

1. Applicant Identification
Columbus Consolidated Government
100 10th Street
Columbus, GA 31901-2736
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type Community-wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested
\$500,000
3. Location
a) City of Columbus b) Muscogee County c) Georgia

4. Target Area and Priority Site Information
Target Area
Census Tracts 18, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29.02, 30, 32, 33

Priority Site 1

Dawson Street Neighborhood Park – three adjacent properties located at 2517 Cusseta Road, 2602 Dawson Street, and 2516 Dawson Street, Columbus, GA 31903

Priority Site 2

Winterfield Commercial Center – four adjacent properties located at 2100, 2102, and 2200 Cusseta Road, and 2111 North Andrew Circle, Columbus, GA 31903

Priority Site 3

Southside Industrial Park – two adjacent properties located at 2702 and 2912 Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard, Columbus, GA 31903

5. Contacts
 - a. Project Director
Robert Scott, Director of Community Reinvestment
(706) 225-3918
scott.robert@columbusga.org
420 East 10th Street, 2nd Floor
Columbus, Georgia 31901
 - b. Highest Ranking Elected Official
B. H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor
(706) 225-4712
SkipHenderson@columbusga.org
Mayor’s Office
Government Center, 6th Floor
100 10th Street
Columbus, Georgia 31901

6. Population

City of Columbus, GA: 195,418 (US Census: 2016-2020 American Community Survey)

7. Other Factors

| Other Factors | Page # |
|--|---------------|
| Community population is 10,000 or less. | N/A |
| The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory. | N/A |
| The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land. | N/A |
| The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them). | N/A |
| The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain. | N/A |
| The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy. | N/A |
| The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures. | 3 |
| The reuse strategy or project reuse of the priority site(s) considers climate adaptation and/or mitigation measures. | N/A |
| At least 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area. | N/A |
| The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing. | N/A |

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached.

9. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable.



Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

Columbus Consolidated Government, Columbus, Georgia, is eligible to apply for an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant as a local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.

2. Community Involvement

The Columbus Consolidated Government (CCG) has completed community involvement tasks during their successful FY17 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and FY19 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant. The CCG will continue to involve the community through public meetings, the Columbus Brownfields Website, and social media. The CCG first discussed this application during a Brownfield Advisory Board (BAB) training in May 2019 and continued discussions at CCG and BAB meetings from 2019 to 2022. The CCG will promote events for in-person meetings and online meetings on the Community Reinvestment and Brownfield websites and social media. As deemed necessary for the protection of human health, community meetings may move to an online meeting format in the event of a COVID resurgence. Meetings will be held on Zoom or in a similar format.

Comments and questions made during brownfield meetings from target area residents will be collected and addressed through the Community Reinvestment Facebook page, Brownfield website and at the office for Community Reinvestment on a monthly basis throughout the grant period. The proposed target area and the grant application was discussed and approved at the Columbus Council Meeting on October 25, 2022. Comments from the Brownfield Advisory Board, community, and target-area residents will be incorporated into the decision-making process for developing a priority site inventory and future reuse plans.

In person meetings with a virtual option will be held twice a year throughout the grant period to inform and engage members of the public, with periodic updates made during regularly scheduled council meetings. Project updates and other grant project-related documents will be provided on the CCG and Columbus Brownfield websites and through email distribution lists, and copies will be made available at the Community Reinvestment office and the Columbus Public and Mildred L. Terry libraries. The target-area residents and property owners are encouraged to join public meetings and an email distribution list to remain informed of the latest news of the project's progress and upcoming events. Project partners will disseminate information to the target area residents who do not have internet access. Project partners committed to outreach assistance will publicize project progress, events, and accomplishments. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available. The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) created during the FY2017 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant Project and updated during the FY2019 Cleanup Grant Project, will be updated as needed during this project.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The CCG affirms that they do not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Target Area and Brownfields i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Established in 1828, Columbus, Georgia is located on the western border of the state. As the most northern navigable point on the Chattahoochee River, the City became densely developed with manufacturing facilities. In 1970, Muscogee County and the City of Columbus were combined into one entity, Columbus Consolidated Government (CCG), making it home to the largest southern riverfront mill district. Established in 1909, the Fort Benning Military Installation, located to the south of Columbus, provided basic training for World War I and World War II troops. As a result, the **Southside** of Columbus developed into a city center with a robust industrial rail corridor, textile mill district, commercial centers, and residential neighborhoods. Textile outsourcing peaked in the 1990s causing a significant industrial decline leaving manufacturing and residential areas vacant, creating blight throughout the community.¹

The geographic boundary for this application will be the city limits of Columbus, GA with a target area focus in the **Southside Corridor**, including the Southside (Census Tracts 24, 25, 27, 28, 29.02, 30, 32, and 33) and portions of MidTown (Census Tracts 18, 24, and 28). The target area was developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s with the majority of industry placed along the railroad corridor. During war times, Fort Benning supported the buildup of the community and economy but after WWII with the military downsizing, many businesses closed, resulting in a continuous economic decline most pronounced in the 1970s. Within the Southside Corridor, the **Winterfield** area was once a vibrant and bustling city center. In the northern portion of the target area, the neighborhoods of **Avondale** and **Radcliff** became home in the 1940s to the first African American subdivisions in the area providing a thriving quality of life for the residents. These same neighborhoods **lost 59% of their population between 1960 and 1980** as a result of military relocation and Urban Renewal Funding which demolished 900 housing units.² **Urban Renewal projects of the 1950s-1960s historically displaced disproportionately poor and minority populations.** The Cusseta Road Area Report documented that commercial properties located in this area were the most blighted in the City with abandoned buildings, unfenced junk yards, and gross neglect of properties. The conditions remained in place as African Americans continued to relocate to this area due to available low-income housing; by 1980 they accounted for 81% of its population. The **Southside Corridor** target area is now known as having the highest concentrations of **African American** residents, **the highest levels of poverty, blighted properties, and crime.** EPA Brownfield funding will provide education and outreach to an underserved, residentially segregated community with persistent poverty (created as a direct result of Urban Renewal policies), develop a Brownfield Revitalization Plan with the direct involvement of community level organizations, and conduct assessments to address the environmental concerns of brownfield sites in a neighborhood with disproportionate impacts from environmental stressors.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The **Southside Corridor** was an area of industry and vibrant residential life, but it is now plagued with blight including abandoned **warehouses, large auto salvage yards, and derelict trailer parks.** **The City has acquired 15 vacant commercial sites within the target area in need of assessment.** The City will work diligently with the target-area residents to identify and prioritize brownfield sites through a grant-funded site inventory. The CCG and target-area residents have identified three priority sites within the target area. **Winterfield Commercial Center:** The CCG owns approximately two acres at the Winterfield intersection located in the central portion of the Southside Corridor. Winterfield once

¹ John S. Lupold, "Columbus, GA," [Georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/Columbus](https://georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/Columbus), March 30, 2004, edited July 17, 2018.

² US Census: 2016-2020 American Community Survey.

² 1984 Cusseta Road Area Report

served as a thriving city center for the community and was the location of the Majestic Night Club. The club was infamous for frequent drug activity and fatal shootings. The City ultimately shut down the club and purchased the property in the interest of public safety. The site consists of five parcels and three structures that previously operated as a nightclub, a car wash, an auto repair facility, and salvage yard, and a restaurant. After acquiring the property, the City demolished all structures. The Majestic building was formerly used as a paint store in the 1950s and 1960s. Environmental concerns on the site include dumping; periodic leaks and drips from paint, paint thinners and other solvents, pigments, resin, and additives; lead-based paint; and inground lifts and underground storage tanks for the auto repair facility and salvage yard. This site is located adjacent to three historical dry cleaners (solvent contamination: trichloroethylene, perchloroethylene, carbon tetrachloride, and mineral spirits) and two service stations (contamination from petroleum products, solvents, and degreasers such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, lead, naphthalene, and MTBE). **The City envisions the redevelopment of this commercial block back to its former glory as a commercial and social center for the benefit of the sensitive and underserved populations of the target area.**

Dawson Street Neighborhood Park: The CCG owns approximately two acres between Dawson Street and Cusseta Road. The site consists of three parcels of which one is commercial and two residential. The **vacant** unfenced commercial parcel is overgrown with vegetation that previously was used to store old cars, and the two residential parcels are **vacant**. The site was most recently a bulk material storage yard. Environmental concerns on the site include petroleum leaks and spills at the site, dumping, and the salvage yard. This site is located near service stations (contamination from petroleum products, solvents, and degreasers such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, lead, naphthalene, and MTBE). **The City envisions a neighborhood park for this distressed and underserved neighborhood.**

Southside Industrial Park: Approximately 63 acres of industrial property located in the northern part of the target area contains several storage yards, dumping areas, remnant building pads, and neglected structures overgrown with vegetation. An industrial property since the 1940s, the facility was previously used as a storage yard for the railroad and most recently as a precast concrete manufacturer, which had periodic leaks from equipment, degreasers, and petroleum products at the site. Potential contaminants of concern include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Metals. **The CCG plans for this site to be a light industrial facility or business park that would have direct access to a railroad.**

b. Revitalization of the Target Area i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The City has three current redevelopment plans which address the serious need to remove blight and increase tax revenues to support the local economy within the target area: the **Benning Park Redevelopment Plan**, **River District Redevelopment Plan**, and the **Midtown Redevelopment Plan**. The **Benning Park Redevelopment Plan** promotes economic opportunity and addresses the extreme blight and poverty of the target area. The redevelopment plan identifies the following issues: aging structures (the majority of commercial/industrial buildings are over 50 years old), low property appraisal value, low property tax value, and perpetual disinvestment and underutilization of properties. The **River District Redevelopment Plan** identifies the primary land-use goals for the target area as infrastructure improvements, infill development, redeveloping commercial and mixed-use nodes, and creating a walkable community with pedestrian/bike-friendly improvements. The **MidTown Redevelopment Plan** was developed to encourage the redevelopment of a poverty-stricken neighborhood with high crime rates, as well as its

industrial/commercial area located throughout the target area. With few greenfield sites in this area, redevelopment will be necessary to improve blighted properties, increase property values, and with the site redevelopment improve tax revenue for the City. The goals of this plan include redeveloping industrial/commercial corridors and encouraging denser land use by utilizing infill properties and mixed-use development strategies.

The City's reuse plans for the three priority sites directly align with the current redevelopment plans. The City plans to develop the **Dawson Street** properties into a park for an underserved neighborhood without direct access to greenspace. A park will remove blight from the neighborhood and provide a safe recreation opportunity for the community. Turning the **Southside Industrial Park** priority site into a light industrial facility or business park will greatly benefit the target area's residents, who suffer from high unemployment rates (18%), as this redevelopment use would be within walking distance. For the **Winterfield Commercial Center** priority site, the City plans to transform the site into a community outreach or health center, a neighborhood safety center, and a fresh food market. The auto repair/carwash and restaurant properties are planned as zero lot line commercial storefronts to promote a more walkable connection to the street and a pedestrian-friendly community. Assessments of the priority sites and additional brownfield sites will serve as a critical link to bring underutilized properties back into productive use, thereby increasing property values and tax revenues for the City.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: As described in the redevelopment plans, the target area is an underutilized, **poverty burdened, distressed neighborhood, with substandard housing** that is primed for economic redevelopment. This area has the existing infrastructure including railroads and roads and a location necessary to re-establish itself as a prosperous live-work neighborhood. The proposed redevelopment of the **Southside Industrial Park strategically located along the railroad main line** as a light industrial business park would remove blight, reduce exposure to environmental threats, bring jobs (approximately 50), raise property values, and increase tax revenue to an area of a historically segregated neighborhood with high poverty and unemployment rates while having direct access to the existing railroad and road system to transport goods and services to this area (**economic benefit**). The redevelopment of the **Winterfield Commercial Center** to include storefronts (approximately 3 businesses creating 20 jobs) with access to a community health center, fresh food market, and neighborhood safety station (**non-economic benefit**) will improve access to healthcare, healthy food options, and safety. The **Dawson Street Neighborhood Park** will provide the target area with greenspace (walking track, playground, exercise stations) that is sorely needed in this distressed and underserved community (**non-economic benefit**). CCG will educate the community on available incentives for energy efficient buildings and renewable energy sources and will encourage redevelopment within the target area to use energy efficient sources and renewable energy as part of their redevelopment strategy. Although none of the planned redevelopment discussed in this grant application will displace businesses or residents, the CCG will employ redevelopment strategies that will be designed to prevent and/or minimize the potential of any future displacement.

c. **Strategy for Leveraging Resources** i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The CCG as a local unit of government is eligible to pursue private, state, and federal grant options to further redevelopment efforts. The target area has three designated **Tax Allocation Districts (TAD)**, Benning Park TAD, River District TAD, and MidTown West TAD. **The tax allocation funding will support infrastructure improvements, environmental assessments, and demolition**, when necessary, to offset costs and encourage investment in this area. The CCG has committed funds for the demolition of blighted structures within the target area and will continue to do so as sites

are assessed and remediated for this brownfield project. The CCG has purchased multiple properties for redevelopment as part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) within the target area. **The CDBG funds may also be used to demolish buildings or conduct environmental assessments**, as necessary, during site redevelopment. The majority of the target area is located within **Opportunity Zones** (CT 25, 27, 28, 29.02, 30, and 32), which provides tax incentives for developers to invest and support redevelopment. Brownfield properties that are enrolled in the GA EPD-Brownfield Program, eligible expenses may be recouped through tax abatement. The City may use these tax incentives to attract potential investors to properties that have been assessed with grant funding. For sites that require cleanup, the CCG will apply for EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant funding.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The CCG’s plans for redevelopment within the target area to include the use of existing infrastructure including water/sewer, streets, transportation, and power. **The infrastructure to support brownfield redevelopment is already in place at the priority sites and in the target area. As redevelopment continues, infrastructure needs will be evaluated to consider immediate and future requirements for new infrastructure.**

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **Community Need** i. The Community’s Need for Funding: The Southside Corridor is historically an economically depressed area with one of the highest concentrations of minority populations in the City. The target area has experienced a significant economic decline since the 1970s and will need a partnership of public/private investment to make a positive, long-term impact on its residents. The target area (CT 18/24/25/27/28/29.02/30/32/33.01/33.02) has an average poverty rate of 47% with 64% of children living in poverty, an **average median household income of \$22,285 and average per capita income of \$13,090** with an 18% unemployment rate.³ These levels are significantly higher than the US and GA rates by several multiples: poverty rate 13% (US), 14% (GA); children living in poverty 18% (US), 20% (GA); median household income \$80,069 (US), \$74,127 (GA); average per capita income \$35,384 (US), \$32,427 (GA); and unemployment July 2022 3.5% (US), July 2022 2.8% (GA).³

The CCG lacks available funding for environmental assessments of the magnitude that would be necessary to redevelop this high poverty, minority community due to the 1983 residential tax freeze. The tax freeze severely limits the CCG’s available funding resources and hinders future redevelopment efforts. Due to increased crime rates during COVID, a significant amount of the City’s budget is allocated to the police department. The cost of other city services has increased during COVID due to a lack of sufficient supplies and a reduced workforce. The EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant funding will serve as a critical link to break the cycle of generational poverty and high crime rates and will ultimately bring back a sense of community.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: **The sensitive populations living in the target area are minorities, largely African American (79% for the target area, US 13%), female head of household (57%, US 34%) and children living in poverty (64%, US 18%).³ Families living at the poverty level and their children were most affected by the declining economic conditions (per capita average income \$13,090).**³ Historically, there has been a concentration of poverty within the target area (41% in 2000, 39% in 2010, 48% in 2020) with **42% of the residents dependent on government food assistance**, with the ability to improve their situation made more difficult by limited job opportunities (**unemployment 18%**).³

Although census tract/target area health data is not available, the Health Department has noted the following associated health factors for Muscogee County: 12% of the population has limited

³ US Census: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

access to healthy food, 21% is threatened by food insecurity, and 30% of adults are obese. According to the USDA Food Access Atlas, the majority of the target area is a food desert with limited access to food with **35% of the target area with no access to a vehicle.**⁴

Many properties within the target area are vacant or abandoned, creating a source of blight for the community and an opportunity for squatters, vandals, and unwanted illegal activity. These sensitive populations are living in a community where their welfare is jeopardized daily by high levels of blight and abandoned properties, and crime. **The violent crime rate is 1,218 crimes per 100,000 people** compared to the GA/US rates of 400/399 crimes per 100,000 people. Although the City experienced a reduction in crime for the first three quarters of 2019 from previous years the overall crime rate in the target area has increased. **The target area represents 3% of the City's total land area, but it has 38% of the City's major crimes with 58% of murders, 37% of rapes, and 63% of assaults.**⁵ (Crime data is not available at the census tract level.) The obvious blight of vacant properties remaining from the textile industry and commercial uses has produced an economic and social drain, resulting in gradual disinvestment. Site assessments funded by the Brownfield Program will assist the community in facilitating the identification and reduction of environmental threats and will remove blight, promote community revitalization, and provide opportunities for job creation. Based on the proposed reuses for the Winterfield priority site, the proposed food market, community health center, and neighborhood safety center will help alleviate these **welfare issues** and promote a rippling effect of community rehabilitation.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Community Health Status Indicators (CHSI) found Columbus to have a higher than average mortality rate for **cancer**, heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and stroke and higher morbidity rates for diabetes, obesity, and **cancer**. The Muscogee County Health Department reports that County has higher rates of premature death from chronic lower respiratory diseases (**target area 5.8%, GA 5.7%**). The National Cancer Institute reports that County has higher rates (cases per 100,000) for the following **cancers**: Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (County 20, GA 18, US 19), liver (County 11, GA 8, US 8), colon/rectum (County 47, GA 42, US 39), leukemia (County 15, GA 15, US 14), lung (County 66, GA 64, US 59) (**census tract target area cancer rates are not available**). The EJ Screen Report indicates that the target area has higher levels of cancer risk (95th percentile in GA) than most of the state. **These figures are troubling considering the cancer-causing contaminants at all of the priority sites, such as trichloroethylene, asbestos, benzene, and coal tar.** The potential risk from soil vapor intrusion is also higher for sensitive populations, including **pregnant women and young children** living near these commercial and industrial facilities, and can lead to respiratory illnesses such as **asthma** (Climate & EJ Screening Tool Target Area 99th percentile) and birth defects. Without the EPA Brownfield grant funding for site assessments, the CCG will be unable to identify potential contaminants throughout the target area that can exacerbate underlying health conditions.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice: The target area has a long and devastating legacy of environmental related consequences from industry practices, government policies, and long-term private and public economic disinvestment. Historically, factories and mills were constructed with nearby worker housing. The industrial age of the late 1800s to early 1900s brought jobs and prosperity to the area, but also the unknown consequence of environmental contamination. Based on the known industrial practices on properties in the target areas, there is potential for environmental threats including heavy metals, VOCs, SVOCs, and pesticides on these industrial properties and properties located within the immediate vicinity of these operations.

⁴ US Census: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

⁵ CCG Police Department 2019 Data. & US - FBI - <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>

Due to factory closures, the Southside Corridor was identified as an area of urban blight in the 1950s-1960s. As a result, approximately 900 residential structures were demolished with **Urban Renewal** funding.⁶ These projects were located throughout the US and minority and impoverished neighborhoods were targeted including the Southside Corridor. Poor families of color were displaced by the government seizure of their residences with property owners not only losing their housing but their source of generational wealth. It has been documented in similar communities that it takes several regenerations to recover from government taking of property through eminent domain without fair and reasonable compensation.⁷ Without an implemented plan for redevelopment, the majority of the urban renewal razed properties remain vacant to this day. As an indirect effect of the multiple brownfield properties and urban renewal areas, crime increased, more businesses closed, and residents of means continued to leave the target areas’ **distressed neighborhood**. As a result of government implemented policies, the population was replaced with a **persistently poor, racially segregated** population with limited access to quality education, healthcare, public transportation, and job opportunities. The high levels of environmental threats, crime, and poverty have led to the perpetual disinvestment of the Southside Corridor.

Based on the COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index (CCVI), Columbus is identified as highly vulnerable community (0.98/1). The CCVI is based on socioeconomic status, minority populations, and access to affordable housing, public transportation, and quality healthcare. The index shows how the cumulative impacts experienced by this distressed community has also led to more vulnerability and greater stressors during and post pandemic conditions. The **Climate and EJ Screen Report** indicates that the target area has higher rates of asthma (99th percentile), low life expectancy (95th), low income (98th), unemployment (97th), poverty (94th), exposure to PM2.5 (92nd), and close proximity to extremely hazardous substances (RMP facilities, 98th). The Brownfield Assessment Grant will provide the underserved community with the ability to redevelop/reuse sites and promote community revitalization by reversing environmental justice issues that have plagued this community for decades.

b. Community Engagement i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles:

| Name of Org. | Point of Contact | Specific involvement in the project |
|--|---|---|
| The Housing Authority | Laura Johnson ljohnson@columbushousing.org | The Housing Authority is a local public organization that provides affordable housing for the Columbus area. The Authority will guide the site inventory and future reuse planning with a focus on providing more affordable housing within the target area. |
| Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley | Betsy Covington bcovington@cfcv.com | The Community Foundation connects people and resources to charitable interests for the Chattahoochee Valley. The Foundation will provide sources of local funding for future redevelopment and will inform and educate the target area residents via community outreach throughout the grant period. |
| South Columbus Church Organization (Local Community Organization) | Reggie Williams pastorreggie04@gmail.com | Led by Pastor Williams, the South Columbus UMC and other South Columbus churches are located within the target area and will provide grant status updates to the community, assist with community outreach , and provide meeting space. |
| West Central Department of Public Health | Asante Hilts asante.hilts@dph.ga.gov | The West Central Department of Public Health’s mission is to prevent illness, promote healthy living, and protect the community. The Health Department will assist with evaluating potential properties for assessment based on environmental risk and site prioritization based on the need of the target area. |

iii. Incorporating Community Input: The CCG will continue to involve the community in this

⁶ Cusseta Road Area Report, Columbus, GA. 1984.

⁷ Cebul, Brent. Urban Renewal Meant Negro Removal. LA Progressive. July 29, 2020

project through public meetings, the Columbus Brownfields Website, and social media. The CCG will promote events online for in-person meetings on the Community Reinvestment and Brownfield websites and social media. Comments and questions gathered from Brownfield Program meetings from the target area residents will be collected and addressed through the Community Reinvestment Facebook page, Brownfield website, and at the office for Community Reinvestment every month throughout the grant period. The proposed target area and the grant application were discussed and approved at the Columbus Council Meeting on October 25, 2022. Comments from the Brownfield Advisory Board, community, and target-area residents will be incorporated into the decision-making process for developing a priority site inventory and future reuse plans. A need assessment (based on community input) will be conducted to determine which areas and sites should be considered the highest priority for grant activities. As deemed necessary for the protection of human health, meetings will move to an online meeting format in the event of COVID resurgences. In-person meetings with a virtual option will be held twice a year throughout the grant period to inform and engage members of the public, with periodic updates made during regularly scheduled council meetings. Project updates and other grant project-related documents will be provided on the CCG and Columbus Brownfield websites and through email distribution lists, and copies will be made available at the Community Reinvestment Office and the Columbus Public and Mildred L. Terry libraries. The target-area residents and property owners are encouraged to join public meetings and an email distribution list to remain informed of the latest news on the project’s progress and upcoming events. Project partners will disseminate information in person to the target area residents who do not have internet access. Project partners committed to outreach assistance will publicize project progress, events, and accomplishments. The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) created during the FY2017 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and updated during the FY2019 Cleanup Grant, will be updated as needed during this project. In the event there are non-English speaking individuals present at events, a translator will be made available.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: CCG is requesting \$500,000 in funding to implement this project based on the number of potential brownfield sites in the target area (discussed in 1.a.ii) and the additional sites that will be found during the site inventory task.

| Task 1: Outreach | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The CCG Brownfield Project Manager will update the Community Involvement Plan (CIP) developed as part of the FY2017 EPA Assessment Grant, create outreach materials, update the brownfield project website and create social media posts with the assistance of the environmental consultant (consultant). CCG staff will lead the community meetings (online if necessary due to COVID-19) to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (handouts) & office supplies. |
| ii. | <i>Identifying Additional Sites 3.a.ii is addressed in the Site Inventory Task 2.</i> |
| iii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP updated within 3 months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings will be held in the 1 st and 3 rd quarters annually . Website and Outreach Materials will be updated in the 1 st quarter and then quarterly throughout the grant project. |
| iv. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> CCG: Kimberly Mitchell - Brownfields Project Manager |
| v. | <i>Outputs:</i> Updated CIP, Brownfield Website, 7 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Summary of Community Meetings in EPA required Quarterly Reports. |
| Task 2: Site Inventory | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The CCG Brownfield Project Manager will work with the residents living in the target area during community meetings to create a site inventory for assessment. Although the CCG has many potential brownfield properties, they have acquired, additional abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by CCG staff using the GIS website. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with staff and local residents to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine the order the sites will be addressed. |

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|---|---|
| ii. | Identifying Additional Sites: The CCG Brownfield Project Manager will work with the BAB, stakeholders, City Staff, local officials, and community leaders to help identify additional sites within the geographic boundary of the city in the event the target area is sufficiently addressed and will prioritize additional sites based on the following criteria: highest level of need, potential threat to public health, and how the sites align with proposed public and private projects and redevelopment plans for CCG, which is home to a many underserved communities. This group will meet quarterly to review project process and assist with site prioritization and community input. |
| iii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> The site inventory process will begin in the 1 st quarter with the evaluation ranking process taking place in the 3 rd quarter & both continuing through years 2-4 of the grant project. |
| iv. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> CCG: Kimberly Mitchell - Brownfields Project Manager |
| v. | <i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List |
| Task 3: Assessment | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The consultant will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting first with the two priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which will include the SS-QAPP. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be obtained. |
| ii. | Identifying Additional Sites 3.a.ii is addressed in the Site Inventory Task 2. |
| iii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Assessment activities to begin in the 2 nd quarter and will continue throughout the grant project. |
| iv. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the CCG - Robert Scott - Brownfields Project Director. |
| v. | <i>Outputs:</i> 20 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, and 10 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP, Site Access Agreements and Property Eligibility Determinations. |
| Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> For projects identified for cleanup, the consultant will prepare the Analysis for Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs and determining site appropriate remediation/ reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The consultant will assist the CCG in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions (virtual depending on COVID restrictions) for key properties. A planning consultant will create a Brownfield Revitalization Plan for the target area. |
| ii. | Identifying Additional Sites 3.a.ii is addressed in the Site Inventory Task 2. |
| iii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes to begin in the 6 th quarter and the Brownfield Revitalization Plan will begin in the 3 rd quarter. |
| iv. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the CCG - Robert Scott - Brownfields Project Director. |
| v. | <i>Outputs:</i> 5 ABCAs, 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes, 1 Brownfield Revitalization Plan |
| Task 5: Programmatic Support | |
| i. | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The Brownfield Project Manager will procure an environmental consultant. The Project Manager will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule and terms and conditions. The consultant will assist the CCG in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the four-year term of the grant. The CCG staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend three national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops. |
| ii. | Identifying Additional Sites 3.a.ii is addressed in the Site Inventory Task 2. |
| iii. | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES & Quarterly Reporting begins in the 1 st quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in the 5 th quarter, 9 th quarter, 13 th quarter, and during the final closeout. |
| iv. | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> CCG: Kimberly Mitchell - Brownfields Project Manager |
| v. | <i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 4 Annual Financial Reports, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period. Two staff to attend three conferences. |

b. Cost Estimates: Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.* The budget for this project includes travel, supplies and contractual costs only. **CCG commits to spending 72% of the budget on the Assessment Activities.**

Task 1 – Outreach: Contractual: Updated Community Involvement Plan \$1,500 (15hrs x \$100), Updated Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$1,700 (17hrs x \$100), 7 Community Education Meetings \$9,800 (98hrs x \$100, \$1,400/meeting), Supplies: GIS Software, printouts (500 color handouts at \$1.00 each) \$1,000. **Task 2 – Site Inventory:** Contractual: Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool creation \$10,000 (100hrs x \$100). **Task 3 – Assessment:** Contractual: 20 Phase I ESA \$3,500 each for a total of \$70,000. 1 Generic QAPP \$4,000. 10 Phase II ESA including SS-QAPP at \$28,600 each for a total of \$286,000. **Task 4 – Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 5 ABCAs \$5,500 each for a total of \$27,500. 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$5,000 (\$2,500/meeting), Brownfields Revitalization Plan at \$50,000 (Planner: 130hrs x \$150; Market Analysts: 112hrs x \$125, Environmental Professional: 110hrs x \$150). **Task 5 – Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Annual & Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period \$24,500 (245hrs x \$100). Travel: Two staff to attend three conferences \$9,000 (flights \$500; 3 nights hotel at \$200 per night; incidentals/per diem \$100, 2 staff, 4 days per conference).

| Category | Tasks | | | | | Totals |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| | <i>Outreach</i> | <i>Site Inventory</i> | <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Remediation/Reuse Planning</i> | <i>Programmatic Support</i> | |
| Travel | | | | | \$9,000 | \$9,000 |
| Supplies | \$1,000 | | | | | \$1,000 |
| Contractual | \$13,000 | \$10,000 | \$360,000 | \$82,500 | \$24,500 | \$490,000 |
| Total Budget | \$14,000 | \$10,000 | \$360,000 | \$82,500 | \$33,500 | \$500,000 |

c. Measuring Environmental Results: To ensure this EPA Brownfield Grant is on schedule a representative from each target area community member’s organization, CCG staff and the qualified environmental consultant will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a**, using an Excel spreadsheet reporting all progress for work scope, goals, and objectives fulfillment to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, expenditures and activities will be compared to the schedule to ensure the Grant Project will be completed within the four-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. Outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with project partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs and cleanup plans. Tracked outcomes will include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project’s performance is not efficient, there are countermeasures in place, including making monthly calls to the EPA Project Officer, and, if needed, creating a Corrective Action Plan.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

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

Description of Key Staff: The CCG-Community Reinvestment staff has a strong capacity to carry out the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the grant with their previous grant management experience. Community Reinvestment annually manages U.S. Department of Housing (HUD) entitlement grant funds (CDBG & HOME) and State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, through the American Rescue Plan and facilitates the application process for local small businesses and nonprofits who are economically affected by the pandemic. Robert Scott, CCG’s Director of Community Reinvestment, will serve as the **Brownfields Project Director**. He is responsible for the oversight and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the grant. Mr. Scott previously served as the Emergency Solutions Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Senior Program Manager in Gwinnett County for five years. He is responsible for managing real estate acquisitions, disposing and leasing, and overseeing the bid contracts, reviewing and underwriting proposals, and preparing reports and budgets. Kimberly Mitchell,

Assistant Director of Community Reinvestment, is new to this position but previously served as a Senior Planner at Mosaic Community Planning for three years. Ms. Mitchell will serve as the **Brownfields Project Manager** and will be responsible for the management of the day-to-day activities of the brownfield project. Ms. Mitchell has over five years of experience in community planning. She will be the primary contact and will provide technical oversight for the project. Angelica Alexander will serve as the **Financial Director**. She has over 11 years of experience supervising accounting, purchasing, financial planning, and revenue divisions. She will be responsible for completing the ASAP drawdowns and financial oversight for this grant. CCG will procure an environmental consultant to assist with the technical portions of the grant project.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: Utilizing local contracting requirements and CCG's competitive procurement processes, CCG will procure a qualified environmental consultant to support the technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment, in addition to any other contractors needed to complete the project. The CCG will ensure compliance with the EPA's "Professional Service" procurement process during contractor selection.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant (1) Accomplishments: The CCG was awarded an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant in 2017 for the 2nd Avenue Corridor. The CCG completed 9 Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA), 6 Phase II ESAs, the Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), 6 Site-Specific QAPPs, and cleanup planning. The outcomes of these projects were documented in the ACRES system at the time of task completion. The grant was completed and closed in February 2020. The CCG was awarded an FY2019 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant for the Former State Farmers Market. The site was assessed during the FY2017 Assessment Grant and found to have asbestos and lead-based paint in the buildings and petroleum contamination in the soil. The public review and comment of the ABCA has been completed, bid documents have been completed for the site cleanup activities, and cleanup contractor selection has been completed. The cleanup activities will be completed, and the grant will close by March 2023. All activities have been entered into ACRES at the time of completion. The CCG was awarded an EPA Brownfield Assessment Pilot Grant in 2002 for the Enterprise Zone area. The project area was comprised of approximately 1,780 acres and 12,883 parcels with 100 parcels identified as part of the brownfield site inventory. This grant was completed prior to the ACRES system but all reporting was completed and submitted on time.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The FY17 Assessment grant was handled properly regarding compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions. The required quarterly reporting and annual report were delivered in a timely manner as well as grant deliverables entered into the ACRES Database. The FY17 Assessment grant was completed in February 2020 and all funding was expended. For the FY19 Cleanup grant, the public review and comment of the ABCA has been completed, bid documents have been completed for the site cleanup activities, and cleanup contractor selection has been completed. Due to COVID, the EPA granted a six-month extension to complete the cleanup activities. It is anticipated that all grant funds will be expended by March 2023. The 2002 Pilot Grant was handled properly regarding compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions with deliverables provided to EPA in a timely manner. All required Property Profile Forms, Annual, and Quarterly reporting and Closeout reports were delivered in a timely manner. The 2002 EPA Brownfield Pilot Grant was successfully completed and closed in 2005. This grant was a pilot grant, and it was a learning experience for the City. The grant was completed, but there were not sufficient funds to complete a Phase I ESA which left a remaining balance of \$1,238.95.