

THE VILLAGE OF VALLEY FALLS

PO Box 157, 11 Charles Street, Valley Falls, NY 12185

Village of Valley Falls, NY – Community Wide Assessment Narrative Information Sheet

- 1) Applicant Identification:
 - a) Village of Valley Falls, New York, PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY 12185

- 2) Website URL: <https://www.HistoricValleyFalls.com>

- 3) Funding Requested:
 - a) Community-wide Brownfield Assessment
 - b) \$500,000 Federal Funds

- 4) Location: Village of Valley Falls, located partially in the Town of Pittstown, and partially in the Town of Schaghticoke in Rensselaer County NY.

- 5) Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information: Target area is the historic Village of Valley Falls (Census Tract 36083051800), ZIP code 12185.
Priority Site for Community-wide assessment - Old Thompson Mill, Three tax parcels/sites (22.16-3-2.1, 22.16-3-1.2, and 22.16-3-1.1) in Valley Falls, NY 12185 identified as 273 Poplar Street.
Secondary sites are the former Valley Falls Dry Cleaner (11 Lyon Street) and Jim’s Auto facility (Rt. 67). See attached map.

- 6) Contacts
 - a) Project Director
Kristina Younger
518-527-6577
vftompsonmillprojectmanager@ gmail.com
PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY. 12185

 - b) Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:
Mayor Jay Overocker
vvftrusteejpo@gmail.com
518-753-6230
PO Box 157, Valley Falls, NY. 12185

- 7) Population
 - i) Village of Valley Falls – 510 (2020 Census)
 - ii) Town of Pittstown – 5,540
 - iii) Town of Schaghticoke – 7,445

8) Other Factors Checklist:

Other Factor	Page # in Narrative
<i>None of the Other Factors are applicable.</i>	
Community population is 10,000 or less.	1, 4
The priority site is adjacent to a body of water.	1, 2, 3, 6
The priority site is in a federally designated flood plain.	2, 3
The proposed site will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.to protect residents and community investments	3, 8

9) Letter from State Environmental Agency: A December 20, 2025 Acknowledgement letter from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Bureau of Program Management Director Karen Diligent is attached.

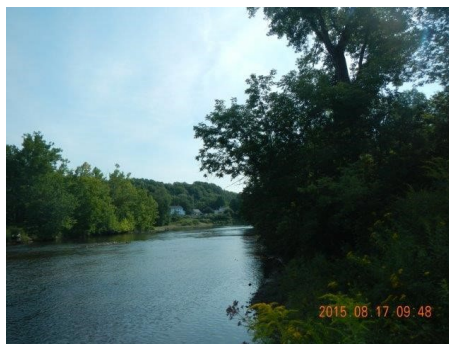
10) Releasing Copies of this Application: No portion of this application is confidential, privileged, or sensitive.

Thank you for this opportunity. Because a picture is worth a thousand words, I hereby submit the essence of our proposal.

We want to get rid of this



to allow public access to this.



Sincerely,

JR Overocker

Mayor Jay Overocker

Attachments:

Map of Target Area and Brownfield Sites (Source: Historic Valley Falls BOA Plan)

NYS Department of Conservation Acknowledgement Letter from Bureau of Program Management Director Karen Diligent dated December 20, 2025.

ATTACHMENT: MAP OF TARGET AREA AND BROWNFIELD SITES

(Source: Historic Valley Falls Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Plan)

Priority site is 10 – Thompson Mill site. Secondary sites are 14 – Auto Body and 5 - former Dry Cleaner

MAP 3.11. Potential Brownfields + Vacant Sites in the Valley Falls BOA





**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

AMANDA LEFTON
Commissioner

December 18, 2025

Kristina Younger
Village of Valley Falls
PO Box 157
Valley Falls, NY 12185

Dear Ms. Younger:

This is to acknowledge that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received a request from the Village of Valley Falls, dated December 3, 2025, for a state acknowledgement letter for a Federal Year 2026 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfields grant.

I understand that the Village of Valley Falls plans to submit a Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment grant application for hazardous substances and petroleum in the amount of \$500,000. Focus of the funding will be to conduct a Phase II Assessment, including building demolition, of tax parcels 22.16-3-1.2 and 22.16-3-1-1. Secondary sites include the former Valley Falls Dry Cleaner and Jim's Auto facility. Funding will also be allocated for associated planning (including reuse and/or remediation planning) and community involvement activities. Please note that the USEPA criteria for an assessment grant specifies that, if selected, the Village of Valley Falls may only expend up to \$200,000 of the grant on a specific site.

DEC encourages initiatives to redevelop brownfields with the goal of mitigating any environmental and health impacts that they might pose.

Sincerely,

Karen Diligent
Director, Bureau of Program Management

ec: N. Azzam, USEPA Region 2
S. Mitchell, USEPA Region 2
R. Mustico, DEC Albany
J. Haugh, DEC Region 4

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

1. Target Area and Brownfields

a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Valley Falls, New York, a historic village on the National Register, is a modest rural community of 185 households and a **total population of 510 residents** (Census tract 36083051800). **The Village of Valley Falls, the Target Area, is only 0.5 square miles** and lies on the boundary of the towns of Pittstown and Schaghticoke and is divided by the Hoosic River. The Target Area is generally bound by Route 67 and Bunker Hill Rd to the north, Riverview Drive to the east, Coons Road to the south and Powder Mill Rd to the west. The Village was founded at the turn of the 20th century due to its prominent location on the river. By 1863, the Village was a mini-industrial center with rail line access, the availability of water and waterpower for several mills, general stores, hotels, foundries, cartwright, farrier, and blacksmith shops. Unfortunately, today the Village is a shadow of its former self - a bedroom community with a very small residential tax base. There are no retail establishments, healthcare services, grocery stores or other amenities remaining in the Village, causing residents to travel to meet their basic needs. The closest senior center and grocery store is in Hoosick Falls, 16 miles away. There is no public transportation in the Village. Village life centers on the Free Library, churches, and the Community Hall. Broadband access is also lacking. The housing stock is dominated by houses dating back to or before the turn of the century.

The Thompson Mill represented the soul of the Village of Valley Falls. For over 100 years, this important mill defined the town – employing most of its residents with a workforce of 110 in its heyday. When the James Thompson & Company moved its textile operation to Mexico in 1992, the old mill sat derelict for 25 years, and then in 2009, it went up in arson-created flames. The Village similarly declined. However, the mill’s prominent location is on a remarkably scenic bend of the Hoosic River, is the gateway to the Village, where Native American artifacts and Revolutionary War history abound, and it provides hope for a different future – **one that can be an example of a great American comeback!**

In the late 1800’s, when the mill complex was developed, nearby properties were developed for commercial uses that are long gone. The area is struggling with the many effects associated with abandoned and underutilized brownfields, including former dry cleaners, automotive repair facilities and other former commercial and industrial uses that left a wide array of environmental contaminants. As a result, the Thompson Mill, located in the heart of the Target Area, is a visual reminder of the blight and other environmental challenges faced by this small rural community following years of decline, resulting in little to no redevelopment, decreased property values, safety issues, diminished investment, and exposure to contaminants. These Brownfields are known to be contaminated by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), heavy metals (chromium, lead, mercury, and others), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), as well as hazardous building materials (HBM) including asbestos, lead-based paint (LBP) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The Hoosic River, a productive fishery, is impacted upstream with PFAS and PCBs contamination. In February 2024, a freight train derailed in the Village, dumping three hopper cars of polypropylene pellets into the river, many of which washed up on the Thompson Mill property. Sensitive populations living in the Target Area include families with children and women of childbearing age, low-income and minority residents, veterans, and seniors (see 2.a.11.1) and this grant is critical to help reverse some of the environmental, economic, and health and welfare challenges the Village has faced for decades.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites: **The Village has identified three (3) of the four (4) parcels that comprise the 23-acre Thompson Mill complex, located at 273 Poplar Street, as well as an adjacent land-locked privately owned parcel potentially impacted by the former mill as its top Priority Sites (labelled as site 10 in Attachment 1).** This mill complex is developed on the north end with one remaining approximately 13,000 sq. ft., three-story brick former mill building, that was structurally damaged by the historic fire and continues to deteriorate. A number of former mill building foundations are visible along with rubble from their collapsed or demolished structures. The complex is adjacent to both youth recreational fields and residences, separated by a rail line. Located in the center of the Target Area and **along the banks of the Hoosic River, the Thompson Mill Site is in the federal floodplain.** Former mill activities included fabric dyeing and

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

other manufacturing and milling operations. In addition, portions of the site have been used for illegal solid waste dumping. Known contamination identified during limited investigation activities include heavy metals (chromium, lead, mercury, and others), PAHs SVOCs, PCBs, LBP and asbestos in building materials. Impacted building debris is in soils around the former mill facility and the adjacent privately owned parcel, due to building collapses after the fire in 2009 have exacerbated the extent and comingling of contaminants and significantly damaged the buildings, which are now a magnet for vandalism and crime, and a significant safety hazard. A structural analysis has deemed the building unsafe to access. Investigational activities around the building can't be safely performed within the 'fall zone' of the building or the building footprint. **Future investigations closer to the building and/or below the foundation, where potential impacts are expected, will require the structure to be demolished prior to investigation activities being performed.** Since petroleum storage and heating sources were co-located with other mill operations, and because of the fire, there may be residual petroleum compounds comingled with hazardous substances at this site. The Village wants to reclaim its riverfront and reuse this property to build a passive recreational green space that will provide river access to the public and includes walking trails, fishing/boat access, and historical displays of the significance of the mill in the Village's history. Evaluation of the sites in this application is critical to implementing this revitalization plan.

A short distance from the mill is the former **Valley Falls Dry Cleaner (11 Lyon Street) and Jim's Auto facility (Rt. 67), secondary Priority Sites** to the Village. A VOC-impacted groundwater plume, including tetrachloroethylene (PCE), associated with the former dry cleaner has impacted local drinking water. In addition, the unknown environmental conditions associated with the petroleum Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) formerly used at the Auto Facility are also a concern to the Target Area residents. Additional investigation activities are needed to evaluate the potential impacts to human health and the environment from these sites. It is a priority to Village residents that these brownfields properties be assessed, remediated if necessary, and brought back to beneficial reuse as small commercial business (including but not limited to restaurant or coffee shop / small grocery store / etc.) that serves the local Target Area, as residents currently need to drive several miles to the next town for such basic amenities and services.

The negative impacts associated with these Priority Brownfields Sites are significant. The mill's peak production years were prior to the advent of environmental regulation and were in fact a reason that the former owner of the mill cited when it abandoned operations in Valley Falls and moved manufacturing to Mexico and other locations in 1992. In addition, the Hoosic River is a food source for area residents, which hosts bass and other sensitive fish and wildlife species in which the types of contaminants released from these sites have the potential to bioaccumulate. There are also several areas at the mill complex where there are known archeological artifacts, and the potential exists for significant artifacts to be uncovered in other areas of the Site where paleosol soils were identified. If the Thompson Mill site remains unremediated, future flood events will further spread the known contaminants from the Site downstream. The Valley Falls Census tract is in the 75th percentile (compared to NYS) for RMP facilities, despite being rural. This could indicate that the area is exposed to additional, non-regulated contaminants based on the density of facilities and that the health of residents is burdened by documented exposure to PFAS compounds, a group of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that have been linked to certain cancers and thyroid dysfunction.

c. Identifying Additional Sites - The Village was designated as a NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) in October 2024. The BOA program provides resources to NY communities to develop area-wide plans to address brownfields. As part of that project, a formal inventory of potential brownfields sites in the Village was completed and prioritized for future assessment and cleanup/reuse planning activities. Of the 16 sites on the brownfield inventory, 13 were identified as "strategic" brownfields based on steering committee input as well as the following criteria: 1) presence of known and/or suspected contamination on site, due to either current or past uses; 2) abandoned, vacant or underutilized status; 3) alignment with community vision and goals; 4) access and relationship to the Village Center and waterfront areas; and/or, 5) opportunities for enhancing the Village's historic character, increasing walkability, and diversifying its economy. The criteria that the Village uses to identify its Priority Sites include but are not limited to current regulatory status and history of the property; known or perceived environmental conditions; threats to human health, the environment, and underserved communities and sensitive populations; potential property end-uses and benefits to underserved / sensitive

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

communities; community concerns and input; site access and ownership; and development interest and/or potential. *Therefore, if grant funds remain after addressing the target area(s)/priority site(s), the Village will use the same criteria used to select the initial priority sites to select additional sites for the program.*

Revitalization of the Target Area

d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The Village's vision, embodied in the 2020 preliminary Waterfront Park designs for passive recreational green space, can only be realized if the hulking skeleton of the burned-out old mill occupying the southern bank of the river, and its impact to the environment, are cleaned up. It is a safety hazard (structurally and due to accessible HBM) and an eyesore as you enter the Target Area. Village Board discussions and community forums on alternate uses of the mill site and revitalization of the Target Area have led to the successful Historic District designation of the Village and its recent designation as a BOA by the State of New York. However additional assessment and cleanup planning is needed before the Village can seek cleanup and redevelopment funds from other sources. With community involvement already initiated and expected at every step in this tight-knit community, success is guaranteed.

The 2024 Historic Valley Falls BOA Plan provides a robust framework for revitalizing the Target Area. Bringing the mill complex and other brownfields sites back to beneficial reuse is a key component. The Village's BOA planning process generated a brownfields revitalization and redevelopment plan to enhance local public-private engagement, stimulate an improved quality of life, and spur investment and economic activity in the Target Area. The proposed riverfront park and redevelopment of vacant brownfields properties will dramatically transform the Target Area in alignment with the community's goals of 1) historic character preservation; 2) celebration of natural beauty by expanding recreational resources; 3) support a lively, multi-generational economy; 4) upgrade the Village's infrastructure; and 5) encourage economic development. Removal of blight is integral to addressing the environmental, health and safety concerns associated with these sites, as well as the introduction of a recreational greenspace that will attract visitors from the region, preserve and enhance river ecology, increase extreme weather resilience, bring much needed commercial business to the Target Area residents and create a destination for local tourism. **The 2024 Historic Valley Falls BOA Plan proposes a comprehensive approach to revitalizing strategic sites (including the waterfront park), new buildings, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, areas for public parking, new trailheads, and walking loops. Cleanup of the Mill site is the cornerstone to this plan.**

i. e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: With a 23-acre waterfront park as an anchor and gateway, the historic Village of Valley Falls will retain a stable population and improve housing values and extend the walkability of the Target Area. It will attract visitors that stimulate the establishment of park-related businesses, such as kayak rental, coffee shops, restaurants, and private investment in the historic village, bringing in jobs. Redevelopment of underutilized properties will generate local tax revenue and expanded tax base, create job opportunities, stimulate community pride, and spur economic activity and growth in this small Village. When paired with the 2018 National Historic Register and the 2024 NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) designation, the Village will be able to more fully articulate and quantify the economic benefits of this renewal. The creation of local jobs and services is an exciting benefit that assessment and cleanup of the priority sites will allow. **This project supports Pillar 1 – Clean Air, Land and water for Every American and can provide a real Comeback story!**

The Assessment Grant will spur private investment by removing unknown liability issues for developers. Cleaning up the eyesore at the entrance to the Village will also increase community attractiveness to additional residential and commercial development. The community will also benefit from the decrease in crime (vandalism and trespassing), increased opportunities for recreational activity and a healthier lifestyle and access to the waterfront. As a flood prone site and federally designated floodplain, the future park will be designed for extreme weather resilience.

The location of the mill site adjacent to the Hoosic River, within the 100-year floodplain, is of concern in times of high water, such as extreme weather events. If the site remains unmediated, the contaminants could be spread downstream to other communities if/when the site floods. With the increase in the number and severity of major storm events, the removal of this risk is a significant benefit. The removal of hazardous building materials and

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

contaminants from the site will provide greater flood storage and improve health conditions and allow the site to be opened to the public and provide access to the waterfront. New river access will increase awareness and care of natural resources. Reuse as green space will provide environmental benefits in terms of flood resiliency, increased wildlife habitat, and improved water quality. Return of the site to vegetation will bolster environmental resiliency by providing a flood area buffer zone to the Village that currently does not exist. Use of the site for renewable energy projects is not applicable due to its propensity to flood.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Once assessment and cleanup planning is complete, the Village will seek funding sources at the state and regional level to support clean-up efforts and park redevelopment. These include **US EPA Cleanup Grants** and the **NYS Brownfields Program** for remedial activities and the **NYS Environmental Protection Fund**, the **Hudson River Foundation Hudson River Improvement Fund**, the **CDBG Vacant Property Clearance Program**, the **Hudson River Greenway**, the **At-Grade Railroad Crossing Improvement Fund**, and the **Restoration Fund administered by the Hudson River Natural Resource Trustees** for redevelopment. The mill's location on a major tributary to the Hudson River opens additional potential fund sources. **The Village has a pending application for an additional \$175K in NY State BOA funding** for the development of land use regulations, and a traffic study. Designation on the National Historic Register and BOA are all part of the strategy to bring the necessary resources for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment to the table. A BOA designation also qualifies these sites for a tax credit 'bump up' in NY's Brownfields Cleanup Program, incentivizing development. In addition, the Village could seek **EPA TBA** services if supplemental assessment activities are needed.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The Village will be able to use existing municipal infrastructure readily available at the Priority Sites as well as at the streetscape in the greater Village area, such as water, sewer, gas, and electricity to support proposed redevelopment and reuse activities in the Target Area. Existing infrastructure in the area has the capacity to handle this expansion, as well as any additional future growth. The proposed redevelopment of the Mill Site does not currently include buildings or other facilities requiring electricity, water, heat, or sewer, as only passive recreation is envisioned, but includes sustainable and green design components. However, the existing at-grade railroad crossing on the private road leading to the site will require safety upgrades to accommodate public use. There is a dedicated **NYS transportation funding** resource for this purpose that the Village will apply for at the appropriate time. In addition, the Village will seek **USDA ReConnect Loan and Grant Program, the NY "connectALL" fund** or other infrastructure sources to provide broadband service, as the lack of broadband is a large economic drag to redevelopment / revitalization.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

a. Community's Need for Funding: Due to its **extremely small, rural population (510)**, the Village does not have the financial resources to complete brownfields assessment and cleanup/reuse planning activities on its own. The \$500,000 assessment grant is approximately three times the entire annual operating budget of the Village (\$168,200). In addition, there is an annual \$104,500 debt service and maintenance costs for the sewage treatment system and plant built in 2004. This \$2.1 million project was a significant undertaking for a Village this small; but was necessary to address raw sewage flowing into the Hoosic River. The service debt costs are borne by the Target Area users of the system. The existing debt obligations for the sewer add financial strain on a Village with extremely limited revenue. **The Village's population of 510 people**, and lack of industrial/commercial tax base, also limits its ability to leverage the needed capital from its residents. The Bureau of Economic Analysis data on Personal Income shows income in Rensselaer County, which includes the Target Area, on a per capita basis is dropping relative to the rest of New York State, from 19th in 2012 to 27th in 2013. This is compounded by the current state of the economy and inflation, which impacts the Village and its residents' ability to carry out assessment and remediation of brownfields properties in the Target Area.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: **As of the 2020 census, there were 510 people in the rural Village of Valley Falls**, continuing a downward trend in population while the number of households is stable. Of the 185 households, 20.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them. The average household size is 2.33, down from 2.6 in 2016. **EPA data highlights lead paint exposure above the national average (0.54**

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

vs.0.3), the wastewater discharge indicator (45th percentile in NY), RMP Facility Proximity (66th percentile in NY), and aging population (20% vs. 17% in NYS) as relevant pollution and socioeconomic indicators for the Village and Target Area. Veterans (a sensitive population) comprise 6.5% of the population as compared to 3.6% in NY state (ACS). The cancer rate (7) is also higher than NYS (6.3) and the US (6.4). Other than the 15 residents who work from home / walk to work, all remaining 253 workers commute to their place of employment, with an average commute time of 40 minutes, 43% longer than the average metropolitan commute time of 28 minutes (ACS). This results in the Transportation Access Burden. In addition, the Target Area is a **critical gap service area for broadband at 5% compared to 12% in NYS and 13% in the US**. The NYS DEC Information Locator also notes that **the James Thompson dam is an Intermittent Hazard Dam which denotes a downstream hazard potential of a dam failure neighboring the site**.

In the village, **the population includes 26.47% under the age of 18 and 15.5% who were 65 years of age or older. Median income is \$77,750 and 1.3% of the population are below the poverty line. 96% of the population 15 or older is not enrolled in college / higher education (2020 Census)**. Target Area residents are exposed to contaminants daily via dermal contact, ingestion, and/or inhalation, including children passing sites on their way to the ballfield or school, dust and/or runoff during storm/flood events, consuming fish from the river adjacent to the mill complex or drinking VOC impacted groundwater. **Regional studies of PFAS have shown impact not just to the Hoosic River, but also evidence of PFAS in the air and soil. The state and federal health databases do not take emerging contaminants such as PFAS into consideration. The health of sensitive populations is threatened by an understudied regional contaminant contributed by upstream facilities located in the nearby Village of Hoosick Falls**. This brownfield funding will allow the Village to further assess contaminants and reduce exposure to contaminants in soil, groundwater, indoor air, surface water and/or sediment as well as hazardous building materials. Through this grant, the rural historic village will benefit by the identification and reduction of health hazards, reduction of crimes like arson, trespassing, vandalism, and illegal dumping at the mill site, and increased investment in the area.

c. Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease & Adverse Health Conditions: Given the very small size and population of the Valley Falls and Target Area community, health data statistics are not readily available from public information databases. According to www.statecancerprofiles.gov, Rensselaer County, where the Target Area is located, has a **higher rate of cancer incidence** (536.3 per 100,000) than New York State (487.7) or the US (453.8), which translates into higher mortality from cancer (187.9 per 100,000 vs. 162.3 for NYS). The EPA indicates that the Target Area's high proportion of children under 5 (66th percentile) suffers from lead paint exposure (81% in US), and according to CEJST, **52% of the population suffers from Asthma. According to NY State Department of Health, of the 5,054 births that occurred in Rensselaer County between 2006-2008, 106 were determined to suffer from birth defects**. According to the CDC, **approximately half of the population in Rensselaer County as of 2017-2018 is obese**.

Specific contaminants identified in the brownfields are known contributors to area health issues. Residents, particularly children and the elderly, are at elevated risk from completed exposure pathways, necessitating action to address these hazards. It is reasonable to presume Target Area residents are adversely affected from exposure to VOCs (liver, kidney, nervous system damage; **birth defects; cancer**), heavy metals – including lead (immune, cardiovascular, developmental, gastrointestinal, neurological, reproductive, respiratory, kidney damage; **cancer**), petroleum (nervous system, immune, liver, kidney, respiratory damage; **cancer**), PAHs (liver disorders; **cancer**), as well HBM including asbestos (lung scarring, mesothelioma and lung **cancer**) and PCBs (immune, hormone and neurological system; liver and skin disease). **High prenatal exposure to PAHs is associated with cognitive dysfunction, childhood asthma and other adverse birth outcomes**. The cleanup and/redevelopment of the Target Site as a recreational park, as well as the secondary sites, will reduce these threats, create recreational opportunities, and improve the overall physical health and wellbeing of Target Area residents.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: Negative health impacts are disproportionate in the Village's sensitive populations (see above). The sensitive populations in the target area

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

(including children under 5, senior citizens, veterans, and low-income individuals) disproportionately share the cumulative negative environmental consequences resulting from multiple stressors, including brownfields. Despite being only 0.5 square miles, the target area contains 16 brownfields, highlighting the disproportionate burden of the historic manufacturing in this former mill town. The mill abandonment and ongoing deterioration has hurt the Village’s revitalization potential and adds to the burden faced by sensitive populations in town. The entire Village is underserved due to its rural status, small population, and has unfair exposure to regional PFAS contaminants and unaddressed brownfield sites. This grant will directly address the primary threat of contamination from these priority sites, mitigate exposure, eliminate blight, decrease crime and provide an outlet for outdoor, waterfront recreation – a documented mental health booster! This will provide community access to the waterfront that has been denied due to years of industry and subsequent decay. Implementation of this grant will reduce the loss of population, encourage investment, improve property values, and increase access to services and job opportunities. Valley Falls will ensure that Target Area community groups are included in all information distribution, meetings, and events. Throughout the process, Valley Falls will encourage the reuse of brownfields to eliminate blight, provide jobs, create affordable housing and improve quality of life to ensure the sensitive populations and underserved communities benefit from developments that shape their neighborhoods.

2.b Community Engagement

e. Project Involvement / ii. Project Roles: The Village of Valley Falls Board, together with its Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC), a panel of citizen advisors from community organizations making partnership commitments to this project, will use three basic strategies in our tool kit – public meetings and workshops, web-based publication, and smaller meetings and consultations. This is consistent with the Village’s lack of broadband access, which limits the effectiveness of offering live on-line or hybrid events. The Village’s partnerships with community organizations to encourage involvement in the planning and implementation of this project are shown in the table below.

f. Project Roles

Name of organization / entity / group & mission	Point of contact (name, email, and/or phone)	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Hudsib-Taconic Lands– <i>preserves open space</i>	Bob Crowley [REDACTED]	Cleanup and Reuse planning / Park design and community outreach support / BAC
Hoosic River Watershed Assoc. – <i>citizens group</i>	Andy Kawszak [REDACTED]	Outreach support, BAC, volunteer labor, participate in cleanup and reuse planning
Valley Falls Free Library	Ralph Marino [REDACTED]	Outreach support, meeting space and Information Repository
Valley Falls United Methodist Church	Richard Palmer, 518-753-4848 [REDACTED]	Outreach support, volunteer labor, meeting space
Pittstown Historical Society	Constance Khell, pittsownhs@gmail.com	Outreach support, historical information and advice, cleanup/reuse planning activities
Valley Falls VFW Post 1938	Harry Rifenburg, 518-753-7707 No email.	Outreach support to veterans, volunteer labor

There are no business organizations in the Village because there is little commercial activity. Because the desired future use for the top priority mill property is public green space, realtor involvement would come into play as there are several properties currently for sale, where the burned-out mill at the major entrance to the Village is an obstacle to housing sales and a downward influence on home values. The Village will collaborate with area realtors to promote plans to assess, remediate and improve the mill site to improve property values in the Village.

g. Incorporating Community Input: In conjunction with the 2024 BOA Plan, the Village held several successful community outreach events and incorporated the feedback into the Plan. For this grant, the Village will require the qualified environmental professional (QEP) to produce project newsletters suitable for distribution to the public at three milestones – completion of the contamination assessment, draft clean-up strategy recommendations, and when a site reuse proposal is available. This newsletter will be produced in both paper and electronic formats. Electronic versions will be distributed through our community organization partners,

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

and through the www.historicvalleyfalls.com website. Paper copies will be made available at Town Hall, the Free Library and the Community Hall – the hubs of Village life. The Village Free Library in the Target Area will be the Information Repository and location for hard copies of all program-related documents for review by the public. **As a rural area, broadband internet service is not universally available or subscribed to by households. Therefore, the village uses paper-based communication in addition to electronic communication.** There is a local paper covering the area, the Express, and this media outlet will be used. The Village has a Facebook page that has achieved 275 followers, which has been a valuable tool to announce and promote the program, communicate progress, solicit input, provide feedback, and advertise meetings. The Village will consider and respond to all community input.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

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

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight
<p>EPA-funded tasks: The Village will procure and manage Project Manager (PM) and Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEPs); ACRES, Quarterly Reports, Annual MBE/WBE/DBE & FFR reports and Final grant close out reporting; Eligibility Determinations, Access Agreements, comply with Section 106 Historic Preservation Act requirements; Brownfield Advisory Committee; Attend EPA and state workshops, and national conference; Coordination with QEP, property owners, and relevant State agencies; Maintain financial records and complete drawdowns; maintaining project files and information repository. Non-EPA funded resources needed: Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff time for cooperative agreement oversight activities beyond those that have been budgeted for task.</p>
<p>Schedule: Competitive procurement of PM & QEP by 12/20/26. Other activities to be conducted from 10/1/26-9/30/30. Quarterly Reports submitted within 30 days after the end of each reporting period (Jan / April / July / Oct). Annual FFR and M/W/DBE reports submitted by October 30 of each grant year. ACRES updated when assessments are started/completed, new information becomes available and other major milestones. Advisory Committee meetings. Final Closeout report submitted within 90 days after end of cooperative agreement.</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead: Village will lead procurement tasks. Contracted PM will lead Brownfields Advisory Committee and oversee QEP with Village supervision; QEP will provide technical & programmatic assistance (QRs/ACRES/eligibility/etc.)</p>
<p>Outputs: RFQ. Procure QEP; 16 Quarterly Reports; BAC Meetings; Updates ACRES to track program measures; 3 annual M/W/DBE & FFR reports; Site eligibility determinations; Closeout Report; Grant drawdown requests; executed access agreements. Attend National Brownfields Conference</p>
Task 2: Community Engagement
<p>EPA-funded tasks: The Village, PM and BAC will provide community outreach and engagement, and focus gathering input from the Target Area residents on site selection and cleanup/reuse planning for priority sites. Outreach materials will be prepared for posting throughout the Village. Newsletters will be generated to provide updates and general Brownfield Assessment Program information. The Village will publicize meetings and ensure the Target Area audience is fully engaged, as well as the broader community. The Village will conduct outreach to local and regional press/media outlets. *Non-EPA grant resources needed: Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff and materials/supplies for any community engagement activities beyond those that have been budgeted for as part of their task.</p>
<p>Schedule: Community engagement activities would begin Winter/Spring 2027 and continue through Spring/Summer 2030. The Village anticipates a minimum of three (3) public meetings to educate and inform the community about the grant, to present assessment results and next steps and solicit feedback from the community regarding potential sites and/or redevelopment/reuse options.</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead: The PM with assistance from the Village will lead this task. Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) and QEP will be the Village’s partners, providing support with technical expertise and other community outreach assistance, as well as helping identify and prioritize potential sites, if applicable.</p>
<p>Outputs: Engage the community in the site selection and assessment process, conduct a minimum of three (3) public meetings, and prepare meeting minutes, presentation materials, newsletters, flyers, handouts, brochures. Track participation and distribution statistics.</p>
Task 3: Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

<p>EPA-funded tasks: Phase I ESAs will be completed in accordance with American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: E 1527-21 and EPA’s “All Appropriate Inquiry”. Based on the results of the Phase I ESAs, site-specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) and Health & Safety Plans (HASPs) will be prepared and approved by EPA prior to the commencement of field activities and Phase II ESAs will be completed to confirm or dismiss the presence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) at each site in accordance with ASTM’s most current Standard Practice for Phase II ESAs. The QEP will conduct the Phase I/II ESA assessment work, which may include Hazardous Building Material assessment, and will also be responsible for enrolling sites into the state’s voluntary cleanup program (if appropriate) and prepare report(s) for regulatory compliance. *Non-EPA grant resources needed: The Village does not anticipate needing non-EPA grant resources to carry out this Task. If necessary, the Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff time for any personnel activities beyond those that have been budgeted for as part of this task or apply for leverage funding to conduct supplemental activities.</p>
<p>Schedule: Begin assessments in spring 2027. Assessment activities at Target Properties will be conducted simultaneously, if possible, to maximize efficiencies and available resources. Complete before 6/30/30.</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead: The QEP will conduct the Phase I / II ESAs, HASPs, and QAPPs. PM and BAC will review reports for accuracy and completeness. PM and Village, with assistance from the QEP, will enroll sites into the NYSDEC’s Environmental Restoration Program (ERP), if applicable.</p>
<p>Outputs: Up to 2 Phase I and up to 3 Phase II reports. Enroll sites into the NYSDEC’s ERP, if applicable.</p>
<p>Task 4: Cleanup & Reuse Planning</p>
<p>EPA-funded tasks: Cleanup/reuse planning will be conducted in accordance with EPA’s Green and Sustainable Remediation guidance and will consider the extreme weather resiliency of the proposed cleanup/reuse. The Phase II and redevelopment plans will be utilized to develop an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and Reuse Plan for the Thompson Mill Site. Proposed remedial alternatives will be evaluated based on cost, feasibility, and effectiveness in protecting human health and the environment. This task may also evaluate options for compliance with and closure under NYDEC’s ERP, if applicable to the site, which may include a combination of risk characterization and remediation, specifically regarding the types of activities that can be allowed at the site with or without an Activity and Use Limitation (AUL). * Non-EPA grant resources needed: Village does not anticipate needing non-EPA grant resources to carry out this Task. If needed, Village will provide in-kind services in the form of staff time beyond those that have been budgeted.</p>
<p>Schedule: Final 18-36 months. The village is confident all work can be completed within 4 years.</p>
<p>Task/Activity Lead: The QEP will complete ABCA/Reuse Plans. Village and PM, with assistance from the BAC, will review reports for accuracy and completeness.</p>
<p>Outputs: One (1) Cleanup Plan / ABCA and one (1) Reuse Plan</p>

e . Cost Estimates - The Village requests a \$500,000 community-wide assessment grant. The Village and/or its non-profit partners will provide in-kind services to allow more funds to be spent directly on assessment and engagement activities. Costs were estimated based upon scopes provided under past grants, experience with tasks, and estimates from QEPs. 5% Indirect costs will cover Village administration.

<p>Task 1 – Cooperative Agreement Oversight: Total = \$51,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel: \$2,575 = Program administration, including fiscal oversight, by Treasurer 65 hours @\$35/hour; Clerk 15 hours @ \$20/hour • Travel: \$3,500 • \$2,100 for National Brownfield Conference Attendance for PM for mileage, hotel, per diem • Project-related local mileage at federal rate of \$0.655/mile (2,137 miles over 4-years =\$1,400). • Supplies: \$1,000 for Project related supplies including but not limited to printing and postage. • Contractual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Services: \$2,500 (Contracted, if needed) • Contracted Project Management (PM): \$30,225 The Village will competitively procure contract program management support services. PM support includes assistance in completing EPA quarterly reports, MBE/WBE forms, and EPA ACRES database. Other activities include completion of EPA work plans, attending EPA and state workshops, and national conference; Coordination with QEP, property owners, and relevant State agencies and other programmatic support necessary to maintain compliance with EPA

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

cooperative agreement terms and conditions. PM @ \$100/hour, ~300 hours total over the four-year grant period to perform EPA reporting/records management and facilitate progress meetings.

- QEP: **\$11,200** [(~\$104/hr x 3 hrs per quarter for 16 quarters = \$5,000 (rounded) to provide technical elements of quarterly reporting and ACRES. QEP will also provide general CA Oversight Assistance, including but not limited to site Eligibility Determination research and forms, Access Agreements, compliance with Section 106 Historic Preservation Act requirements; Assume (62 hours x \$100/hour = \$6,200).];

Task 2 - Community Outreach: Total = \$21,500

Personnel: \$1,000 Program support Treasurer 20 hours @\$35/hour; Clerk 15 hours @ \$20/hour

Contractual:

- The Village's contracted PM will perform and lead all community engagement work (PM @ \$100/hr, 75 hrs total over life of 4-year grant = **\$7,500**)
- QEP will assist (\$3,000/meeting @ 3 meetings = \$9000, includes presentation preparations and attendance, + ~\$1,333/newsletter @ 3 = \$4,000, for a total of **\$13,000 (rounded)**).

Task 3 – Phase I / II Assessment: Total = \$387,500

Contractual total: QEP: **\$387,500**

- 2 Phase I assessments @ \$7,500 per site = \$15,000
- 3 Phase II assessments' costs are much more variable but are anticipated to average approximately \$87,250 per site, including Work Plan, HASP and QAPP for 2 sites. For the third site \$198,000 is earmarked for the Thompson mill as partial demolition (approved by EPA in 2021) is required to adequately assess the site. The cost estimate for partial building demolition for the purpose of assessment was prepared by demolition subcontractors by calculating the total cost of demolition and factoring it down. Due to the unsafe structural condition of the building, partial demolition was approved by EPA to fully define contamination nature and extent within the building footprint.

Task 4 – Cleanup & Reuse Planning: Total = \$40,000

Contractual –

- QEP: **\$40,000** [Up to three (3) Remedial Action Plans / Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) will be produced at an estimated cost of \$7,500 each or \$22,500. Site Reuse Planning activities for the Dry Cleaner Site will include a sustainability assessment and conceptual reuse design alternatives. The estimated cost of this Task is \$17,500 (~140hrs X ~\$125/hr).

Budget Categories		Task 1: Coop. Agree. Oversight	Task 2: Community Outreach	Task 3: Phase I & II Assessments	Task 4: Cleanup and Reuse Planning	Total
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$2,575	\$1,000			\$3,575
	Fringe	\$0				\$0
	Travel	\$3,500				\$3,500
	Supplies	\$1,000				\$1,000
	Contractual - QEP	\$11,200	\$13,000	\$387,500	\$40,000	\$451,700
	Contractual – Legal	\$2,500				\$2,500
	Contractual – PM	\$30,225	\$7,500			\$37,725
	Other	\$0				\$0
Total Direct Costs		\$51,000	\$21,500	\$387,500	\$40,000	\$500,000
Indirect Costs (~5%)		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget		\$51,000	\$21,500	\$387,500	\$40,000	\$500,000

f. **Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results** - ACRES, quarterly reporting and monitoring of the Work Plan and project schedule are the primary tools to measure Environmental Results. The system established in the previous EPA contract will continue to be used to achieve project goals, effectively

NARRATIVE – Village of Valley Falls, Community-Wide Assessment

manage schedules and costs to ensure timely and effective use of funds. The Village will track the results by regularly scheduling team progress meetings and producing progress reports. If a project is not on schedule, the reasons will be documented in the quarterly report and a corrective action plan to get the project back on track will be implemented. Future leveraging funding to clean up the mill site and build the park will also be tracked. The additional priority sites (former dry cleaner, auto repair) evaluation will also provide the community with a blueprint for action. Long-term outcomes such as the number of jobs created, the number of acres made ready for reuse; the volume of soil remediated will be measured and tracked and entered into ACRES as appropriate.

4) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Programmatic Capability

a. Organizational Capacity / ii. Organizational Structure / iii Description of Key Staff: The Village of Valley Falls has the experience, knowledge, resources, and ability to obtain and supervise/control those resources it lacks in house to ensure successful completion of all required aspects of this project and grant by procuring resources strategically. **Project Management (PM) and Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) oversight** services will be competitively procured by the Village. This is consistent with Village practices and was successfully completed for the **administration of the previous site-specific EPA assessment grant, which was completed on time and on budget.** Project **financial oversight** will be provided by the **Village Treasurer, Michelle Moore**, with progress reports to the Board of Trustees. Annual training on accounting, legal, and regulatory matters for Continuing Education Credits are a requirement of the Treasurer position. **Jay Overocker, the Village's Mayor**, and the Village Board of Trustees will oversee the PM and will also serve as interim or replacement project manager in the event of PM loss. *This organizational structure focuses on working together successfully and provides this small village with the capacity to successfully carry out and manage the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the projects and grant.*

b. Acquiring Additional Resources: **Upon award, the Village will initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to competitively procure a PM and QEP following EPA and federal guidelines.** The Village will use a **QEP** overseen by the Village Board of Trustees and PM to assist with outreach and cooperative agreement oversight activities and to accomplish the assessment and cleanup and reuse planning activities at Priority Sites. The QEP will be competitively procured and be contractually responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable federal and state requirements of the project and the funding sources, particularly those related to labor practices and local hiring. This will explicitly include reporting, community outreach, and safety tasks. Any **legal services** required, will also be arranged through a competitive contract, as the Village does not employ an attorney. This is consistent with past practice.

e. Past Performance and Accomplishments - Has Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

1. Accomplishments: Valley Falls received a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Site Specific Assessment grant (BF-96267417-0) in 2017 that was 100% expended and closed by the EPA on July 21, 2021. These grant funds allowed the Village of Valley Falls to complete All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) and a Phase I ESA Report prior to attaining site ownership of the Thompson Mill after foreclosure on the tax delinquent owner; generated a SAP, HASP, QAPP and a Phase II ESA report for the mill site, which were all reviewed and approved by EPA. EPA and the QEP identified significant remaining data gaps following the Phase II ESA, due to the requirement to demolish the building in order to complete an adequate assessment of the property; The site was fenced and warning signs were posted to prevent potential exposure to hazardous materials, as well as the structurally unsound building, and prohibit unauthorized access to the site; A site-specific hazardous waste variance was applied for and approved from the NYS DOL; The Village procured legal services to investigate prior owner liability. Conceptual site reuse plans were generated and updated based on community input. Community engagement and outreach on progress on site activities occurred throughout the duration of the project, particularly at major project milestones.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements: The Village complied with the work plan, schedule and terms and conditions of the EPA grant, with one request for an extension due to a delay relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Quarterly reports were submitted on time and were complete. ACRES database is up to date including the findings of the site-specific assessment activities. All grant funds were fully expended.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA DOCUMENTATION – Historic Village of Valley Falls

1. Applicant Eligibility

The Village of Valley Falls NY is a general-purpose unit of government, incorporated in 1904. As such, it is exempt from Federal taxation under section 501c4 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Village does not engage in lobbying activities.

2. Community Involvement

The Village of Valley Falls Board, together with its panel of citizen advisors drawn from community organizations making partnership commitments to this project **will use three basic strategies in our tool kit – public meetings and workshops, web-based publication, and smaller meetings and consultations.** This reflects the *lack of broadband access* in the Village to provide live on-line events. The Village of Valley Falls has established partnerships with community organizations to encourage involvement in the planning and implementation of this project. A full description of the Community Engagement and Partnerships in this project is contained in the narrative starting on page 5.

The Village of Valley Falls held a Public Information Meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2020, to discuss the findings of the site-specific Thompson Mill assessment thus far and to describe the project application and seek input. This was advertised using flyers at key community locations and the Village Facebook page. 10 people attended following COVID-19 protocols (Face masks required, 6 ft. spacing). The rural nature of this small village, where internet access is limited, argues against the use of virtual workshops. The Village posts critical items on its Facebook page. **The Village intends to continue holding such meetings at critical project milestones.**

Further, the Village sought a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) nomination for the old Thompson Mill site as part of the Village's grant application to the NYS BOA Program through the New York State Department of State's Consolidated Funding Application process in 2021. To support this application, the Village published a notice of intent in the local newspaper, accepted written public comments, and held a public meeting on July 6, 2021. Over **65** public comments were received **in support** of the proposed application and the need for designation as a BOA. These comments are available for review. This grant application was approved. The Village completed its contract to prepare a BOA Nomination package in May 2024 and received NYS BOA Designation in October 2024. As part of this process, the website "www.historicvalleyfalls.com" was established, community surveys were conducted, and the advisory committee expanded to 12 members. The first public meeting for the BOA nomination, held on May 15, 2023, attracted 45 participants. An Open House was held on December 8, 2023, and a final Public Hearing on February 15, 2024. Both were attended by more than 35 people, and meeting records are available on request.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds: Valley Falls does not have any open EPA grants.

4. Contractors and named subrecipients: There are no contractors or named subrecipients in this application. Competitive procurements will be conducted.