

Application Information Sheet

(1) Applicant Identification

City of Fort Myers
2200 Second Street Fort Myers, FL 33901

(2) Website URL

<https://fortmyers.gov/>

(3) Funding Requested

- a. Grant Type
Single Site Cleanup
- b. Federal Funds Requested
\$462,000.00

(4) Location

City: Fort Myers
County: Lee County
State: Florida

(5) Property Information

2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901

(6) Contacts

- a. **Project Director**
Jessica McElwee
239-851-7403
JMcElwee@fortmyers.gov
2200 Second Street
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
- b. **Chief Executive/Highest-Ranking Elected Official**
Mayor Kevin Anderson
239-321-7020
KAnderson@fortmyers.gov
2200 Second Street
Fort Myers, Florida 33901

(7) Population

Approximately 86,395 residents

(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 proposed brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the remediation/reuse; secured resource is identified in the Narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.	N/A
The proposed site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the proposed site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	N/A
The proposed site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	3
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	N/A
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) Releasing Copies of Applications

Not applicable. The application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.



City of Fort Myers, Florida
Grant Narrative – Ranking Criteria
Former News-Press Site (2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901)

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

The City of Fort Myers is located on Florida’s southwest coast, along the scenic Caloosahatchee River. The City serves as the Lee County seat and historic governmental hub of the region. The City encompasses approximately 39.84 square miles of land area and is home to approximately 86,395 residents according to the 2020 census.

Following the end of the Seminole Wars in 1865, the former U.S. Army fort nestled along the Caloosahatchee River in Southwest Florida was re-purposed into the early town of Fort Myers. Throughout the beginning of the twentieth century, the town reinvented itself from a quaint, former Army hub and became the premiere metropolitan community of the region. Amidst successes, including the Florida real estate boom of the 1920’s, and devastation, major hurricanes in 1926 and 1928, downtown Fort Myers remained a hub of commerce, government, and socialization for the surrounding region of Southwest Florida. Despite challenges in real estate and development in Florida after natural disasters, Fort Myers’ commitment to development allowed the community to shine as a hub of urban transformation. By midcentury, Fort Myers emerged as a regional leader, heralded by the opening of the Edison Mall in 1965. Celebrated with national press, the indoor mall was the first in the United States to be entirely air conditioned, and the first to co-locate JCPenney and Sears under one roof. This development emphasized the social and economic impact of the downtown corridor. Key investments into the corridor allowed economics to thrive. To date the Edison Mall remains the highest paying revenue generator for the City of Fort Myers. After this mid-century turning point, decline in the urban center forced greater intervention. The City established the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in 1984 Beginning with the inaugural 1986 Downtown Plan and subsequent updates, the CRA, working alongside the City, has systematically invested in projects and programs that have resulted in a significant reduction in crime, vacancy rates, homelessness and overall blight in the Downtown area. Through these key efforts in the city, immediate downtown conditions have improved over the years; however, the adjacent areas, including the subject cleanup site, continue to decline in overall quality and character, posing a threat to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Specific Target Areas: This cleanup project would address the largest and most conspicuous brownfield site within the Downtown area, the former News Press Printing Press and the adjacent vacant fire station, located in Census Tract 12071000700. The site is also located in an opportunity zone, 12071000502 – Florida. The existing site is currently a very visible, blighted introduction to the City’s downtown district, and it has been a major deterrent of development in the surrounding neighborhoods. **How this grant addresses the brownfield challenges:** Funding enables the City to remediate the property, eliminating blight from the essential downtown corridor, and redevelop the project, alongside a private development company, as a mixed-use, catalyst project consisting of residential, commercial, retail, and higher education uses.

b. Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site.

The City of Fort Myers’ proposed single-site Cleanup Grant project is located at 2442 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Fort Myers, Lee County, Florida within the Midtown submarket and at

the entrance to the City's Downtown District. The property consists of a single parcel encompassing 9.71 acres and two vacant buildings.

Past Uses. Historic mapping and city records indicate activity on portions of the site for over a century. Early uses included a City of Fort Myers fire station, police station, and city jail at the northwest corner. These functions operated from approximately 1917 to 2015, with associated petroleum storage tanks for vehicle fueling and emergency power. Immediately south of the fire station, the City operated a municipal fuel pumping facility with oil-fired engines and potential fuel tanks from 1915 through the 1940s. To the southwest, an adjoining parcel historically housed a standard oil bulk fuel distribution facility with multiple gasoline and kerosene tanks supplied by a rail spur. Residential uses occupied parts of the property from the 1910s through the 1960s, followed in later decades by a building-supply distribution facility on the southeast portion, an auto body and repair facility and other commercial/retail uses on the northeast portion (1950s–1980s), and an ice house and cold-storage facility in the east-central area (1950s–early 1990s). The Fort Myers News-Press daily newspaper began operations on the site in the early 1960s. The primary press building was constructed in 1960 with numerous additions through 2003 to support printing, plate processing, ink and solvent handling, truck loading, and distribution activities. The newspaper operated its printing press on the property from the 1960s until printing was relocated to Naples in 2016.

Current Use. The City of Fort Myers acquired the property in 2019. The buildings are now largely vacant and functionally obsolete. **Structures.** The site includes several structures in various stages of decay. These structures include a two-story industrial flex building containing 18,796± square feet of gross building area and 11,037± square feet of net building area, which was built in 1957, and three contiguous buildings containing 180,640± square feet of gross building area and 169,240 square feet of net building area, which were built between 1955 and 1960, and expanded in 1992, 2002, and 2003. **Known Contamination.** Asbestos is present in the buildings in a variety of friable and non-friable building materials, including (among others) pipe mastic, vinyl flooring, 9"x9" vinyl floor tile, HVAC duct mastic, pipe run/elbow wrap, 12"x12" vinyl floor tile, pipe elbow insulation, transite panel and transite siding, pipe elbow valve wrap and mastic, expansion tank mastic and insulation, cementitious kick panels, mirror mastic, ceramic tile grout/thin set, sink insulation, plaster on wire lath, pressure valve wrap insulation, column caulk, drywall/joint compound, loading door gasket, floor mastic, rolled vinyl flooring, and floor float. PFAS concentrations above the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) provisional groundwater PCTLs in wells GW-4, GW-5, and GW-6 around the former fire-station area. Additionally, arsenic in shallow railroad-spur soils above the residential direct-exposure CTL (2.1 mg/kg) but below commercial/industrial levels, with no PAHs, PCBs, or other metals exceeding soil CTLs were confirmed on the property. Full removal and proper disposal of identified and accessible ACM prior to demolition will be necessary.

Revitalization of the Target Area

c. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The reuse strategy for the News-Press site is to transform the property into a vibrant, walkable mixed-use district that serves as a new destination and economic engine for Downtown and Midtown Fort Myers. The Downtown CRA redevelopment strategy specifically identifies the former News-Press site as a “catalytic redevelopment opportunity” and calls for implementation of site readiness actions, including acquisition, demolition, remediation, and subsequent redevelopment, to address blight and unlock private investment. These target-area priorities are reinforced in the City of Fort Myers FY2024–FY2025 Strategic Plan, which identifies the News-

Press property redevelopment as a priority Revitalization and Redevelopment action. The plan calls for the City to negotiate a development agreement for a quality, mixed-use, catalyst project, and also emphasizes university partnerships and the creation of a Downtown/Midtown campus to advance workforce, education, and community revitalization. The dilapidated condition and high visibility location of the News Press site at the gateway to the City and the Midtown area lend it as the perfect opportunity to strengthen the downtown core, expand economic opportunity, and improve climate resiliency. The City entered into a Purchase and Sale Contract and Development Agreement with a developer in March 2025, with plans to redevelop the property as a mixed-use project consisting of a 120,000 square feet of Class A office space and a 100,000 square foot academic campus, supported by 376 residential housing units, a 152-key hotel with conference space, and street level neighborhood-serving retail uses to create a walkable, mixed-use campus environment. This reuse strategy aligns with and advances local land use and revitalization plans and related community priorities, including: (1) the City’s Comprehensive Plan and FY2025 Strategic Plan; (2) the Midtown Vision Plan; and (3) the Smart Code framework intended to foster walkable, mixed-use environments. The project also supports the goals of the City’s 2025 Downtown Redevelopment Plan, including placemaking, sustainability, resiliency, mixed-use development, and a next-generation economy supported by technology and innovation. In addition, the City’s Economic Development Department and the developer are in active negotiations with an educational institution, New York Institute of Technology’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, to build a new medical school at the site. The inclusion of the College of Osteopathic Medicine serves as an anchor to support the creation of a “Medical City” hub in the Midtown area that connects healthcare delivery, education, research, and innovation to the underserved communities surrounding Downtown and the Southwest Florida market as a whole. These efforts directly connect with the City’s strategic plan and vision for future economic development in the city.

d. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

The proposed remediation, redevelopment, and reuse of the subject property removes environmental and market barriers to reinvestment. The investment enables a catalytic redevelopment with substantial economic, community, and environmental benefits for Downtown Fort Myers and the broader region. **Elimination of Slum & Blight** The subject site has presented a significant obstacle to redevelopment of downtown and presents a threat to the health and safety of residents. The proposed remediation removes blighted conditions from the Midtown Submarket, advancing the strategic goals of the EPA by ensuring clean air, land, and water for everyone. **Economic Development and Job Creation** The mixed-use program is expected to generate significant direct and indirect employment opportunities during construction and ongoing operations. The proposed redevelopment of the News Press site is projected to cost approximately \$400 million. **Housing Opportunities for a Mix of Incomes** The redevelopment of the site will add new residential units in the downtown core, including apartments reserved for workforce housing (80-120% AMI limits) supporting increased activity and customer base for existing businesses and advancing the City’s plans to make Downtown a live-work-play environment. **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation** The redevelopment plans include a number of measures and strategies that will advance climate adaptation/mitigation and resilience. The project’s district-level resilience strategy is intended to: (1) reduce flood risk through integrated blue-green stormwater management; (2) reduce extreme heat risk through district-scale shading and streetscape design; and (3) reduce risk from hurricane force winds by designing all buildings to exceed the requirements of local building codes to meet High-Velocity Hurricane Zone standards.

Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency The project buildings and public realm improvements are being designed to incorporate energy efficiency measures and high-performance standards (e.g., LEED and/or NGBS), with a focus on passive survivability during extreme events. The plans incorporate practices, such as smart location strategies, green building and infrastructure techniques, and efficient neighborhood and building design. More specifically, the project plans include: (1) on-site renewable energy (solar) paired with battery energy storage systems (BESS) to provide power during outages and for peak shaving and resilience; (2) high-performance building envelope optimized for hot-humid climate; (3) smart building systems integrated with a digital twin platform.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

e. Resources Needed for Site Characterization, f. Resources Needed for Site Remediation and g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse are identified in the table below.

Assessment of the subject site has been completed. Should additional resources be needed for either additional assessment or remediation, the City has identified several funding sources for reuse activities which will occur after grant-funded remediation. Committed and identified leveraged funds are further detailed below.

Name of Resource	Is the Resource for (1.e) Assessment, (1.f) Remediation, or (1.g) Reuse Activities	Status	Leveraged Funds
City of Fort Myers	Site Acquisition	Secured	\$9,000,000
City of Fort Myers	Midtown Utility and Infrastructure	Secured	\$44,000,000
Third Party Developer	Cleanup Planning – Draft ABCA	Secured	\$10,000
FY26 USEPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant	Remediation	Unsecured	\$331,000
Private Third-Party Developer	Reuse: Demolition and Clearing	Secured	\$1,285,000
Fort Myers CRA TIF	Reuse: Project Infrastructure	Unsecured	\$27,000,000

h. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The subject site is an infill project that will use existing and new infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, and utilities including water, sewer, gas, and telecommunication to support the projects. The project includes public improvements, including a public park area. These enhancements will be funded by a combination of sources identified in the table above, including the Fort Myers CRA and the private developer working on the redevelopment project.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

a. The Community’s Need for Funding

The surrounding trade area reflects the importance of targeted reinvestment. A trade area report for the Fort Myers 33901 area indicates that within a 1-mile radius there are approximately 23,433 residents with a median household income of approximately \$45,402 and a median age of 44.0. County-level indicators also show that 13% of the population has income below poverty and that 32% of the population is classified as disadvantaged in the CMRA county profile. Cleanup and redevelopment of this site will support new housing options (including workforce housing), job creation, and neighborhood-serving amenities in an area with documented socioeconomic need. The City has invested significant resources in the purchase and assessment of the subject site as an answer to community concerns but lacks the resources to complete the project without grant

assistance. In the wake of several devastating natural disasters, Category 5 Hurricane Ian and Category 4 Hurricane Milton, the City has devoted its resources to clean up and essential infrastructure advancements. An investment from the EPA allows the City to devote essential dollars on the continued recovery of the community.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

The City prioritizes the cleanup of hazardous building materials to protect public health and welfare. According to the US Centers for Disease Control, asbestos containing materials can enter the air, water, and land from wind-blown dust and may get into water from runoff and leaching. Fort Myers, and the target area particularly, are at heightened risk for flood risk and for major storm events. The City is still recovering from Hurricane Ian, a Category 5 hurricane that devastated the area in 2022 and was the third costliest weather disaster on record worldwide. The cleanup approach will protect sensitive populations who live, work, or travel near the downtown core by reducing the potential for offsite releases during abatement and demolition preparation. In addition, the City will incorporate worker protection measures in light of increasing extreme heat conditions, including scheduling, hydration/rest protocols, and heat stress prevention as part of contractor health and safety planning.

Those at greatest risk of exposure through the pathways discussed above are those residents who live closest to the subject site. The target area is home to higher percentages of at-risk populations, including low-income households, people of color, and those with low levels of educational attainment. According to the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), the target area exceeds disadvantaged community thresholds for climate change and housing. Socioeconomic indicators of the target area are highlighted below.

Demographic Indicators	CT 12071000700 Target Area
Low Income Households	32%
People of Color Population	57%
Hispanic Population	9%
Limited English Proficiency	20%
Per Capita Income	\$16,875
< HS Education	25%
Children: < 10 yrs	10%
Elderly (over 65%)	17%

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

Numerous diseases and conditions have been linked with exposures to environmental contaminants and many of these are problematic in Lee County (lowest level health data available for the target area). According to the Florida Charts, the most recent lung, breast, and colorectal cancer death rates are all higher than state rates with low-income persons and populations of color higher than other groups.

Environmental Burden Indicators - CT 12071000700	Percentile in US
Particulate Matter 2.5	20th
Lead Paint Indicator	62nd
Hazardous Waste Proximity	22nd
Proximity to RMP Facilities: (sites/distance)	94th
Housing Indicators	
Housing Cost	92nd

Energy Cost	73rd
Lack of Green Space	80th
Climate Indicators	
Flood Risk	87th
Wildfire Risk	33rd
Expected Building Loss Rate	84th
Health Indicators	
Low Life Expectancy	91st
Diabetes	87th
Asthma	83rd
Heart Disease	74th
Water and Wastewater	
Underground Storage Tanks and Releases	98th
Toxic Wastewater Discharge	90th
Critical Service Gaps	
Transportation Access Burden	Yes
Food Desert	Yes

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

The target area (CT 12071000700) is defined by CEJST as a disadvantaged community exceeding climate and economic justice thresholds across two categories – housing and climate change. The location of low-income neighborhoods along high-risk rail corridors and adjacent to heavy industry is a historical and environmental injustice to disadvantaged communities throughout the country, including the target area. As evidenced in the table above, residents are disproportionately impacted by proximity to known contaminated sites in an area of elevated flood and storm risk, restricted access to transportation and fresh food grocers, high cost and substandard housing conditions, low incomes, and low levels of educational attainment. The proposed project would advance the reversal of these injustices through the remediation and redevelopment of the subject site, which will remove the most blighted property in the City, reduce the threat of direct contact with contaminants at the subject sites, and prevent the potential offsite migration of contaminants via airborne dust and stormwater and/or groundwater migration, particularly during storm events. If awarded, this grant would allow for the remediation of 9.71 acres of contaminated land that will expand housing and economic opportunities within the target area.

Community Engagement

e. Project Involvement and f. Project Roles

Key local community partners, their organizational mission, point of contact and project roles are summarized in the table below.

Name of Organization	Entity’s Mission	Point of Contact (name & email)	Specific Involvement in Project
Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency	Provide equitable, impactful incentives, while implementing redevelopment plans that enable revitalization and foster engagement and opportunities for stakeholders, using sound fiscal practices and	Michele Hylton-Terry mhylton@fortmyers.gov v	Assist in planning, facilitating community input, and implementing

	professional staff to improve quality of life for our diverse community.		incentives for the Midtown Fort Myers area.
Collaboratory	A regional community foundation with an evolved mission committed to coordinating the solving of Southwest Florida’s major social problems by 2040.	Dawn Belamarich dbelamarich@collaboratory.org	Convene with community leaders and conduct town hall meetings.

g. Incorporating Community Input

The City will communicate progress to the community through community partners as named in the table above and a variety of media outlets (newsletters, email lists, website publications, public television, and social media) to engage the community and ensure project success. City meetings will be held in public venues to make them convenient, inviting and accessible to the local community. They will be advertised using traditional and social media outlets. Meetings will provide progress updates, solicit feedback and an opportunity to respond to questions. The City will live stream public meetings and provide electronic forms for public input as an inclusionary method for those residents unable to attend. The City’s Grants and Special Projects division will be responsible for soliciting, considering, and responding to the community directly through the same method in which they reach out.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Proposed Cleanup Plan

As documented by environmental site assessments conducted between November 2017 and January 2026, the subject site contains asbestos in the buildings in a variety of friable and non-friable building materials, including :pipe mastic, vinyl flooring, 9”x9” vinyl floor tile, HVAC duct mastic, pipe run/elbow wrap, 12”x12” vinyl floor tile, pipe elbow insulation, transite panel, transite siding, pipe elbow valve wrap and mastic, expansion tank mastic and insulation, cementitious kick panels, mirror mastic, ceramic tile grout/thin set, sink insulation, plaster on wire lath, pressure valve wrap insulation, column caulk; drywall/joint compound, loading door gasket, floor mastic, rolled vinyl flooring, and floor float. Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) concentrations above FDEP provisional groundwater petroleum cleanup target levels (PCTLs) in wells GW-4, GW-5, and GW-6 around the former fire-station area. Additionally, arsenic in shallow railroad-spur soils above the residential direct-exposure CTL (2.1 mg/kg) but below commercial/industrial levels, with no PAHs, PCBs, or other metals exceeding soil CTLs were confirmed on the property. **Cleanup Method:** As detailed in the Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) (see Attachment), remedial action activities are warranted to facilitate redevelopment at the subject site for the intended redevelopment of the property. Based on the evaluation, the City proposes the following asbestos abatement method. Utilizing 6 mil polyethylene sheeting, the work area will be contained by constructing temporary barriers at the entrances to the abatement area. Where necessary, the work areas will be placed under negative pressure using air filtration devices that are high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtered. Appropriate asbestos warning signs will be posted at all accessible passageways into the work areas. During the work activities, the workers will don disposable, protective suits and half-face respirators fitted with P-100 filters. Water will be applied to the asbestos-containing material to be removed to assist in fiber release prevention. The waste removed from the site will be double bagged then disposed of at a proper landfill. Once the removal is complete, a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtered vacuum will be used to vacuum the surfaces within the work area.

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

The City has developed the tools and procedures to immediately implement this grant and execute project activities within the grant period. The City will procure contractors immediately upon award and work can begin immediately after execution of the cooperative agreement.

Task 1: Project Management and Reporting
b. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities: The City of Fort Myers Grants and Special Projects Division will provide project management and programmatic support throughout the project. This includes overseeing grant implementation, including financial and programmatic management to ensure compliance with the Cooperative Agreement, schedule, and terms and conditions for the grant period.
c. Anticipated Project Schedule: Task 1 will begin immediately upon award and will continue throughout the duration of the project. Monthly project team meetings will occur to ensure successful management of time and budget. This task will be led by the assigned City of Fort Myers Project Manager.
d. Task/Activity Lead: City of Fort Myers Grants and Special Projects Division
e. Outputs: Qualified environmental professional/abatement contractor procurement, quarterly reports, closeout report, ACRES updates, and annual MBE/WBE reporting.
Task 2: Community Involvement and Engagement
b. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities: The City of Fort Myers Grants and Special Projects Division will work with community organizations, action groups, and individuals to ensure that all project stakeholders are afforded meaningful participation in all aspects of the cleanup and redevelopment process. Public/neighborhood meetings will be conducted on a progress or semi-annual basis. All activities will be conducted in accordance with the approved Community Involvement Plan.
c. Anticipated Project Schedule: Task 2 will be initiated within 3 months of the grant award and will continue through the duration of the grant period.
d. Task/Activity Lead: City of Fort Myers Grants and Special Projects Division
e. Outputs: Community Involvement Plan, community meetings, preparation and distribution of factsheets semi-annually at minimum to be shared at public meetings, in local newspapers, and social media platforms.
Task 3: Planning, Cleanup, and Final Reporting
b. Project Implementation: – EPA-funded tasks/activities: This task includes planning and implementation of asbestos abatement (removal), transport, disposal, air monitoring, and final reporting.
c. Anticipated Project Schedule: Task 3 will be initiated within 3 months of the grant award with an estimated 12-month timeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Months 1-3 – Preparation of final ABCA, Quality Assurance Project Plan, Health and Safety Plan, and Cleanup Plan. • Months 4-10 – ACM abatement and disposal in accordance with applicable regulations. • Months 10-12 – Clearance, Completion Report, and EPA closeout package.
d. Task/Activity Lead: City of Fort Myers Grants and Special Projects Division and QEP/abatement contractor
e. Outputs: Final ABCA, Quality Assurance Project Plan, Health and Safety Plan, Cleanup Plan, completion of cleanup, Cleanup Report, and Completion Report.

f. Cost Estimates Total project cleanup costs are estimated at \$462,000. Costs in excess of the grant amount (if exceedances occur) will be covered by the City’s budgeted contingency fund. The cost descriptions and budget justifications below are based upon the local industry cost averages and input from regional awardees with program experience and current pricing in the central Florida market.

Budget Categories		Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Total
		Project Management and Reporting	Community Involvement and Engagement	Planning, Cleanup, and Final Reporting	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$18,000	\$4,000	\$0	\$22,000
	Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$440,000	\$440,000
Total Budget		\$18,000	\$4,000	\$440,000	\$462,000

Task 1 - Project Management and Reporting

Personnel: \$18,000 City of Fort Myers Director of Grants and Grant Specialist (2 people x 15 hours per month x 12 months x \$50/hr = \$18,000)

Task 2 - Community Involvement and Engagement

Personnel: \$4,000 City of Fort Myers Director of Grants and Public Information Officer to manage, advertise, and conduct a minimum of four meetings (2 people x 3 hours per month x 12 months x \$50/hr = \$3,600); Supplies: printing supplies (\$400).

Task 3 - Planning, Cleanup, and Final Reporting

Contractual: This task includes completing the final ABCA, QAPP, Health & Safety Plan, Remedial Action Plan, coordinating with state and federal regulatory agencies, abatement of asbestos materials, appropriate transportation and disposal of all remedial waste, air monitoring, asbestos clearance sampling, and cleanup completion report (\$440,000).

g. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

The City will manage project results and outcomes on a monthly basis by meeting with the contracted vendor to document performance under the grant. The contract with the selected vendor will require updates to include: percentage of abatement completed, quantity of asbestos removed, and other performance measures as included within their contract. This detailed monthly report will allow for the City to quantify the performance and the impact of the EPA’s involvement. The City of Fort Myers uses a software suite, including ProCORE, Euna Grants, and Oracle to track and manage projects. The City will assign both a project and a grants manager to the team to ensure that the project remains on schedule and is progressing within the grant guidelines. Overall project outcomes will be included in the final progress report by comparing future community demographics/welfare characteristics to current conditions and will include: removal of hazardous waste and dollars of public and private funding leveraged. If the timelines for advancing one or more phases of work at the subject site are not well aligned with the EPA grant project period, then the City and its hired engineer will work with the EPA to adjust the approach to maintain progress on achieving the project outcomes. Outcomes will be tracked by the City and reported at regular city council meetings and on the City website and social media outlets.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability

a. Organizational Structure

The City of Fort Myers is organized under a Council-Manager form of local government. The seven-member City Council is the principal legislative and governing body of the city. Six councilpersons and mayor are elected at large for four-year terms. The City Manager, who serves at the direction of the City Council, leads the City Administration, which is organized into 9 departments. The City maintains a staff of over 1,100 personnel, including police and fire service. The proposed project will be administered by long-standing members of City staff with the requisite skills and experience to ensure the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of all technical, administrative, and financial requirements of the project and grant.

b. Description of Key Staff

The award will be managed by the Grants and Special Projects division and in coordination with many departments to ensure compliance with the EPA requirements and efficient project management. The City will ensure to allocate appropriate resources to each project.

Jessica McElwee, MPPA, Director of Grants and Special Projects- Responsible for executive leadership over the Grant Process, decision making and grant administration.

Melissa Whitfield, Special Projects Coordinator—Responsible for managing key assets of grant administration including reimbursement requests and monthly reporting

Carlina Lominy, MPPA, Grant Specialist- Responsible for the coordination of the grant agreement and public notice of grant materials.

Noelle Casagrande, Public Information Officer- Responsible for providing notice and public communication as needed.

Nicole Setzer, P.E., City Engineer- Responsible for facilitating the vendor contract for asbestos abatement.

Denise Finn, CPPB, Procurement Manager- Responsible to facilitate the successful procurement of a capable vendor to complete the abatement.

c. Acquiring Additional Resources

The City will require additional expertise and resources to successfully complete the proposed project. The City will solicit professional services of a qualified engineering professional firm to assist with technical and reporting aspects of the grant upon notice of award. Procurement procedures will be conducted in full compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, and 40 CFR Part 33, which will include the public advertisement of a Request for Qualifications, and the review of multiple proposals. The City will choose the top scoring qualified vendor based on qualifications, prior experience in remediation, community engagement and program management.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

e. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Agreements

Although the City has not received funding under a U.S. EPA Brownfields grant, Fort Myers has successfully obtained and managed many other state and federal grant resources. The City's track record includes the successful administration of 15 million dollars of ARPA/Cares Funding following the COVID-19 Pandemic, 70 million dollars of CDBG-DR funds after the devastation of Hurricane Ian, and millions of dollars. This history proves the City as a trusted federal partner, able to successfully and efficiently administer federal Grant programs such as the EPA Brownfields Grant.



City of Fort Myers, Florida
FY26 U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant (Single Site Cleanup)
Threshold Criteria – Provided as Attachment(s)
Former News-Press Site (2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901)

1. Applicant Eligibility:

- a. Applicant Type: The City of Fort Myers is a General Purpose Unit of Local Government.
- b. Eligibility: The City of Fort Myers affirms that it is not exempt from Federal Taxation under section 501(c)(4).

2. Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants:

The City of Fort Myers affirms that the proposed site, 2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901, has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

3. Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds:

The City of Fort Myers affirms that it does not have an open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.

4. Site Ownership:

The current owner of the proposed site at 2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901 is the City of Fort Myers. The recorded deed is attached.

5. Basic Site Information:

- a. Name of Site: Former News-Press Site
- b. Site Address: 2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901

6. Status and History of Contamination at the Site:

- a. Site Contaminants: The Phase II Environmental Assessment and Asbestos Survey conducted at the proposed property document hazardous substances on the site.
- b. Operational History and Current Use: **Historical Use.** Historic records indicate the site has been in continuous use for over a century, including municipal facilities (fire station, police, jail, and pumping operations), fuel storage and distribution, residential uses, and various commercial and industrial activities. From the early 1960s to 2016, the site was occupied by the Fort Myers News-Press, with printing and related operations conducted in a press building constructed in 1960 and expanded through 2003. **Current Use.** The City of Fort Myers acquired the property in 2019 and has not placed it into active use since that time. The buildings are now largely vacant and functionally obsolete. The site is currently mostly covered with impervious surface (structures and a large asphalt parking lot).
- c. Environmental Concerns: Asbestos-containing materials (friable and non-friable) are present in multiple building components, including flooring, mastics, pipe insulation/wraps, transite materials, drywall/joint compound, plaster, grout, and gaskets. PFAS were detected above FDEP provisional groundwater PCTLs in wells GW-4, GW-5, and GW-6 near the former fire station. Arsenic was identified in shallow railroad-spur soils above residential but below commercial/industrial CTLs, with no PAHs, PCBs, or other metals exceeding soil CTLs.
- d. Cause of Contamination and Nature and Extent: **Cause.** The site building was constructed using asbestos containing building materials deemed acceptable at the time of construction. PFAS contamination resulted from historical aqueous film-forming foam use at the former fire station, while arsenic impacts are attributable to legacy

railroad spur activities, including treated materials and rail-related fill that affected shallow soils and localized groundwater. **Extent.** Asbestos contamination is found throughout the existing former News-Press and fire station buildings. PFAS is in shallow groundwater near the former fire station, with concentrations exceeding provisional cleanup levels, and arsenic is in shallow soils and localized groundwater along the former railroad spur, generally above residential but below commercial/industrial criteria, with impacts limited in extent and not site wide.

7. Brownfield Site Definition:

The City of Fort Myers affirms that the proposed site at 2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901, is not:

- a. Listed or proposed for listing on the National Priority List;
- b. Subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA; and
- c. Subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. Government.

8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Applications:

Phase I Environmental Site Assessments completed in 2017 and 2025; Phase II Subsurface Investigations completed by Partner in 2017–2018 and by GFA Limited in 2019 (including a Site Assessment Report); a Remedial Action Plan prepared in 2020 with Operations & Maintenance and Post-Active Remediation Monitoring conducted in 2021; a PFAS Site Assessment Report Addendum completed in November 2021; a Partner Phase II Subsurface Investigation Addendum completed in December 2025; and a comprehensive asbestos survey performed by AMRC in December 2025 and documented in January 2026.

9. Site Characterization:

- a. N/A
- b. N/A
- c. Current letter from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is attached. The proposed site is not eligible to be enrolled in the State’s voluntary response program. FDEP affirms in the attached letter that there will be sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessments performed January 28, 2026, for the remediation work to begin on the site.

10. Enforcement or Other Actions:

The City of Fort Myers affirms there are no known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions related to the site for which Brownfields Grant funding is sought.

11. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination:

The City of Fort Myers affirms that the proposed site at 2442 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33901 does not need a Property-Specific Determination.

12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability:

- a. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substance Sites
 - iv. Sites with Hazardous Building Material that is not Released into the Environment
 1. The City of Fort Myers affirms that there has been no release and that there is no threat of release of the hazardous substance(s) from building materials into the outdoor environment based on the site conditions.

13. Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure:

- a. Cleanup Oversight: The proposed site is not eligible to be enrolled in the State’s voluntary response program. The City of Fort Myers affirms we will work with the



EPA to ensure the cleanup is protective of human health and the environment. The City of Fort Myers will acquire the appropriate technical expertise to conduct, manage, and oversee the cleanup.

- b. Access: Access to neighboring properties will not be necessary to carry out the anticipated response activities.

14. Community Notification:

- a. Copy of draft ABCA attached.
- b. Copy of Community Notification attached which was posted to the City of Fort Myers website on 1/14/26.
- c. Summary of the meeting notes from the public meeting held on January 21, 2026, are attached. No public participants attended the meeting.
- d. Submission of the draft ABCA, Community Notification Documents, summary of public comments received (no comments received), applicant's responses to public comments (no comments received), meeting notes from the public meeting is attached as transcription, and meeting participation list attached (no public participants at the meeting).

15. Contractors and Named Subrecipients:

- a. Contractors: The City of Fort Myers has not procured any contractual services for this project.
- b. Named Subrecipients: The City of Fort Myers has not and has no intention to name subrecipients under this grant



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 11, 2025

Alyssa Kuhn
Brownfields Program
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
61 Forsyth Street, S.W. 10th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960
Kuhn.Alyssa@epa.gov

Dear Ms. Kuhn:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges and supports the City of Fort Myers' plans to conduct the cleanup of a brownfield site(s) and is applying for an FY26 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

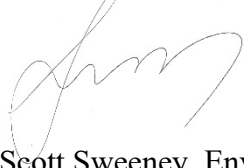
The City of Fort Myers has developed an application requesting site-specific federal Brownfields Cleanup funding for the property located at 2242 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33901. The property is also identified as Lee County parcel 24-44-24-P1-01000.0070. The Department understands that this application has been prepared in accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) guidance document EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-25-07, titled "Guidelines for Brownfield Cleanup Grants." This letter of acknowledgement addresses the requirement for a "Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority," described in SECTION II.B.9.b.

The Department affirms that the subject property:

- i. Is not eligible for the State's Voluntary Response Program. Previous assessments have identified asbestos contamination that would warrant remediation; however, the State's program does not oversee asbestos abatement and therefore the cleanup at the subject property is not eligible for the State's Voluntary Response Program. The City does state that there will be a sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessment(s) performed by January 28, 2026, for the remediation work to begin on the site.

For any questions regarding this letter, please contact Justin Cross at (850) 245-8968.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Sweeney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Scott Sweeney, Environmental Manager
Brownfields and CERCLA Site Screening Section

SS/jc

cc:

Jessica McElwee, City of Fort Myers – jmcelwee@fortmyers.gov

Philip Wilkerson, DEP Southwest/South District – philip.wilkerson@floridadep.gov

Reid Jaeger, Catalyst – reid@catalystcd.com

Joseph Bonora, Catalyst – jbonora@catalystcd.com