



Application Information Sheet

ROI-26-M-001

(1) Applicant Identification: Worcester Redevelopment Authority, City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

(2) Website URL: <https://www.worcesterma.gov/development/wra>

(3) Funding Requested:

a. Grant Type: Multipurpose

b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,000,0000

(4) Location: a) Worcester. b) Worcester County. C) Massachusetts

(5) Target Area and Priority Site Information:

- Downtown Worcester Urban Revitalization Area
- Former Denholm & McCay Company site, 484-500 Main Street
- Chatham Street Parking Lot, Intersection of Chatham and Irving Streets and Houchin Avenue
- Former Registry of Motor Vehicles Property, 611 Main Street

(6) Contacts

a. Project Director: Paul Morano, Assistant Chief Development Officer, 508-799-1400, ext. 31408, moranop@worcesterma.gov, City Hall Room 402, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Official: Peter Dunn, Chief Executive Officer, (508) 799-1400, dunnp@worcesterma.gov, City Hall Room 402, 455 Main St., Worcester, MA 01608

(7) Population: 211,286

(8) Other Factors:

Other Factors	Page #
Community population of 15,000 or less	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority sites 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).	
The priority sites is in a federally designated floodplain the reuse of the priority sites will facilitate renewable energy from wind solar or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority sites will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	
At least 20% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse area wide planning activities as described in Section 3.A.(2) for priority sites within the target area.	
The target area is impacted by a coal fired plant that has recently closed 2015 or later or is closing.	



The City of
WORCESTER

Worcester Redevelopment Authority
City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608
P | 508-799-1400 F | 508-799-1406
development@worcesterma.gov

(9) Letter from the State Environmental Authority: Attached

(10) Release of Copies of Applications: Allowed



PRIORITY SITES IN TARGET AREA

11/27/2026 12:50 PM



- Override 1
- Tax Parcels
- Buildings**
- TYPE
- Building

DATA SOURCE
 City of Worcester Geographic Information System
 Original Data - Digitized at 1:500 scale (Data true resolution 1 inch = 49 feet)
 Licensed Using Spring 2003 Aerial Photography at 1:200 scale (1 inch = 100 feet)
 Further Updates Using City of Worcester Information

Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy, correctness, and timeliness of data presented herein. This information is only as accurate as its sources and may not reflect the most current information. The City of Worcester, MA, assumes no liability for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies and makes no warranty representation or guarantee of any kind, express or implied, as to the content or for any decisions made or actions taken or inaction by the user based upon any information provided on this map.



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: Peter Dunn, Chief Executive Officer
Worcester Redevelopment Authority
455 Main Street, Room 402, Worcester, MA 01608

RE: STATE LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

***Denholm Building: 484 Main Street, Worcester
Brownfields Multipurpose Grant***

Dear Mr. Dunn:

I am writing to support the application submitted by the Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA) under the Fiscal Year 2026 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Grant Program. We understand that the WRA plans to conduct assessment, remediation, and demolition of the 200,000 square foot vacant Denholm Building to create a pad ready development site at 484 Main Street and the assessment and potential remediation of the adjacent surface at 41 Chatham Street. Potential redevelopment options include the construction of a mixed-use development consisting of more than 125 market-rate and affordable residential units, first-floor commercial space, and parking to support the new development. The target area has been identified as a priority property in the City of Worcester.

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 WRA and City of Worcester 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: Paul Morano, City of Worcester
Katy Deng, US EPA Region 1
Kevin Daoust, MassDEP Central Regional Office

(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

a. Overview of Brownfields Challenges and Description of Target Area

The city of Worcester is the 2nd largest city in New England and situated in the heart and center of Massachusetts, with its economic roots forged during the Industrial Revolution. During the 1800s and early 1900s, manufacturing prospered in the heart of the 118.4 acre Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) target area located in Census Tract 25027731700. Factories producing textiles, steel and wire, boots, and shoes relied on the adjacent railroad and Blackstone Canal for transportation support, while commercial businesses were concentrated along Main St. As the industrial era came to a close, most of the factories were gone, leaving behind job loss, abandoned buildings, Brownfields sites and contamination in their wake. The densely-populated Downtown URA is a mix of redevelopment intermingled with vacant storefronts, dilapidated low-income multifamily and subsidized housing, schools, churches and abandoned and/or underutilized buildings, vacant and overgrown lots that attract crime, and Brownfields sites. Congested triple decker worker housing was constructed on plots less than 6,000 square feet, reflective of the dense, low-income multifamily rental housing that still exists. Residents and workers are not fully utilizing public transit connected to the Union Station bus and commuter rail hub in the eastern part of the target area¹. The 4-lane McGrath Boulevard, Interstate Route 290, and a CSX railway hug the eastern edge of the target area, contributing to elevated emissions. The target area is a state-designated Burdened Area², reflected by poverty, elevated contaminant exposure and disease rates, and high unemployment. The blight of vacant and underutilized Brownfields sites is depressing residential real estate values, causing low-income residents to be “trapped” in their rents, mortgages and undervalued properties. Reinvestment efforts in the target area are impeded by Brownfields contamination. Worcester is a state-designated “Gateway City”, which historically offered good jobs and a “gateway” to the American Dream, but now suffers from the loss of manufacturing jobs over several decades. The target area is threatened by the Brownfields sites, 24 EPA-listed facilities³ and over 20 MassDEP-regulated environmental releases⁴. Assessment and cleanup of the target area aligns with the City of Worcester’s (City) objectives to mitigate contaminant threats to our threatened populations, create jobs and affordable housing, connect residents to resources, and propel Brownfields sites toward developer investment.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites: The Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA) has prioritized the following multi-acre sites which are primed for developer acquisition and reinvestment. Historic maps⁵, recent Phase I ESAs, and the state waste site cleanup database⁶ were referenced to evaluate former usage and suspect/known contamination. The former **Denholm & McKay Company** property comprises 1.2 acres at 484-500 Main St., featuring a vacant five-story building totaling 224,000 square feet. The site is situated directly across from City Hall. Constructed circa 1900, the building was occupied by a renowned department store until 1973 and subsequently divided into office condominium units and occupied until 2023. The WRA purchased the property in 2022. From the late 1800’s to the early 1900s, the site was occupied by several commercial occupants, including drycleaning facilities and tin and paint shops. In the early to mid-1900s, the site was occupied by a shoe and boot factory, steam laundry and residences. Although limited abatement was conducted, there is known asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-

¹ Only 2.72% of the population are using public transit for commute to work. Massachusetts Community Health Assessment. Massachusetts Health Data Tool. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health

² MassEnviroScreen, State of Massachusetts

³ EPA Envirofacts List of EPA Regulated Facilities

⁴ Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup Waste Sites and Reportable Releases

⁵ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

⁶ Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Waste Site and Reportable Releases database

based paint (LBP) and PCBs in building materials. There is a suspect 10,000-gallon fuel oil underground storage tank (UST), associated with a release of No. 4 fuel oil reported to MassDEP in 2011⁷, along with several above-ground storage tanks (ASTs) and “gas tank”. Based on historic use, there is the potential of impacts associated with petroleum, chlorinated solvents, PAHs in fill materials and metals. The WRA-owned 1.1-acre **Chatham St. parking lot** is located a block from Main St. at the intersection of Chatham St., Irving St., and Houchin Ave. and was occupied by residences from the late 1800s to the 1950s. Based on historic practices, there is a potential that the former structures were buried in place during demolition with potential hazardous building materials and PAHs. The former **RMV property** at 611 Main St. spans 3 acres and includes a 13,000 SF single-story building, built in 1990 for state offices and parking. From at least the mid-1900s, the site was occupied by commercial operations, including a gas station and laundry, with suspect impacts from chlorinated solvents and petroleum releases.

c. Identifying Additional Sites. The WRA has a list of additional sites in the target area that are primed for redevelopment and will work with the City’s Assessor on identifying tax delinquent properties and property transfers. We will prioritize grant funds for sites with the greatest near-term community benefit in the target area. The WRA will also accept candidate site nominations from existing/prospective property owners. Sites that have a potential purchaser or developer with redevelopment plans that align with community goals will be prioritized for funding. Our project partners will provide input on eligible sites that may be candidates for reuse, along with input from the community. We will interface with MassDEP on identifying sites, along with interested developers and stakeholders on developable sites. As our planning initiatives evolve over the 5-year grant cycle, we will continue to work closely with our partners on new development/reuse opportunities and track the occupation and use of underperforming properties.

Revitalization of the Target Area: d. Overall Plan for Revitalization. The WRA’s **Downtown Worcester Urban Revitalization Plan (URP)** and City’s **Theatre District Master Plan, Housing Production Plan** and **Worcester Now | Next Citywide Plan** aim to create an active mixed-use 18-hour Downtown neighborhood. Goals include: (1) Encourage private sector investment and utilize public funds judiciously and strategically as a catalyst for private investment; (2) Redevelop former industrial properties to increase the number and diversity of well-paying jobs in the city; (3) Expand housing opportunities-Support the construction and rehabilitation of homes to meet the needs of people of all abilities, income levels, and household types; (4) Improve access to modern and efficient public transportation options to make the URA more accessible, with consideration to intermodal transportation networks; (5) Improve infrastructure systems to support modern development needs; and (6) Construct and promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, and materials. Furthermore, the City strives to address food insecurity and access to fresh food.

The Downtown Worcester URP was approved by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in 2016. The URP was initiated by the WRA in cooperation with the City of Worcester and the Worcester City Council. The URP process involved collaboration with stakeholders, including area property owners, residents, city officials and the URP Citizen Advisory Committee. Stakeholders have the mutual interest of revitalizing the downtown area by publicizing arts and tourism destinations, improving the visitor experience, attracting new or expanding existing commercial and industrial users, enhancing residential quality of life, and remediating brownfields to increase developable land area. The Downtown URA has an

⁷ MassDEP assigned Release Tracking Number (RTN) 2-18124 to the release.

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application

Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

irregularly-shaped boundary comprised of approximately 118 parcels and 380 properties within a 118.4-acre area, of which approximately 24.6 acres are public ways, 10.1 acres are railroad ROW, and approximately 93.7 acres are parcels.

With the approval of the Downtown Worcester URP and the identification of the Denholm Building as an underutilized, blighted property through the public participation process, the WRA purchased the Denholm property and Chatham St. parking lot in 2022 with the consent and cooperation of the previous owners who desired to sell the property due to the high estimated costs to maintain and rehabilitate property. The WRA issued an RFP for the sale and development of the property in November of 2022 with a desired end-use of residential and commercial uses, including affordable housing, which was consistent with the Downtown Worcester URP. The WRA designated the Menkiti Group as the Preferred Developer. The Menkiti Group is an award winning, integrated real estate services business that is dedicated to enhancing the fabric of life in America's urban neighborhoods through the strategic development, management, and sale of residential and commercial property. As a 100% minority owned firm that is committed to transforming lives, careers, and communities through real estate, the Menkiti Group grew out of a long-term commitment to the growth of a specific neighborhood in Northeast Washington, DC and has expanded into a rapidly growing multi state enterprise that has been recognized nationally for its growth, innovative business model, and impact on communities. Over the past 20 years, the Menkiti Group has developed more than 600,000 square feet of residential and commercial property and invested over \$300 million in emerging neighborhoods. In 2021, they successfully completed a 24-unit multifamily project known as Chatham Lofts in the Theatre District demonstrating their ongoing commitment to the city. More recently, in the summer of 2023, they delivered new office space for the MassHire Career Center at 554 Main St. In 2024, they delivered Worcester's first Workbar-branded co-working space at 530 Main St. The Menkiti Group is currently renovating the mixed-use building at 204 Main St. in Worcester into 22 units of mixed-income housing and first floor commercial space and is finalizing plans to convert 403 Main St. to 40 mixed-income housing units. Upon the WRA completing the required assessment and remediation of the Denholm Property, the Menkiti Group proposes to purchase and redevelop the Denholm Property into a minimum of 125 units of new market-rate and affordable housing units and 10,000 square feet of first floor retail space. The new construction is required to comply with Worcester's Specialized Stretch Code (SSC) which was adopted on September 26, 2023. This code sets higher energy efficiency standards for new residential and commercial construction and mandates Passive House standards for large multifamily buildings and applies to major renovations. In addition, the Menkiti Group's longer-term plans for the Chatham St. parking lot could include additional mixed-income housing and a potential community garden.

The WRA recently purchased the blighted property at 611 Main St. from the State in December of 2025. The underutilized, one-story building was previously the site of the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The WRA has not issued an RFP for the sale and redevelopment of the property at this time. The RFP will not be issued until public meetings are held to ensure stakeholders, area property owners, residents, and other interested parties have an opportunity to express their desired end-uses for the property and a plan/concept for the site is created.

e. Outcomes and Benefits of Overall Plan for Revitalization. Redevelopment of the URA will return property that is currently underutilized into places of commerce and productivity, increasing employment opportunities for the local and regional workforce. Consistent with the objectives outlined for the URP, economic benefits of the proposed plan focus on the following: Act as a catalyst for private investment; Create temporary employment opportunities during construction, then sustainable and permanent jobs in a wide variety of fields; Provide a wide range of leasable

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application

Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

space options for new and existing local businesses and institutions; Provide amenities and interesting programming which will encourage repeat visits to downtown by area residents and students. Provide opportunities for affordable market-rate housing in the downtown area; Return vacant and underutilized land to the city's tax rolls; and Improve retention of college graduates in the area. Redevelopment within the URA will create temporary employment opportunities during construction and permanent jobs upon completion. Construction activity is expected to create an estimated 1,000 temporary jobs over the course of implementation. An estimated 1,300 new permanent full-time equivalent positions are anticipated, primarily consisting of office workers associated with commercial development. Private reinvestment in underutilized properties in the target area will create jobs and improve health & welfare. An estimated 500 new housing in the target area is anticipated to attract residents that rely on public transportation and will benefit from walkability to assets. We expect renewed investment and increased property values, resulting in local job opportunities and enhancement of the target area. Increased tax revenue will provide expanded municipal services for underserved and burdened residents.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources f. Resources needed for Site Reuse. There are several resources that the WRA and the City have secured and are eligible to receive to propel the Brownfields sites toward reuse and revitalization. The WRA invested **\$3 Million** on the purchase of the Denholm and Chatham St. lot properties. To date, the WRA has secured a \$500,000 grant from the **State's Site Readiness Program** and can apply for additional grant funding annually in future rounds. The City has agreed to provide the WRA with a \$500,000 grant and a \$500,000 loan through its **BCRLF Program**. Finally, the WRA is working with **MassDevelopment** to secure funding through its Brownfields Program. Developer incentives and tools successfully used by the City include: cleanup loans and grants through its **BCRLF Program**, local property tax relief through **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**⁸ under the **Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)** and **Tax Increment Financing (TIE)** under the **Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP)**, grant funding through the City's **Affordable Housing Trust Fund** and **HOME Program**, **Brownfields Tax Credits**, **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits** and **New Market Tax Credits**. Since designated as a **Massachusetts Gateway City**, the WRA has several options to leverage funding to support cleanup and redevelopment of Brownfields sites after assessment. The City is designated as an entitlement community under the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and has allocated more than \$20 million in contracts over the past five years. CDBG funds serve as a supplemental resource for targeted infrastructure, public service, or housing improvements.

Secured	Eligible	Funding Opportunity
X	X	<u>MBTA Catalyst Fund:</u> The City was awarded a FY26 \$1 Million grant for public infrastructure improvements (roadway, streetscape, and water/sewer) to support housing developments in the target area
X	X	<u>EPA Brownfields RLF:</u> The City has agreed to provide the WRA with a \$500,000 grant and a \$500,000 loan
X	X	<u>Affordable Housing Trust Fund:</u> A \$1.25 Million funding round, administered through the city's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF), is backed by Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds and aims to assist qualified developers in building income-restricted rental or homeownership units.

⁸ District Improvement Financing (DIF) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) are economic tools that promote redevelopment by use of public/private partnerships. TIF offers tax breaks to developers, while DIF channels tax dollars into targeted redevelopment districts.

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application
Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

	X	<p>MassDevelopment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Underutilized Properties Program (UPP)⁹</u>: WRA is eligible to apply for up to \$1 Million for capital improvements and predevelopment activities, awarded annually. • <u>Site Readiness Program¹⁰</u>: WRA has secured and is eligible to apply again for a \$500K grant for site preparation and predevelopment activities annually. • <u>Brownfields Program</u>: The WRA is eligible to apply for up to \$2 million for brownfields remediation.
X	X	
	X	
	X	<p>HousingWorks Infrastructure Program (HWIP¹¹): The City is eligible to apply for up to \$500K in pre-development funding and up to \$5 Million in construction funding.</p>
	X	<p>MAPC: The City is eligible for funding from Central Massachusetts Planning Commission (MAPC), including grants and technical assistance</p>
X	X	<p>State Chapter 90 DOT funding: The City is apportioned over \$7 Million in MassDOT FY26 Chapter 90 transportation funding, which can be applied to infrastructure improvements in the target areas.</p>

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure. The target area is connected to public water, along with electric, natural gas, and communications (i.e., cable, high-internet, fiber optics) and contains recently upgraded streets and sidewalks as part of streetscape improvements. New development will implement sustainable stormwater infrastructure to enhance resilience. Enhancements of infrastructure include upgraded walkable connections to existing amenities, including the Union Station and linkage to assets (including health care, higher paying jobs, education).

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need a. The Community’s Need for Funding^{12, 13}: Over the past three years, the WRA has spent almost **\$1.1 million** maintaining the Priority Brownfields Site properties, which has created a financial burden and translates into decreased opportunities. Lost tax revenue for the Brownfields sites in the target area are in the millions, which represents both lost back taxes and lost redevelopment opportunities for over 20 years, due to contamination. The business vacancy rate is close to 15%, exceeding state and federal rates. The target area is located within a state-designated **Burdened Area**, facing cumulative environmental, health and socioeconomic stressors as compared to other block groups in the state. Unemployment in the target area (over 25%) is over 5 times state and federal rates and over 18% experience housing security and instability, higher than state and federal rates. Housing burdened low-income households (29%) are over 88% higher and poverty (28%) is over 91% higher than state rates. Many of our low-income residents in the target area rely on property tax credits and fuel, medical, and meal assistance to meet their

⁹ The state’s 2021 Economic Development Bill authorizes \$40M for the Underutilized Properties Program, to be administered by MassDevelopment, for the purpose of funding “projects that will improve, rehabilitate or redevelop blighted, abandoned, vacant or underutilized properties to achieve the public purposes of eliminating blight, increasing housing production, supporting economic development projects, increasing the number of commercial buildings accessible to persons with disabilities”

¹⁰ The Site Readiness Program, administered by MassDevelopment, aims to increase the state’s inventory of large, well-located, project-ready sites; to accelerate private-sector investment in industrial, commercial, and mixed-use projects; and to support the conversion of abandoned sites and obsolete facilities into clean, actively used, tax-generating properties.

¹¹ The state’s HousingWorks Infrastructure Program (HWIP) is a competitive grant open to municipalities for a variety of infrastructure projects associated with housing development. This grant program awards funds based on the project’s nexus with housing, transportation, infrastructure, and community development needs.

¹² MassEnviroScreen for Block Group 2, Census Tract 7317, Worcester County

¹³ Massachusetts Community Health Assessment. Massachusetts Health Data Tool. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health

basic needs. This cleanup grant is anticipated to spur community reinvestment, resulting in affordable housing and job opportunities.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations. The City is ranked 10th in the state for high-risk communities with children with lead poisoning.¹⁴ Our increased populations with disabilities (14.74%) exceed state and federal rates¹⁵. An increased proportion of sensitive populations face **heightened health risks** associated with contaminant exposure. Environmental exposures in the community include the following risks that are **higher** than block groups in the state by the following percentages, posing health threats¹⁶: Particulate matter (PM 2.5) (91%); ozone (62%); nitrogen dioxide (92%); diesel particulate matter (58%); air toxics cancer risk (34.57%) and proximity to heavy traffic (84%). The percentage of adults with poor physical health (15%) and mortality (916.8 per 100,000) exceed state and federal rates. *The revitalization will lead to reinvestment in the target area to address service gaps, reduce contaminant impact and provide links to amenities.*

c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions^{17, 18} There is evidence of heightened levels of disease in the community. The latest state data indicates observed rates of brain and other nervous system, breast, esophagus, liver and intrahepatic bile duct, lung and bronchus, prostate cancers, and melanoma, exceeding expected rates. Diabetes (14.14%), hypertension (39.58%), and obesity (35.78%) prevalence exceed state and federal rates. Impacts to sensitive populations in the target area include the following risks that are higher than block groups in the state by the following percentages: pediatric asthma (69.95%); adult high blood pressure (11.9%); low birthweight infants (96.58%); and premature mortality (98.45%). Known and suspected Brownfields site contaminants may cause or exacerbate health conditions- PCBs are associated with risk of liver and biliary tract cancers¹⁹; asbestos may cause mesothelioma and risk of cancers of the stomach, pharynx and colorectum²⁰; and chlorinated solvents are linked to neurological effects²¹. *Site cleanup is anticipated to mitigate contaminant exposure and threats of disease.*

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations^{22, 23}. The median income²⁴ is \$29,453, much lower than state (\$99,565) and federal (\$67,521) values. Children in poverty (24.12%) exceed state and federal rates. The Area Deprivation Index (ADI) ranks the target area as “most disadvantaged” socioeconomic status and the Social Vulnerability Index exceeds state and national rates. Households lacking computers (5.84%) and populations without a high school diploma (14.33%) surpass city and state rates, and children enrolled in school (95.32%) are lower than state and federal percentages, highlighting disparities in education and employment access. Just 62% of residents have private insurance, a rate lower than state and national averages, creating financial strain. The mental health care provider rate is below state and federal rates. These issues contribute to poor health outcomes, increased by lack of insurance or insurance with unaffordable deductibles, and transportation gaps to health and social care. Our population experience homelessness over three times state and deferral rates. In addition, housing

¹⁴ 2022 Annual Childhood Lead Poisoning Surveillance Report. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health

¹⁵ Massachusetts Community Health Assessment. Massachusetts Health Data Tool. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health

¹⁶ MassEnviroScreen Report for Block Group 3 Census Tract 1705.2 Suffolk County, Massachusetts

¹⁷ Massachusetts Cancer Registry Cancer & Incidence City & Town Report for City of Worcester 2016-2020 data.

¹⁸ MassEnviroScreen for Block Group 2, Census Tract 7317, Worcester County, Massachusetts

¹⁹ Agency for Toxics Substances and Disease Registry. Adverse Health Effects of PCB Exposure.

²⁰ Asbestos Exposure and Cancer Risk. National Cancer Institute

²¹ Solvent Neurotoxicity. Occupational & Environmental Medicine

²² Massachusetts Community Health Assessment. Massachusetts Health Data Tool. Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health

²³ MassEnviroScreen for Block Group 2, Census Tract 7317, Worcester County

²⁴ 2020 Census data for Census Tract 7317, Worcester, County, Massachusetts

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application

Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

with incomplete kitchen facilities exceeds state and federal rates, reducing access to fresh food. Many underserved residents live in older rental units with lead paint and pipes, where landlords often delay maintenance. Increased tax revenue will result in improved municipal services to support the community. The cleanup will mitigate contaminant impacts to sensitive receptors and is anticipated to improve health and social outcomes and landlords will be expected to “keep up” with area-wide improvements. Cleanup will spur renewed developer interest in the target area, resulting in new housing and job opportunities and connection to educational and health assets.

Community Engagement. e. Prior/Ongoing Community Involvement: As part of the completion and approval of the Downtown URP, the WRA incorporated input received from public outreach efforts undertaken during the planning process, as well as the recommendations that were developed for other area plans which incorporated extensive public outreach (e.g., the Theatre District Master Plan). The main components of the WRA’s overall approach to citizen participation throughout the URP process included the Downtown URP Citizen Advisory Committee, public forums, public hearings, online availability of the draft Downtown URP, and media outreach (e.g. recording the forums for broadcast on local government access channel television, newspaper). The Downtown URP Citizen Advisory Committee was comprised of a dedicated group of stakeholders that included local residents, business owners, property owners, and municipal officials committed to the development and implementation of the URP.

f. Project Involvement and g. Project Roles: Working with our municipal partners, including the City’s Planning and Regulatory Services and Special Projects Division, and local organizations, we will foster community engagement and integrate reuse plans with our project partners. The following is a list of project partners, project involvement and project role. These partners have been selected based on their ongoing commitment to the target area and their missions are well-aligned with the goals of the EPA’s Brownfields Program and our revitalization strategy.

Regional Environmental Council supports a network of community and school gardens across the City and will support the WRA in community garden development. Steve Fischer, Executive Director, steve@recworchester.org, (508) 799-9139.

Downtown Worcester Business Improvement District is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization representing the owners of more than 100 properties in the target area. BID will provide support on stakeholder outreach and commercial reuse of mixed-use development. Katelyn O'Brien, Executive Director, katelyn@downtownworchester.org, (508) 622-3050.

Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce is the lead regional organization for economic development and will provide the WRA with support on the Downtown revitalization. Timothy Murray, President, tmurray@worchesterchamber.org, (508) 753-2924.

Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) is our regional planning agency and will provide support on planning, outreach, and funding. Lizzi Janet Pierce, Executive Director, lpierce@cmrpc.org, (508) 459-3319.

Main South Business Association (MSBA) is a collaborative effort of local businesses in the Main South commercial corridor. Its mission is to promote economic development and enhance the quality of life of the neighborhood by fostering strong relationships among businesses, community members, and organizations. MSBA will provide links to stakeholders in the target area and support community outreach. Katia Norford, President, mainsouthba@gmail.com, (508) 304-4932.

Crown Hill Neighborhood Association represents the historic neighborhood in the Downtown and will provide support on historic site background preservation and community outreach and engagement. Kristine Johnson, President, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

MassDevelopment, the state's finance and development agency, offers financing and real estate solutions to support companies and nonprofits and will provide support on Brownfields funding, developer financing, tax credits and assistance on developer RFPs. David Bancroft, Senior VP Community Investment, Dbancroft@Massdevelopment.com, (857) 319-0528.

h. Incorporating Community Input: We will build on our successful recent public outreach and engagement, including the Downtown URP and Worcester Now | Next from 2022-2024, which included a City-wide online Visioning Survey, Public Visioning Workshops, Visioning Listening Tour, Priority Goals Questionnaire and Public Draft Plans Workshops and Exhibit. A Public Involvement Plan will be prepared for EPA review. We will partner with the City to hold community meetings to discuss various reuse scenarios with members of the public by implementing an ongoing collaborative process with residents and other stakeholders throughout the community. We will continue to utilize electronic measures and social media to foster two-way communication and record videoconferences. We will harness the reach of Project partners as "boots on the ground" and to utilize their resources (i.e., website, social media, staff) to broaden our reach and expand reuse visions. WRA will develop and distribute multilingual brochures (both printed and electronic). To motivate residents and stakeholders in the target area, we will demonstrate that their input is being incorporated into the project and showcase feedback through the use of posters and public meetings, which will be posted throughout the neighborhood, including City Hall, library, and local businesses and meeting spaces. We will provide periodic summaries of site and target area progress, which will be shared on WRA, City and community organization websites and other forms of social media, and strive to be transparent in discussing proposed redevelopment scenarios to ensure that the public is continually engaged. We will conduct meetings at area organizations that are accessible and "less intimidating" than City Hall and provide translators. Finally, we will seek support from UCONN TAB²⁵ for stakeholder workshops and charrettes, to engage the public on the revitalization design.

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

a. Proposed Cleanup Plan

Cleanup will be conducted in accordance with the MassDEP Asbestos Regulation under the management of WRA's selected Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and performed by licensed contractors. Cleanup plans will be discussed and integrated in the Community Involvement Plan (CIP) and presented at Public Meetings). The cleanup plan will incorporate EPA Principles for Greener Cleanups and the WRA will also require contractors to employ operational practices, such as engine idle reduction practices and recycling. We will strive to utilize local receiving facilities for remedial waste. State and EPA Cleanup Reporting: A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPPA) will be prepared for EPA review. The Draft Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) will undergo a 30-day public review period and be reviewed by EPA and finalized. Public bid specifications will be prepared by the QEP and will include technical specifications and drawings that will address local and state requirements, measurement and payment, contractor scheduling requirements, health and safety requirements and Davis-Bacon wage requirements. Permits and Health & Safety: All local, state and federal permits will be obtained prior to the implementation of cleanup activities. A Health & Safety Plan will be prepared, prior to the implementation of cleanup activities, and all Site personnel will be properly licensed and/or certified to perform and oversee cleanup activities, including OSHA HAZWOPER certifications. Abatement of hazardous building materials: The WRA's selected Contractor will prepare Asbestos and Demolition Notifications to MassDEP. The Contractor will install fencing and stormwater controls. The QEP's project monitor will perform daily visual inspections during

²⁵ The University of Connecticut provides Technical Assistance for Brownfields Communities Program for EPA Region 1

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application

Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

the work as well as perimeter work air sampling for total fibers with on-site phase contrast microscopy (PCM) analysis in accordance with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Method. Upon successful completion of bulk loading and final cleaning by the Cleanup Contractor, the QEP's asbestos project monitor will perform a post abatement/decontamination final visual inspection to ensure no visible debris remains in the work area. Bulk ACM building debris will be transferred to a licensed receiving facility under a hazardous waste manifest.

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs. Implementation of the EPA grant and Project cleanup will be a collaborative effort between the WRA, project partners, the QEP, and Cleanup contractor. The work is divided into four tasks, each with defined activities, deliverables, and roles. WRA and City support staff will allocate personnel costs from their own budgets.

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight

- | |
|--|
| a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> The WRA will partner with the business community, local organizations, community stakeholders, MassDEP and EPA Brownfields staff. We will prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) and review responses to the RFP, conduct interviews and select a Cleanup contractor. We will also perform program management and communication with regulatory personnel, community officials and the public. EPA ACRES reporting will be conducted throughout the duration of the project. |
| b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Progress reports will be submitted on or before January 30th, April 30th, July 30th, October 30th of each year. Annual DBE reports will be submitted on or before October 30th of each year. Site information will be entered into ACRES and updated upon completion of milestones related to remediation and site redevelopment. The partners will initially meet monthly and then quarterly to execute the priorities and direction of the Brownfields Program. |
| c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> The WRA Chief Executive Officer will serve as the Lead, with support from the Assistant Chief Development Officer, partners, and QEP. |
| d. <u>Outputs:</u> Quarterly progress reports, financial reports, final closeout report, ACRES updates (as needed); and Davis Bacon reporting. Contract with QEP and Cleanup Contractor. |

Task 2: Community Engagement

- | |
|---|
| a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> We will hold a series of quarterly public meetings to engage local stakeholders about the cleanup and proposed redevelopment. We will prepare public outreach materials and conduct extensive outreach and communication with residents and stakeholders prior to undertaking the cleanup/abatement efforts, during remediation, and following the successful completion of remediation. A Community Involvement Plan will be prepared. |
| b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Ongoing before, after, and during the project. |
| c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> The WRA Chief Executive Officer will serve as the Lead, with support from the Assistant Chief Development Officer, partners, and QEP. including the use of translators. |
| d. <u>Outputs:</u> Project schedules and milestones for activities from cleanup and reuse planning. Meetings, presentations, and materials, including multilingual documents, posters, flyers. |

Task 3: Assessment

- | |
|---|
| a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> Phase I ESAs will be conducted for each eligible site in accordance with the ASTM 1527-21 Standard, which will include a summary of "recognized environmental conditions" (RECs) and recommendations for Phase II ESAs. P1 ESA reports will include a summary of "recognized environmental conditions" (RECs), and recommended Phase II ESA (P2ESA) activities. P2ESAs will include media sampling, lab analysis, and risk assessments. |
|---|

Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

- b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Phase I ESAs in Quarters²⁶ 2-9 and Phase II ESAs in Quarters 3-14. Cleanup planning will be conducted in Quarters 6, 8 and 15.
- c. Task/Activity Lead: The QEP/LSP²⁷ (lead) in coordination with WRA staff.
- d. Outputs: Site Eligibility Forms; Access agreements, permits, P1 ESA and P2 ESA reports;

Task 4: Cleanup

- a. Project Implementation: WRA will issue an RFPs for a QEP and a Cleanup Contractor. WRA's selected QEP will perform oversight of the Contractor.
- b. Anticipated Project Schedule: The QAPP and Draft ABCA will be prepared in Year 1-Quarters 1-2 and submitted to EPA for review/approval. A Draft ABCA public meeting will be scheduled in Year 1 for a 30-day public review. Asbestos Abatement Closeout report will be prepared in Year 4.
- c. Task/Activity Lead(s): The WRA Chief Executive Officer and Assistant Chief Development Officer will oversee the QEP on reporting and regulatory interpretation.
- d. Outputs: Draft and Final ABCA, bid specifications, permits, Asbestos Cleanup Closeout Report.

e. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories	Project Tasks					
	Task 1 Coop. Agreement Oversight	Task 2 Community Engagement	Task 3 Assessments	Task 4 Cleanup	Admin Costs	Total
Personnel						\$0
Fringe Benefits						\$0
Travel						\$0
Equipment						\$0
Supplies						\$0
Contractual	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$282,000	\$127,000		\$427,000
Construction				\$573,000		\$573,000
Other						\$0
Total Federal Funding	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$282,000	\$700,000	\$0	\$1,000,000

Task 1 Budget: QEP \$200/hr. x 45 hrs. = \$9,000. **Task 2 Budget:** QEP \$200/hr. x 45 hrs. = \$9,000

Task 3 Budget: Denholm Phase II ESA @ \$95,000; Chatham St. Parking Lot: Phase I ESA @ \$8,000 and Phase II ESA @ \$65,000. 611 Main St.: Phase I ESA @ \$7,500 and Phase II ESA @ \$44,500. Three Phase I ESAs (additional sites): \$7,500/each. One Phase II ESA (additional site): \$32,500. Phase II ESAs will include drilling and soil sampling, groundwater monitoring, lab analysis and geophysical surveys.

²⁶ Quarters are 3-month periods, with 16 quarters in the 4-year grant cycle.

²⁷ In 1993, Massachusetts created a model program that privatized the cleanup of hazardous waste sites in the Commonwealth. Licensed Site Professionals (LSPs) are authorized by the Commonwealth to work on behalf of property owners, operators, and other responsible parties to oversee the assessment and cleanup of contamination that has been released into the environment. LSPs are scientists, engineers, and public health specialists with significant professional expertise in oil and hazardous material contamination. LSPs are governed by the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Professionals, also known as the LSP Board.

Task 4 Budget:

QEP Specs/Bidding Assistance: \$200/hr. x 150 hrs.= \$30,000; QEP Reports: \$14,000
QEP Construction Administration: \$200/hr. x 100 hrs.= \$20,000
QEP Abatement Monitoring: \$2,000/day x 30 days = \$60,000; Abatement Closeout Report: \$3,000
Contractor: Permit & Expenses \$6,500
Contractor Mobilization/Demobilization= \$20,000 plus 10% contingency (\$2,000)= \$22,000
Contractor: Construction Fence and Erosion Control: \$11,000
Contractor Boiler Abatement: \$60,000 plus 10% contingency (\$6,000)= \$66,000
Contractor Walls/Flooring Abatement: 15,000 SF x \$20/ft= \$300,000 plus 10% contingency (\$30,000)= \$330,000
Contractor Piping Abatement: 2,500 LF x \$50/ft= \$125,000 plus 10% contingency (\$12,500)= \$137,500

f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: Our anticipated outputs from the Brownfields Program are technical and quantitative reports that will provide WRA with the next steps to move the sites forward. We will measure the success of public engagement by requesting our community partners to help us measure the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of community engagement. The Sites will be brought into state compliance and attract developer interest for redevelopment. We will measure project outcomes beyond the completion of the Brownfields program by increases in tax revenue, number of affordable and market-rate housing units and jobs created, number of acres/square feet remediated/redeveloped, number of acres of greenspace created, kilowatt hours of renewable energy produced, miles of infrastructure upgraded, percent reduction in health issues, and increase in transit usage. Additional anticipated outcomes include increase in recreation and health benefits, decrease in crime, increase in public participation, and increase in walkability and connections to amenities. The WRA will comprehensively assess costs and potential outcomes, including improved health statistics, of this Cleanup Plan. Measurable indicators, such as outreach efforts from the Community Involvement Plan and exploration of future adaptive reuse possibilities, will be used to monitor and evaluate progress toward outcomes at the proposed sites.

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability. a. Organizational Capacity, b. Organizational Structure, and c. Description of Key Staff:

The WRA staff have the necessary experience and technical ability to carry out the administration and oversight activities required of the Brownfields Multipurpose Program. Key Staff members that will implement and monitor this Program have over 35 years of combined experience with brownfields assessment, remediation, and redevelopment through their roles administering the City of Worcester’s successful BCRLF Program and include Chief Executive Officer Peter Dunn and Assistance Chief Development Officer Paul D. Morano. Please note that in addition to staffing the WRA, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Morano also staff the City of Worcester’s Executive Office of Economic Development. The staff members have experience working with a wide range of federal funding sources including EPA, HUD, FTA, and EDA. The WRA’s staff members consistently attend events and seminars sponsored by the EPA, which has helped the staff develop strong expertise with the use and management of grant funds. In addition, the WRA’s staff has forged a productive relationship with its EPA Region 1 Project Officer and understands the important role of the Project Officer during the grant period. The Chief Executive Officer and Assistant Chief Development Officer have experience with the day-to-day management of grants and work with

the WRA's Chief Legal Officer on contract documents to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws. In addition, the aforementioned staff and the WRA's Budget Office have decades of experience with grant monitoring/auditing, processing payment requisitions, and best practices with respect to accounting methods. All of the services rendered through the WRA's staff associated with this grant are provided in-kind to maximize the dollars spent on the Brownfields Multipurpose Program objectives. Also, the WRA staff will be responsible for implementing the marketing strategy; engaging the community; preparing EPA performance reports, including ACRES; and reviewing and processing project invoices. In addition to the extensive technical expertise of the staff, they also have years of experience working with the City's Purchasing Director to competitively procure and oversee QEPs, who provide additional expertise.

Acquiring Additional Resources: The WRA has established systems to acquire additional expertise and resources, including QEPs through competitive procurement overseen by the City's Purchasing Director. Leveraging in-kind services from the Law Department and Budget Office maximizes the funds allocated to the Brownfields Multi-Purpose Program objectives. Furthermore, the WRA actively promotes strong labor practices, local hiring, and procurement, linking community members to employment opportunities related to brownfield assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment projects. In addition, the WRA will seek support from state and federal agencies, and the private sector to support our Brownfields program, along with support from MassDEP. We will seek support from UCONN TAB²⁸ for stakeholder workshops. Finally, City Fire, Police, and Health Departments will provide safety, security, and health support to address the Cleanup and reuse and Dept. of Public Works and Engineers will address infrastructure needs.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements: (1) Purpose and Accomplishments: The WRA has a strong track record of successfully managing approximately \$50 million of grants from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Federal Transit Administration over the past ten years. The grant funds were awarded to the WRA to operate, maintain, and renovate the historic WRA-owned Union Station – Worcester's intermodal center providing commuter rail to Boston and Amtrak service, as well as intra- and inter-city bus services. While the WRA has not been a previous recipient of EPA grant funding, WRA staff that also staff Worcester's Executive Office of Economic Development have successfully managed more than \$10 million in EPA grant funding awarded to the City, including Revolving Loan Fund Program and Brownfields Assessment Grants. Worcester's past EPA grants have resulted in a diverse portfolio of redevelopment projects that have led to the creation of approximately 450 units of housing, 500,000 square feet of new commercial space, a new minor league baseball stadium, the creation and retention of hundreds of jobs, as well as the generation of more than \$130,000,000 in private investment, showcasing its commitment to brownfields revitalization.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The WRA is in full compliance with all grant requirements, including documentation and reporting requirements, invoicing, financial statements, budgeting and schedule. We adhere to contract requirements, including terms & conditions.

²⁸ The University of Connecticut EPA Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Program

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application
Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

Threshold Criteria

(1) Applicant Eligibility

a. The Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA) is eligible to apply for an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant because it is a government entity established by the City of Worcester and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under former M.G.L. c. 121 section 2600, the predecessor to the present M.G.L. c. 121B section 4 (M.G.L. c. 121 was recodified in 1969 as M.G.L. c. 121B). The WRA has the powers of an “*operating agency*” under section 11 of M.G.L. c. 121B and additional powers as an “*urban renewal agency*” under sections 9 and 45 to 57 of the same chapter. The broad development capabilities of the WRA includes the power to engage in “*urban renewal projects*” and other projects, the power to buy and sell property, the power to acquire property through eminent domain, and the power to designate projects under M.G.L. c. 121A. Attached please find a correspondence from Alexandra H. Kalkounis, Chief Legal Officer for the WRA, that explains the legal status of the WRA. Also attached, please find a Worcester City Council Order from February 25, 1957 consenting to the organization of the WRA.

b. The WRA is a government entity created pursuant to statute and not a 501(c)(4).

(2) Community Involvement

As part of the completion and approval of Worcester’s Downtown Urban Revitalization Plan (URP), the WRA incorporated input received from public outreach efforts undertaken during the planning process, as well as the recommendations that were developed for other area plans which incorporated extensive public outreach (e.g., the Theatre District Master Plan). The main components of the WRA’s overall approach to citizen participation throughout the URP process included the Downtown URP Citizen Advisory Committee, public forums, public hearings, online availability of the draft Downtown URP, and media outreach (e.g. recording the forums for broadcast on local government access channel television, newspaper). The Downtown URP Citizen Advisory Committee was comprised of a dedicated group of stakeholders that included local residents, business owners, property owners, and municipal officials committed to the development and implementation of the URP.

We will build on our successful recent public outreach and engagement, including Worcester Now | Next from 2022-2024, which included a City-wide online Visioning Survey, Public Visioning Workshops, Visioning Listening Tour, Priority Goals Questionnaire and Public Draft Plans Workshops and Exhibit. In addition, public outreach efforts will be undertaken as the WRA plans for the redevelopment of the targeted properties. A Public Involvement Plan will be prepared for EPA review.

(3) Target Area

- The target area is the 118.4-acre Urban Revitalization Area (URA) in Downtown Worcester
- The Census Tract is 25027731700

(4) Affirmation of Brownfield Site Ownership

The WRA affirms that it owns three Brownfields site properties located at 484 – 500 Main Street, the intersection of Chatham and Irving Streets and Houchin Avenue, and 611 Main Street that meet the CERCLA §101(39) definition of a brownfields and are (a) not listed (or proposed for

FY'26 EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant Application
Downtown Urban Revitalization Area (URA) Target Area, Worcester, Massachusetts

listing) on the National Priorities List; (b) not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into parties under CERCLA and (c) not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

(5) Use of Grant Funds

Refer to the following page numbers in the grant narrative:

- Pages 8 - 11: Complete at least one Phase II environmental site assessment
- Pages 8 - 11: Remediate at least one site
- Pages 2 - 3: Overall plans for the revitalization of the target area exist, which include the **Downtown Worcester Urban Revitalization Plan**, supplemented by the **Theatre District Master Plan, Housing Production Plan and Now | Next Worcester's Citywide Plan**.

(6) Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

Not Applicable – The WRA does not have an open Multipurpose Grant or Assessment Grant.

(7) Contractors and Named Subrecipients

- Contractors: Not Applicable
- Named Subrecipients: Not Applicable
- The WRA has not procured a contractor and a subrecipient has not been named.