

NARRATIVE INFORMATION SHEET

1. Applicant Identification: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, 160 Main Street, Haverhill, MA 01830
2. Website URL: www.mvpc.org
3. Funding Requested:
 - a. **Assessment Grant Type**: Community-wide
 - b. **Federal Funds Requested**: \$500,000
4. Location: Merrimack Valley Planning District, consisting of 15 Essex County municipalities: Amesbury, Andover, Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Methuen, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury. All 15 municipalities will be covered by the proposal; however, the primary target area will be the three densely developed and economically distressed urban centers of Haverhill, Lawrence, and Methuen.
5. Target Areas and Priority Site Property Information: The primary target areas will be the three densely developed and economically distressed urban centers of Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen. Including:
 - Tombarello Site – 207 Marston Street, Lawrence – Census Tract 2508003
 - Merrimac Paper - 7, 9, 19 South Canal Street, Lawrence – Census Tract 2516004
 - Hoyt and Worthen Tanner – 60 Railroad Avenue, Haverhill – Census Tract 2610003
 - Stevens Mill Site – Stevens Street, Haverhill – Census Tract 2607001
 - Dutton Airfield – 15 Dutton Road, Haverhill – Census Tract 2603022
 - Methuen DPW - 41 Pleasant Street, Methuen – Census Tract 2525023
 - Batty Property – 51 Old Ferry Road, Methuen - Census Tract (2526021)
6. Contacts:
 - a. Project Director: Jenifer Dunlap Deputy Director/Finance Director, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, 160 Main Street, Haverhill, MA 01830; Phone: 978-374-0519; Fax: 978-372-4890; E-mail: jdunlap@mvpc.org
 - b. Chief Executive: Jerrard Whitten, Executive. Director, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, 160 Main Street, Haverhill, MA 01830; Phone: 978-374-0519; Fax: 978-372-4890; E-mail: jjwhitten@mvpc.org

7. Population (Census 2020): MVPC Brownfields Program Target Areas: Cities of Haverhill (67,787), Lawrence (89,143), Methuen (53,059). Total target population = (209,989)

8. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less	X p.1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	X p.1 &2
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain	X p. 2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures	X p.3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	N/A
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	N/A
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/areawide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	N/A
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2011 or later) or is closing	N/A

9. Letter from the State Environmental Authority—Letter dated December 23, 2025, from MassDEP acknowledging MVPC application is attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications – Not applicable



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

December 23, 2025

[Via Email]

Attn: Jerrard Whitten, Executive Director
Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
160 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01830

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

***Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant***

Dear Mr. Whitten:

I am writing to support the application submitted by the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) under the Fiscal Year 2026 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Grant Program. We understand that the MVPC Regional Planning Agency is proposing to undertake several assessment projects to promote redevelopment in target areas that include the Cities of Haverhill, Lawrence, and Methuen. 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 MVPC 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: Jenifer D. Dunlap, MVPC Deputy Director / Finance Director
Katy Deng, US EPA Region 1
Joanne Fagan, MassDEP Northeast Regional Office

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields.

1. a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Activities under this grant will occur within the geographic boundaries of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) region, encompassing 15 cities and towns with a population of 369,889 people in the Merrimack River Valley of Essex County, MA (8 communities have population <15,000). Merrimack Valley's industrial factories in the core cities of Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen relied on the Merrimack River for power and led the 19th century American industrial revolution. For generations, these "Gateway Cities" were home to industry that offered residents good jobs and a "gateway" to the American Dream. The region has endured decades of economic transition since the 1950's: the decline of the dominant textile and leather industries, suburbanization, the boom and bust of the plating industry, and successive waves of new immigrants, the most recent primarily from Latin America and Asia. Long-term unemployment, wage stagnation, high poverty rates and a legacy of industrial-era environmental contamination continue to be structural barriers to economic revitalization. The region has faced significant economic challenges since the 2008 recession, from which many municipalities have yet to recover, including high-profile plant closures and associated job losses. EPA Brownfields assessment funding is needed to address the contaminated sites and the associated problems created by them.

The Merrimack Valley region has been designated an Economic Development District by the U.S. Economic Development Administration because of the economic distress indicators and brownfield conditions throughout the region which are most pronounced in the Cities of Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen, which are the Target Areas for this grant. Additionally, within these communities are specific areas with opportunities for growth/improvement where there are disproportionate and adverse environmental, human health and other cumulative impacts. These areas also have very significant economic challenges because they contain low-income historically underserved populations that experience high incidence of disease, likely due to proximity to living in and around brownfields sites. As such, all census tracts within the City of Lawrence and portions of Haverhill and Methuen include many environmental indicators adverse impacts to air quality from particulates, lead paint, wastewater discharge, traffic proximity, and hazardous waste.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfields Site(s): Today, remnants of our industrial legacy are brownfields located throughout the region and particularly concentrated in the urban centers of our Target Areas of Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen. Blighted properties continue to be a threat to our environment, our health and safety, and our economy. MVPC's brownfield inventory includes 973 potential brownfield sites in the Target Areas and 1,985 brownfield sites overall in the region. **Priority Brownfield Sites** in the Target Areas were selected based on redevelopment potential, the potential for private investment, city priority, availability of existing infrastructure, and overall economic and social return to the community and include the following:

Lawrence: While the city needs help with many sites, these highlight the need for assessment funding on properties that it has taken by tax title or sites where they may be the responsible party. The industrial **Tombarello** site at 207 Marston Street (**Census Tract 2508003**) is a city-owned 14-acre PCB brownfield cleanup site where additional site characterization and delineation is needed to assess multiple data gaps recently identified by MassDEP. This site was formerly the city's biggest scrapyards. The city has prioritized this site so it can become a new industrial park, allowing several of its important manufacturing companies to move here away from its more sensitive populations. The city seeks a national company to redevelop. The **Merrimac Paper** site, also owned by the city, at 7, 9 and 19 South Canal Street (**Tract 2516004**) consists of three lots totaling 4.75 acres as well as numerous foundations where buildings once stood. While work is underway toward finding a developer, additional assessment under existing buildings is necessary because MassDEP has concerns regarding asbestos in soil, petroleum and other hazardous substances.

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Haverhill: Many brownfield properties are located along Haverhill's Merrimack River waterfront requiring assessment to remove the hurdle for future residential redevelopment including the 1.90-acre vacant **Hoyt and Worthen Tannery** at 60 Railroad Street (**Tract 2610003**) which has concerns related to PCBs and chlorinated solvents. This and other sites along the Merrimack River lie in the FEMA designated 100-year floodplain. Another priority Brownfield Site in Haverhill is the **Stevens Mill site** located on the federally designated flood plain Little River in Haverhill's Lower Acre (**Tract 2607001**) at 14 Stevens Street. The 4.52 acres property has more than 100,000 sf of building that has been vacant since 2006. This site is proposed for redevelopment into 80 units of mixed-income housing (a portion affordable) and a restaurant, but redevelopment is complicated by the presence of asbestos, petroleum tanks, and other contaminants. While not on the waterfront, the **Dutton Airfield site** (**Tract 2603022**) at 15 Dutton Road is a >69-acre former small airport that the city would like to see developed into an industrial park, but suspected petroleum and hazardous substance concerns are preventing it.

Methuen: A Priority Brownfield Site in Methuen is the **Battye Property**, located at 51 Old Ferry Road (**Tract 2526021**). It is a former construction and trucking company which has a history of illegal construction debris landfilling (+/-577,000 cy) (including asbestos) that has been documented by MassDEP. The site abuts several residential neighborhoods and contains state priority habitat for endangered species. Assessment is underway but the scope of the work is very large, and more funds are needed. Supplemental assessment will help inform the community to acquire the site by tax title and return the site to productive use as the future home of Methuen's Department of Public Works facility. **Methuen DPW** at 41 Pleasant Street (**Tract 2525023**) is city-owned and needs assessment so it can be redeveloped once the city moves the facility to the Battye site. Methuen has two excellent former school sites that are earmarked for residential redevelopment. Methuen is the potential responsible party so they need MVPC to assess these projects, so to attract future developers the environmental liabilities can be understood.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites: MVPC has been performing assessments through its EPA funded Brownfields Grants since the early 2000's. Our tried-and-true method of identifying additional sites to assess has includes direct outreach to city planners and our commissioners to identify and nominate sites for inclusion in the assessment program. Sites that have bona fide prospective purchaser interest and are priorities for the community are scored highest. Additionally, MVPC cross-checks our inventory with each community's chief municipal officer (i.e., mayor or town administrator) to ensure that they meet their priorities too. Those that align with MVPC's written goals/strategies are scored highest and included in the inventory. As such, we have many sites already in the queue that need assessment through MVPC's brownfields program. In Lawrence properties acquired by tax title on **May Street, South Canal, and Tower Hill** at Broadway. Another redevelopment opportunity involves the **Greater Lawrence Sanitary District** which is looking to construct a 4-million-gallon sewage storage tank. Locations being considered include several City lots where assessment is needed before soil removal could be proposed. In Haverhill, additional assessment sites, all within economically disadvantaged Census Tracts, include 194 River Street which has a history of industrial use, **266 River Street**, an old shoe mill currently being used as an antiques storage building (both in **Tract 2608002**). Another potential redevelopment parcel in need of assessment and potential residential development opportunity is located at **266 River Street (Tract 2532002)** and was the former location of an auto dealer and shoe factory.

1.d. Revitalization of the Target Area - Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The overall goal of the MVPC Brownfields Assessment Program and each Target Area is to return sites with real or perceived contamination back into productive use for our target communities. MVPC, through use of its EPA funded Brownfield Assessment and RLF Grant programs, works collaboratively with its communities and community partners to assess and cleanup properties that align with local government land use and revitalization plans, including the **Merrimack Valley Priority Growth Strategy** where regional priority development areas are identified (including the Target Areas) to encourage growth.

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MVPC produces the region's **Housing Production Plan** and **Hazard Mitigation Plan** which help communities identify potential redevelopment opportunities for housing while ensuring development in hazard prone areas is avoided. MVPC's **2025 Industrial Zone Profile** report indicates that there is a need for more industrial space in the region because demand (5%) is relatively high and this aligns with restoring jobs lost since 2008.

The target community of Lawrence has focused attention on brownfield opportunities with its EPA-led "**Making a Visible Difference**" planning initiative and has established an urban renewal district where brownfields are a priority for the community. The Lawrence Redevelopment Authority (LRA) also focuses on bringing back the industrial sector. LRA identified action steps to advance four key goals: 1. Economic development; 2. Job creation; 3. Improved quality of life; and 4. Fiscal stability. Examples include the planned redevelopment of the Tombarello site into a new 14-acre industrial park and the Merrimac Paper site for new mixed-income residential development with up to 100 units and 5 new commercial spaces.

Several of Haverhill's Priority Brownfield Sites are located within the City's **Priority Growth Area (PGA)** as identified by MVPC and within identified neighborhoods. Proposed redevelopment could include at least 100 affordable housing units, >500 units of market-rate housing, up to 50,000 sf of commercial space, and new open spaces that include rail-trail connections. Additional development is proposed outside of the PGA and low-income areas and is focused on the industrial sector and potential job growth. In 2016, Haverhill was recognized by the Federal Reserve Boston as a "Working Cities Challenge Community" supporting the Mount Washington Alliance partnership efforts in neighborhood-based actions to increase employment opportunities, improve the quality of education, and connect Haverhill residents to food nutrition and health resources.

Methuen established a **Smart Growth Zoning District** in its downtown/industrial area to promote denser, mixed-use development. Methuen needs new industrial space to support the high demand for this sector and return manufacturing to the City, as such the redevelopment of the Battye property will lead to up to 32 acres of industrial development. Redevelopment of city owned properties will result in up to 100 units of low-income and market rate housing. Much of Methuen's proposed redevelopment in the Broadway and River Streets is focused on pedestrian friendly neighborhoods with parks, housing, and access to transportation. These areas are also within Methuen's low-income Census Tracts (Tract **2523002** and **2524003**). Assessment and redevelopment in Methuen will be consistent with these goals.

1.e. Revitalization of the Target Area - Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: The proposed reuse of the Prioritized Brownfield Sites will directly catalyze economic growth and social equity by returning blighted properties to productive use in alignment with local revitalization goals. Transforming the Tombarello and Dutton Airfield sites into modern industrial parks will attract private capital investment and create living-wage jobs in the manufacturing sector, meeting the high regional demand for industrial space. Residential strategies for the Merrimac Paper and Stevens Mill sites will provide over 200 units of mixed-income and affordable housing, significantly expanding housing choice for low-income populations in Lawrence and Haverhill. Furthermore, the redevelopment of the Battye Property for a new municipal DPW facility provides vital fiscal stability and allows for the subsequent residential revitalization of downtown Methuen. To ensure long-term sustainability, MVPC has always encouraged developments to incorporate energy-efficient mechanical systems (heat pumps, geothermal), rooftop solar, and LID techniques to improve local resilience to extreme weather events and flood risks. This includes asking for specific language requiring LID in land use ordinance.

1.f. Strategy for Leveraging Resources - Resources Needed for Site Reuse: MVPC has demonstrated ability to leverage public and private capital investment for cleanup and redevelopment. We will use our prospective purchaser network of our community partners to help identify this capital. We also have a plan to find and develop key funding to support the completion of the assessment, remediation and reuse of the priority sites include: **MVPC Brownfields Cleanup RLF Program:** MVPC currently maintains a

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Brownfields RLF program to support cleanup efforts at sites to be assessed under this grant. MVPC currently has \$1 million available for loans and subgrants and has committed to using these funds to complement the assessment of the Priority Brownfield Sites identified herein. **Federal CDBG Funds:** The target communities of Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen all have active community development programs with access to federal CDBG funds. Lawrence and Haverhill are HUD Entitlement Communities for CDBG. For all three communities, brownfield redevelopment is a strategic priority, and CDBG funds will be used to support brownfield cleanup and redevelopment. **State Leveraging:** MassDevelopment, a quasi-public state financing agency that has collaborated and partnered on MVPC on multiple cleanup efforts including the Hooker Howe building in Haverhill and Coastal Metals in Merrimac has made available low-interest loans of up to **\$1.1 Million** and up to **\$2M** (for remediation projects) as well as MassDEP's Site Assessment and Remediation Support Services (SARSS) program to provide additional site evaluation support. MassDEP also has funding to provide 128(a) monies to projects. **Community/Non-profit Partners:** Groundwork Lawrence (GWL) is a neighborhood non-profit based in Lawrence with extensive experience in community building. GWL currently supports Lawrence's Brownfields Program, is a partner in the City's Cleanup Grant for the Merrimac Paper site and has conducted extensive education and outreach as part of this project.

1.g. Strategy for Leveraging Resources - Use of Existing Infrastructure: The reuse of existing infrastructure is a critical and necessary component of funded brownfield redevelopment projects. MVPC's Brownfield Program decision-making has focused on selecting Priority Brownfield Sites that have access to existing water/sewer/gas/broadband infrastructure. Reuse of existing buildings is a selection consideration, including those with historical value. Based on this, the Brownfield sites selected for assessment are in downtowns where buildings, associated water/sewer/gas services, parking and transportation access are already in place in these areas and thus, can be reused as part of the projects. MVPC Brownfields program has proven track record of selecting sites where utility/buildings are reused. In addition to prioritizing work in underserved neighborhoods with sensitive populations, MVPC plans to assess and promote redevelopment of sites that advance EPA/HUD/DOT livability principles directly by supporting existing communities and enhancing the economic competitiveness of our region by leveraging investment in underserved neighborhoods.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. The Community's Need for Funding: MVPC is a regional planning agency dependent on federal, state and foundation grant funding for multi-community initiatives as member dues make up only 6% of our annual budget. Existing Brownfields assessment resources are dwindling at a time when developer interest in Brownfields properties is showing signs of increasing. Lawrence among the poorest urban areas in Massachusetts supported by Census poverty rate data. Municipal budgets are dependent on state aid and property tax revenue increases, but they are capped at 2.5% annually. All three target communities have no in-house Brownfields capacity and lack the means to fund site assessment and cleanups using local resources. Their annual operating budgets are already severely strained with the demands for even basic services – schools, public works, police, and fire protection – outstripping the available revenues. Lawrence is Massachusetts' is one of poorest cities in Massachusetts where over 19.4% of the population lives in poverty, according to 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) data. In Haverhill, the percentage is 10.6 and in Methuen the percentage is 8.93. Census data for Methuen's urban center indicates lower per capita income and household income compared to the rest of Methuen and Essex County indicating localized economic disparities.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: The population of Lawrence is dominated a number of underserved populations including those living in poverty, children under 5 years old, single parents, and limited English-speaking households. By state standards, 100% of Lawrence is prioritized for environmental health support¹. In Lawrence, people under the age of 18 account for just under 27% of the population with 8% of the population under the age of 5 (higher than the Essex County average of 21% under 18 and 5.5% under 5). Lawrence has a very high percentage (65%) of households with children under

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the age of 18 headed by a female single parent. Highly urbanized areas like Lawrence, Methuen and Haverhill face additional environmental challenges associated with dense urban neighborhoods where past industrial development has caused pollution and environmental degradation. According to the *places.com*, large portions of Haverhill and Methuen both have higher incidences of asthma and COPD than the national averages.

By working with Community organizations like Groundwork Lawrence and partnering with our municipalities on other regional planning initiatives like the Merrimack Valley Regional Housing Production Plan and Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, MVPC's Assessment Program we plan to identify and reduce threats to the health and welfare of these sensitive populations through environmental assessment and eventual cleanup and redevelopment of Sites within the targeted areas assuming that are awarded assessment grant funding.

2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Our region's older housing stock and contamination in soils, groundwater, and rivers have disproportionately impacted on residents' health in our target communities; the data is significant. In Lawrence, the region's largest city, the health challenges are daunting. ***Infant mortality rate is 25% higher than the state rate*** and intensified by a ***25% decrease in mothers receiving adequate prenatal care***. Stresses already evident on a sensitive infant population can be greatly exacerbated by the addition of chemical stresses, either during fetal development or in the years following birth.

Finally, statistics on ***mortality, hospitalizations, lead poisoning, and emergency rooms visits due to asthma as well as overall asthma rates in 0-4-year-olds, 5-14-year-olds, and 15-34-year-olds are all between 1.5- and 3-fold higher than state rates. Children in Lawrence have asthma rates in the general population that are 67% higher than the statewide average*** (Sources: MA Dept. of Public Health and Boston Univ. School of Public Health for MA Prevention Center). Asthma prevalence is linked to the building environment and is exacerbated by airborne particulates due, in part, to the presence of auto-related uses and industrial facilities. Lawrence has the highest rates of asthma in the Merrimack Valley, with a prevalence of 12.2%. The sensitive population data shows Lawrence in the 95th percentile for Particulate Matter and Respiratory Hazard Index in EPA Region 1. This means only 5 percent of the region's population has a higher value than Lawrence. Although banned in 1978 in Massachusetts, lead paint is the most common source of lead poisoning in children putting them at risk of damage to brain, kidney, and nervous system functions. Despite efforts to improve this, ***Lead levels in children in Lawrence are currently three times the state rate***. This risk is exacerbated by Brownfields, many of which are contaminated with lead and other heavy metals. Assessment and cleanup of our Brownfields will directly address these health concerns by providing better housing choices, upgraded new industrial spaces, and a safer, cleaner environment in the target areas.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/disproportionately Impacted Populations: By prioritizing the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of target area sites, we can disrupt long-standing of poverty and of local investment by creating safe affordable housing choices and new industrial places for area residents to live. Removing blight and toxins allows for the creation of safe, affordable housing and industrial investment, directly improving the quality of life for these **historically overburdened populations**. Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen face a disproportionate concentration of environmental and public health hazards. According to published publicly available data sets indicators for **Lead Paint, Superfund Proximity, and Hazardous Waste Proximity** rank above the 90th percentile statewide, while Haverhill and Methuen track closely in the high 80s and low 90s. These cities are characterized by limited economic resources and high percentages of vulnerable residents living in some of the oldest housing in Massachusetts. According to the Lawrence lead program staff, **83% of homes** were built before 1979, frequently containing lead paint, asbestos, and other safety risks. This is compounded by a high rental rate of **72%** - nearly double the regional average - leaving many residents without the authority or means to address home contamination. By focusing on residential housing opportunities and industrial reuse options the risks to impoverished/disproportionately impacted residents will be lessened.

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2e. – 2.f. Project Involvement & Project Roles & List of Organizations/Entities/Groups & Roles: MVPC has developed strong working partnerships with a number of key community-based organizations in our region that play a vital role in our program. We selected certain partners because they will help us identify important site housing or industrial development, help us connect with developers and site owners that wish to redevelop their sites, or provide meeting space or translation services to underserved communities:

Name of organization/entity/group	Entity’s Mission	Point of contact (name, email & phone)	Role
Groundwork Lawrence (community group)	Environmental sustainability through community partnerships	Lesley Melendez, Executive Dir. lmelendez@groundworklawrence.org (978) 974-0770	Project Identification, Reuse concepts, Translation, and Outreach
Northern Essex Community College	Educate and inspire students to succeed	Lane Glenn, President lglen@necc.mass.edu (978) 556-3855	Outreach, provides meeting space for community meeting and Brownfields Discussions
Merrimack River Watershed Council	Improve and conserve the Merrimack River watershed	Curt Rogers, Executive Dir. crogers@merrimack.org (603) 717-1748	Outreach, Project Identification
Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce	Economic development strategy	Kate Cook, President/CEO president@haverhillchamber.com (978) 373-5663	Outreach, Developer Outreach, Site Promotion for industrial and commercial properties
Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce	Economic development strategy	Joe Bevilacqua, President/CEO (978) 686-0900 jjb@merrimackvalleychamber.com	Developer Outreach, Site Promotion

2.g. Incorporating Community Input: We plan to host public up to 8 public meetings in the target communities to discuss the inventory process, as well as the Phase I/II/ and ABCA results. MVPC is dedicated to ensuring that all communities in its region have a voice in the Brownfields program. To achieve this, MVPC will focus on reaching out to traditionally underserved populations, including minority and low-income communities, and those with limited English proficiency. MVPC will also use community partners, like Groundwork Lawrence, to help with reuse planning, organizing and holding charrettes, and assisting with overall outreach efforts. Groundwater Lawrence will help collect feedback (direct and anonymous), disseminated summaries to MVPC and other stakeholders. MVPC will use our website as portal for public responses to feedback received. Their involvement will be a part of MVPC’s comprehensive outreach strategy that includes providing meeting notices and materials in multiple languages (including **English and Spanish**), offering translation services at public meetings, and utilizing in-person and accessible virtual meeting platforms. Meetings will be advertised through various channels, such as press releases, mailings, social media, and community partner websites. In Lawrence, we will also engage the public, when needed, by going on the mayor’s weekly radio program to talk about his

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Brownfields priorities and get the word out on site and results received. MVPC will be sensitive to factors like meeting times, locations (especially those transit-served locations), and providing childcare services to accommodate diverse needs. By prioritizing community engagement, MVPC aims to create a more inclusive and equitable decision-making process. This approach will help to identify and address the specific concerns and needs of affected communities. By involving stakeholders early and often, MVPC can foster a sense of ownership and collaboration, leading to more successful Brownfields projects. Ultimately, MVPC's commitment to community engagement will strengthen the overall effectiveness of its Brownfields program. By actively listening to the voices of all residents, MVPC can make informed decisions that benefit the entire region and our target areas.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Project Implementation; 3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule; 3.c. Task/Activity Lead; and d. Outputs:

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight: a. Project implementation - EPA Funded Tasks: MVPC will administer and oversee the program and provide economic development and planning staff support for the implementation. At each step in the assessment process, MVPC will be involved to ensure cost control, oversee progress, and ensure that the project timelines are met. MVPC will conduct contractor procurement of qualified environmental professional (QEP) in accordance with applicable state and federal rules on fair and open competition at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 1500, and with EPA's DBE participation rule at 40 CFR 33. MVPC will continue to work cooperatively with local officials and business leaders. The QEP will assist MVPC in ACRES and quarterly reporting. No Non-funded EPA Tasks. b. Anticipated Schedule: Activities throughout the entire 4-year grant period - Fall 2026 through Fall 2030. Procure QEP during Q1, ACRES reporting upon initiation of each priority site assessment and quarterly throughout project, etc. c. Task Activity/Activity Lead: MVPC staff (MVPC director and project manager) with support from QEP. d. Outputs: will include RFP for QEP services, QEP contract, 16 Quarterly reports, project closeout reporting. MVPC staff will attend 2 EPA Brownfield conferences & training.

Task 2: Outreach, Engagement, Inventory and Site Selection: a. Project implementation - EPA Funded Tasks: MVPC staff with its QEP will lead targeted proactive community outreach and education process to our member communities, where we meet with each municipality's planners, economic development personnel, and the chief municipal officer. We call these Brownfields Road Show events. We will hold up to 4 of these events. MVPC will also host a minimum of 4 public outreach/education meetings and community-building activities (1/year) to get the word out about the program. MVPC's Brownfields staff will select the region's highest-ranking sites for assessment in the identified target area. MVPC will update the existing Regional Brownfields Database in our *MIMAP (my map)* application that houses our extensive Brownfield inventory. No Non-funded EPA Tasks. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: It is essential that these activities occur throughout the life of the grant (Fall 2026 through Fall 2030). c. Task Activity Lead: MVPC staff and QEP/community partners. d. Outputs: Presentation materials and planning/education outreach materials including feedback from target neighborhoods and community partners with sharing of information through print, inventory updates to *MIMAP (my map)* application, our website, and social media.

Task 3: Phase I & Phase II ESAs: a. Project implementation - EPA Funded Tasks: MVPC's QEP will perform Phase I and Phase II ESAs that meet applicable ASTM standards (ASTM E1527-21 and ASTM E1903-19) EPA's All Appropriate Inquiries Rule, and applicable state of Massachusetts rules and guidance. This work will also include hazardous building materials surveys (HBMS) when a building is present on the site. Where possible, these properties will be "clustered" or "grouped" to complete assessments simultaneously to maximize efficiency. MVPC will work with innocent landowners and/or prospective site developers to make the process collaborative and participative to obtain access agreements for priority sites. No Non-funded EPA Tasks. b. Anticipated Schedule: MVPC has projects ready to go so we anticipate that we will be able to spend all the funds between October 2026 and September 2029. c. Task Activity Lead: QEP with direct oversight from Jen Dunlap and other MVPC Staff. d. Outputs: consist of 8 Phase I and II ESAs completed and reported in ACRES. We anticipate having the QEP conduct up to 2 HBMS as a part of this task.

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Task 4: Remedial/Reuse Planning/Plans: *a. Project implementation* - EPA Funded Tasks: MVPC intends to evaluate cleanup alternatives including development of Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) and Reuse Plans conducted as part of this task. ABCAs will be conducted in accordance with both EPA guidelines and MassDEP requirements for remedial action plans (RAPs). No Non-funded EPA Tasks. *b. Anticipated Schedule:* Schedule includes the second and third year of the grant (October 2028 through September 2029). *c. Task Activity Lead:* QEP with direct oversight from Jen Dunlap and other MVPC Staff. *d. Outputs:* 4 ABCA/Remedial Action and other relevant MassDEP documents and one reuse planning document. No Non-funded EPA Tasks

3.e. Cost Estimates (15)

Budget Categories		Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Admin Costs	Total
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$ 3,000	\$7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 2,500	\$0	\$ 20,500
	Fringe Benefits	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$0	\$ 0
	Travel	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$0	\$ 5,500
	Supplies	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$0	\$ 3,000
	Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$0	\$ 0
	Contractual	\$ 3,000	\$20,000	\$389,000	\$34,000	\$0	\$446,000
Total Direct Costs		\$11,000	\$31,000	\$396,500	\$36,500	\$0	\$475,000
Indirect Costs		\$ 3,658	\$ 9,146	\$ 9,146	\$ 3,050	\$0	\$ 25,000
Total Budget		\$ 14,658	\$40,146	\$405,646	\$39,550	\$0	\$500,000

**MVPC approved NICRA of 130.55%. Indirect costs above are shown at 100% of personnel(attached).*

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight:

MVPC staff time (60 hrs. x \$50/hr. = \$3k). Travel = EPA training at 2 national conference attendees@ \$3.5k for mileage/airfare/lodging/per diem. The QEP will assist MVPC in ACRES updates, quarterly reporting, and other tasks (24 hrs. @ \$125/hr.). \$1,500 for miscellaneous supplies.

Task 2: Outreach, Engagement, Inventory and Site Selection: MVPC staff time (150 hrs. x \$50/hr.) = \$7,500. Travel = \$2K (2,778 miles @\$.72/mile) and miscellaneous supplies related to handouts @ \$1,500. QEP=\$20,000 broken down as follows: 40 meetings @ \$500/meeting including meeting minutes preparation (160 hours @ \$125/hour) includes 4 road show events, 4 public brownfields meetings, 10 internal meetings, 12 site owner meetings, 10 innocent landowners and/or prospective site developers meetings, and time for assistance with updating MVPC’s MIMAP (my map) application with Brownfields Sites selected for inclusion in the program inventory.

Task 3: Phase I & II ESAs: We have estimated \$4,000 for a typical Phase I ESA 8 sites = \$32K budget and QAPP/Phase IIs are estimated at \$44,625 each (\$4,500 for each SSQAPP and \$40,125 for each Phase II ESA investigation. The total for 8 SSQAPPs/Phase II ESAs is \$357k. The average cost of Phase IIs includes performance of two HBMS (est. \$10K). Total Assessment budget is \$389K. MVPC oversight and coordination time MVPC staff time is estimated at 150 hrs. x \$50/hr.= \$7,500.

Task 4: ABCA/RAP/Reuse Planning/Plans: We estimate \$6,000/site for each ABCA/RAPs x 4 sites \$24,000 (48 hours @ \$125/hour) to be spent by the QEP. We anticipate funding one small reuse plan at cost of \$10,000 per document. These are all QEP costs. Total Task Budget of \$34,000. MVPC oversight and coordination time MVPC staff time is estimated at 50 hrs. x \$50/hr.= \$2,500.

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: The mechanism for tracking, measuring, and evaluating progress and achieving our program outcomes (short and long-term) will be accomplished through our quarterly EPA reports. In addition, project site information including leveraged investment and beneficiaries will also be updated regularly as projects progress in the EPA ACRES

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database and through our in-house GIS database of sites. Upon notification of award, MVPC will prepare the required Cooperative Agreement Work Plan with EPA. The work plan will outline the overall project schedule and project budget and will identify the various stages, tasks, required benchmarks, and milestones that will be tracked and measured during grant implementation. Connecting the outputs to our work plan will provide an important way to link the results of the grant funding with EPA's strategic plan as well as demonstrate to Congress the tangible results of the Brownfields grant program. MVPC will continue to track long-term outcomes of sites assessed through the program using a variety of tools including: the ACRES database, MVPC MiMap application, and through internal spreadsheets. This will allow us to accurately quantify **acres assessed and cleaned up, jobs created, private and public leverage amounts.**

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Organizational Capability; 4.b. Organizational Structure; 4.c. Description of Key Staff: MVPC currently has full-time staff of 15 planning professionals and support staff. We are led by an experienced executive director as well as both environmental program manager and finance director, each with existing Brownfields grant administration experience. MVPC has established well-defined and efficient management systems for all components of grant management including accounting, file management, financial, audit, progress reporting, payroll, contract procurement and oversight. Thus, we have the capacity and structure to successfully manage and execute this grant. Key staff include:

Jerrard Whitten, MVPC Executive Director, has more than 30 years of experience in regional planning and community development, as GIS Program Manager and most recently as MVPC Executive Director. Jerrard has been actively leading and participating in the program since 2021. His team includes **MVPC Brownfields Program Coordinator and Deputy Director/Finance Director, Jen Dunlap**, with over 30 years of experience in managing QEP, reporting and compliance for MVPC's Brownfields program. She also became MVPC's Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup RLF Program coordinator in mid-2024. Jen has worked on all seven of MVPC's EPA Brownfields grants. Jen also serves as the finance manager of MVPC's other state and federal grants. Jen has managed every drawdown and closeout of all MVPC Brownfields grants. **MVPC has the organizational structure to allow Jen and Jerrard to take on Brownfields projects.**

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources: MVPC will continue to follow federal guidelines and state law in public procurement for Licensed Site Professionals (LSP)/QEPs within weeks of finalizing our Cooperative Agreement with EPA. The procurement process involves public notice and outreach to environmental engineering firms; issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP), ranking of the proposals by the MVPC staff and MVPC Brownfields Committee; & contractor selections. All proposal submittals, evaluations and contracts shall conform to the **federal fair and open competition requirements** outlined in 2 CFR 200 & 2 CFR 1500, and the EPA DBE participation requirements of 40 CFR 33 and Mass General Laws, Chapter 30B (MGL, Ch. 30B). Additionally, MVPC will work with an **Environmental Attorney** to address sensitive environmental issues and/or provide opinions regarding environmental law issues. Depending on the project, MVPC can use the services of **Economic Development Consultant** to complete market study on strategically important projects.

4.e. Currently or Has Ever Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: (1) **Accomplishments.** MVPC has managed seven (7) prior EPA Brownfields grants [FY 2003 (2), 2006 (2), 2009, 2012, 2017, and 2022] without adverse audit findings. Grant awards have been fully expended and project closeouts completed in compliance with all cooperative agreement workplan, schedule, and reporting requirements with all except 2022. MVPC's current FY2022 Assessment Grant is still open, but all funds have been expended. MVPC's recent grant details are summarized in the table below. All funds were expended in a timely manner and all administrative reports (quarterly, annual, closeout) were completed and submitted on time or the grant was extended using standard practices to accommodate assessments that require more time to complete. An annual audit of all MVPC financial records is performed by an independent certified public accountant to evaluate and certify contract activities. No adverse findings have been identified. MVPC has received and managed federal

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and non-federal grants, including our current EPA Brownfield Assessment and Brownfields RLF grants. Over the past ten years we have successfully managed over \$15 million in funding from numerous federal agencies and private foundations funding projects related to Brownfields, transportation, economic development, GIS mapping and land use planning & analysis.

MVPC USEPA Brownfields Grants History	Amount	Grant Type	Contaminant Class	Grant Status	Ph I ESA Sites	Ph II ESA / Add. Assess.	Cleanup /Planning	Remaining Funds
4B00A01088 (FY 22)	500K	Assess	Haz/Pet	Open	2	4	3	\$0
4B00A00801 (Supp)	2.750M	RLF	Haz/Pet	Open	-	-	8	\$2.28M
BF00A00161 (FY17)	\$300k	Assess	Haz/Pet	Closed	6	3	3	\$0

The ACRES database accurately shows progress for these sites. We have used the EPA grant funds to establish and implement a highly successful district-wide brownfields program that has assessed both hazardous substance and petroleum-contaminated sites. Our workplan outputs and outcomes have included completion of over 80 Phase I/II ESAs and Mass. Contingency Plan response actions. Sites have ranged from large mill complexes and manufacturing facilities to machine shops, metal-plating shops, commercial trucking depots, dry-cleaners, and abandoned rail corridors.

MVPC has a proven track record of successfully managing EPA funds, having consistently met all programmatic requirements and utilized assessments to unlock significant private and public investment. Our management facilitated the fast-track cleanup of the former Hooker Howe Costume facility, enabling adjacent residential redevelopment. We have effectively navigated complex regulatory hurdles at the Battye Property, completing critical Endangered Species and asbestos permitting to prepare the site for a future municipal facility.

Our strategic cleanup planning support work at the Tombarello site—once the city’s largest scrapyards—produced a site-wide estimate and redevelopment vision that has positioned the property for a \$60M industrial park. In Amesbury, MVPC successfully managed the removal of abandoned USTs at the Amesbury Visitor Center, a project that leveraged over \$3M in trail improvements and created a regional recreational anchor. Furthermore, our work at the Trader Allen Truckstop and Methuen DPW has successfully transitioned these high-priority blights toward public RFPs for industrial and commercial reuse. By integrating assessment with local visioning, MVPC focused on the grant dollars spent directly supporting the creation of living-wage jobs, mixed-income housing, and improved fiscal stability for our target communities.

4.e.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements. MVPC’s open FY2022 assessment grant started in October of 2022 and the contractual portion was fully expended by June 2025 based on current projects. More funds are now needed to continue MVPC’s program. The FY 2017 assessment grant was started in October 2017 and was completed in September 2020. Both assessment grants were managed in accordance with the Cooperative Agreements terms and conditions and our Work Plan commitments with no corrective actions required by EPA. MVPC has successfully completed all financial status reports and submitted ACRES Quarterly Reports on time and as requested by EPA for both cooperative agreements.

APPENDIX A
THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission THRESHOLD CRITERIA

1) APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- a. The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission is a regional governmental entity “Regional Council” established in 1959 under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B (See Appendix B Summary Description of MVPC organization, membership & purpose; Background on Massachusetts regional planning agencies.)
- b. MVPC is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We plan to host public up to 8 public meetings in the target communities to discuss the inventory process, as well as the Phase I/II/ and ABCA results. MVPC is dedicated to ensuring that all communities in its region have a voice in the Brownfields program. These include residents with limited English proficiency. Meeting notices and materials, as well as website postings, will be presented in both *English and Spanish*; translation and closed caption/signing services will be provided at public meetings as needed and requested. Staff will also make use of MVPC’s language proficiency analysis update to coordinate other appropriate language outreach and consult with local partners to design a meeting schedule facilitating participation. Factors to be considered will include daytime/evening meetings, transit hours of operation, convenient, transit-served locations, and provisions for childcare services. Our public Brownfields meetings will be advertised through ***press releases, direct mailings, and public postings, including posting on MVPC’s regional website (www.mvpc.org) and social media including Facebook*** as well as the websites of our target communities, our community partners and important community-based organizations.

Through daily communication and hands-on project work with neighborhood groups and citizens, our community-based organizations will play a key role in effective outreach to publicize and promote meaningful participation in target neighborhoods. MVPC will do extensive outreach to community leaders/organizers that have been identified to have the ear of the community. This will better ensure that information dissemination, including when outreach sessions are happening.

Where possible MVPC will host meetings in locations where the communities are that we are trying to inform and engage. This means holding meetings in neighborhoods where the proposed projects are so those most potentially impacted can have a voice in the decision-making process. Public meetings will be held using meeting professional facilitators, depending on the nature of the event. Additionally, meetings will be run in a café style with small groups to invite a back-and-forth conversation about the topics being discussed.

Sometimes it will not be possible to host meetings proximally to the selected projects. At these times, MVPC will engage with its communities virtually. This adds a layer of complexity that will need to be overcome to ensure that the most vulnerable stakeholders are engaged.

MVPC will also host virtual meetings and community input sessions on two platforms (Teams and Zoom). These platforms also offer opportunities to use call in options if internet connections are not available and are also the easiest and most familiar platforms to use.

Outreach to traditionally underserved groups helps ensure that all constituents have opportunities to have an impact on the decision-making process. Allowing this to happen organically promotes a spirit of inclusion and then informs and sets the tone for subsequent project assessment, future

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cleanup, and redevelopment activities. The greater the consensus amongst stakeholder groups, the greater the chances of success of the outreach and the redevelopment. The MVPC staff endeavors to understand the full range of a community's needs in order to create more responsive and innovative plans.

3) EXPENDITURE OF EXISTING GRANT FUNDS

MVPC has an open FY2022 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant (#4B00A01088). More than 70.00% of these assessment funds have been drawn down. A report from MVPC's account with the federal Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) website demonstrates that MVPC has drawn down 93% of the grant funds by 10/1/25.

4) CONTRACTORS AND NAMED SUBRECIPIENTS

- **Contractors: N/A** – MVPC plans to procure contractor(s) using a competitive process that is approved by EPA and the State of Massachusetts if awarded these funds.
- **Subrecipients: N/A**