

FY21
Narrative Information Sheet



1. Applicant Identification
City of Ocala, Florida
110 SE Watula Ave.
Ocala, FL 34471
2. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested
 - i. \$300,000
 - ii. Not Applicable
3. Location
a) City of Ocala b) Marion County c) Florida
4. Property Information for Site-Specific Applications
Not Applicable
5. Contacts
 - a. Project Director
Melanie Gaboardi
(352) 629-8312
mgaboardi@ocalafl.org
201 SE 3rd Street, 2nd Floor
Ocala, FL 34471
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official
Jay A. Musleh, Council President
(352) 401-3976
jmusleh@ocalafl.org
110 SE Watula Ave.
Ocala, FL 34471
6. Population
City of Ocala, FL – 58,598 (US Census: 2014–2018 American Community Survey)



7. Other Factors Checklist

None of the Other Factors apply to this brownfield project.

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	NA
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States territory.	NA
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	NA
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road or other public thoroughfare separating them.)	NA
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	NA
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy; or will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	NA
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.	NA

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached



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. 10th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960
nolan.cindyj@epa.gov

Dear Ms. Nolan:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the City of Ocala'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 Ocala 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 Lu Burson, the Central District Brownfields Coordinator, at (407) 897-2912 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:

Lisa Walsh, City of Ocala – lwalsh@ocalafl.org
Melanie Gaboardi, City of Ocala – mgaboardi@ocalafl.org
Lu Burson, DEP Central District – lu.burson@floridadep.gov

FY21
Threshold Criteria

Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

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

2. Community Involvement

Ocala benefits from an engaged community that provides public input and participates in the governmental process. Informing and gathering public input when implementing changes in the community is a top priority to the City. The City has previously prepared a formal Community Involvement Plan (CIP), which will be updated as a first step in the execution of the proposed project. The CIP will rely on input from the community and will outline planned community engagement activities, a programming schedule, and stakeholders. The CIP for this project will be compatible with and build on existing public involvement in implementing the Midtown and North Magnolia redevelopment plans.

The City has established a series of implementation strategies for its engagement goals based on its past experience of effective methods and specific target-area challenges. The City's goals for community involvement efforts are to **give the public accessible, accurate, and timely information; ensure adequate opportunity for meaningful participation and for input to be considered; reflect community concerns, questions, and information needs in program activities and decisions; and respect and fully consider public input throughout the process.** Dedication to this process will be maintained despite COVID-19 pandemic conditions. The City offers Zoom meeting options in addition to socially distanced, in-person meetings. The City will ensure that residents are provided with ample opportunity to obtain valuable information despite social distancing requirements and will use various means of outreach that follow CDC/municipal guidelines. A modified tour using a video that provides scenes and clips of the target community will be used during webinar meetings and will be posted on City social media. Other plans include asking residents to provide their own photos and video clips to create a grassroots digital montage, as well as provide input and information to the City to develop the Brownfield Program.

The City will continue seeking input from all target-area members in its Brownfield Program and will leverage project-partner resources to encourage involvement and outreach/education. The City and its eleven-member Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC), made up of citizens, professionals, and business owners recruited based on their engagement in current civil and business organizations, will lead these efforts. The City and BAC will use multiple forms of media to communicate with the community and seek input. The City will further develop its social media audience as a means for distributing information. The BAC will be integral to site selection, reuse planning, and overall redevelopment activities. Posts on the City's webpage, displays in public spaces (libraries), and the use of mailers will provide a variety of informational resources. Additionally, many of the BAC are also members of other City Community Redevelopment Advisory Committees, bringing a strong redevelopment mindset to the group. As of September 2020, the City has presented the brownfields initiatives being requested through this grant to the BAC, the Downtown Business Alliance, and North Magnolia CRA Advisory Committee.

3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

The City of Ocala, Florida affirms that the City has drawn down 72% of funds associated with the current EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant (BF00D71118) as of October 1, 2020. A copy of the ASAP financial record displaying the amount of Cooperative Agreement funds drawn down is attached.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED
Automated Standard Application for Payments
ACCOUNT SETTLEMENT REPORT

ALC/Region : 68128933/
Recipient ID : 1246686
Account ID : BF00D71118
Transaction Date From : 09/07/2018

Short Name : RTP-Grants
Short Name : Ocala

Through : 09/30/2020

Settlement/Applied Date	Transaction Type	Authorizations	Draws/RP/BE	Account Balance
10/03/2018	AU	\$300,000.00		\$300,000.00
04/22/2019	PY		-\$15,915.02	\$284,084.98
09/12/2019	PY		-\$34,579.28	\$249,505.70
11/08/2019	PY		-\$81,311.31	\$168,194.39
03/27/2020	BE		-\$29,389.68	\$138,804.71
03/27/2020	BE		\$29,389.68	\$168,194.39
03/27/2020	PY		-\$83,165.46	\$85,028.93
07/31/2020	PY		-\$2,953.75	\$82,075.18
Totals :		\$300,000.00	-\$217,924.82	

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 Ocala is located in North Central Florida and encompasses 45 square miles at the junction of five major roadways (I-75, SR40, US27, US441, and SR200). Economic development in the area was first promoted through agricultural production, which included the citrus industry. The railroad reached the city in 1881, furthering development. In 1883 downtown Ocala was destroyed by a fire and rebuilt with brick, granite, and steel, earning it the name “The Brick City.”¹ From the 1930s to the 1960s, US 441/301 was the primary highway connecting the northern US with Florida. This accessibility brought tourists and industry to the community, including vehicle assembly and customization, manufacturing, food production, fuel depots, and distribution centers. Ocala is synonymous with the adjacent Silver Springs State Park, a world-famous tourist attraction that has provided a strong tourism base to the community for decades. The roads through Ocala and the once bustling downtown were a haven for motels, fueling and auto repair stations, and agricultural and industrial businesses. Many of the fueling stations were abandoned prior to the underground storage tank (UST) closure requirements under US EPA regulations. Additionally, many of the industrial businesses were run with no environmental regulations to guide their practices. Industrial businesses remain integral to the economy today, and recently emphasis has been placed on attracting logistics services for trucking and transportation as the City is home to a newly emerging downtown, several large distribution centers (FedEx, Chewy, AutoZone, and Amazon), and mid-sized manufacturing.

The City’s target area for this brownfield assessment grant consists of Census Tracts (CT) 18, 19, and 14.01, which are all federally designated Opportunity Zones (OZ). The target area coincides with the City’s redevelopment plans for the Midtown/Downtown and North Magnolia areas. Midtown is located immediately north of downtown and is distinguished by the green spaces of the **Tusawilla Park and Historic District**. North Magnolia is located north of and adjacent to Midtown/Downtown. The areas have a blighted commercial presence with a heavy industrial setting in North Magnolia. The residential communities within these areas consist of a sensitive low-income population with a number of economic disadvantages, including high unemployment exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. After decades of neglect coupled with the flight of residents to the suburbs, these areas are poised for redevelopment. The City is committed to bringing the Downtown Development District back to its rightful place as the center of economic, cultural, and civic activity in the region. This will be accomplished through prosperous growth of residential, restaurant, entertainment, and retail hubs, as emphasized in the City’s **Ocala 2035 Vision Plan**.

ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Commercial and industrial businesses have come and gone in the target area for over a century, leaving behind an abundance of brownfield sites. The City has created, digitized, and maintained an extensive inventory of brownfield sites in the Ocala’s Brownfield Information System (OBIS), a GIS-based inventory system. The City intends to continue to build and prioritize its inventory with assistance from project partners and target-area residents. The City has identified two priority sites based on consistent interest from developers to redevelop the sites into mixed-use properties which align with the City’s redevelopment plans, including the **Ocala 2035 Vision Plan and North Magnolia Redevelopment Area Community Redevelopment Plan**. Site access has been secured for these two priority sites.

¹ Midtown Master Plan

The **Concord Parking Lot** is an approximately 1.15-acre site located to the northeast of the intersection of NE 1st Street and N Magnolia Avenue in Midtown/Downtown. The site was historically a post office that was demolished in the 1960s. The site is currently owned by the City as parking for surrounding businesses, and it is adjacent to the historic Sovereign Building. The prior post office basement may remain beneath the site and hold demolition debris containing lead, asbestos, and volatile organic compound (VOC)/semi-volatile organic compound (SVOC) petroleum impacts from the historical boiler system. Historical information reviewed for the site indicates documented petroleum impacts to soil and groundwater from past use of the surrounding sites adjacent to the north, east, south and west of the site. Recent assessment of a former dry cleaner historically located to the north has identified halogenated chlorinated solvent impacts to groundwater with a large plume impacting the Concord Parking Lot. The Concord Parking Lot is situated within 0.75-miles to the closest school, 4–5 blocks of existing neighborhoods, and close to employment centers including the Downtown Square and future hotel, the Osceola Trak, and the Marion County Courts Complex. The site is in a prime location for partnership with developers for mixed-use designs with provisions for a potential high-intensity parking garage and inclusion of affordable housing, as the City has implemented the inclusion of affordable housing in all development negotiations. The assessment and redevelopment of the Concord Parking Lot is recognized as a paramount initiative in revitalization of the area as the site is a **Catalytic Opportunity Site** in the **Midtown Master Plan**.

The former **Ocala Lumber Parcel** is approximately 4.91-acre privately owned site made up of three parcels located adjacent to NW 14th Street, NW Magnolia Terrace, and the Florida Northern Railroad line in North Magnolia. The site consists of open grassland, warehouses, and a small office building. Currently the site is leased to a granite company who, on assessment of the site, will work with the property owner to relocate, allowing redevelopment to occur. The long-term historic use of the site as a lumber yard and industrial facility coupled with historically registered petroleum tanks brings probability for subsurface impacts to soil and groundwater associated with VOCs, SVOCs, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and wood preservative products, including heavy metals and dioxins. Additionally, the remaining structures on the site may contain asbestos and lead based paint requiring survey prior to demolition. This large acreage site in the heart of North Magnolia is seen as a top priority for redevelopment with **strong potential for future mixed-use residential/commercial development** with an **affordable housing component**, aligning with the **North Magnolia Redevelopment Area Community Redevelopment Plan**. The allocation of brownfields funds to this site will make the site more desirable and marketable. The area needs revitalization and an infusion of new energy through prosperous planned development.

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

Plans: This project seeks to direct revitalization to some of the most economically disadvantaged portions of Ocala and generate interest in ideally located properties overlooked due to poverty as well as racial, socioeconomic, and environmental stigmas. The City has initiated the **Midtown and Downtown Master Plans** and **North Magnolia Community Redevelopment Area Development Plan** intended to limit light industrial use while promoting a walkable suburban form infused with mixed-use development and affordable housing. The City envisions developing safe affordable housing and infrastructure with accessibility and connectivity. The use of economic drivers is included not only to create jobs within the downtown area, but also to create housing in proximity to these jobs.

In 2010, the City started a multi-year process developing a vision plan to guide the community

for the next fifteen years. The resulting **Ocala 2035 Vision Plan** identified the need for redevelopment in the target area among other areas of the City. The **North Magnolia Community Redevelopment Area Development Plan** was adopted in 2019 as a community-driven collective effort of community residents, businesses, and City staff. The City has also developed a **Form Based Code (FBC)** to regulate development and achieve a specific urban form by creating a predictable public and private physical realm with a lesser focus on land use. Future affordable housing/mixed-use developments will benefit from existing infrastructure, especially public transportation and the proximity of the housing to the employment availability downtown. The assessment and cleanup of brownfields within the target area will further the goals and priorities of the City's plans and programs. These projects support redevelopment strategies that incorporate equitable development (benefiting all Ocala residents) and sustainable practice/livability principles. In October 2017, the City adopted a resolution to expand a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and brownfields area based on input from the community. Sites have been identified and prioritized through community engagement, with the goal of expanding brownfield redevelopment in the target area. The brownfield properties best suited to capitalize on current growth and development interest opportunities include the **Concord Parking Lot** and **Ocala Lumber Parcel**. The locations of the two priority sites will make them suitable for mixed-use retail and commercial/office centers, with a residential/affordable housing component. Not only will these uses add employment opportunities in the target area, but they will create affordable housing opportunities for the sensitive populations of the target area while enhancing the attractiveness to the entire City.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The assessment and remediation of sites in the target area will make properties available for redevelopment and help continue the mission of the CRA and 2035 Vision Plan by creating new businesses, job opportunities, and affordable housing. **The target area includes three federally designated OZs**, which will continue to be marketed to prospective developers to spur revitalization. The anticipated reuse of the priority sites aligns with the City's revitalization plans and will create an **economic benefit** of new jobs and a **non-economic benefit** of affordable housing, resulting in increased tax revenues to promote additional projects and development interest from private parties. Additionally, the creation of affordable housing will increase the residential population and stimulate the growth of businesses to support this population. Addressing brownfield sites throughout the target area will directly impact economic growth and serve to remove the environmental stigma surrounding potential redevelopment sites.

To promote sustainability, the City's Comprehensive Plan encourages the incorporation of **renewable energy** in development designs. The City has initiated **solar programs** allowing for voluntary use of renewable power and Net Solar Metering that provides residents generating renewable power to receive a bill credit. The City encourages the **reuse of structures** throughout the target area. Once these structures are repurposed and redevelopment occurs, residents will enjoy a more secure environment fostering a close-knit community that can readily enjoy safe access to newly created jobs, as well as schools, churches, community events, and parks like the existing Tusawilla Park, all within walking distance.

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. The City is making every effort to secure additional funding to further their Brownfield Program redevelopment goals and is currently pursuing the following funding opportunities:

	Agency	Funding Purpose
Federal	Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (up to \$500,000)	Demolition of brownfield sites that contribute to affordable housing initiatives. Expand housing opportunities.
State	Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) (up to \$155,000)	Design Extension of Osceola Trak (Midtown) through to CR200A (NE Jacksonville Rd)
State	Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) (up to \$600,000)	Improvement of drainage retention areas
State	Florida Department of State (FDOS) (\$425,000)	Special Category grant for window replacement, stucco repair, paint of historic Sovereign Building
Local	CRA Districts	Improvement of streetscapes and business buildings

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The existing infrastructure (sewer, water, power) throughout the target area is suitable for redevelopment activities. The City has made Capital Improvements over the past few years, evidenced by a water main replacement project including the target area, and will use additional funding through state and federal grant opportunities and local tax collections as improvements are needed to support redevelopment. The infrastructure currently in place for the priority sites will allow for immediate development.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **Community Need** i. The Community's Need for Funding: The target area exemplifies a community in need of revitalization. **The target-area (CT 14.01, 18, and 19) residents maintain an average per-capita income of \$16,930, barely half the state per-capita income of \$30,197.² The target area's median household income of \$29,014 is less than half the national average of \$60,293.² In addition, people living below the poverty level in the target area comprise 39% compared to the US average of 14%.² The high percentage of low-income residents impedes any major tax increases to fund brownfield assessment projects.**

COVID-19's effect on the City has exacerbated the problem, and the administration expects reduced tax revenues. In anticipation of this, the City has cut the budgets of several departments for the upcoming year. Due to limited tax revenue from the area and economic strain from COVID-19 on revenues and funding mechanisms, the City cannot afford to conduct brownfields assessment on its own, but the EPA Brownfield funding can help identify contaminants and reduce the threats to the sensitive populations through assessment, remediation, and redevelopment throughout the target area.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Within the target area, the sensitive populations include **African American minorities, single mothers, and the impoverished.** The target area's **African American population is 41%, twice that of the City (20%) and more than three times the US average (13%).²** The target area includes high percentages of impoverished residents, including female heads of household with children under the age of 18 at **an average of 66% (CT 18 at 83%), much higher than the national average of 38%.²** In addition, **34% of all families** within the target area are **below the poverty level** (US 10%), 48% of those families with children under the age of 18, significantly higher than the national average of 16%.² Poverty begets the need for government assistance, shown by **38%** of the target area households dependent on SNAP Benefits (food stamps) compared to 12% nationally.²

² US Census: 2014-2018 American Community Survey

The poverty level is further stressed by the **current unemployment rate of 14% in the target area, higher than the national average of 6%.³** This increasingly prevalent scenario has been heightened by the current COVID-19 pandemic, with the current unemployment rate for the City at 12%, up from 4% in January.^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} The unemployment, poverty, and resultant dependency on government assistance is exacerbated by the target area's status as a **USDA designated food desert; 21% of target area households have no access to a vehicle**, and must rely on public transportation or walk over two miles to obtain fresh food.³

With incomes so low, target-area residents find it difficult to pay for basic needs such as shelter, and **rental vacancies in the target area are at 12%, twice the national average of 6%.³** Residents' inability to obtain affordable housing has caused a rise in homelessness, which increases crime rates and incidence of drug and alcohol addiction, putting further strain on the community. Homeless populations create daily impacts to home and business owners and stress emergency and healthcare service providers in the target area. **The crime rate in the City is 55 per 1,000-residents, one of the highest in the country, with a one in 18 chance of being a victim of crime.⁴** The violent crime rate in Ocala is one of the highest in the nation for communities of any size, with a 1 in 149 chance of becoming a victim.⁴ The property crime rate is much higher with a 1 in 21 chance of becoming a victim, a rate of 48 per 1,000.⁴

Crime can lead to other welfare and health issues, such as drug abuse. The City has a systemic problem with opioid and heroin abuse as shown by the increase in overdoses when compared to 2019, with 67 overdoses and 11 deaths as of May 2020.⁵ A strong emphasis for brownfield funding will be placed on development of affordable housing along with access to basic goods and jobs that will have a dramatic impact on homelessness, crime, and drug problems. Based on community input, the overwhelming need identified in the target area is affordable housing. By securing this grant and promoting brownfield redevelopment opportunities, the City can send a signal to developers and brownfields stakeholders that there is not just local, but federal support for revitalization in this promising area. Threats to residents will be reduced by bringing these sites to the public's attention, completing assessments that identify the presence and extent of contamination, and directing remediation and redevelopment through engineering and/or institutional controls.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: The pervasiveness of brownfield sites throughout the target area carries a high propensity for petroleum and hazardous substance impacts, a health concern for the sensitive target-area populations. **Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the City and respiratory disease the third.⁶** These causes of death are disproportionately higher in low-income and high-minority parts of town, which include the target area. The Concord Parking Lot and Ocala Lumber Yard priority sites, along with surrounding properties, are prime examples of sites contaminated from long-term historic use that have compounded health concerns in the community. The potential contaminants of concern associated with the priority sites and target area consist of VOCs, SVOCs, heavy metals, PCBs, and pesticides/herbicides, which are linked to cancer and respiratory diseases. **There were 785 hospitalizations in 2019 from Asthma per 100,000 people in Marion County, compared to 657 in Florida.⁷** The City's death rates for cancer maintained a rate of **197.2 deaths per 100,000 people from 2013 to 2017, above the state rate of 155.3 deaths.⁷** Additionally, the top cause of death for individuals 45 to 64 years of age is cancer.⁷ By identifying contaminants at brownfield

³ US Census: 2014-2018 American Community Survey

⁴ Neighborhood Scout – Ocala, FL Crime Analytics

⁵ Ocala.com

⁶ 2020–2024 Marion County Community Health Improvement Plan, Published January 2020

⁷ Florida Department of Health, Florida Health Charts, Marion County

sites throughout the blighted communities of the target area, the threat to the sensitive populations' health will be greatly reduced as the opportunity to forge a healthier life is made possible through the EPA Brownfield funding.

(3) **Disproportionately Impacted Populations:** The socioeconomic issues of the target area include unemployment, poverty, depressed property values, reduced access to goods and services (food desert), and lack of affordable housing, which has directly impacted the residents with a disproportionate impact on the African American population who make up the majority. Blight and the suspected environmentally impacted properties add to the issues disproportionately impacting minorities within the target area, especially **highlighted in CT 18 where non-white minorities make up 91% and African Americans make up 89% of the residents.**⁸ Of this group, **76% of families with children under the age of 18 are below the poverty level.**⁸ The long-term industrial nature of many businesses that have operated and continue to operate in the target area parallel the socioeconomic community impacts. **The NATA Diesel PM, Cancer Risk, and Respiratory Index of the target area are in the 70th–80th, 60th–70th, and 60th–70th percentile for the EPA Region, which directly correlates to the aforementioned high cancer and respiratory disease rates.**⁹

The sensitive populations not only face environmental justice problems, but are also victim to industrial practices and environmental factors that lead to high rates of disease. These populations are now dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, with over 10,000 cases in the county.¹⁰ The respiratory index in the target area is 0.54, higher than the national average of 0.44.⁹ A recent study identified that COVID-19 can be made more serious, and in some cases, more-deadly, by these locally high industrial emissions or hazardous air pollutants (HAPs).¹¹ The EPA Brownfield Grant Program will be instrumental in both reducing and reversing these negative impacts through the identification of contaminants, site assessment, and remediation. Funding from this grant will affirm EPA's commitment to address the environmental justice disparities in this area and will invigorate public engagement and dialogue in its planning and development efforts.

b. Community Engagement i. **Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles:** Several local organizations throughout the community have expressed a desire to be a project partner. Below is a sampling of partners who will be involved in making decisions in the process of site selection, prioritization, cleanup, and future redevelopment of the priority brownfield sites for this project.

Name of Org.	Point of Contact	Specific involvement in the project
Chamber of Economic Partnership	Mr. Kevin Sheilley, kevin@OcalaCEP.com	Assist with site identification and business attraction and retention.
Career Source Citrus / Levy / Marion	Ms. Kathleen Woodring, kwoodring@careersourceclm.com	Assist with site prioritization and providing workforce services.
North Magnolia Business Community	Mr. Clark Yandle, 352.730.3000	Assist with outreach , as well as business growth and prosperity.
Downtown Business Alliance	Mr. Rusty Juergens, 352.840.5999	Assist with cleanup/future reuse planning .

iii. **Incorporating Community Input:** Ocala benefits from an engaged community that provides public input and participates in the governmental process. Informing and gathering public input from target area residents and local organizations/entities/groups when implementing changes in the community is a top priority to the City. The City has previously prepared a formal Community

⁸ US Census:2014-2018 ACS

⁹ Environmental Justice Screening Report

¹⁰ Florida's COVID-19 Data and Surveillance Dashboard

¹¹ Environmental Research Letters, "Hazardous air pollutant exposure as a contributing factor to COVID-19 mortality in the United States"

Involvement Plan (CIP) which will be updated as a first step in the execution of the proposed project. The CIP will rely on input from the community and will outline planned community engagement activities, a programming schedule, and key stakeholders. The CIP for this project will be compatible with and build on existing public involvement in implementing the Midtown/Downtown and North Magnolia redevelopment plans.

The City has established a series of implementation strategies for its engagement goals based on its prior experience and understanding of specific target-area challenges. The City's goals for community involvement efforts are to give the public accessible, accurate, and timely information; ensure adequate opportunity for meaningful participation and for input to be considered; reflect community concerns, questions, and information needs in program activities and decisions; and respect and fully consider public input throughout the process. Dedication to this process will be maintained despite COVID-19 pandemic conditions. The City offers Zoom meeting options in addition to socially distanced in-person meetings. The City will ensure that residents are provided with ample opportunity to obtain valuable information despite social distancing requirements and will use various means of outreach that follow CDC/municipal guidelines. A modified tour using a video that provides scenes and clips of the target community will be used during webinar meetings and will be posted on City social media. Other plans include asking residents to provide their own photos and video clips to create a grassroots digital montage, as well as provide input and information to the City to develop the Brownfield Program.

The City will continue seeking meaningful input from all target-area members in its Brownfield Program and will leverage project-partner resources to encourage involvement and outreach/education. The City and its **eleven-member Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC)**, made up of citizens, professionals, and business owners recruited based on their engagement in current civic and business organizations, will lead these efforts. The City and BAC social media audience will be further developed to provide a stage for distributing information. The BAC will be integral to site selection, reuse planning, and overall redevelopment activities. City webpage posts, public displays, and mailers will provide a variety of informational resources. Additionally, many of the BAC are also members of the CRA, bringing a strong redevelopment mindset to the group. As of August 2020, the City has presented the brownfields initiatives being requested through this grant to the BAC, the Downtown Business Alliance, and North Magnolia CRA Advisory Committees.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

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

Task 1: Outreach	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The City's Brownfield Project Manager will update their existing Community Involvement Plan (CIP) and brownfield project website and will create new outreach materials and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental consultant (consultant). City staff will lead community meetings (virtual/online during COVID-19 and in-person post COVID-19) 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 updated within three months of award (upon completion a more concrete schedule will follow). Community Meetings held 1 st , 4 th , 8 th and 10 th quarter. Website and Outreach Materials will be created in the 1 st quarter and posted monthly throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Lisa Walsh, Economic Development Manager, Brownfield Project Manager
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Updated CIP, Updated Brownfield Website, 4 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Meeting handouts, Sign-in sheets, Minutes.

Task 2: Site Inventory	
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 update the existing site inventory for assessment. Abandoned and underutilized properties identified by the residents of the target area will be researched further by City staff using a combination of the Marion County Property Appraiser's website and their established Geographical Information System (GIS) based OBIS inventory system. Once a list is compiled, the consultant will work with City of Ocala staff to use the evaluation ranking tool and determine with the help of residents the order in which the sites will be addressed.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in the 1 st quarter will add to the existing inventory and use the established evaluation ranking process throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Lisa Walsh, Economic Development Manager, Brownfield Project Manager
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Update 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.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Assessment activities to begin in the 2 nd 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 the City's Economic Development Manager and Brownfield Project Manager, Lisa Walsh.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 14 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 7 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 and/or 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 th 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 the City's Economic Development Manager and Brownfield Project Manager, Lisa Walsh.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 4 ABCAs, 1 Vision Sessions/Charrettes
Task 5: Programmatic Support	
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 up to two national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins in the 1 st quarter & Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2 nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in 5 th quarter, 9 th quarter, and during final close out.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> City: Lisa Walsh, Economic Development Manager, 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 the Assessment Activities.** **Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$3,000 (30hrs x \$100), Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$2,000 (20hrs x \$100), 4 Community Education Meetings \$7,000 (56hrs x \$125) (\$1,750/meeting). Supplies: Software, printouts, etc. \$1,500. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: \$4,500 (45hrs x \$100). **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 14 Phase I ESAs (includes site eligibility/access) at \$3,500 each for a total of \$49,000. 1 Generic QAPP \$5,000 7 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$24,000 each for a total of \$168,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 4 ABCAs at \$6,500 each for a total of \$26,000. 1 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$5,000 (\$5,000/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 \$10,000 (flights at \$750, 4 nights in hotel at \$1,150, incidentals and per diem at \$150 x 4 for a total of \$600 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					\$10,000	\$10,000
Supplies	\$1,500					\$1,500
Contractual	\$12,000	\$4,500	\$222,000	\$31,000	\$19,000	\$288,500
Total Budget	\$13,500	\$4,500	\$222,000	\$31,000	\$29,000	\$300,000

c. Measuring Environmental Results: To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule the City Brownfields Team, which will include the consultant, will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a** using an Excel spreadsheet and will report all progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the projects schedule to ensure the grant project is completed within the three-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The outputs to be tracked include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and community partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and cleanup redevelopment plans. The outcomes to be tracked include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. The City has countermeasures in place to address program efficiency. The City will make monthly calls to their EPA Project Officer and if needed will revise the Work Plan to help the project to get back on schedule.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability i. Organizational Structure & ii. Description of Key Staff: The City of Ocala Community Development (CD) Department is tasked with undertaking economic development, redevelopment, and reinvestment initiatives, and oversees the brownfields program. **Melanie Gaboardi, Director of CD Services** will continue to be responsible for the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the project as the Brownfield Project Director. Ms. Gaboardi has over 22 years of contract administration experience and possesses 18 years' experience in state/local grant administration and implementation. She currently oversees the City's affordable housing grant programs. **Lisa**

Walsh, Manager, Economic Development will assist Ms. Gaborardi and serve as Brownfield Project Manager and will manage the day-to-day grant activities. Ms. Walsh has 19 years of experience in Community Planning and has been involved with brownfield redevelopment planning and grant management since 2011. **Sean Lanier, PE, City Engineer/Director Water Resources** will serve as the Technical Lead. Mr. Lanier has expertise in civil and structural engineering, including design, project management and construction management, and a demonstrated leadership ability with multi-disciplined engineering and construction project teams. **Anthony Webber, Financial Operations Manager** with over 15 years' experience, will be responsible for managing the grant finances and will be responsible for all ASAP.gov drawdowns.

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

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant (1) Accomplishments: When the City Brownfields Redevelopment Program was initiated in 1996, the area around the City's Downtown Square had an occupancy rate of approximately 30%, but through investments made in brownfields and infrastructure, the blocks surrounding the Square now have a 95% occupancy rate. Brownfield grant funds have been used in 54 private sector projects and 2 city-related projects. The City has been awarded four EPA Assessment Grants; three in the amount of \$200,000 in 1999, 2004, and 2006. The initial grant in 1999 was a demonstration grant used to establish a Brownfields Office to identify, categorize, and monitor sites of environmental concern. All outcomes/outputs from the three prior grants were recorded in the Property Profile, as the ACRES system was not yet established. The City's fourth and current/active Assessment Grant was awarded in 2018 (\$300,000) which has successfully completed 8 Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA), 1 Phase I ESA Update, 4 Phase II ESAs, and 2 supplemental Phase II ESAs, with a focus on the West Ocala target area totaling 45.95 acres in property transactions to date. All outcomes/outputs have been recorded in the ACRES database. Prior grants successfully exceeded 90% expenditures for the betterment of the community and the current grant has already exhausted 72.64% of funds.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The City has maintained a very successful program. In 2008, the City's program was challenged by the loss of its Program Director, and the program suffered as a result of that loss. The City recognized weaknesses in its past program management and took corrective steps, including improved record keeping and staff cross-training and overlap, creating today's successful program. The current grant has been facilitated in strict conformance with the Work Plan and complied with required schedules implemented by the US EPA for on-time submittal of quarterly reports, ACRES reporting, and deliverable submittals. This attention to detail and dedication to process has supported a strong partnership with the US EPA Project Manager and led to the use of 72.64% of grant funds to date. The current open grant held by the City was started on October 1, 2018 with an end date of September 30, 2021 and has a current balance of \$82,075.18 as of October 1, 2020. The remaining grant funds are anticipated to be exhausted by the grant period end date through assessment of a priority site and an anticipated ABCA, along with outreach activities. Through their dedication, the City now has an extensive understanding of the requirements and process necessary to make the current and future programs a success story for their community with the support of US EPA grant funding.