for all brownfield-related redevelopment via community outreach practices and project updates to project partners.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements: (1) Purpose and Accomplishments: The Parish has a history of successfully obtaining and executing grants. The Parish has been awarded multiple grants over the past several years ranging from drainage, roadway, and water supply improvements to workforce housing renovations. In 2020, The Parish was awarded a grant by the Louisiana Public Safety Commission (LPSC Grant) for \$220,000 for lighting improvements in the Parish buildings. The Parish installed new LED/energy-efficient fixtures and bulbs to increase energy efficiency. The Parish successfully performed the lighting improvements and has seen a substantial reduction in lighting costs of Parish buildings. In 2019, the parish was awarded a \$383,587 grant for roadway improvements that successfully repaired 5 important road projects. From 2019-2022, the Parish was awarded three Community Water Enrichment Fund (CWEF) grants. The CWEF projects were for assisting the water districts in the Parish to add water lines, meters, and other improvements for their customers to have safe, clean drinking water. The first two grants have been successfully completed and the third is underway and project to be completed early. The Parish also works with the State of Louisiana's Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP). These grants are usually for storm disasters that are declared by the governor (such as the 6-16-2023 Severe Storm/Power Outages/Strong Winds). The grants are approved and reimbursed at 75% of the total cost of damage. These are done on the GOHSEP Portal to upload documents, storm damage pictures, invoices, and close out financial forms. The Parish has successfully completed all grants awarded over the past 10–15 years.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The Parish has a successful history of on-time compliance with grant work plans, schedules, grant reports, budgets, terms and conditions, and is highly efficient regarding property reporting with all awarding agencies. The Parish is proud of all the improvements that are able to be completed and enjoyed by all Parish residents through our many successful grant partnerships. The Parish and their staff are skilled in project management and will monitor all grant activities to ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.



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Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. DeSoto Parish, Louisiana, (lead applicant) is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant as a as a general-purpose unit of local government as defined under 2 CFR §200.64.
- b. The Parish is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Number and Eligibility of Non-lead Coalition Members

- a. Non-lead members of this Coalition Assessment Grant are the City of Mansfield, Louisiana, and Village of South Mansfield, Louisiana. Both entities are local governments pursuant to 2 CFR §200.64 and are eligible to participate in this project.
- b. The Non-lead members are not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code

3. Target Areas

All census tracts (CTs) listed (in all target areas) are considered **Justice40 Disadvantaged communities**/census tracts.

- *DeSoto Parish – Lead Member (Target Area 1):* CT 22031950600, CT 22031950300
- *City of Mansfield - Non-Lead Member (Target Area 2):* CT 22031950400
- *Village of South Mansfield – Non-Lead Member (Target Area 3):* CT 22031950500

4. Existing Brownfields Grants to Non-lead Members

The non-lead coalition members are not the recipients of an open cooperative agreement for MARC Grant funding.

5. Coalition Agreement

Letters signed by each Coalition member citing the agreement to participate in the EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant are attached.

6. Community Involvement

In an effort to gain community support and inform the local coalition-member communities, meetings were held to discuss the need for Brownfield Assessment Grant funding on October 2, 2023, and October 16, 2023. Over the past year, the coalition members have discussed the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within the coalition member target areas.

DeSoto Parish and the coalition members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by the coalition members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield coalition meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website. Target-area, resident-identified sites will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and the future land-use redevelopment plans. Comments/questions gathered during Brownfield Program meetings from residents, especially those underserved residents most affected by the project,



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will be collected and addressed through the Parish Facebook page, brownfield website, and at the Parish meetings **every month** throughout the grant period.

Coalition member and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the coalition member areas. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the program's status. To share the coalition's Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in the Parish office, coalition members' offices and on the brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared throughout the community at coalition members' public meetings held within the target areas and local libraries. The program director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly council meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.

Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual and in-person meetings to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual and in-person small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions.

7. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

DeSoto Parish affirms that it does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

8. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.