



City of Caribou

Municipal Building
25 High Street
Caribou, ME 04736
Telephone (207) 493-5961
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www.cariboumaine.org

R01-26-A-022

Application Information Sheet **EPA FY2026 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application**

1. Applicant Identification: City of Caribou, Maine
25 High Street, Caribou, Maine 04736
2. Website URL: www.cariboumaine.org
3. Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
4. Location
 - a. City: Caribou
 - b. County: Aroostook County
 - c. State: Maine
5. Target Area and Priority Site Property Information
 - a. Target Area: Caribou Stream & Aroostook River Corridors
 - b. Priority Sites:
 - i. Brook Street Dump (no address; Brook Street)
 - ii. Vacant mixed residential/commercial buildings (3-9 Water Street)
6. Contacts:
 - a. Project Director: Penny Thompson, City Manager
25 High Street, Caribou, Maine 04736
(phone): 207-493-5961
citymanager@cariboumaine.org
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Official: Courtney Boma, Mayor
25 High Street, Caribou, Maine 04736
(phone): 207-493-3324
cboma@cariboumaine.org
7. Population: The City of Caribou has a population of 7,328 (2024-US Census Bureau).

8. Other Factors Checklist:

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	6
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	NA
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	1 & 2
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.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2), for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	NA
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	NA

1. Letter from State or Tribal Environmental Authority: Attached
2. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not Applicable- application does not have confidential, privileged or sensitive information



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

January 6, 2026

City of Caribou
Attn: Penny Thompson
25 High Street
Caribou, ME 04736

Dear Penny Thompson:

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges that the City of Caribou (City) plans to conduct assessments of brownfields sites and is applying for an FY26 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Assessment Grant.

The City has developed an application requesting federal Brownfields Site Assessment Grant funding to assess Brownfields sites in the City.

If the City receives funding, the Department will assign project management staff to conduct eligibility determinations and provide review and comment on all assessments, workplans, quality assurance plans, and health and safety plans. For sites where cleanup is pursued, the Department's Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP) staff will provide review and comment on investigation reports and remedial workplans, and will provide oversight, as necessary, of their contractor's work at the properties. Upon successful completion of remedial activities at a property, the VRAP will provide protections from Department enforcement actions by issuing a Commissioner's Certificate of Completion.

Please feel free to call me directly at (207) 215-8597 should you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Christopher Redmond
Department Brownfields Coordinator
Voluntary Response Action Program Manager
Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management, Division of Remediation
Maine Department of Environmental Protection

cc: EPA Brownfields Region 1

AUGUSTA
17 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6
BANGOR, MAINE 04401
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND
312 CANCO ROAD
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: The City of Caribou, incorporated in 1859, the most northeastern city in the U.S., is located on the Aroostook River, which is well-known for its scenic, historical, recreational, and trout and salmon fishery values. The international border with Canada is just 15 river miles downstream of the City. Caribou consists of 79.29 square miles, and a population of 7,328, which meets the census definition of a small rural town. Caribou experiences social, environmental, economic and health and welfare disparities typical of a disadvantaged rural community including remoteness from urban areas (Portland, ME is 300 miles away) and weather extremes exacerbated by geography and climate change. Until the late 1960s, Caribou was the world's largest potato shipping hub, and until the base closure in 1994, was a service community to Loring Air Force Base, leading to a long period of disinvestment. Unemployment spiked in the wake of the base closure, causing massive workforce flight and abandonment of residential, commercial and industrial properties. Tax revenues and career opportunities generated by the base's skilled workforce disappeared. Valuable school programs and safety resources have been slashed due to reductions in Caribou's budget. It has been a tragedy to the community to see the lack of jobs and opportunities for goal-oriented, energetic youth. The base's closure has prevented displaced people from returning to Caribou; and an outmigration of our youth has left behind our sensitive population of low income, unemployed, disabled, and aging citizens that are struggling to adapt and reinvent themselves in a decimated economy. With under 7,500 people, the population has a large elderly contingent. Caribou is in the 82nd percentile of the US for people over 65 and a low-income rate of 40%, which is 10% higher than the national average.

The Target Area subject of this Community-Wide Assessment grant application are neglected and blighted properties located along our two major waterways, Caribou Stream and the Aroostook River. Caribou Stream also flows through our Downtown. We have identified more than 50 unused, vacant, or underutilized commercial and industrial properties in our Target Area. In a remote rural community such as Caribou, Brownfields exacerbate public health and environmental risks, and social and economic burdens, including abandoned and distressed properties along our waterways. Our once vital businesses and economy are no more, and substantial outmigration has left business owners without the workforce they require to operate. Visitors to the once-vibrant Target Area are now confronted with the presence or perceived presence of contamination that worsens the challenges of vacancy, blight, neglect, economic hardship and the consequent inability to attract investors and developers. Our Brownfield challenges include fire-damaged buildings, dry cleaners, former gas stations/auto repair facilities, and blighted industrial sites. Many of Caribou's inhabitants, including members of our elderly, disabled, unemployed, low-income women and children sensitive populations live in neighborhoods abutting vacant industrial properties along Caribou Stream and the Aroostook River. The Target Area was home to a majority of businesses that supported potato farmers and Loring Air Force Base, but have become neglected, distressed, and are in dire need of assessment and cleanup. This grant is critical to address our challenges by redeveloping blighted properties in our Target Area, creating jobs, and revitalizing our City. This grant will build on the successes of our FY23 and FY25 Brownfields Cleanup Grants for the Caribou Power Plant (Diesel Plant and Steam Plant sites, respectively) to identify contaminant releases and provide a clear understanding of environmental conditions throughout our community. This critical first step will help Caribou assess risks to human health and the environment, prioritize and facilitate cleanup to protect sensitive populations, attract new businesses, and promote investment and redevelopment in our City.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): The City has developed a comprehensive inventory of potential Brownfields sites. Within just the Target Area, we estimate there are 50 potential Brownfields with a total combined area of 400 acres. Many of these Brownfields are located adjacent to Caribou Stream, Aroostook River, and/or within federally designated flood plains; therefore, posing a risk of impairment to water quality. These Brownfields include former gas stations, railyards, dry cleaners, electrical substations, sawmills, schools, truck and automobile service stations and sales lots, junk yards, dumps, and fertilizer plants. These vacant or underutilized Brownfields have left behind a legacy of real or perceived environmental contamination that have discouraged redevelopment, investment, and growth. Caribou's two priority Brownfield sites, which possess both the greatest concerns of contamination as well as the current highest likelihood of being successfully redeveloped in a timely manner, thus making them the highest priority for assessment and reuse, are the following:

Brook Street Dump: this site is a 23.8-acre parcel of undeveloped land located within the federally designed floodplain of Caribou Stream adjacent to a dense residential neighborhood to the southwest of our Downtown. The former owners of the Brook Street Dump used the property as a junkyard for old cars, tires, rubbish and potential hazardous substances and/or petroleum products. Brook Street Dump is a danger to our community and poses a risk to the water quality of Caribou Stream and areas downstream, which includes our Downtown. Making matters worse is that the extent of contamination, cleanup costs and potential impacts to sensitive populations, water resources, and wetlands in the vicinity of Brook Street Dump is unknown. The enormity in scale associated with potential contamination and environmental issues associated with Brook Street Dump that negatively impacts Caribou Stream and adjoining wetland areas, residential neighborhoods and our Downtown is overwhelming; to date, these issues have not been characterized or evaluated.

3-9 Water Street: this site consists of four parcels with a combined area of 0.27 acres located within the federally designed floodplain of Caribou Stream and in our Downtown. Four interconnected buildings were constructed at these properties in the early 1900s. The buildings housed commercial businesses on their ground levels and residential apartments in the upper levels. A destructive and fatal fire occurred at the center building (7 Water Street) in 2023, which caused structural damage to the adjoining buildings (5 & 9 Water Street). These buildings provided housing, good-paying jobs, financial security and a sense of community pride in our Downtown for over 100 years. However, since the destructive fire, these damaged and dilapidated buildings serve only to remind residents of a time when jobs were plentiful, the Downtown was busy and occupied, and Caribou was successful and thriving. Now, the gutted buildings and environmental contamination are a sign of blight and despair to Target Area revitalization. Hazardous building materials, including asbestos, lead-based paint, universal wastes (i.e., PCB and heavy metals-containing electrical equipment, etc.) and mold growth are likely in the buildings. In addition, potential fuel oil releases, associated with the buildings' heating systems, may have occurred during the destructive fire and could be leaking oil into Caribou Stream.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites: The University of Connecticut's (UCONN's) Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program assisted Caribou with developing a preliminary inventory of Sites for this grant application and we are prepared to expand this inventory in the event that grant funds remain after assessment activities are completed at priority sites in our Target Area. Expansion of our potential Brownfields inventory will be completed through public outreach efforts and Site nomination forms, review of state and federal environmental databases and historic maps, meetings with community organizations and individuals, and windshield surveys. The City will develop ranking criteria for prioritization of Sites (proximity to target areas; availability of infrastructure; likelihood of redevelopment; potential for job creation/retention; potential for housing; benefit to the community and underserved communities; protection of natural resources; ability to leverage financial resources, etc.) that will guide our prioritization criteria and methods for adding new properties to our Brownfields Assessment Program.

Revitalization of the Target Area

1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Redevelopment of the 3-9 Water Street properties is proposed to include new mixed commercial and residential apartment buildings with goals for affordable housing for low-income persons and supportive housing units for the elderly and disabled. Redevelopment of the Brook Street Dump will likely take the form of a park for use by Caribou's citizens and visitors. There are walking trails near the Brook Street Dump, which connect to the adjacent City Mill Pond Park, Caribou Stream and its wetland areas. Caribou entrusts this site will serve as an ideal locale for public recreation and waterfront access for a community in need of such amenities. This planned park is aligned not only with its location in a federally designated floodplain, but also with community goals, future visions, and adjacent land use. A 2009 Downtown Revitalization Plan and the 2024 Comprehensive Plan discuss the priority need for removal of blight and revitalization of Caribou's waterfront and mill pond areas. The Caribou Riverfront Redevelopment Committee (CRRC) was established in 2020 to evaluate and plan for cleanup and redevelopment along Caribou Stream and the Aroostook River. The Planning Board has rezoned the area to promote mixed use and recreation. The Maine Department of Transportation is considering reuse of the waterfront railroad right of way for a recreational trail. Atlantic Salmon of Northern Maine, Inc. plans a fish hatchery/park on an adjacent parcel to the former Caribou Power Plant Brownfields site. During the 2024 Comprehensive Planning process, a visioning session was attended by over fifty residents, and it was acknowledged that waterfront redevelopment is long overdue. Caribou's

Planning Board and CRRC meet monthly and have ongoing waterfront and recreational revitalization projects, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This Brownfields proposal is a catalyst for discussions leading to redevelopment and removal of blight, and reduction of public health and safety concerns. It is serving to energize and fuel waterfront cultural and recreational development welcomed by the entire community. This grant is vital for Caribou to conduct environmental assessments, including subsurface investigations and Hazardous Building Materials Inventories (HBMI), to properly assess and evaluate the priority Brownfield Sites to determine the extent our sensitive populations living and working in the Target Area are exposed to contamination. With this grant, our community can have the assurances that environmental issues will be addressed and hopefully spur investment and redevelopment in our City.

1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Caribou's sustainable Brownfield reuse strategy provides the perfect opportunity to highlight our revitalization efforts and increase community pride and sense of place for residents and visitors. Health, welfare, and safety for sensitive populations will be increased by contamination and blight removal and creating new housing, businesses, and scenic waterfront recreation areas. The Caribou Development Committee prioritizes waterfront cleanup, blight reduction, and redevelopment as a major economic engine for boosting the local economy. Many of our citizens live in neighborhoods adjacent to Caribou Stream and the Aroostook River. Performing environmental assessments will be an important step in a multi-phased process to assess, reuse and redevelop the Target Area. Assessment, cleanup, and revitalization of our Target Area will have immediate direct and positive impacts on public welfare, health, and the environment; and will stimulate the economy, create much needed jobs, expand the tax base, increase property values, reduce blight, improve community morale and neighborhood investment. These project outcomes directly correlate with our reuse strategy for our Target Area and also include expansion of public waterfront trail access along these waterways. By eliminating environmental stigma and safety concerns with vacant and dilapidated buildings that currently exist in the Target Area, we anticipate property values will rise throughout our community. Brownfields Assessment funding is vital to promote prosperity and jump-start the revitalization of Caribou. This project will not displace our residents or businesses but rather improve their housing options and employment opportunities.

Cleanup at both priority sites will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation and provide resilience to protect residents and community investments, as their cleanup plans will include provisions to increase the sites' capacities to handle increased stormwater flows, more frequent storm events, and rising groundwater tables, such as terraced slopes, geotextile coverings, and properly sloping landscaped areas to direct stormwater away from water bodies.

Potentially, the reuse of both priority sites will facilitate the use of renewable energy, through the incorporation of a solar array at the Brook Street Dump or rooftop solar energy panels on buildings at 3-9 Water Street. Other energy efficient measures including geothermal heat pump systems, LED lighting, energy efficient windows, and energy efficient appliances will be incorporated into the housing components for each Brownfield site, which are supported by the City and frequently employed in the development of affordable and supportive housing in Caribou.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City, as well as owners and potential developers, are aware of a variety of funding resources that they may qualify for to support the completion of environmental assessments, cleanup planning, and remediation. Caribou is eligible for monetary funding from other resources: 1) for assessment, through MEDEP's Brownfields Assessment Program; 2) for remediation, through both the MEDEP and the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD's) Brownfields Cleanup Subgrant Program; and 3) for redevelopment, through the Economic Development Administration's Public Works Program. The City has experience acquiring additional funds from municipal (such as Tax Increment Financing [TIF]), state [Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)] Economic Development Program (grants up to \$100,000 for equipment and working capital), the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (up to \$20,000 in tax credits per unit), the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program (zero interest deferred debt of up to \$153,750 for a studio/efficiency unit and up to \$200,000 for a one-bedroom or larger unit), the CDBG Housing Assistance Program (grants up to \$500,000 for non-construction costs), and federal sources (appropriations). Supplemental funding costs will be developed in the Remedial Action Plan and Reuse Planning tasks of the Assessment process.

The City intends to leverage all that it can through working with its State delegates on supplemental grants, earmarks, and other funding, and with potential developers to obtain private funding, to fund assessment, economic development, and cleanup activities. Previously Caribou successfully secured and is currently managing FY23 and FY25 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants for the Caribou Power Plant site and is ready to do the same for other sites requiring remediation.

1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The Target Area maintains significant infrastructure which can be reused and revitalized as a cost saving for future redevelopment. Electricity: *solar power* is generated in Caribou for public use. Water & Wastewater: properties in the Target Area are provided with public water and sewer services. Rail Access: The Target Area has access to the state-owned Bangor and Aroostook Railroad rail line, which, if reinvestment is made, is capable of transporting goods to the deep-water ports of Searsport, Maine and through an interconnect to metropolitan centers in the Northeast. Data: The Target Area has high-speed fiber access. Regional Workforce Efforts: Caribou benefits from its proximity to the University of Maine in Presque Isle and Northern Maine Community College in Presque Isle. The redevelopment options available to our Target Area are endless and the infrastructure is in place to support the desired development options.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

2.a. The Community's Need for Funding: When Loring Air Force Base closed in 1994, over 10,000 people lost their jobs and unemployment rates spiked. Technical, good-paying jobs have not returned and our energetic, goal-oriented youth have left our City. This grant is necessary for Caribou which is unable to fund environmental remediation and subsequent reuse due to its small population (less than 7,500 people), low-income, economically impoverished sensitive populations, and declining tax base. Between the 2010 and 2020 census, Caribou was the fastest-shrinking city in Maine. Caribou's 2023 median household income of \$54,271 is 25% below Maine median income of \$71,773, and 30% below the US median household income of \$78,538. The poverty rate in Caribou is 11.8%, above the state rate of 10.6%. Child poverty rate is 20%; state rate is 13%. (US Census; County Health Rankings 2023). As a designated regional service center, most new construction and business has been government and/or healthcare-related, and therefore tax-exempt, resulting in a tax base not keeping up with increasing municipal expenses; causing a lack of financial resources for site cleanup. Based on these factors, Caribou does not have the tax base to support cleanup or redevelopment without outside funding. Funding sources for this type of work are very limited, and Brownfields funding is the best source that could directly provide assessment and cleanup funds. Winning this grant is vital to assessing our properties and understanding cleanup funding options necessary to reinvigorate our community. This grant is critical to start our recovery which will hopefully pave the way for investment, redevelopment, new jobs, and increased tax revenue.

2.b. Health and Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Four sensitive populations facing greater susceptibility to the risks/challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, crime, vandalism and blight in our community are seniors, veterans, low-income population, and limited English-speaking households. The proportion of senior and veteran residents is greater locally than both state and national averages. Seniors over 64 comprise 27% of residents in Caribou; compared with US rate of 18%. The local hospital service area contains 92% higher proportion of seniors than nationwide. The local veteran population is 14% compared to 7% nationwide (US Census); the local hospital service area contains 88% more veterans than hospitals nationally (Cary Medical Center). 40% of Caribou's population is low income, compared to 28% for the state of Maine. Within a 1-mile radius of our Target Area, low-income families are 47% of total our total population; resulting in 87th percentile in the state; 78th percentile in US. In the Target Area census tract, 21% are below the poverty line compared to 14% in all of Caribou and 11% US (2020 Census). Other significant local welfare issues are indicated by public assistance (3.3% compared to 2.4% nationally), and SNAP benefits (21% compared to 11.4% nationally). Food insecurity affects 16% of residents compared to 12.4% Maine, and 12% for the U.S. Caribou's percentage of limited English-speaking households is at the 92nd percentile for Maine and 72nd percentile for U.S. households.

The older population requires increasingly high service costs and provides the City with a diminishing tax base. These environmental issues, combined with overall disinvestment and blight that plagues the Target Area, have impacted the health of low-income families, especially single-women and children, the disabled, and elderly individuals that live in the Target Area and are limited in their choices for housing options, lacking the funds to move or conduct necessary renovations to keep them safe. Low-income residents in particular, pay a

disproportionate share of their income toward healthcare. Caribou's children and elderly are more susceptible to damage from environmental pollutants because they have either underdeveloped or compromised biological systems. Adding environmental contaminants to their healthcare concerns is overly burdensome to one of the City's most sensitive populations. Brownfields assessments are the first step in a redevelopment process that will create community pride, investment, and good-paying jobs. Reinvestment in the community will lead to improvements in infrastructure, our housing stock, health care services, and will improve the health and welfare of those sensitive populations who live and work in Caribou.

2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Caribou, as part of Aroostook County, experiences the highest rate (21%) of people with fair or poor health in the state. Also highest is the percentage of adults who are obese, 38%, with 36% reporting no leisure time physical activity. A local community health assessment also reports that obesity in our hospital service area is more prevalent than in those of 78% of hospitals nationwide. The 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) cites cancer as the #1 local health priority with 69.3% of survey respondents rating it as extremely important. While all cancer rates are near state/national averages, 46% rate of colon cancer is of concern compared to 36%. Cancer is the leading cause of death in Aroostook County with a higher mortality rate than statewide. Higher than average asthma rates impact 12.8% of County population, compared with 11.4% statewide and 9.4% nationwide. Youth asthma impacts 13.7% compared to 7.9% nationally. The local rate of COPD is 11.8% compared to 6.5% nationally, resulting in almost double the state and national rate of COPD hospitalizations: 31.3% vs. 16.7% (ME), 16.3% (US). Other CHNA areas of concern are: All hospitalizations: 81% vs 61% statewide, individuals with disabilities: 22.3% locally, 16% Maine, 12.7% US; heart attack deaths: 31.3% locally, ~25% Maine and US. This Brownfields grant is critical to environmental assessment and cleanup in our community, which will reduce threats and address the health and welfare of sensitive residents. Potential exposure to currently unsecured pollutants present in our Target Area are cancer/health risks to vulnerable residents, either through direct contact or threat of ground and surface water contamination. The threat of exposure to airborne asbestos by those affected with asthma and COPD will be mitigated by future cleanups. New opportunities for accessible recreation and physical activity for overweight/obese residents will be provided.

Maine also continues to have the highest age-adjusted cancer incidence and mortality rates in the nation. Maine ranks higher than the national average in overall cancer rates, chronic respiratory diseases and unintentional injuries. Abandoned industrial sites, gasoline filling/service stations, dry cleaners and automotive repair businesses in the Target Area typically have soil and groundwater contamination characterized by petroleum constituents, dry cleaning solvents and heavy metals; studies show that individuals exposed to these contaminants over long periods can develop cancer and other health impacts.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: All (100%) of our population is rural, which denotes disadvantaged and underserved, as rural populations are "systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in many aspects of social, economic and civic life." (E.O.13985) Caribou does not have adequate access to affordable housing, clean environments, adequate transportation, and healthy food and lifestyles. All three census tracts of Caribou, including the Target Area, are designated disadvantaged by the 2022 Council on Environmental Quality Climate, validating Caribou's health, economic and social disparities. Air non-attainment, impaired waters, transportation access burden, and food desert are significant economically impoverished factors of our community that disproportionately impact our citizens. Additionally, 13% of neighborhood housing units are vacant, up 37% from 2010 (US Census). Overall, the most prevalent stressors to local sensitive populations are low household income, asthma, heart disease and obesity, and lack of physical activity (US Census).

Our City is left with relatively no job opportunities and a diminished population. These impacts have disproportionately impacted low-income families, especially our children and aging populations and created significant socioeconomic issues. A Brownfields grant will promote remediation and redevelopment of our contaminated and blighted waterfront areas; protecting sensitive populations from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects. The outcome of our Brownfields program will be an upgraded, clean Target Area in which low-income citizens and sensitive populations (children, veterans, seniors, limited English) can recreate and feel secure, rather than be concerned about health hazards, personal safety, and vandalism. A beautiful, revitalized river, stream, and pond areas will spur economic development and just treatment for the

currently underprivileged neighborhoods. Opportunities for meaningful resident involvement will be provided during project community engagement activities to ensure that revitalization does not result in unintended displacement of residents or small businesses. By including community members through every step of the process, Caribou will ensure that this project is equitable and beneficial for the people who already call this city home. This grant will be used to help achieve Caribou’s goals of advancing and elevating community pride and honoring sense of place.

Community Engagement

2.e. Project Involvement & 2.f. Project Roles: The following local organizations will serve as community partners and will have meaningful involvement in this project, including in making decisions with respect to site selection, cleanup, and future reuse of the Brownfield sites, including priority sites:

Name of Organization/Entity/Group	Entity’s Mission	Point of Contact	Specific Involvement in Project or Assistance Provided
CRRC: Caribou Riverfront Redevelopment Committee	" ... restore and renew the Aroostook Riverfront by creating commercial, residential, & recreational opportunities ..."	Mark Draper mark@aroostookwaste.com	Riverfront master planning; community engagement. Mark proposes to serve on Caribou’s Brownfields Advisory Committee.
Mi'kmaq Nation	" ... elevate health status of the Mi'kmaq Nation to the highest level possible ... promote responsibility"	Christina Kane-Gibson ckanegibson@micmac-nsn.gov	Inform and preserve native history and culture. Christina proposes to serve on Caribou’s Brownfields Advisory Committee.
Age-Friendly Caribou	" ... help Caribou ...by addressing the needs of its aging residents"	Elizabeth Singer esinger@carymed.org	Input from & engagement of seniors.
Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)	" ... to provide services and resources that help individuals and families achieve greater economic independence and improve lives .."	Jason Parent jparent@acap-me.org	Advocate for low income & limited English-speaking families.
Northern Maine Development Commission	" ... drive growth in the region, especially in underserved and economically distressed communities."	Jay Kamm jkamm@nmdc.org	Provide input on reuse planning; access to funding.

2.g. Incorporating Community Input: We will conduct up to three public education and information meetings to be held in our Target Areas during the assessment and reporting phases, and remedial and reuse planning. Project stakeholders include site owners, neighbors, developers, community organizations, citizen groups, lenders, EPA, and MEDEP. We will conduct up to two public meetings for each selected site: after the Phase II Assessment and after the ABCA/RAP phase. These meetings will be community charrettes (in-depth design/planning process) to solicit public input and develop cleanup/reuse options that incorporate green space/recreation, architectural options for the reuse, as well as community needs for the proposed site redevelopment. Project updates will be publicized in our local newspaper (The County), on the City’s website, and social media. We will create informational flyers, handouts, and project summary documentation, and will distribute paper versions of these documents in key locations throughout Caribou to include our sensitive populations (elderly and low-income individuals) who may not have internet access. Hard copies of project documents and reports will be available at

City Hall for review. Public meetings will be handicapped accessible. The City will also accommodate those who may have hearing/reading impairments (such as the elderly and the disabled) by providing access to videotelephony and online chat services through a cloud-based, software platform (i.e., Teams or Zoom) as a means for community engagement. The City is committed to hearing from impacted residents, embracing the idea that full participation is critical, and “nothing about us without us” applies to all aspects of community policy creation and implementation.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs *(including 3.a., b., c. & d.)*

Task/Activity 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight
<p>i. Project Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA-Funded Activities: We will perform program development, organization, and support; will conduct programmatic oversight, and will develop a Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) that will include City staff, MEDEP, EPA, and citizen/project stakeholders. Based on a competitive bid process (per 40 CFR 30), we will develop a Request for Proposals, hold interviews, and select a QEP. City staff will attend the National Brownfield conference. Quarterly reports and MBE/WBE reporting will be completed. ACRES will be maintained/updated. The City will establish a schedule and facilitate meetings with the BAC, MEDEP, and EPA. Project implementation will include the project team identifying priority sites in the Target Area. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities: None
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: This will be an ongoing and continuous effort throughout the 4-year grant cycle. We anticipate the BAC will be developed within 1 month of funding, and that meetings will be held at regular intervals throughout the project. Our BAC project kickoff meeting will be conducted prior to QEP selection, and a second meeting will be held after selection. We anticipate a QEP will be selected within 3 months of funding. MBE/WBE reports will be submitted and ACRES will be updated on a Quarterly basis.</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: We will oversee this task with assistance from the BAC and selected QEP.</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: A BAC will be developed; a QEP will be selected; the City and the QEP will facilitate/attend up to three meetings with the BAC; our inventory will be expanded; 16 quarterly reports will be prepared; MBE/WBE reporting will be conducted as needed; ACRES will be updated on a Quarterly basis.</p>
Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement
<p>i. Project Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA-funded activities: With help from the BAC and QEP, the City will hold up to three public meetings to solicit site data and educate local officials and citizens about the Brownfields process. We will also develop and distribute outreach materials (such as Site nomination forms, informational and outreach brochures, and general informational packets). Public participation will be enhanced by televising City and BAC meetings, website and social media announcements (Facebook), public notices in newspapers, press releases, and legal ads. We will re-visit our Brownfields Inventory to prioritize and rank identified sites based on perceived environmental concerns, potential for economic development, proximity to existing infrastructure, and other criteria with the highest rated sites being selected for the program. Once sites are selected, and if the property owner is amenable, we will prepare EPA eligibility documentation to enter the site into the Program. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out task/activities: Community partners will be used to help advertise public meetings and solicit input from the community.
<p>ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Community outreach will occur over the duration of the grant; the first public meeting will occur at project kickoff (Brownfields 101) and as part of the updated Brownfields Inventory. Subsequent public meetings will be held after Sites are entered into the program and assessment activities have begun. Additional public meetings will be held during cleanup and reuse planning.</p>
<p>iii. Task/Activity Lead: The City will oversee this task with assistance from the BAC/QEP/community partners.</p>
<p>iv. Outputs: Outreach and educational materials (updated Brownfield 101 tri-fold brochure and FAQ handout), public meeting advertisements, press releases and project update reports, educational materials to support</p>

public meetings (PowerPoint presentations and handouts), completed Site nomination forms. Three public meetings. One-on-one meetings with Site abutters, as needed.
Task/Activity: Phase I & Phase II Site Assessments (Task 3)
<p>i. Project Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA-funded activities: The QEP will conduct Phase I ESAs for eligible sites in accordance with ASTM E1527-21 as well as “All Appropriate Inquiry” standards; these will include a site visit, review of regulatory agency files, interviews with site personnel, review of historical files, and a written report for each site. The ESAs will include a summary of “recognized environmental conditions” and recommendations for follow-up investigations and activities. Based on these recommendations, Phase II ESAs will be conducted to determine if contamination exists, and if so, to what extent. Phase II ESAs will be conducted in accordance with ASTM E1903 and may include soil, groundwater, and/or soil gas sampling, UST assessments, or hazardous building materials inventories (HBMI). Prior to conducting a Phase II ESA, a SSQAPP and sampling plan will be prepared for USEPA and MEDEP review and approval. Site owners, City staff, and the general public will be kept informed of ongoing activities. Priority will be given to sites that have the highest redevelopment potential in the Target Area. Non-EPA grant resources: None
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: ESAs will be completed throughout the four-year grant cycle. We anticipate we will complete our first Phase I ESA within 4 months of receiving grant funds. A Phase I ESA takes approximately 3-4 weeks to complete, SSQAPPs take approximately 2 weeks to prepare and have a 30-day MEDEP and EPA review period, and Phase II investigations and reporting often take 6-8 weeks or more depending on scope of work, although these schedules can be expedited if needed.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): The QEP will oversee this task, with assistance by the City.
iv. Outputs: 16 Phase I ESAs, 10 SSQAPPs, 10 Phase II ESAs, 5 HBMI.
Task/Activity: Cleanup/Reuse Planning (Task 4)
<p>i. Project Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA-Funded Activities: The QEP will develop ABCA/RAPs for AOCs which require remediation based on Phase II ESA data. The ABCA/RAPs will include remedial actions for each identified contaminant that exceeds applicable MEDEP guidelines. Remedial actions will be compared based metrics such as cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in protecting human health and the environment. Based on the results, a remediation plan will be developed for the AOC, considering the specific or potential reuse scenario(s) for the Site). Concurrently, the City, BAC, and the QEP will complete reuse planning activities on select sites. Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out task/activity: None
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: ABCA/RAPs will be completed within 1-2 months of finalizing the Phase II ESA report. The public meeting/design charette will be held after the draft ABCA/RAPs are complete, but before they are finalized. We anticipate no impediment to completing this task within the grant period.
iii. Task/Activity Lead: The QEP will oversee the completion of ABCA/RAPs. The City will oversee the public meeting/design charettes with assistance from the QEP and BAC.
iv. Outputs: Outputs include up to eight (8) ABCA/RAPs; one public meeting/design charette (and associated outreach/presentation materials).

3.e. Cost Estimates:

Task 1 – Cooperative Agreement Oversight: This task includes the City’s time for program development, organization, and support (40 hours @ \$50/hour = \$2,000); up to three meetings with the BAC (24 hours @ \$50/hour = \$1,200); preparing bidding documents for QEP selection and interviewing/contracting with the QEP (15 hours @ \$50/hour = \$750); \$500 for supplies; and for travel to two National Brownfields Conference (two people @ \$2,637.50 air fare, lodging, and registration = \$10,550). QEP time associated with this task is estimated at \$8,000, which includes attendance at three BAC meetings and programmatic support.

Task 2 – Community Engagement: Costs under this task include City staff (130 hours at \$50/hour = \$6,500); \$500 for supplies and QEP personnel time (estimated at \$9,000) to attend meetings, prepare presentations and materials, and respond to follow-up questions and comments solicited from the community. Outputs include up to three public meetings and preparation of public outreach deliverables to communicate site status and outcomes.

Task 3 – Phase I & II Environmental Site Assessments: We anticipate our QEP completing sixteen Phase I ESAs (16 x \$5,000 each). If Phase I Assessment results indicate “recognized environmental conditions” are present, our QEP will complete additional investigations to confirm or dismiss the conditions and determine the nature and extent of contamination. The QEP will prepare a Site-Specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (SSQAPP) and submit it to the EPA and MEDEP as part of this task prior to undertaking Phase II activities. The Phase II Investigation may include monitoring wells, soil borings, test pits, and groundwater, soil, and soil gas sampling, or evaluation/sampling for hazardous building materials. The QEP will use results from the Phase II investigations to develop ABCAs/RAPs. We anticipate that the QEP will complete ten Phase II Investigations as part of the Brownfields Assessment Grant (10 x \$30,000 each, inclusive of drilling/laboratory subcontractors). Cost includes the City’s time for report reviews and interfacing with MEDEP, EPA, BAC personnel and property owners (100 hours at \$50/hour = \$5,000).

Task 4 – Cleanup/Reuse Planning: We anticipate that our QEP will complete eight cleanup plans/feasibility studies, known as Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) with Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) (8 x \$8,000 each). Costs include the City’s time for review of ABCA/RAPs, interfacing with MEDEP, EPA and BAC personnel, and attending/participating in a public meeting/design charette (120 hours at \$50/hour = \$6,000).

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)					Total
		Task 1 Cooperative Agreement Oversight	Task 2 Community Engagement	Task 3 Phase I & II Assessments	Task 4 Cleanup/ Reuse Planning	Administrative Costs	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$4,950	\$6,500	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$0	\$22,450
	Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Travel	\$10,550	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,550
	Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Supplies*	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
	Contractual	\$8,000	\$9,000	\$385,000	\$64,000	\$0	\$466,000
	Other (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Direct Costs		\$24,000	\$16,000	\$390,000	\$70,000	\$0	\$500,000
Indirect Costs		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget		\$24,000	\$16,000	\$390,000	\$70,000	\$0	\$500,000

*Supplies include presentation and printed materials for community meetings, microphone/video rentals, chairs/tables.

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: The City and its QEP will track progress to ensure project funds are expended timely and efficiently. We will hold monthly status meetings to review our milestone chart, priority sites, schedule, and budget. ACRES will be utilized for preparing electronic quarterly reports. Our overall expected outcomes are to return the selected Brownfields and nearby areas impacted by the stigma of perceived proximity to contamination and tangible blight back to economic vitality. Sites selected to participate in the Brownfield assessment program either are or will be entered into the MEDEP’s Voluntary Response Action Program. The number of sites assessed and the particulars of the assessed sites (i.e., acres of site, contaminants found, assessment money spent, leveraged money, etc.) will be tracked via EPA quarterly reports, as well as EPA’s ACRES online database. These documents and work products will provide the liability protections required to stimulate redevelopment. Phase I ESAs provide landowner defense under CERCLA,

completion of ABCAs will determine cleanup costs, reuse/redevelopment planning activities will assist developers with their business plans for development of the Brownfield sites.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability

4.a. Organizational Capacity: The City of Caribou is familiar with cooperative agreement terms as well as the reporting and record keeping requirements associated with USEPA Brownfields programs. Our team is successfully managing 2 Brownfields Cleanup Grants for the Caribou Power Plant site. We will succeed in managing this grant using the same personnel and structure.

4.b. Organizational Structure: The City is governed by an elected 7-member City Council. The City Manager will serve as Project Manager and have primary oversight of this project, collaborating with the selected Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and contractors to implement the EPA-approved workplan. Monthly progress reports will be made to City Council.

4.c. Description of Key Staff: Caribou City Manager, Penny Thompson, will serve as Project Manager. A 15-year city employee, and Manager since 2021, she is a member of the International City Management Association, and the International Economic Development Council. Manager Thompson maintains strong relationships with city officials and residents through her commitment to community engagement. Special Projects Coordinator, Karen Gorman, experienced in grant management, community planning and outreach, will assist the Manager for all financial tasks and reporting for the grant. Thompson and Gorman were presenters at the 2023 National Brownfields Conference during the “Perfect Pitch” competition where they were selected by the audience as having the “Best Presentation.” Finance Director Carl Grant is a Certified Maine Tax Collector and Treasurer experienced in local, state and federal financial compliance and reporting. Mr. Grant will work with Manager Thompson on financial management of grant. Site reuse will be assisted by Caribou’s Director of Public Works, Chris Perkins, and Caribou’s Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Gary Marquis.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources: We will manage a competitive procurement process in accordance with 40 CFR 200 through a Request for Proposals to solicit responses from qualified firms to select our QEP and to assist with community outreach and regulatory compliance. Caribou and our selected QEP will liaison with the MEDEP to design, coordinate, and oversee the successful completion of the proposed assessment program. Caribou will also seek the advice and support of EPA and MEDEP Brownfields Coordinators for direction on programmatic requirements. Additional redevelopment resources will be generated from local/regional economic, cultural/historical, and environmental/outdoor recreation entities.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

4.e.(1) Accomplishments: Caribou received an EPA FY23 Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the Caribou Power Diesel Plant and an EPA FY25 Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the Caribou Power Steam Plant. ACRES quarterly reporting for both grants are current as of the time of this application.

4.e.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: Caribou is successfully managing our EPA FY23 Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the Caribou Power Diesel Plant and our EPA FY25 Brownfields Cleanup Grant for the Caribou Power Steam Plant. Diesel Plant cleanup activities commenced in 2025 after EPA’s Time Critical Removal Action tasks were completed for the site in December 2024. Steam Plant cleanup is scheduled to start during the spring/summer of 2026. The City is complying with all reporting requirements in accordance with applicable terms and conditions with the EPA. The City has never received any adverse audit findings and all ACRES reporting is up to date for our FY23 and FY25 Brownfields Cleanup Grants.

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Caribou is a municipality eligible to apply for Brownfields Assessment funding from the EPA Brownfields Grant Program. The City of Caribou is exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement

The City of Caribou will hold up to three open meetings/workshops for periodic assessment progress reports and community education regarding potential environmental risks from the Brownfields sites. We will advertise these meetings publicly via e-mail, a legal announcement in the local newspaper, and on the City's website, door-to-door fliers, and will make meeting minutes publicly available. We will communicate the progress of our Brownfield assessment program to citizens through regular status updates available on the City's website; reports available for review at City Hall; press releases, legal ads, and other public notices, as needed; and through local news coverage of public meetings including the Brownfields public outreach and education meetings and subsequent meetings for each specific assessment site. We will continue to utilize video communications, as necessary.

We will submit press releases on the City of Caribou's Brownfields program to local newspapers including *The County*, which services Caribou and nearby communities. The majority of the community speaks English, but we will provide interpreters and/or language translations and accommodate any special needs, as needed. Through its prior successful federal grant programs and community initiatives, the City of Caribou already has a strong and successful outreach program to notify the public about economic development projects, maintains an informative public website, and uses social media (Facebook) to promote public awareness. We are always exploring new techniques and technology to solicit greater input from a broader segment of the community, particularly the disproportionately disadvantaged populations that we have identified in our grant application. For this grant application, we are targeting 3-9 Water Street and the Brook Street site (former dump), and select sites located in our Target Area along Caribou Stream and the Aroostook River in order to develop immediate action strategies out of the gate.

Many of the sites that will be included in the Brownfields Program are abandoned and/or derelict properties located primarily in our Target Area. With Brownfields funding, the focused Target Area within the City can be revitalized and become the catalyst to further invigorate sustainable redevelopment and growth throughout the community.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City of Caribou affirms that it does not have an active U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

4. Named Contractors and Subrecipients

N/A as Contractors/Subrecipients have not been procured/named.