

FY21  
Narrative Information Sheet



# CITY OF CLEARWATER

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING, POST OFFICE BOX 4748, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33758-4748

600 CLEVELAND STREET, SUITE 600, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33755

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: TELEPHONE (727) 562-4220 FAX (727) 562-4075

HOUSING: TELEPHONE (727) 562-4030 FAX (727) 562-4037

1. Applicant Identification  
City of Clearwater  
600 Cleveland Street  
Clearwater, Florida 33755
2. Funding Requested
  - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
  - b. Federal Funds Requested:
    - i. \$300,000
    - ii. Not Applicable
3. Location  
a) City of Clearwater b) Pinellas County c) Florida
4. Property Information for Site-Specific Applications  
Not Applicable
5. Contacts
  - a. Project Director  
Chuck Lane  
(727) 562-4023  
[charles.lane@myclearwater.com](mailto:charles.lane@myclearwater.com)  
600 Cleveland Street, Clearwater, Florida 33755
  - b. Highest Ranking Elected Official  
Mayor Frank Hibbard  
(727) 562-4050  
[Frank.Hibbard@myclearwater.com](mailto:Frank.Hibbard@myclearwater.com)  
600 Cleveland Street, Clearwater, Florida 33755
6. Population  
City of Clearwater, FL: 114,015 (US Census: 2014–2018 American Community Survey)

Mark Bunker, Councilmember  
Kathleen Beckman, Councilmember

Frank Hibbard, Mayor



David Allbritton, Councilmember  
Hoyt Hamilton, Councilmember

"Equal Employment and Affirmative Action Employer"



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## 7. Other Factors Checklist

| <b>Other Factors</b>  | <b>Page #</b> |
|---|---------------|
| 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 brownfield 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.) | 2             |
| 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; or will incorporate energy efficiency measures.  | 3             |
| 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse planning activities for priority brownfield site(s) within the target area.   | N/A           |

## 8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority See attached

Mark Bunker, Councilmember  
Kathleen Beckman, Councilmember

Frank Hibbard, Mayor



David Allbritton, Councilmember  
Hoyt Hamilton, Councilmember

"Equal Employment and Affirmative Action Employer"



# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Bob Martinez Center  
2600 Blair Stone Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Jeanette Nuñez**  
Lt. Governor

**Noah Valenstein**  
Secretary

August 25, 2020

Cindy Nolan  
Brownfields Program  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
61 Forsyth Street, S.W. 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960  
[nolan.cindyj@epa.gov](mailto:nolan.cindyj@epa.gov)

Dear Ms. Nolan:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the City of Clearwater's Brownfields grant application for a Community-Wide Hazardous Substance and Petroleum or Petroleum Products Assessment Grant. The Department understands that this application has been prepared in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidance document EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06, titled "Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants." This letter of acknowledgement addresses the requirement for a "Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority," described in SECTION IV.D.8. EPA Brownfields grant funding will strengthen the City's cleanup and redevelopment efforts. This federal grant effort also supports Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Act and the Department's role in administration of site rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

The Department encourages EPA grant recipients to use the incentives and resources available through Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Program with EPA grant funding to enhance the success of their Brownfields project. The Department recommends that the City of Clearwater consider including Brownfields sites or areas that could potentially receive federal funding in a state-designated Brownfield area. The City is also encouraged to contact Yanisa Angulo, P.E., the Southwest District Brownfields Coordinator, at (813) 470-5757 to learn more about the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Crain".

Kelly Crain, Environmental Manager  
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

KC/jc

cc:

Philip Kirkpatrick, City of Clearwater – [philip.kirkpatrick@myclearwater.com](mailto:philip.kirkpatrick@myclearwater.com)  
Yanisa Angulo, P.E., DEP Southwest District – [yanisa.angulo@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:yanisa.angulo@dep.state.fl.us)

FY21  
Threshold Criteria

## Threshold Criteria

### 1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Clearwater (City), Florida, is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a general-purpose unit of local government as defined under 2 CFR §200.64.

### 2. Community Involvement

The City of Clearwater announced at the regular City Council meeting (10/12/2020) and at the Brownfield Advisory Committee meeting (10/13/2020) that they intend to *reapply* for the EPA's Brownfield Community-wide Assessment Grant for the downtown target area of **Census Tract 259 and Census Tract 261.01**. The City has always valued the input of their community members and is committed to keeping them involved in every step of the process, which is evident based on their long Brownfield Program history dating back to 1996. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to describe the planned community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players, which will be made available for review at the City's Planning and Development Department. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, community meetings have been and will continue to be held online. The City anticipates community input to be received primarily over the phone or online. When in-person meetings are permitted again, meetings will be held within the target area while observing social distancing requirements. Additionally, questions and concerns can be submitted via the innovative Clearwater Connect system online. The City will respond to feedback during the community meetings and via online.

The City is accessible to the public on social media platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The City will update the community throughout the brownfield project via the city's website and social media platforms, as well as through city-news and calendar-announcement emails, which they will encourage residents to subscribe to. As part of the assessment program, the City will develop a brownfield website and brochure explaining the Brownfield Program. The City staff will provide information during the regularly scheduled City Council meetings, which are broadcasted on C-View TV, the City of Clearwater's television channel that is available to residents through local cable providers and online streaming. This TV platform enables the City to remain active within the community during the time of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

The City affirms that it does not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

FY21  
Narrative

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

**a. Target Area and Brownfields** i. Background and Description of Target Area: The City of Clearwater (population 114,015) is located along Florida's Gulf Coast.<sup>1</sup> Clearwater has a long history that began with the Native Americans, who named the area after the clear water springs that dotted the present downtown area, followed by the arrival of European explorers in the 1500s.<sup>2</sup> By the 1840s, settlers had built a small farming community in the area, known as "Clear Water Harbor." Henry Plant brought the railroad through Ocala, and to boost his rail passenger business, he built several resorts and hotels in the area.<sup>2</sup> In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area was renamed "Clearwater" and experienced steady growth despite setbacks including a decimating fire that raged through the business district in 1910.

Although Clearwater has been a vacation destination for generations due to its climate and beautiful views, the city has an agricultural and industrial past.<sup>3</sup> In the 1930s, Clearwater was the "chief shipping point" for Pinellas County, which resulted in lasting impacts to the subsurface.<sup>3</sup> With Census Tract (CT) 259 bounded by Clearwater Bay and CT 261.01 bounded by Clearwater Harbor with direct access to the Gulf of Mexico, this downtown **target area** was an ideal location for commercial businesses to import and export goods. Unfortunately, by the 1960s many businesses had left the downtown area to relocate to the newly growing commercial centers along US Highway 19 North. As businesses moved out, so did residential development, causing many to relocate. This mass exodus from the downtown area left vacant properties in its wake. The **target area for this brownfield assessment, CT 259 and CT 261.01**, is full of blighted sites in the heart of downtown that inhibit redevelopment and pose environmental dangers to the residents.

Changes in the economy have greatly impacted the downtown, placing the city at a serious crossroad. Clearwater has become the headquarters to a spiritual group, a private tax-exempt organization that began in 1975 with a single building and now owns **92 properties** downtown.<sup>4</sup> According to an article in the *Tampa Bay Times*, the church and parishioners over a three-year period have spent \$103 million to acquire property in the downtown area, with **72% of those church-owned properties being tax-exempt**.<sup>5</sup> The organization is now the largest landowner in Clearwater. Numerous properties had hosted businesses for years, and the Church made offers on them without them listing publicly. The large land grab pushed many businesses that remained out of the area. Many of these properties sit vacant, with no sign of intended redevelopment. The growth of this organization has **dramatically impacted the municipal tax base and dollars available to support community services**. The economic and environmental decline combined with the downtown target area's business and job loss leaves a legacy of vacant properties. The City recognizes the need to assess and incentivize developing the properties that remain. Fortunately, CT 259 is a federally designated **Opportunity Zone**, which the City will leverage to entice developers to revitalize the historic downtown area. Additionally, the northern portion of CT 259 is designated as a **Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)**, which allows for future increases in property values to be set aside to support economic development projects within that district.<sup>6</sup>

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Clearwater has seen many businesses come and go; however, the vacant buildings left behind provide opportunities for new life and purpose. The City will build and prioritize their brownfields inventory with the help of their project partners and the target-area residents by thoroughly discussing sites and future market-driven redevelopment

<sup>1</sup> 2014–2018 American Community Survey – US Census

<sup>2</sup> History <https://www.myclearwater.com>

<sup>3</sup> Clearwater Chamber of Commerce Brochure (1930s)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.tampabay.com/news/clearwater/2019/10/20/scientologys-40-years-of-conflict-with-the-city-of-clearwater-recapped/> 9

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.tampabay.com/news/clearwater/2019/10/20/see-every-building-owned-by-the-church-of-scientology/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://redevelopment.net/cra-resources/q-a-for-cras/>



opportunities during community and project-partner meetings. The City has identified two properties as initial priority sites since developers have committed to redevelop these properties into a community center and a hotel, which aligns with the Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan. **The City has site access to both priority sites from the current landowners along with several others within the target area** and will continue the process of site-access negotiations as more properties are identified. The priority brownfield sites are the **Former Gasoline Station** property located at 401 & 415 S. Fort Harrison Avenue and 420 S. Garden Avenue and the **Former North Ward Elementary School** property located at 900 N. Fort Harrison Avenue.

The **Former Gasoline Station** property, three parcels totaling approximately one acre, is located within an **Opportunity Zone** and **CRA**. The City recognizes this site as a top priority due to its proximity to downtown and residential areas as well as its having developers ready to **redevelop the site into a hotel, which aligns with the Redevelopment Plan**. The site consists of a restaurant building constructed in 1960, an office building constructed in 1927, and a vacant lot. The vacant lot is the location of a former gasoline station and auto repair shop and has been vacant since 2018. The lot is unfenced, and the potential volatile organic compounds (VOC), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOC), petroleum, and metal-contaminated soil is accessible by all who take a shortcut through the property to access nearby businesses, churches, and homes. This eyesore is one of the last things tourists see before they take the Clearwater Memorial Causeway to Clearwater Beach. The site's three-story office building stands tall with its Greek columns above the cleared vacant lot and the brick-paved Markley Street, which connects the property to the northern parcel with the restaurant building. The age of both the restaurant and office buildings are concerning due to the potential for lead-based paint and asbestos containing materials.

A mile north of the **Former Gasoline Station** property, a local landmark stands out among the residential properties. The unique collection of buildings is what remains of the **Former North Ward Elementary School**, characterized by its charming red brick façade directly across the street from the harbor. The school, which served as a place of knowledge and growth since 1915, has sat empty for the 11 years since budget cuts closed its doors. This two-acre parcel overlooks the Clearwater Basin Marina to the west and is located within the North Marina neighborhood, which elected officials are considering designating as a new CRA. Despite the pristine views and the appealing character of the building, the property is tainted by its history. The canopy located in the northwest portion of the site serves as a reminder of the site's historical use as a gasoline station. The property's seemingly benign use as a school complicates matters further due to the presence of an **underground heating oil tank** that serviced the school buildings. Additionally, the age of the buildings (95 years old) presents health concerns with the potential for **lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials**. Although previous assessment has been conducted at the site, additional assessment is needed to ensure the health and wellbeing of those who will use this space since it is intended for mixed-use development with a multi-family residential building, a boutique hotel, and a **community center** with a pool, an event lawn, a dining hall with market stalls, and vendors. This redevelopment will serve the needs of the target area by creating a safe gathering space, jobs, and support for local vendors. The City recognizes this site as a top priority due to its proximity to downtown and residential areas as well as its proximity to the waterfront, which is an area of focus in the Redevelopment Plan. Additionally, developers are ready to revitalize the site while **retaining the existing structures** to create this new community center, which **aligns with the Redevelopment Plan** as well as the concerns of the local community, who have spoken out against demolishing the old school buildings.

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

The City recognizes the need to redevelop the target area by addressing brownfield properties. Much effort and consideration went into the development of the 2018 **Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan**: A Special Area Plan & Community Redevelopment Plan for the City of Clearwater. Additionally, the **Downtown District & Design Standards** were created to guide the redevelopment of the area consistent with the vision, guiding principles, goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the Redevelopment Plan. The vision statement of the Plan is as follows: *Downtown Clearwater will thrive as the urban core and heart of the City, as the center of business and government, and as an attractive place to live, work, shop and play. A revitalized Downtown will be achieved through quality urban design, continued creation of a high-quality public realm, and a dense and livable pattern which will strengthen the overall health of the City.*

The proposed plan for redeveloping the **Former Gasoline Station** priority site with a **hotel** aligns with the Redevelopment Plan for hotels on properties fronting Court Street. The proposed redevelopment plan of the **Former North Ward Elementary School** priority site as a mixed-use parcel with **community center** aligns with the objectives of “encourage renovation, restoration and reuse of existing historic structures” and “encourage a vibrant and active public realm, recreation and entertainment opportunities, and support the community and neighborhoods.” In fact, the Redevelopment Plan specifically mentions the **Former North Ward Elementary School** property by name, stating that it could be “adapted to a community/cultural center...and improved with publicly accessible amenities like a playground, garden, or space for outdoor events to expand the cultural attractions” in the area, which aligns with the proposed redevelopment. The proposed redevelopment matches the City’s vision for this property.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The assessment and remediation of properties in the target area will make them available for redevelopment, which will help to continue the Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan’s mission of creating **new business and job opportunities** (economic benefit) as well as **improving the aesthetic of the target area neighborhoods** (non-economic benefit). The community center at the Former North Ward Elementary School will create opportunities for **local businesses** by renting them vendor booths to sell their wares during community events. The availability of the booths will inspire residents with dreams of starting their own businesses by offering a **safe, local venue** where they can build a business in the community they live in, truly making the vision of a “*live, work, shop, and play*” area a reality. The community center will serve the residents by providing a central area to share goods, ideas, and form relationships. Additionally, at-risk children of the area will have a safe place to form positive relationships with their peers and mentors within the community through activities such as swimming and yard games. Areas for local businesses to flourish will not be limited to the community center because, fortunately, CT 259 has been identified as the Downtown Clearwater federally designated **Opportunity Zone**, which the City will leverage to entice developers to revitalize this historic downtown target area. The proposed reuse at both priority sites **aligns with the City’s revitalization plans** and will have a beneficial impact on the economy as well as the residents’ quality of life. The redevelopment of the **Former Gasoline Station** priority site with a hotel will create jobs, thereby increasing the local tax base.

The City has identified the need for **renewable energy**, and Policy 14 of the Redevelopment Plan **encourages the use of solar panels** above structured parking and other structures. The City aims to improve quality of life and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by improving underutilized lands, such as brownfield sites, with greenspace. The City’s 2011 sustainability plan, Greenprint, identified the following goal: *Transform vacant and other underutilized properties from liabilities to assets that provide long-term economic, social and environmental benefits.* The plan specifically

pinpoints the city's need to continue implementing the brownfield program and providing incentives for brownfield and greyfield development. The proposed **reuse of the existing structures** at the **Former North Ward Elementary School** directly aligns with the goals of the sustainability plan as well as the Redevelopment Plan. As one of the Guiding Principles of the Redevelopment Plan, **Adaptive Reuse** is imperative for enhancing economic growth as well as creating a unique and inviting space. **The city intends to reuse structures throughout the target area as well as the priority sites when it is environmentally safe to do so.**

**c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources** i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City as a local unit of government is eligible to apply for county, state, and federal grant funding. In 1981, the City created a **CRA and Tax Increment Financial (TIF) District** within the target area that focused on reducing blight and spurring economic growth. The Downtown Clearwater TIF has funding available to further the redevelopment efforts within the CRA. As the City continues with its redevelopment efforts within the CRA and TIF districts, the EPA Brownfield grant funding will further stimulate the availability of additional funds through increased tax revenues as more sites are made ready for reuse. Since 1996, the City has been awarded grant funding from state and federal agencies in the amount of nearly \$5 million for **infrastructure** improvements focused on improvements to the target area. The City will apply for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which will be used to encourage the rehabilitation of commercial building façades and to demolish blighted properties throughout the target area.<sup>7</sup> A New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) is available for low-income communities within Clearwater. The State of Florida also offers a Brownfield Site Rehabilitation Agreement (BSRA) which incentivizes businesses to develop brownfield properties. Furthermore, with CT 259 being in an **Opportunity Zone**, private investors and developers will be drawn to the available tax incentives when redeveloping in the target area. The City intends to use RLF funds from BL-98487922-6 as a source of additional funding for the cleanup and remediation of assessed properties.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The City has determined the infrastructure (water, sewer, streets) is sufficient throughout the target area including the priority sites for redevelopment. As infrastructure needs are identified, the City will acquire additional federal and state grant funding.

## **2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**a. Community Need** i. The Community's Need for Funding: The target area (CT 259 and CT 261.01) is home to **7,365** people. The **civilian unemployment rate is 13%**, which is double the national rate (6%).<sup>8</sup> Target-area residents suffer from a low per capita income of \$30,626, which is less than the state and US averages (\$33,478/\$32,621).<sup>8</sup> The median household income in the target area is **\$35,869**, which is significantly less than the state and US averages (\$53,267/\$60,293).<sup>8</sup> With the low income, it is not surprising that the **percentage of all people below the poverty level in the target area is 23%** (US 14%) with **nearly 53% of those being children under the age of 18**, which is more than double the US average of 20%.<sup>8</sup> The City of Clearwater has suffered revenue shortfalls due to reduced sales tax and other tax revenues due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, (March–September 2020 shortfall of 14% in sales tax and revenue sharing) which has rendered them unable to afford assessments on potential brownfield sites throughout the city limits. Additionally, of the 92 properties owned by the Church, **72% are tax-exempt** for religious purposes.<sup>9</sup> As the Church continues to acquire more properties, the tax base diminishes. With the low-income numbers and high poverty levels, it is impossible for

<sup>7</sup> Special Incentive Areas <https://www.myclearwater.com/government/city-departments/economic-development/special-opportunity-incentives>

<sup>8</sup> 2014–2018 American Community Survey – US Census

<sup>9</sup> Tampa Bay Times, *Clear Takeover* October 20, 2019

residents to afford increases in taxes to fund redevelopment projects, but with the help of the EPA funding, goals as established in the City's redevelopment plans can be realized.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: The sensitive populations of the target area are the **elderly, minorities, and the impoverished**. The target area is occupied by an aging community with nearly **31% of the population made up of individuals who are 62 years and older**, which is more than the US average of 19%.<sup>10</sup> With a large proportion of the population at the US average retirement age (62 for women and 64 for men)<sup>11</sup> nearly half of the population in the target area (**42%**) **relies of social security**.<sup>10</sup> The EJ Screen Report show the target area ranks in the **89<sup>th</sup> percentile for population over 64 years of age**. **African Americans make up 19% of the target-area residents** compared to the national average of 13%, with **CT 261.01 comprised of 26%**.<sup>10</sup> The impoverished, or those living below the poverty level, make up **23% of all people** (US 14%) with **53% of all people under the age of 18** (US 20%) living below the poverty level.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, female heads of household make up **37% of the target area households who live below the poverty level**.<sup>10</sup> Within the target area, **18%** of households rely on food stamps (US 12%) and although food stamps provide a means for needy families to purchase healthy foods, their value relies on the availability of groceries to the recipient.<sup>10</sup> In the target area, **21% of occupied housing units lack access to a vehicle**, a number substantially greater than in the city (11%), state (8%), and US (9%).<sup>10</sup> The lack of vehicles substantially limits access to healthy foods, which is troubling considering **the target area is a USDA Food Desert**.<sup>12</sup>

In 2018, Clearwater's **crime rate was higher than 80%** of US cities.<sup>13</sup> Clearwater crime rates are **20% higher than the national average**.<sup>14</sup> The desperation stirred by unemployment (**12%**) and poverty causes some residents to turn to crime.<sup>10</sup> **Thefts accounted for 71%** of Clearwater crimes in 2018.<sup>13</sup> According to a survey from 2017, 7% of adults in Pinellas County reported that crime keeps them from walking around during the day and 20% reported that crime keeps them walking around outside at night.<sup>15</sup> The Downtown Redevelopment Plan aims to revitalize the area by renovating, repurposing, or demolishing vacant structures to promote safety and growth. The Downtown Redevelopment Plan envisions a community that facilitates a healthy, active, and social lifestyle for everyone. One of the objectives of the plan is to promote walking and biking to destinations, such as the community center at the **Former North Ward Elementary School**. Considering the target area households **lack access to a vehicle (21%)**, improving the safety and walkability of the area will offer new opportunity to the residents.<sup>10</sup> This is extremely important since **64% of adults in Pinellas County are overweight or obese** and one of the leading causes of death is heart disease.<sup>15</sup> Not only will addressing brownfield sites throughout the target area encourage economic growth by removing the environmental stigma surrounding potential sites, but the remediation of blighted structures can remove sites that create opportunity for illegal activity. Once these potential brownfield sites within the target area are redeveloped, residents will feel more secure using the sidewalks already in place to walk to their school, church, place of employment, and parks, allowing for healthier lifestyle choices. Together, the Redevelopment Plan and EPA funding will help to identify contaminants and reduce the safety threats that affect the target-area residents' health and welfare.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Sensitive populations are the most at risk when it comes to disease and health conditions that can arise from brownfield sites. In addition to the contaminants (VOC, SVOC, petroleum, metals, asbestos) found

<sup>10</sup> 2014–2018 American Community Survey – US Census

<sup>11</sup> Center for Retirement Research at Boston College: What is the Average Retirement Age? (2011)

<sup>12</sup> Food Desert [https://www.cims.edfifund.gov/preparation/?config=config\\_nmte.xml](https://www.cims.edfifund.gov/preparation/?config=config_nmte.xml)

<sup>13</sup> Clearwater Crime Data <https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Clearwater-Florida.html>

<sup>14</sup> Clearwater Crime Data <https://www.areavibes.com/clearwater-fl/crime/>

<sup>15</sup> Pinellas County Community Health Assessment, 2018



at the **Former Gasoline Station** property and **Former North Ward Elementary School**, former uses of the target area properties, which include use as a “chief shipping point” for Pinellas County, add other potential health risks from contaminants including petroleum and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Numerous PAHs have been classified as animal carcinogens and probable human carcinogens.<sup>16</sup> The former railroads and citrus groves that were responsible for much of the early economic success of Clearwater have a lasting negative impacts from metals, including arsenic.<sup>17</sup> Arsenic is a known carcinogen, and long-term exposure can also lead to **developmental effects, diabetes, pulmonary disease, and cardiovascular disease**.<sup>18</sup> Numerous properties within the target area, such as the priority site **North Ward Elementary School**, operated as gasoline stations and automotive repair shops and were redeveloped before regulations were in place to address lead, petroleum, and VOC contamination resulting from this use. Health effects from long-term exposure to VOCs include **damage to the liver, kidneys, lungs, and central nervous system** as well as **cancer**. According to the US National Library of Medicine, populations most vulnerable to the negative health effects of VOCs include the **elderly and young children**.<sup>19</sup> The various contaminants found throughout the target area, including asbestos, are contributing to the **high rate of both lung cancer** incidence (65 per 100K) and deaths (45 per 100K), compared to the state rates (59 per 100K/40 per 100K).<sup>20</sup> Health data is only available for Pinellas County and is not specific to the city; however, considering the abundance of contaminants within the target area, the percentage of impacted people is expected to be even greater than the county averages. Contaminants including VOCs and SVOCs, which can affect the breathing of the sensitive populations, are of concern as evidenced by the **higher rate of hospitalizations from asthma** in Pinellas County (924 per 100K), which is much higher than in the state (836 per 100K).<sup>20</sup> Assessments made possible through EPA Brownfield Program funding will identify the contaminants causing health issues plaguing the target area and reduce the negative health threats the sensitive populations are facing every day.

(3) Disproportionately Impacted Populations: The sensitive populations throughout the target area have been suffering from environmental justice issues based on current and past land uses for decades, which is apparent with the long-time vacant North Ward Elementary School priority site being an educational facility that predominately enrolled African American residents living in the target area. Currently, the harmful effects of high traffic volume throughout the target area is apparent, with the EJ Screen Report showing the target area is in the **91<sup>st</sup> percentile in the EPA Region and the 81<sup>st</sup> percentile in the US for traffic proximity and volume**. The high transient traffic in the area contributes to the target area’s ranking in the **72<sup>nd</sup> percentile in the state for ozone**. By revitalizing the target area and making way for a more walkable community, traffic in the area will be reduced, leading to a reduction in the associated, harmful automobile emissions and noise pollution. Additionally, the plans to create more green spaces to filter the air will improve the air quality. The City’s Sustainability Plan also outlines the City’s goals for improving the streets for all modes of transportation including bikes, walking, wheelchairs, and public transportation. Another issue facing the target area is the location along the Clearwater Harbor and Bay, which receives wastewater discharge. The EPA EJ Screen Report shows the target area is in the **99<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state and region Wastewater Discharge Indicator and the 97<sup>th</sup> percentile in the US**. The identification of contaminants will not only help to reduce the wastewater and air quality issues through the assessment and remediation of brownfield sites, but

<sup>16</sup> ATSDR – PAHs - <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/phs/phs.asp?id=120&tid=25>

<sup>17</sup> Pinellas County Historical Background, 2018

<sup>18</sup> WHO – Arsenic <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/arsenic>

<sup>19</sup> NLM – VOCs <https://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/chemicals-and-contaminants/volatile-organic-compounds-vocs>

<sup>20</sup> Pinellas County Community Health Assessment, 2018

it will reduce the environmental justice issues and threats affecting the health of the sensitive populations living within the target area.

**b. Community Engagement** i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: Local organizations throughout Clearwater have expressed a desire to assist with this project through site identification, selection, cleanup, and future redevelopment of brownfield sites throughout the target area.

| <b>Name of Org.</b>                      | <b>Point of Contact</b>  | <b>Specific involvement in the project</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| Pinellas Realtor Organization            | David Bennett,<br><a href="mailto:dbennett@tampabayrealtor.com">dbennett@tampabayrealtor.com</a>                           | Will assist with <b>site identification and prioritization.</b>  |
| Amplify Clearwater (Chamber of Commerce) | Amanda Payne, CEO,<br><a href="mailto:amanda@amplifyclearwater.com">amanda@amplifyclearwater.com</a>                       | Will <b>keep local businesses informed</b> on the status of the project and will <b>post identified sites available for redevelopment online</b> to feature their redevelopment potential. |
| Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition    | Marilyn Turman, Director of Communications,<br><a href="mailto:MTurman@tampabaybbic.com">MTurman@tampabaybbic.com</a>      | Will assist with community <b>outreach for the minority populations</b> in the target area.  |
| Pinellas County Public Works Dept        | Dan Nedvidek, Brownfield Program Manager<br><a href="mailto:dnedvidek@pinellascounty.org">dnedvidek@pinellascounty.org</a> | Will assist with <b>cleanup and future reuse planning.</b>   |

iii. Incorporating Community Input: The City of Clearwater announced at the regular City Council meeting (10/12/2020) and at the Brownfield Advisory Committee meeting (10/13/2020) that they intend to *reapply* for the EPA's Brownfield Community-wide Assessment Grant for the downtown target area. The City has always valued the input of their community members and is committed to keeping them involved in every step of the process, which is evident based on their long Brownfield Program history dating back to 1996. A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created to describe the planned community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players, which will be made available for review at the City's Planning and Development Department. Due to the current **COVID-19 pandemic**, community meetings have been and will continue to be held online. The City anticipates community input to be received primarily over the phone or online. When in-person meetings are permitted again, meetings will be held within the target area while observing social distancing requirements. Additionally, questions and concerns can be submitted via the innovative Clearwater Connect system online. The City will respond to feedback during the community meetings and via online.

The City is accessible to the public on social media platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The City will update the community throughout the brownfield project via the city's website and social media platforms, as well as through city-news and calendar-announcement emails, which they will encourage residents to subscribe to. As part of the assessment program, the City will develop a brownfield website and brochure explaining the Brownfield Program. The City staff will provide information during the regularly scheduled City Council meetings, which are broadcasted on C-View TV, the City of Clearwater's television channel that is available to residents through local cable providers and online streaming. This TV platform enables the City to remain active within the community during the time of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

**a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**: The City of Clearwater is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Grant in the amount of \$300,000 for a community-wide assessment program.

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| <b>Task 1: Outreach</b>                   |  |
| i   | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The City's Brownfield Project Manager will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, brownfield project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental consultant (consultant). City staff will lead the community meetings to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts), office supplies, and software to manage the grant.   |
| ii  | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP will be created within 3 months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings held 1 <sup>st</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> quarter. Website and Outreach Materials will be created in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project.  |
| iii                                       | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Phil Kirkpatrick Sr., Brownfield Project Manager  |
| iv  | <i>Outputs:</i> CIP, Brownfield Website, 3 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Meeting handouts, sign-in sheets, and meeting minutes.  |
| <b>Task 2: Site Inventory</b>             |  |
| i   | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The City's Brownfields Project Manager will work with the residents living in the target area during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by City staff using the property appraiser's website. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with City staff to create an evaluation ranking tool with the help of residents to determine the order in which the sites will be addressed. |
| ii  | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process that began with this application, with the evaluation-ranking process taking place in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter & continuing throughout the grant project.  |
| iii                                       | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Phil Kirkpatrick Sr. Brownfield Project Manager   |
| iv  | <i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List   |
| <b>Task 3: Assessment</b>                 |  |
| 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.   |
| ii  | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Assessment activities to begin in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter and will continue throughout the grant project.   |
| iii                                       | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from City of Clearwater's Phil Kirkpatrick Sr., Brownfield Project Manager.   |
| iv  | <i>Outputs:</i> 12 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP   |
| <b>Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning</b> |  |
| 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 City in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions (virtual or in-person depending on COVID restrictions) for key properties.   |
| ii  | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes to begin in the 6 <sup>th</sup> quarter and will continue throughout the grant project.  |
| iii                                       | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The consultant will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from City of Clearwater's Phil Kirkpatrick Sr., Brownfield Project Manager.   |
| iv  | <i>Outputs:</i> 4 ABCAs, 2 Vision Session/Charrette  |
| <b>Task 5: Programmatic Support</b>       |  |
| i   | <i>Project Implementation:</i> The City's Brownfields 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 City in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic  |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | Support for the three-year term of the grant. The City staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend two national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.  |
| ii  | <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter & Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in 5 <sup>th</sup> quarter, 9 <sup>th</sup> quarter, and during final closeout. |
| iii | <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Phil Kirkpatrick Sr., Brownfield Project Manager   |
| iv  | <i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 3 Annual Financial Reports, 12 Quarterly Reports, 3 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period. Two staff to attend two 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. **The City commits to spending over 70% of the budget on Assessment activities.** **Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$4,500 (45hrs x \$100), Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$2,000 (20hrs x \$100), 3 Community Education Meetings \$6,000 (\$2,000/meeting). Supplies: Software, printouts, etc. \$1,000. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: \$6,000 (48hrs x \$125) **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 12 Phase I ESAs \$3,000 each for a total of \$36,000. 1 Generic QAPP \$4,500. 8 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$23,000 each for a total of \$184,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 4 ABCAs \$6,500 for a total of \$26,000. 2 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$6,000 (\$3,000/meeting). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Annual Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the three-year grant period \$19,000 (152hrs x \$125). Travel: Two staff to attend two conferences \$5,000 (flights at \$750, 3 nights in hotel at \$350, incidentals and per diem at \$150 x 2 attendees).

| Category            | Tasks           |                       |                   |                                   |                             | Totals           |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
|                     | <i>Outreach</i> | <i>Site Inventory</i> | <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Remediation/Reuse Planning</i> | <i>Programmatic Support</i> |                  |
| Travel              |                 |                       |                   |                                   | \$5,000                     | \$5,000          |
| Supplies            | \$1,000         |                       |                   |                                   |                             | \$1,000          |
| Contractual         | \$12,500        | \$6,000               | \$224,500         | \$32,000                          | \$19,000                    | \$294,000        |
| <b>Total Budget</b> | <b>\$13,500</b> | <b>\$6,000</b>        | <b>\$224,500</b>  | <b>\$32,000</b>                   | <b>\$24,000</b>             | <b>\$300,000</b> |

**c. Measuring Environmental Results:** To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule, the City's Brownfield Project Team, which includes the qualified environmental consultant, will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a** in an excel spreadsheet and will report all progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects' schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the three-year timeframe. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and project partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and cleanup redevelopment plans. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project is not being achieved in an efficient manner, the City has countermeasures in place to address this problem, including monthly calls to the City's EPA Project Officer, and if needed, revisions to the existing Work Plan will be made.

#### **4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

**a. Programmatic Capability** i. Organizational Structure & ii. Description of Key Staff: The



grant will be managed by Clearwater's Economic Development and Housing Department (ED&H) as the department provides quality affordable housing and community services and directly links assistance to emerging and existing businesses throughout Clearwater. Chuck Lane, Assistant Director, will serve as the Brownfield Project Director and will be responsible for the oversight and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the Brownfield Program. Mr. Lane began working with the City in 2011 and has served as Assistant Director of ED&H since 2016. Phil Kirkpatrick, Senior Economic Development Coordinator, will serve as the Brownfield Project Manager and will be responsible for the day-to-day activities and the timely and successful expenditure of funds of the Brownfield Program. Mr. Kirkpatrick came to the City of Clearwater in 2020 after 30 years of private, commercial, and industrial real estate development work. He will be assisted by Mr. Joe DeCicco, Senior Environmental Specialist, who will serve as Subject Matter Expert. Mr. DeCicco has been with Clearwater Engineering for 12 years and has over 22 years of experience in completing environmental engineering and geologic studies in the Tampa Bay area. They will be assisted by Mr. Jay Ravins, City Finance Director, who will be responsible for managing the finances and ASAP.gov drawdowns. Mr. Ravins has 39 years of accounting and finance experience both in private industry and public sector, with 27 of those years in government.

iii. Acquiring Additional Resources: The City's Centralized Purchasing Department will advertise, solicit, and select a qualified environmental consultant to assist with the technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment, in full compliance with Federal Procurement Standards. The City of Clearwater procurement process is governed by the Code of Ordinances, City of Clearwater, Articles & Divisions; Sections 2.541 through 2.564.

**b. Past Performance and Accomplishments** i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant (1) Accomplishments: Clearwater has been awarded seven EPA Brownfield grants (1996–2009) resulting in 73 assessments and 17 cleanups. **Many of these activities happened before the inception of ACRES; therefore, the numbers in the ACRES system only reflect the activities which took place during the 2003, 2007, and 2009 grant awards.** The City has successfully managed these grants and has complied with all requirements including the work plans, schedules, terms, and conditions. Accomplishments and property information were reported via property profiles before the inception of the ACRES database. The City's 1999 RLF grant resulted in two loans and subsequent cleanups making the redevelopment of the Former Clearwater Automotive and Former CarPro site possible. The 2003 \$400,000 Assessment Grant resulting in 10 Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) and 4 Supplemental Assessments created over \$2.4 million in leveraged funding and 4 acres ready for reuse. The 2007 \$400,000 Assessment Grant resulting in 6 Phase I ESAs, 2 Phase II ESAs, and 2 Supplemental Assessments created nearly \$290,000 in leveraged funds and 44 acres ready for reuse. The 2009 \$400,000 Assessment Grant resulting in 3 Phase I ESAs, 2 Phase II ESAs, and 1 Supplemental Assessment created over \$283,000 in leveraged funding and 40 acres ready for reuse. No funds were remaining at the time of closure of any of these grants. (2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The City's past grant cooperative agreements were handled properly regarding compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions. During the project periods, no corrective actions were required, and the City maintained compliance with expenditure and reporting requirements. All required reporting documentation, including annual, quarterly, and closeout reports, were delivered in a timely manner, as well as all grant deliverables being entered into the ACRES database/Property Profile Forms on time. The quarterly financial summaries consistently indicated the budget was on-target throughout the life of the grant. All assessment grant awards were fully expended within the agreed upon timeframe.