

MICHAEL P. GALIME, MAYOR  
CITY OF UTICA



DEPARTMENT OF URBAN & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
1 KENNEDY PLAZA  
UTICA, NEW YORK 13502  
PHONE: (315) 792-0181  
FAX: (315) 797-6607

**APPLICATION INFORMATION SHEET**

1. Applicant Identification:  
City of Utica, New York  
Department of Urban & Economic Development  
1 Kennedy Plaza  
Utica, New York 13502  
(315) 792-0181 phone
  
2. Website URL-<https://www.cityofutica.com/>
  
3. Funding Requested:
  - a. Brownfield Grant Type: Single Site Cleanup Grant
  - b. Federal Funds Requested = \$3,859,440
  
4. Location:
  - a) City of Utica
  - b) Oneida County
  - c) New York
  
5. Property Information  
  
Mele Manufacturing  
1904 Erie St,  
Utica, NY 13502

6. Contacts

a. **Project Director:**

**Project Director**

Laura Cohen, Director Community Development  
 City of Utica  
 1 Kennedy Plaza  
 Utica, New York 13502  
 315-792-0181

b. **Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official**

Mayor Michael P. Galime  
 City of Utica  
 1 Kennedy Plaza  
 Utica, NY 135021  
 315-792-0100

7. Population :

City of Utica: 63,607

8. Other Factors

<b>Other Factors Checklist</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community Population is 15,000 or less.	NA
The applicant is, or will assist a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory	NA
The priority site is impacted by mine-scarred land.	NA
Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the remediation/reuse; secured resource is identified in the Narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.	3
The proposed site is adjacent to a body of water (i.e. the border of the proposed 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).	NA
The proposed site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	NA
The reuse of the proposed site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	2
The reuse of the proposed site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters	NA
The target area (s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing..	NA

9. Releasing Copies of Applications:

This information is not confidential, privileged, or sensitive and may be made public.

## **1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

### **Target Areas and Brownfields**

#### **1. a Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area**

Utica, New York (NY), a small City of 64,723, is strategically located in central NY within Onieda County's Mohawk Valley (MV), approximately 90 miles northwest of Albany and about 50 miles east of Syracuse. Bordered by the Adirondack Mountains to the north, the City sits at the confluence of the Mohawk River and the New York State Erie Canal System, which powered the City's historical industrial hub. Beginning in the early 1800s, mining and manufacturing companies prospered in the resource-rich Utica area. The construction of the Erie Canal along the Mohawk River in the mid-1800s vaulted the area to entrepreneurial dominance, and it became one of the greatest centers of textile production in the world. The City's population grew to a peak of 101,400 in 1960. In time, globalization led to the migration of companies to lower-cost areas resulting in a prolonged painful decline in manufacturing base and population. It is reported that over 50 textile mills and several other manufacturers including Savage Arms closed from 1960 to 1990, cutting thousands of jobs. The 1990s saw the end of the Cold War and a further decline with the closing of three major area employers: Griffiss Air Force Base (1995), Lockheed Martin (1996), and General Electric (1997), eliminating nearly 7,000 civilian and military jobs virtually overnight. These closures continued with the closure of Mele Manufacturing, which once employed 1200 people, in 2003 and most recently Utica Boiler (2024), Semikron Danfoss (2025) and Remington Arms (2025) in neighboring Ilion eliminating hundreds of good paying jobs. This job loss has resulted in the City's decline from 101,400 in 1960 to 64,723 today, a staggering 36% decline compared to a 20% increase for NYS over the same period.

The former manufacturing sites now sit decaying with broken windows, collapsed roofs, exposed asbestos-containing material and graffiti, inviting vagrants. The impact of this disinvestment is breathtaking. Obvious to casual observers is the blight in downtown areas where vacant buildings are collapsing under their own weight, exposing residents to physical and environmental hazards. The risks are well beyond what one can see. Hundreds of industrial facilities were closed before the era of environmental regulations leaving behind vacant abandoned buildings where owners cannot be found. These abandoned sites pose significant public safety, health hazards, financial strain, and economic decline. The Brownfield Target Area faces numerous challenges, including loss of jobs and population and the number of brownfields- an astounding 459 acres within Utica's 1,100-acre urban core are brownfields. The remaining population lives in poverty in the shadows of vacant and decaying buildings creating conditions that have resulted in high homicide rates and opioid overdose deaths and greater rates of disease and adverse health conditions when compared to NYS.

This grant will provide the funding needed to clean up a site, a priority site for redevelopment which will provide investment in a neglected and forgotten area of the City. The cleanup will allow the site to be redeveloped and serve as a catalyst for additional investment. In addition, permanent jobs will be created, tax revenue generated for the City and most importantly the project serve as an example for future site development and a blueprint for public – private partnership to address brownfields.

**The Target Area (TA) is the Central Industrial Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA – NYS program that identifies/inventories areas of concentrated brownfields and develop area- wide revitalization strategies through public engagement) - an 1,100-acre area on the downtown's outskirts spanning the City's length (east to west) along historical transportation corridor (Erie Canal, railroad and highways). The area, characterized by vacant, underutilized decaying structures and vacant lots, includes at least 49 brownfields occupying 451 acres, occupied by 1,313 low-income residents (38% below poverty) living in substandard housing (49% of homes were built before the 1940s).**

## **1.b Description of Proposed Brownfield Site**

Mele Manufacturing located at 1904 Erie St.; Utica is a 5.33-acre vacant site owned by the City of Utica. The flat, vacant rectangular-shaped site is located between two major roadways that serve as a gateway to the City. The Erie Canal and a harbor area, located along the site's northern border, were backfilled in the 1930s. Surrounded by rundown commercial businesses, vacant lots, and residences, the site was used by various manufacturing operations for production of knitting goods, jewelry boxes, plastic flooring, and coal storage from at least 1899 until 2004 when the facility was abandoned.

A Phase I ESA was completed in 2014, followed by Phase II ESAs in 2016, 2017 and 2025. The ESAs determined that the site's industrial history has adversely impacted the site with metals (i.e. chromium, lead, and mercury) and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) present in fill materials across the site likely due to historical releases, disposal of coal ash and demolition of prior on-site buildings. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) were also detected in a 0.8-acre portion of the site's soils and groundwater due to the historical releases of Trichloroethylene used in the former wash house and boiler house located in the south-central portion of the site. Based on analytical data from the investigations, the groundwater VOC plume is constrained to the Site, and is not migrating off-site. PAHs and metal contaminants are primarily located in the northern section of the site and are related to the presence of fill materials.

## **Revitalization of the Target Area**

### **1.c Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans**

Planning and site reuse strategies have been developed at the regional and local levels. At the regional level, the Mohawk Valley Economic Development Growth Enterprise (MVEDGE - regional public-private partnership responsible for economic development) created the Mohawk Valley Strategic Plan to direct State investment to address brownfields, blight and disinvestment by encouraging infill development and attracting industry and commercial development. At the local level, planning and public engagement conducted during preparation of the Utica's 2011 Master Plan and 2024- 2024 Consolidated Plan Central Industrial Corridor BOA determined commercial activities, which establish a strong, vibrant corridor as a goal for the area. These plans also encourage the development of housing to accommodate the workers of the new jobs from the proposed reuse strategy. Consistent with the community vision, the City zoned the site Urban Mixed-Use, to encourage commercial use to generate jobs, increase tax revenue and a create vibrant corridor along Erie St. In addition, the City and MVEDGE identified 1904 Erie Street as a strategic site for commercial development to anchor the area's revitalization. Due to the City's efforts, an auto dealership has agreed to purchase the site and revitalize it as an auto dealership. The dealership will include construction of an energy efficient 25,000 ft<sup>2</sup> building with sales, service, training and administration as well as landscaping, stormwater features and shade trees.

This site is an example of what public private partnerships can achieve. The Utica Urban Renewal Agency (UURA) initially funded a Phase I ESA and Phase II ESAs while MVEDGE's EPA Assessment grant was used to fund additional Phase II ESAs to define the degree and extent groundwater VOC contamination and identify its source. In addition, The UUDA has agreed to fund the preparation of NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) application and associated remediation documents to enter the site into a state oversight program. The auto dealer has agreed to purchase and revitalize the site once cleaned up is completed. Funding for cleanup is necessary to facilitate redevelopment.

### **1.d Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy**

The proposed projects will remove blight, environmental hazards, and a threat to the area's residents, especially surrounding children that have a habit of entering vacant lots. Utica will require that selected contractors employ local construction crews/vendors and solicit graduates of the Herkimer, Madison and Oneida County Brownfield

Training Grant, whenever possible.

Construction of the auto dealership, estimated to be \$15 million, will serve as a powerful catalyst for local urban revitalization. By remediating the vacant contaminated site; blight and environmental hazards will be removed; surrounding property increased by an estimated 5% to 15%; an estimated 60 construction and 70 high-quality permanent jobs will be created; and an estimated \$6 million in annual state and local tax revenue (based on City projections). This redevelopment not only reverses decades of environmental neglect but also maximizes existing infrastructure, reduces urban sprawl, improving living conditions and opportunities for surrounding sensitive populations and provides a sustainable stream of revenue to fund essential public services for residents of Utica. The project goals are in alignment with Pillar 1 (ensure that there is clean air, land, and water for the area’s residents) and 3 (Utica will engage in cross agency partnerships with the NYSDEC, EPA and other agencies, when possible) of EPA 5 Pillars of Powering the Great American Comeback” Initiative. During site cleanup, green remediation BMPs (i.e. integrating site remediation with redevelopment goals) will be used In addition, the site redevelopment will incorporate renewable energy from solar and energy efficiency measures as required by the Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State (ECCCNYS), which mandates significant energy efficiency (insulation, walls, HVAC, lighting) and renewable energy for new/renovated buildings. In addition, site redevelopment will improve stormwater management along the street to mitigate stormwater impacts from extreme weather events.

**Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

**1.e Resources Needed for Site Characterization**

Since the site has been fully characterized, no added resources are needed.

**1.f Resources Needed for Site Remediation**

As noted in the table below and letter included in an attachment, the UURA has agreed to fund completion of the NYSDEC BCP application and associated cleanup documentation (Health and Safety Plan, Community Air Monitoring, Final report, etc.) required to enter into the NYSDEC BCP. The site’s remediation is critical to support the reuse strategy. The **\$3,859,440** EPA Cleanup grant funding will be sufficient to complete the required remediation as documented in the ABCA.

**1.g Resources Needed for Site Reuse**

Destination Kia has agreed to purchase the site for redevelopment as an auto dealership once the site is cleaned up (see Attachment). A summary of the funding sources is provided below.

Name of Resource	Is the Resource for (1.e) Assessment, (1.f) Remediation or (1.g) Reuse Activities	Secured or unsecured	Additional Details or Information about Resource
\$58,000 - Utica Urban Renewal Agency	1.f Remediation Documentation	Secured	Preparation of NYSDEC BCP Application and Cleanup Workplan.
\$15M - Destination Kia of Utica	1.g Reuse activities	Secured	A car dealership has agreed to buy the site and redevelop it with a car dealership once the site is cleaned up.

\$ Pending - Mohawk Valley Economic Development Growth Enterprise (MVEDGE)	1.g Reuse activities	Unsecured	Construction loans and PILOT agreements
--	----------------------	-----------	---

**1.h Use of Existing Infrastructure**

A review of the site’s infrastructure, conducted during the BOA’s preparation, reported that comprehensive public and private infrastructure including water, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, gas, electric, telecommunications, and fiber optic cable are adequate within the BOA. The Mohawk Valley Water Authority (MVWA) and City of Utica, which provide water and sewage for the site, reported that there is adequate capacity to support site redevelopment. In addition, the site fronts primary public transportation and pedestrian routes. Sidewalks are present on both Erie and Oriskany Streets. Centro Bus provides public transportation to the area and connects downtown and other employment centers. The site developer will provide connections to existing water, sewer, electric and telecommunications during site development.

**2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**Community Need**

**2.a The Community’s Need for Funding**

US Census and NYS Comptroller data indicated that Utica has a declining population (lost 36% since 1960), Utica suffers from poverty (29% vs. 13% NYS), low per-capita income (\$33,212 vs. \$47,173 NYS) and low home median values (\$189,798 vs. \$405,000 NYS) and a crushing property tax rate which is double NYS’s (\$15.13 per \$1,000 vs \$7.05 NYS). Not surprisingly, a 2023 financial audit by the NYS Office of Comptroller reported that the City is under stress. Over the past 3 years City taxes have increased by 7.8%, 14% and 3.2% driven by rising City costs for healthcare, retirement, and other services, with officials citing budget deficits and the need to maintain essential services like police and fire departments as reasons for raising taxes, even while trying to minimize the impact on residents. These financial issues are only amplified in the TA where 61% of the population has low income, almost three times the NYS rate of 28%. The high degree of poverty creates a large demand for services that are not equal with the community’s available financial resources. Given the financial limitations of the local tax base and competing needs for basic services, the City is unable to fund the site cleanup, which will facilitate the site’s development. Further, the developer has stated the project economics are not viable without the funding to complete the cleanup.

**2.b Health and Welfare of Sensitive Populations**

Review of available US Census and NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) data noted the following sensitive populations are disproportionately exposed to brownfields within the TA; low-income and children under five. Other sensitive populations, according to the City of Utica Health Equity Report prepared by NYSDOH, include pregnant women and infants due to high preterm births (10% Utica vs. 9% NYS) and low birth weight babies (7.4% Utica vs. 6.2% NYS). No specific data is available for Utica, however according to the Oneida County Health Assessment (OCHA) and NYSDOH, these sensitive populations are adversely impacted by the following elevated adverse health and welfare issues: birth defects (309/10k births vs. 287/10k NYS, DOH); poverty (38% vs. 13% NYS, OCHA); depression (28.6% vs. 19.5% US, OCHA); obesity (39% vs. 33% NYS, OCHA); suicide (9.2/100k vs. 7.5/100k NYS); food insecurity (23% vs. 10% NYS, OCHA); opioid overdose deaths (30.1/100k vs. 22.9/100k, DOH); and teen pregnancy (45.7/1k births vs 41.3/1k NYS, OCHA). In addition, the number of children under six years old with blood lead levels >10µg/dl per 1,000 is almost five times greater than NYS (29.8 vs. 6.0 NYS).

Many of these health and welfare conditions can be attributed to the sensitive populations' poor living conditions and daily exposure to environmental contaminants and blight. Cleaning up and redeveloping the site will provide a critical pathway to improving the physical, mental, and economic health of sensitive populations. Addressing hazardous substances including metals (lead, mercury, chromium), VOCs, PAHs will directly mitigate the risk of birth defects, and developmental disabilities and elevated lead blood concentrations that disproportionately affect children and pregnant women living near the site.

Once these environmental hazards are addressed, site redevelopment will create jobs to combat poverty, increase tax revenue to assist a cash strapped City, increase surrounding poverty value and provide economic vitality that will alleviate depression, teen pregnancy, suicide and opioid addiction. In addition, the redevelopment will act as a catalyst to attract additional business such as housing and grocery.

### **2.c Greater-than-Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions**

Although specific health and welfare data is not available for Utica the NYSDOH indicates that County residents suffer disproportionately from asthma (10.9% vs 9.9% NYS), birth defects (309 per 100k live births vs. 287 NYS) and incidences of cancer (496.5 vs 466.1 in NYS). NY County Health Rankings reports that Oneida County (county in which Utica is located) is among the least healthy counties in NY (lowest 25%). The County's low health ratings are due to a variety of adverse health conditions including heart disease, asthma, cancer, and disabilities. According to the Oneida County Health Assessment, residents have a greater-than-normal incidence of disease and adverse health including:

- Cancer – lip, oral cavity, and pharynx cancer per 1,000 - 3.2 vs. 2.7 NYS,
- prostate cancer per 1,000 -145.1 vs. 129.4 NYS
- colon cancer per 1,000 - 17.1 vs. 12.4 NYS.
- Heart disease hospitalizations per 10,000 - 142.2 vs. 126.0 NYS.
- Strokes per 100,000 – 38.5 vs. 27.5 NYS.

Site cleanup will eliminate the public exposure to metals, VOCs and PAHs present in the site soils and potential dust generated by the site. In addition, addressing the VOCs will eliminate the public's potential exposure to VOC contaminated soil gas. Eliminating these contaminants will reduce the surrounding residents Greater-than-Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions, public high incidence of stroke, cancer and heart disease as well as increase the public's life expectancy.

### **2.d Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations**

The target area is shouldering the burden of the past industrial productivity of the US, and subsequent decline, depopulation and disinvestment. There is one EPA Superfund site and over 100 potential brownfields, which have exposed the residents and important ecological resources (Mohawk River and tributaries) to pollution for decades. The grant will conduct will clean up a contaminated site and allow its redevelopment. Eliminating contamination from soil, water, and air in Utica will have profound public health benefits. Exposure to pollutants such as VOCs and PAHs linked to increased risks of stroke, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancer and chemical exposure can contribute to birth defects, infant mortality and developmental complications. Reducing these contaminants will lower chronic inflammation and oxidative stress in at-risk groups, improving overall health outcomes and decreasing health care burdens. Cleaner environments not only prevent acute illnesses but also reduce long-term risks, creating healthier conditions for children, seniors, and economically disadvantaged residents who are disproportionately affected by these hazards. In addition, the site redevelopment will create construction and permanent jobs and act as a catalyst to encourage additional investment reversing disinvestment and depopulation. Also, increased tax revenue generated by the site will assist in alleviating the City's financial strain and allow the City to eliminate tax increases.

## **2.e Community Engagement and Project Involvement and 2.f Project Roles**

Since 2011 Utica has been engaged in vision and conceptual planning for the site’s redevelopment. The city will continue to encourage public engagement and utilize the following groups to assist with this project:

<b>Partner Name/Mission</b>	<b>Point of contact (name, email, phone)</b>	<b>Specific role in the project</b>
East Utica Concerned Citizens/ organizations that are active in issues/ concerns of East Utica.	Lucretia Hunt 315-732-1032	Assist with public outreach and provide input on site cleanup and reuse.
Utica Urban Renewal Agency/manage City owned properties	Brian Thomas, Commissioner bthomas@cityofutica.com (315) 792-0181	Agent for property transfer for redevelopment and coordination of redevelopment
Community Action Partnership/ Social service agencies that advocate for underserved residents	Amy Turner, Director 315-624-9930	Assist with public outreach and engagement. Liaison to relevant community organizations
Workforce Development Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida County and Brownfield Training Grant/brownfield Work Force Training	<u>Austen Johnson</u> <a href="mailto:ajohnson@working-solutions.org">ajohnson@working-solutions.org</a> <u>315-207-6951</u>	Participate in identification of EPA Brownfields Training Grant graduates to aid with project implementation
BOA Steering Committee/management of brownfields	Brian Thomas, Commissioner Utica Urban Renewal and Economic Development bthomas@cityofutica.com	Assist with public outreach and engagement. Provide input on cleanup plans.

## **2.g Incorporating Community Input**

Utica will build off the existing community involvement program that was used during the Utica Central Industrial Corridor BOA program. Since 2011 Utica has been engaged in vision and conceptual planning for the site’s redevelopment. Public outreach meetings will be held at the following milestones- once the site remediation plan is complete: two weeks prior to the beginning of site work and once cleanup is completed. Outreach events, open to the public, will be posted at community locations (libraries, community centers, etc.) and on the City and partner websites, social media and newspapers ensuring that the entire community has an opportunity to provide input. Personal invitations will be sent to residents directly affected (i.e., adjacent properties), neighborhood groups, lenders, area businesses, and developers to maximize stakeholder engagement. Utica has already begun engaging target area residents, business owners, and community advocates to solicit their input regarding the project. Utica staff will maintain outreach efforts (how advertised), event presentation, event attendance lists, and response to public comments. As the project progresses, Utica will involve stakeholders in the decision-making process regarding site cleanup and reuse plans. With the stakeholders’ input, Utica will evaluate against their development goals and available resources, adopting feedback that feasibly meets these criteria. If asked, news releases, web postings, written materials, etc. will be available in other languages for residents whose first language is not English. Also to expand accessibility, community engagement meetings will be recorded and available on-line. To create an effective online meeting, video segments will be timestamped and linked to agendas, minutes, and supporting documentation; meeting web pages and content will be checked to ensure documents are screen-reader friendly for accessibility, and closed captioning will be used when streaming videos. Public meeting online participation tools, including conference calls for those without digital access, will be used to ask for public comment at each event. Comments submitted during meetings will be meaningfully considered and responded to immediately. Written

online comments will be responded to individually and presented at the next meeting.

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS**

**3.a Proposed Cleanup Plan**

The cleanup effort will include the entry of the site into the NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup program, allowing NYSDEC to provide oversight of the clean-up effort and permit the NYSDEC to certify that the site has been remediated to the necessary levels for mixed-use development. In addition, the cleanup plan and Health and Safety and site monitoring activities will be submitted to the NYS Department of Health for review and approval. As noted in section 1.b., site soils are impacted with PAHs, metals, and VOCs and groundwater is impacted with VOCs. The proposed cleanup strategy for the approximately 0.8-acre VOC-impacted area will address soil and groundwater contamination caused by chlorinated volatile organic compounds, including Trichloroethylene (TCE) and 1,2-Dichloroethylene (1,2-DCE). The remediation strategy includes installing and operating an extraction system that will remove both groundwater and vapor from the affected area, as noted in the ABCA. Recovery wells will be installed to capture contamination within the groundwater plume. Extracted vapors will be treated to meet New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) air quality standards before being released into the atmosphere, while groundwater will be treated to meet water discharge requirements and then discharged to the municipal sanitary sewer under the appropriate permits. Any solids or residual materials collected during treatment will be properly containerized and disposed of at a licensed facility in compliance with state and federal regulations. The system will operate until groundwater contamination levels meet NYSDEC remedial goals, with quarterly monitoring and reporting throughout an estimated five-year period. In addition, areas of the site with metals and PAH-impacted fill materials will be covered with an engineered cap consisting of a stone base and asphalt surface, creating a durable parking lot that meets NYSDEC requirements for preventing direct contact and erosion of contaminated materials.

A Final Engineering Report (FER) that documents the site cleanup activities, as required by the NYSDEC, will be prepared and submitted to NYSDEC for approval. In addition, a Site Management Plan that outlines required inspections and site administrative procedures will also be prepared and submitted to NYSDEC for approval. NYSDEC will subsequently issue a Certificate of Completion that provides a release of liability projection for the City of Utica.

**Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

<b>Task/Activity 1: Project Management, Consultant Procurement, Planning, Reporting &amp; Other Eligible Activities</b>
<b>b. Project Implementation:</b> Includes: (1) Cooperative agreement compliance oversight; (2) Selection of Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) by Utica in accordance with Utica requirements and 2 CFR200.317-326; (3) Complete quarterly reports in the EPA’s Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) database; (4) Federal Financial Report (FFR) reporting; (5) Property Profile Form submission/updates in ACRES; (6) monthly status meetings with QEP to ensure activities are progressing, goals/objectives are met, and if not, actions to address; (7) Finalize ABCA; (8) Develop QAPP/HASP; (9) Finalize Cleanup Plan to solicit bid and retain remedial contractor; (10) Enroll Site in NYS BCP Prepare Technical; (11) prepare an EPA Final Technical report summarizing accomplishments, expenditures, outcomes, outputs, lessons learned, and resources leveraged at 120 days after grant completion; (12) prepare FER for DEC review and approval; (13) Utica staff member will attend one local and one national brownfield training conference.
<b>c. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> This task will be completed throughout the 4-year grant period.
<b>d. Task/Activity Lead:</b> City of Utica Department of Urban and Economic Development (DUED) will lead the execution of the Cooperative Agreement, QEP procurement, and brownfield conference attendance. The QEP will complete reporting and plan preparation.

**e. Outputs:** Quarterly reports with updated budget table (up to 16), QEP selection, Annual FFR reports (up to 4), up to 48 monthly status meetings, ABCA, QAPP, HASP, final Cleanup Plan, approval of the site to enter the BCP, EPA Final Technical report, ACRES profile updated with completion of each project element, DEC Approved FER, attendance at two brownfield conferences.

**Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement**

**b. Project Implementation:** Creating/updating a DUED project webpage, advertising for and holding meetings to inform stakeholders of the reuse plans, remediation progress and other project related items.

**c. Anticipated Project Schedule:** The project website will be completed in the first quarter after the Grant contract is executed, the meetings will take place over the 4-year grant period.

**d. Task/Activity Lead:** DUED will create and launch the website. The QEP assist DUED with meetings (e.g coordination, fact sheets).

**e. Outputs:** 8 Community Meetings, Project Webpage

**Task/Activity 3: Site Remediation**

**b. Project implementation:** (1) Installation of approximately 20 permanent groundwater monitoring wells; (2) Design and construct a total fluids/multiphase vacuum extraction system for the removal of chlorinated solvents (3) Implement extraction system until CVOC concentrations in site groundwater comply with NYSDEC groundwater quality standards (4) installation of soil cap

**c. Anticipated Project Schedule:** This task will be completed between Quarter 5 to Quarter 16 of the grant period.

**d. Task/Activity Lead:** QEP will be the lead based on subject matter expertise and experience.

**e. Outputs:** Ground water cleanup, removal /capping of soil contamination, NYSDEC Certificate of Completion that provides a release of liability projection for the BCP applicant, City of Utica.

Budget Categories	Task 1:Project Mgt., Consultant Procurement, Planning, Reporting&Other Eligible Activities	Task 2: Community Engagement	Task 3: Site Remediation	Total
Personnel	\$28,350	\$2,592	\$0	\$30,942
Travel	\$2,565	\$0	\$0	\$2,565
Contractual	\$119,320	\$12,240	\$1,592,103	\$1,723,663
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$2,101,700	\$2,101,700
Other	\$570	\$0	\$0	\$570
Total Direct Costs	\$150,805	\$14,832	\$3,693,803	\$3,859,440
Indirect Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$150,805</b>	<b>\$14,832</b>	<b>\$3,693,803</b>	<b>\$3,859,440</b>

**3.f Cost Estimates:** Project costs are presented below and summarized on the table above. Estimates for Task 3, Site Remediation, are derived from previous quotes from contractors for similar activities, HRP’s experience, RSMMeans, NYS Office of General Service Contracting Costs, NYS Department of Transportation Pay Item Catalog

**Task/Activity 1: Project Management, Consultant Procurement, Planning, Reporting & Other Eligible Activities \$150,805:** Personnel/Fringe Benefits: \$28,350: Project Meetings by DUED \$28,350 (350 hrs. @\$81/hr. x 1 staff); Travel: \$2,565 2027 National Brownfields Conference (Salt Lake City, UT): \$1,525 (\$1,525/person x 1 staff); 2027 Regional/State Brownfields Conference (Location TBD): \$1,040 (\$1,040/person x 1 staff); Contractual Total: \$119,320; 48 monthly check-in meetings: \$8,160 (48 hrs. x \$170/hr. x 1 staff), 48 Compliance Reporting Events: \$8,160 (48 hrs. x \$170/hr. x 1 staff), BCP Application, ABCA Plan, QAPP, HASP, Cleanup Plan, FER, EPA Technical Report, \$119,320 (QEP 630 hours at average rate of \$158). Other:

\$570; Conference Registration Fees: \$570 (\$285/person x 2 conferences x 1 staff)

**Task/Activity 2: Community Engagement (\$14,832):** Personnel/Fringe Benefits: \$2,592; Community Meetings with DUED participation, \$2,592 (32 hrs.@\$81/hr. x 1 staff); Contractual Total: \$12,240 Project website creation and updates, attend 8 meetings (72 hrs. x \$170/hr.)

**Task/Activity 3: Site Remediation (\$3,693,803):** Contractual Total: \$1,592,103; \$112,000 Construction oversight (700 hrs. x \$160/hr.), \$77,000 Engineering design of Treatment System; \$498,600,000 treatment trailer system mobilization and installation; \$226,000 Install 20 extraction wells and pipe to trailer; \$600,000 Perform weekly/monthly monitoring, maintenance and NYSDEC reporting of the system (\$150,000/year estimate 5 years = \$600,000), \$78,503 Remove/replace 1.0 feet of shallow impacted soil/fill in areas where 0.5 acres of green space is planned; Construction Total: \$2,101,700; \$2,101,700 Grade site, install demarcation layer and engineered cover over an estimated 4.0 acres of the site.

### **3.g Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results**

The City will administer and manage the grant through the DUED, which is responsible for overseeing state and federal grants intended to improve the quality of life for the City's residents and businesses and is staffed with six employees. DUED will work with the QEP to develop and utilize a detailed project work plan for implementing planned outputs under the proposed grant. The work plan will detail key milestones within the grant period documenting and communicating outputs and outcomes to the public, EPA Region 2, NYSDEC, and partners listed in 2.e. with all progress detailed in quarterly reports and on the City's brownfields website. At least monthly and prior to the completion of each quarter, DUED will review and evaluate the project progress and take any necessary corrective actions should the schedule fall behind. Corrective actions may include holding weekly meetings or conference calls to all parties working on the grant as they occur. Lastly, DUED will utilize the ACRES database to report, document, and track information such as job creation, leveraged, property cleared for redevelopment, and exposure risks. These statistics will also be communicated to IDNR, project partners, and the public.

## **4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

### **Programmatic Capability**

#### **4.a Organizational Structure & 4.b Description of Key Staff**

DUED has the organizational capacity to execute and manage the grant's programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements including six full-time experienced professionals that focus on planning and zoning, economic development, and community development. DUED works with various community partners, providing critical funds to these agencies and organizations to support their efforts in these areas. Ms. Laura Cohen, DUED's Director of Community Development, will serve as the primary manager of the grant and primary decision maker, and will oversee all financial matters for the grant. Ms. Cohen has 14 years of economic development experience. She has managed Utica's CDBG, ESG and HOME grants, and developed a keen understanding of brownfields, their impacts on residents, environmental concerns, and revitalization issues. Ms. Cohen will be assisted by:

- Chris Lawrence, Deputy Commissioner of Community Development, will serve as assistant grant manager. Mr. Lawrence has 15 years' experience managing grants, most significantly CDBG, ESG, and HOME programs. Mr. Lawrence will serve as Financial Director, ensuring compliance with vendor acquisition policies and procedures, timely reporting, and payment application review and submission using the EPA ASAP system.
- Ms. Patti DeCarr, Senior Administrative Aide, will oversee Community Outreach including coordinating and conducting meetings and preparing materials. Ms. DeCarr has extensive knowledge of Utica's community groups, public engagement, BOAs, government and history.
- Mr. William M. Borrill, Esq., Utica Corporation Counsel, will provide legal assistance as requested, including the NYSDEC cleanup agreement and property transfer to site developers.

#### **4.c Acquiring Additional Resources**

Administration of grant activities will be fully undertaken by DEUD. DEUD has experience in the administration of grant funds at local, state, and federal levels as noted in 4.d. below. However, DEUD does not have the internal capability to perform some technical aspects of the grant including environmental assessments and planning. Therefore, DEUD intends to select qualified individuals and firms such as QEP, through a competitive process to assist with reporting, community participation, and completion of environmental assessments, remediation plans, and reuse plans. DEUD will solicit and contract services through DEUD's procurement process. DEUD's Procurement Policies and Procedures also encourage the participation of local businesses and are posted on their website. Additionally, DEUD has and will procure contractors in compliance with fair and open competition requirements noted in 2 CFR Part 200 & Part 1500.

#### **Past Performance and Accomplishments**

##### **4.d Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant**

Utica received EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant BP99290601 in September 1998 (end date of September 2005).

(1) Accomplishments: it was reported that Activities completed under the Assessment grant:

- Identified 53 properties as brownfield sites and ranked for assessment.
- Seven Phase Is were completed.
- Three Phase IIs were completed.

The assessment activities led to two cleanup projects at a cost of \$870,000 that leveraged 255 jobs and \$4,900,000 in redevelopment. \$5,770,630 in brownfield initiative funding was received from other sources. Information on these sites was reported in ACRES and is up to date. Public outreach meetings were held to educate City residents on the brownfield program, share updates, identify sites and redevelopment potential. Utica scheduled and attended semi-monthly meetings throughout the grant period with the QEP to ensure progress. A brownfield flyer was created, printed, and distributed at multiple city and town notice boards.

Compliance with Grant Requirements: During the administration of the grant, meetings were held at milestones by Utica officials and interested/invested parties to review progress and make recommendations. Upon conclusion, a review was completed to determine the overall success and/or areas requiring improvement. These reports were submitted to the awarding agency within the grant requirements. The reporting requirements within the grant (monthly and quarterly), were completed on time and submitted in the required report formats, including ACRES reporting. No corrective actions were required during the administration of the grants.

**City of Utica  
Brownfield Cleanup Grant**

**THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES**

1. Applicant Eligibility

The applicant is a City.

a. Documentation of applicant eligibility if other than a city, county, state, or Tribe: e.g., resolutions, statutes, Intertribal Consortium documentation, or documentation of 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status or qualified community development entity.

Not Applicable, (a City)

b. A Statement of 501 (c)(4) tax-exempt status and if applicable, legal opinion regarding lobbying activities.

Not Applicable, (a City)

2 Previously awarded Cleanup Grants

The proposed site has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfield cleanup grant.

3. Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds.

The applicant does not have a previous multipurpose grant.

4. Site Ownership information

City of Utica is the sole owner of the site.

5. Basic Site Information

Mele Manufacturing  
1904 Erie St,  
Utica, NY 13502

6. Status of History of contamination at the site:

*Contaminant type:*

Hazardous Substances

# City of Utica Brownfield Cleanup Grant

## THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES

### *The operational history and current use:*

The site is currently vacant and was used by various manufacturing operations for production of knitting goods, jewelry boxes, plastic flooring, and coal storage from at least 1899 until 2004 when the facility was abandoned.

### *Environmental Concerns:*

The site is contaminated by Hazardous substances including Volatile Organic Compounds, Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons and metal contaminants which are present in the soil and groundwater.

### *How the site became contaminated:*

- Chlorinated compounds present in the soil and groundwater due to a release in the vicinity of the former wash house and boiler house.
- The manufacture of jewelry boxes has led to the residual presence of metals, lubricants, and solvents.
- A large Cistern was located on the property, which may have been a receptacle for waste discharges from various manufacturing processes.
- The eventual filling of the original Erie Canal was filled with unknown materials in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, from which there exists little-to-no documentation.
- It is also possible that there was a coal storage area on or adjacent to the site.

### *Nature and the extent of the contamination:*

All investigations confirm that contamination including Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals are present in soil and groundwater throughout the site. The chlorinated solvent plume is located in the south central portion of the site. PAHs and metal contaminants are primarily located in the northern section of the site and are likely related to the presence of fill materials.

### 7. An affirmative statement that the site meets the definition of a brownfield site

The site is a) not listed or proposed for 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 by parties under CERCLA: and c) not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the US government.

**City of Utica**  
**Brownfield Cleanup Grant**

**THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES**

8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Applications:

Description of the environmental assessment conducted at the site.

A Phase I ESA was completed in 2014, followed by a Phase II ESA in 2016, and a Supplemental Subsurface Investigation in 2017 and 2025. All investigations confirm that contamination including Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals are present in soil and groundwater throughout the site which validates that this is a brownfield site.

9. Site Characterization

b. The site is eligible to be enrolled in NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP). In addition, a BCP application has been submitted to the NYSDEC. See attached letter from NYSDEC stating site is eligible and notification of NYSDEC acknowledging receipt of application.

10. Information on enforcement or other actions or affirmation that there are no enforcement or other actions

There are no known on-going or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions related to the site for which the brownfield grant is sought.

11. Property -specific determination info. or an affirmative statement that a property specific determination is not required.

There is no property specific determination required for this site since it does not meet any of the special classes of properties that require a property specific determination.

12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability

Property ownership eligibility info. for hazardous substances sites, if applicable.

The Phase II and Supplemental Subsurface Investigation report confirm that the site is contaminated with hazardous substances. The City of Utica is exempt from CERCLA liability based upon the following:

**Property Acquired Under Certain Circumstances by Units of State and Local Government**

State and local units of government that acquired ownership or control of a property by any of the circumstances listed below and did not cause or contribute to any

# City of Utica Brownfield Cleanup Grant

## THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES

contamination at the property, are exempt from liability for any previous contamination at that property and, therefore, do **not** have to demonstrate that they meet the requirements of a CERCLA liability defense to be eligible for a Brownfields Grant. Such circumstances include:

- Seizure or in connection with any law enforcement activity.
- Bankruptcy.
- Tax delinquency.
- Abandonment; or
- Other circumstances where title to the property was acquired by virtue of the government's function as sovereign.

**The following will demonstrate that the City of Utica is exempt from CERCLA liability:**

**(a) Describe in detail the circumstances (from the list above) under which the property was acquired.**

The property was acquired by the City of Utica through tax foreclosure in July 2009.

**(b) Provide the date on which the property was acquired.**

The property was acquired on July 30, 2009

**(c) Identify whether all disposal of hazardous substances at the site occurred before you acquired the property.**

All of the disposal of hazardous substances at 1904 Erie Street occurred before the City of Utica acquired the site.

**(d) Affirm that you have not caused or contributed to any release of hazardous substances at the site.**

The City of Utica did not contribute to any release of hazardous substances at the site.

**(e) Affirm that you have not, at any time, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.**

I affirm that the City of Utica has not, at any time, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.

Property ownership eligibility info. for petroleum sites, if applicable

Not applicable, not a petroleum site.

13. Description of cleanup authority and oversight structure

# City of Utica

## Brownfield Cleanup Grant

### THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES

**Technical Expertise and Oversight.** Utica has submitted an application to enter the NYSDEC BCP to obtain NYSDEC oversight of the site cleanup.

**Brownfield Cleanup Agreement.** All parties must sign a Brownfield Cleanup Agreement (BCA) whereby the Applicant makes a commitment to undertake remedial activities under DEC's oversight. The obligations of an Applicant under a BCA depend upon whether the Applicant is accepted into the BCP as either a Volunteer or a Participant. The City of Utica would be considered a Volunteer – an applicant who is not liable for disposal of hazardous waste or discharge of petroleum at the site.

**BCP Reporting Requirement.** All environmental investigation and cleanup activities must be performed in accordance with Work Plan or design documents approved by DEC. Reports documenting the completion of all work must be submitted to DEC for approval in order to receive a Certificate of Completion. The documents are typically prepared by the Applicant's engineering consultant and require certification by either a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) or a Professional Engineer (PE) registered in New York State.

**Citizen Participation.** To facilitate the remedial process and enable citizens to participate more fully in decisions that affect their health, the DEC will require opportunities for citizen involvement and will encourage consultation with the public early in the process.

A Citizen Participation Plan which provides details on the citizen participation activities that will occur at several milestones during a BCP project must be submitted within 20 days of the executed Brownfield Cleanup Agreement and must be approved by DEC before any other work plans/reports can be approved. The handbook provides details of the requirements of the citizen participation program for the BCP.

**Remedy Selection.** The selection of remedies is based on the characterization of nature and extent of contamination on the site and qualitative exposure assessment. A Participant in the Brownfield Cleanup Program must evaluate and implement an effective remedy that addresses not only contamination on-site but any contamination that has migrated off-site. A Volunteer in the Brownfield Cleanup Program must evaluate and implement an effective remedy to address the contamination on-site as well as prevent further migration of contamination to off-site properties.

The Remedial Alternatives Analysis Report identifies one or more remedial alternatives and evaluates the effectiveness of each alternative with respect to the remedy selection evaluation criteria as presented in 6 NYCRR Part 375 and DER-10.

# City of Utica Brownfield Cleanup Grant

## THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES

Remedies in the BCP are selected from four cleanups:

- **Track 1** - no restrictions on the use of the property.
- **Track 2** - restricted use with generic soil cleanup objectives (SCOs) based on the intended use of the property-residential, restricted residential (single family houses not allowed), commercial, or industrial.
- **Track 3** - restricted use with modified SCOs based on the same uses described in track 2 above.
- **Track 4** - restricted use with site-specific soil cleanup objectives, where the shallow exposed soils must meet the generic SCOs used for track 2 above.

Once a remedy has been proposed, a fact sheet will be issued noticing the availability of the Remedial Work Plan (Remedial Alternatives Analysis or Remedial Action Work Plan) and presenting the proposed remedy for a 45-day public comment period. DEC will consider the public comments for final remedy selection, have the applicant revise the plan as necessary, and issue a final Decision Document which describes the selected remedy. The applicant(s) may then design and perform the cleanup action to address the site contamination, with oversight by DEC and the NYS Department of Health.

**Certificate of Completion.** DEC issues a Certificate of Completion at the completion of a BCP project and upon a determination that the remedial action objectives for the BCP site as defined in the Decision Document have been achieved. A Certificate of Completion allows the Applicant to receive a limitation of liability to the State of New York which applies to contamination identified by the remedial program. In addition, a Certificate of Completion makes the Applicant eligible to apply for BCP Tax Credits. The tax credits for individual sites may vary depending on when the site was accepted into the BCP.

**Competitive Purchasing.** Recognizing the absolute necessity of qualified experts required for a successful cleanup, the City of Utica will prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Qualified Environmental Engineering and/or Consulting Firm in accordance with 2 *CFR* 200.317 through 200.326 to ensure that this technical expertise is in place prior to beginning cleanup activities.

The City of Utica is a diverse community, with a growing refugee population and an increasingly entrepreneurial culture. As a community, we directly solicit and encourage the participation of minority-owned, women-owned, and immigrant-owned enterprises.

**Accessibility and Impact on Neighboring Properties.** Fortunately, the structures on this site have long-since been demolished, and the site is accessible from Erie Street, Oriskany Street, and a service drive. We foresee little to no impact on neighboring properties.

With DEC oversight comes the additional assurance that the public and adjacent property owners are informed at each step along the way. Direct mailings and neighborhood

**City of Utica**  
**Brownfield Cleanup Grant**

**THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES**

meetings will continue to inform neighbors and stakeholders of the planned and ongoing cleanup activities. The City of Utica will coordinate with the Ward Councilor.

14. Community Notification documents

The following are attached:

Copy of the Ad

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held January 12th, 2026, at 3 PM in the Utica Department of Urban and Economic Development, Utica City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 1 Kennedy Plaza, Utica NY to discuss the Brownfield EPA Cleanup Application and ABCA. No one attended the meeting, nor were any comments received.

15. Discussion on contractors and named subrecipients, or an affirmative statement that a contractor has not been procured and a subrecipient has not been named.

No contractors and named subrecipients have been named.



**Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation**

**KATHY HOCHUL**  
Governor

**AMANDA LEFTON**  
Commissioner

December 5, 2025

Brian Thomas  
Commissioner, Urban and Economic Development  
City of Utica  
1 Kennedy Plaza  
Utica, NY 13502

Re: 1712 Erie Street, Utica (C), Oneida County  
Investigation and Brownfield Cleanup Program

Dear Mr. Thomas:

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) acknowledges that the City of Utica plans to conduct the cleanup of a brownfield site and is applying for an FY26 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

The City of Utica has developed an application requesting site-specific federal Brownfields Cleanup funding for Former Mele Manufacturing Facility located at 1712 Erie Street, Utica, NY.

The Department affirms that:

- i. City of Utica will request State oversight for the site;
- ii. The site is eligible to be overseen by a State program or office; and
- iii. Based upon the environmental site assessments performed to date and information provided by the applicant, the State oversight program concurs that the site has had a sufficient level of site characterization for the remediation work to begin.

If you have any questions, or need additional forms, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kelly Hale, I.G.,  
Assistant Geologist  
[kelly.hale@dec.ny.gov](mailto:kelly.hale@dec.ny.gov)

cc: N. Azzam, USEPA Region 2  
S. Mitchell, USEPA Region 2  
K. Hale, DEC Region 6  
J. Smith-Gagnon DEC Region 6  
D. Storandt, DEC Region 6  
J. Pelton, DEC Albany  
B. Thomas, City of Utica  
L. Cohen, City of Utica  
C. George, HRP Associates