

City of Chicopee
Department of Planning & Development

City Hall Annex • 274 Front Street • 4th Floor • Chicopee, Massachusetts 01013

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(1) Applicant Identification:

City of Chicopee, Massachusetts
Department of Planning & Development
Chicopee City Hall Annex
274 Front Street, 4th Floor
Chicopee, MA 01013

(2) Website URL: <https://www.chicopeema.gov/365/Planning-Department>

(3) Funding Requested

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

(4) Location: a) Chicopee, b) Hampden County, and c) Massachusetts

(5) Target Area and Priority Site Information

Chicopee Center and Willimansett are the target areas under this Community-wide Assessment Grant Proposal with a focus on Brownfields that form a physical barrier between these contemporary urban neighborhoods.

Priority Sites include:

-Former Hampden Steam Plant: Parcels 0116-0001 & 0095-0006A, 26.49 acres, owned by the City.

-Former Moore Drop Forge Plant #2 & Depot Street Ponds: Parcels 0095-0005, 0095-00006, 0095-00008, 14.31 acres, privately-owned by D.H. Holdings.

-Flood Control Parcel: Parcel 0095-0006A, 4.49 acres, owned by the City.

-Undeveloped Parcels North of Chicopee River: Approximately 67 acres, owned by the City of Chicopee.

-Western MA Electric Company Parcels: Parcels 0115-00001, 0116-00002, 0117-00001, 6.53 acres.

-Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels: located south of Delta Park along the Connecticut River, are composed of multiple parcels totaling 9 acres.

(6) Contacts

a. Project Director:

Lee M. Pouliot, AICP, ASLA, Director

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Chicopee Department of Planning & Development

274 Front Street, 4th Floor

Chicopee, MA 01013

b. Chief Executive/Highest-Ranking Elected Official

Mayor John L. Vieau

mayorvieau@chicopeema.gov

(413)594-1500

Chicopee Mayor's Office

274 Front Street, 4th Floor

Chicopee, MA 01013

(7) Population: 55,560

- (8) Other Factors Applicants claiming one or more of the other factors below must provide a summary in the Narrative on the applicable other factor(s). Please identify which of the below items apply to your community/proposed project by noting the corresponding Narrative page number. **If none of the Other Factors apply to your community/proposed project, please provide a statement to that effect.** EPA may verify this information prior to selection.

Sample Format for Providing Information on the Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	1-4
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	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.	3-4
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3-4
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2) , for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	9-10
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	N/A



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 16, 2026

[Via Email]

Attn: Lee M. Pouliot, Director
City of Chicopee
274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

***City of Chicopee – Delta Park
Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant***

Dear Mr. Pouliot:

I am writing to support the application submitted by the City of Chicopee (the “City”) under the Fiscal Year 2026 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Grant Program. We understand that the City is proposing to conduct community involvement, site assessment, and cleanup planning for the Brownfields sites of Delta Park in Chicopee with planned reuse as an urban green space that will provide recreational opportunities and alternate transportation routes for the historically disadvantaged community. The target area was deemed a priority in the City’s Comprehensive Plan, West End Brownfields Area-wide Plan, and Willimansett Brownfields Area-wide Plan.

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 City 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: Patrick Collins, City of Chicopee
Nicholas Kiser, City of Chicopee
Katy Deng, US EPA Region 1
Caprice Shaw, MassDEP Western Regional Office

1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

a. Target Area and Brownfields

- i. **Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area.** Geographically situated at the confluence of the Chicopee and Connecticut Rivers, the City of Chicopee's riverfront access allowed it to emerge as a prominent manufacturing hub during the Industrial Revolution. The development and consolidation of several mill villages, including the target area encompassing the 2 former mill villages of Chicopee Center and Willimansett, formed the economic engines that drove the City's growth for much of its history. The target area has continually represented 2 of the City's densest urban neighborhoods, exhibiting geographically and socioeconomically segregated populations, discontinuous commercial corridors, urban blight, and Brownfields where the skeletal remains of mill structures stand as a reminder of the former prosperity from the Industrial era.

Notably, Chicopee's former industrial sites have been home to A.G. Spalding & Brothers; creators of Spalding basketballs and Ames Manufacturing Company; the largest manufacturer of swords for the Union Army during the Civil War, to name a couple. Unfortunately, Chicopee has the all too familiar history of a once-thriving, riverfront industrial city, whose prosperity has dwindled alongside the relocating manufacturing industry. Ironically, the same buildings that served to put Chicopee on the map are now liabilities that keep the City from reaching its potential.

Chicopee's industrial legacy has left a significant environmental impact, resulting in 31 known brownfield sites covering approximately 225.2 acres of contaminated land. These properties are tainted with pollutants such as petroleum, asbestos, and heavy metals, which pose risks not only to the local community but also to groundwater quality, ultimately affecting the Connecticut River. Most of the sites are disproportionately located in or around low-income communities, and in a city where 8,000 people are living in poverty, this has a significant impact. The City has identified a need for green space and recreational areas for the community to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Delta Park, the Target Area, is comprised of the West End of Chicopee Center (West End) and the southern portion of Willimansett. West End is bordered by the Connecticut River to the west, the Chicopee River to the north, Chicopee Street to the northeast, and Center Street to the south/southeast. The area is also bisected by Interstate 391 and a north-south rail line that disconnects the West End from Willimansett and the riverfront. The neighborhood is one of the oldest industrial neighborhoods in the United States, with its earliest factories established in the 1820s. Around 1830, the Dwight Canal was completed to take advantage of hydropower from the Chicopee River, which supported the growth of manufacturing textiles, munitions, and shoes. During the past several decades, many of the neighborhood's mills have been vacated, leaving behind brownfields, an industrial legacy that demands environmental and economic solutions.

The West End was the subject of a 2011 pilot Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant that resulted in the West End Brownfields Area-Wide Plan. This plan confirmed that the West End contains a disproportionate concentration of known and suspected brownfields. The Plan addresses 15 priority brownfields representing 67.077 acres or 35.3% of the West End's total geographic area. This area is home to 2% of the City's total population but contains 5.4% of all sites in Chicopee reported in the Massachusetts (MA) voluntary cleanup program, with 6 of those 15 sites regulated under the MA Department of Environmental Protection's Tier IA (i.e., most hazardous). Only 3 other Tier IA sites exist in the rest of the City.

Willimansett, located north of the West End, is geographically separated from the West End by the Chicopee River. The City's most geographically isolated neighborhood, it is bound by a flood control levee along the Connecticut River to the west, I-90 and the Chicopee River to the south, I-391 and the north-south rail line to the east and north.

Like the West End, Willimansett saw industrial expansion in the 1800s, particularly following the construction of the Willimansett Bridge that opened in 1891, connecting the village to the City of Holyoke across the Connecticut River. Residents of Willimansett were then able to access jobs either in the powerhouse mills of Holyoke or the thriving industrial corridor along Meadow Street. By the mid-20th century, Willimansett began to experience downsizing and closure of its industrial facilities. Coupled with the construction of Interstate 391 in 1982, Willimansett was easily bypassed by regional traffic and commerce between Springfield to the south and Holyoke to the north.

Today, Willimansett is a mixed-use neighborhood, boasting one of the most culturally diverse populations of all City neighborhoods. However, it suffers from the most severe disinvestment and underutilization of historically industrial properties. Willimansett is the subject of Brownfields Planning and Assessment activities and a 2020 EPA Assessment

Grant, with 5 catalyst brownfields sites identified for assessment, potential cleanup, and revitalization. Over 40 sites in Willimansett are reported in the MA voluntary cleanup program.

Delta Park is within a mile of three schools and the majority of downtown. This section of the riverway supports a variety of sensitive wildlife populations. Due to the unique characteristics of the delta, this region is particularly vulnerable to accumulating contaminants. Several environmental justice communities are located around the target area, where the minority population is 60%, and the median household income is \$36,000. These communities additionally face language isolation due to the stark contrast in socioeconomic status from the rest of the City. With the support of an EPA grant, the City will be able to identify all the contaminants in Delta Park, develop an effective plan for remediation, and help reconnect the City.

- ii. **Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s).** The priority sites include Delta Park and Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels. Positioned at the confluence of the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers (FEMA Special Hazard Flood Areas: Regulatory Floodway and Zone AE) and between the Willimansett and Chicopee Center neighborhoods, Delta Park and the Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels represent former industrial properties that have sat vacant or underutilized for decades.

Delta Park encompasses over 100 acres directly adjacent to the confluence of the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers, located in both Chicopee Center and Willimansett. Currently, the only access is through a low, narrow, gated underpass below the north-south rail line that is secured against public access. This access inadequacy must also be addressed to allow for measurably attainable work to be done in assessing and remediating the target sites. Delta Park is composed of the following parcels/sites:

- Former Hampden Steam Plant: Parcels 0116-0001 & 0095-0006A, 26.49 acres, owned by the City. Once served by several access roads and a rail trestle, the Hampden Steam Plant began service in 1918 to assist in meeting the increased demand for electricity during World War I. This coal-fired plant eventually fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1992 leaving its mark by depressions from mineral extraction. Today this parcel is vacant, underutilized, and inaccessible to the West End of Chicopee Center. A Phase I environmental assessment performed in 2014 identified Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) requiring further assessment including oil, PCBs & VOCs, and historic landfilling.
- Former Moore Drop Forge Plant #2 & Depot Street Ponds: Parcels 0095-0005, 0095-00006, 0095-00008, 14.31 acres, privately-owned by D.H. Holdings with ongoing assessment and cleanup efforts dating back to 1986. These parcels are known to be impacted by petroleum, oil, and metals with 23 recovery wells currently operating to recover free phase oil from contaminated groundwater. Additionally, plans are under development to address asbestos and metal-contaminated soils and a landfill area.
- Flood Control Parcel: Parcel 0095-0006A, 4.49 acres, owned by the City. The parcel is developed with an Army Corps of Engineers earthen levee and concrete flood wall system that serves as a critical component of the City's flood protection system along both Rivers. The parcel is impacted by contamination from the former Moore Drop Forge Plant #2 parcels.
- Undeveloped Parcels North of Chicopee River: Approximately 67 acres, owned by the City. This currently undeveloped property may have historically provided fill that was utilized to construct the Hamden Steam Plant; however, no assessment has been conducted. This site is within Willimansett; however, it is largely inaccessible due to the adjacent City Water Treatment Plant and flood control levee.
- Western MA Electric Company Parcels: Parcels 0115-00001, 0116-00002, 0117-00001, 6.53 acres. These industrial parcels abut the undeveloped parcels North of the Chicopee River and are improved with regional electric transmission infrastructure operated by Eversource Energy.

The **Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels**, located south of Delta Park along the Connecticut River, are composed of multiple parcels spanning 9 acres. These properties have been utilized for industrial and residential uses since the early 1900s. They are physically disconnected from the West End of Chicopee Center by Interstate 391 and north-south rail with access provided by a single underpass. Little data exists regarding environmental impacts, however, these parcels are identified as priority brownfields within the West End Brownfields Area-Wide Plan and noted to be potentially impacted by equipment storage, historic industrial uses, and historic fuel oil/gasoline storage tanks. Further assessment

will be needed to complete an entire picture of how the presence or absence of these buildings, and their footprints, is crucial to the assessment and remediation of the target area.

iii. Identifying Additional Sites. Additional sites will be evaluated against the same criteria used to identify the initial priority sites, with priority given to other known brownfields noted in the West End and Willimansett Brownfields Area-Wide Plans. These sites were identified through public involvement processes during each plan's development. Consideration will be given to any additional site's ability to advance community priorities established in both plans, provide additional access to and from the rivers, and ability to support physical links between Willimansett and the West End of Chicopee Center. Other criteria that will be considered include consistency with the City's Comprehensive and Open Space & Recreation Plans and ability to support reuse of vacant mill properties located adjacent to the initial priority sites. According to EPA's EJScreen, Delta Park is in the 90th -95th percentile of hazardous waste proximity, and with 12.6 acres of the target site yet to be investigated and the history of the site, it is not hard to believe that further contamination is more than a possibility.

b. Revitalization of the Target Area

i. Overall Plan for Revitalization. Delta Park and the Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels are identified as priority brownfields in the West End Brownfields Area-Wide Plan. Delta Park was initially targeted to site renewable energy or specific agricultural production; however, additional planning efforts that followed the West End Brownfields Area-Wide Plan considered Delta Park's potential to become a significant, new riverfront park that enhances/protects the ecological diversity, habitat, and flood capacity potential of this unique area at the confluence of the rivers. Such reuse would address limited access to green space experienced by West End residents, while also providing additional urban amenities to support the redevelopment of vacant West End mill structures including riverfront access, pedestrian/bike access, and improved jobs/services access between the West End and Willimansett.

The 2015 plan, A New Vision for Delta Park, studied alternatives to improve access to Delta Park, develop accessible trails, boardwalks, canoe/kayak launches, public art/performance spaces, and other amenities set within the site's ecological/industrial context. The plan strongly encourages the City to consider the viability of creating a connection across the Chicopee River, north to Willimansett and the existing Connecticut RiverWalk & BikeWay that follows the Connecticut River for nearly 3 miles through Willimansett. Access improvements to Interstate 391 and north-south rail line underpass would then provide for a connection to the Chicopee Canal & RiverWalk through the West End along Front Street. The plan envisions Delta Park becoming a hub between these pedestrian/bicycle networks that would create a connected off-road travel network linking both neighborhoods to Chicopee Falls, further east. The Chicopee Canal & RiverWalk will extend to RiverMills at Chicopee Falls, the City's most significant brownfields redevelopment project.

Should reuse of Delta Park advance as envisioned, the resulting new park space and connected RiverWalk & Bike network would support additional brownfields redevelopment efforts and City-wide priorities including redevelopment of the Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels and vacant mill structures for housing; increased access to parks and open space for all residents; further brownfields redevelopment; and protection of the ecological integrity of the site's unique ecosystem.

ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Overall Plan for Revitalization. Reuse of Delta Park and the Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels support neighborhood-scale and site-specific redevelopment of other brownfields that can advance the recreational, transportation, housing, and economic needs of Chicopee Center and Willimansett. This includes redevelopment of mill properties as mixed-use housing-based projects. Specific outcomes include the following:

- Open/Green Space Access: Wisniewski Park is the only park that serves the West End of Chicopee Center. The reuse of Delta Park as open space increases recreational access, restores access to the rivers, and preserves/enhances the unique ecosystem existing at the site.
- Climate Resiliency: The activation of Delta Park will assure the preservation of the unique habitat that exists at the confluence of the Connecticut and Chicopee Rivers while allowing for further restoration and the protection/enhancement of the site floodplain functions. Such efforts will ensure that the City's flood control system is resilient against future flooding events.
- Alternative Transportation/Access: Delta Park acting as a hub for the existing RiverWalk and BikeWay systems will create an alternative transportation network connecting Willimansett, Chicopee Center, and Chicopee Falls. This will

provide Willimansett residents with increased access to the jobs and services in Chicopee Center and Chicopee Falls, while increasing access to green/open space for residents of all 3 historic mill villages.

c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

- i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse.** The City exhausts its efforts to leverage various funding sources to supplement any and all projects. Planning staff is constantly and actively pursuing each available avenue, as needed and evidenced by the reapplication to this program, for example. Actively pursued and previously awarded programs include the Commonwealth's Parkland, Infrastructure, and Underutilized Properties Programs. Additionally, the City has previously, and will continue to pursue Land & Water Conservation Fund proposals at the federal level. Further funding opportunities are available to support cleanup and reuse through the Massachusetts Brownfields Priority Fund, managed by MassDevelopment, and the City's existing partnership with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. The City has committed its Community Development Block Grants for brownfields projects and will also consider this project for such funding.
- ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure.** The priority brownfields sites are embedded in the City's most urban neighborhoods which provide access to existing infrastructure originally built to support large-scale industrial developments that now boast excess capacity to meet reuse demand. The City, through the Commonwealth's Infrastructure Program, improved utility systems in the target area which will serve priority sites. This project proposes to make connections between disconnected pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure which will improve the value and usage of these facilities by creating access through 3 neighborhoods.

Additionally, while there is little to no stormwater infrastructure to comply with modern standards, what remains is targeted to be upgraded through the City's ongoing Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) mitigation efforts. This is especially true for the remaining structures on the Dwight Street Riverfront parcels, whose redevelopment and use will need CSO separation operations to accommodate projected tenancy. This is crucial in the target area as the contaminated soil and surfaces are certainly a non-point source (NPS) of continual pollution into the confluence of the 2 rivers on which it stands. Assessment of the existing infrastructure would better inform how to properly mitigate and potentially eradicate the NPS contribution to this ongoing environmental issue, allowing the City to take a more strategic approach to improving infrastructure in the area.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

a. Community Need

- i. The Community's Need for Funding.** Brownfields have perpetuated a cycle of disinvestment in the West End of Chicopee Center and Willimansett. Low property values and high cleanup costs make redevelopment unfeasible. Properties that were once essential to economic vitality are now underutilized or abandoned, which negatively impacts surrounding property values and total tax revenue. Within these neighborhoods, a high rate of small business failure and ownership turnover prevents and limits significant contributions to the City's finances, which paralyzes the City's ability to fund brownfields efforts and maintain core services. Further, the City has made significant investments in other City-owned brownfields to prepare for redevelopment, which impacts its ability to fund brownfields work elsewhere.

Chicopee is a city that operates with substantially less capital than neighboring communities, and less than the Commonwealth's average. According to the U.S. Census, the median household income in Chicopee is \$49,434 and 3 out of 4 of the target area's Census Tracts earn below \$36,000, while all 4 earn less than the Commonwealth's median of \$77,378. Further, the target area is home to some of the City's most disadvantaged communities. Census Tract 8109.01 (West End of Chicopee Center) is home to only 876 residents. Within that Census Tract, 58% of residents are identified as low-income, which is well over double the Commonwealth's average of 22%. Therefore, the target area's community has a small, low-income population that is disproportionately impacted by brownfields.

ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

- 1. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations.** According to data obtained from EJScreen, Census Tract 8109.01 in Chicopee, Massachusetts, which contains the target site, contains a high concentration of sensitive populations which face a serious health crisis. The population suffers from alarmingly low life expectancies, ranking in the 99th percentile at the state level and the 95th percentile nationally. The decaying brownfields in the area only exacerbate this issue, especially for the tract's high concentration of vulnerable populations, which include residents with disabilities (93rd

national percentile), low-income populations (82nd national percentile), and limited-English speaking households (91st national percentile). These communities rely on a clean environment yet find themselves surrounded by harmful pollutants that have led to significantly lower-than-average life expectancies, underscoring the urgent need for environmental remediation.

As pollution levels rise, so do the health risks, as continued exposure leads to worsening conditions and in turn, higher medical costs. This is particularly burdensome for populations in the target census tract who face greater barriers to accessing healthcare, ranking in the 70th state percentile for lack of health insurance. In addition to a lack of health insurance, residents in the target tract also experience several critical service gaps including a housing burden and a food desert (according to EJScreen), which only further exacerbates the overall health and wellbeing issues experienced by these sensitive populations. Environmental threats in the census tract will continue to threaten the health and welfare of the City's most vulnerable residents, and without intervention, the risks associated will only grow. Assessment funding is crucial in properly addressing these issues; by diagnosing the sources of pollution and contamination, the grant would help catalyze the process to reduce the harmful health effects that plague Chicopee's sensitive populations and subsequent redevelopment will give the residents a chance to be uplifted from the public health and welfare challenges which burden the area.

- 2. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions.** Residents in the target tract experience multiple diseases and adverse health conditions at a higher-than-average rate. Asthma (96th percentile nationally) and heart disease (91st percentile statewide and 74th percentile nationally) are extremely prevalent. These same residents also live in close proximity to a significant concentration of environmental hazards from the soil, air, and groundwater; including fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which ranks in the 96th percentile statewide, lead paint (92nd percentile nationally), toxic releases to the air (73rd percentile nationally), traffic proximity (91st percentile nationally), RMP facility proximity (85th percentile nationally), and hazardous waste proximity (86th percentile nationally). The higher-than-average prevalence of asthma and heart disease will only be worsened by such a high concentration of hazardous building materials, air toxins, and contaminated sites with a plethora of hazardous waste.

As such, the population surrounding Delta Park faces far more severe health risks compared to the rest of MA and the nation, making this site a key priority and undeniable opportunity for meaningful, impactful cleanup and subsequent revitalization. Clean-up of this site offers more than just environmental benefits, it also presents an opportunity to restore a community that has struggled for years; proper management of the site could breathe new life into the area, providing a safe, clean green space where residents can connect with each other and nature, all while reclaiming their health. With the help of a grant, the industrial scars left on this community could be wiped away, giving Chicopee's citizens a healthier, cleaner future. Transforming the brownfields located at Delta Park into a green space would offer much needed relief by removing health risks and improving the community's overall well-being.

3. Promoting Environmental Justice

- a. Identification of Environmental Justice Issues.** The target census tract, identified as disadvantaged by CEJST, faces severe environmental justice threats, as defined by a significant prevalence of environmental threats in combination with a high concentration of people of color (POC) and low-income populations (i.e., historically underserved, marginalized, and/or disadvantaged populations). Tract -0901 is in the 82nd percentile for the USA demographic index and in the 90th percentile for the state demographic index, and in the 82nd national percentile for low-income populations according to EJScreen. Moreover, this tract is above the 80th percentile for 11 out of 12 EJ Indexes compared to the state and 9 out of 12 compared to the nation. This is a further indication that the tract experiences significant environmental justice issues because EJ indexes represent the severity of EJ issues in a community by combining a single environmental indicator with data on low-income and POC populations. Proximity to so many contaminants, combined with the community's disadvantaged status and a high prevalence of EJ populations, further highlights the need for intervention.
- b. Advancing Environmental Justice.** Without funding, the community lacks the resources needed to clean up the contamination plaguing their health and environment. Federal assistance would provide critical resources to allow for the clean-up of the site. In collaboration with residents, the community has identified a reuse for this waterfront property that is synonymous with the desires of the local community, transforming it into a public park. This redevelopment would help to reinforce preservation of the wetlands along the coast of the river, which is a sensitive ecosystem and a natural

barrier against floodwaters. Studies from the National Institutes of Health show that access to green spaces can increase life expectancy by 2.5 years, ease asthma symptoms, provide improved air quality, and reduce ambient noise levels; all of which are environmental benefits severely lacking in these communities. Additionally, the park would boost local business revenue by increasing foot traffic to an area of the City that is otherwise isolated due to the separation from the interstate. This is a significant anti-displacement measure for local businesses as it will ensure that the reuse of the site is a benefit to them as opposed to a burden that would lead to displacement of local businesses. The active and meaningful engagement of the community will continue throughout the cleanup redevelopment process to help mitigate the unintended displacement of residents and/or businesses by ensuring that the reuse of the site is both synonymous with the desires of the community and to develop means for local businesses, community-based organizations, and/or land banks to have active involvement in the project.

b. Community Engagement

i. Prior/Ongoing Community Involvement. Planning efforts for the West End Brownfields Area-Wide Plan included 5 stakeholder group meetings with business/property owners & City officials and 3 community workshops held to gain insight into proposed reuse strategies. Community feedback forms and one-on-one interviews with stakeholders and residents were also utilized to broaden feedback beyond in-person activities.

Planning efforts for the Willimansett Brownfields Area-Wide Plan are now complete and included efforts to reach disengaged populations and solicit participation recognizing the ongoing impacts of the pandemic. Efforts have included an online survey in English and Spanish with postcards mailed to all addresses within the study area. Paper copies of the survey were available as well. The Planning team also participated in 3 pop-up community events to directly engage residents and stakeholders. Steering Committee members overseeing development of the Plan also shared information through their networks and with participating clients. The Plan was completed in 2023 and is now adopted.

ii. Project Involvement, iii. Project Roles. A Steering Committee to guide planning and engagement efforts will assist in advancing the project in all aspects of the target area:

Name of Organization/ Entity/Group	Point of Contact	Specific Involvement in the Project or Assistance Provided
Chicopee Parks & Recreation	Ben Strepka, Superintendent bstrepka@chicopeema.gov	Pop-up events, meeting space, recreation input on reuse plan
Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.	Stephen Huntley, Executive Director shuntley@valleyopp.com	Community involvement, distribution of involvement materials
Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee, Inc.	Jason Reed, Executive Director jasonr@bgcchicopee.org	Community involvement, meeting space, pop-up events with neighborhood youth, distribution of involvement materials, recreation input on reuse plan
Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce & Center Fresh Market	Melissa Breor, Executive Director melissa@chicopeechamber.org	Business community outreach, pop-up events, distribution of involvement materials
Chicopee Housing Authority	Monica Blazic, Executive Director mpblazic@chicopeehousing.org	Engagement/involvement with Housing Authority residents, distribution of involvement materials, pop-up events
D.H. Holdings, Inc.	c/o Attorney James Duda jduda@bulkley.com	Coordination on reuse/cleanup planning for the former Hampden Steam Plant parcel and the D.H. Holdings parcels

iv. Incorporating Community Input. The City will continue to involve the community by utilizing the Steering Committee as a priority avenue to connect with previously identified vulnerable/disengaged residents. To connect with disengaged residents, the City will work closely with the Valley Opportunity Council, Boys & Girls Club, and Chicopee Housing Authority to ensure these residents have a voice in the reuse planning process. Additionally, the City is prepared to communicate progress, solicit feedback, and directly engage with residents through a variety of mediums including mailings, newsletters, pop-up community events, and multimedia progress postings. The City will address language barriers by preparing involvement materials in English, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, and any other language

necessary to connect with residents in the target area. The City is also capable of providing materials for residents with visual and hearing impairments.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

i. Project Implementation. The scope of work for each major task is outlined below:

Task/Activity: Cooperative Agreement Oversight
<p>i. Project Implementation: The City's Planning Department will be responsible for all Cooperative Agreement oversight tasks, reporting, and other activities. Planning staff (up to 4) will attend 2 National Brownfields Conferences and up to 5 state/regional brownfields training events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA-funded tasks/activities: Travel to National Brownfields Conferences & state/regional brownfields training events. • Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Planning Department Staff time will be funded by the City's annual budget.
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Oversight will begin Year 1, Quarter 1 and continue through Year 4, Quarter 4.</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: City Planning Department.</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: 16 quarterly reports, ACRES profiles, 4 annual MBE/WBE Reports & Financial Reports, final grant closeout, and attendance at 2 National Brownfields Conferences & 5 state/regional brownfields training events.</p>

Task/Activity: Community Involvement
<p>i. Project Implementation: The City's Planning Department with support from the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and Steering Committee will develop and implement community engagement and involvement activities. Efforts will include mailings (postcards/newsletters), pop-up events, multimedia project updates, and procurement of translation services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA-funded tasks/activities: Development of postcards, newsletters, pop-up events, multimedia project updates, and translation services. Purchase of 2 tablets to support involvement events. • Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Planning Department Staff time will be funded by the City's annual budget.
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Community involvement will begin in Year 1, Quarter 2 and continue through Year 5, Quarter 4.</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: City Planning Department, QEP Team, Steering Committee</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: 5 sets of mailings (postcards/newsletters), 5 pop-up events, outreach/presentation materials with translations, 10 multimedia updates, presentations, and event records.</p>

Task/Activity: Environmental Assessments
<p>i. Project Implementation: The QEP will conduct Phase I and Phase II assessments for priority sites. The QEP with assistance from the City's Planning Department and Steering Committee, will develop a priority list of additional sites based on community involvement and the West End & Willimansett Brownfields Area-Wide Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA-funded tasks/activities: Phase I and Phase II assessments, list of additional sites. • Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Planning Department Staff time will be funded by the City's annual budget.
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Assessments will begin during Year 2, Quarter 2 and continue through Year 3, Quarter 2.</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: QEP, City, Steering Committee</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: 4 Phase I Assessment Reports, 2 Phase II Assessment Reports, 1 Generic QAPP and 2 Site-specific QAAP addenda for each Phase II site; 1 priority list of additional sites.</p>

Task/Activity: Cleanup / Reuse Planning

- i. **Project Implementation:** The City’s Planning Department and QEP will review existing vision plans for Delta Park and Dwight Street Riverfront Parcels to develop schematic reuse plans through community charrettes. Existing conditions survey including wetlands/floodplain delineations, Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), and cost estimates for cleanup/reuse will also be produced.
 - **EPA-funded tasks/activities:** Conceptual reuse plans, existing conditions survey, ABCA, and cost estimates for cleanup/reuse.
 - **Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable:** Planning Department Staff time will be funded by the City’s annual budget.
- ii. **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Cleanup/Reuse Planning activities will begin in Year 2, Quarter 4 and continue through Year 4, Quarter 4.
- iii. **Task/Activity Lead:** QEP, City Planning Department, Steering Committee
- iv. **Outputs:** Community design charette materials, schematic reuse plan, existing conditions survey, ABCA, and cost estimates for cleanup/reuse.

b. Cost Estimates

Budget Category	Project Tasks				Total
	Task 1 Program Oversight	Task 2 Community Involvement	Task 3 Environmental Assessments	Task 4 Cleanup / Reuse Planning	
Travel	\$33,000				\$ 33,000
Supplies		\$62,000			\$ 62,000
Contractual		\$25,000	\$230,000	\$150,000	\$ 405,000
Total Budget	\$33,000	\$87,000	\$230,000	\$150,000	\$500,000

The above budget was developed based upon the following task breakdown, using the data and experience from conducting previous and ongoing assessment and remediation work on brownfields sites across the City:

Task I: Cooperative Agreement Oversight

Expenditures	Quantity	Cost	Attendees	Total
National Brownfields Conference	2	\$4,000/conference	4	\$32,000
Regional/State Brownfields Event	5	\$50/event	4	\$1,000

Task II: Community Outreach & Involvement

Expenditures	Quantity	Cost	Total
Marketing/Involvement Materials	5	\$9,000	\$45,000
Community Pop-Up Events	5	\$1000	\$5,000
Translation Services	As needed	\$25,000	\$25,000
Multimedia Updates	10	\$1,000	\$10,000
Tablets for Pop-Up Events	2	\$1,000	\$2,000

Task III: Environmental Assessments

Expenditures	Quantity	Cost	Total
Phase I	6	\$5,000	\$30,000
Phase II	4	\$50,000	\$200,000

Task IV: Cleanup/Reuse Planning

Expenditures	Quantity	Cost	Total
Cleanup/Reuse Planning	2	\$75,000	\$150,000

- c. **Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results.** The Planning Department will monitor progress and prepare quarterly reports, updates to ACRES, and annual MBE/WBE & financial reports to ensure consistent project oversight. Additionally, the City will work with the QEP and Steering Committee to track, measure, and

evaluate progress and expected results. The QEP will be responsible for reporting assessment and cleanup progress. The Work Plan will be utilized by the Steering Committee as a scheduling tool and to monitor progress. Regarding long-term health outcomes, the project and associated plans will be repeatedly revisited and compiled through the data collection for various plans including but not limited to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Municipal Vulnerability Plan, and Open Space Plan. Although heavily dependent on qualitative data, these plans will also utilize data collected via the US Census' ACS surveys and information that can be accessed from regional public health agencies.

4. Programming Capability and Past Performance

a. Programmatic Capability

i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii. Description of Key Staff. The City's Brownfields Program has been housed in the Planning Department since 2014. The Planning Department consists of 6 full-time staff and 1 part-time intern. 4 of the full-time staff are planners whose focus is grant writing and grant/project management for grant-funded projects. Since 2014, the Planning Department has successfully administered federal/state grants and provided project management for projects focused on brownfields, infrastructure, parks/open space facilities, trails, planning/design, and social service programs. Awards have ranged from \$200,000 to over \$6 million. The Department has developed an efficient workflow to address administrative requirements and financial management, while advancing projects consistent with anticipated schedules.

Key members of the Planning Department include Lee Pouliot, Planning Director; Patrick Collins, Assistant Planner; and Nick Kiser, Associate Planner. Those key staff members are planners certified through the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Under Lee's leadership, the Planning Department has managed and overseen the City's Brownfields Program to include over 13 years of work to assess and cleanup the former Uniroyal and Facemate properties in Chicopee Falls (a former tire factory and textile mill) and advance redevelopment as RiverMills at Chicopee Falls, a mixed-use neighborhood plan. This project has seen the investment of nearly \$40 million from federal, state, and local resources to cleanup and redevelop 40 acres of Brownfields along the Chicopee River. The Brownfields Program has also completed 2 area-wide plans for brownfields in Chicopee Center and Willimansett, advanced assessment and cleanup through EPA and state brownfields funds and lead the development of plans and permitting of significant mill conversion projects for RiverMills and Chicopee Center.

Prior to his position as Planning Director, Lee managed the City's Brownfield Program while working to advance projects through the City's Office of Community Development, primarily funded through the City's Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Patrick holds a Bachelor's in Urban & Regional Planning and has nearly 5 years of professional planning experience. Nick holds a Master's in Urban Studies and has private experience in the writing/management of grants. Specifically, he was successful in writing and managing grants administered through the EPA and Texas' GOMESA office on behalf of the U.S. Department of the Interior in relation to coastal resource management. Both Patrick and Nick will manage the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the project while being overseen by Lee who will act as Project Manager. If staff turnover occurs during the project, the Mayor will assign appropriate staff to manage the project through its completion.

Additional support will be provided as needed by City Treasurer Marie Laflamme who oversees financial transactions for the City, City Solicitor Kevin Corridan who will review contracts and any access agreements for the project, and the City's Purchasing Agent who will ensure all public procurement requirements are met. These Departments regularly work in collaboration to advance City projects being supported by a variety of funding sources.

ii. Acquiring Additional Resources. The Planning Department works regularly with the Purchasing Department to advance procurement of needed services including a QEP, planning, and cleanup services. The Purchasing Department ensures that all City Departments comply with City, state, and applicable federal procurement requirements. Further, the Planning Department has strong relationships with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, MassDevelopment, which oversees the Massachusetts Brownfields Priority Fund, and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. These entities can be relied upon for additional assistance, technical and financial, particularly related to brownfields projects.

The City recognizes the importance of strong labor practices, local hiring/procurement, and opportunities for local employment associated with brownfields and reuse. All City construction-related projects are required to meet Prevailing Wages (including fringe benefits) as set by the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards. Additionally, the City ensures that projects with federal funding comply with Davis-Bacon Wage Rates as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor. Further, the City has adopted participation goals for minority and women business enterprises for design and construction projects, as established by the Massachusetts Office of Supplier Diversity. The City is served by and regularly collaborates with MassHire, the Hampden County Workforce Board, which advances workforce development initiatives across Hampden County. The City will work through its existing relationship with MassHire to advance local employment training and hiring goals/objectives that can be supported through this project.

b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant. The City has been a successful recipient of EPA Brownfields grants since FY2011 having received community-wide assessment grants, cleanup grants, and a pilot area-wide planning grant in collaboration with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Most recently, the City received a community-wide assessment grant in FY2020 specific to Willimansett and 3 FY2017 cleanup grants for hazardous building materials abatement in former Uniroyal Buildings.

1. Accomplishments. Under the FY2020 community-wide assessment grant (\$300,000) the City has successfully overseen the development of the Willimansett Brownfields Area-Wide Plan to support brownfields reuse through neighborhood-scale interventions and specific reuse visions for 5 catalyst brownfields sites. Phase I and Phase II Assessments were completed at 2 catalyst sites, and a Hazardous Building Materials survey was completed at one. The grant was closed in January 2026.

Under the FY2017 cleanup grants (\$600,000), the City completed cleanup of hazardous building materials in former Uniroyal Buildings #15, 27, & 42. The project realized appropriate off-site management of 2,200 tons of asbestos containing materials and 1,665.85 tons of mixed asbestos/polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) materials. Over 1,140 tons of steel were recycled off-site while 160 tons of clean concrete was reused as backfill on-site. Buildings #27 & 42 have been preserved for redevelopment. The City complied with all grant requirements and reporting obligations. All work was completed per the Work Plan and the project closed in March 2022.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements. The City has consistently addressed all grant requirements and deadlines for all awards including compliance with its Work Plans. This includes the completion of all required documents including work plans, community relations plans, and outreach materials. All required reporting has been completed including quarterly reports, financial reports, ACRES property profiles, and final/closeout reports. The City's Brownfields Program works closely with the EPA Project Officer to ensure compliance with all grant requirements and anticipates continuing its current practices. If, for some unanticipated reason, the City should miss a reporting deadline, staff will immediately communicate with the EPA Project Officer and submit materials as soon as possible.

The City has no open EPA grants. The City's FY2020 community-wide assessment grant is now closed. A Closeout Report was submitted to EPA on January 28, 2026.

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City of Chicopee, Massachusetts
Application for FY26 U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant
Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Chicopee, Massachusetts is a general-purpose unit of local government.

2. Community Involvement

Engagement and involvement efforts between Chicopee's Brownfields Program and City residents have been an ongoing endeavor since the program's establishment in 2012.

The City will continue to involve the community by utilizing the Steering Committee as a priority avenue to connect with already identified vulnerable/disengaged residents. To connect with disengaged residents, the City will work closely with the Valley Opportunity Council, Boys and Girls Club, and Chicopee Housing Authority to ensure these residents have a voice in the reuse planning process. Additionally, the City is prepared to communicate progress, solicit feedback, and directly engage with residents through a variety of mediums including mailings, newsletters, pop-up community events, and multimedia progress postings. The City will address language barriers by preparing involvement materials in English, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese and any other language necessary to connect with residents in the target area. The City is also capable of providing materials for residents with visual and hearing impairments.

3. Target Area

Chicopee Center and Willimansett are the target areas under this Multipurpose Grant Proposal with a focus on Brownfields sites that form a physical barrier between these contemporary urban neighborhoods.

The West End of Chicopee Center is bordered by the Connecticut River to the west, the Chicopee River to the north, Chicopee Street to the northeast, and Center Street to the south/southeast. The West End is also bisected by Interstate 391 and a north-south rail line that disconnects the West End from Willimansett and the 2 rivers.

Willimansett is located north of the West End (geographically separated from the West End by the Chicopee River). Willimansett is the City's most geographically isolated neighborhood. The neighborhood is bound by the Connecticut River to the west (including a flood control levee), I-90 and the Chicopee River to the south, I-391 and the north-south rail line to the east and north.

4. Affirmation of Brownfield Site Ownership

The City of Chicopee affirms that it owns at least one site within the target area that meets the CERCLA 101(39) definition of a Brownfield. The former Hampden Steam plant parcels have been owned by the City since July 3, 1985, through tax foreclosure. The City completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on the property in 2014 that confirmed recognized environmental conditions (RECs) exist on the property.

There are no active unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA on any of the target parcels.

None of the target parcels are currently listed on the National Priorities List.

None of the target parcels are subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

5. Use of Grant Funds

The City of Chicopee will use EPA grant funds to advance site assessment, cleanup/reuse planning, and community engagement efforts at priority Brownfields sites within the target area of the West End of Chicopee Center and Willimansett. The proposed scope of work related to this effort is detailed on pages 7-10 of the Project Narrative.

6. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City of Chicopee confirms that it has no open Assessment or Multipurpose Grants. Chicopee's FY2020 community-wide assessment grant (\$300,000) has been closed following the submittal of its Closeout Report on January 28, 2026.

7. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Contractors. Not applicable.
Subrecipients. Not applicable.