

COMMUNITIES  
FOR A BETTER  
ENVIRONMENT  
established 1978

**EPA CWA Grant Narrative Document**

**Application for EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant  
Narrative Information Sheet**

**1. Applicant Identification**

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)  
6325 Pacific Blvd. Ste 300  
Huntington Park, CA 90255

**2. Funding Requested**

- a. **Grant Type:** Community-Wide Assessment
- b. **Federal Funds Requested** \$500,000

**3. Location**

Walnut Park & Florence Firestone unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, California

**4. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information**

Florence Firestone unincorporated area of Los Angeles County -- Census Tracts: 5348.04, 5349, 5350.01, 5350.02, 5351.01, 5351.02, 5352, 5353, 5354, 2421

Walnut Park unincorporated area of Los Angeles County -- Census Tracts: 5347, 5348.02, 5348.03, 5348.04

Site 1: 1552 E. Florence Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90001

Site 2: Florence & Whitsett Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90001

Site 3: 7662 S Central Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90001

Site 4: 2230 E Florence Ave, Huntington Park, CA 90255

**5. Contacts**

- a. Project Director
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- b. Chief Executive
  - i. **Name, Title** Darryl Molina Sarmiento, Exec Dir.

- ii. **Phone Number** (323) 826-9771
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- iv. **Mailing Address** 6325 Pacific Blvd. #300, Huntington Park, CA 90255

**6. Population**

FLORENCE-FIRESTONE POPULATION: 64,787

WALNUT PARK POPULATION: 15,939

**7. Other Factors**

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 10,000 or less.	No
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	No
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	No
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).	No
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	No
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	Yes, pg 4
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Yes, pg 4
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	Yes, pps 1—6
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/areawide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	Yes, pps 7--8
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing.	No

**8. Letter from State Authority (not included in the three-page limit) – attached to Project Narrative Attachment Form**

**9. Releasing Copies of Applications -- None – full application is publicly available**

## Florence Corridor Revitalization Project – Communities for a Better Environment

### 1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLAN FOR REVITALIZATION

#### a. Target Area and Brownfields – i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and community members have worked closely with Los Angeles (LA) County to develop plans such as the Green Zone<sup>1</sup> Program and Florence-Firestone Community Plan<sup>2</sup> that encompass our proposed target areas. However, brownfield revitalization efforts have been slow along the Florence corridor. In our outreach to landowners, we learned that many are unaware of the potential partnerships, opportunities, and incentives that federal and state programs offer. And there is no coordinating organization that brings all the parties together to build partnerships and identify win-win scenarios towards a community-driven and equity-based revitalization process. CBE plans to fill this gap.

**Target Area 1: Florence-Firestone (FF) (Census Tracts 5348.04, 5349, 5350.01, 5350.02, 5351.01, 5351.02, 5352, 5353, 5354, 2421)** is an unincorporated area of the South LA region of LA County. The population of FF is 64,787 (2020 Census), spans 3.5 square miles and is bordered by the City of Huntington Park and unincorporated Walnut Park to the east, and the City of LA to the north, west, and south. The area was once farmland and transformed into an industrial district, bringing traditional large-scale manufacturing. In FF, residences were built in proximity to local industries such as Goodyear and Firestone Tire. Today, FF contains several industrially zoned properties which are directly adjacent to residential zones. Most of these industrial sites are now vacant, aging and not compliant with current development standards. These contaminated parcels have had significant environmental health and adverse quality-of-life impacts on residents. CBE community leaders have engaged with addressing these issues<sup>3</sup> over the past decade as we pointed them out to Administrator Regan in the toxic tour of this area during his August 2021 visit. Recent past uses of vacant industrial sites, including a number of brownfield sites we have identified in our target area, consist of outside storage, warehouses, auto-repair shops, materials recycling, and auto-dismantling, which have caused wide range of negative health impacts for residents in this vulnerable community. FF area ranks in the 98th percentile for cancer risk and 92nd percentile for the respiratory health index.<sup>4</sup> Per CalEnviroScreen 4.0, this area is in the 89th percentile for pollution burdens, 93rd percentile for cardiovascular disease, and 80th percentile for asthma—among the highest risk groups in California.<sup>5</sup> Tenants in FF have the highest displacement vulnerability<sup>6</sup> of all the communities.

**Target Area 2: Walnut Park (WP) (Census Tracts 5347, 5348.02, 5348.03, 5348.04)** is an unincorporated area of the South LA region of LA County, bordered by the City of Huntington Park to the north and east, FF to the west, and the City of South Gate to the south. WP spans 0.75 square miles.<sup>7</sup> According to a 2020 Census report, WP had a population of 15,939.<sup>8</sup> This area has one of the highest rates of overcrowding in the US.<sup>9</sup> The community faces several local environmental issues, including high levels of pollution from nearby industrial uses, low urban tree canopy coverage, and a challenging pedestrian and bicycle environment. WP ranks in the 98th percentile for cancer risk and 92nd percentile for the respiratory health index.<sup>10</sup> Per CalEnviroScreen 4.0, this area is in the 84th percentile for pollution burdens and 97th percentile for cardiovascular disease—among the highest risks in California.<sup>11</sup>

For this project, CBE is focusing on the Florence Corridor located within FF and WP. Census tracts along this corridor are also designated as disadvantaged communities per CEJST. The brownfields at or near FF and WP target areas have been a nuisance and have raised safety concerns especially for children walking to nearby schools, according to CBE community members. According to our focus group discussions with residents, these brownfields are both a visual blight and show signs of neglect. CBE community members/leaders in FF and WP areas agree that their community has many needs and vacant/contaminated areas, as well as many nearby abandoned industrial parcels, which should be cleaned up and used to address community needs such as: parks/parklets, cooling/resilience centers, recreational facilities and affordable housing. This grant will provide the much-needed resources for CBE and residents to coordinate a community-driven process for creating a vision for the FF and WP areas with a focus on catalytic planning for priority sites. This project can support CBE, community leaders/residents and partners to play a central role of bringing various parties together to identify win-win strategies to address various community needs identified during our focus group discussions. Many of the landowners in the area are individuals or small partnerships who have shown interest in learning about federal/state opportunities and want to know how they can comply and best take advantage of new LA County zoning designations and development plans.

**ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites:** CBE identified 17 (16 in FF and 1 in WP) abandoned and underutilized sites that were once auto repair shops, junk storage, and retail shops. Past activities on these sites trouble CBE community members, including but not

<sup>1</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/green-zones-program/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/florence-firestone-community-plan/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cbecal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Central-Metals-fact-sheet-5-21-13.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

<sup>6</sup> <https://escholarship.org/content/qt6qz6f7vr/qt6qz6f7vr.pdf?t=rwyy5w&v=lg>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/walnutparkcdpcalifornia,carsoncitycalifornia/BZA115221>

<sup>8</sup> <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/walnut-park-ca>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/Ch8\\_Step%20by%20Step\\_Public%20Review%20Draft\\_March2019.pdf](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/Ch8_Step%20by%20Step_Public%20Review%20Draft_March2019.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

limited to, air quality and noise concerns; safety issues for pedestrians, especially school age children; and operations that lack proper permits or safeguards. CBE took this preliminary list of sites and engaged with our youth and adult community groups to collect feedback. CBE held a strategic planning meeting to begin prioritizing sites based on all the community information received. Key takeaways include: Florence Blvd needs revitalization due to the number of vacant/abandoned lots that pose threats to the community; the community sees the revitalization of Florence Blvd and surrounding areas within FF and WP as a priority; there is heavy foot traffic, according to community members, due to new transit-oriented development which highlights the need for revitalization and creating safer and healthier walking/biking pathways; there are community concerns about gentrification and members want CBE to play a more central role in this process, given our successful past collaboration with affordable housing groups. Based on these community concerns/criteria--which are equally significant--and the potential interest of some property owners, CBE has initially identified four potential priority sites at or near Florence Corridor in the target areas that can be used for infill open space and community uses. During Q1-Q3 of this project under task 3 (Comprehensive Site Inventory), CBE will firm up these criteria and finalize this preliminary list into a final list of 4 priority sites that will go under further environmental site assessment.

<p><b>Site 1: 1552 E. Florence Ave. Los Angeles, 90001, CA (FF target area)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current status: Vacant land– Vacant since 2007 ( 9,897 sq ft)</li> <li>• Zoning: Mixed-Use (per FF TOD Specific Plan and FF Community Plan)</li> <li>• Owner: Moris Moussavieh (Private Owner); purchase date: 10/2009</li> <li>• Qualified opportunity zone</li> <li>• Near Florence Blue Line Metro Station - 5-minute walk</li> <li>• Past uses: storage yard, auto repair shop and store</li> <li>• Nearby historic Uses: Dry cleaning, listings of LUSTs</li> <li>• <b>Potential contamination: PERC, VOCs, lead, asbestos, waste oil</b></li> <li>• <b>Potential Reuse: cooling center, adult school, community space, business incubator</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Site 2: Florence &amp; Whitsett Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90001 (AIN: 6025-005-033) (FF target area)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Status: Vacant (8,294 sq ft)</li> <li>• Zoning: Residential Medium</li> <li>• Pervious zoning: Industrial</li> <li>• Owner: Alfonso &amp; Amelia Rodarte (Private Owners)</li> <li>• Past Uses: Car / Junk Storage</li> <li>• Nearby historic uses: dry cleaning facilities, auto repair shop, listings of LUSTs</li> <li>• <b>Potential contamination: PERC, VOCs, lead, asbestos, PCBs</b></li> <li>• <b>Potential Reuse: parklet, community pool, cultural space</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Site 3: 7662 S Central Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90001 (FF target area)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Status: Vacant (2,300 Sq. Ft--estimated)</li> <li>• Zoning: Mixed Use (FF TOD Specific Plan and FF Community Plan)</li> <li>• Last Purchased: 2002 / Owner: Gilberto &amp; Amelia Avila</li> <li>• From 2007 - 2017 the site was completely vacant (just land)</li> <li>• Past uses: restaurant, demolished burned structure, junk yard &amp; storage</li> <li>• Nearby historic uses: dry cleaning facilities, auto repair shops.</li> <li>• <b>Potential contamination: PERC, VOCs, lead, asbestos</b></li> <li>• <b>Potential Reuse: cooling/resilience center, adult school, business incubator, cultural space</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Site 4: 2230 E Florence Ave, Huntington Park, CA 90255 (FF target area)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Status: Vacant (9,924 sq. ft.)</li> <li>• Zoning: Mixed Use (per FF TOD Specific Plan and FF Community Plan)</li> <li>• Past uses: Garage, Warehouse, Guadalajara Nightclub</li> <li>• Nearby historic uses: machine shop, gasoline service stations, auto repair shops</li> <li>• <b>Potential contamination: lead, asbestos, PCBs, VOCs</b></li> <li>• <b>Potential Reuse: Park, business incubator, affordable housing</b></li> </ul>

**iii. Identifying Additional Sites:** Our focus is on the Florence corridor, but we will consider other sites throughout FF and WP in the event there are remaining funds and/or greater interest by other landowners to engage in our target areas. CBE will work with community partners and target-area residents to identify and prioritize additional sites through a comprehensive site inventory. We will evaluate and prioritize other abandoned/underused properties using similar tentative criteria that we used before such as: community needs, desired reuses, access to site, feasibility, and impacts on health outcomes. During Q1-Q3 and under task 3, CBE will firm up these criteria and finalize the list of 10+ sites that will be further explored through a Phase I desk study (Q2) to inform further assessment, visioning, and planning for catalytic projects. If there is interest in engagement on the part of additional property owners and opportunity to create parks, affordable housing or other community envisioned priority end-uses, CBE will coordinate those discussions and will continue identifying and assessing additional sites as resources allow. We will also continue to identify additional funding to complement EPA funding.

**b. Revitalization of the Target Area – i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans**

Our strategy is to work with LA County, nonprofit park developers, affordable housing groups, land trusts, and other partners to build community spaces that comply with the following 4 regional and 6 local plans. This project creates an area-wide vision, including an implementation plan focusing on the Florence Corridor as well as the broader areas of FF and WP, paving the way for priority catalytic projects. In order to supplement existing planning, CBE conducted a preliminary focus group discussion with community members regarding reuse, and among the suggestions were: *Public Library; Adult School; Mirco-Business Incubator; Parks/Parklet; Community Garden; Community Pool; Cooling/Resilience Center*. In the full implementation phase, CBE will rely on our partnerships to build parklets, and community centers in smaller lots, and business incubators and affordable housing units in bigger lots. Additionally, creation of open space and community centers makes it more attractive for nonprofit organizations to develop affordable housing. We will also rely on our good relationships with the LA County Supervisors (SD 4 and SD 2)<sup>12</sup> to champion some of these projects and/or identify additional resources for the County to take the lead in advancing proposed catalytic projects.

<sup>12</sup> <https://hahn.lacounty.gov/> & <https://mitchell.lacounty.gov/2nd-district/>

**County-wide plans include:** LA County Sustainability Plan.<sup>13</sup> This plan has clear goals for resilient and healthy community environments through infrastructure, sustainable land use, and accessible public spaces. Community priorities for parks, cooling centers, and community spaces (pools/gardens) align with Goals 1, 2, 3, and 6 of this plan. Climate Action Plan (CAP).<sup>14</sup> This plan focuses on actions to reduce GHG emissions in unincorporated LA County, which includes the FF and WP target areas. Community priorities which we have identified align with the plan's reuse strategies--places for cooling, parks, and community gardens--addressing some issues around extreme heat, air quality, and reduction of GHG emissions. Additionally, Florence Corridor has limited shade and tree canopy, which is needed for transit-dependent neighborhoods such as FF and WP. Green Zones Program.<sup>15</sup> This program is based on a county ordinance that seeks to enhance public health and land use compatibility in the unincorporated communities that bear a disproportionate pollution burden. CBE staff and community members were engaged in creation of this plan and supported LA County Planning staff with ground-truthing the county data. FF has been designated a green zone district. Parks and green spaces would comply with the development standards set forth by the ordinance. Metro Area Long-Range Plan.<sup>16</sup> This plan provides a detailed roadmap for how the LA County Metropolitan Transit Agency will plan, build, operate, maintain, and partner for improved mobility in the next 30 years. Florence Ave. has heavy foot traffic but little transit investment although the Blue Line Light Rail is nearby. Investing in redevelopment in the corridor will promote better transit, less congestion, complete streets, and access to more opportunities.

**WP-specific plans include:** WP Community Parks and Recreation Plan.<sup>17</sup> WP has a severe deficit of parkland. This plan provides a vision and roadmap for a greener WP, including a more extensive network of publicly accessible green spaces and recreational facilities. WP Community Pedestrian Plan.<sup>18</sup> This plan aims to address corridors in WP that have concentrations of traffic collisions - identified as having had 3 or more fatal or severe injury collisions within a half mile segment between 2013-2017, and work in this project will further engage the community in a better implementation of this plan.

**FF specific plans include:** FF Community Plan.<sup>19</sup> This is a land use development guide intended to direct development and land use decisions to achieve the community's vision for public safety, economic development, transit-oriented development, accessible public spaces, environmental justice, mobility, and connectivity. The Florence Avenue corridor has a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, providing a central concentration of activities that can integrate with the commercial areas and be considered for the development of public gathering spaces. This plan presents an opportunity to develop into an active and vibrant community center with a mix of uses, including residential, retail, parks, services, offices, and public facilities in a compact, walkable, and transit-oriented environment. FF Community Parks and Recreation Plan.<sup>20</sup> This plan is a guide for the strategic planning of parks and recreation services that can meet the needs of residents in FF, which is significantly park deficient. FF Community Pedestrian Plan.<sup>21</sup> This plan aims to address corridors in FF that have concentrations of traffic collisions identified as having had 3 or more fatal or severe injury collisions within a half mile segment between 2013-2017. FF Transit Oriented District Specific Plan.<sup>22</sup> This plan proposes tailored land-use policies in the FF Community to provide affordable housing options, encourage transit-oriented development (TOD), promote active transportation, increase accessible transit options, and reduce vehicles miles traveled. Our initial priority sites are located near the Florence A Line station.

**ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:** The clean-up of the sites will immediately reduce exposure to environmental threats to residents. The priority sites' accessibility to transit reduces automobile dependence for residents and commuters. Although none of the initial redevelopment ideas discussed in this grant application will displace businesses or residents, CBE will employ redevelopment strategies that will be designed to prevent the potential of any future displacement. We will work with our affordable housing partners; LA County Sustainability Office; offices of supervisors Mitchell and Hahn; and business stakeholders to preserve existing affordable housing options and businesses as well as produce more dedicated affordable housing units. Parks will bring vital improvement to the corridor<sup>23</sup>: CBE community members have emphasized that they want more exposure to nature in their neighborhoods. In focus group discussions, members emphasized the need to create a more beautiful Florence Corridor that helps develop a sense of place, a venue for families to engage in social activities and improve safety for families, especially for school-aged children. Members also emphasized the need to have easier access to parklets for younger children to play and for child-care providers to assemble to build *community*. Benefits of cooling centers are also important and obvious<sup>24</sup>: they provide for a low-cost heat intervention. A cooling center along the Florence Corridor is prime for community access; it helps reduce the risk of heat-related morbidity, especially for children and the elderly.

<sup>13</sup> <https://ourcountyla.lacounty.gov/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/climate-action-plan/documents/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/green-zones-program/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.metro.net/about/plans/long-range-transportation-plan/>

<sup>17</sup> [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dpr/240517\\_WalnutParkCommunityPlanReduced.pdf](https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dpr/240517_WalnutParkCommunityPlanReduced.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/Ch8\\_Step%20by%20Step\\_Public%20Review%20Draft\\_March2019.pdf](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/stepbystep/docs/Ch8_Step%20by%20Step_Public%20Review%20Draft_March2019.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/florence-firestone-community-plan/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://parks.lacounty.gov/florence-firestone-community-parks-and-recreation-plan/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://storymaps.com/stories/7484b87f79d8457da98a656e5205f3f0>

<sup>22</sup> <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e9823a0f2a9440399f04f1bbb44d97d2>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.brec.org/WhyParksareImportant>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9378433/#:~:text=Cooling%20centers%20are%20a%20common,risk%20of%20heat%20related%20morbidity>

All proposed projects, such as a cooling center, business incubator, cultural center, affordable housing, recreational facility, and other end-uses identified by the community, will comply with all requirements and/or recommendations of the LA County Climate Action Plan<sup>25</sup> and the most current codes and standards, including all parts of Title 24 of California Code of Regulations. The 2022 Energy Codes promotes energy efficiency, electric heat pumps, electric-ready requirements, solar panels, and battery storage among other measures. Buildings applying for permit after January of 2023 must comply with the 2022 Energy Code.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, CBE will work with our partners to identify resources to employ best practices as part of their redevelopment strategies.

**c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources – i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse:**

CBE staff are passionate about this project and will identify additional resources for supporting this transformative vision. In addition to applying for this grant, CBE is making every effort to secure additional funding to advance its green zone and brownfield revitalization goals. We have funding for general operating support from private foundations that support our green zone vision and will complement resources for this project. We will explore funding from a variety of resources including private, state, and federal grant options to supplement brownfields assessment, cleanup and reuse efforts, including Dept of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) brownfield funding and recently released Technical Assistance Grant program, CA Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Community Resilience Centers grants, various parks and open space funding, Urban Greening Program, USDA Urban and Community Forestry, NPS Land and Water Conservation Fund, EJ-focused grants (EPA Community Change grants, CalEPA EJ Action grants), and other EPA funds. CBE will also explore funding opportunities from LA County Sales Tax Measures W and A, which invest dollars in clean/safe water, parks, open space, transportation, and climate resilience. Depending on the final redevelopment strategy for each priority site, CBE will evaluate which funds will help meet the project's goals. The level of funding needed for each proposed catalytic project will be assessed in task 5 (Clean Up & Reuse Planning) as part of the implementation plan of the Area Wide Strategic Planning Document.

**ii. Use of existing Infrastructure:** As the target areas will be infill development, existing infrastructure, such as water/sewer, streets, transportation, and power will be used. As redevelopment continues, infrastructure needs, such as green and pedestrian infrastructure, will be evaluated to consider immediate and future requirements. We will look into state and federal funding sources to supplement the current budget allocations for repair, maintenance, and new installations. Tax increment financing, such as Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts and Community Revitalization Investment Authorities, are also possibilities.

**2. COMMUNITY NEED & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT a. Community Need i. Need for Funding**

	FF	WP	LA County
Population	64,787	15,939	9,721,138
Unemployment	11%	7%	6.2%
Poverty Rate	23%	17%	14%
Percent Minority	99%	99%	74%
Under 18	30.4%	25.5%	20.4%
Median Household Income	\$53,478	\$68,708	\$77,456

FF and WP have historically been economically depressed areas. Decades of racial and environmental injustice have drained these communities. FF has “below average” school quality, high segregation rates and poverty zones, and an extreme housing burden, according to the LA County Indicators Tool.<sup>27</sup> Our proposed target areas are further burdened by the substantially growing need to remove severely blighted sites that represent a hazard to the community. FF and WP are part of unincorporated LA County, and residents rely on the county for public services, which are often stretched thin. In addition, LA County, with 10 million residents (making it the nation’s most populous) and one of the largest counties in land mass in the US, only has five elected supervisors, meaning each one has large territories and constituencies of 2 million people. COVID-19 placed an additional burden on local governments

for funding. These areas – with their overcrowded housing and large number of front-line workers – were highly impacted by the pandemic. This has had lasting consequences, including increasing unemployment rates, reductions to disposable income, and increased reliance on social safety net programs. FF has an unemployment rate of 11% compared to the county average of 6.2% and poverty rates at FF and WP are 23% and 17% respectively compared to LA County average of 14%. EPA’s support through this grant would be vital for CBE to bring necessary resources and coordination capacity for the environmental assessments and community-based equity-driven planning to this deserving project area. Funding and support for this project also sends a strong signal to various partners and stakeholders that EPA is committed in cleaning up one of the most pollution-burdened communities in the region paving the way for longer term transformation of the project area starting with creating successful catalytic projects.

**ii. Threats to sensitive Populations**

**1. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations**

**FF Statistics:** FF is a majority self-identified Hispanic and Latino Community. About 93% of residents are Hispanic/Latino and 6% Black/African American. The median household income is \$53,478 (2021), compared with \$77,456 for LA County. About 23% of FF residents live below the poverty line, compared to 14% countywide.<sup>28</sup> The high poverty rate in the area is a strong indicator of poor

<sup>25</sup> <https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/climate-action-plan/documents/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-energy-efficiency-standards/2022-building-energy-efficiency>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c3567118a1384e2c90ea221f9abcf37/>

<sup>28</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2021). American Community Survey 5-year estimates

nutrition and health disparities. Park Access is limited: Park space in FF totals 1.2 acres per 1000 residents compared to county average of 3.3 acres. Tenants in FF have the highest displacement vulnerability of all the communities.

**WP Statistics:** WP is primarily Hispanic/Latino and has a large immigrant population. About 98% of residents are Hispanic/Latino and 46% are foreign born. The median household income is \$68,708(2021), compared with \$77,456 for LA County. About 17% of WP residents live below the poverty line, compared to 14% countywide.<sup>29</sup> Park access is limited, and WP lacks open space. These factors create an undue burden for sensitive populations living near brownfield sites.

Both target areas are classified as disadvantaged communities per *CalEnviroScreen*<sup>30</sup>, indicating residents in the target areas suffer most from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens. Using EPA Brownfield Assessment funds to identify contamination and reduce the threat to sensitive populations in the target areas will be the first positive step towards redevelopment. The initial priority sites have been selected with the purpose of reducing risk to the public. Creating more parks and open space along with general revitalization of the Florence Corridor will make streets safer for active transportation, improving the quality of life for residents. Removing contamination from land will lower the exposure to a wide range of pollutants, lowering the pollution burden especially for sensitive receptors such as children, the elderly, and people with existing health conditions.

**2. Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions:** The FF target area ranks in the 98th percentile for cancer risk and 92nd percentile for the respiratory health index.<sup>31</sup> Per *CalEnviroScreen* 4.0, this area is in the 89th percentile for pollution burdens, 93rd percentile for cardiovascular disease, and 80th percentile for asthma – among the highest in California. The WP target area ranks in the 98th percentile for cancer risk and 92nd percentile for the respiratory health index.<sup>32</sup> Per *CalEnviroScreen* 4.0, this area is in the 84th percentile for pollution burdens and 97th percentile for cardiovascular disease, and also among the areas with the highest risk factors and incidences of respiratory illnesses among California census tracts. In addition to information gathered for this proposal, CBE will continue to conduct secondary research on the cumulative impacts of stationary and mobile sources of pollution in the FF and WP areas, as part of our community health assessment for this project area. One of the sources of pollution and nuisance that negatively impacts the quality of life for these two communities, are the brownfields. Land contamination is exposing the community, especially sensitive receptors, to a wide range of adverse health impacts from potential exposure to lead, asbestos, PCBs, and VOCs. We will complete a more comprehensive community health assessment based on available data and focus group discussions. Parks will improve physical and mental health among several other benefits. The health benefits of cooling centers are obvious and spending even a few hours in a cool environment reduces elders’ risk of heat exposure and other heat-related illness. Community facilities improve the quality of life and health for the FF and WP neighborhoods.

**3. Environmental Justice – a. Identification of Environmental Justice Issues:** Poor land use and zoning and underinvestment generate ripple effects of negative consequences reflected in indicators from EJ Screen and the designation of the entire target area and the priority sites as disadvantaged under CEJEST. The target areas are exposed to noise pollution, racial inequity, and have been dissected by rail corridors and interstate highways. Withdrawal of union job manufacturing within the community increased unemployment and poverty rates. The target areas were selected because they clearly demonstrate significant environmental justice issues. According to *EJ Screen.gov*, the FF target area (Census Tracts 5348.04, 5349, 5350.01, 5350.02, 5351.01, 5351.02, 5352, 5353, 5354, 2421) ranks in the 70-80th percentile for low income, 94th percentile for people of color, and 97th percentile for less than a high school education. As a dense community surrounded by the region’s major transportation systems, FF’s air quality is among the worst in California.<sup>33</sup> According to *EJ Screen.gov*, the WP target area (Census Tracts 5347, 5348.02, 5348.03, 5348.04) ranks 80-90th percentile for low-income, 94th percentile for people of color, and 99th percentile for less than a high school education. Exposure to environmental contaminants, poverty, and low education rates are the result of neglect for several decades. These communities have not experienced the same economic growth and vitality as the rest of LA County; assessments are needed on all sites before redevelopment can occur.

EPA EJ Screen Environmental Justice Indexes for Target Areas		
Environmental Justice Index	State Percentile (FF)	State Percentile (WP)
Particulate Matter 2.5	93	94
Hazardous Waste Proximity	90	91
Lead Paint	90	91
Air Toxics Cancer Risk	95	97
Toxic Release to Air	91	92

**b. Advancing Environmental Justice**

This grant will advance environmental justice through CBE’s mission “to build people’s power to communities of color and low-income communities to achieve environmental health and justice by preventing and reducing pollution and building green, healthy and sustainable communities” through local empowerment and creating much needed amenities. The Brownfields Assessment Grant will address several EJ issues plaguing these communities by focusing on the Biden Administration’s Justice 40 initiatives to reduce disproportionate environmental stressors/burdens. All the beneficial land uses

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (2021). American Community Survey 5-year estimates

<sup>30</sup> <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40>

<sup>31</sup> <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

<sup>33</sup> Florence-Firestone Community Pedestrian Plan

that CBE members identified in their initial focus group discussions in preparing for this project (such as parks/parklets, cooling centers, adult-schools, business incubators, as well as cultural spaces and affordable housing developments) will offer meaningful changes to quality of life for FF and WP residents. Negative environmental consequences and threats will be reduced and, in some cases reversed, upon the identification, assessment, and remediation process made possible by the EPA Brownfield Grant, which will help remove the unknowns and bring new life and business opportunities to these areas. It will set the stage for redevelopment, enabling community residents to directly benefit from new spaces. The proposed reuse of the priority sites and the vision for revitalization in the area, will improve the health and well-being of sensitive populations and remedy many of the environmental and socioeconomic justice issues affecting our underserved communities.

**b. Community Engagement – i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles**

<i>Name of org./entity/group</i>	<i>Point of Contact (name &amp; email)</i>	<i>Specific involvement in Project or assistance provided</i>
Office of Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell	Laura Muraida, <a href="mailto:lmuraida@bos.lacounty.gov">lmuraida@bos.lacounty.gov</a>	Supporting equitable revitalization measures in FF
Office of Supervisor Janice Hahn	Joel Torrez Jr., <a href="mailto:jtorez@bos.lacounty.gov">jtorez@bos.lacounty.gov</a>	Supporting equitable revitalization measures in WP
CCLR	Ignacio Dayrit, <a href="mailto:ignacio.dayrit@cclr.org">ignacio.dayrit@cclr.org</a>	Technical Assistance with visioning, environmental assessments, and reuse strategies
Estolano Advisors	Cecilia V. Estolano, <a href="mailto:cecilia@estolanoadvisors.com">cecilia@estolanoadvisors.com</a>	Technical Assistance with redevelopment and reuse strategy
The Maxima Group	Patricia Flynn, <a href="mailto:pflynn@themaximagroup.com">pflynn@themaximagroup.com</a>	Technical Assistance with real estate and market analysis
DTSC	Jose F. Diaz, <a href="mailto:Jose.Diaz@dtsc.ca.gov">Jose.Diaz@dtsc.ca.gov</a>	Technical support and regulatory oversight; cleanup strategies
LA County Sustainability Office	Ali Frazzini, <a href="mailto:afrazzini@csso.lacounty.gov">afrazzini@csso.lacounty.gov</a>	Supporting our planning process as it reinforces key elements of County's Sustainability Plan
LA Neighborhood Land Trust (LANT)	Tori Kjer, <a href="mailto:tkjer@lanlt.org">tkjer@lanlt.org</a>	Exploring partnerships for land acquisition and creating open space/parks
Placelt	James Roias, [REDACTED]	Helping with hands-on visioning sessions for residents in FF and WP
Hollywood Community Housing	Sarah Letts, <a href="mailto:sletts@hollywoodhousing.org">sletts@hollywoodhousing.org</a>	Identifying opportunities for building affordable housing in the FF and WP
Property owners	N/A	Provide access to sites for assessment and reuse planning
A Community of Friends (ACOF)	Dora Leong Gallo <a href="mailto:dgallo@acof.org">dgallo@acof.org</a>	Exploring opportunities for providing housing for people experiencing homelessness and affected by mental illness

**iii. Incorporating Community Input:** CBE Youth and Adult organizers each will hold monthly meetings with community residents/members--for a total of 24 meetings--to gather feedback/input about every stage of this project such as: community health assessment; area wide planning; results of different investigations by consultants/researchers on land-use/reuse. At the beginning of the project, organizers will offer community members a tour of FF and WP as well as a walking tour of the Florence Corridor. Community members will also contribute to data collection during comprehensive site inventory, continuing to build on the process which they have already started in identifying brownfields in their neighborhoods within the project area. Residents will also participate in community liability/asset mapping exercises and will work towards creating a common vision for the project area as well as identifying specific catalytic sites and projects. Additionally, we will have visioning sessions with the help of CCLR and Placelt to engage the community in the process of creating a common vision and channeling their inputs into the area-wide planning tasks. CBE will offer 2 half-day-long leadership development training sessions in a popular education format to creatively engage and exchange knowledge about different aspects of this project. At all community events, we will announce agenda items, action items, and feedback opportunities. For meetings and printed material, we will provide information in English and Spanish. Should in-person meetings be infeasible, CBE will implement Zoom and other online engagement methods. Childcare and food will either be donated by CBE members or will be provided through complementary funding from private CBE donors. Community input will be channeled into the steering committee of the project that consists of core community residents/members in the project area and key CBE project staff for final recommendations.

**3.TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS**

**a. Description of Tasks / Activities and Outputs**

<b>TASK 1: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT</b>
<b>Project Implementation:</b> CBE's Project Manager (PM) will convene weekly meetings with project staff to ensure the team members are clear about the goals, tasks, and deliverables of the project at every stage. PM will identify and retain the consultants for this project related to various tasks in the project including but not limited to assessments of environmental sites, land use/reuse research, and area wide planning. PM will inform project partners of the launch of the project and will convene a meeting.
<b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b>



<p>A) Team meetings will take place weekly throughout the project period--Q1-Q8;  B) ACRES and financial reports will be filed quarterly--Q1-Q8;  C) Consultant will be identified--Q1;  D) Meeting of project partners--Q1</p>
<p><b>Task/Activity Lead:</b>  A) CBE PM will take the lead in coordinating internal and external meetings;  B) PM will take the lead in procuring consultants, will get feedback from project staff, project partners, consultants, and EPA TA liaisons.</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b>  A) PM will work with team members to create a <i>Project Roadmap</i>, which includes a detailed task list for Q1-Q8 tasks and timeline clearly identifying who is the lead on each task, what are the deliverables and when outcomes are expected; B) Scope of work and contract for consultants are finalized; C) Meeting notes from project partner meetings and interview notes for those who cannot attend.</p>
<p><b>TASK 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b></p>
<p><b>Project Implementation:</b>  A) CBE PM will work with CBE organizers to develop an <u>Outreach &amp; Engagement Plan</u>;  B) CBE organizers will work with the PM and CBE communications staff to develop flyers, social media posts, phone banking transcripts and facts sheets about this project. CBE will also develop leadership development training sessions, so residents of the project area fully engage with the vision, goals, objectives, and tasks of this project as well as the vision and goals of US EPA for designing this grant program;  C) CBE Youth and Adult organizers each will hold monthly meetings with community residents/members to gather feedback/input.</p>
<p><b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b>  A) Creation of the Outreach &amp; Engagement Plan will be completed—Q1;  B) <u>Leadership Development Training</u> material will be developed--Q1 &amp; Q2; factsheets be produced: Q1-Q8;  C) Hands-on visioning and community meetings will take place twice a month: Q1-Q8.</p>
<p><b>Task/Activity Lead:</b>  A) PM will work with organizers in completing the <u>Outreach &amp; Engagement Plan</u>;  B) CBE Organizers will work with PM and CBE communications staff on developing outreach material for community residents;  C) PM and organizers will take the lead on implementation of the <u>Outreach &amp; Engagement Plan</u> with support from other CBE staff.</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b> A) Outreach &amp; Engagement Plan; B) Outreach &amp; educational material such as: flyers, social media posts, phone banking transcripts &amp; facts sheets about this project; C) Leadership development trainings; D) Deliverables from this outreach &amp; engagement strategy include: More complete health assessments of the project area; 50 completed community surveys; one completed community liability asset/liability list; one area-wide vision statement and 2-5 maps; two lists of amenities for the project area, one from youth and one from the adult members; two lists of priorities for catalytic sites for youth and adult members.</p>
<p><b>TASK 3: Comprehensive Site Inventory</b></p>
<p><b>Project Implementation:</b>  A) PM works with organizers, researchers, and residents to create a comprehensive list of all the brownfields in the FF and WP area;  B) Community members will go on a bus tour of FF and WP area and will go through a walking tour of the Florence corridor in project area to better familiarize themselves with preliminary criteria lists and initial priority sites;  C) CBE staff &amp; community members create a criteria list to rank different brownfields and identify which sites are top priority for environmental site assessment and more extensive planning as catalytic projects;  D) Use non-EPA funds to do a Phase I Desk study of 10+ sites in the FF and WP area to inform some of the community conversations;  E) Solidify criteria and finalize 4 priority sites.</p>
<p><b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b>  A) CBE will conduct these activities: Q1-Q3;  B) Tour for Q1 and monthly youth focus group discussions and monthly adult focus group discussions: Q1-Q3;  C) CBE staff will meet weekly and hold meetings with consultants as needed: Q1-Q3;  D) Phase I Desk Study to be completed by Q2.</p>
<p><b>Task/Activity Lead:</b> PM will work closely with organizers, researchers and residents/members engaged to implement the Project Roadmap.</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b> A) Finalized criteria list; B) Comprehensive list of brownfields in the project area; C) Final map of the project area showing different layers of information including brownfields, other key info &amp; <u>Final</u> priority sites D) Phase I Desk study of 10+ sites.</p>
<p><b>TASK 4: ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT</b></p>
<p><b>Project Implementation:</b>  A) CBE PM will provide consultants with the <u>Final list</u> of brownfields for phase I assessment; 4+ sites will go through phase I assessment and 1-2 sites will go through phase II assessment.  B) Consultants will develop QAPP;  C) We will continue to contact landowners along Florence corridor and surrounding sites and meet with them as needed, and we will identify those who are most interested in engaging with this project. We have already established contact with some landowners;  D) We will continue to upload info to the ACRES site.</p>
<p><b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) Detailed Phase I assessment of 4 priority sites will be performed in the first 6-12 months of the projects: Q3-Q4;</li> <li>B) Phase II assessment will be done in the second year of the project: Q5-Q6;</li> <li>C) We will finalize site access during the 6-12 months of the project--Q4;</li> <li>D) ACRES will be updated Quarterly: Q1-Q8.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task/Activity Lead:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) Phase I and Phase II assessments will be conducted by the contractors under the supervision PM &amp; DTSC;</li> <li>B) QAPP will be developed by consultants;</li> <li>C) CBE PM will update ACRES quarterly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outputs:</b> A) Detailed Phase I report on 4+ priority sites in the FF &amp; WP target area; B) Phase II report on 1-2 high priority site; C) updated ACRES database D) Finalized QAPP</p>
<p><b>TASK 5. CLEAN UP &amp; REUSE PLANNING</b></p>
<p><b>Project Implementation:</b> CBE will collect information and identify community priorities in monthly community focus groups. CBE staff &amp; consultants will evaluate environmental conditions and explore market feasibility for potential catalytic sites. CBE &amp; partners will also evaluate infrastructure data related to proposed reuse plan and community vision identifying needs/obstacles. CBE staff &amp; engaged members will finalize and select 1-4 sites as potential catalytic projects based on the priorities identified by community. In the site reuse assessment, we will interview LA County planners, property owners, local businesses, elected officials &amp; their staff; perform market analysis of land value and trends among other research activities. We will gather additional information on redevelopment opportunities and zoning restrictions and carefully explore the elements of other existing plans for FF and WP towards creating an <u>Area Wide Strategic Planning Document</u>.</p>
<p><b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Q1-Q8</p>
<p><b>Task/Activity Lead:</b> CBE PM will coordinate different aspects of this task making sure community and CBE team feedback is included in various analyses, and project staff and members/residents are regularly updated of new findings.</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b> <u>Area Wide Strategic Planning Document</u> – a comprehensive report (Implementation Plan) on viable strategies, funding sources and partnerships that can help advance the revitalization efforts of the Florence Corridor and surrounding areas and materialize the community's vision to extent that is feasible. The plan will identify potential catalytic projects.</p>

**Other tasks and outputs:** CBE will use additional funds from our private funders to support our partnerships with Estolano Associates in the redevelopment/reuse strategies. We will partner with Placelt and CCLR to support our hands-on community visioning/modeling sessions. LANT will help support identifying strategies towards creating parks in place of brownfields and our collaboration with Hollywood Community Housing and ACOF will help us identify affordable housing solutions for the community. We will consult with DTSC on Phase I and II. County officials will support equity, sustainability and anti-displacement strategies through interviews, meetings, and group discussions throughout the project.

**b. Cost Estimates**

**Task 1 (Q1-Q8):** includes 5% of Program Director (at \$93K/yr FTE); 20% of Research Director/PM (at 102K/yr FTE); and 5% of Adult Organizer, 2 Youth Organizers, and Researcher (at \$78K/yr FTE)\* Fringe: Calculated at 25% of Personnel\* Travel estimates 611 miles of travelling to various meeting locations and bringing members to meeting at 0.655 per mile Q1-Q6 for all project staff\*Supplies include cost of office supplies such as posters, butcher paper for 88 weekly project staff meetings at \$3/meeting\* Contractual includes cost for visioning exercises at \$175/hour \*Translation Services is 5.5 hours at \$100 per hour\* **Taks 2 (Q1-Q8):** includes 5% of Program Director (at \$93K/yr FTE); 10% of Research Director/PM (at 101K/yr FTE); and 25% of Adult Organizer & Youth Organizer (at \$78K/yr FTE), and 5% of another Youth Organizer and Researcher (at \$78K/yr FTE)\* Fringe: Calculated at 25% of Personnel\* Travel is estimates 61 miles of travelling to various meeting locations at .655/mile for all project staff\* Supplies include costs of 2,500 flyers and outreach material at the cost of 10 cents/page \*Contractual includes cost for visioning exercises at \$175/hour\* Translation Services is 7.5 hours at \$100 per hour for interpretation/translation\* **Task 3 (Q1-Q3):** includes 5% of Program Director (at \$93K/yr FTE); 10% of Research Director/PM (101K/yr FTE); and 10% of Adult Organizer & Youth Organizer (at \$78K/yr FTE), and 5% of another Youth Organizer and Researcher (at \$78K/yr FTE)\* Fringe: Calculated at 25% of Personnel\* Travel is the cost of a bus tour of project area at \$500/trip\* Supplies include poster, meeting material butcher paper at the cost of \$21/meeting for a total of 12 youth & 12 adult meeting for this period\* Contractual includes cost for visioning exercises at \$175/hour \* Translation Services is for 6.25 hours at \$100 per hour for interpretation in meetings and translation of material for 6-12 adult meetings as needed. **Task 4 (Q1-Q8):** includes 5% of Program Director (at \$93K/yr FTE); 10% of Research Director/PM (101K/yr FTE); and 5% of Youth Organizer and Researcher (at \$78K/yr FTE)\* Fringe: Calculated at 25% of Personnel\* Travel is covering part of the cost of attending the National Brownfield Conference for one CBE project staff\*Supplies include cost of weekly staff meeting supplies at the rate of 3\$/meeting for a total of 88 weekly meetings\* Contractual includes \$40K for Phase I of 4+ priority sites and 165K for Phase II assessment; it also includes \$24K to DTSC for regulatory oversight for 50 hours of staff time/yr and total of 100 hours for two years\* Translation Services is for 5 hours at \$100 per hour as needed for translation of assessment studies\***Task 5 (Q2-Q8):** includes 5% of Program Director (at \$93K/year FTE); 10% of Research Director/PM (101K/yr FTE); and 15% of Adult Organizer & Youth Organizer (at \$78K/yr FTE), and 5% of another Youth Organizer and Researcher (at \$78K/yr FTE)\* Fringe: Calculated at 25% of Personnel\* Travel covers part of the cost of attending the National Brownfield Conference for one CBE project

staff\*Supplies is the cost of materials for modeling and visioning workshops at the cost of \$231/session\* Contractual includes cost one hands-one visioning workshop at \$15,000/session\* Translation Services is 5 hours at \$100/hr for interpretation and translation.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks					Total
		(Task 1)	(Task 2)	(Task 3)	(Task 4)	(Task 5)	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$36,737.75	\$57,677.79	\$34,326.33	\$18,758.69	\$42,110.15	\$189,610.69
	Fringe	\$9,184.44	\$14,419.45	\$8,581.58	\$4,689.67	\$10,527.54	\$47,402.67
	Travel	\$400.00	\$40.00	\$500.00	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$1,740.00
	Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Supplies	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$500.00	\$250.00	\$462.00	\$1,712.00
	Contractual	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$205,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$209,000.00
	Regulatory Oversight (DTSC)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$24,000.00	\$0.00	\$24,000.00
	Construction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Translation Services	\$550.00	\$750.00	\$625.00	\$300.00	\$500.00	\$2,725.00
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>		\$48,122.18	\$74,137.23	\$45,532.91	\$253,398.36	\$54,999.68	\$476,190.36
<b>Total Indirect Costs</b>		\$2,406.11	\$3,706.86	\$2,276.65	\$12,669.92	\$2,749.98	\$23,809.52
<b>Total Budget</b>		\$50,528.29	\$77,844.09	\$47,809.55	\$266,068.27	\$57,749.67	\$499,999.87

**c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results:** We will use our Project Roadmap document (created during Q1 at Task1) to evaluate our progress. In addition to identifying outcomes, task schedule and lead staff, the roadmap will contain target benchmarks and measurable goals. At the end of each quarter, CBE youth and adult organizers will reserve 30 minutes for qualitative evaluation by community members about different elements of the project and how CBE staff and consultants are performing. CBE PM will also hold internal monthly staff meetings to gauge our progress looking at the project tasks, weekly scheduled activities, and proposed outputs and measurable targets. During these monthly project staff meetings, community evaluations will also be discussed and incorporated. PM will also coordinate with consultants, partners and TAs to get an external perspective of CBE progress. In addition, we will utilize EPA's ACRES database to track the outputs.

#### 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

**i & ii) Organizational Capacity /Organizational Structure:** Founded in 1978, CBE is one of the most highly respected environmental justice organizations in the nation. We have a \$6.7 million annual budget, which we have been able to grow from year to year. CBE has Legal, Research/Science, Organizing, Finance and Development departments with 52 full-time and half-time staff. CBE's Finance Director and Development Director coordinate the tracking of grants and contracts. Department directors report to the Executive Director and the 6-member Governing Board who meet quarterly. CBE directors meet weekly to manage different aspects of CBE work, including budget, program, and administration. This project will be co-managed by the Director of Research & Policy and the Southern California Program Director. They have more than 20 years of combined management experience and have successfully handled multi-year private foundation and government grants from NIH, US EPA, Caltrans, CalEPA, and LA County, successfully fulfilling programmatic, administrative, financial, and reporting requirements. Government grants are tracked separately with support from the Project Manager who confirms expenses related to the grant on a quarterly basis. CBE PM will meet with the project team weekly to ensure the advancement of objectives and tasks and fulfillment of reporting requirements. CBE has a long tradition of working with elected officials, decision-makers, experts, stakeholders, and residents. We have created successful projects with excellent results as evidenced by examples in section 4b below. CBE is nationally recognized EJ organization which has received awards and recognition from American Planning Association, Air Quality Management District, CA Air Resources Board, CA Energy Commission, and elected officials, including members of Congress for our contribution to promotion of EJ and managing complex planning and policy issues.

iii) Key Staff	Background / Expertise
Darryl Molina Sarmiento, Executive Director	Will oversee the overall compliance of this project with all the EPA requirements and will ensure proper communication among different CBE departments. Darryl has extensive management experience who has been in this role for 7 years. She started at CBE as a Youth Organizer in 2005.
Bahram Fazeli, Director of Research and Policy; Project Manager (Co-PM)	Has extensive project management experience and will coordinate different aspects of this project internally and with external partners and consultants. Bahram is an experienced policy analyst who has been a director for 10 years and has worked at CBE for 24 years. He has successfully managed several federal, state, and regional research & planning projects. Bahram will ensure compliance with the terms of the agreement.
Milton Hernandez Nimatuj, Program Co-Director (Co-PM)	Will manage the community engagement aspect of this work. Milton was promoted to SoCal Program Director in 2017, after serving 6 years as CBE's Youth Program Coordinator. Milton is a former CBE Youth EJ member & a native of Southeast Los Angeles (SELA).

Iliana Alvarado, Finance Director	Will be responsible for financial management and compliance with all the financial reporting requirements. Iliana is responsible for providing leadership, oversight, and management to CBE's financial department. Iliana has over fifteen years of experience in the non-profit sector.
Stephanie Taylor, Development Director	Will be responsible for tracking and managing the grant contract and ensuring compliance with the terms. Stephanie has worked for over 25 years with various non-profit organizations for which she had a role in fund development.
Roberto Bustillo, SELA Adult Organizer	Will be responsible for the outreach, leadership development and engagement of adult members/residents. Roberto spent 10 years working in the housing movement, which gave him a solid foundation to understand the link between the environment & health in vulnerable communities.
Janeth Preciado Vargas, SELA Youth Organizer	Will be responsible for the outreach, leadership development and engagement of youth members/residents. Janeth has organized for labor and immigrant rights, worked directly with high school-aged youth as a tutor, mentor, and coordinator of an educational program, and offered support to first-generation students of color on campus. Janeth is a native of the Florence-Firestone area.
Rossmery Zayas, SELA Youth Organizer	Will be responsible for the outreach, leadership development & engagement of youth members. Rossmery has advocated for CBE's local, regional/statewide campaigns and has worked on several campaigns to push out toxic facilities & practices. Rossmery is a native of SELA.
Ambar Rivera, Researcher	A GIS specialist, Ambar will support with maps/graphics for the project and currently is investigating various pollution sources locally.

**a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources:** CBE will comply with federal & California state codes to procure consultants. CBE promotes local hires and other equitable hiring practices, and uses these practices to solicit proposals and bids according to its procurement policy. CBE is committed to racial and economic equity because we recognize there is a need to center and prioritize the needs and voices of the communities in which we work – this EJ perspective is ‘baked-in’ to our recruitment and procurement practices and is central of mission, vision, and values of CBE. CBE is a community-based organization that prioritizes and places high value in local hiring and working with companies that adhere with strong labor practices. We will also receive support from the aforementioned partners in Sections 2 and 3 and will use the services provided by the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program as needed.

**b.1. Past Performance and Accomplishments:**

**Huntington Park Brown to Green Implementation Plan**<sup>34</sup> -- In 2010, CBE received a Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant from the EPA to conduct research, receive technical assistance, and create a community driven area-wide vision, plan, and implementation strategy to revitalize various brownfield sites in the city of Huntington Park. CBE worked successfully with the residents, the city, various partners, and consultants to develop an implementation plan. The findings and recommendations are outlined in our well-received published report, *Huntington Park Brown-to-Green Implementation Plan*. The city passed a resolution endorsing the recommendations, inspiring planners, and decision-makers to move forward with several catalytic sites identified by our project.

**Southeast LA Link Parks Project**<sup>35</sup> Since 2020, CBE has been collaborating with the LA Neighborhood Land Trust and two municipalities on this project. This initiative improves existing parks and creates new parks and green space by repurposing abandoned and underused properties, including brownfields, specifically focused on the cities of Maywood and Cudahy. This includes visioning and seeking funding and enhancing the capacity of community members to engage in revitalization efforts as well as creating an implementation plan. For each city we are currently renovating one park and have raised over \$10 million for these projects--Clara Park and Maywood Riverfront Park. We also plan to raise funds for one green space in each city, a community garden in a brownfield behind the Cudahy Post Office and a linear park in Maywood along the Randolph train track.

**Walnut Park Affordable Housing Apartments**<sup>36</sup> In this affordable housing project, CBE collaborated with Hollywood Community Housing. Located at 7616 Pacific Blvd, near CBE Headquarters in the City of Huntington Park, the Walnut Park project includes 64 units for individuals and families. Sixty-two apartments will be income-restricted, of which 31 will be reserved for households suffering from homelessness (earning at or below 30% AMI) and the remaining 31 apartments will be set aside for low-income households (earning at or below 40-50% AMI). CBE provided information on this project to our members in Southeast LA through workshops that included affordable housing developers and tenant organizers. CBE youth and adult organizers held focus group discussions with members and channeled their feedback to our partners. We also urged decision-makers to support this project.

**b.2. Compliance:** CBE has historically expended all the grant funds allocated and submitted in its quarterly/semi-annual/annual reports as required by our grant sponsors. In our past public and private grant awards, we either completed anticipated outcomes outlined in the grant application on schedule or asked for a “no cost-extension,” and all our final grant reports presented the outcomes and achievements of the various grant projects to the satisfaction of our funders.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.cbecal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/CBE-Huntington-Park-Brown-to-Green-Report1.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> <https://innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Link-Parks-Initiative-Report.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> <https://hollywoodhousing.org/portfolio-item/walnut-park-apartments/>



**Yana Garcia**  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection



## Department of Toxic Substances Control

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Meredith Williams, Ph.D.  
Director  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630



**Gavin Newsom**  
Governor

### SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

November 2, 2023

Bahram Fazeli  
Director of Research & Policy  
Communities for a Better Environment  
6325 Pacific Boulevard, Suite 300  
Huntington Park, California 90255

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANT PROPOSAL FOR \$500,000

Dear Bahram Fazeli:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) of the California Environmental Protection Agency acknowledges and supports the Communities for a Better Environment's (CBE) application for a United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfield Community Assessment Grant (USEPA Grant) for CBE's Florence Corridor Revitalization Project within unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles, California. CBE plans to request a funding amount of \$500,000 to perform land use, community health, and environmental site assessments combined with equity-centered brownfield area-wide planning.

CBE plans to focus on the following sites as potential catalytic opportunities for this project while engaging the community in the area-wide visioning and planning for the broader Florence-Firestone and Walnut Park neighborhoods.

#### Site 1: 1552 E. Florence Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90001

- Current status: Vacant land–Vacant since 2007
- Zoning: Mixed-Use (per Florence-Firestone TOD Specific Plan and Florence-Firestone Community Plan)

- Previous zoning: commercial: C-2 neighborhood business
- Owner: (Private Owner)
- 9,897 usable square feet
- Last purchase date: 10/2009
- Qualified opportunity zone
- 2023 land value per LA County Assessor website: \$310,167
- Near Florence Blue Line Metro Station - 5 minute walk

Site 2: Florence & Whitsett Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90001 (AIN: 6025-005-033)

- Current Status: Vacant
- Zoning: Residential Medium
- Previous zoning: Industrial
- Owner: Private
- 8,294 usable square feet
- Past Uses: Possibly car/junk storage

Site 3: 7662 S Central Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90001

- Current Status: Vacant
- Zoning: Mixed Use (per Florence-Firestone TOD Specific Plan and Florence-Firestone Community Plan)
- Zoning: Commercial (previous zoning)
- 2,300 Sq. Ft (estimated)
- Last Purchased: 2002
- From 2007 - 2017 the site was completely vacant (just land)
- Since 2018 looks like site has been used for car/junk storage
- Owner: Private

Site 4: 2230 E Florence Ave, Huntington Park, CA 90255

- Current Status: Vacant
- 9,924 sq. ft.
- Historical Uses: Guadalajara Nightclub + parking
- Zoning: Mixed Use (per Florence-Firestone TOD Specific Plan and Florence-Firestone Community Plan)
- Previous Zoning: Commercial

CBE plans to focus on the Florence corridor located within the Florence-Firestone and Walnut Park communities of unincorporated LA County and adjacent neighborhoods in other cities. The affected demographic of the project area includes working class, minority populations. Ninety-three percent of residents are Hispanic/Latino and six

Bahram Fazeli  
November 2, 2023  
Page 3 of 3

percent are Black/African American. The median household income is \$53,478 (2021), compared with \$77,456 for Los Angeles County. About 23% of Florence-Firestone residents live below the poverty line, compared to 14% countywide.

DTSC looks forward to the possible award of the USEPA Grant to CBE to facilitate redevelopment of these brownfield properties and help transform these communities. DTSC is ready to provide the necessary technical support and regulatory oversight, as needed, for projects and sites covered by the grant. If you need further information or assistance regarding specific brownfield sites, or any of DTSC's brownfields programs, please feel free to contact me via phone at (818) 717-6614 or via email at [Jose.Diaz@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Jose.Diaz@dtsc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Jose Diaz  
Brownfields Coordinator  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program  
Southern California Division – Chatsworth Office

cc: (via e-mail)

Ms. Maryam Tasnif-Abassi  
Brownfield Development Manager  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program  
Southern California Division – Cypress Office  
[Maryam.Tasnif-abassi@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Maryam.Tasnif-abassi@dtsc.ca.gov)