

-THE CITY OF-
EASLEY
SOUTH CAROLINA

R04-26-A-043

1. Applicant Identification

City of Easley, South Carolina
205 North First Street
Easley, SC 29640

2. Website URL: <https://www.cityofeasley.com/>

3. Funding Requested

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

4. Location

a) City of Easley, b) Pickens County, c) South Carolina

5. Target Area and Priority Site Information

- Target area: census tracts 45077010802, 45077010803, 45077010804, **45077010805, and 45077010806**.
Bolded CTs are located within an Opportunity Zone.
- Priority sites
 - Magnolia Properties – 115 Folger Avenue, Easley, SC 29640
 - Custom Cleaners – 214 N. West Main Street, Easley, SC 29640

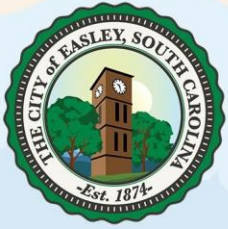
6. Contacts

a. Project Director

Mario DiPietro, City Planner
864-655-7900
mdipietro@cityofeasley.com
205 North First Street
PO Box 466
Easley, SC 29640

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Lisa Talbert, Mayor
864-655-7900
ltalbert@cityofeasley.com
205 North First Street
PO Box 466
Easley, SC 29640



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7. Population

City of Easley, SC – 23,942 (US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates)

8. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
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).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2)., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	8–9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing	N/A

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

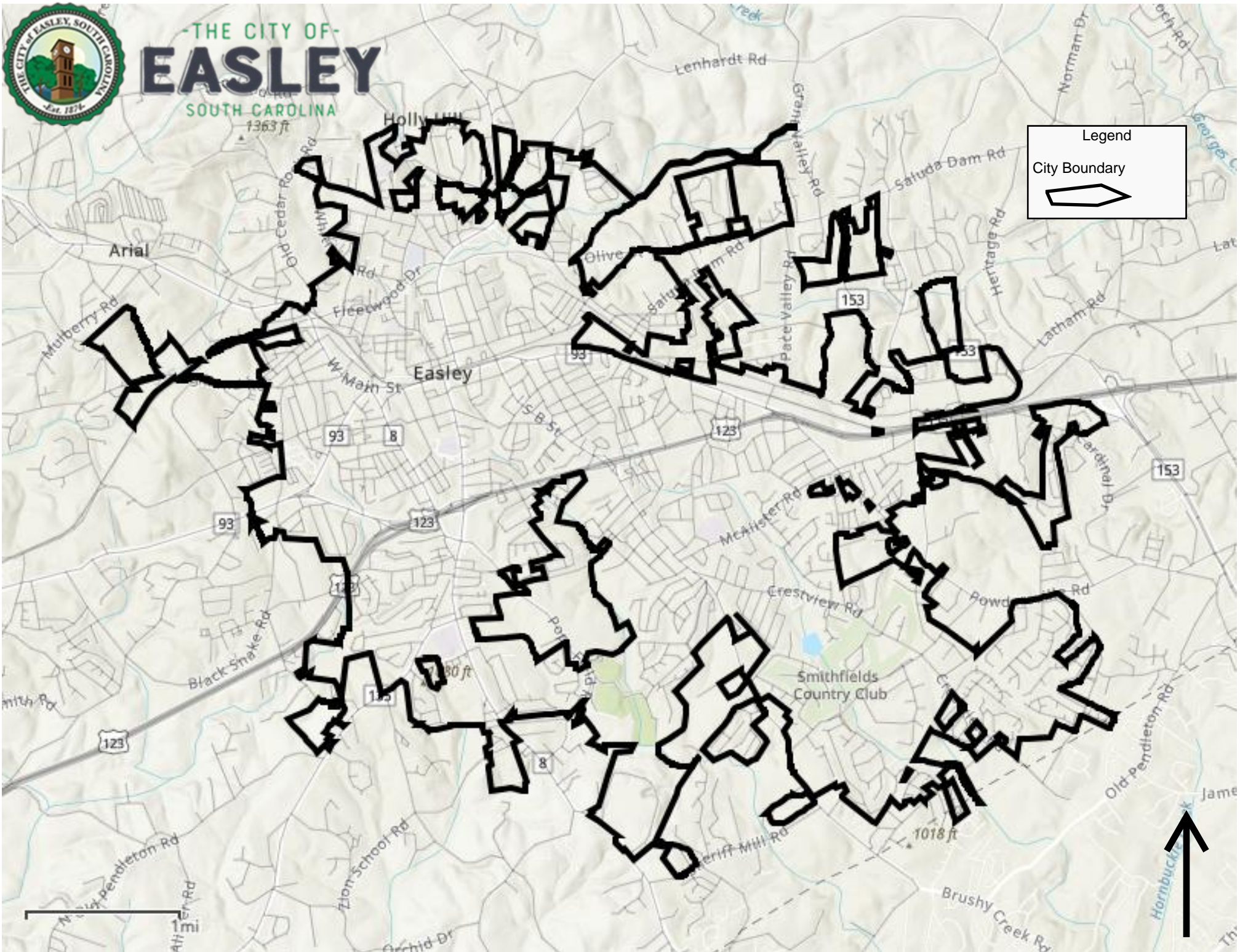
See attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable.



THE CITY OF EASLEY SOUTH CAROLINA



Legend

City Boundary





SC DEPARTMENT of
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

Juli E. Blalock, Chief
Bureau of Land and Waste Management
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

January 7, 2026

Aditi Chakravarty
Region 4 Brownfields Coordinator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

RE: EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant
Pickens County, South Carolina

Dear Ms. Chakravarty:

The South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES), the State's environmental authority, acknowledges and fully supports the City of Easley's application for a Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. The funding will be primarily focused on the downtown area and railroad corridor.

SCDES appreciates your consideration of the application and hopes for a favorable outcome. Your positive response will assist the City of Easley in its efforts to revitalize properties in their communities. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Chris Kaibery, member of my staff, at 803-898-0924 or christopher.kaibery@des.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Juli E. Blalock".

Juli E. Blalock, Chief
Bureau of Land and Waste Management

cc: Betsy Seals, Area Director, Upstate BRLS
Preston Mousseau, Manager, Brownfields Program
Chris Kaibery, Project Manager, Brownfields Program



-THE CITY OF-
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SOUTH CAROLINA

**City of Easley, SC
FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide
Assessment Grant
Narrative**

1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization; Target Area and Brownfields

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

The City of Easley (City), chartered in 1874, is in the heart of Upstate South Carolina. With a population of 23,942,¹ residents and businesses alike find Easley a prime location in which to live, work, and play; however, such growth from humble beginnings has not come easy. The textile boom created a thriving Main Street and a railroad corridor with many manufacturing opportunities, but as time went on, most of the South's textile manufacturing left the country. Textile mills began to close, jobs were lost, and properties were left vacant. Presently, with tremendous growth potential in the region, City leadership recognizes a unique opportunity for revitalization. However, this opportunity depends on addressing lingering **brownfield challenges**. With the loss of the textile industry, blighted properties along the railroad are plentiful and inhibit redevelopment efforts. The **geographic boundary** for this grant application is the **City limits** with a **target-area focus** on the **downtown**, including sites along the **Railroad Corridor** and **Doodle Trail Corridor** (census tracts [CTs] 108.02, 108.03, 108.04, 108.05, and 108.06). Two of these census tracts (108.05 and 108.06) are located within a designated **Opportunity Zone**. The **Railroad Corridor**, located along an active rail line, has several properties in need of assessment so the City can move forward with planned redevelopment. The **Doodle Trail Corridor**, a Rails-to-Trails project within Pickens County, has several potential brownfields sites located within feet of the multiuse trail where visitors of all ages enjoy outdoor recreational activities. The environmental stigma associated with the sites is a hindrance to the redevelopment of the area. The City's prior EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant successfully established a strong Brownfield Program and has made significant progress toward addressing the City's Brownfield problems, assessing over 44 acres, with 16 acres ready for reuse or actively being redeveloped; however, **over 20 sites remain on the site inventory** that present **brownfield challenges** due to perceived environmental impacts. Several sites have received Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) during the previous grant and are awaiting Phase II ESAs. Therefore, another EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant is needed to continue this successful Brownfield Program and help the City achieve its redevelopment goals. Once brownfield properties have been assessed and remediated, redevelopment of these sites **will create opportunities for affordable housing, new businesses, better access to jobs, and extension of multiuse trail systems**, assuring a bright and prosperous future for generations to come.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

The City estimates that over 20 additional brownfield sites need assessment in the target area based on the FY19 grant site inventory. These properties could pose a serious health risk to residents and visitors of recreational areas such as the Doodle Trail **due to potential contaminants like petroleum products, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), asbestos, lead-based paint, and others**. The following two priority sites were chosen due to their proximity to residents and their redevelopment potential to address housing needs.

Magnolia Properties – 115 Folger Avenue: One block from historic Main Street in the Railroad Corridor on approximately **8 acres** sits a **vacant 5,000-square-foot metal plating facility** (Palmetto Plating) that operated from the early 1980s through 2022. Former operations at the site included electroplating, anodizing, and coloring/finishing of metals and formed products. This site was prioritized for assessment and reuse because a spur of the Doodle Trail (which connects a former textile mill recently revitalized into apartments, dining/retail establishments and the main Doodle Trail) adjoins the site and, since the site is unfenced, trail patrons are at risk of exposure

¹ US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates

to potential contaminants associated with historic site operations, including **petroleum products, VOCs, SVOCs, and heavy metals**. The City’s redevelopment plan for this site is to create a **multipurpose development that complements the downtown** area with townhomes, apartments, shops, and restaurants. Displacement is not anticipated for this site.

Custom Cleaners – 214 N. West Main Street: This site is located on **0.3 acres** in the heart of historic downtown, developed with a **3,764-square-foot** 1940s-era building. A dry-cleaning facility has operated here since 1942. Due to the historic use of chlorinated solvents, the public has a negative environmental stigma surrounding dry cleaners, particularly ones that have operated in the same location for over **80 years**, as this one has. Common contaminants of concern associated with this type of property include **chlorinated solvents and asbestos**. The City envisions redeveloping the site and the surrounding City-owned properties into a **new municipal complex**. Displacement of businesses may result from the proposed plans for the Custom Cleaners site. For the Custom Cleaners, the City will work with the property owner to settle on a fair market price to purchase the property. The City will also assist the owner of Custom Cleaners to find and relocate to another property within the downtown Easley area.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites

During the FY19 Assessment Grant site inventory, 26 target-area properties were identified that have yet to be assessed. These sites include former textile mills, fuel distributors, a concrete plant, a dry cleaner, an auto-body service shop, and a farm supply store. In addition, during the FY19 grant **an evaluation ranking tool was created to determine the order in which sites would be addressed based on redevelopment plans, financial need, and risk to the community**. This tool will once again be utilized for site prioritization. Once the target-area sites have been completely addressed, abandoned and underused properties identified by the residents **throughout the geographic boundary** will be researched further by City staff using Pickens County’s GIS website. Once a list is compiled, the qualified environmental contractor (QEC) will work with City staff and residents to prioritize the order in which the sites will be addressed. Additional sites will be identified and prioritized during a thorough site inventory process involving community partners and residents with an emphasis on **economically impoverished populations and communities within the Opportunity Zone**.

Revitalization of the Target Area

1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

With the City’s prior Brownfields Assessment Grant acting as a catalyst, the City has made great strides to revitalize the historic downtown, Doodle Trail, and railroad corridors. But the job of revitalizing the vacant and underused properties is not finished. Successful redevelopment started with a plan that reflects current City conditions and addresses residents’ concerns. The City’s **2022 Comprehensive Plan** focuses on several **Core Values**. The first of the core values is **Strong Sense of Community**, with concern that projected growth could threaten this quality. The community has expressed both its strong family-friendly values and a desire to embrace and preserve Easley’s history. The second core value is **Diversity**. With this core value the City seeks to make decisions that “include as many voices and perspectives as possible to ensure outcomes that are more equitable and just.” The third core value is **Resourceful**, in which the City strives to make the most of its greatest strengths and assets and encourage growth that respects and builds from those assets while helping to achieve progress. The final core value is **Connectivity**. This core value reflects the City’s desire for a transportation network that accommodates all users and modes of transportation; it includes facilities for safe walking and biking as well as for transportation and recreation. The City will build on these **Core Values** as defined in the Comprehensive Plan to develop a **Brownfields Revitalization Plan**. The creation of such a plan would continue to build

on the City’s firm foundation of success in championing brownfield revitalization. This plan will couple the vision of the City with the input of the community to take actionable and feasible steps toward spearheading redevelopment in the target area.

The core values in the **2022 Comprehensive Plan** align with the City’s goal of implementing a successful Brownfield Program. The reuse plans for the **Magnolia Properties** site are to redevelop the site with restaurants, shops, townhomes, apartments including affordable housing. This site will foster the value of **Strong Sense of Community**, where the residents of Easley can find a place to “Live, Work, and Shop.” The **Diversity** value is fostered by bringing affordable housing to the target area, allowing the City to meet future demands by uplifting an **underserved** population within the community that is **economically impoverished**. The **Connectivity** value aligns with the extension of the Doodle Trail spur along the site boundary, where community members can walk, bike, and run. The **Custom Cleaners** site reuse plan to develop the site into a municipal complex aligns with the **Strong Sense of Community, Diversity, and Resourceful** values. Redeveloping the site into a municipal complex will centralize all the City’s departments under one roof, allowing the City to more efficiently serve the community especially for the **economically impoverished/transportation-challenged** citizens who need City services.

1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

The assessment and remediation of brownfield sites throughout the City limits will further the City’s redevelopment goals by eliminating the negative environmental stigma associated with several properties which will, in turn, encourage business development, bringing jobs and a much-needed boost to a local economy that has struggled since the textile mill closures.

Site reuse plans will have a strong positive impact on quality of life (**noneconomic benefits**) for the **underserved** community, including the addition of affordable housing, access to trails and green space, as well as walkability to local employment and nonprofit services. Redevelopment plans for the **Magnolia Properties site, including the extension of the multiuse trail, townhomes, apartments, shops, and restaurants, directly aligns with the City’s Strategic Objective** and will benefit all residents by creating a safe environment for a healthy lifestyle. **Economic benefits** include the creation of jobs and an increased tax base. New businesses will form, increasing revenue and taxes in the area, which will help fund future redevelopment.

Redevelopment at the priority sites (retail and restaurants at the Magnolia site) will bring an **economic benefit of new jobs for this low-income, sensitive population, thus addressing the issues of low income (high/persistent poverty) and high unemployment** by stimulating income for target-area **residents and businesses**. In addition, the City will work with developers to ensure incorporation of **energy-efficiency measures** into the redevelopment designs to promote sustainable redevelopment. Developments like the Magnolia site will have both an **economic and noneconomic benefit**, with a **reduction of the carbon footprint and energy cost** that can burden low-income residents, while simultaneously helping with climate mitigation. The proposed redevelopment of the **Custom Cleaners** site into a new municipal complex for the City will also incorporate energy-efficiency measures and **renewable energy sources**. The City will explore the option of **solar outdoor lighting** in addition to other **renewable energy** options throughout the redevelopment of the municipal complex and all redevelopment sites within the target area. “Green” energy savings will reduce operating costs and allow the City to better steward taxpayer funds (**economic benefit**). The City intends to incorporate **climate smart brownfield planning activities** into its **Brownfields Revitalization Plan**. By exploring **climate adaptation and mitigation capacity** in each redevelopment, the City will create a better resilience to impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

The City as a local unit of government is eligible to apply for county, state, and federal grant funding. Easley is making every effort to secure additional funding to further their Brownfield Program redevelopment goals and is currently pursuing the following funding opportunities:

Funding	Description
Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (up to \$500,000)	Demolition of remediated brownfield sites, contribution to affordable housing initiatives, expansion of housing opportunities (Magnolia site), and infrastructure upgrades
EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant (up to \$4,000,000)	Funds the cleanup of brownfield sites throughout city limits including potential cleanup of Custom Cleaners priority site
South Carolina’s (SC) Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)	Via the Catawba Council of Governments (COG) to fund the cleanup of brownfield sites throughout the city limits
SC Recreational Trails Program (up to \$100,000)	Multiuse trail creation throughout the city limits (Magnolia site)
SC Department of Environmental Services Brownfield Voluntary Cleanup Program	Encourages developers to use brownfield sites through tax incentives, credits, or exemptions

1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The City intends to redevelop using existing infrastructure (roads, power, water/sewer) within the target area and at the priority sites. Interested developers wish to maintain the history of several of the brownfield properties in need of assessment and remediation and will repurpose existing structures and contribute to on-site infrastructure upgrades as needed. The planned trail additions throughout the target area will use existing sidewalk infrastructure and railroad rights-of-way that are no longer in use. In the event existing infrastructure needs repair or to be replaced, the City will look to state funding sources.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

Community Need

2.a. The Community's Need for Funding

Blighted properties at the center of small mill villages are desolate reminders of the greatness that was but is no longer there. Some communities rise above unemployment woes, but others struggle for generations to break the cycle of poverty. The **low-income** communities throughout the target area are not the exception; they show a significant need for redevelopment. The five target-area CTs have an **average per capita income of \$36,119 and median household income of \$60,252**, less than the **national** averages (\$44,587 per capita; \$78,538 median).² **Three** CTs show major signs of **impact economically impoverished populations**. CT 108.06 is at a poverty level (23.7%) that is 2 times greater than the US poverty level (12.4%), CT 108.02 is at a poverty level (20%) 1.6 times greater than the State (14.2%), and CT 108.05 is at poverty level (18.4%) above the State/US as well. Within the CT 108.05 there is a greater disparity of poverty among the Black (50.6%) and Hispanic (46.4%) populations. Additionally, **the target area poverty level for all people (17.3%) is higher than the US (12.4%)**, which demonstrates the need to enhance quality of life for residents.² The City strives to operate within a balanced budget and has no surplus funds available for assessing brownfield sites. The City’s budget for FY-2025–2026 has allocated nearly \$1,252,000 from the general fund for many needed capital improvements. Furthermore, the City is keeping a close eye on inflation, and increased cost related to population growth, therefore, the City has added a 3-mill rate increase, which will bring in an extra \$393,000 to cover those growth expenses. **Low income and high poverty make it impossible** for residents to afford tax increases to fund redevelopment projects, but with the help of the EPA Assessment Grant funding, the City’s planned redevelopment can prosper.

² US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Within the target area, the **sensitive populations include *the impoverished, minorities, and elderly***. The target area has a higher population of **people with income below the poverty level (16%)** than the US (13%) as well as a higher **Black (11%)** population than the county (6%) and a higher **Hispanic/Latino (11%)** population than the county (4%).³ The percentage of residents age **62 years and over (23%)** is also higher than the national average (20%).³

Welfare issues such as blight, substandard housing, and crime abound within the target area. As the population of Upstate SC continues to grow, the need for **newer and more affordable housing at the Magnolia Properties priority site is crucial**. Currently within the target area, **9% of homes are vacant and 50% of all homes were built before 1979** (before the federal lead paint and asbestos bans took effect).³ Many target-area homes are located in the “mill hill” areas of the City and are in desperate need of repair. After years of poverty and neglect caused by the mill closings, many **underserved** residents end up abandoning their homes, adding to the blight problem.

Vacant and blighted properties throughout the target area create potential for illegal activity, causing concern for community safety. In 2024, **Easley’s violent crime rate was 3 per 1,000 residents, with a property crime rate at 20 per 1,000**.⁴ The City’s Police Department is confident that as brownfield sites are assessed, remediated, and redeveloped, crime in those areas will be substantially mitigated. **By identifying and reducing blight and threats of crime**, residents will feel safer spending more time walking throughout the target area to schools, parks, churches, and their places of employment. Redevelopment of the Magnolia Properties site will remove blight from the community, and redevelopment of the Custom Cleaners site will allow the City to expand municipal services including police services, directly impacting threats of crime. Throughout the target area, **redevelopment of potential brownfield sites** will not only address the blight and crime issues but will also create an environment that **will improve the local economy, increase the availability of affordable housing, and promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging physical activity on multiuse trails** for generations to come.

2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Brownfield sites and the potential for contaminants on those sites are concerning, especially when the contaminants can negatively impact the health of sensitive populations. Pickens County has the **highest** reported incident rate for **Thyroid cancer and second highest** reported incident rate for **Melanoma** in the state and exceeds state/national incidence rates for **Lung & Bronchus, Pancreas, Oral Cavity & Pharynx, Cervix, and All Cancers**. Pickens County ranks **ninth for all cancer incidences in the state**,⁵ and the Upstate ranks as the **second highest region in the state for minority cancer mortality rates**.⁶ In Pickens County, **lung cancer** was the most common cancer diagnosis and the **leading cause of cancer death** from 2015 to 2019.⁵ **10%** of residents in the target area suffer from **asthma**, which is **greater than the county and state level (9.7% and 8.8% respectively)**.^{7,8}

The need for affordable housing in the target area exacerbates the health issues caused by **lead-based paint (LBP)**. Approximately **50% of the homes in the target area were built before 1979**

³ US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates

⁴ Neighborhood Scout: <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/sc/easley/crime#data>.

⁵ SCDPH Pickens County Cancer Profile:

<https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/media/document/Pickens%20County%20Cancer%20Profile%202022.pdf>

⁶ SCDPH Upstate Region Cancer Profile:

<https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/media/document/Upstate%20Cancer%20Profile%202022.pdf>

⁷ US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates

⁸ SCDES Tracking Asthma Dashboard: <https://dph.sc.gov/professionals/public-health-data/sc-environmental-public-health-tracking/tracking-asthma-dashboard>.

(before the federal lead paint and asbestos bans took effect) and up 70% in CT 108.03.⁹ According to SCDPH, in 2022 Pickens County had a **Confirmed Elevated Blood Lead Level of 0.65%** for childhood lead exposure, which was **highest level over the last ten years**.¹⁰ LBP exposure can cause many health effects such as poor brain development, kidney damage, **birth defects**, and fertility issues, and is known to be a cancer-causing agent, as well as being linked to asthma. **Substandard housing** impacts the sensitive population's ability to find safe housing free from **LBP**. Potential contaminants such as **petroleum (gasoline, heating oil, diesel, coal), chlorinated solvents, heavy metals, lead paint, and asbestos** from the priority sites that plague this underserved community are contributing factors to these health issues. Assessing and remediating brownfield sites will mitigate these serious health concerns affecting this underserved community **by identifying and removing potentially life-threatening contaminants and redeveloping blighted structures**.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

The City of Easley's brownfield redevelopment strategy directly addresses environmental and economic threats to vulnerable populations through targeted assessment and remediation of high-risk industrial sites. Along the Railroad Corridor, where 20+ unassessed sites contain petroleum byproducts and heavy metals from former plating operations, the grant will prioritize properties adjacent to residential areas in Census Tract 108.06 – a community with a 20.7% poverty rate and 37.5% substandard housing.⁹ By conducting Phase II environmental site assessments at locations like the Magnolia Properties (a former metal plating facility), the City can unlock 8 acres for mixed-development (with an affordable housing component) while mitigating exposure risks from unfenced boundaries near the heavily used Doodle Trail. This project's trailside retail component creates 150+ jobs within a 10-minute walk of public transit routes, targeting unemployment in a corridor where 34% of households lack vehicle access.⁹ This addresses both the economic barrier of private-sector remediation costs and the immediate health threat of chromium/nickel contamination to children, who comprise over a third of nearby residents. Similarly, the Custom Cleaners site – operational since 1942 with confirmed PCE and asbestos contamination – blocks critical municipal redevelopment in an Opportunity Zone where 23.7% of residents live below the poverty line.⁹ Redevelopment along with vapor intrusion mitigation here would enable replacement of aging infrastructure while eliminating carcinogen exposure pathways for 12,000 residents within a 1-mile radius. The strategy transforms environmental liabilities into community assets, converting 28+ contaminated acres into 300+ affordable housing units and enhanced trail connectivity, directly countering the cycle of disinvestment in neighborhoods disproportionately burdened by legacy industrial pollution. The EPA Grant Program will help the City reduce the issues plaguing the economically impoverished and disproportionately impacted populations by addressing low-income/poverty issues, high unemployment, and distressed neighborhoods and creating a safe, prosperous community that will benefit this disadvantaged community for generations to come.

As brownfield sites are redeveloped, changes in the community such as rising housing costs and increased rent for both residential and small businesses are inevitable. This overwhelmingly affects the disadvantaged community, often forcing residents and small businesses out. The City will utilize strategies such as down-payment and closing-cost assistance programs as well as small business preservation programs and inclusionary zoning to minimize displacement.

⁹ US Census: 2023: ACS: 5-year Estimates

¹⁰ SCDES Tracking Childhood Lead Dashboard: <https://dph.sc.gov/professionals/public-health-data/sc-tracking/tracking-childhood-lead-dashboard>



Community Engagement: 2.e. Project Involvement & 2.f. Project Roles – The following organizations will provide assistance and support for the brownfields grant project.

Name of organization	Entity's mission	Point of contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Greater Easley Chamber of Commerce	Provides leadership and resources to strengthen the greater Easley business community and create a positive business environment and member experience	Brian Swords: bswords@easleychamber.org	The COC plays an important role in helping build and maintain a positive business climate for Easley. They will assist with fundraising and inform local businesses of project status.
Downtown Easley Business Council	Serves to protect and promote business growth and sustainability of businesses located in the TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District of downtown Easley	Amber Davis: ecc@easleychamber.org	The Council supports all businesses and community members with a focus specifically on downtown. They will assist with property identification and prioritization of sites for assessment .
United Way of Pickens County	To mobilize the caring power of Pickens County to improve communities and individual lives in measurable and lasting ways	Julie Capaldi: jcapaldi@uwpickens.org	This nonprofit fights for the education, financial stability, and basic needs of every person in our community. They will help engage legislative bodies regarding future reuse of properties and outreach/education for the public.
School District of Pickens County	To engage each student today to RISE to tomorrow's potential	Karla Kelley: karlaketley@pickens.k12.sc.us	The school district is the public education provider for Pickens. They will host meetings and educational outreach .
Easley Presbyterian Church	To show the love of Christ by meeting the needs of the community and world through partnerships with local, national, and international organizations	Dr. Bill Seel: bill@easleypresbyterian.org	Local church serves residents of the target area (adjacent/walk distance to priority sites). It will assist with community outreach through the use of their facilities for public meetings.

2.g. Incorporating Community Input

The City has a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) in place that was developed during the FY2019 grant. The City consistently includes residents in their decision-making processes. Leadership understands the importance of gathering public input when making changes within a community, because community buy-in is critical for redevelopment success. To share the progress of the Brownfield Program, the CIP will be updated to describe the planned community-engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Residents can review the CIP in City Hall. The City held council meetings to discuss brownfield initiatives and how this grant will help with the planned revitalization efforts. City staff will continue to solicit the community's assistance for site identification during regularly scheduled City Council and target-area community meetings (in-person and online). The City will use the input and information gathered from the community meetings, project partner meetings, and vision sessions to advance the City's Brownfield Program. All information gathered from concerned citizens, local organizations, and entities during community outreach will be presented and discussed at the quarterly Brownfield Project Team meeting.

The City realizes that using multiple forms of media for communication is vital to success. The City will continue to use its municipal website as well as social media to share Brownfield Project information. In addition, a brochure explaining the project will be shared both online and throughout the community, being strategically placed at City offices and recreational facilities. Local media press releases will keep the community up to date on project milestones and events. City staff will also continue to provide brownfield information during regularly scheduled City Council and community meetings that will take place in the target area and online. If non-English-

speaking individuals are present at events, a translator will be available. To reach members of the community that may not have internet access, various community organizations, including listed community partners, will advertise community meetings and disseminate information throughout the community.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress:

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs; 3.a. Project Implementation, 3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule, 3.c. Task/Activity Lead, d. Outputs

Task 1: Programmatic Activities
a. Project Implementation: Task includes: 1) Quarterly, Annual, and Final Reporting; 2) Progress and Financial tracking and ACRES database entries; 3) Monthly progress updates and meetings; 4) Procurement of Qualified Environmental Consultant (QEC); 5) Travel to national/regional Brownfields conferences/workshops
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: 1) Quarterly reporting begins in Q1 and continues throughout grant; Annual reporting in Q5, Q9, Q13, and grant closeout; 2) Progress and Financial tracking and ACRES entries begin in Q1 and continue throughout grant; 3) Monthly progress updates and meetings being in Q1 and continue throughout grant; 4) QEC will be procured in Q1; 5) Conference/workshop attendance in Year 1 and Year 3
c. Task/Activity Lead: Mario DiPietro, Brownfields Project Director with assistance from QEC
d. Outputs: Procure QEC in 1st quarter. ACRES & quarterly reporting begins in the 1st quarter and continues throughout the grant. Annual reporting & forms created in the 5th, 9th, 13th quarters and final closeout.
Task 2: Community Outreach
a. Project Implementation: Task includes: 1) Development of Community Involvement Plan (CIP); 2) Newsletters, Surveys, Social media/website updates, and other outreach material; 3) Community Meetings.
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: 1 CIP updated in 1st quarter. Community meetings held in quarters 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, & 15. Website updated in 2nd quarter. Outreach materials created in 1st quarter and posted throughout the grant.
c. Task/Activity Lead: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfields Project Director
d. Outputs: Updated CIP & BF webpage, 7 community meetings, brochures/handouts, social media posts, summary of community meetings in EPA-required quarterly reports.
Task 3: Site Inventory / Assessment
a. Project Implementation: Task includes: 1) Brownfields Site Inventory; 2) Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); 3) Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Phase II ESAs with Site Specific QAPPs (SSQAPPs) and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs), and additional eligible assessments (Asbestos Survey, Lead Paint Survey, etc.)
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: 1) Site inventory begins in Q1 and continues throughout grant as needed; 2) Generic QAPP completed in Q2; 3) Assessment activities will begin in Q2 and continue throughout grant
c. Task/Activity Lead: The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director.
d. Outputs: Updated site inventory, 15 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 7 Phase II ESAs and SSQAPPs, additional assessments (asbestos, lead paint, wetlands delineations, etc.) and SSQAPPs, site access agreements, property eligibility determinations, Section 106 determinations (if applicable).
Task 4: Cleanup / Reuse Planning
a. Project Implementation: Task includes: 1) ABCAs, 2) Visioning Sessions/Charettes, 3) Brownfields Revitalization Plan, 4) Site Reuse Plans, and 5) Land Use Assessments
b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Activities under this task will begin in Q6 and continue throughout grant
c. Task/Activity Lead: The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the City: Mario DiPietro: City Planner, Brownfield Project Director.
d. Outputs: 4 ABCAs, 2 vision sessions, 1 BF Revitalization Plan, 2 Site Reuse Plans, 2 Land Use Assessments

3.e. Cost Estimates – Cost estimates were developed based on local market rates. The budget includes travel and contractual costs. **Of the total budget, site specific work accounts for 52.4% and eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities account for 37.6%.**

Task 1: Programmatic Activities– Travel: Two staff to attend two conferences \$5,000 (Per trip



City of Easley, SC
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- Flight: \$800; Hotel – 3 nights: \$1,200; Incidentals and per diem: \$500; total: \$2,500); Other: Conference registration \$1,000 (two conferences x \$500 ea) Contractual: ACRES Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period \$24,000 (120 hrs × \$200).

Task 2: Community Outreach– Contractual: Updated CIP \$3,000 (20hrs x \$150); 7 Community meetings/events \$14,000 (70hrs x \$200; \$2,000/meeting); social media, website updates, fliers, and brochures \$3,000 (20hrs x \$150).

Task 3: Site Inventory/Assessment–Contractual: Updated BF Site Inventory and Ranking Tool \$12,000 (60hrs x \$200); 15 Phase I ESAs \$57,000 (avg. \$3,800 ea); 1 Generic QAPP \$5,000; 6 Phase II ESAs including SSQAPP/HASP \$144,000 (avg \$24,000 ea); 8 additional assessments (asbestos, lead paint, wetlands delineations, etc) \$44,000 (avg. \$5,500 ea).

Task 4: Cleanup/Reuse Planning– Contractual: 4 ABCAs \$24,000 (avg \$6,000 ea); 2 Visioning Sessions \$10,000 (\$5,000 ea); 1 Brownfields Revitalization Plan \$60,000; 2 Site Reuse Plans \$70,000 (\$35,000 ea); 2 Land Use Assessment \$24,000 (\$12,000 ea.).

	Task 1: Programmatic Activities	Task 2: Community Outreach	Task 3: Site Inventory / Assessment	Task 4: Cleanup/Reuse Planning	Total
Travel	\$5,000	-	-	-	\$5,000
Contractual	\$24,000	\$20,000	\$262,000	\$188,000	\$494,000
Other (Conference Reg. Fees)	\$1,000	-	-	-	\$1,000
Total Direct Costs	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$262,000	\$188,000	\$500,000
Total Budget	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$262,000	\$188,000	\$500,000

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results – To ensure outputs, results, and outcomes align with the grant narrative and workplan, all project elements will be tracked, measured, and evaluated weekly by the project team through a shared real-time database. This system enables continuous progress monitoring and schedule adherence. Monthly summary reports generated from this data will be shared with the City of Easley Brownfields Task Force (BTF) for review during monthly project team meetings and quarterly BTF meetings. These reports will form the basis for quarterly submissions through EPA's ACRES database. Following each assessment activity, the project team will receive a summary report and ACRES will be updated. Tracked outputs (defined in Section 3.d) include quantities of completed Phase I/II assessments, QAPPs, ABCAs, revitalization plans, cleanup/reuse plans, and community meetings. Quarterly outcomes reporting will cover leveraged funding, job creation, public engagement, and acreage prepared for reuse. The City will maintain monthly update calls with their EPA Project Officer, with corrective actions implemented for any project deviations.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance; Programmatic Capability

4.a. Organizational Capacity, 4.b. Organizational Structure, 4.c. Description of Key Staff

The City operates under a Mayor–Council form of municipal government. The City has the organizational capacity to handle a project through the office of City Administrator with support by the City’s government officials (City Council) led by the mayor. City Planner/City Engineer, **Mr. Mario DiPietro, PE**, will be responsible for day-to-day activities, timely and successful expenditure of funds, and completion of administrative and financial requirements of the project as the **Brownfield Project Director**. Mr. DiPietro has a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from Northeastern University and has over 40 years of engineering and project management experience. He has been with the City as the City Planner/City Engineer since August 2022 and is responsible for planning, grant administration, special projects, and community outreach. Prior to working with the City, Mr. DiPietro worked with several engineering firms in



upstate South Carolina (since 1989). City Administrator **Mr. Tom Couch** will serve as the **Brownfield Project Manager** for the City's Brownfields Project Team, assisting Mr. DiPietro with the administration of the City's Brownfields Program. Mr. Couch has a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from the Air Force Academy and a Master of Science degree in civil engineering from Auburn University. Mr. Couch retired from the US Air Force after serving 20 years. He has over 20 years of experience working with municipal public works departments and has been with the City as the City Administrator since September 2023. They will be assisted by the City's Finance Director, **Mr. Ralph Herden, MPAcc CPA CGMA**, who will serve as the **Brownfield Finance Director** and will be responsible for managing the finances and all drawdowns through ASAP.gov for this EPA Grant project. Mr. Herden has worked with the City for over a year With 20+ years of financial experience across municipalities, nonprofits, real estate, and international business, he oversees City financial operations, ensures transparency, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce & Business Administration from University of Alabama and a Master's in Professional Accountancy from Clemson University. An environmental contractor will assist with the technical portions of the Brownfield Project.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources – Using local contracting requirements and procurement process, the City will procure a QEC to assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Community-wide Assessment, in addition to any other contractors needed to complete the project. The City will ensure compliance with the EPA's "Professional Service" procurement process. The City has an established Procurement Policy as defined in the City's Code of Ordinances to appropriately acquire any additional expertise and resources (e.g., contractors or subrecipients) necessary to successfully complete the project. The City will make every effort to hire/procure local or minority/woman-owned businesses and local/minority/female individuals for opportunities in brownfield assessment, cleanup, or redevelopment.

Past Performance and Accomplishments:

Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant;

4.e.1. Accomplishments – The City was awarded an EPA Community-wide Assessment Grant in 2019 of \$300,000 to complete assessment activities on properties located in the downtown area along the "Railroad Corridor & Doodle Trail Corridor." Grant outputs included the completion of Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) of eight sites, two Phase II ESAs (or equivalent), five asbestos and lead paint surveys, one asbestos abatement design, one wetland delineation, and two sites enrolled/applied in the state Voluntary Cleanup Program. **Forty-four (44) acres have been assessed and 16 acres have been made ready for reuse.** Two success stories of land ready to use are the **Former Getty's Middle School** and the **Former Mayfair Mill**. The **Getty's** site has been redeveloped into a multifamily apartment complex, which provided much needed housing for the area. The **Mayfair Mill** site is slated for redevelopment as a mixed-use development that will bring both residential and retail opportunities to the underused site. Project outputs and outcomes have been recorded in the ACRES system and will continue to be recorded as additional progress is made.

4.e.2. Compliance with Grant Requirements – Easley has completed the project goals and milestones of the prior assessment grant, including the Work Plan and compliance with all terms and conditions. Quarterly reports and ACRES data entry were completed in a timely manner. The grant period began on October 1, 2019, with an end date of September 30, 2022; however, due to difficulties arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, an extension through September 30, 2023, was established. **The grant was closed on September 30, 2023, with all grant funds expended.**



-THE CITY OF-
EASLEY
SOUTH CAROLINA

**City of Easley, SC
FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide
Assessment Grant
Threshold Criteria**



Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The City of Easley, South Carolina, is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant as a general purpose unit of local government as defined under 2 CFR § 200.64.
- b. The City of Easley, South Carolina, is **not exempt** from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Community Involvement

The City has a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) in place that was developed during the FY2019 grant. The City consistently includes residents in their decision-making processes. Leadership understands the importance of gathering public input when making changes within a community, because community buy-in is critical for redevelopment success. To share the progress of the Brownfield Program, the CIP will be updated to describe the planned community-engagement activities, project schedule, project background, and key players. Residents can review the CIP in City Hall. The City held council meetings to discuss brownfield initiatives and how this grant will help with the planned revitalization efforts. City staff will continue to solicit the community's assistance for site identification during regularly scheduled City Council and target-area community meetings. The City will use the input and information gathered from the community meetings, project partner meetings, and vision sessions to advance the City's Brownfield Program. All information gathered from concerned citizens, local organizations, and entities during community outreach will be presented at the quarterly Brownfield Project Team meeting and responded to within two weeks of the meeting.

The City realizes that using multiple forms of media for communication is vital to success. The City will continue to use its municipal website as well as social media to share Brownfield Project information. In addition, a brochure explaining the project will be shared both online and throughout the community, being strategically placed at City offices and recreational facilities. Local media press releases will keep the community up to date on project milestones and events. City staff will also continue to provide brownfield information during regularly scheduled City Council and community meetings that will take place in the target area and online. If non-English speaking individuals are present at events, a translator will be available. To reach members of the community that may not have internet access, various community organizations, including listed community partners, will advertise community meetings and disseminate information throughout the community.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The City of Easley affirms that they do not have an open Assessment or Multipurpose Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable.