



## Application Information Sheet

### (1) Applicant Identification:

Friends of the Rail Park  
1219 Vine, Philadelphia PA 19107-1130

(2) Website URL: [www.therailpark.org](http://www.therailpark.org)

### (3) Funding Requested

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

### (4) Location

City: Philadelphia  
County: Philadelphia County  
State: Pennsylvania

### (5) Target Area and Priority Site Information

Approximate project site address: 420 N 16th, 19107

Target area description: Study area is approximately 2.87 acres of former rail infrastructure bounded by N 16th Street to the east, N 20th Street to the west, Callowhill Street to the south, and Hamilton Street to the north in Philadelphia's Logan Square and Spring Garden neighborhoods (Census Tracts 125.01 and 125.02)

Address of the priority site(s): Approximate address 420 N 16th, 19107

A map has been attached to visually depict the target areas and priority sites

### (6) Contacts

a. Project Director: Nicole McDonald  
Phone: 215-485-2221  
Email: [nicole@therailpark.org](mailto:nicole@therailpark.org)  
Mailing address: 1219 Vine, STE M, Philadelphia PA 19107

b. Chief Executive: Rebecca Chan  
Phone: 847-915-2088  
Email: [rebecca@therailpark.org](mailto:rebecca@therailpark.org)  
Mailing address: 1219 Vine, STE M, Philadelphia PA 19107

(7) Population: 1,570,000

**(8) Other Factors Checklist:**

<b>Information on the Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 15,000 or less.	
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	2-3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2), for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	8
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	

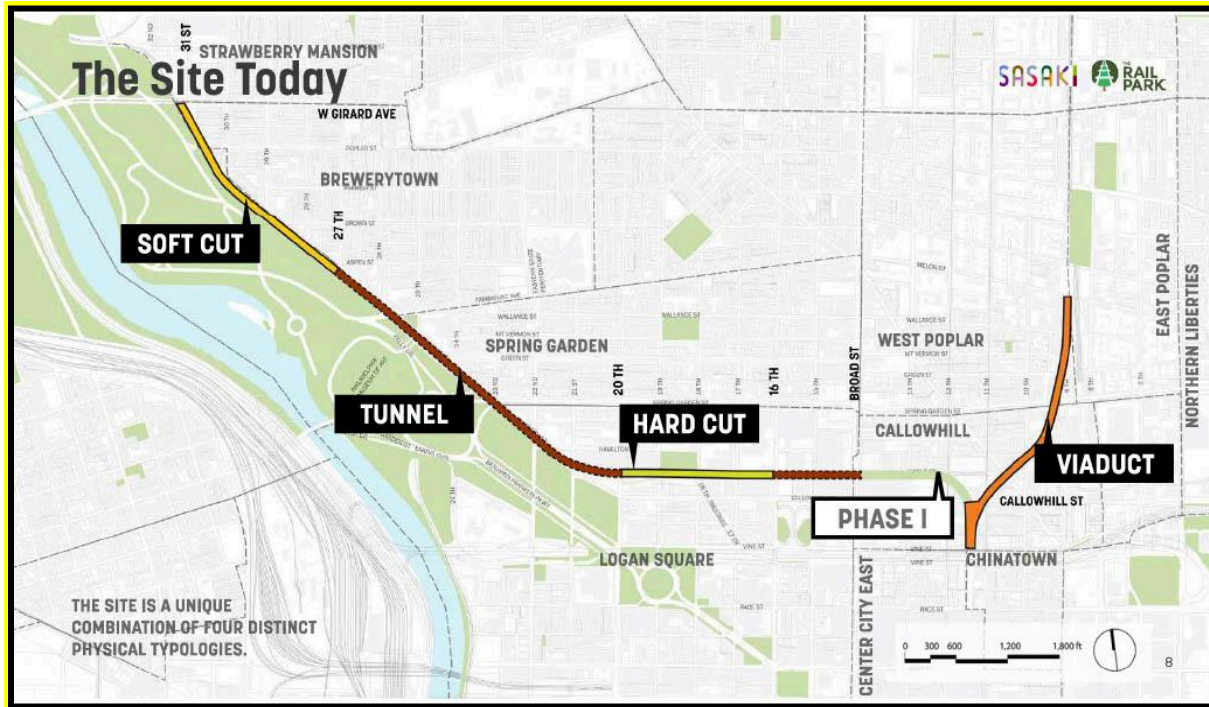
**(9) Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority**

Please find attached a letter dated December 23 2025 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection acknowledging our intent to apply for FY26 grant funds and conduct assessment activities.

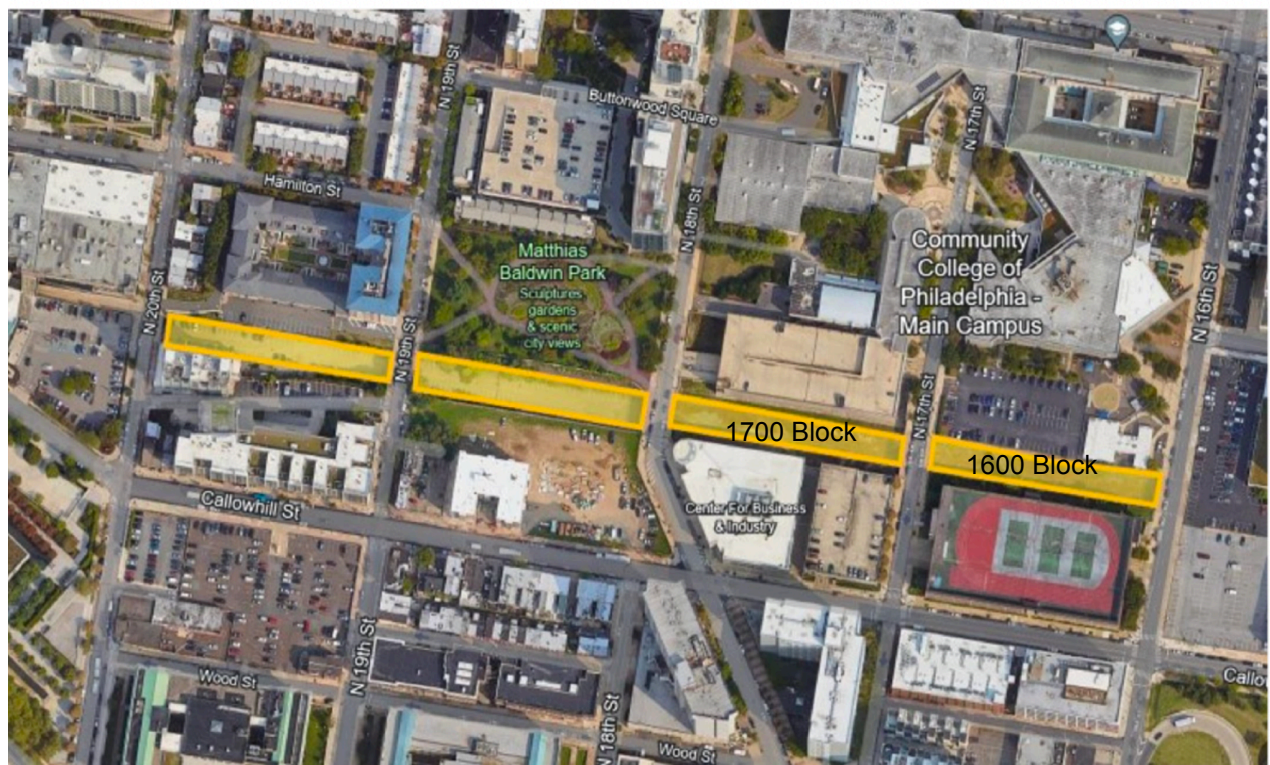
**(10) Releasing Copies of Applications**

CBI not applicable

Attachment - Site Map



Map of the Rail Park's three mile vision, including "The Hard Cut" or The Cut in yellow. The project site is depicted below in yellow.





December 23, 2025

Ms. Rebecca Cordes Chan, Executive Director  
Friends of the Rail Park  
1219 Vine St., Suite M  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

**RE: U.S. EPA Brownfields Grant Proposal | State Letter of Acknowledgement  
Friends of the Rail Park  
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania**

Dear Ms. Cordes Chan:

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is pleased to support your efforts to redevelop brownfield properties in your regional area. Returning environmentally challenged and underutilized land and buildings to productive use improves our environment, safeguards our residents, and helps boost Pennsylvania's economy.

The DEP supports the Friends of the Rail Park application for a US EPA Brownfields FY26 Community-Wide Assessment Grant in the amount of \$500,000 to create clean-up and reuse planning and conduct community engagement activities.

The Friends of the Rail Park efforts to examine the redevelopment potential of aggregated, underutilized sites to create renewed neighborhoods and business districts in Pennsylvania is a worthwhile endeavor.

Both Central Office and Regional Office Staff in the Land Recycling Program look forward to supporting Friends of the Rail Park and U.S. EPA Region 3 on this project.

If you have any questions, please contact John Gross by email at [johngross@pa.gov](mailto:johngross@pa.gov) or by telephone at 717-783-7502.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Maddigan".

Michael Maddigan  
Land Recycling Program Manager  
Bureau Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields

**NARRATIVE****(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION****Target Area and Brownfields**

**a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area:** The SEPTA City Branch, locally known as “The Cut,” is a former rail corridor located within Census Tracts 125.01 and 125.02 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Historically associated with the Pennsylvania Railroad and Philadelphia’s industrial legacy as the “Workshop of the World,” The Cut is a below-grade, linear corridor approximately 0.4 miles long that has been vacant and underutilized for decades. Its former industrial and rail-related uses combined with prolonged disinvestment, have created significant barriers to reuse, including potential environmental contamination, physical inaccessibility, and uncertainty regarding site conditions.

The target area encompasses approximately 2.87 acres and “cuts” through Community College of Philadelphia’s (CCP) campus, connecting Broad Street, a major Philadelphia north-south corridor to the many civic and cultural institutions along Parkway, ending at the iconic Philadelphia Museum of Art. Although centrally located, the site currently functions as a physical and psychological barrier within the urban fabric, contributing to blight, safety concerns, and missed opportunities for community-serving reuse.

Grant funds will be used to conduct robust community engagement and to develop a comprehensive cleanup and reuse plan for The Cut, targeting the site as the next major phase of Philadelphia’s Rail Park. While there is widespread public and stakeholder support for cleaning up and reusing The Cut, existing efforts remain at a high-level conceptual stage. The proposed planning process will translate that vision into an actionable, phased strategy that integrates environmental assessment, cleanup planning, community priorities, and feasible reuse scenarios. In doing so, the project will directly address the brownfield-related challenges that currently inhibit redevelopment and long-term public benefit.

**b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s):** The Cut is a former railroad right-of-way extending approximately four blocks between N. 16th and N. 20th Streets and situated roughly 25 feet below street grade. This below-grade condition creates access, drainage, and redevelopment constraints typical of legacy rail infrastructure and complicates both environmental investigation and reuse planning. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (June 2024) identified a Recognized Environmental Condition associated with historic rail operations and recommended further investigation in areas where soils may be disturbed. A subsequent Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (January 2025) documented soil exceedances of applicable screening criteria for constituents consistent with legacy rail and industrial corridors, including VOCs, metals, and PCBs. Certain PCB detections may be subject to TSCA requirements, underscoring the need for coordinated assessment and cleanup planning aligned with future reuse.

While this assessment grant will consider environmental conditions across the full four-block length of The Cut to support a comprehensive understanding of corridor-wide conditions, the priority brownfield sites for this application are the **1700 Block** and **1600 Block** segments. These two contiguous blocks bisect the CCP campus, are currently overgrown and blighted, and represent the most immediate constraints to safe access, interim activation, and long-term reuse. Concentrating assessment activities in these blocks will allow the project to address the areas of highest redevelopment pressure and greatest potential community benefit while informing future phases along the remainder of the corridor.

These priority segments also include the Sellers Bridge, the last remaining structure associated with the Matthias Baldwin Locomotive Works era, presenting a unique opportunity to integrate environmental assessment and remediation planning with historic preservation and community-serving reuse. Beyond environmental conditions, the degraded state of the 1600 and 1700 Blocks contributes to visible blight and underutilization within a dense institutional and residential area that lacks accessible

green space and outdoor gathering areas, limiting opportunities for student well-being, neighborhood connectivity, and community engagement.

**c. Identifying Additional Sites:** Additional brownfield sites within the geographic boundary will be identified through the phased planning and feasibility analysis conducted under this grant. The site reuse planning process will establish clear criteria for identifying and prioritizing additional sites, including environmental conditions, reuse potential, community benefit, connectivity, and feasibility of assessment and cleanup. If grant funds remain after completion of activities at the priority site, Friends of the Rail Park (FRP) will evaluate other undeveloped or underutilized segments of historic rail infrastructure that comprise the Rail Park's 3 mile corridor. This approach ensures assessment and planning activities are coordinated, strategic, and aligned with an area-wide revitalization framework rather than isolated interventions.

#### **Revitalization of the Target Area**

**d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans:** The reuse strategy for the priority site is The Rail Park: a vision to transform three miles of historic rail infrastructure into a publicly accessible linear park and greenway. The Cut represents a critical next phase of this vision and is projected to be reused as publicly accessible green space serving the Community College of Philadelphia and the Logan Square, Spring Garden, Callowhill, and Chinatown neighborhoods.

The Cut is a key connector in the Rail Park's vision, linking more than ten Philadelphia neighborhoods and serving an estimated 100,000 residents living within a ten-minute walk. The reuse strategy also positions the site as a catalyst for economic development, with opportunities for small-scale concessions, cultural and community events, and workforce development through both site construction and long-term maintenance and operations.

The project will integrate green infrastructure and stormwater management features to address chronic flooding in this area of the city and to mitigate the urban heat island effect, particularly given the site's proximity to I-676, Philadelphia's cross-town highway. These strategies align environmental remediation with climate resilience and public health objectives.

Phase I of The Rail Park—a quarter-mile viaduct segment transformed into a public park featuring native plants, walking pathways, and public art—opened to the public in 2018 and serves as a proven model for successful reuse. The site attracts approximately 40,000 visitors annually, demonstrating strong public demand, broad community support, and the feasibility of transforming former rail infrastructure into vibrant public space in Philadelphia.

The Rail Park, and redevelopment of The Cut, is explicitly aligned with adopted planning and policy frameworks, including the Philadelphia 2035 Comprehensive Plan, relevant Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission initiatives, and Community College of Philadelphia's campus planning goals. It has been identified as a community priority by the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Chinatown Development Corporation, and through the 2023 Rail Park Visioning Study. The project also has demonstrated support from state and local elected officials.

**e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:** The proposed project will stimulate economic development by preserving historic infrastructure and transforming currently underutilized, undeveloped property into a publicly accessible park and greenway. Modeling the success of Rail Park Phase I, the site will be operated by a 501(c)3 in partnership with community stakeholders and institutional partners, ensuring long-term stewardship and public benefit.

Environmental and public health outcomes include reduced exposure to potential contaminants, increased access to green space, and enhanced neighborhood connectivity. The project will significantly improve local resilience to extreme weather events, particularly flooding, through integrated stormwater management strategies. In addition, reuse of The Cut will reduce the urban heat island effect; Rail Park Phase I has already demonstrated localized temperature reductions of up to three degrees Fahrenheit, and similar benefits are anticipated for this phase.

Collectively, these outcomes advance EPA Brownfields Program goals by preparing contaminated land for sustainable reuse, improving environmental conditions, protecting public health, and restoring economic and social vitality to the surrounding community.

### **Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

**f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse:** The EPA-funded reuse and cleanup planning work proposed in this grant is the critical “unlock,” reducing uncertainty, defining feasible reuse scenarios, and positioning the project to compete for and secure follow-on investment. FRP has a demonstrated track record of braiding public and private dollars to deliver Phase I and will apply the same approach here: pursuing state and local implementation funding once a reuse plan and cleanup pathway are established, while also leveraging private philanthropy and institutional partners to support design, construction, and long-term operations. FRP plans to apply for state grant resources that can be accessed during and/or after assessment efforts, including the PA Department of Community and Economic Development Local Share Account (\$500k), Neighborhood Assistance Program (\$250k), and Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (\$10M). Private philanthropic sources include the Knight Foundation (\$3M) and the William Penn Foundation (\$1M). In partnership with City Councilmembers, FRP is also exploring the creation of a tax increment district in the Target Areas, which could provide sustainable long-term funding in the future.

**g. Use of Existing Infrastructure:** The site reuse plan will be explicitly designed to capitalize on The Cut’s existing infrastructure and physical form as a former railroad right-of-way in an uninterrupted, below-grade corridor with multiple cross-streets spanning above it. While these conditions create access and design constraints, they also uniquely support linear open space reuse, phased implementation, and efficient integration with surrounding neighborhoods.

Reuse planning will also address site control and technical requirements associated with existing infrastructure, including an unrestricted sub-surface easement for fiber and telecommunications infrastructure, requiring coordinated design and construction sequencing to protect ongoing services. In addition, the plan will integrate historic rail-era elements within the corridor, including the above-ground Sellers Bridge at 17th Street, pairing remediation with preservation and adaptive reuse to reinforce the site’s historic character while supporting long-term functionality.

## **(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**a. The Community’s Need for Funding** Philadelphia and FRP lack dedicated funding to carry out the environmental assessment, reuse and cleanup planning required to advance The Cut from a brownfield to a community-serving asset. This gap is especially pronounced because the intended reuse is nonprofit public infrastructure—a public greenway—rather than private redevelopment that could absorb pre-development costs. EPA Community-wide Assessment funding is therefore essential to overcome the pre-development barrier that has left the site inaccessible and underutilized despite broad public support. By funding inventory and prioritization, community engagement, reuse planning, and cleanup planning, EPA will reduce uncertainty, define a feasible cleanup pathway, and position the project to leverage state, local, and philanthropic implementation resources.

**b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:** Sensitive populations within and immediately adjacent to the target area include students, faculty, and staff at the Community College of Philadelphia and residents of the surrounding Logan Square and Spring Garden neighborhoods (Census Tracts 125.01 and 125.02); residents and workers in nearby neighborhoods such as Chinatown (Census Tracts 131 and 141), where households are more likely to include low income, limited-English-proficiency individuals; and populations more vulnerable to environmental exposures, including children, older adults, pregnant people, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular conditions. EJScreen indicators for census tracts surrounding The Cut indicate elevated cumulative environmental burdens, including wastewater discharge, hazardous waste proximity, ozone exposure, and traffic proximity, all ranking in the 95th–100th percentiles, which compound baseline health vulnerabilities and increase risks associated with daily exposure.

The greatest threat to the health and welfare of these sensitive populations is the presence of The Cut itself, where legacy contamination, unmanaged stormwater, limited tree canopy, heat-retaining surfaces, and traffic-related air pollution intersect with frequent pedestrian use. Assessment activities supported by this grant will reduce these threats by clarifying contamination and exposure pathways, incorporating community input on site use, and informing cleanup planning and reuse strategies that prioritize health-protective outcomes, including safe pedestrian greenway access separated from vehicular traffic, increased shade and tree canopy, stormwater management features, and site designs that reduce exposure and improve environmental conditions, consistent with EPA EJ priorities.

**c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions:** Philadelphia, and in particular census tracts 125.01, 125.02, 131 and 141 face persistent chronic disease challenges, including elevated asthma impacts, which are intensified near major transportation corridors and in areas with limited access to green space. Reuse of The Cut as a greenway and public open space, informed by assessment and cleanup planning, will help identify and reduce exposure risks from legacy contaminants through risk-based cleanup strategies and long-term exposure controls where needed. At the same time, green infrastructure associated with reuse will deliver health co-benefits, including reduced heat stress, improved stormwater performance, and increased opportunities for physical activity and safe outdoor gathering, in areas of the city with just 4% tree cover compared to the citywide goal of 30%. Community engagement will further inform protective design and operational measures, such as dust controls during construction and safe access points, ensuring the project responds to populations experiencing the greatest health burdens.

**d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations:** The target area reflects the cumulative impacts of historic industrial use, major transportation infrastructure, and uneven investment patterns that have concentrated environmental burdens while limiting access to high-quality public space. Just a block away, the Vine Street Expressway (I-676) divides neighborhoods and contributes to localized environmental stressors; reuse of The Cut as a continuous public greenway is designed to reconnect communities and transform blighted, unusable land into a shared public asset. This grant will address disproportionate impacts by supporting a community-driven, phased cleanup and reuse plan that prioritizes public benefit rather than displacement-driven redevelopment.

In an area in which the EJScreen puts portions of the study area within the 90-100 percentile of concentrations of low-income individuals, the project also embeds economic mobility strategies into reuse planning by leveraging proximity to CCP and a nearby vocational high school to create workforce pathways in planning, environmental assessment, construction, and long-term operations. In addition, partnerships with CCP’s small business center will create opportunities for on-site revenue generation by small businesses and entrepreneurs, ensuring EPA-funded activities reduce environmental risk while advancing community-serving revitalization.

**2.e. Project Involvement and 2.f Project Roles:** FRP will implement this project through a cross-sector partnership to ensure site selection, assessment priorities, cleanup planning, and reuse decisions are community-informed and coordinated with key public agencies and institutional stakeholders.

Entity Name & Mission	Point of contact	Project Involvement
Community College of Philadelphia: Public higher education institution providing education and workforce development	Dr. Shannon Rooney, VP of External Affairs, srooney@ccp.edu	Host and support engagement; advise on reuse programming and stewardship; support workforce pathways

Logan Square Neighborhood Association: Resident civic association supporting quality of life and neighborhood engagement	W. Alan Williams [REDACTED]	Neighborhood outreach; recruit participants; review and provide input on reuse alternatives
Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation: Equitable development and cultural preservation for Chinatown	John Chin, CEO jchin@chinatown-pcdc.org	Community outreach with language access; recruit residents and businesses; review reuse alternatives
Park to Broad: Community development corporation and neighborhood improvement in Fairmount & Spring Garden	Patrick Sherlock, Executive Director, psherlock@fairmountcdc.org	Community engagement; align reuse planning with neighborhood priorities and amenities
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA): Regional transit authority and rail infrastructure owner	Kenneth Starr, Director of Real Estate, KStarr@septa.org	Coordinate site access and technical constraints; review easements and operational compatibility
City of Philadelphia Planning Commission: Citywide planning and land use policy agency	Ian Litwin, District 1 Planner, Ian.Litwin@phila.gov	Align reuse and cleanup planning with adopted plans and zoning; advise on feasibility and interagency coordination
City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems: Transportation and multimodal infrastructure planning	Sarah Clarke Stuart, sarah.clark.stuart@phila.gov	Advise on access, connectivity, and street interfaces influencing reuse feasibility
Philadelphia Parks & Recreation: City agency overseeing parks and recreation	Darren Fava, darren.fava@phila.gov	Advise on operations, maintenance, and programming; greenspace reuse concepts
Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC): Public-private economic development agency	Kelly Lee, klee@pidcphila.com	Advise on implementation readiness, financing and market context
Philadelphia City Council (district and at-large): Legislative body representing residents	CM Squilla, <a href="mailto:mark.squilla@phila.gov">mark.squilla@phila.gov</a> ; CM Young j.young@phila.gov	Support community convening and communications; align reuse planning with district priorities

**g. Incorporating Community Input:** FRP will implement a focused and inclusive engagement strategy to ensure community input informs site selection, assessment priorities, cleanup planning, and future reuse of The Cut. Project updates will be shared through quarterly public meetings, virtual participation options, and monthly digital communications, providing multiple accessible ways for residents and partners to stay informed. FRP will gather input through targeted workshops, surveys, small-group discussions, and outreach at community events, in partnership with trusted neighborhood organizations. Language access and accessible formats will be provided as needed. Feedback will be

reviewed at key decision points and summarized in “what we heard / how it informed decisions” updates to ensure transparency and accountability.

This engagement builds on established relationships, including successful collaboration on the Rail Park Visioning Study (2023) and the Community First Plan (2025). These efforts demonstrate FRP’s ability to convene stakeholders, translate community input into actionable outcomes, and sustain trust, ensuring the engagement represents a deepening of a proven, community-driven framework.

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

<b>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Management &amp; Oversight</b>
<p><b>a. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities</b> FRP will provide overall cooperative agreement oversight, including coordination with the EPA Project Officer; compliance with EPA reporting, procurement, and environmental results requirements; financial tracking; and performance reporting. EPA funds will support direct programmatic costs associated with performance and financial reporting and environmental oversight, which are allowable programmatic costs under EPA guidance. FRP will procure Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEPs) and planning consultants through competitive, federally compliant procurement processes and will manage all consultant scopes, schedules, and deliverables. <b>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</b> FRP will contribute in-kind staff time for senior leadership oversight and governance not charged to the EPA grant.</p>
<p><b>b. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Ongoing throughout period of performance (36 months)</p>
<p><b>c. Task/Activity Lead:</b> Friends of the Rail Park (applicant)</p>
<p><b>d. Outputs:</b> Executed consultant contracts, Quarterly progress reports, Financial and performance reports submitted on schedule</p>

<b>Task 2: Brownfield Inventory, Site Selection, and Prioritization &amp; ESAs</b>
<p><b>a. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities:</b> FRP and its consultants will develop and refine a brownfield inventory for the The Cut corridor and establish transparent, community-informed criteria for prioritizing sites for assessment, cleanup planning, and reuse. Criteria will include environmental risk, feasibility, community benefit, infrastructure conditions, and alignment with reuse goals. This task reflects EPA best practices for area-wide and corridor-based brownfield planning. Additionally, under FRP oversight, a Qualified Environmental Professional will conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments in compliance with All Appropriate Inquiries (40 CFR Part 312) and Phase II ESAs where warranted. Activities will include site access coordination, sampling, laboratory analysis, and documentation of environmental conditions. <b>Non-EPA grant resources needed:</b> Use of existing FRP planning documents, data, and prior visioning work (in-kind).</p>
<p><b>b. Anticipated Project Schedule:</b> Months 1-24</p>
<p><b>c. Task/Activity Lead:</b> Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), selected through competitive procurement with support from FRP</p>
<p><b>d. Outputs:</b> Brownfield site inventory, Site prioritization criteria and matrix, Documentation of selected priority site(s); Phase I ESA report(s), Phase II ESA report(s) with analytical results, Updated site characterization summaries</p>

**Task 3: Community Engagement and Community Liaison Support**

- a. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities:** FRP will conduct community engagement to inform site selection, reuse planning, and cleanup planning through public meetings, workshops, surveys, tabling, and small-group discussions in partnership with trusted community organizations. Engagement will occur throughout the project period and be aligned with key milestones, including site prioritization, assessment findings, cleanup planning, and reuse scenario development. To reduce barriers to participation, FRP may use participant support costs such as stipends for community liaison(s), childcare, and transportation, with rates established in advance based on time commitment and local norms and paid only for actual participation. FRP will maintain documentation, including receipts and attendance records, to ensure allowability and prevent duplication of assistance from other Federal, State, or local programs. **Leveraged/non-EPA resources:** FRP senior leadership oversight, partner outreach support and meeting space (in-kind).
- b. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Months 1–36 (with engagement aligned to planning and assessment milestones)
- c. Task/Activity Lead:** FRP with community engagement consultant support
- d. Outputs:** Minimum of 8–12 community meetings/workshops, Engagement summaries documenting input received, “What we heard / how it informed decisions” reports

**Task 4: Cleanup Planning and Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA)**

- a. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities:** FRP and its QEP will develop site-specific cleanup planning documents informed by assessment results and projected reuse scenarios. This includes preparation of Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) or equivalent documents, evaluating cleanup options based on protectiveness, feasibility, cost, and consistency with future reuse. **Non-EPA grant resources needed:** none
- b. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Months 18–30
- c. Task/Activity Lead:** Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP)
- d. Outputs:** Completed ABCA(s) or cleanup planning documents, EPA review and acceptance

**Task 5: Site Reuse Planning and Area-Wide Planning**

- a. Project Implementation / EPA-funded tasks/activities:** FRP will develop site reuse plans and/or an area-wide reuse plan for The Cut corridor that integrates environmental conditions, community priorities, infrastructure constraints, market context, and climate resilience considerations. Planning activities may include reuse scenario development, evaluation of infrastructure needs, and identification of implementation phasing and readiness steps. **Non-EPA grant resources needed:** Alignment with existing City, institutional, and neighborhood plans (in-kind).
- b. Anticipated Project Schedule:** Months 12–36

<b>c. Task/Activity Lead:</b> FRP with planning consultant
<b>d. Outputs:</b> Site-specific reuse plan(s) and/or area-wide plan, Implementation roadmap and phasing strategy

FRP will not issue subawards; External expertise will be obtained through contractor agreements.

**e. Cost Estimates:**

Category	Project Tasks					
	Task 1 Management & Oversight	Task 2 Inventory & ESAs	Task 3 Engagement & Participant Support	Task 4 Cleanup & ABCA(s)	Task 5 Site Reuse & Area Wide Planning	Total
Personnel	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$25,000		\$10,000	\$65,000
Fringe	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000		\$1,000	\$4,000
Travel	\$3,000					\$3,000
Supplies			\$10,000			
Contractual		\$185,000	\$68,000	\$70,000	\$95,000	\$418,000
<b>Total Direct</b>	\$24,000	\$196,000	\$104,000	\$70,000	\$106,000	\$500,000
*no equipment, construction, or “other” costs are associated with request; all costs direct costs						

**Task 1:** \$20,000 (400 hours, \$50/hour) for FRP personnel costs to provide management, reporting, and compliance for the grant period. \$3,000 for travel expenses for one person (\$1,500 +/- per conference; hotel for 3 days at \$200/\$600; airfare-\$450; registration - \$250; incidentals (food, transportation, parking) -\$200) to an EPA Brownfields conference and a regional brownfield conference. \$1000 Fringe included in 5% allowable administrative costs.

**Task 2:** \$10,000 (200 hours, \$50/hour) for FRP personnel costs to support QEPs and \$1000 Fringe. Contractual funds will be used to procure a QEP through a competitive, federally compliant procurement process. Contracted services include development and refinement of a brownfield inventory, preparation of site prioritization criteria and matrices, Phase I ESAs conducted in accordance with 40 CFR Part 312, and Phase II ESAs where warranted. Costs cover field investigations, sampling, laboratory analysis, documentation, and final reporting. Costs for ESAs will vary depending on the history, complexity, and pollutants of each site; estimates are based on similar work in the region, but actual costs may vary as a QEP will need to be selected.

**Task 3:** \$25,000 (500 hours, \$50/hr) and \$1000 Fringe for FRP program staff to plan, coordinate, and document community engagement activities aligned with site prioritization, cleanup planning, and reuse planning milestones. Includes meeting facilitation support, coordination with community partners, preparation of engagement materials, documentation of feedback, and development of summaries. \$10,000 Supplies include printing of outreach and engagement materials such as flyers (4,000, \$.50/page), large posters (50, \$20per), and booklets (300, \$5per); facilitation supplies used during workshops and surveys and accessibility materials such as flip chart pads, directional signage, name badges, and large-print handouts (approximately \$3,500); and administrative and documentation supplies including clipboards, folders, envelopes, and printed evaluation forms to support reporting

and recordkeeping requirements (approximately \$1,000). \$68,000 Contractual funds will support a competitively selected community engagement consultant to assist with outreach strategy, facilitation, and documentation of engagement.

**Task 4:** EPA funds will support a competitively procured QEP to prepare site-specific cleanup planning documents, including Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), informed by assessment results and anticipated reuse scenarios.

**Task 5:** \$10,000 (200 hours at \$50/hr) of FRP programmatic staff time and \$1000 fringe to support reuse and area-wide planning activities, integrate community and environmental inputs. \$95,000 Contractual funds will support a competitively procured planning consultant to develop site-specific reuse plans and/or an area-wide reuse plan for The Cut corridor, including reuse scenario development, evaluation of infrastructure and climate resilience considerations, and preparation of an implementation roadmap and phasing strategy.

**f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results:** FRP will use a task-based performance tracking system to measure progress toward expected outputs and outcomes. Progress will be monitored against the approved workplan to ensure activities remain on schedule and within scope. FRP will track and document key outputs, including sites inventoried and prioritized; Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments completed; community engagement activities conducted; reuse or area-wide plans developed; and cleanup planning documents and ABCAs prepared. Outcomes will be evaluated based on increased understanding of environmental conditions, reduced uncertainty related to contamination and exposure pathways, and improved readiness for cleanup and reuse. Periodic internal reviews will be used to address challenges and ensure results are measurable, transparent, and directly attributable to EPA funding.

#### **(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

##### **a.-c. Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure, and Key Staff**

**Organizational Capacity:** Friends of the Rail Park (FRP) has the organizational capacity, systems, and experience to successfully manage the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of an EPA Community-wide Assessment Grant. Founded in the 2010s, FRP has grown from a volunteer-led effort into a staffed nonprofit serving as the designated steward and community partner for The Rail Park. FRP has led complex, multi-year planning, construction-adjacent coordination, and community engagement associated with the successful delivery and ongoing activation of Rail Park Phase I (opened 2018). FRP has a strong track record managing public funding from the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as well as multi-year, six-figure foundation grants, supported by established internal controls, procurement procedures, and reporting systems. While this would be FRP's first EPA grant, FRP is well positioned to meet all federal compliance, reporting, and performance requirements.

**Organizational Structure:** FRP operates under a governance and management structure designed to ensure accountability, timely expenditure of funds, and successful completion of technical and administrative tasks. The organization is governed by a ten-member Board of Directors with expertise in finance, real estate, environmental law, and community development. Day-to-day grant oversight will be managed by executive leadership and professional staff with clearly defined roles for program oversight, consultant coordination, financial management, and reporting. FRP will procure and manage qualified environmental and planning consultants in compliance with federal procurement requirements and will conduct regular internal reviews to track scope, schedule, budget, and deliverables. Key project staff include:

**Executive Director, Rebecca Chan:** Provides strategic leadership and overall accountability; serves as primary liaison with EPA and key partners; ensures alignment with mission and long-term implementation goals. Brings experience in brownfield planning and environmental assessment.

**Deputy Director, Nicole McDonald:** Oversees day-to-day project implementation; coordinates

consultants and community partners; leads performance tracking and reporting. Brings deep community engagement and public sector coordination experience to the organization.

**Project Manager, Amanda Moore:** Manages daily operations, schedules assessments and meetings, tracks deliverables, and supports community engagement; serves as a primary point of contact for neighborhood and institutional stakeholders.

**d. Acquiring Additional Resources:** FRP will acquire the additional technical expertise and resources required to complete this project through transparent, competitive, and federally compliant procurement procedures, consistent with 2 CFR Part 200 and Section IV of the EPA NOFO Clauses. FRP will issue Requests for Proposals and/or Requests for Qualifications to retain qualified environmental professionals and planning consultants with demonstrated experience in brownfield assessment, cleanup planning, community engagement, and urban infrastructure reuse. Contractors will be selected based on technical qualifications, relevant experience, cost reasonableness, and capacity to meet project schedules and deliverables, and will operate under FRP's direct oversight; FRP does not anticipate the use of subrecipients for this project. FRP has an established record of successfully procuring and managing consultants for federally and non-federally funded planning initiatives, maintaining clear scopes of work, performance benchmarks, invoicing controls, and documentation to ensure compliance with grant requirements. This approach minimizes administrative and financial risk while ensuring the project has timely access to the specialized expertise necessary to meet EPA Brownfields Program goals and deliver measurable outcomes.

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

**e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant:** Not applicable.

**f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements :** FRP has not previously received an EPA Brownfields Grant, but has a demonstrated record of successfully managing federal and non-federal financial assistance agreements that are comparable in structure, accountability, community engagement intensity, and deliverable-based performance to the proposed project.

#### **(1) Purpose and Accomplishments**

**National Endowment for the Arts - Federal (\$25,000).** **Purpose:** to support community engagement and visioning for The Cut corridor, including public workshops, stakeholder convenings, and synthesis of community priorities into planning concepts. **Accomplishments:** FRP completed all proposed engagement activities, expanded participation among residents, institutions, and community organizations, and produced documented engagement outputs that informed subsequent planning and feasibility work for The Cut. The project strengthened FRP's capacity to manage consultants, coordinate multi-stakeholder processes, and translate community input into actionable planning outcomes. The grant was successfully completed and fully closed out in 2025, with all deliverables submitted, accepted, and compliant with federal requirements.

**John S. and James L. Knight Foundation - Non-federal (\$500,000).** **Purpose:** to support large-scale community planning, engagement, and organizational capacity related to The Rail Park, including visioning, equitable development strategies, and stakeholder coordination. **Accomplishments:** enabling FRP to complete the Rail Park Visioning Study and Community First Plan, deepen partnerships with community-based organizations, City agencies, and elected officials, and administer a grant of comparable size and complexity to the proposed EPA award. These outcomes directly position FRP to efficiently implement EPA-funded assessment, reuse, and cleanup planning activities.

**(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements:** Under both agreements, FRP complied fully with approved workplans, schedules, and terms and conditions, submitted timely and complete progress and final reports, documented progress toward expected results, and maintained clear communication with funding agencies throughout each grant period. No corrective actions were required. This performance demonstrates FRP's capacity to responsibly manage funds, meet reporting and performance requirements, and mitigate administrative and financial risk.

## **Threshold Criteria Responses**

### **Applicant eligibility**

Friends of the Rail Park is a 501(c)(3) organization. Please see attachment documenting Friends of the Rail Park's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

### **A statement of the applicant's 501(c)(4) tax-exempt status**

Not applicable.

### **Description of community involvement:**

Community involvement has been central to the planning and visioning work that Friends of the Rail Park (FRP) and its partners have undertaken for the Rail Park as a whole, and now The Cut and surrounding neighborhoods. FRP will continue to actively request, respond to, and incorporate community input as brownfields assessment activities and reuse planning move forward under the EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant.

FRP will use a combination of in-person and virtual engagement strategies to ensure broad, inclusive participation. Targeted outreach through email, social media, and neighborhood partner networks will be used to provide regular updates on assessment activities, timelines, and opportunities for input. FRP will also maintain a dedicated webpage for the assessment grant that will include project updates, meeting summaries, key documents, and upcoming engagement opportunities. Meeting recordings, materials, and summaries will be posted online for those unable to attend live sessions.

Community outreach meetings will be held at key milestones, including project kickoff, work plan review, assessment updates, and project closeout. Meetings will be offered both in person and virtually to reduce barriers to participation and ensure continuity if public health or scheduling constraints arise. In-person meetings will be held in ADA-accessible locations within or near the project area. Materials will be prepared in plain language and translated into Spanish and Cantonese, the two most commonly spoken languages in the surrounding neighborhoods, to ensure information is accessible to residents with limited English proficiency. Interpretation services will also be offered at meetings to ensure accessibility.

Following notice of an Assessment Grant award, FRP will publicly announce the award and the availability of the draft Work Plan through its website, social media channels, email newsletter, and partner communications. Written and electronic notices will be shared with community partners, neighborhood associations, nearby institutions, and local stakeholders. Hard copies of key materials will be made available at community-accessible locations for residents without reliable internet access.

The public will be invited to provide comments verbally at meetings, electronically, and in writing. FRP will host a public meeting to review the draft Work Plan and discuss feedback received. Relevant comments will be incorporated into the final Work Plan as appropriate, and a summary of how community input shaped the document will be shared publicly.

After Work Plan approval, FRP will host a public kickoff meeting to introduce the project goals, assessment process, and opportunities for ongoing involvement. Community members will be invited to identify brownfield sites or conditions they believe are affecting neighborhood health, safety, or quality of life, which will help inform site prioritization and assessment activities.

As assessments are completed, results will be shared openly with the community through public meetings, online postings, and written summaries. FRP will focus on clear explanations of findings and next steps, including any potential health or environmental concerns. If assessment results indicate potential risks, FRP will coordinate with appropriate agencies and notify affected stakeholders as needed.

Throughout the project, FRP staff will provide regular updates at public forums, community meetings, and partner gatherings, and will remain available to answer questions and receive feedback. At project close, FRP will host a final public meeting to review outcomes, lessons learned, and how assessment findings will inform future cleanup and reuse planning. Virtual participation options will continue to be offered to ensure equitable access for all community members.

**Open Assessment Grant and Multipurpose Grant; or an affirmative statement that the applicant does not have an open Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.**

Friends of the Rail Park does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose grant.

**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 named contractors or subrecipients are included in the grant application. A qualified environmental professional (and any other eligible consultants) will be selected upon award of grant funds in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500.

**Solicitation documents and the signed executed contract as applicable.**

Not applicable.