
APPLICATION INFORMATION SHEET

R01-26-A-007

(1) Applicant Identification

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01201-6278

(2) Website URL – www.berkshireplanning.org

(3) Funding Requested

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

(4) Location

- a. City: Pittsfield
- b. County: Berkshire
- c. State: Massachusetts

(5) Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

Target Area: City of Pittsfield
Addresses of the priority site(s) proposed:

JB Paper

70 Elmvale Place
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Harris Street

19 Harris Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

50 East Mill Street

50 East Mill Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

370 Wahconah (aka Bel Air Mill)

370 Wahconah Street
Pittsfield, MA

(6) Contacts

a. Project Director

Melissa Provencher
Phone (413) 442-1521 ext. 22
mprovencher@berkshireplanning.org
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01201

b. Chief Executive

Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
Phone (413) 442-1521 ext. 34
tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01201

(7) Population

Berkshire County – 128,047

Target Area (City of Pittsfield) - 42,942

(8) Other Factors Checklist

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	4
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
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).	1, 3 & 5
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	1, 2 & 3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.A., for priority site(s) within the target area.	
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	

(9) Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

A current letter from the appropriate state or tribal environmental authority acknowledging that the applicant plans to conduct assessment and cleanup activities and is planning to apply for FY26 federal brownfields grant funds is attached.

(10) Releasing Copies of Applications

The application does include confidential business information (CBI), trade secrets or other confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Department of Environmental Protection

Address: 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston MA 02114 | Phone: 617-292-5500

Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kim Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Rebecca Tepper
Secretary

Bonnie Heiple
Commissioner

January 13, 2026

[Via Email]

Attn: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01220

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

***Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant***

Dear Mr. Matuszko:

I am writing to support the application submitted by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) under the Fiscal Year 2026 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Grant Program. We understand that the BRPC is proposing to undertake several assessment projects to promote redevelopment in the target area of the City of Pittsfield. EPA funding will facilitate Brownfields redevelopment by providing resources to assess properties, conduct cleanup planning and redevelopment planning at properties where actual and perceived contamination inhibits development. The target sites have each been deemed a priority property in the subject community.

In Massachusetts, state and federal agencies have developed strong partnerships and work together to ensure that parties undertaking Brownfield projects have access to available resources and incentives. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), through our regional offices, provides technical support to Brownfield project proponents when regulatory issues arise. If this proposal is selected, MassDEP will work with our state and federal partners to support the BRPC and member communities to help make this project a success.

We greatly appreciate EPA's continued support of Brownfield efforts in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

David Foss, CPG, LSP

Statewide Brownfields Coordinator, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup

cc: Melissa Provencher, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Katy Deng, US EPA Region 1
Caprice Shaw, MassDEP Western Regional Office

NARRATIVE

(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

a. Overview of Brownfields Challenges and Description of Target Area

The geographic boundary for this application is Berkshire County, which is the westernmost county in Massachusetts encompassing an area of approximately 945 square miles with a current population estimated at 124,944 persons. Much of the county was built along the Housatonic River. Flowing through a historically rural area, the Housatonic River attracted increased industrialization in the late 19th century. The City of Pittsfield is the largest city and the historic county seat of Berkshire County and is the Target Area for this Community-wide Assessment grant application. At the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Housatonic River, the City of Pittsfield's landscape was once dotted with mills that produced lumber, grist, paper and textiles. In 1890, William Stanley, Jr. founded the Stanley Electric Manufacturing Company in Pittsfield. The company manufactured small transformers, electrical motors and appliances. In 1903, General Electric (GE) acquired Stanley Electric and subsequently operated three major manufacturing operations in Pittsfield: transformers, ordnance, and plastics. Due to the success of GE, Pittsfield's population boomed from 1930 to 1960. However, significant layoffs began in the 1980s, bringing an economic and population decline from which the City has yet to recover.

The region has struggled to overcome the obstacles associated with known and suspected brownfields, including former textile and paper mills, auto shops, fueling stations and dry cleaners - among others. Many of these sites are contaminated with chlorinated solvents, petroleum products, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), asbestos, and heavy metals. The impacts of these languishing sites with known or unknown contamination continue to cripple the area with unknown health and safety risks and a stigmatized economy that is decreasing job opportunities and losing tax revenues.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfields Sites

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) has identified four prominent sites within the Target Area, including a vacant former factory (JB Paper) and 3 former mills on the banks of the West Branch of the Housatonic River (50 East Mill Street, Harris Street and 370 Wahconah Street). These sites are largely located in densely developed neighborhoods and are in some of the poorest communities within the region.

JB Paper: A 4.2 acre site former paper mill located at 70 Elmvale Place adjacent to Onota Brook, partially within the 100-year floodplain. In 2015 a suspicious fire broke out in the building causing concern with regard to public safety and soil and groundwater contamination. The building has since been demolished while the slab remains and the site sits vacant. In 2022 and 2023, US EPA conducted Site Evaluation and Removal Actions that removed asbestos-containing building debris and limited soil containing lead, arsenic, and asbestos, yet additional work is needed. Known and suspected contaminants include asbestos, metals, PCBs, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs). This priority site has been selected for assessment and reuse due to its high redevelopment potential combined with the fact that the site has remained vacant for more than a decade due to legacy contamination on site. The assessment and ultimate redevelopment of this site is a high priority for the City.

Harris Street: A 0.83 acre vacant lot abutting 19 Harris Street previously used to house an auto body repair shop and historically the site of a wool mill, demolished by the City in 2002 due to unsafe building conditions and abandonment. The site is adjacent to the West Branch Housatonic River and located partially within the 100-year floodplain. Known and suspected contaminants include petroleum, heavy metals, and pesticides (potentially from an abutting property that contained the operations of the Berkshire County

Mosquito Control). This priority site has been selected for assessment and reuse as the City has identified the assessment and ultimate redevelopment of this site as a high priority.

50 East Mill Street: This 3.09 acre site is adjacent to the West Branch Housatonic River and partially within the 100-year flood plain. Dating back to the late 1800s, this site has a rich history including a textile and wool mill formerly connected to the Harris Street site across the river. More recently, the site has been used as an autobody garage, salvage yard, scrap metal reclamation, trucking and furniture refinishing. Remaining vacant for nearly 30 years, some barriers to redevelopment have been mitigated over the years including demolishing the fire-damaged mill building, removing building debris, and restoring the adjacent riverbank. This priority site has been selected for assessment and reuse due to exposure risk including indoor air concerns associated with known chlorinated solvents, petroleum, heavy metals, and PCBs that continue to pose a community risk.

370 Wahconah Street: This 7.0 acre site is located along the West Branch Housatonic River and previously contained a mill structure and associated outbuildings that were destroyed by fires in 2001 and 2005, as well as the Bel Air Pond Dam which is currently being remediated and removed by the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety. Building debris removal and soil and groundwater sampling occurred in 2009. The City of Pittsfield has acquired this site to facilitate dam removal. This priority site has been selected for assessment and reuse due to the need for additional assessment and cleanup planning at the site to address known contaminants including arsenic, cadmium, nickel, and lead.

c. Identifying Additional Sites

BRPC has a long-standing Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) established in 2004. The BAC members and the community at large will be invited to nominate additional sites for further consideration and approval. The criteria used to prioritize additional sites will include: Risk Factors (proximity to sensitive populations, health risks, ownership status); Location (whether a site is located in an underserved and/or a disadvantaged community); Site Characteristics (property status, property size, proximity to existing infrastructure); Economic Development (redevelopment potential, the potential to leverage private capital for cleanup and redevelopment, anticipated living-wage job creation); Housing and Open Space (estimated number of mixed-income housing units, incorporation of outdoor recreation spaces to improve community connectivity and public health, protection of natural resources).

Revitalization of the Target Area

d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The grant funding aligns with the *Sustainable Berkshires Plan*, the regional plan for Berkshire County. A Policy of the Plan is to “Remove or minimize threats to health posed by environmental contamination and brownfield sites.” This work is also consistent with the economic goals within the Plan including making sites development ready by proactively addressing brownfield concerns. The Target Area is the most industrialized community within Berkshire County, where redevelopment can use existing infrastructure, including water, sewer and transportation, consistent with the Plan’s strategy to “prioritize brownfield sites within urban and suburban neighborhoods for cleanup and reuse.” In addition, BRPC’s Brownfields Program has been identified as a Priority Project within the Berkshire County 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs).

The JB Paper site has high development potential and the redevelopment of this site is a high priority for the City. The City is poised to take ownership of the site in tax title, and envisions the site as a future home for commercial office space resulting in job creation and/or a home for community services. Nestled within a residential neighborhood abutting the West Branch Housatonic River, the City is also poised to take both the Harris Street and 50 East Mill Street sites through tax title foreclosure. The Harris Street site is poised

for potential multifamily redevelopment, or potential greenspace to contribute to the ongoing development of the *West Side Riverway*, which seeks to provide greater access to the Housatonic River for residents and visitors. The City envisions the 50 East Mill Street site as a future home for multi-family residential, commercial office or light industrial space. Demand for multi-family residential development is high in Pittsfield and throughout Berkshire County, and in fact, it's so high surrounding the 50 E Mill and Harris Street sites that a 28-unit apartment building located just 500 feet from these sites is scheduled to be completed in the Spring 2026, fueling interest in this area. It is the City's intent that the 370 Wahconah site will be reused for a light industrial/commercial use that is consistent with the proximity to residential uses and the river. The commercial abutter to the property has expressed interest in buying the property once environmental concerns are mitigated with the intent of expanding their business.

e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

This grant has the potential to stimulate economic development in the Target Area upon completion of assessment/cleanup of the priority sites resulting in 15 prime acres made ready for reuse. The economic benefits envisioned for the region include: job creation, increased property values, and enhanced tax base. The grant funding will come early in the reuse planning process and quantitative estimates (i.e., number of jobs, tax revenue) are not yet available; however, this funding will reduce the uncertainties associated with industrial and commercial sites that have the highest redevelopment potential. The redevelopment of these sites is expected to improve adjacent neighborhoods resulting in higher property values, creating housing and jobs for both the residents of these neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

The grant funding and resulting revitalization will benefit neighborhoods and communities within the Target Area by attracting private capital investment, expanded housing choice for mixed incomes and low-income populations, provide living-wage jobs, and minimizing the risk of exposure to hazardous substances. The proximity of all the Priority sites to riverfront and floodplain poses a significant exposure risk due to more intense precipitation events and rising water levels¹. The risk of contaminants mobilizing due to flooding is a significant concern that will be addressed through the assessment/cleanup of these sites. Responsible redevelopment of these sites can increase flood storage capacity and strengthen local resilience to flooding events. The reuse of all of these sites has the potential to facilitate renewable energy from solar or geothermal energy, while all buildings will conform to the Commonwealth's Stretch Code for green building and incorporate energy efficiency measures. New building design will incorporate energy efficient mechanical systems (heat pumps, geothermal), utilize passive solar generation on rooftops, LED lighting, incorporate LID techniques for stormwater management, etc. improving efficiency and resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

This grant will stimulate availability of additional funds for environmental site assessment, remediation, and subsequent reuse including leveraging private funds for cleanup and redevelopment of the priority sites. Adequate characterization of the priority sites will enable future cleanup applications including from EPA and other sources. The City of Pittsfield is a CDBG entitlement community and will use these funds to support redevelopment of the Priority Brownfield Sites. In addition, BRPC and the City will actively seek other potential funding resources to support additional assessment, remediation, and/or reuse. Potential key funding resources to support site remediation and promote redevelopment for the priority sites include HUD, EDA, the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, the Berkshire Brownfields RLF, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and Rural Business Development, and the MassDevelopment Collaborative Workspace

¹ Massachusetts Climate and Hydrologic Risk Project and the Resilient Massachusetts Climate and Hazards Viewer

and Site Readiness Programs. BRPC has begun working with federal, state and local agencies to seek these funds and has a strong track record of past successes obtaining funding and bridging funding gaps.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure

This grant will facilitate the use of existing infrastructure at the priority sites and within the Target Area. The Target Area is the largest, most industrialized, and most densely developed city within Berkshire County where redevelopment can use existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and transportation. There are no additional infrastructure needs or upgrades key to the revitalization plans for the priority sites.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

a. The Community's Need for Funding

This grant will meet the needs of the communities within Berkshire County that have an inability to draw on other sources of funding to carry out environmental assessment or remediation because of both small populations and low-incomes. The communities within Berkshire County do not have the financial resources to address all their brownfield issues. Thirty of the thirty two communities in Berkshire County have populations less than 10,000. Municipalities in Massachusetts depend heavily on local aid from state and local property taxes. With limited local aid, communities in Berkshire County must either raise property taxes or cut services. However, Proposition 2½ MGL Ch. 59 § 21 is a state statute that limits property tax increases by municipalities to 2.5% or less. A side effect of Proposition 2½ is that municipal incomes decline in real terms whenever inflation rises above 2.5%, thus resulting in a real local tax decline. Additionally, according to 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the median household income (MHI) in Berkshire County is nearly 30% and 10% lower than that of MA and the U.S., respectively. In the Target Area of Pittsfield, the MHI is 33% lower than that of MA, with higher poverty (13.6%) and unemployment (7.6%) rates compared to both state (10% and 5.1%) and U.S (12.4% and 5.2%). These factors paired with over 20% of the population being retirement age (65+) contribute heavily to the reduced tax base in the area.

With no county government, the communities rely heavily on BRPC to provide services. BRPC is a state-created regional planning agency that serves all 32 cities and towns in Berkshire County. However, BRPC relies heavily upon funding through competitive grants, which make up approximately 70% of our annual operating budget. BRPC does receive funding from each of our member communities, but these funds make up just 3% of our annual budget. In addition, BRPC is charged with meeting federal requirements to service the transportation needs of our communities. Additional funding is needed to address known and suspected brownfields in the region, as BRPC is unable to draw from other funding sources.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

This assessment grant will facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to the health and welfare of sensitive populations in the area, which include low-income, elderly, and disabled populations, as well as women of childbearing age. A quarter of the population in Pittsfield is in the sensitive age categories of over age 65 (20%, 17.5% in MA) and under age 5 (5.2%, 5% in MA); more specifically, tracts 9004 (JB Paper) and 9007 (Harris St.) are in the 83rd and 78th national percentiles for population over age 65. Residents in these age categories are particularly susceptible to adverse health effects of exposure to air pollutants causing respiratory issues, and heavy metals such as lead resulting in developmental delays and cognitive impairment. Additional sensitive populations in the Target Area are persons with disabilities, which include 18.3% of the population (12% in MA), and low-income populations, as 13.6% of residents live below the poverty level compared to 10% statewide.

All four priority sites within the Target Area have been vacant or abandoned for 10 to 30 years, and all are in the midst of neighborhoods, community centers, parks and schools. These sites have often been host to squatters, vandalism, illegal dumping and other criminal activity. A suspicious fire leveled the JB Paper Factory in August 2016. The City was aware of concerns that squatters were using the space and building officials were concerned about its dilapidated condition. However, no action had been taken due to potential contamination. The fire damage resulted in greater public safety concerns, including potential presence of asbestos and soil and groundwater contamination. The abandoned and derelict structure, open foundation and debris posed threats to the welfare of the residents who live in the neighborhood, particularly the adjacent affordable housing complex. The City installed a temporary chain-link fence in 2023 to deter illegal trespassing and dumping. Similarly, at the 370 Wahconah Street property also along the Housatonic River, illegal dumping and large hazardous debris piles from two suspicious fires that ravaged the former mill building posed a significant public health hazard and environmental concerns. According to a Berkshire United Way study, people are concerned about the diminishing quality of life in their neighborhoods and sense a loss of spirit and cohesiveness. Assessing and redeveloping these sites, which will be catalyzed primarily by this grant, will provide significant benefits for the welfare of the sensitive populations by eliminating threats posed by abandoned and derelict structures and providing the community with job growth opportunities and safer housing thereby reducing the economic stresses placed on these residents.

c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Berkshire County and the Target Area experience adverse health conditions at higher rates when compared to the rest of MA and the nation. According to the U.S. CDC, Berkshire County has a higher rate of adult asthma (12.2%) when compared to the nation (10.6%), with tracts 9003, 9004, 9007, and 9009 also having high rates of 11.9%, 12.5%, 12%, and 12.5%, respectively. Additionally, tracts 9004, 9007, and 9009 have higher rates of cancer (excluding skin cancer) than the national average (10.1%, 10.8%, and 9.3%, respectively, and 9% in the U.S.). Elevated child blood lead levels in Pittsfield are also well above the state averages, with a prevalence (per 1,000) of 37 elevated tests compared to just 12 statewide (MA Environmental Public Health Tracking Network). These health conditions are exacerbated by the presence of brownfields in these already vulnerable communities, which increase potential exposure to contaminants such as chlorinated solvents, hazardous building materials, heavy metals, PCBs, and pesticides.

With the help of this grant funding, assessments will be conducted to better understand and reduce the risks posed by these priority sites, institutional and engineering controls will be implemented as needed, and the process to sever the pathways of contamination will begin. Risk assessments will be conducted to ensure that the priority sites no longer pose threats to sensitive receptors, including potential exposure to asbestos for the affordable housing complex adjacent to the JB Paper site, or potential exposure to chlorinated solvents, petroleum, heavy metals, PCBs and pesticides for the residential communities adjacent to and surrounding the 50 East Mill and Harris Street sites.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

The populations in the Target Area are impoverished and disproportionately share the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial operations. Over a period of 40 years, GE discharged untold quantities of PCBs into the Housatonic River from its plant in Pittsfield. The GE/Housatonic River Cleanup Site is one of the largest PCB cleanup projects in the U.S. The City is deeply impacted by the contamination within the river, which flows through its downtown neighborhoods. A permanent PCB landfill (Hill 78) already exists in Pittsfield holding contaminated river sediment adjacent to an elementary school requiring the air quality of the school to be continually monitored.

The Target Area is also impacted by other various cumulative environmental issues; power plants, incinerators, industry, landfills, congested highways, and other sources of air, water, and land pollution are all present within the Target Area. When compared to the nation, tract 9003 is in the 96th, 85th, and 71st percentiles for proximity to National Priority List (NPL) sites, potentially hazardous and toxic sites, and Toxic Release Inventory sites, respectively (U.S. CDC ASTDR). Similarly, tract 9009 is in the 96th national percentile for proximity to NPL sites, and tract 9004 is in the 91st and 93rd national percentiles for the built environment and lead paint indicator (pre-1980 housing), respectively. This grant and the projected site reuses will support the vulnerable and impoverished populations in the Target Area that are disproportionately affected by negative environmental consequences by facilitating the identification and reduction of threats posed by brownfield sites within the Target Area. Redevelopment of the priority sites will create job opportunities, catalyze economic development, support the need for affordable housing, and promote green space in this otherwise built environment in the City of Pittsfield.

Community Engagement

e and f. Project Involvement and Project Roles

We are fortunate that Berkshire County is small enough that organizations across a wide variety of venues tend to know each other and consistently collaborate, often at a very personal level. The following community-based organizations have committed to providing support to the Berkshire Brownfields program and facilitating community engagement with smaller neighborhood community groups impacted by the priority sites and potential sites identified:

1Berkshire: Economic development organization working to preserve, position, and promote the county's profound sense of place. Role: Participate on the BAC, help identify sites, publicize the program, and advise commercial and industrial redevelopment at target sites. Contact: Ben Lamb blamb@1berkshire.com

Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT): Non-profit working to protect the environment for wildlife in support of the natural systems that support us all. Role: Publicize the program through their e-newsletter and website and communicate with stakeholders. Contact: Brittany Ebeling brittany@thebeatnews.org

Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity (CBHH): An independent affiliate of Habitat for Humanity building strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. Role: Publicize the program and conduct community outreach and education during site assessment, remediation and redevelopment. Contact: Carolyn Valli ceo@berkshirehabitat.org

g. Incorporating Community Input

BRPC will use a five-step approach that consists of soliciting, collecting, considering, responding to and incorporating community input. Information will be made readily available via the City's website and social media. BRPC anticipates conducting three or more virtual meetings with residents: at the project outset, upon completion of a Phase II ESA, and during the Remedial Action and Reuse Plan development.

BRPC and its partners will communicate project progress to citizens and interested groups and solicit comments through a variety of media and community outreach venues, including: websites and social media (Facebook and other websites), news outlets (a minimum of three articles in regional print and online newspapers), BAC meetings (\pm 18 virtual meetings; all meetings will be posted and open to the public), two additional public meetings to solicit community input on the four priority sites, and virtual neighborhood public meetings (held in the evening to accommodate the working public). Community input during public BAC meetings will be addressed in meeting minutes published quarterly on BRPC's website. Community

input during separate public meetings will either be addressed live during the public meeting(s) or on BRPC’s dedicated Berkshire Brownfields webpage. Additional meetings will be scheduled if warranted.

(3) TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs

No non-EPA grant resources are needed to carry out tasks/activities

<p>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight:</p> <p>a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> BRPC will continue to provide support to the BAC that is already in place. The BAC consists of municipal representatives, business leaders and an EPA Region I representative. A member of the BRPC staff will attend the EPA Brownfields Conference. Regular updates to the Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) database will be used to measure results and progress of the project. Required quarterly reports will be submitted. BRPC will work closely with EPA Region 1 staff and the BAC to hire a QEP to conduct Phase I/II ESAs and Remedial Action and Reuse Plans and Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). BRPC will follow all state and federal procurement regulations. BRPC will oversee the QEP and ensure compliance with applicable federal cross-cutting measures.</p> <p>b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Q1 - QEP selection, Q2 to end of grant – ACRES and qtrly updates.</p> <p>c. Task/Activity Lead: Project Manager will lead all Task 1 activities.</p> <p>d. <u>Outputs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP/RFQ; documentation of meeting of open competition; contract for scope of services. • Quarterly reports and forms; updated ACRES database; final report, and closeout forms. • Attend EPA Brownfields conference.
<p>Task 2: Community Outreach & Engagement</p> <p>a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> BRPC will conduct community outreach efforts to residents, neighborhood groups, and others. BRPC will hold ±18 public meetings of the BAC with the QEP to seek input. BRPC will work with our project partners to disseminate information regarding the status of the program via a variety of media and other venues. These include virtual public meetings, newspapers, newsletters, radio, public access television, websites, and social media. Significant community outreach is expected for the communities surrounding the four priority sites, particularly surrounding the 50 East Mill Street site, due to anticipated vapor intrusion concerns. A minimum of two additional public meetings to solicit and respond to community input regarding the assessment of the four priority sites, specifically the 50 East Mill Street site, are anticipated.</p> <p>b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Beginning Q1 BAC/public meetings and community updates ongoing</p> <p>c. Task/Activity Lead: Project Manager with QEP support for Task 2 activities</p> <p>d. <u>Outputs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one color brochure, FAQ insert(s) and “Success Story” fact sheets. • Two PowerPoint presentation(s) and displays for public meetings. • 20 public meetings (18 public BAC meetings and two separate public meetings to solicit and respond to public input/concerns) • Public meeting notes from 20 public meetings documenting responses to community input
<p>Task 3: Site Inventory, Evaluation & Prioritization</p> <p>a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> BRPC with QEP assistance will conduct community outreach within the Target Area and the various local, regional, and state economic development organizations serving the region to request site nominations. Nominated sites will first be reviewed based on whether site access has been obtained and secured. Nominated sites will then be presented with QEP assistance to the BAC for</p>

consideration and evaluation. The BAC will review, prioritize, and select sites, which will be regularly updated as appropriate based on newly nominated sites and remaining grant funding.
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Q1 to end of grant – BAC will review, prioritize, and select sites for assessment and/or cleanup planning.
c. Task/Activity Lead(s): Project Manager with QEP and BAC
d. Output: List of nominated sites, prioritization, and sites approved for assessment/cleanup planning.
Task 4: Site Assessments
a. <u>Project Implementation</u> : Assessments will be completed in accordance with standards established by the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) standard E 1527-21 as well as the EPA’s “All Appropriate Inquiry” rule. The City of Pittsfield anticipates acquiring the remaining three of the four priority sites through tax title; therefore, Phase I ESAs at these sites would not be required but may be desired based on developer interest. Phase I ESAs on up to 6 additional selected sites as warranted through the site identification process. Phase II ESAs will be conducted to refine, confirm or dismiss the presence of contamination in accordance with the ASTM 1903-97(2002) standard. Phase II ESAs will be conducted on up to 8 sites (4 priority sites and up to 4 additional selected sites as warranted through the site identification process). Remedial Action and Reuse Plans and ABCAs will be developed for up to 4 priority sites. Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) will be prepared as appropriate.
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Q1: Phase I ESA and QAPP preparation, Q2 – end of grant: Phase I and II ESA activities, additional QAPPs as needed and Draft ABCA preparation.
c. Task/Activity Lead: QEP
d. <u>Outputs</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Phase I and 8 Phase II ESA reports. • 8 approved site-specific QAPP Addenda. • 4 draft remedial action plans and 4 draft ABCAs.

e. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight	Task 2: Community Outreach & Engagement	Task 3: Site Inventory, Evaluation & Prioritization	Task 4: Site Assessments	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$7,476	\$5,178	\$3,910	\$1,956	\$18,520
	Fringe Benefits	\$4,216	\$2,920	\$2,205	\$1,103	\$10,444
	Travel	\$2,064	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,064
	Contractual	\$0	\$7,000	\$5,000	\$441,500	\$453,500
Total Direct Costs		\$13,756	\$15,098	\$11,115	\$444,559	\$484,528
Indirect Costs		\$6,248	\$4,322	\$3,269	\$1,633	\$15,472
Total Budget (Total Direct + Indirect)		\$20,004	\$19,420	\$14,384	\$446,192	\$500,000

BRPC has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Indirect Costs and Fringe Benefits are percentages of Personnel and have been combined and reflected below as “staff time”. No separate Administrative Costs will be charged to the grant. Indirect Costs are 3%, well below the maximum 5% allowed for Administrative Costs. QEP costs are based on prior experience and knowledge of sites.

Task 1 – Cooperative Agreement Oversight: Total= \$20,004

The budget for this task assumes BRPC travel costs of \$2,064 for National Brownfield Conference (registration, airfare, lodging, per diem) plus BRPC staff time of \$17,940 (130 hrs @ \$138/hr) for general Cooperative Agreement Oversight and programmatic assistance, including 16 Quarterly Reports (QRs), ACRES updates, and grant closeout reporting.

Task 2 – Community Outreach & Engagement: Total = \$19,420

The budget for this task assumes BRPC staff time of \$12,420 (average of 4.5 hrs/meeting x 20 meetings = 90 hrs @ \$138/hr) plus Contractual expenses of \$7,000 for the QEP inclusive of color brochure, FAQ insert(s) and “Success Story” fact sheets (\$350/meeting x 20 meetings).

Task 3 – Site Inventory, Evaluation & Prioritization: Total= \$14,384

The budget for this task assumes BRPC staff time of \$9,384 (68 hrs @ \$138/hr) plus Contractual expenses of \$5,000 for the QEP (32 hrs @ \$156.25/hr).

Task 4: Site Assessments: Total = \$446,192

The budget for this task assumes BRPC staff time of \$4,692 (34 hrs @ \$138/hr) plus Contractual expenses of \$441,500 for the QEP. Phase I ESAs will be conducted on 6 anticipated sites (up to 6 additional selected sites as warranted through the site identification process at an average of \$4,000 each = \$24,000). Phase II ESAs will be conducted on up to 8 sites (4 priority sites and up to 4 additional selected sites as warranted through the site identification process at an average of \$42,500 for 7 of the 8 Phase IIs plus \$90,000 for the 50 East Mill Street Phase II due to complicated nature of the chlorinated-impacted media and vapor intrusion concerns as identified in a prior Phase II ESA for the site = \$387,500). Phase II ESA costs are inclusive of preparing QAPPs and HASPs. Remedial Action and Reuse Plans and ABCAs will be developed for up to 4 priority sites at an average of \$7,500 each = \$30,000. Most of the costs (\$387,500) are slated for Phase II ESAs, including soil, groundwater, sub-slab and indoor air quality investigations.

f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

BRPC will track, measure and evaluate our progress in achieving project outcomes, outputs and project results. BRPC will develop a Workplan for approval by EPA Region 1 that will include anticipated outputs and outcomes. This information will be tracked in quarterly and final reports. BRPC will use ACRES to report, document, and track information such as funding received, contamination present, acres cleaned up, acres redeveloped and funds leveraged.

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability

a. Organizational Capacity

BRPC’s staff has nearly 49 years of experience in managing a variety of grant programs and has previously received six EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants. BRPC has also established a Revolving Loan Fund through grant funding from EPA. BRPC has dedicated and experienced staff responsible for meeting the various requirements of state and federal agencies. BRPC regularly manages federal, state and other grants and has the organizational capacity for carrying out the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the project and grant. In FY24, BRPC was contracted to manage \$7.5M in state and federal funds. BRPC is committed to retaining project leadership and successfully completing projects.

b. Organizational Structure

BRPC also has the organizational structure to ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of all technical, administrative, and financial requirements of the project and grant. BRPC has continually operated at a “low-risk” term under agency OMB Circular A-102 regulations. An annual audit of its financial records is conducted by an independent certified public accountant whose responsibility is to evaluate and certify all contract activities. BRPC’s management procedures have been determined to be in compliance for such audits.

c. Description of Key Staff

Melissa Provencher manages BRPC’s Brownfields Program and will serve as Project Manager. Ms. Provencher has been with BRPC for over 26 years. She closed out five successful Brownfield Assessment Grants, most recently a 2017 Assessment Grant. Ms. Provencher successfully managed and closed numerous Assessment and Cleanup Grants on behalf of communities within the county. Ms. Provencher is currently managing the Brownfields RLF and providing grant management services to the Towns of Adams and Great Barrington for 2023 and 2025 Assessment Grants, as well as 2024 Cleanup Grants to the City of North Adams and Greylock Flume, Inc.

d. Acquiring Additional Resources

BRPC has appropriate systems and procedures in place to appropriately acquire additional expertise and resources required to complete the project. BRPC, with input from the BAC, will hire a QEP to conduct Phase I and II ESAs, Remedial Action and Reuse Plans and ABCAs. BRPC has successfully contracted with QEPs in the past for similar projects and follows all state and federal procurement laws and regulations. BRPC works closely with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and MassDevelopment, both of which are resources for additional expertise. As a cooperative agreement recipient, BRPC will work closely and collaboratively with EPA Region 1 and with the University of Connecticut, the Region 1 Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) provider.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

e. Currently or Has Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

(1) Accomplishments

BRPC’s success is measured by EPA grant funds that have led to site cleanups, created jobs, reduced environmental risk and improved the region’s quality of life. Outputs and outcomes are accurately reflected in ACRES at the time of this application submission. Using EPA Assessment grant funding, BRPC has completed 37 Phase I ESAs, 33 Phase II ESAs and 8 Remedial Action and Reuse Plans. As a result of these assessment activities, clean-up or redevelopment projects are completed or underway on eight of these sites.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements

BRPC has consistently been in compliance with the workplan, schedule, and terms and conditions under the current and most recent grants. BRPC has an excellent track record of timely and acceptable quarterly performance, grant deliverables, and ongoing ACRES reporting. BRPC has made and reported progress towards achieving the expected results of all grants in a timely manner. No corrective measures have been needed. BRPC, in conjunction with its QEP, has consistently provided EPA with both mandatory and voluntary reporting measures, including property profile forms, ACRES reporting, quarterly reports, and financial status reports. BRPC’s QEP has provided EPA with QAPP reports and updates or modifications as required. All grant funds under BRPC’s open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant (4B00A00809) will be expended by the end of the Period of Performance (10/1/22-9/30/26) and 100% of the grant funds are committed to eligible grant activities. No grant funds remained for any of BRPC’s closed EPA Brownfield Grants all grant funds were expended within the Period of Performance.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT GRANTS

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) is a General Purpose Unit of Local Government, and therefore meets the eligibility requirements for an EPA Brownfield Grant. BRPC was established by state legislature as a governmental entity in 1966 under Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws (please see attached). The purpose of this chapter is to permit a city or town to plan jointly with other cities or towns to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated and orderly development of the areas within their jurisdictions and the general welfare and prosperity of their citizens. The Commission is comprised of elected and appointed community officials from each of its 32 member communities as well as a full-time professional staff.
- b. BRPC is **not** exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the IRC.

2. Community Involvement

Public outreach, communication, and meaningful public participation are essential to the success of this project and the larger Berkshire Brownfields Program. The Community Involvement Plan includes working with the Brownfields Steering Committee and our project partners: 1Berkshire, the Pittsfield Housing Authority (PHA), and the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) to involve the community in the planning and implementation of the project through regular meetings, newsletters, and working directly with stakeholders as needed.

The Brownfields Steering Committee was created in 2004 and is made up of representatives of the towns of Adams, Dalton, Lee, and Great Barrington and the cities of North Adams and Pittsfield, as well as Economic Development Agencies (i.e., 1Berkshire and Lee CDC), BRPC staff and policy board, and our EPA Project Officer. The City of Pittsfield (Target Area) is represented on the Brownfields Steering Committee and will be directly involved in site prioritization, site updates, and site cleanup and reuse planning. BRPC will use a five-step approach that consists of soliciting, collecting, considering, responding to and incorporating community input in decision-making.

BRPC has an excellent track record working with residents, site owners, developers and members of the business community. BRPC staff will be available to work directly with stakeholders as needed. BRPC staff will oversee the work of the QEP; however, when appropriate, site owners and municipal officials will be able to work directly with the QEP to ensure the effectiveness and success of each assessment project. BRPC has also partnered with 1Berkshire to assist in working with property owners. Project progress, next steps, issues and achievements will all be communicated through the BRPC website and newsletter as well as through local newspapers. BRPC staff will be available to answer questions or address concerns and site factsheets will be created to summarize actions, findings, progress and next steps.

3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

Documentation of the available balance of BRPC's open Assessment Grant is attached in the form of an ASAP Report, which documents that as of 10/1/2025 95% of the funds have been drawn down.

4. Named Contractors and Subrecipients - Not applicable.

Contractors: BRPC has **not** already selected a contractor that will be compensated with EPA funds made available under this NOFO.

Subrecipients: BRPC has **not** named a subrecipient at the time of this application submission.