

## Mount Hope Community - Green District Initiative



### NARRATIVE INFORMATION SHEET

I Am Green Inc. is submitting the enclosed application for a U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant. I Am Green is a 501c3 operating in San Diego, CA - our vision is to assist community members in identifying sustainable practices that have been passed down from generation to generation and determine how we can use said practices with today's innovation to live a more ROBUST, RESILIENT, & REGENERATIVE LIFE!

The following applicant information is provided as specified in the Grant Guidelines:

<b>Applicant Identification</b>	<b>I Am Green Inc.</b> - 1021 S. 37th Street   San Diego   CA   92113
<b>Funding Requested</b>	a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide b. Federal Funds Requested i. \$500,000 ii. N/A – Not a site-specific proposal
<b>Location</b>	Mount Hope San Diego, CA
<b>Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information</b>	<b>Target Areas:</b> Mount Hope (Census Tracts 34.03, 34.04, 35.01 and 39.01 and 40.00) Imperial Ave & Market street North to South - East to West - 35 street to 30th Street <b>Priority Sites:</b> Tompkins Street - The entire south side of the street - Road One Towing - 121 35th Street
<b>Contacts</b>	I Am Green Inc. 1021 S. 37th Street San Diego, CA 92113  Maria Muhammad, CEO <a href="mailto:SisterMaria@iamgreenandsoareyou.org">SisterMaria@iamgreenandsoareyou.org</a> 760-512-5001  Jay Corrales, Project Director [REDACTED] 760-433-1505
<b>Population</b>	Mount Hope: 40,083 residents (Census 2020)
<b>Other Factors</b>	Checklist provided on the following page.

**Mount Hope Community Corridor Green District Initiative  
FY24 Assessment RFA Community Wide**

<b>Letter from the State Environmental Authority</b>	The State Letter is included as Attachment 1
<b>Releasing Copies of Application</b>	N/A – Application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.

**Other Factors Checklist**

<i>Applies</i>	<i>Other Factors</i>	<i>Page #</i>
<b>NA</b>	The community population is 10,000 or less.	
<b>NA</b>	The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
<b>NA</b>	The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
<b>NA</b>	The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water.	
<b>NA</b>	The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
<b>X</b>	The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	<b>4</b>
<b>X</b>	The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	<b>4</b>
<b>X</b>	Whether the applicant has considered climate adaptation and/or mitigation measures as part of the reuse strategy or projected reuse of the priority site(s);	<b>3</b>



**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 13, 2023

Maria Muhammad  
Chief Executive Officer  
I Am Green Inc.  
1021 South 37<sup>th</sup> Street  
San Diego, California 92113  
[sistermaria@iamgreenandsoareyou.org](mailto:sistermaria@iamgreenandsoareyou.org)

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF A UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY COMMUNITY WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT PROPOSAL FOR \$500,000

Dear Maria Muhammad:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) of the California Environmental Protection Agency acknowledges and supports I Am Green Inc.'s application for a United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant (USEPA Grant) for sites within the Mount Hope community located in the southeastern area of the City of San Diego, California. I Am Green Inc. is requesting funding in the amount of \$500,000 to cover the cost of environmental assessments of properties located in the Mount Hope community of San Diego.

I Am Green Inc. is a 501c3 organization based in San Diego County that is focused on environmental protection, as well as access to fresh food, high-quality jobs, and local capital. Their goals include the development of sustainable and affordable housing, workforce development and job creation, investment in new businesses, and strategic revitalization of underutilized properties.

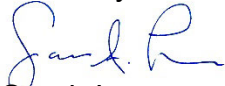
With funding provided by the USEPA Grant, I Am Green Inc. will identify Brownfield sites in the Mount Hope community that have been disproportionately affected by

properties that are contaminated, or thought to be contaminated, and are underutilized due to perceived remedial cost and liability concerns. There are over 25 potential Brownfield sites, including former gas stations, tow yards, and industrial properties in the Mount Hope neighborhood. With the USEPA Grant funding, many of the Brownfield sites will be inventoried, assessed, investigated, and, if necessary, remediated.

The USEPA Grant aligns with I Am Green Inc.'s objectives and will enable I Am Green Inc. to reconnect the community with the environment. The USEPA Grant will enhance I Am Green Inc.'s current initiatives and empower them to explore new avenues for community development. Securing the USEPA Grant funding will greatly benefit the residents and businesses of the Mount Hope community by addressing environmental concerns, offsetting due diligence and soft costs, and moving projects towards entitlement and development.

DTSC looks forward to the possible award of the USEPA Grant to I Am Green Inc. to facilitate the success of assessment and future redevelopment of Brownfields in the underserved and impoverished Mount Hope community. DTSC is ready to provide the necessary technical support and regulatory oversight, as needed, for projects and sites covered by the USEPA 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 (714) 484-5321 or via email at [Sarah.Larese@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Sarah.Larese@dtsc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Sarah Larese  
Regional Brownfield Coordinator  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program

cc: Maryam Tasnif-Abassi  
Brownfield Development Manager  
Site Mitigation & Restoration Program  
DTSC-Cypress  
[Maryam.Tasnif-abassi@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Mariam.Tasnif-abassi@dtsc.ca.gov)



## Mount Hope Community - Green District Initiative Narrative/Ranking Criteria

### **1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

**a. Target Area and Brown Fields** *i. Background and Description of Target Area* Nestled within the vibrant city of San Diego, California, the Mount Hope Community Corridor the target area spans from Market Street to Imperial, stretching from North to South, and from 35th Street to 30th Street, encompassing the region from East to West (City; pop. 1,374,076, Community pop. 40,083 residents). This unique corridor holds immense potential for rejuvenation and transformation. Mount Hope is an ethnically diverse, hilly urban neighborhood which is named for the large municipal Mount Hope Cemetery, which encompasses approximately 115 acres (0.47 km<sup>2</sup>) of the community. San Diego, renowned for its coastal charm and cultural diversity, is a bustling metropolitan area with a rich tapestry of communities. However, the Mount Hope Community Corridor faces challenges that have hindered its prosperity. Despite its strategic location near Market Street and Imperial, the corridor has struggled with issues such as high crime rates, lower educational attainment, and economic decline. Abandoned industrial lots and vacant storefronts dot the landscape, contributing to the prevailing blight.

In response to these challenges, the Mount Hope Community - Green District Initiative emerged, aiming to revitalize this area. This urban initiative, aligned with the City of San Diego's redevelopment statutes and [Climate Action Implementation Plan](#), envisions a comprehensive transformation of the corridor. The boundaries of the target area stretch from 35th Street to 30th Street, and from Market Street to Imperial, creating a focal zone for redevelopment efforts.

The Mount Hope Community is designated as a federally qualified Opportunity Zone and Promise Zone. This recognition opens up avenues for strategic partnerships and funding opportunities. The corridor's unique position between major streets and its accessibility from North to South and East to West positions it as a prime location for sustainable development.

Over the years, Mount Hope has experienced environmental degradation and economic decline, leaving a lasting imprint on the community's vitality. Factors such as historical industrial activities, unregulated land use, and the absence of formal environmental assessments have contributed to a landscape marred by contamination and economic hardship.

According to the EPA's - EJScreen Mapping Tool the target area is in the **95-100th percentile for Waste Discharge, 80-90th percentile for lead paint and 95-100th percentile for Hazardous Waste Discharge**. According to [CalEnviroScreen](#), Mount Hope is **88th percentile for cumulative impacts** and particularly vulnerable to environmental harms due to its geographic isolation, historical reliance on heavy industry, proximity to major roadways and rail lines that bypass the community. The absence of stringent environmental regulations in the past has led to pollution and contamination, adversely affecting air and water quality. Additionally, the lack of proper waste disposal mechanisms has left Mount Hope grappling with the remnants of abandoned industrial sites, contributing to blight and health concerns. Without the crucial intervention of an EPA assessment, Mount Hope remains at risk of continued environmental degradation. The absence of comprehensive evaluations hinders the identification and remediation of contaminated sites, perpetuating the cycle of environmental, social and economic challenges.

To address these issues, the Mount Hope Community - Green District Initiative proposes a comprehensive redevelopment strategy, integrating brownfields reuse, sustainable urban planning, and community revitalization. Leveraging the EPA assessment grant, the initiative aims to identify and remediate priority brownfield sites, fostering economic growth and community development.

## **MountHope Community - Green District Initiative FY24 Assessment RFA Community Wide**

The initiative prioritizes the health and wellness of the community through the remediation of contaminated sites, the development of green spaces, public amenities, and accessible public transportation. Emphasizing mixed-use spaces, affordable housing, and community engagement, the Green District seeks to improve residents' overall quality of life. The proposal represents a strategic and holistic approach to mitigating environmental harms, stimulating economic growth, and enhancing the health and wellness of the resilient Mount Hope community.

**ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)** The MountHope Community - Green District Initiative is focusing on the following community-chosen priority sites for funding consideration under this FY24 Assessment RFA Community Wide EPA Grant. All priority sites are located in a designated Opportunity Zone, [Promise Zone](#), are in Communities of Concern and align with the City of San Diego's [Complete Communities and Housing Action Package 2.0](#). Currently, the priority brownfield sites are owned by various project participants, developers and private businesses. All sites have active developer interest. Most recently, one developer C4GS-ZEDlife LLC was awarded a California Energy Commission Grant to [Re-Image MountHope](#). Their vision has inspired the community to organize a focus group under the leadership of I Am Green to develop the MountHope Community - Green District Initiative. Quantification of environmental remediation is necessary before private parties will consent to proceed with joining the development. Development proposals will then be submitted to the City and as plans are approved, the private and public land owners will explore options to contribute their parcels to the public-private partnerships between the Initiative and developers to implement the approved development plans. **Priority Parcels 1** - under this Initiative are the South side of Francis and Tompkins Street from 175 & 185 Francis Street, 3487 to 3569 Tompkins Street. In February of 2023 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed on 3487 Tompkins. The report stated that; with properties in older neighborhoods of San Diego, there is the potential for burned or incinerated ash from "backyard" incinerators or "burn pits" to be present or mixed with the soil. In addition, elevated concentrations of metals may exist in the shallow soil from other sources as well (e.g., imported fill, aerially deposited lead, paint from historical structures). Based on review of historical sources, the adjacent property to the east was historically occupied by Battle Moving and Storage, as discussed below. Based on a review of historic aerial photographs, it is interpreted that from at least 1966 through 1972 the adjacent property to the east also utilized the Site for parking and possibly as part of its operations, since the Site appeared to be occupied by trucks. Based on the report, companies having a fleet of trucks, such as moving companies, grocery markets, or delivery services, often had onsite underground storage tanks. Additionally, it is possible that the Site was used for truck maintenance activities such as oil changes. Therefore, the potential for impacts due to the former or current possible presence of features of potential environmental concern and whether releases have occurred at the Site for parking and possibly as part of its historical operations cannot be assessed and is considered a business risk. Additional assessment (e.g., soil sampling, soil vapor sampling) would be necessary to further evaluate the presence of subsurface features and potential associated releases. **Priority Parcels 2** -Priority Parcels 2, positioned on the South Side of the Orange Line Trolley Tracks, encompass the tow yard adjacent to the main sewage drain for Mount Hope. Due to neglect and multiple district changes, residents have dubbed this area the "dead zone." The tow/junk yard, notorious for hazardous waste challenges, intensifies health risks for the community. Numerous studies associate living near such sites, coupled with industrial areas, busy roads, and gas stations, with an increased likelihood of adverse health outcomes. Given the community's already existing health challenges and the proximity of the tow yard to critical sewer and water drains, it's imperative that Mount Hope undergo a transformation into a healthier and more sustainable community.

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The EPA Community Assessment is indispensable for Mount Hope's health redevelopment, specifically for the greener and cleaner community envisioned by the MountHope Community - Green District Initiative. Without EPA support, achieving the community's goals becomes a significant burden. Funding for the EPA assessment is crucial to comprehensively examine activities in the tow yard, identifying pollutants and potential risks to sensitive populations. This assessment will inform strategic plans for remediation and redevelopment, addressing multifaceted environmental challenges and the pressing health concerns of the community.

The grant funds not only aid in threat reduction but also contribute to the broader MountHope Community - Green District Initiative, repurposing priority sites for community benefits like a community center, education facility, and health center. Moreover, the initiative targets living wage employment opportunities and affordable housing, directly addressing community needs. With EPA grant funding supporting due diligence processes and prospective site assessments, it will play a pivotal role in revitalizing the area, mitigating environmental risks, and fostering a healthier, more sustainable community in Mount Hope. The community is confident in its potential for success with the vital support of EPA funds. **Priority Parcels 3:** Through preliminary research the project team has identified several parcels in the Mount Hope Community being used for dumping, homeless encampments and railroad owned spaces that disconnect the community from parks, safe access to walkways and transit. The historical data for these properties also show heavy industrial uses have been prominent on these properties since the 1950s. One parcel has been a gas station. The remaining parcels were used during the freeway construction as heavy equipment parking lots and construction offices. Additional environmental concerns include petroleum, heavy metals, and VOCs. MountHope Community - Green District Initiative is working tirelessly to transform this once heavy-industrial, disinvested corridor into a mixed-use, vibrant hub of retail, commercial, and family-oriented activities. Development plans are underway to transform these priority parcels into first floor commercial uses, retail and a grocery store co-operative with workforce housing on the upper floors.

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

**i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans** The proposed reuse strategy of the priority brownfield parcels (detailed in 1.a.ii) directly align with revitalization plans, developed with residents and community-based groups, when community led planning efforts began with the Reimagine our Community Initiative (see 2.b.i). **The goals of the Initiative include:** **1.** Providing Green Industry training and job ready access for residents, **2.** Providing mixed-use affordable environmentally sustainable housing with near zero electric bills, **3.** Facilitate the expansion of entrepreneurship activity in the district to provide access to needed goods and services, new jobs, and expand green business opportunities, **4.** Strengthen the neighborhood's connectivity and accessibility to public transportation, **5.** Ensure the ability to live well without a car and expand opportunities for clean transportation, **6.** Implement "green infrastructure" -- low cost, appropriate-scaled and environmentally friendly solutions to basic infrastructure needs, **7.** Respect the environment. **8.** And Development of a Community Stewardship Agreement with all developers and businesses in or who are considering entering the corridor.

Under the leadership of I Am Green, the community development efforts over the past year and a half have resulted in creating a community-based Environmental League of Justice (ELJ), a collaboration involving community residents, business owners, educational leadership, board members, and green building coalition members – all who are committed to working for Environmental and Social Justice in order to consider climate adaptation and/or mitigation measures as part of the reuse strategy. In addition the San Diego Green Build Council, the Climate Action Campaign, and San Diego Building Electrification have been cooperative partners of the Initiative and

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have supported the efforts of I Am Green to adopt site specific redevelopment plans, consistent with the City of San Diego's Climate Implementation and Housing Action Plans. The Initiative is working to formalize a public-private partnership to execute redevelopment and revitalization. To make the developments a reality, we are engaged with the City of San Diego to fast track approvals and assure the necessary zoning meets the development goals. Priority site end uses (see 1.b.ii) directly address community goals.

**ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy** The envisioned repurposing strategy for the priority brownfield sites within the MountHope Community - Green District Initiative aligns seamlessly with the community's revitalization plans. These plans, co-created with residents and community groups under the MountHope Reimagine Our Community Initiative aim to: **Establish** a live, learn work community where job training and higher education skills are taught on-site with affordable housing units.

**Develop** 1000 affordable, workforce housing units for community residents. **Reduce** automobile dependence through the integration of a Trolley Stop at Frances St. and Imperial Ave. with additional connectivity to MTS Bus lines. **Create** EV Charging stations throughout the corridor to decrease the communities carbon footprint | **Establish** Greenway Spaces, safe biking and walking paths addressing the lack of such assets currently. | **Deliver** education & establish training facilities and federally qualified health centers | **Integrate** cutting-edge energy efficiency measures, storm-resilient construction, and renewable solar energy components, **community owned power and micro grids ensuring a 30% reduction in energy use**. The project aims to leverage its innovative approach to foster economic, social, and cultural benefits, setting the stage for replicable models and best practices in future green districts.

**c. Strategy for Mobilizing Resources** **i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse** In addition to its qualification as a Community Redevelopment Area, the target area is designated as a federally qualified [Opportunity Zone](#), [Promise Zone](#), are in Communities of Concern and align with the City of San Diego's [Complete Communities and Housing Action Package 2.0](#). These designations greatly enhance the community and Initiative's eligibility for monetary funding for reuse from other resources. MountHope Community - Green District Initiative is in one of the 22 urban Promise Zones in the U.S. The San Diego Promise Zone (SDPZ) is characterized by high unemployment, low educational attainment, insufficient access to healthy foods, concentrated poverty, rising crime, and the least affordable housing in the nation. By investing in the **MountHope Community - Green District Initiative** - investors will work with community leaders and stakeholders to **Create Jobs | Improve Economic Activity and Connectivity | Reduce Violent Crime | Promote Wellness and Access to Healthcare | Expand Educational Opportunities | and Provide Quality Affordable Housing**. Additionally, in order to encourage investment in the zones, businesses can exclude from taxation capital gains from such investments and obtain tax-exempt bond financing for the purchase of properties within the zones. Developers can take advantage of reduced or in-lieu of city fees under Complete Communities and share in creating an equitable future for the Mount Hope Residents. This grant will stimulate the availability of infrastructure improvements resources by providing assessment dollars to position properties for reuse and determine what, if any, remediation needs exist. The team will create a "Resource Roadmap" for Priority Projects in order to develop a Strategy for Matching-Share Contributions and Leverage Local Funding Sources while growing the coalition of community based organizations to support. If the Initiative takes ownership of priority sites, Brownfields Cleanup Grants will be applied for in addition to other City, County and State grants to continue to support the work of revitalizing the community. The team is actively seeking funding by leveraging both private and public funds to support the communities efforts through California Energy Commission, County and City affordable housing grants, CNRA Urban Greening Program, and Impact investors. Following the Community-Wide assessment, we may apply for EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds to



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supplement grants and/or provide cleanup loans for developers or public-private partnerships. Developers will be responsible for site redevelopment costs. HRSA and USDA funds will be sought for the installation of the health center and the community garden and grocery store cooperative.

**ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure MountHope Community - Green District Initiative** strategically utilizes its location within the urban center of San Diego, CA, capitalizing on existing infrastructure, including power, gas, water, sewer, telecommunications, high-speed internet lines, roadways, transit facilities, and transportation lines and creating parks and green spaces from storm water retention. The project aligns with continuous enhancements in the drainage and stormwater system, ensuring a seamless integration with the established urban core of San Diego.

**2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** a. **Community Needs** i. *The Community's Need for Funding* Mount Hope, located in the City of San Diego, has a rich history, but recent challenges, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, have highlighted the urgent need for funding and support. Historically, this community has faced economic disparities, and the post-pandemic scenario has intensified these challenges. Data specific to Mount Hope reflects a minority-majority population with persistently low incomes, making it one of the areas of persistent poverty, as identified by the Economic Research Service, USDA. The aftermath of COVID-19 has led to a significant rise in unemployment rates, substantial reductions in disposable income, heightened reliance on social safety net programs, and a sharp decline in local sales tax revenues. Mount Hope, like many other communities, has been grappling with the long-term economic consequences of extended lockdowns, further hindering its ability to address existing challenges, including those related to brownfield impacts. The community requires targeted funding to revitalize and strengthen its economic foundation, fostering a sustainable and resilient future for Mount Hope in the City of San Diego.

**ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations** In the Mount Hope community, identified as a food desert, sensitive populations, mainly consisting of 83% Hispanic residents, young adults, and children (68%), face significant health and welfare threats including cancer and high levels of asthma that are associated with exposure to hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum. With a poverty rate based on real cost at 55%, the community qualifies as a [Medically Underserved Population](#). Resources from this grant will provide to assess and remediate brownfield properties with known contamination, focusing on economic revitalization. Priority sites, such as Site 1 with plans for a community center, educational facility, and federally qualified health center, and Site 2 emphasizing green job training, affordable housing, and a fresh food grocer co-op, directly combat health and welfare inequities. The initiative targets living wage employment opportunities within the community, addressing socio-economic needs.

**Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Planning for Reduction:** The grant addresses the greater than normal instances of environmentally influenced diseases in Mount Hope, including asthma, low birth weight, heart failure, cancer, and newly associated concerns like diabetes. Mount Hope ranks in the 2nd Quartile for health according to the [Health Places index by the County San Diego](#). Mental health issues, [affecting 48% of Hispanics countywide](#), further underline the challenges within the community. **Disproportionately Impacted Populations: Overcoming Historical Injustice** Mount Hope, historically burdened by environmental injustice, rail corridors, and interstate highways, faces disproportionate risks, ranking high in asthma risk index, traffic proximity, and [hazardous waste proximity](#). The region has witnessed race riots, gang activity, and economic challenges due to credit withdrawal and the closure of financial institutions. This grant seeks to revitalize Mount Hope, offering hope by identifying and reducing environmental threats. Assessments on all sites are crucial before redevelopment due to the heavy transportation and industrial presence. Supporting due diligence processes, the grant resources will help to reduce

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costs associated with prospective sites, facilitating efforts to repair the community's broken image and promote revitalization. **b. Community Engagement** *i. Project Involvement and ii. Project Roles* The MountHope Community - Green District Initiative, stemming from a [California Energy Commission Epic Challenge](#), secured \$1,000,000 for a green building design project. C4GS-ZEDlife and I Am Green, chosen among 12 California projects, and the Environmental League of Justice (ELJ), a community focus group [led Phase 1, resulting in a plan for 94 units, 300 beds](#). Emphasizing community-driven redevelopment, the Initiative operates with an Operational Unity model, involving residents, business owners, elected officials and stakeholders in various components like green jobs, housing, training, and social services. The Environmental League of Justice plays a key role in brownfields decision-making, selecting priority sites and participating in ongoing cleanup/reuse planning through monthly Zoom calls. The initiative embodies the principle of achieving redevelopment within, by, and for the community including by not limited to the following community based organizations:

Name of organization / entity /group	Point of contact (name & email)	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Sunrise Movement San Diego		Youth Climate Justice Advocacy and Outreach Partners
C4GS-ZEDlife	Steph Groce sgroce@c4gs.org	Community Outreach and Developers of Green Technology and Educational Training
Climate Action Campaign		Outreach partner and community policy educators
San Diego Green Building Council	Colleen Fitzsimmons	Outreach partner and community planning educators
Resilience	Jessica Jane Robinson [REDACTED]	Outreach partner, litter clean up organizers and community planning educators

**iii. Incorporating Community:** Our community development method in Mt. Hope involves collaborative efforts with local leaders, built over seven years with various partners. Recognizing influential figures, including informal leaders and educators, we

embrace inclusivity, illustrated by a transformative story of redemption. Our approach values personal growth and community commitment.

Prioritizing active listening, we acknowledge the historical neglect of Mt. Hope residents. We will conduct town halls and listening sessions to address frustrations before discussing sustainability initiatives. Ongoing participation in neighborhood meetings ensures ongoing awareness of local concerns.

Collaborating with community leaders and addressing identified challenges, I Am Green has co-created a framework and strategy for engaging Mt. Hope. Emphasizing open communication, we utilize channels like town halls, neighborhood meetings, pop-ups, and digital platforms. The project will host quarterly Zoom meetings, soliciting input, and distributing information digitally. Spanish translation services are consistently provided for inclusivity in public meetings and publications. Participation in the forums will be incentivised through reasonable stipends tracked through sign in sheets to support those who may not be able to participate historically.

**Organizational Structure of the MountHope Community - Green District Initiative** is currently being established to support community engagement for the long term and will be composed of nonprofit agency directors, faith community representatives, bankers, private developers, and a legal service advisor. Additionally, the Initiative would employ small business contractors to manage the incubator and other small business-related activities. The Initiative has engaged an urban planner to

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help with broad community planning processes and to lead the Business Improvement District development process. Moreover, the Initiative will be run by I Am Green as a program of the non-profit.

3. **TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES AND MEASURING PROGRESS** All tasks below are intended to be EPA-funded tasks. Non-EPA grant resources are not applicable to the tasks outlined below.

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

<b>Task 1: Grant Management and Programmatic Support</b>
<p><b>i. Project Implementation:</b> I Am Green will provide the management and oversight of the project including all coordination with the EPA, QEP, community stakeholders and other involved parties. Activities include: budget management, coordination of meetings, monitoring and reporting, and participation in brownfields training opportunities. Monthly meetings (and as needed) with the QEP to discuss progress on tasks, and will review project’s milestones quarterly to evaluate progress within the specified timeframe. Additionally, the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) will provide program administration and compliance services, and be in attendance at outreach meetings. 5% of assessment grant funds will be allocated to Grant Management and Programmatic Support.</p>
<p><b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> ongoing throughout the grant period.</p>
<p><b>iii. Task Lead:</b> While I Am Green envisions itself primarily handling programmatic support activities in-house, budget has also been set aside for additional consultant support.</p>
<p><b>iv. Outputs:</b> Monthly team meetings, 15 Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs), regular ACRES entries, annual reports (MBE/WBE and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs), a final Grant Closeout Report, and participation in at least one national/regional brownfields conferences, workshops, or webinars.</p>
<b>Task 2: Phase I &amp; II ESAs</b>
<p><b>i. Project Implementation.</b> Site access agreements and property eligibility determinations will be sought prior to assessment. Regulatory Agency coordination will also take place to inform assessment. Phase I ESAs for Priority Sites. Phase II ESAs based on the findings of the Phase I ESA. The consultant will be required to submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and Sample Analysis Plan (SAP) to EPA Region 9 prior to conducting any environmental sampling under this task. This task will apply both to priority sites and non-priority sites. Additional activities include the development of an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the entire grant area, as well as site-specific Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) with Health and Safety Plans (HASPs). Property Profile Forms (PPFs) and AAI forms will also be prepared, and attendance at community outreach meetings. 48% of assessment grant funds will be allocated to Phase I &amp; II ESAs.</p>
<p><b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, Year 1 and then on-going, Years 1-4</p>
<p><b>iii. Task Lead:</b> I Am Green will lead the inventory process and site selection activities and will oversee the activities managed by the Consultant QEP.</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b> Completion of QAPP and of 6 Phase I ESA reports following ASTM E1527-21. Six Phase II ESA investigations following current ASTM and regulatory standards including SAPs. Number of parcels for which Phase I and Phase II ESAs assessments are completed will be tracked and reported in ACRES and quarterly reports.</p>
<b>Task 3: Cleanup and Reuse Planning</b>
<p><b>i. Project Implementation:</b> Cleanup plans and regulatory compliance/coordination requirements, infrastructure evaluation and market assessments at identified Priority Sites, dependent on environmental assessment information. Reuse planning on Priority Sites and non-priority sites to identify reuse opportunities to attract private investment, identify Brownfields issues for key parcels and provide an explanation of how these issues would impact various types of development. 36% of assessment grant funds will be allocated to Cleanup and Reuse planning.</p>
<p><b>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Beginning 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, Year 1 and then on-going, Years 1-4</p>
<p><b>iii. Task Lead:</b> The QEP will lead remediation planning, however I Am Green with Consultant will lead reuse planning with support from project stakeholders.</p>

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iv. <b>Outputs:</b> Eight cleanup plans and three reuse plans for both Priority Sites and non-priority sites, and an infrastructure evaluation and market viability study for identified Priority Sites.
<b>Task 4: Community Involvement</b>
i. <b>Project Implementation:</b> I Am Green will coordinate a robust community outreach and resulting community-driven reuse visions for the Priority Sites. Community outreach will be used to identify other brownfield opportunities in the Target Areas, including: direct contact with property owners, developers, real estate professionals; and broader marketing through the City's and community partners' communication channels. Activities include: development of a Public Involvement Plan (PIP), dedicated webpage on the City's website, press releases and other educational materials related to grant implementation, and a minimum of two community outreach meetings per year. Participant Support Costs will also be included in this task in order to cover community member costs that would hinder their participation thus maximizing community engagement. 10% of assessment grant funds will be allocated to Community Involvement.
ii. <b>Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> ongoing throughout the grant period. The first community outreach meeting will occur in the first quarter, and then recur three per year at minimum (more as needed).
iii. <b>Task Lead:</b> While the I Am Green envisions itself primarily handling community involvement activities in-house, budget has also been set aside for consultant support.
iv. <b>Outputs:</b> Community outreach meetings, educational materials, and development of a "Green District Initiative" prioritizing equitable ownership and community ownership.

**iv. Identifying Additional Sites** All the sites expected to undergo assessment under this grant have been previously identified and detailed. If, for any reason, one of the identified sites cannot be assessed, additional sites from the surrounding area will be proposed. In the absence of additional priority sites, there may be a request for further assessment, cleanup planning, and reuse planning for priority sites. Site prioritization will consider factors such as potential contamination, redevelopment possibilities, and the potential benefits of planned reuse for the local community, particularly underserved members. The grant team will collaborate with local and state agencies, including the DTSC, Department of Environmental Health and Quality, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, for technical assistance and compliance to identify sites with redevelopment potential.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		Programmatic Support (Task 1)	Phase I and II ESAs (Task 2)	Cleanup/ Reuse Planning (Task 3)	Community Engagement & Involvement (Task 4)	
<b>Direct Costs</b>	Personnel	\$15,000			\$25,000	\$40,000
	Travel	\$2,500				\$2,500
	Contractual	\$7,500	\$244,000	\$181,000	\$15,000	\$447,500
	Participant Support & Stipends				\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>		<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$244,000</b>	<b>\$181,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$244,000</b>	<b>\$181,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**b. Cost Estimates** The following grant activity estimates are specific to the project team's identified priority sites and on the anticipated outputs and related cost estimates based on project area market unit cost averages and allowable federal rates. Additional personnel time and supplies, including brochure printing and meeting supplies, will be considered in-kind leveraged funds for this grant.

**Task 1, Programmatic Support: Personnel and Fringe:** \$15,000 is allocated for I Am Green personnel costs to provide programmatic support and oversight of all tasks for the grant period. We anticipate approximately 120 hours over the course of the grant term at \$125/hour for a total of \$15,000. Any additional personnel expenses for programmatic support will be provided in-kind or

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through other funding sources. *Travel:* \$2,500 is included for attendance at an EPA Brownfields Conference and/or regional brownfields conference including registration, food, and transportation expenses. *Contractual Costs:* \$7,500 to cover Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and additional support for program administration and compliance anticipated at approximately 25 hours over the course of the grant term at \$200/hour plus an additional 20 hours at \$125/hour for a total of \$7,500 Contractual Costs.

**Task 2, Phase I and Phase II ESAs:** *Personnel and Fringe:* Personnel costs are included under Task 1 Programmatic Support to oversee site selection activities and QEP. *Contractual Costs:* \$244,000 estimate includes one QAPP at \$10,000, 6 Phase I ESAs (\$4,000 each on average), and 6 SAPs and Phase II ESAs (\$35,000 each on average). Where possible, activities will be "batched" to create efficiencies and reduce cost, allowing for potential reallocation to other tasks. These estimates are based on similar work in the region, but actual costs may vary as a QEP will need to be selected. Costs for ESAs will vary depending on the history, complexity, and pollutants of each brownfield site.

**Task 3, Cleanup and Reuse Planning:** *Personnel and Fringe:* Personnel costs are included under Task 1 Programmatic Support to oversee site selection activities and QEP. *Contractual Costs:* \$181,000 estimate includes eight cleanup plans at a cost of approximately \$10,000 each, three reuse plans at a cost of approximately \$12,000 each, one infrastructure evaluation at a cost of \$40,000, and one market viability study at a cost of \$25,000. Costs will vary as contractors will need to be selected.

**Task 4, Community Engagement and Involvement:** *Personnel and Fringe:* \$25,000 for I Am Green personnel costs to conduct for community outreach. *Contractual Costs:* \$15,000 will be used to conduct stakeholder and community meetings such as charrettes, visioning exercises and other planning activities over the life of the grant. \$10,000 will be used for participant and focus group stipends.

**C. Measuring Environmental Results** - Drawing upon past experience with other complex projects, I Am Green will establish and track milestones through our internal project management tools including the number of environmental assessments, cleanup plans, reuse plans, the number of sites that are successfully redeveloped and any mitigation strategies determined to be appropriate during agency coordination. We will work with the EPA project manager if there is slippage in the schedule or expenditures. Each of these outcomes will also be tracked in EPA's ACRES system and quarterly reporting to EPA. I Am Green will also document jobs created, greenspace created and the reuse of sites and structures as they progress. At the conclusion of the four-year grant period, a report reviewing the projects will be prepared and transmitted to EPA.

**4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE** *a. Programmatic Capability* **i.** I Am Green has the capacity and experience necessary to successfully manage this project. The organization has successfully created and continues to manage community-based educational and training projects such as their Environmental Literacy Course(ELC), Eco-Stewardship training, Community Resiliency Initiative, and, most recently, their I Am Green Go! Free EV Community Car Share Program. While I Am Green has not received EPA funds, they have received multiple grant awards from the City of San Diego and foundations like the California Black Freedom Fund, and contracts to support community engagement. The organization has tapped into its board members and staff members many talents and career experiences in the management and execution of prior grant projects and has a similar strategy for the proposed Brownfields Assessment Grant to ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds.

***ii. Description of Key Staff*** Sister Maria Muhammad is the Chairperson of the Initiative's Board and works professionally in community development as the CEO of I Am Green. Brother David Muhammad is a well-known, well-respected member of the community and CFO of I Am Green. Their collective 30 years of experience in community engagement, hosting hundreds of community

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meetings and forums and co-creating a lasting impact in the Mt Hope community. The project will be directly managed by Jay Corrales. Jay Corrales is an experienced project manager and team leader with over 20 years experience in technology, real estate, transformational education and sustainable development sectors. The project will also be supported by Melissa Elder. Melissa is an environmental engineer who has overseen \$100 million in infrastructure projects. She has 10 years of experience in community engagement, engineering, grant procurement and management and non-profit start ups.

### **4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments 4.b.i. and 4.b.ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements (1) Purpose and Accomplishments**

Grant	Award	Purpose	Accomplishments
California Energy Commission Grant: The Next EPIC Challenge: Reimagining Affordable Mixed-Use Development in a Carbon-Constrained Future	Total Grant - \$10M  Community DesignPhase: \$120K  Community Build Phase: \$250K	Develop & Implementation of the Education/Outreach and Community Engagement Plan to support Zero Energy Housing Developments, Environmental Justice Training and Residential Advocacy and activities that affect Communities of Concern.	The planning stage is done, and the agreement for the construction phase will be finalized by early 2024. With a finished EPA Grant Community Assessment, the construction team can proceed with building more housing, community facilities, and a grocery store in San Diego's Mount Hope Community.
San Diego City Council Community Projects, Programs and Services (CPPS)	\$10,000	Create IAG's Electric Vehicle (EV) Car Sharing Pilot Program, conduct ongoing research on clean transportation, and provide workshops for target communities to educate them about electric vehicles, clean transportation, and their community's benefits from these initiatives.	Successfully launched I Am Green Go! Free EV Community Car Share Program and partnered with community organizations to offer EV ride sharing to local communities and deliver groceries to those unable to shop for themselves.
California Black Freedom Fund	\$150,000	Support for IAG's core programs: Community Resiliency Initiative (CRI), Environmental Literacy Course (ELC), Eco Stewards Program, and Let's Talk Resiliency Project.	Continued to support the growth of our core programs while also assisting to launch new initiatives such as the I Am Green Go! Free EV Community Car Share Program.

It is important to note that all grants listed above are a result of or related to the reuse strategies for the Target Areas. This ongoing work will be further amplified by an infusion of assessment funds. (2)

**Compliance with Grant Requirements:** I Am Green Inc, along with our partners, contractors, and staff, consistently meets compliance and monitoring requirements for both Federal and Non-Federal grants. We vigilantly monitor and audit projects to ensure desired outcomes. All listed grants are in good standing, many completed or on track for completion. We meet reporting deadlines on schedule and maintain strong communication with all grantors.