



(1) Applicant Identification

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
555 E. Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

(2) Website URL <https://www.cfrpc.org>

(3) Funding Requested

- a. **Assessment Grant Type** Assessment Coalition
- b. **Federal Funds Requested** \$1,500,000

(4) Location

- a. **City** Zolfo Springs, Wauchula, Sebring, Okeechobee, CDPs Eloise and Wahneta
- b. **County(ies)** Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee and Polk Counties
- c. **State** Florida

(5) Coalition Members’ Target Areas and Priority Site Information

entral Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) - Lead Applicant

Target Area - Zolfo Springs CCD (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County)

Priority Brownfield Site #2: 298 Rest Haven Road, Zolfo Springs, FL 33890

Hardee County - Non-lead Coalition Member

Target Area - City of Wauchula (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County)

Priority Brownfield Site #1: 122 South 8th Avenue, Wauchula, FL 33873

City of Sebring - Non-lead Coalition Member

Target Area - City of Sebring (CTs 12055.9601.03 and 12055.961a, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Highlands County)

Priority Brownfield Site #4: 551 N Ridgewood Drive, Sebring, FL 33870

Priority Brownfield Site #5: 422 Park Street, Sebring, FL 33870

Okeechobee County - Non-lead Coalition Member

Target Area - City of Okeechobee (CTs 12093.9103 and 12093.9104.01, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Okeechobee County)

Priority Brownfield Site #3: 185 NW 32nd Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972

Polk County- Non-lead Coalition Member

Target Area - Eloise (CT 12105.014600) and **Wahneta** (CT 12105.118.22), census-designated places in unincorporated Polk County.

Priority Brownfield Site #6: 622/642/672 Snively Avenue, Eloise, FL 33880

Priority Brownfield Site #7: 100/104/108/110 US 17 N, Winter Haven, FL 33883

Priority Brownfield Site #8: 2712 Rifle Range Road, Winter Haven, FL 33880



(6) Contacts

a. Project Director

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, MPA, AICP
Executive Director
icodosalisbury@cfrpc.org
Central Florida Regional Planning Council
555 E. Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830
Office: (863) 534-7130 ext. 178

b. Chief Executive/Highest-Ranking Elected Official

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, MPA, AICP
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Bartow, FL 33830
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(7) Population

Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) - Lead Applicant – 1,026,420 total regional population: 34,719 (DeSoto) + 25,508 (Hardee) + 107,614 (Highlands) + 40,249 (Okeechobee) + 818,330 (Polk)

Hardee County	25,508
Highlands County	107,614
Okeechobee County	42,369
Polk County	818,330
Zolfo Springs	1,836
City of Wauchula	4,910
City of Sebring	11,379
Eloise (CDP)	227
Wahneta (CDP)	4,409



(8) Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
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.	
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 sites within the target areas.	10
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 see attached letter.

(10) Releasing Copies of Applications

Not applicable.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Bob Martinez Center
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jay Collins
Lt. Governor

Alexis A. Lambert
Secretary

December 19, 2025

Alyssa Kuhn
Brownfields Program
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
61 Forsyth Street, S.W. 13th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960
Kuhn.Alyssa@epa.gov

Dear Ms. Kuhn:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the Central Florida Regional Planning Council's (CFRPC) Brownfields grant application for a Community-Wide Hazardous Substance and Petroleum or Petroleum Products Coalition Assessment Grant. The coalition consists of CFRPC, Hardee County, Okeechobee County, Polk County, and the City of Sebring. The Department understands that this application has been prepared in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidance document EPA-OLEM-OBLR-25-05, titled "FY26 Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants (Assessment Coalition Grants)." This letter of acknowledgement addresses the requirement for a "Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority," described in SECTION IV.B.9. EPA Brownfields grant funding will strengthen the Coalition's cleanup and redevelopment efforts. This federal grant effort also supports Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Act and the Department's role in administration of site rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

The Department encourages EPA grant recipients to use the incentives and resources available through Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Program with EPA grant funding to enhance the success of their Brownfields project. The Department recommends that the Coalition consider including Brownfields sites or areas that could potentially receive federal funding in a state-designated Brownfield area. The Coalition is also encouraged to contact Philip Wilkerson, the Southwest District Brownfields Coordinator, at (813) 470-5753 to learn more about the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Sweeney".

Scott Sweeney, Environmental Manager
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

SS/jc

cc:

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, CFRPC – jcodosalisbury@cfrpc.org
Philip Wilkerson, DEP Southwest District – philip.wilkerson@floridadep.gov



Heartland Brownfield Coalition (Central Florida Regional Planning Council)**(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION****Coalition Members, Target Areas, and Brownfields**

a. Coalition Members. The Central Florida Regional Planning Council (a regional council established under governmental authority) was established in 1974 through an interlocal agreement by five counties in Florida’s historic “Heartland” region: Polk, Hardee, DeSoto, Highlands, and Okeechobee. The Council was subsequently enabled and authorized by the State of Florida under Chapter 186.502(4) Florida Statutes. Our overall mission is to facilitate inter-governmental cooperation and sharing of resources among the counties to support community planning and re/development. For over 50 years, we have provided technical advice and planning services and programs to all five counties and 25 cities of the region. Our services are diverse and include economic development, strategic planning, emergency preparedness planning, transportation planning, intergovernmental coordination, community visioning, and a wide variety of grant writing and grant management activities. Through these activities, we provide an important regional forum for leaders and residents to consider and discuss critical development issues, solve problems, develop programs, and build consensus to improve our communities.

One of the key challenges/opportunities that we have identified collectively for all counties is brownfields remediation and redevelopment, especially when it comes to workforce housing. Florida’s Heartland region is a major economic engine for the state but a significant portion of the population experiences financial hardship due to factors such as low wages and high cost of living, both of which have conspired to prevent our workforce from affording and attaining decent housing. Our proposed “Heartland Brownfield Coalition” will allow us to work together across the region on brownfields redevelopment and workforce housing—two key and intertwined problems we face that we cannot address on our own. Collectively, we can coordinate effectively with each other, share technical advice and resources, and develop a regional plan to address our growing brownfields, all of which are shaped by our shared past in mining and agriculture. Our **Heartland Brownfield Coalition** is comprised of the **Central Florida Regional Planning Council [Lead Applicant]** (an eligible applicant authorized by Chapter 186.502(4) Florida statutes) and four Non-lead Coalition Members (each an eligible entity as a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1): **Polk County, Hardee County, Okeechobee County, and City of Sebring (Highlands County)**. Each coalition member has critical workforce housing needs that can be met with brownfields redevelopment. Each member also has the background and experience with similar redevelopment projects that, when combined as part of the Coalition, can create positive change with sustainable results across the Heartland Region.

b. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas. Polk, Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties together are often referred to as the “Heartland” of Florida because of their central, landlocked location and deep history with over 500 years of sustained settlement. **These four counties form the geographic boundary for the proposed grant activities.** Key heartland settlements like Bartow, Wauchula, Sebring, and Okeechobee each would become county seats and, once connected by rail in 1850, economic engines for the state fueling the agriculture and phosphate mining industries. The region has been the leading citrus producer for the United States for much of the 20th century and supplies phosphate for fertilizer for 75% of the U.S. market and 25% of the global market. Overseas competition leading to downturns in the local economies have placed these communities in hard times since the 1990s, with many former industrial facilities now vacant or abandoned. Brownfields now outnumber businesses in some areas. For example, in Highlands County, the state designated brownfield area (BF 250701000) in Wauchula spans 11,932 acres and the brownfield area (BF 280601000) in Sebring covers 12,769 acres. In both communities, most brownfield sites represent former industrial plants or commercial businesses servicing those plants (e.g., manufacturing, automotive, storage), each with their own unique history of hazardous waste disposal and contamination. In neighboring Polk and Hardee counties, 24 monumental (5-700 surface acres) phosphogypsum stacks (waste from phosphate mining)

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dot the landscape composing what residents call “Bone Valley,” the richest source of phosphate rock in the world. The mining process involves the large-scale production of hazardous waste byproducts including uranium (100 ppm) that are stored in the “gypstacks” and retention ponds, some of which have historically caused contamination in nearby areas. Rail for transporting the dryrock interconnects this region with Okeechobee, an important town on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee, the largest (730 sq. mi) freshwater lake in Florida and a critical water resource for Florida’s agricultural industry (tomatoes and sugarcane among other crops). Brownfields in this part of the Heartland are related to commercial agriculture and consist of old farms with legacy contamination from pesticides, fuel tanks, warehouses, and former railyards.

Because the types and scales of brownfields throughout the Heartland are incredibly diverse—from industry to mining to agriculture—addressing them through remediation and redevelopment has been difficult, especially for the small, rural towns that are economically depressed. We believe that the U.S. EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant program is the ideal opportunity for us to engage the Central Florida Regional Planning Council to help us coordinate our efforts across the region. Coordination can help us identify and share technical assistance we can all benefit from, learn how to develop planning and funding strategies where brownfields present stigma to redevelopment and economic growth, and catalyze community change with the assessment and cleanup of strategic properties in our communities with high-growth potential. These communities represent our **Target Areas** for the proposed coalition assessment grant project: **City of Wauchula** (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County), **City of Sebring** (CTs 12055.9601.03 and 12055.961a, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Highlands County), **Zolfo Springs CCD** (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County), **City of Okeechobee** (CTs 12093.9103 and 12093.9104.01, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Okeechobee County), and **Eloise** (CT 12105.014600) and **Wahneta** (CT 12105.118.22), census-designated places in unincorporated Polk County.

c. **Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites.** There are eight priority brownfield sites in our initial assessment and redevelopment efforts, which represent properties identified by our coalition partners as essential for catalyzing additional redevelopment in their communities. Each site offers different opportunities for redevelopment, but coalition partners agree that workforce housing is most critical based on discussions and surveys with residents and other stakeholders.

Priority Brownfield Site #1: 122 South 8th Avenue, Wauchula, FL 33873 previously operated as Auto Restoration Depot, Inc. and as Auto Klassix Metal Clean, LLC, car restoration businesses that included total immersion paint stripping and electrolytic de-rusting services. The business was storing at least 15,000 gallons of hazardous waste, thought to be mainly caustic rinse water with heavy metals. One of the 5,000 gallon process tanks holds a caustic cyanide process solution. Other tanks and drums contain wastewater and/or sludge or solids that are in various states of deterioration, some of which are leaking or have leaked. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection found that the operator frequently failed to manage waste and hazardous materials properly. The property owner disposed of 30,000 lb. of hazardous waste from one of the 5,000 gallon tanks in February 2014 but has more than 60,000 lb. of waste left on site, packaged in leaking yard boxes. Four 1,000 gallon liquid totes are also on site, two of which are stored outside. No fence is present to secure the site, which is located in a small urban area, surrounded by commercial buildings and private residences. Reuse of the site could include mixed use development with commercial and residential components.

Priority Brownfield Site #2: 298 Rest Haven Road, Zolfo Springs, FL 33890 is a former assisted living facility, which closed several years ago. The building onsite, owned by Hardee County, is currently vacant and in need of repair, having been damaged significantly by Hurricane Ian in 2022. The county would like to make use of the existing structure and repurpose it for farmworker housing, but assessment and cleanup are needed. Because of the age of the structure, there is concern about asbestos and lead-based

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paint. There are also concerns about activity areas on the property that may have produced hazardous wastes.

Priority Brownfield Site #3: 185 NW 32nd Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972 is a closed landfill (“Old Okeechobee Airport Landfill”) near the city’s airport, which is the economic hub of the community. The property, owned by Okeechobee County, sits within a Florida Rural Area of Opportunity and a federal Qualified Opportunity Zone. While we have a No Further Action letter for groundwater monitoring from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, there is evidence for concerns regarding heavy metals (Pb, As, Hg) and VOCs (benzene, trichloroethylene) as well as complex mixtures from pharmaceuticals, pesticides, and industrial chemicals. Reuse of the site would include commercial activities of the airport to enhance workforce development and economic growth.

Priority Brownfield Site #4: 551 N Ridgewood Drive, Sebring, FL 33870 is a former gas station (now owned by the city) located within the city’s Community Redevelopment Area. There are existing concerns about underground storage tanks and related soil and groundwater pollution. The property is located at a busy commercial intersection where reuse could support office and retail functions. If additional properties are added, there is opportunity for mixed use.

Priority Brownfield Site #5: 422 Park Street, Sebring, FL 33870 houses the city’s former public works maintenance yard. Given its past use involving many different maintenance activities, we expect a variety of hazardous wastes chemicals for landscape care (herbicides, fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides such as glyphosate) and equipment upkeep (degreasers, oils, fuels, cleaning agents such as isopropyl alcohol, phosphoric acid), along with potential hazards like diesel, paints, and solvents (chloroform). Due to its location adjacent to a residential neighborhood, the city has targeted redevelopment of the site for multi-family housing.

Priority Brownfield Site #6: 622/642/672 Snively Avenue, Eloise, FL 33880 are adjoining properties formerly part of “Truck Center of Winter Haven,” which is in the Eloise Community Redevelopment Area. Based on aerial photos dating back to 1964, the site has been used primarily for outdoor storage and similar industrial uses, with a fueling facility currently onsite. Contaminants of concern include heavy metals, VOCs, petroleum hydrocarbons, and BTEX (benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes), among other pollutants. There is also evidence for possible underground storage tanks and former storage/disposal of hazardous wastes. The three parcels that compose this brownfield site are in a Residential-Low-4 district (areas for the low-density residential needs of residents in urban areas who desire spaces with smaller lots). The 2018 Eloise Community Redevelopment Plan Update identifies this property as a “Redevelopment Opportunity Site” for its potential to host affordable housing and for environmental remediation because the site borders a drainage canal with wetlands.

Priority Brownfield Site #7: 100/104/108/110 US 17 N, Winter Haven, FL 33883 is an open lot (known as the “Spiker Property”) in the Eloise Community Redevelopment Area. The former building on the property (now demolished) had two garages and may have served as a automotive repair shop. As such, contaminants may include used oils, solvents, antifreeze, paints, and heavy metals (lead, chromium) from fluids and parts. The site is split with two different land use classifications. The parcels fronting US 17 are in a Community Activity Center Land Use (CAC) District, which aims to provide for shopping needs of residents living within a surrounding community. The CAC district permits special residential development and non-residential uses such as offices, department stores, supermarkets, restaurants, and community facilities. This parcel is part of a larger CAC that is located at the US 17 & Snively Avenue/CR 55 intersection. The remaining three parcels are in a Business-Park Center 2 (BPC-2) district, which represent areas for light-industrial activities. The BPC-2 district permits light manufacturing, fabrication, assembly, distribution and wholesaling activities, and some retail uses to support the businesses and activities within the Business Park Center. Based on the recent “Live Local” Act passed by

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the Florida Legislature, this collection of properties could also be used for affordable housing, even though the property is in a commercial and industrial district.

Priority Brownfield Site #8: 2712 Rifle Range Road, Winter Haven, FL 33880 is an open lot (known as the “Nor Ayad Property”) in the Wahneta neighborhood that has been used as a nursery since 1988. Given the use of the property, it is expected that various chemicals for pest, weed, and disease control are likely present at the site. These include, for example, fungicides (e.g., chlorothalonil), insecticides (e.g., neonicotinoids, organophosphates), herbicides (e.g., glyphosate, 2,4-D), and fertilizers (e.g., nitrogen, phosphorus). The subject parcel is in Wahneta, an unincorporated community that has been a priority for redevelopment by the County (Polk County Comprehensive Plan, Section 2.134-A: Wahneta Neighborhood Plan Polk County Land Development Code – Section 4.03.01). Both the County’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code has special provisions for this area, with the intent of promoting redevelopment. The site is designed as being in a Residential-Suburban X Land Use District. Within this district, residential development on parcels greater than five acres is allowed at maximum density of three dwelling units per acre. Applied to this 9.04-acre site, this means that the site has the potential for a maximum of 27 housing units. Redevelopment of this property for residential purposes would upgrade the amount and quality of the housing stock in Wahneta, plus have the potential to spur additional redevelopment.

d. Identifying Additional Sites. If grant funds remain after completing assessment activities on the identified priority sites, the Coalition will implement a structured, transparent, and community-informed process to identify and prioritize additional eligible brownfield properties. This process will be coordinated by CFRPC (lead applicant). The Coalition will use a multi-step screening methodology to include: (1) *community and stakeholder input* (a public nomination form will be made available at all community outreach events and meetings, as well as on the websites of CFRPC and its coalition members to allow residents, property owners, and developers to suggest additional properties for consideration); (2) *field surveys and windshield assessments* (the coalition will conduct structured field observations to document vacant or deteriorated structures, dumping or distressed site conditions, indicators of past industrial or commercial activity, proximity to sensitive receptors such as schools, parks, senior housing, or residential neighborhoods); (3) *review of municipal data sources* (to include Code Enforcement inventories of vacant, abandoned, or unsafe structures, Planning Department records documenting underutilized parcels, zoning inconsistencies, or redevelopment barriers, historic land-use maps, and tax delinquency records that may indicate long-term neglect or environmental stigma); and (4) *environmental and historical records review* (for candidate properties, the City and its environmental consultant will conduct desktop-level research, including state environmental records, EPA Envirofacts and ECHO databases, historical aerial imagery, Sanborn fire insurance maps and underground storage tank (UST) and leaking UST registry reviews).

Criteria for prioritizing additional sites to determine which properties should receive remaining assessment funds will include the following: (1) *access/site control or willingness of property owner* (publicly owned sites or those whose owners are cooperative with assessment activities and sites where acquisition, redevelopment, or public-private partnership is feasible); (2) *cost-effectiveness and technical feasibility* (sites that can be reasonably advanced through Phase I and Phase II assessment within available funding and locations where assessment results will directly support redevelopment decision-making); (3) *community health and environmental risk* (proximity to sensitive populations, e.g., schools, childcare centers, senior housing, densely populated neighborhoods, and presence of distressed structures that may contain asbestos or lead-based paint as well as locations adjacent to waterways or floodplains where contamination may migrate); (4) *redevelopment readiness and catalytic potential* (sites supporting ongoing corridor or neighborhood master plans and sites with committed development interest or clear reuse potential once environmental barriers are removed; and (5) *removal of blight and*

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neighborhood stabilization (properties contributing to visible deterioration or safety concerns and sites impeding reinvestment or depressing surrounding property values).

Revitalization of the Target Areas

e. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans. Opportunity and investment areas in the region are identified based on compatibility with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) goals and the U.S. EPA Six Pillars and are expected to make a future impact on the regional or local economy based on the suitability and marketability of the site; or, because of the investment that has already been made on the site. As projects are considered for public funding opportunities, priority will be given to those that are compatible with the goals of the CEDS and are aligned with the Six Pillars. Priority projects impact the regional economy in terms of job creation for the local or regional populace, or as catalysts for future development. Reuse of each property aligns with existing planning efforts. For example: (1) opportunity Investment Area 3 and 4 Hardee County Commerce Park & Wauchula; (2) Area 7 Sebring Multimodal Logistics Center and Business Park; and (3) Area 8 Okeechobee Commerce Center / Okeechobee Airport Area - the Okeechobee Commerce Center is a 124 acre industrial park owned by the City of Okeechobee. It sits next to the CSX rail line and is located near US 441. The Commerce Center has full infrastructure on the site, including high speed internet. Included in this opportunity area is the Okeechobee County Airport and Industrial Park, located in unincorporated Okeechobee County. The airport consists of 852 acres, including the airfield and the Industrial Park. Easy access to the airport is available from US 98 and US 441. The Industrial Park is home to several active businesses as well as a County-owned Incubator consisting of three 4,500 square foot bays.

f. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy. By identifying potential contaminants, the coalition can create a strategy for remediation, which will lead to environmental improvements and improved resiliency within the Target Areas. The coalition will address issues surrounding environmental contamination by focusing on Target areas that are considered impoverished. By engaging with community members in these areas, the coalition will gather site reuse planning input from community members to further address environmental concerns. The priority sites, all of which are located in disadvantaged census tracts, will lead to the construction of affordable housing. Thus, the outcomes of this project will include successful community engagement activities that address environmental concerns and planning activities that will result in the redevelopment of brownfield sites as affordable housing.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse. The reuse and redevelopment efforts to be funded by this brownfield assessment project will require a multi-layered approach to leveraging resources for assessment, cleanup, redevelopment and reuse, including loans, grants, CRA Tax Increments (TIFs) and private investment. Brownfield Priority Sites 4, 6, and 7 are located within Community Redevelopment Areas, which under Florida law (F.S. 163) enables a key tool to fund renewal projects. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) captures the revenue of all increased property taxes (the "increment") from redevelopment to be reinvested *only* in that blighted area, not for general government use. This spurs private investment, infrastructure, and economic growth by freezing base property values and using future tax hikes for revitalization projects like streets, utilities, and building improvement. Additionally, all priority sites and target areas are located within federally designated Qualified Opportunity Zones. In addition, Florida's brownfield program offers up to 15 financial incentives, 12 regulatory incentives, and four technical assistance incentives (Florida§376.84). Florida Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credits are available to cover a portion of necessary remediation costs. The coalition can access FDEP CERCLA 128(a) Site Specific Activities/Targeted Brownfields Assessment Assistance for cleanup activities, as necessary.

h. Use of Existing Infrastructure. Existing infrastructure in the Target Areas includes roadway, streetscapes, and utilities, such as electrical power and sewer/stormwater service. Improvements in

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infrastructure in the case of the priority sites will be assessed as part of the redevelopment strategies made possible through the proposed planning funding to ensure the success of the reuse and redevelopment of the priority sites. The coalition is able to access CDBG funding in each county to support necessary infrastructure enhancements as needed.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**Community Need**

a. The Community's Need for Funding. Environmental site assessment and remediation are the keys to redeveloping brownfields in our Target Areas. Neither the lead applicant nor the coalition partners have access to funding for these tasks. Yet, as redevelopment plans across the Heartland make clear, there is urgent need for remediated and redeveloped property for affordable housing (e.g., the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Atlas shows our Target Areas are all at or above the 90th percentile for housing cost) and community-wide health care located within our Target Area communities that are suffering environmental exposures, low socioeconomic status, and chronic disease (asthma, diabetes, hypertension). This heightened need for more access to expanded housing and workforce development with our coalition partners demands careful consideration of the community needs, assisted capital growth, and care expansion in each Target Area. The Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Atlas shows that residents in our Target Areas are above the 80th percentile for asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and low life expectancy. Through this coalition grant, we will have access to resources for environmental site assessment and will be able to leverage brownfields redevelopment by directing CDBG funding to communities in need.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations. Impoverished communities across the U.S. increasingly endure disproportionate human and environmental health burdens as a legacy of prior land uses that resulted in the proliferation of brownfields containing hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants. Research demonstrates that many of these communities also suffer from long-term economic disinvestment that has created high levels of un/under-employment and poverty interdependent with a lack of access to quality education, affordable housing, and reliable healthcare. These challenges become especially challenging for the health and welfare of sensitive populations, such as children (under 18) and older adults (over 65), individuals and families living in poverty, and those experiencing homelessness. In our region, populations under 18 (average 20.6% of the population) and over 65 (14.0% of the population) represent another large sector (over a third of the total population) of sensitive groups impacted by brownfields contamination in our region.

Notably, the Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Atlas tool shows that our Target Areas are all at or above the 90th percentile (compared to the state) when it comes to hazardous waste and superfund site proximity, PM 2.5, and air toxics (respiratory HI and cancer risk). In our communities experiencing environmental challenges, wellbeing and opportunity are diminished compared to neighboring areas and life expectancy is significantly lower than other regions of the state. Historically, lack of attention to critical infrastructures (e.g., water, housing, education, health) has combined with the proliferation of brownfields to produce uneven access to affordable housing and healthcare resulting in growing threats to human and environmental health. Our coalition project identifies the range of such challenges faced by residents in these communities in our Target Areas and will work toward creating the governmental and infrastructural conditions that will: 1) prioritize impoverished communities with brownfields challenges; 2) orient future investment in affordable housing; and 3) co-develop interventions with these communities that are context sensitive.

c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions. According to Florida Health CHARTS Chronic Disease and Birth Defects Profiles, Polk, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties show asthma hospitalization and chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD) hospitalization rates in the 3rd and 4th quartiles among Florida's 67 counties. Total birth defect rates per 10,000 live births in several



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CFRPC counties meet or exceed the Florida rate for the same period. These elevated burdens of respiratory disease and birth defects, in conjunction with documented hazardous substance releases in the region, indicate a greater-than-normal incidence of diseases and conditions potentially associated with environmental exposures. Notably, Polk, Hardee, and Okeechobee counties exhibit higher birth-defect rates than the Florida statewide rate (259.6 per 10,000). Polk County, at 292.2 per 10,000, is notably elevated relative to state and national prevalence estimates. Multiple CFRPC counties—particularly Polk, Hardee, and Okeechobee—exceed the Florida statewide birth-defect rate. These elevated rates indicate localized patterns that may warrant further investigation in relation to environmental exposures and public-health disparities.

Area	Age-adjusted Cancer Incidence (per 100,000, 2017–2021)	Difference vs Florida	Difference vs U.S.
United States	444.4	–	–
Florida (state)	464.0	+4.4% above U.S.	+4.4% above U.S.
CFRPC 5-County Region (aggregated)	≈490.5	≈+5.7% above FL	≈+10.4% above U.S.
Polk County	493.6	≈+6.4% above FL	≈+11.1% above U.S.
Highlands County	489.8	≈+5.6% above FL	≈+10.2% above U.S.
Okeechobee County	471.4	≈+1.6% above FL	≈+6.1% above U.S.
Hardee County	472.0	≈+1.7% above FL	≈+6.2% above U.S.
DeSoto County	454.0	≈–2.2% below FL	≈+2.2% above U.S.

Source: National Cancer Institute (NCI) / CDC State Cancer Profiles, 2017–2021.

Area	Asthma Rate (%) Adults; Children	Birth Defect Rate per 10,000 live births	CLRD Hospitalization Rate per 100,000 persons
United States	8.6%, 6.5%	249.2	101.3
Florida (state)	8.5%, 5.9%	259.6	106.5
Polk County	9.2%, 6.6%	292.2	159.8
Highlands County	8.4%, 5.7%	179.3	154.2
Okeechobee County	8.9%, 6.4%	244.3	154.0
Hardee County	8.4%, 6.1%	252.2	162.0
DeSoto County	8.5%, 5.9%	217.8	140.7

Source: Florida Health Charts, Florida Department of Health, 2023–2024

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations. Florida’s Heartland communities are significantly impoverished compared to the rest of the state (see table below). Median household income in Heartland counties are 10-50% lower than the rest of the state and, on average, are 15% lower than the national median. The federal poverty rate in our region ranges from 13-41%, compared to state (12.7%) and national (12.0%) averages. Finally, populations under 18 (average 20.6%) and over 65 (14.0%) represent another sector of sensitive groups impacted by brownfields contamination in our region. Together, these factors suggest that residents of Heartland communities bear a disproportionate burden when it comes to environmental contamination.

Geography	Total population	% minority population	Median household income	Per capita income	% under 18	% over 65	Poverty rate
United States	334,900,000	41.6%	\$74,580	\$41,700	22.3%	17.3%	12.0%
Florida	22,200,000	47.3%	\$70,000	\$39,700	19.4%	21.3%	12.7%
CFRPC Region*	1,026,420	45.7%	\$63,200	\$32,020	20.6%	21.2%	14.0%
DeSoto County	34,719	44.5%	\$50,868	\$24,462	18%	23.8%	23.1%
Highlands County	107,614	35.8%	\$55,581	\$30,848	17%	36%	15.4%
Polk County	818,330	47.4%	\$66,909	\$33,489	22%	19.6%	12.8%



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Okeechobee County	40,249	37.3%	\$52,288	\$27,836	21%	20%	19.0%
Hardee County	25,508	52.9%	\$54,231	\$26,225	25%	16%	24.3%
Sebring (city)	11,185	44.8%	\$42,072	\$31,891	17%	29.2%	27.9%
Wauchula (city)	4,910	62.5%	\$36,324	\$24,607	32%	12%	40.7%
Okeechobee (city)	5,376	47.6%	\$50,365	\$23,909	25%	17%	23.3%

*Aggregated regional data. Sources U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 1-year <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs> Census Reporter Profiles <https://censusreporter.org/> [Census Reporter Data USA Place & County Profiles https://datausa.io/](https://datausa.io/)

Community Engagement

e. Project Involvement. We will establish a Community Advisory Board (CAB) composed of coalition members, community residents and representatives, local governments, and business/industry to oversee our stakeholder engagement efforts. A formal Community Involvement Plan will be developed upon the formation of the CAB and selection of the coalition’s Qualified Environmental Professional firm. Community residents and representatives will actively take part in decision making from the very beginning of the project and throughout, including identification and prioritization of reuse sites, redevelopment planning, and sharing of all results and outcomes. Through capacity building strategies previously employed by coalition partners in other community-engaged projects, we will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure resources and power relations are equitably balanced. Moreover, we will make efforts to provide opportunities for students from local colleges and universities through a service-learning curriculum as opportunities arise. In addition, all coalition partners are guided by boards of directors that include resident stakeholders in the Target Areas, and these groups will also be substantively involved in project activities. Finally, we will partner with the Florida Brownfields Association (the leading advocacy nonprofit for brownfields redevelopment) to advance our efforts for brownfields redevelopment for housing initiatives. All coalition partners have a strong record of community and stakeholder engagement in the Target Areas.

f. Project Roles. The Coalition is fortunate to have support of numerous project partners (both coalition and community) throughout its project area. Project partners will be engaged in eligible grant activities that will facilitate community understanding of environmental exposures, socioeconomic status, and chronic diseases, and together develop a framework to mitigate these threats and convert them to opportunities to improve the community’s overall environment, health, successes in education, employability, and economic status.

Name of organization & Mission	Contact Person	Specific project role
Habitat for Humanity	Julie Farish julie@habitateastpolk.org	Community Advisory Group
Wauchula Community Redevelopment Agency	Jessica Newman jnewman@cityofwauchula.com	Community Advisory Group
Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency	Mark Bennett markbennett@polk-county.net	Community Advisory Group
Central Florida Healthcare	Ann Claussen aclaussen@cfhconline.org	Community Advisory Group
Sebring Community Redevelopment Agency	Kristie Vazquez kristievazquez@mysebring.com	Community Advisory Group
Okeechobee County Economic Development Corp	Kaylee King kaylee@ocedcorp.com	Community Advisory Group

g. Incorporating Community Input. The Coalition will follow the EPA’s “Steps for Effective Public Involvement” that include planning/budgeting for public involvement, the provision of information/outreach, conducting involvement activity, reviewing/using input, and providing feedback and evaluating activities/processes. The Coalition will use their own, as well as partner agencies’ websites, social media, radio, local newspapers, and informational brochures, to convey project progress, advertise public meetings/webinars, and solicit input from target area residents. It is the Coalition's goal



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to provide all target area residents with equal access to the decision-making process. All members of the Coalition have relationships with public officials, community leaders, and residents of the target areas. Public meetings will be made accessible via virtual platforms for the convenience of those who are unable to attend in person. The meetings will be held alternately in the target areas to ease transportation burdens for residents who would like to attend in person. Letters, phone calls, and emails will be accepted methods for supplying input from residents unable to attend meetings and who lack internet service. All questions and concerns expressed by the community will receive a response within 10 business days. Printed workplans and quarterly reports will be available to the public upon request. Meetings will be held in accessible locations. Interpretation services will be provided with 3-day advance notice.

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

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task 1 - Project Management & Reporting
a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> EPA-funded: Staff time and QEP Support for meetings, quarterly, annual, and closeout reporting (including MBE/WBE forms and ACRES database updates). Non-EPA-funded: contractor procurement & Work Plan development
b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Contractor selection and Work Plan Development - June 2026; kick-off meeting/setup of forms - Oct 2026; monthly project meetings, quarterly, annual, closeout reporting, forms, ACRES - Oct 2026 through Sept 2030.
c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> Sheila McNamara, Brownfield Coordinator, will be responsible for programmatic activities with assistance from the QEP, overseen by Finance Director and Project Director to ensure compliance with the Work Plan & schedule.
d. <u>Outputs:</u> : 1 kick-off meeting/setup of programmatic forms, 48 monthly project team meetings, 16 quarterly reports & ACRES updates, 1 close-out report, 4 annual reporting periods with annual financial and MBE/WBE reporting.
Task 2 - Community Outreach & Engagement
a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> EPA-funded: conference attendance/travel for 2 staff, brochure development, Community Involvement Plan (CIP), brownfields coalition & community meetings, priority site meetings, site prioritization coordination and graphic materials; Non-EPA-funded: The Coalition will provide in-kind translation services as-needed.
b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> CIP and brochure development: completed by Dec 2026, priority site meetings Jan 2027 - Dec 2027, Brownfield quarterly meetings and site prioritization - Oct 2026 through Sept 2030
c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> Project Director, Jennifer Codo-Salisbury will direct outreach activities with support from Coalition Members and Sheila McNamara, Brownfield Coordinator. The contractor will assist with the development of the CIP and brochure, outreach materials, assist with meetings, and site prioritization.
d. <u>Outputs:</u> Attendance at 4 Brownfield Conferences, 1 brochure, 1 CIP, 16 quarterly brownfield coalition meetings (rotating location within target areas), 8 priority site brownfield meetings. Graphic materials for meetings/presentations to public.
Task 3 - Site Assessments
a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> EPA-funded: Staff time and QEP support to complete Site Inventory, Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), Phase I & II ESA, Site Specific QAPPs and Health and Safety (H&S) Plans.
b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Generic QAPP Q1; Phase 1 ESAs - through month 24; site eligibility forms, site-specific QAPPs, H&S plans, and Phase II ESAs – Dec 2026 – June 2030
c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> The contractor (QEP) will assist with the Site Inventory, site eligibility forms, QAPPs, H&S Plans, and assessment activities. Assessments will be completed in accordance with current ASTM standards and the All-Appropriate Inquiries rule. CFRPC and Coalition Partner staff will secure site access and coordinate the site inventory across target areas. The Brownfields Project Director will review site eligibility forms, QAPPs, H&S Plans, and ESAs, as well as provide oversight for all tasks.
d. <u>Outputs:</u> 1 Site Inventory, 1 Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), 35 Phase I ESAs with site access agreements, 16 Phase II ESAs with site eligibility approvals, Site-Specific QAPPs and H&S Plans.
Task 4 - Cleanup & Reuse Planning
a. <u>Project Implementation:</u> EPA-funded: Staff time and QEP support for Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), asbestos cleanup plans, and Brownfield Reuse Plans, Conceptual Design Plans, Target Area Redevelopment Plans.
b. <u>Anticipated Project Schedule:</u> Cleanup (ABCAs) and reuse planning for Priority Sites – Jan 2027- Jul 2030; Area Wide Redevelopment Plan - Sept 2028 - Jul 2030
c. <u>Task/Activity Lead:</u> CFRPC staff with support from Qualified Environmental Consultant, planners, and market analysts with and oversight from the Project Director, Jennifer Codo-Salisbury and Sheila McNamara, Brownfield Coordinator.
d. <u>Outputs:</u> 10 ABCAs and 10 Brownfields Reuse Plans for priority sites; 5 Target Area Brownfield Redevelopment Plans



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e. **Cost Estimates.** The following cost estimates are based on local costs for professional services available in the Central Florida market and CFRPC’s past EPA Brownfields projects and grant experience.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Total
		Task 1 Project Management & Reporting	Task 2 Community Outreach & Engagement	Task 3 Site Assessments	Task 4 Cleanup & Reuse Planning	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$15,000	\$45,000	\$180,000
	Travel	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
	Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Contractual	\$15,000	\$75,000	\$810,000	\$405,000	\$1,305,000
	Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Direct Costs ⁴		\$75,000	\$150,000	\$825,000	450,000	\$1,500,000
Indirect Costs ⁴		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget		\$75,000	\$150,000	\$825,000	\$450,000	\$1,500,000

Task 1 Project Management & Reporting Total \$75,000 (5%). *Personnel Costs* (\$60,000) @ average rate of \$75.00/hour X 800 hours over project period (200 hours/yr) inclusive of *Fringe Benefits* calculated at 29.86% (\$17,916) *Contractual* (\$15,000) - \$750 (5 hours X \$150) X 16 = \$12,000 for assistance with ACRES updates and quarterly project team meetings; \$3,000 for final closeout report. **Task 2 Community Outreach & Engagement** Total \$150,000 (10%). *Personnel Costs* (\$60,000) 800 hours @ \$75.00 inclusive of *Fringe Benefits* calculated at 29.86% (\$17,916) *Travel* (\$15,000) 4 conferences x 2 people @ \$3,750 = \$15,000: flights (8 x \$500=\$4,000), hotel (24 x \$250/night = \$6,000), expenses (24 x \$125/day = \$3,000), registration (8 x \$250 = 2,000). *Contractual* – (\$75,000) \$5,000 Brochure development (40 hours @ \$125), Community Involvement Plan \$5,000 (40 hours @ \$125), \$40,000 for 16 quarterly brownfields meetings at \$2,500/meeting; \$20,000 for priority site meetings (\$2,500 each for 8 sites); and \$5,000 for preparation of graphic materials (40 hours @ \$125). **Task 3 Site Assessments** Total \$825,000 (40%). *Personnel Costs* (\$15,000) average rate of \$75.00 per hour X 200 hours inclusive of *Fringe Benefits* calculated at 29.86% (\$4,479) *Contractual* – 1 GIS Based Site Inventory @ \$30,000; 1 Generic QAPP @ \$5000; 35 Phase I ESAs @ \$5,000 = \$175,000; 16 Phase II ESAs @ average cost of \$37,500 (including HASP and SS-QAPP) = \$600,000. **Task 4 Cleanup & Reuse Planning** Total \$450,000 (30%). *Personnel Costs* (\$45,000) 600 hours @ \$75.00 inclusive of *Fringe Benefits* @ 29.86% (\$13,437) *Contractual* – 10 Analysis for Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives @ \$7,500 each = \$75,000; 10 Brownfield Conceptual Design Plans @ \$18,000 each = \$180,000; 5 Target Area Brownfield Redevelopment Plans @\$30,000 = \$150,000.

f. **Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results.** The project’s progress will be measured by the production of deliverables and expenditure of funds. The outputs to be tracked include the number of meetings held, environmental assessments performed, ABCAs completed, reuse and revitalization plans developed, and acres made ready for reuse. A detailed electronic file record will be maintained to capture all project-related output documents including minutes from monthly progress meetings; number of completed quarterly reports in ACRES and DBE utilization reports; documentation of the results of community stakeholder input including meeting minutes, input received, coalition responses, and resulting changes to reuse plans; procurement and contractual documents for the QEP(s); and number of reuse site plans created. The coalition will also track project outcomes including future public and private investment redevelopment dollars leveraged, economic development benefits (jobs, new businesses, new tax revenues), community development benefits (acres of parks or greenspace, new

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housing opportunities) and improved community health metrics. Progress will be reported to EPA via quarterly performance reports. Project expenditures and activities will be compared to the project's schedule to ensure the grant will be completed within the four-year time frame. Site specific information will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. Additionally, our QEP will continue to update ACRES property profiles beyond the life of the grant to fully capture long-term outcomes.

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**Programmatic Capability**

a. Organizational Capacity and b. Organizational Structure and c. Description of Key Staff. CFRPC maintains an organizational capacity and structure designed to implement the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of multiple ongoing programs and has extensive experience managing federal and state grants. The Council maintains a 18-member board comprised of city and county elected officials, as well as gubernatorial appointees from the state Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida and Southwest Florida Water Management District. Brownfields are a key economic development program for the Council, which actively supports planning, assessment, cleanup, and sustainable development of brownfields by providing technical assistance, loans, and bringing municipal, private, and community stakeholders together to redress related issues. Additionally, CFRPC employs 21 professional staff, including a finance manager, economic and emergency management professionals, and a host of regional planners specializing in land use, environment, transportation and resilience. Staff provide data and research, technical assistance and implement long range planning, transportation, emergency preparedness, economic development, and resiliency programs. CFRPC staff have proven experience in the management and execution of prior grant projects and will employ similar strategies for the proposed Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant to ensure timely and successful expenditure of funds and complete all technical, administrative, and financial requirements of the project and grant. The decision-making structure includes procedures for site selection, scope of work development for contractors, permits/access agreements for assessments, and related aspects of grant activities ensuring the community is involved in how grant funds will benefit the area. We are fortunate to have the expertise of three key staff members that will dedicate their time to this project:

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, MPA, AICP, Executive Director, CFRPC will serve as **Project Director**. Ms. Codo-Salisbury has successfully served in this role through previous EPA Brownfields Grants administered by CFRPC, which has successfully completed multiple EPA assessment grants, an Area-wide Planning Grant, is currently successfully administering an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Grant and will meet all grant environmental/administrative requirements. **Sheila McNamara**, Regional Resiliency Manager, CFRPC, will serve as **Brownfield Coordinator**. Sheila has more than 20 years of experience identifying and building key relationships for strategic planning and implementation, attributing her success to transparent conversations and engagement of diverse groups including local, state, and federal government entities, the general public, stakeholder groups, subject matter experts, and political leaders. She previously served as the Sustainability Manager for Hillsborough County and Hillsborough Community College, the Program Manager for the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Agricultural Program in Virginia, and the Director of Hartwick College's Environmental Campus in New York. **Tami Hulse**, Finance Director, CFRPC will serve as **Financial Director and Grant Manager** and will oversee project reporting, including quarterly and annual reporting. CFRPC ensures compliance with program and comprehensive-planning requirements by incorporating approved accounting procedures, providing internal audits, and following grant requirements. Though the organization is small, it handles a variety of complex grants administrative and compliance requirements. All grant and contracts managed by CFRPC are current on reporting requirements and in compliance with all contract terms and conditions.

d. Acquiring Additional Resources. The Coalition has not procured a contractor for the work proposed



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under this grant project. The procurement process will begin immediately following the work plan and cooperative agreement approval. The Coalition will comply with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 1500 to procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be advertised widely throughout the target areas. Firms will be evaluated based on their experience and capacity for preparing Brownfields Inventories, conducting Community Outreach, performing Phase I and Phase II ESA's, developing Quality Assurance Project Plans, and preparing remediation and redevelopment planning, and other factors. The Coalition will also consult with and use the resources from the EPA Region 4 TAB provider as needed.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

(1) Accomplishments. The table below provides details on previously awarded EPA Brownfields Grants received and managed by CFRPC, as the lead applicant. Outputs were accurately reflected in the Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System, except for those projects that closed prior to the implementation of the ACRES program.

Program	Amount	Balance	Award Date	Grant Accomplishments
US EPA Brownfields Community Wide Assessment	\$400,000	-0-	10/2014	Conducted 20 Phase I and 5 Phase II ESA's, carried out reuse planning, testing, and technical assistance including establishment of a community garden.
US EPA Brownfields Area Wide Planning	\$198,032	-0-	10/2013	Facilitated community involvement, conducted research and technical assistance activities to develop an Area-wide Plan and implementation strategy with the City of Lakeland and Polk County for a brownfields property on the southeast shore of Lake Parker.
US EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) (BF-95481311)	\$1,300,000	-0- Closed 12/2020	09/2011	Loan & subgrant applications & grant/loan documents, 7 subgrants and 2 loans. \$1,005,684 in Leveraged Funding, \$109,260 in cost share funding.
US EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment	\$1,000,000	-0-	7/2009	Completed 25 Phase I ESA's & 19 Phase II ESA's, reuse planning, & soil/groundwater testing for radiation.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements. For all prior EPA Brownfield Grants, CFRPC was in full compliance with grant requirements. All grant funds were utilized within the approved period of the grant. Additionally, CFRPC maintained a history of timely and acceptable quarterly performance, grant deliverables, and ongoing ACRES reporting. No corrective measures were necessary. Progress was achieved towards grant outputs such as number of Coalition meetings, number of brownfield sites identified, and number of Phase I/II ESAs completed. Progress was also made toward the grant outcomes including the number of acres, number of acres assessed and made ready for reuse, and acreage redeveloped.



(1) Eligibility of Lead and Non-Lead Coalition Members

a. Applicants

Lead Applicant – The Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) is an eligible applicant as a Regional Council established in 1974 through an interlocal agreement by five counties in Florida’s historic “Heartland” region (Polk, Hardee, DeSoto, Highlands, and Okeechobee) and authorized by Chapter 186.502(4) Florida statutes to function as a single legal entity with authority to enter into binding agreements with the Federal Government. A copy of the enabling statute is attached.

Non-lead Coalition Member – Hardee County is an eligible entity as a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1.

Non-lead Coalition Member – City of Sebring is an eligible entity as a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1.

Non-lead Coalition Member – Okeechobee County is an eligible entity as a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1.

Non-lead Coalition Member – Polk County is an eligible entity as a General-Purpose Unit of Local Government as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1.

b. 501(c)(4) tax exempt status Not applicable

(2) Target Areas

Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) - Lead Applicant – **Zolfo Springs CCD** (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County)

Hardee County - Non-lead Coalition Member – **City of Wauchula** (CT 12049.9701.02, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Hardee County)

City of Sebring - Non-lead Coalition Member - **City of Sebring** (CTs 12055.9601.03 and 12055.961a, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Highlands County)

Okeechobee County - Non-lead Coalition Member – **City of Okeechobee** (CTs 12093.9103 and 12093.9104.01, a Qualified Opportunity Zone in Okeechobee County)

Polk County- Non-lead Coalition Member - **Eloise** (CT 12105.014600) and **Wahneta** (CT 12105.118.22), census-designated places in unincorporated Polk County.

(3) Non-lead Member(s) that Never Received an EPA MARC Grant The non-lead coalition members (Hardee County, the City of Sebring, Okeechobee County and Polk County) have NOT previously received an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, or Cleanup (MARC) Grant.

(4) Legal Authority to Expend Grant Funds on Behalf of Non-Lead Coalition Members

a. Legal Authority to Expend Grant Funds on behalf of Non-Lead Coalition Members Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) as lead applicant attests that it has the legal authority to expend grant funds on behalf of the non-lead members to conduct the proposed grant activities.



b. Geographic Boundaries The geographic boundaries of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) include the five counties of DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee and Polk, including the 25 municipalities they contain. The agency was created in July, 1974 by an interlocal agreement and subsequently enabled and authorized by the State of Florida under Chapter 186.502(4) Florida Statutes. A copy of the enabling statute is attached.

(5) Coalition Agreement Please see attached letters from each non-lead coalition member.

(6) Community Involvement We will establish a Community Advisory Board (CAB) composed of coalition members, community residents and representatives, local governments, and business/industry to oversee our stakeholder engagement efforts. A formal Community Involvement Plan will be developed upon the formation of the CAB and selection of the coalition's Qualified Environmental Professional firm. Community residents and representatives will actively take part in decision making from the very beginning of the project and throughout, including identification and prioritization of reuse sites, redevelopment planning, and sharing of all results and outcomes. Through capacity building strategies previously employed by coalition partners in other community-engaged projects, we will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure resources and power relations are equitably balanced. Moreover, we will make efforts to provide opportunities for students from local colleges and universities through a service-learning curriculum as opportunities arise. In addition, all coalition partners are guided by boards of directors that include resident stakeholders in the Target Areas, and these groups will also be substantively involved in project activities. Finally, we will partner with the Florida Brownfields Association (the leading advocacy nonprofit for brownfields redevelopment) to advance our efforts for brownfields redevelopment for housing initiatives. All coalition partners have a strong record of community and stakeholder engagement in the Target Areas.

(7) Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds Neither the lead applicant or the non-lead coalition members have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

(8) Contractors and Named Subrecipients

•**Contractors.** Not applicable. No contractors that will perform work under the requested Brownfield Grant have been procured.

•**Named Subrecipients.** Not applicable. No subrecipients will be named under the requested Brownfield Grant.