

January 28, 2026

(1) Applicant Identification

Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission
73 Progress Drive
Waverly, Ohio 45690-1196

(2) Website URL

<https://ovrdc.org>

(3) Funding Requested

- a. Assessment Grant Type:
- b. Federal Funds Requested:

Community-Wide
\$500,000

(4) Location

a) Cities/Towns:

Within the OVRDC's twelve counties there are 171 townships, 96 villages, 8 cities (Milford, Washington Court House, Hillsboro, Jackson, Wellston, Ironton, Chillicothe, and Portsmouth, plus a portion of The City of Loveland), and 14 census designated places, as well as unincorporated areas.

b) Counties: Adams, Brown, Clermont, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton

c) State: Ohio

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

Target Areas:

- Lawrence County, Highland County, and Ross County

Priority Sites:

- Lawrence County: Wilson Glove Building, 1603 South 3rd Street, Ironton, Ohio
- Lawrence County: Slagel Gas Station, 414 North 2nd St., Ironton, Ohio
- Highland County: Former Machine Shop, 204 Jefferson Street East, Greenfield, Ohio
- Ross County: Howson Building, 12-18 East Main Street, Chillicothe, Ohio

Map: See attached.

(6) Contacts

a. Project Director

Kerri Richardson
Development Director
73 Progress Drive
Waverly, IN 45690
(740) 947-2853
krichardson@ovrdc.org

b. Chief Executive/Highest
Ranking Elected Official

Stephanie Gilbert
Executive Director
73 Progress Drive
Waverly, IN 45690
(740) 947-2853
sgilbert@ovrdc.org

(7) Population

City of Ironton, Lawrence County: 10,571
Village of Greenfield, Highland County: 4,339
City of Chillicothe, Ross County: 22,059
(*US Census 2020*)

(8) Other Factors

See below

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	4
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).	2
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.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities as described in Section 3.A.(2), for priority sites within the target areas.	8
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	-

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

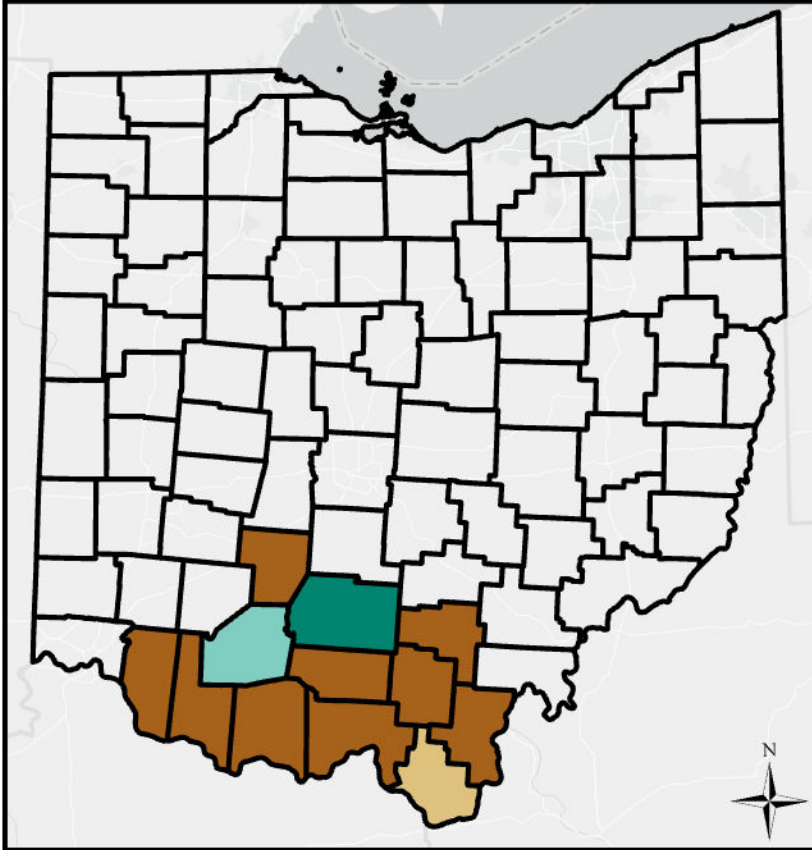
A letter of acknowledgement from the Ohio
Environmental Protection Agency is attached.

**(10) Releasing Copies of
Applications**

Not Applicable

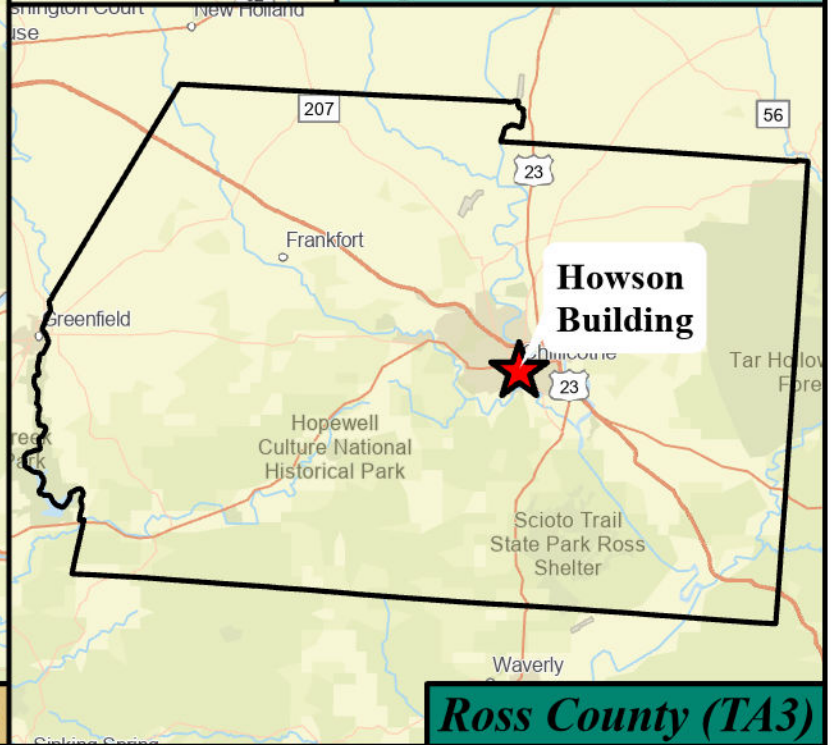
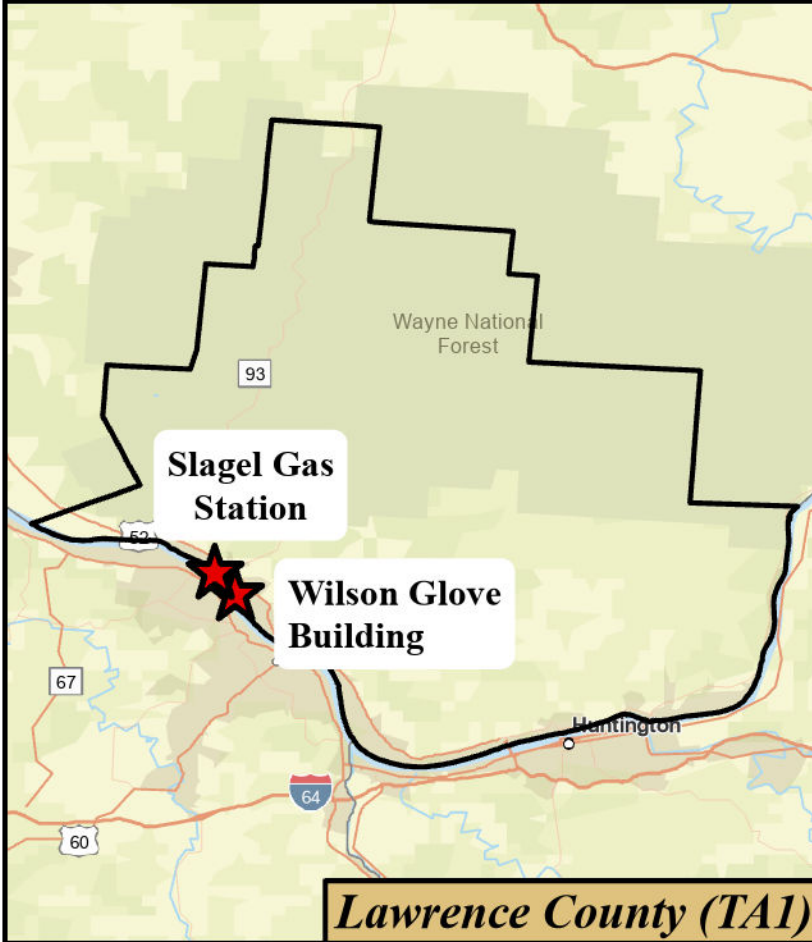
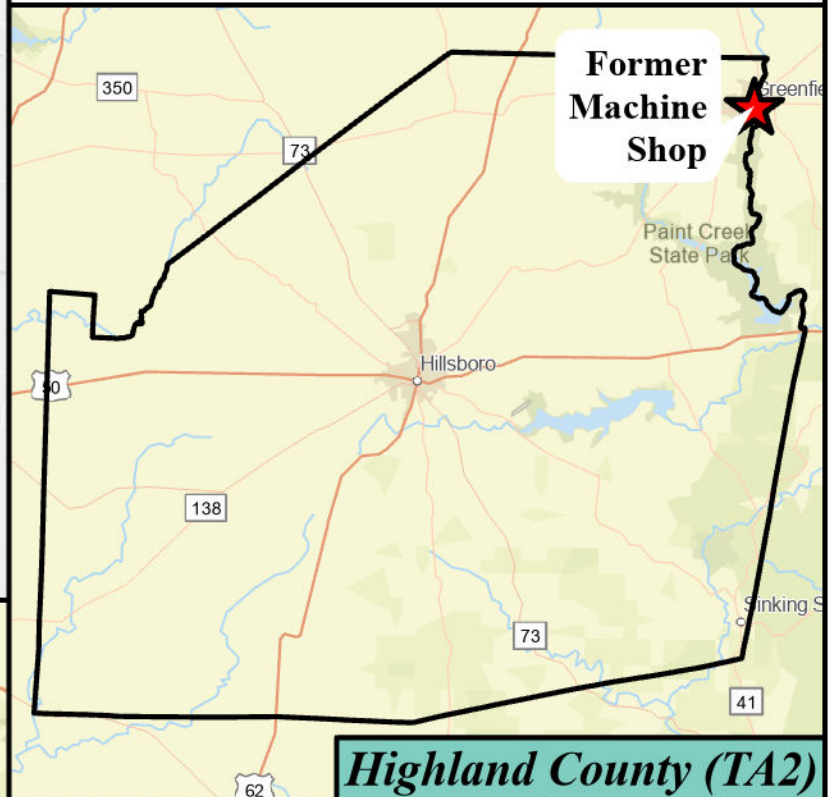
Grant Implementation Area

Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission



Legend

-  Priority Sites
-  Grant Area





January 23, 2026

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
ATTN: Torre Ippolito
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Mail Code SB-5J
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

**RE: Ohio EPA's Letter of Support for Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission's
Community-Wide Assessment Grant Proposal**

Dear Torre Ippolito:

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) acknowledges that the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) plans to conduct assessment activities and is applying for a FY26 U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant for \$500,000. Ohio EPA supports this effort under the Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant program.

If awarded, OVRDC will use these funds to:

- Conduct environmental site assessments and cleanup/reuse planning.
- Develop inventories of brownfield properties and perform community outreach.
- Support local governments and organizations in identifying redevelopment priorities.
- Lay the groundwork for leveraging additional resources for cleanup and revitalization.

The proposed target areas include priority sites such as:

- Former Wilson Glove Building at 1603 S 3rd Street in Ironton, Lawrence County (privately owned) - Built in 1927 and historically used for manufacturing shoes, sporting goods, and furniture. The building is vacant and deteriorating. Potential contaminants include VOCs, petroleum, metals, asbestos, and lead.
- Slagel Gas Station at 414 N 2nd Street in Ironton, Lawrence County, Ohio (privately owned) - Former fueling station with a history of groundwater contamination and petroleum odors. Potential contaminants include petroleum and VOCs.
- Former machine shop at 204 Jefferson St. East in Greenfield, Highland County, Ohio (privately owned) - Constructed in 1920 and last used as a tool and die shop. The building is

vacant and water damaged. Potential contaminants include petroleum, VOCs, metals, asbestos, and lead.

- Howson Building at 12 to 18 East Main St. in Chillicothe, Ross County, Ohio (privately owned) - Built in 1894 and located in Chillicothe's historic downtown. Potential contaminants include asbestos and lead.

The OVRDC service area spans 12 counties across southern Ohio—Adams, Brown, Clermont, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton. This largely rural region includes communities that are historically reliant on manufacturing, extractive industries, and transportation infrastructure. Many properties have become vacant or underutilized, contributing to economic distress and environmental uncertainty. Several counties are designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission as economically distressed or at risk, underscoring the need for targeted investment.

Ohio EPA supports the OVRDC and anticipates significant benefits, including reducing environmental risks associated with brownfields, increasing local capacity to pursue redevelopment opportunities, stimulating economic growth and job creation in communities facing persistent poverty and population loss, and improving quality of life through the revitalization of blighted properties.

We look forward to working with OVRDC and U.S. EPA on this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-644-2295 or via e-mail at lisa.shook@epa.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Lisa Shook

Lisa Shook, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

cc: Stephanie Gilbert, Executive Director, Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission
Nate Wanner, CP, PG, Senior Project Manager, OneAtlas
Martin Smith, Ohio EPA, DERR

(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges & Description of Target Areas

The Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) serves a 12-county region (geographic area) in southern Ohio. Counties include Adams, Brown, Clermont, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties and spans 6,022 square miles, the equivalent of 3.8 million acres. The OVRDC region is characterized by a predominantly rural landscape where forest covers 51% of the geography, followed by cultivated crops (21%) and pasture/hay (14%). The region is interspersed with small cities, villages, and townships ranging from 58 to 21,769 in population, averaging one person per every six acres. Historically, communities throughout the region developed around manufacturing, extractive industries, river and rail transportation, agriculture, and public infrastructure, many of which have experienced long-term economic transition. At the turn of the 19th century, the OVRDC region became a center point of iron production, with numerous iron furnaces and forges in operation. The iron industry played a crucial role in economic growth. Mining in this Appalachian region was lucrative due to the rich iron ore, coal, and the proximity to the Ohio River for transport. By the mid-1800s the region produced most iron used in the United States. However, steel rapidly replaced iron in the 20th century. While steel and other large industry developed along the Ohio River, many of the plants have since closed as industry moved first to other states and then overseas. Coal production in the area also declined in response to concerns about its sulfur content and air quality. As industries declined or relocated, numerous properties that once served as community assets became vacant, underutilized, or functionally obsolete and the population went with it. Since 2010, 11 of 12 counties have lost population.¹

EPA’s Envirofacts identifies 2,076 facilities where hazardous substances have been handled or released within the OVRDC region. This includes 299 facilities impacting air, 1,484 RCRA facilities, 312 facilities with NPDES permits for surface water, and 133 toxic release inventory (TRI) sites. EPA’s Cleanups in My Community website identifies 168 cleanups in the region, including 66 Superfund sites, 15 RCRA sites, 14 Response sites, and 78 Brownfields sites. One blighted brownfields site in a small town can have an impact on tourism, downtown vacancy rates, and other economic factors that keep small towns alive. A brownfields assessment grant would provide OVRDC with a funding source and tools to help communities that do not have the funds or resources available to address brownfields.

OVRDC’s three target areas are Lawrence County (TA1), Highland County (TA2), and Ross County (TA3). All are rural Appalachian counties. Lawrence County is the southernmost county in Ohio. It abuts the Ohio River, and its largest city is Ironton, the county seat, with a population of 10,647. Lawrence County was heavily industrialized with iron related industries. This small county has three Superfund sites along with numerous vacant or underutilized former industrial sites. Highland County is an inland county with regional ties to agriculture and small-town manufacturing. Hillsboro is the county seat and largest community in the county with a population of 6,481. Established in 1798, Ross County has a long history as a regional and industrial center, but the paper plant that anchored Chillicothe, the county seat and only city, recently closed after 200 years of operation.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)

Brownfields sites in OVRDC’s target areas include retail, commercial, and industrial properties, some of which are abandoned or vacant, and some are simply underutilized. The table below provides details on the numbers of documented sites. OVRDC will complete inventory activities in both target areas to identify additional sites.

County/Target Area	Number of Sites						Environmental Concerns
	Documented Brownfields	Superfund	RCRA regulated	Petroleum releases – no liable party	Active petroleum release sites	EPA Cleanup Sites	
TA1 - Lawrence	27	13	173	13	22	44	Petroleum products, volatile organic compounds, cyanide, metals, asbestos, lead
TA2 - Highland	16	2	76	8	26	6	
TA3 - Ross	14	10	184	15	43	28	

Size of sites range from small mom-and-pop corner store gas stations to large industrial manufacturing facilities. Data from Ohio BUSTR program, EPA’s Envirofacts, and EPA’s Cleanups in My Community (CIMC)

The former **Wilson Glove Building** located at 1603 S 3rd Street in Ironton is a priority site in Lawrence County (TA1). This site is in the 3rd Street/Ohio River Corridor that runs from Ironton’s Central Business District to the Village of Coal Grove. The multi-story structure was constructed in 1927 and used by multiple companies for manufacturing shoes, sporting goods equipment, and furniture. The building sits on 2.38 acres and is 75,981 square feet. The building has fallen into disrepair and tax payments are delinquent. Contaminants may include VOCs, petroleum and metals associated with manufacturing and asbestos and lead in building materials. This site

¹ OVRDC Community Economic Development Strategy 2022

is a priority for the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation, a county economic development driver, for redevelopment as it lies at the southern entrance to Ironton's Central Business District, and its revitalization will leverage additional improvements in the downtown area.

The second priority site in Lawrence County (TA1) is the former **Slagel Gas Station**, a 0.265-acre property at 414 N 2nd St. Formerly used for fuel dispensing and possibly still containing underground storage tanks, the site has documented petroleum releases, including gasoline vapors detected in nearby apartments in 1986 and groundwater contamination confirmed by EPA investigations, with no remedial action and no investigation since 1994. Petroleum odors were also reported in the sewer system in 2005 and continue to increase during high river stages, indicating ongoing impacts. The small, deteriorated property sits adjacent to the Ohio River and lacks a viable responsible party. It is prioritized for assessment due to its petroleum contamination, potential remaining USTs, and proximity and potential impact to residences. Brownfield funding is the only feasible path to evaluate conditions, plan cleanup, and prepare the site for future commercial reuse.

A priority site in Highland County (TA2), the **former machine shop** at 204 Jefferson Street East in Greenfield, occupies a prominent and highly visible downtown corner. Built in 1920, the structure, last used by a tool and die company, now sits vacant and water-damaged, despite its strong historic character along the street-facing façade. A local business owner, working collaboratively with the city, hopes to preserve this architecturally meaningful front portion while demolishing the warehouse-like rear section to support reinvestment. Currently generating minimal tax revenue despite its strategic location, the property faces additional challenges due to potential petroleum, VOC, metal, asbestos, and lead contamination, all of which must be addressed to unlock its full redevelopment potential.

The **Howson Building**, located at 12–18 East Main Street in Chillicothe in Ross County (TA3) is a distinguished 1894 landmark whose architectural elegance and historic prominence make it essential to sustaining downtown Chillicothe's revitalization. Once home to the Elks Lodge until 1911 and later a hub for community gatherings, the building's ornate character and commanding presence reflect the city's rich heritage. Though it suffered severe damage in a 2003 arson fire, its importance was affirmed when Adena Health System acquired it, along with the adjacent Carlisle Building, as part of a major community investment. Today, its restoration potential remains hindered by asbestos and lead contamination, challenges that must be resolved to return this grand structure to productive use.

c. Identifying Additional Sites

Within the OVRDC's geographic region, additional sites will be identified through existing inventories and ongoing community engagement. Many of the land banks in OVRDC's region have developed lists of vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties. Building on this foundation, community outreach events will be hosted as well as individual meetings with local officials, community organizations, private developers, realtors, and residents to identify additional sites that pose significant barriers to revitalization. OVRDC will develop a brownfields website and create an online form for community members to nominate sites for assessment. Prioritization criteria will be developed by the brownfields steering committee and may include location in a target area, property owner interest, investment potential, potential health and welfare concerns, and readiness for cleanup and reuse. Through regular partnership meetings and public outreach, including listening sessions and stakeholder engagement, the steering committee will ensure site selection reflects community priorities and maximizes the impact of grant resources, allowing assessment funding to catalyze broader revitalization across the OVRDC region.

Revitalization of the Target Area

d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

OVRDC's 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) documents its goal to build business and drive tourism. With 60% of the U.S. population, 80% of U.S. corporate headquarters, and 61% of U.S. manufacturing capacity within a day's drive, coupled with its many modes of existing transportation infrastructure (river, road, rail, and air), the region has a compelling story to tell in marketing itself to new industry. Strategy 3 under Objective 1 in the CEDs specifically identifies collaboration with stakeholders to improve the perception of Southern Ohio and increase the economic growth potential of the region as a goal. Redevelopment of all four priority sites will reduce blighted vacant buildings.

Redevelopment of the Wilson Glove Building will help spur other redevelopment as it is an anchor of the 3rd Street/Ohio River Corridor in Ironton (Lawrence County, TA1). Grant funds will be used for a site reuse plan at this site and help tie in the needs of the community while driving business growth and economic stability. The Slagel Gas Station is a priority for the Lawrence Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) because upon assessment, cleanup, and demolition of the site, LEDC would market this riverfront site to developers. LEDC is creating *The Corridor* from downtown Ironton to the Village of Coal Grove, inclusive of the Wilson Glove

Building and other brownfield sites. This 4-mile redevelopment area will start in the City of Ironton's Central Business District. The most recent Central Business District Plan incorporates a vision, purpose, and scope that ties in with brownfields redevelopment and emphasizes: 1) a downtown community that is clean, convenient, safe and a fun place in which to shop, work, live and play, 2) development that capitalizes on unique Rivertown attributes such as juxtaposition of water and land transportation methods, 3) preservation of historical structures with industrial legacy to be included in preservation to the extent feasible, and 4) revitalization following the four forces of real estate value: political, physical, economic and social.

The former machine shop in Greenfield, located in Highland County (TA2), occupies a prominent downtown corner and consists of a traditional brick front building paired with an attached warehouse at the rear. While the warehouse portion is visually obtrusive and slated for demolition, the historic front structure will be retained and redeveloped. Though the final use of the property is still undetermined, the owner, a local business owner, intends to work closely with the city to pursue a reuse that will deliver meaningful benefits to the community. This redevelopment directly aligns with OVRDC's CEDS goal of collaborating with regional stakeholders to elevate the image and economic promise of Southern Ohio.

At the Howson Building in Chillicothe in Ross County (TA3), grant funds will be used for community engagement and reuse planning. Adena Health Systems, a local non-profit health provider, and building owner, is deeply tied to the community and purchased and redeveloped the adjoining Carlisle Building after the 2003 fire. This facility was redeveloped into much needed housing for medical residents and visiting medical staff. This filled a need in the community and Adena wants to help the community in redevelopment of the Howson as well. Redevelopment of the Howson Building directly correlates to Goal 1 of Chillicothe's Comprehensive Plan (March 2023) to efficiently manage land and prioritize infill development, revitalization, and strategic growth.

e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

Revitalization of even a single underutilized property in a small rural community can serve as a powerful catalyst for broader economic growth, and this is especially true for the priority sites identified in this project area. The Wilson Glove Building in TA1, the former machine shop in TA2, and the Howson Building in TA3 are all located within federally designated Opportunity Zones, making them highly attractive to developers who can defer and reduce capital gains tax liabilities while leveraging additional incentives. Multiple funding streams, including CDFI financing, USDA Rural Development programs, historic tax credits, and New Markets Tax Credits, also prioritize projects in these zones, increasing the likelihood of private investment once environmental barriers are removed. Cleanup will make these properties more competitive for redevelopment, increasing surrounding property values and generating new property tax revenue. If reused for commercial or industrial purposes, the community will benefit further from increased sales and income tax revenue, strengthening long-term economic vitality.

Cleanup will also improve public health and community resilience. Assessment and remediation at the Slagel Gas Station will address potential petroleum contamination from legacy underground storage tanks, which currently pose risks to nearby residents, especially during high river stages when gasoline vapors are detectable. Removing these environmental hazards not only protects human health but also reduces vulnerability to flood-related releases, improving resilience to extreme weather events. At the Howson Building, OVRDC will partner with the City and Adena Health to upgrade the HVAC system and advance energy-efficient improvements.

Together, assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the priority sites will unlock substantial redevelopment capacity across the community: 75,981 square feet of building space at the Wilson Glove Building, 9,063 square feet at the Howson Building, and 1,680 square feet at the former machine shop will become suitable for productive reuse. In addition, demolition of the Slagel Gas Station structure and the warehouse portion of the machine shop will return roughly three-quarters of an acre of land to the developable inventory. These improvements will expand the community's ability to attract new businesses, create jobs, and strengthen its resilience to environmental and economic stresses long after cleanup is complete.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

To reach site reuse, assessment and any required cleanup must first be completed. OVRDC and its members are all local governments or non-profit organizations and therefore eligible for a broad array of funding opportunities. Ohio is fortunate to have state brownfield assessment and cleanup resources available through Ohio Department of Development's Brownfield Remediation Program (up to \$300k for Phase IIs and up to \$10M for remediation), JobsOhio (up to \$5 million in loans, \$200,000 in site assessment, and \$1 million in grant monies to fill funding gaps), as well as Ohio EPA's Targeted Brownfield Assessments (up to \$25,000). Ohio brownfield grant policies have included dedicated \$1 million per-county set-asides. Given the rural nature of our region and the limited capacity of county development agencies to perform initial assessment and outreach, our counties have at times not used their full set-asides. And many sites in OVRDC's region are not large or contaminated enough to qualify

for these funds. We simply need help with the initial leg work that our individual small communities cannot support or fund on their own. Our goal with the US EPA assessment grant is to focus on the hurdles: 1) Perform community outreach and inventory to identify brownfield sites, 2) Perform Phase I and Phase II assessments that provide the necessary information to define additional assessment and remediation needs in grant applications, and 3) provide reuse planning that lays out a roadmap to successful redevelopment.

A brownfields assessment grant will obtain site-specific data needed to make cleanup funding available. Cleanup funding will be sought from the Ohio resources listed above as well as EPA brownfields cleanup and revolving loan fund grants. For reuse, OVRDC and its member communities and non-profits are eligible for and will seek funding from US Department of Agriculture, US Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant funds for housing and economic development projects, Regional Transportation Planning dollars for infrastructure investment, and Appalachian Region Commission funding for economic and workforce development in coal communities. Communities within OVRDC's region are also eligible for funding sources managed by OVRDC such as the Appalachian Community Grant Program, Ohio Public Works Commission, Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation, Surface Transportation Grant Block funding, and its own small business revolving loan fund. Because the priority brownfields sites need planning work completed, once a reuse plan is selected, funds may be used for resource roadmaps to identify funding opportunities, evaluating eligibility and available resources. Additionally, for sites in Hillsboro, in Highland County (TA2), tax increment financing (TIF) is available for sites in the TIF district. Lawrence County (TA1) also has a designated foreign trade zone in Ironton, providing additional financial incentives to developers.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure within the target areas includes electric service, natural gas, public water, sanitary sewer, and broadband. All priority sites currently have access to these essential services. In some locations, onsite structures may be suitable for reuse; however, infrastructure assessments may be necessary at sites such as the Slagel Gas Station where the building may not be feasible for reuse. Any future redevelopment at the priority sites would require the developer to reinstall or upgrade on-site infrastructure as necessary. All properties are accessible via existing roadway networks. Should additional infrastructure improvements be required, OVRDC, in coordination with the local government, will work with the Ohio Department of Transportation for roadway needs and the Ohio EPA Office of Financial Assistance and Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) for water and wastewater improvements. Electrical infrastructure coordination will occur with the appropriate local utility provider.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

a. The Community's Need for Funding

OVRDC supports a 12-county region in southern Ohio. Our communities are small and rural in nature and do not have the capacity to support brownfields assessment, cleanup, or reuse. They have small populations and low incomes. The OVRDC geographic area has 356 unincorporated communities with populations under 1,600. Of the 77 incorporated communities, 75 have populations of less than 15,000 people, meaning only two communities in the entire 12-county region have more than 15,000 people. Median household incomes are below Ohio's median of \$58,116 and the US at \$64,994. Outside of Clermont County, which is an outlier (\$69,720), median incomes range from \$40,067 to \$57,200. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) designates counties according to their economic situation. Eight OVRDC counties are considered distressed (rank worst 10% in the nation) or at risk of becoming economically distressed (rank between the worst 10% and 25% in the nation). To add on, 11 of 12 counties have shrinking populations which means shrinking tax bases. While Ohio communities averaged a 0.352% population increase from 2010 to 2021, those 11 counties on OVRDC's region lost population from -0.185% to -1.336% (Lawrence County target area). There are also 55 Opportunity Zones in OVRDC's region. OVRDC communities simply do not have funds for brownfields assessment and in the event they do, they do not have the capacity to manage brownfields redevelopment as they have only one or two staff members.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

The target areas in Lawrence (TA1), Highland (TA2), and Ross (TA3) counties contain sensitive populations facing disproportionately high poverty, childhood poverty, disability, and chronic disease burdens. Poverty rates in all three counties exceed state and national averages, with Lawrence County at 17.5%, Highland at 14.4%, and Ross at 12.1%, and childhood poverty levels remain similarly elevated. Disability rates are also higher than the U.S. average, ranging from 18% to 22.4% across the three counties, indicating large populations more vulnerable to environmental hazards and disruptions. These conditions heighten vulnerability to environmental hazards,

reduce access to health-protective resources, and limit the community’s capacity to respond to contamination. Together, these indicators reflect a population more likely to experience chronic health issues, economic instability, and environmental exposure risks rooted in aging industrial properties and legacy contamination.

	Lawrence County	Highland County	Ross County	Ohio	US
Living below the poverty level	17.5%	14.4%	12.1%	12.7%	12.5%
Under 18 below the poverty level	21.2%	18.9%	17.5%	16.5%	16.7%
Bachelor’s Degree	18.6%	15.6%	16.6%	32.4%	36.8%
Disabled Population	22.4%	18%	18.7%	14.6%	13.7%

The proposed grant and reuse strategy directly addresses these threats by enabling the community to identify, assess, and mitigate contamination sources that disproportionately burden low-income families, children, and individuals with disabilities. By removing blighted structures, clarifying environmental risks, and preparing sites for safe redevelopment, the project will reduce exposure to pollutants and create conditions for healthier neighborhoods. Future site reuse focused on commercial or community-oriented development can expand economic opportunities, increase local services, and enhance access for vulnerable groups whose welfare is most affected by current environmental conditions.

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

According to County Health Rankings and Roadmaps⁴, both Lawrence and Highland County are faring worse than the average county in Ohio for population health and well-being, and worse than the average county in the nation. According to CDC PLACES, all 12 counties in the OVRDC Coalition have adult asthma rates higher than the US average of 9.8%. The median rate in the 12 counties is 11.6%. Asthma prevalence in Lawrence County is 11.7%, 11.4% in Highland county, and 11.6% in Ross County, all higher than the US rate of 9.8%. Cancer rates in the target areas exceed Ohio and US rates.

Lawrence County’s rate is 20% higher than Ohio’s and 27% higher than the US. Highland County’s rates are 6% and 13% higher, respectively. Ross County’s rates are 11% and 17% higher, respectively. Even more dramatic are lung cancer rates where Lawrence, Highland, and Ross County have rates 83%, 65%, and 73% higher than the US average, respectively.

Health Indicator	Lawrence County	Highland County	Ross County	Ohio	US
Asthma ²	11.7%	11.4%	11.6%	10.4%	9.8%
Cancer ³ (per 100,000)	566.0	500.1	521.9	470.0	444.4
Lung cancer (per 100,000)	97.1	87.8	91.9	64.3	53.1

Environmental factors may contribute to these elevated rates of asthma and cancer. Asbestos remains a major contaminant of concern at priority our brownfield sites due to the age and deterioration of structures. When asbestos-containing materials decay or are disturbed, fibers become airborne, creating a serious inhalation hazard. This grant will enable targeted efforts to identify and mitigate these environmental threats, reducing potential exposure to asbestos, a known carcinogen that also exacerbates respiratory conditions such as asthma. By addressing these hazards, we aim to lower environmental risk factors linked to cancer and respiratory disease, improving long-term health outcomes for target area residents.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

The target areas of Highland, Ross, and Lawrence Counties face longstanding environmental and economic burdens tied to industrial decline, aging infrastructure, and legacy contamination. In Greenfield (in TA2), repeated boil water advisories reflect aging water infrastructure that can leave low-income households, seniors, and people with disabilities most vulnerable to unsafe water and service disruptions. More broadly, these conditions are not isolated: combined, the OVRDC region has 4,277 facilities that have handled or released enough hazardous substances or petroleum to be tracked on government databases. In Chillicothe, the closure of the Pixelle paper mill has intensified risks associated with a toxic underground plume of trichloroethylene and vinyl chloride, contamination originally linked to the former WearEver aluminum cookware operations; the mill’s long-term groundwater pumping helped contain plume migration, and its shutdown raises concerns about contaminant movement into surrounding neighborhoods. The mill’s closure also represents major job loss, compounding economic hardship in a community already navigating disinvestment and environmental stigma.

These counties also lie within Appalachian Ohio, a region shaped by extractive and heavy industrial activity whose impacts persist today. Coal mining across Appalachia left widespread abandoned mine lands and polluted waterways, including acid mine drainage that continues to degrade streams and deter reinvestment, disproportionately burdening rural and low-income communities. In Pike County (central in the OVRDC area), the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, one of the nation’s two uranium enrichment facilities, is tied to

² CDC Places Data Comparison, Ohio rate is CDC (https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/most_recent_data_states.htm)

³ NIH State Cancer Profiles for Ohio Counties 2017-2021

⁴ County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Lawrence and Highland Counties, 2025 data

contamination concerns severe enough to contribute to the 2019 closure of Zahn’s Corner Middle School after enriched uranium was identified in interior dust and related radioactive indicators were detected nearby, illustrating the profound, long-term risks borne by communities with limited capacity to respond. This grant will help identify, mitigate, and reduce threats by assessing and cleaning priority sites located in these same disadvantaged communities, removing environmental barriers to redevelopment and reducing exposure risks through targeted investigation, cleanup planning, and reuse enablement. By eliminating contamination sources and reopening these properties for safe, productive reuse, the project will directly benefit populations that have historically absorbed the negative environmental consequences of industrial, governmental, and commercial operations, while strengthening community resilience by reducing the likelihood that aging sites and contaminated infrastructure exacerbate health risks during system failures and extreme weather events.

Community Engagement

e. Project Involvement, f. Project Roles

Name & Mission	Point of contact	Specific Involvement
Lawrence Economic Development Corporation: <i>provides business development, innovation, and seeks partnerships around the world to bolster the economic fortunes of Southern Ohio, and build a better standard of living for its communities.</i>	Jeremy Clay jeremy@ledcorp.org	Member of brownfields steering committee. Assist with site selection decision making and reuse planning for sites in Lawrence County.
Highland County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank): <i>revitalizes and strengthens the communities it serves by returning vacant and abandoned properties to productive use throughout Highland County.</i>	Jason Johansen jjohansen@co.highland.oh.us	Member of brownfields steering committee. Assist with site selection decision making and reuse planning for sites in Highland County.
Greater Chillicothe & Ross County Development (GCRCD) / Economic Development Alliance of Southern Ohio (EDASO): <i>Promotes industrial, economic, commercial and civic development of Ross County by focusing on the following objectives: Industry Attraction, Business Retention & Expansion, Available Sites & Buildings and Workforce Development.</i> Ross County Port Authority (RCPA): <i>Stimulates growth and development and serves as a trusted partner, through leadership, financing and strategic collaboration.</i>	Tiffany Lemaster tiffany@gcrcd.com	Member of brownfields steering committee. Assist with site selection decision making and reuse planning for sites in Ross County. Coordination with Chillicothe and Ross County representatives. Assist with reuse funding strategies.
Hillsboro Community Improvement Corporation: <i>Advances, encourages, and promotes the industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development of Hillsboro (Highland County).</i>	Lauren Walker LWalker@hillsboroohi.ohio.net	Assist with cleanup decision making, and developer/business outreach.
Joint Economic Development Initiative of Southern Ohio (JEDISO): <i>A regional economic development partnership charged with supporting economic development in Jackson, Pike, Ross, and Scioto Counties.</i>	Tammy Eallonardo teallonardo@gcrcd.com	Assist with site selection decision making for sites in Jackson, Pike, Ross, and Scioto Counties.
Adena Health System: <i>A non-profit independent health system providing health care and personal service to south central and southern Ohio since 1895.</i>	Hudson Ward hward@adena.org	Priority site property owner. Will provide site access, cleanup decision making and reuse planning input.
Lawrence County Port Authority: <i>Enhance, foster, aid, provide, or promote transportation, economic development, housing, recreation, education, governmental operations, culture, or research within Lawrence County.</i>	Bill Dingus dingus@ohio.edu	Outreach to business community (existing and potential) on grant fund uses and educate on cleanup and reuse potential of brownfield sites.
Chambers of Commerce: <i>Advocate for, and are a resource for business communities, promoting economic and community development.</i>	Bill Dingus (TA1) dingus@ohio.edu Jamie Wheeler, (TA2) info@thehighlandchamber.com Mike Throne (TA3) chillicotherosschamber@gmail.com	Outreach to business community (existing and potential) on availability of grant funds and educate on cleanup and redevelopment potential of brownfield sites.
Ironton-Lawrence County Community Action Organization: <i>Improves the well-being of the community by providing opportunities for those in need.</i>	Ralph Kline rkline@ilcao.org	Community engagement, outreach, local information support, and assistance in identifying and securing leverage funding for cleanup throughout the County.

g. Incorporating Community Input

Community involvement will be a cornerstone of this project. Upon award, OVRDC will develop a comprehensive Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to guide engagement activities throughout the life of the grant. Steering committee members will meet shortly after the award to outline the CIP, ensuring it reflects local priorities and provides meaningful opportunities for input. The steering committee will convene quarterly meetings to review project progress, select sites, and address community concerns. OVRDC will create a brownfields webpage to serve as a central hub for information. The site will include site information, steering member committee contact information, and interactive features such as a “Nominate a Site” tool and a comment submission form for public feedback. For specific redevelopment planning efforts, dedicated links will be added to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Public outreach will begin with an announcement in OVRDC’s electronic newsletter that is sent to 574 people across the 12-county region. Brownfields highlights will be included in the newsletter bi-annually. Social media posts on Facebook and LinkedIn will include announcement of the grant award and regular updates and project highlights. Within 6 months of the award, we will host a public meeting in each of the target area communities. Additional meetings will be scheduled in conjunction with existing community gatherings such as chamber of commerce, council, and board meetings and local stakeholder meetings. Targeted outreach will include events for Realtors and financial institutions, and pop-up engagements at local festivals, fairs, and farmers’ markets. While in-person engagement is preferred with our population, virtual options will be available to ensure broad participation. The OVRDC Grant Coordinator will monitor and share public comments with the steering committee at quarterly meetings or via email, propose strategies to incorporate feedback, and provide responses. This process ensures that community voices are heard and integrated into decision-making. Through these efforts, the coalition will maintain a transparent, inclusive approach that fosters trust and collaboration across the region.

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

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: OVRDC is requesting \$500,000 to complete the following tasks. OVRDC is not using funds for participant support costs or subawards. Additionally, there are no non-EPA grant resources needed to implement the tasks and activities.

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs:

Task 1: Programmatic
<i>a. Project Implementation:</i> Prepare work plan, procure a qualified environmental professional (QEP), ongoing project management (ACRES, quarterly reporting; oversight), submittal of eligibility requests, attend 2 EPA conferences, coordinate with steering committee members, drawdown requests, contractor invoice payments.
<i>b. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Workplan completion upon award of the cooperative agreement. Procurement and selection of QEP in months 1-4 of cooperative agreement. Quarterly reports submitted within 30 days after reporting period and ACRES reporting conducted for site updates. Continuous project oversight, obtaining site access, and submitting site eligibility forms.
<i>c. Task/Activity Lead:</i> OVRDC with assistance from QEP
<i>d. Outputs:</i> 1 QEP, 1 work plan; 16 quarterly progress reports; updated property profile forms in ACRES, 4 annual financial federal reports, 1 final closeout report, attendance at 2 conferences.
Task 2: Outreach
<i>a. Project Implementation:</i> CIP, Grant public kick-off meeting, steering committee meetings, pop-up events, website creation and updates
<i>b. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP development within months 4-6, public kick-off meetings within 6 months of cooperative agreement, steering committee meetings quarterly, pop-up events as needed, regular website updates throughout the grant.
<i>c. Task/Activity Lead:</i> OVRDC with assistance from QEP
<i>d. Outputs:</i> 3 kick off meetings (1 per TA), 16 steering committee meetings, 1 website
Task 3: Assessment
<i>a. Project Implementation:</i> Completion of QAPP, Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) for EPA approval. Phase I ESAs conducted in accordance with All Appropriate Inquiry & ASTM E1527-21. Phase II ESAs conducted in accordance with ASTM E 1903-19. ESAs will also meet Ohio EPA VAP requirements as appropriate. Regulated building material surveys (RBMS) will be completed in accordance with National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP).
<i>b. Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Phase I ESAs completed in months 4-45 with 4 completed in year 1, 3 in years 2 and 3, and 2 in year 4. QAPP submittal in month 4-6. SAPs/HASPs submitted to EPA in months 6-45. Priority site assessments will occur during months 6-18. Assessments on other sites following approval will commence throughout the grant period. Anticipate 2 Phase II ESAs or RBMSs in year 1, and 3 each in years 2-4.
<i>c. Task/Activity Lead:</i> QEP with OVRDC guidance
<i>d. Outputs:</i> 1 Phase I ESA reports, 11 SAPs w/HASPs, 3 Phase II ESA reports, 8 RBMS reports, 1 QAPP

Task 4: Cleanup & Reuse Planning	
a. <i>Project Implementation:</i>	Cleanup and reuse will be evaluated following the results of Phase II ESA/RBMS data based on potential reuse scenario(s). Remedial actions are evaluated on cost, intended use, feasibility, and effectiveness in protection of human health and environment. Completion of remedial action plans which include the components of an analysis of brownfields cleanup alternatives (ABCA). Reuse planning activities will include infrastructure evaluations, area-wide revitalization plans, site reuse assessments, a market study, and resource roadmaps.
b. <i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i>	Remedial action plans completed as needed within 3 months after Phase II/RBMS completion. Reuse planning will begin by month 12 of the cooperative agreement.
c. <i>Task/Activity Lead:</i>	OVRDC with QEP assistance
d. <i>Outputs:</i>	2 ABCAs, 2 remedial action plans, 2 infrastructure evaluations, 2 site specific reuse plans, 2 resource roadmaps.

e. Cost Estimates

A breakdown of the \$500,000 grant budget is below. **Over 41% of the funds are allocated for tasks directly associated with site-specific work (\$209,500/41.9%).** This includes Phase I and II ESAs, Building Material Surveys, ABCAs, Remedial Action Plans. Administrative costs are at 4.0% (\$19,989). Eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities are 30% of the budget (\$150,000).

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				Administrative Costs	Total
		Task 1: Prog.	Task 2: Outreach	Task 3: Assessment	Task 4: Cleanup & Reuse Planning		
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$ 27,000	\$13,500	\$2,025	\$2,025	\$5,490	\$50,040
	Fringe Benefits	\$11,070	\$5,535	\$830	\$830	\$2,250	\$20,516
	Travel	\$7,888	\$2,759	-	-	-	\$10,647
	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	\$0
	Supplies	-	\$449	-	-	-	\$449
	Contractual	\$15,000	\$24,000	\$191,500	\$174,000	-	\$404,500
	Construction	-	-	-	-	-	\$0
	Other	\$1,600	-	-	-	-	\$1,600
Total Direct Costs		\$62,558	\$46,243	\$194,355	\$176,855	\$7,741	\$487,752
Indirect Costs		-	-	-	-	\$12,248	\$12,248
Total Budget		\$62,558	\$46,243	\$194,355	\$176,855	\$19,989	\$500,000

Task 1: Programmatic Activities. \$62,558: *Personnel:* 600 hours @ average rate of \$45 rate x 600 hours = **\$27,000** || *Fringe:* Calculated @ 41% of Personnel = **\$11,070** || *Travel:* 10 Flights (2 National Brownfield Conferences x 2 participants) @ \$500 per flight = **\$2,000**, 12 Hotel bookings (6 nights for conferences/workshops x 2 participants) @ \$250 rate = **\$3,600**, Per Diem calculated at \$68 per day (Federal Per Diem Rate) x 16 days (2 national conferences [4 days x 2 x 2 participants]) = **\$1,088**, transportation to and from airport, parking, hotel parking = **\$1,200** (\$300 x 2 conferences x 2 participants) || *Contractual:* Quarterly reporting, invoicing, and meetings @ \$150 x 100 = **\$15,000** || *Other:* 4 Conference Registrations @ \$400 each = **\$1,600**.

Task 2: Outreach \$46,243: *Personnel:* 300 hours @ average rate of \$45/hour = **\$13,500** to plan and attend community engagement activities || *Fringe:* Calculated at 41% of personnel = **\$5,535** || *Travel:* mileage at \$0.725/mile x 3,805 miles for driving around OVRDC region = **\$2,759** || *Supplies:* **\$449** for printing (\$0.25 per page x 1,796) || *Contractual:* **\$24,000** for CIP development and community outreach (\$150 x 160 hours)

Task 3: Site Assessments \$194,355: *Personnel:* 45 hours @ average rate of \$45/hour = **\$2,025** to coordinate access || *Fringe:* Calculated at 41% of personnel = **\$830** || *Contractual:* 11 Phase 1 ESAs @ \$4,500 each = **\$49,500** || 8 BMS @ \$8,000 each = **\$64,000** || 3 Phase 2 ESAs @ \$24,000 each = **\$72,000** || 1 Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) = **\$6,000**. Costs estimated by environmental consultant.

Task 4: Clean-up/Reuse Planning \$176,855: *Personnel:* 45 hours @ average rate of \$45/hour = **\$2,025** || *Fringe:* Calculated at 41% of personnel = **\$830** || *Contractual:* 2 ABCAs @ \$4,000 each = **\$8,000**, 2 Remedial Action Plans @ \$8,000 each = **\$16,000**, 2 Infrastructure Evaluations @ \$20,000 each = **\$40,000**, 2 Site Reuse Assessments @ \$40,000 each = **\$80,000**, 2 Resource Roadmaps @ \$15,000 each = **\$30,000**. Cleanup planning costs estimated by environmental consultant and reuse planning costs taken from EPA planning fact sheets.

Administration Tasks: \$19,989: *Personnel:* 122 hours @ average rate of \$45 rate = **\$5,490** || *Fringe:* 41% of Personnel = **\$2,251** || *Indirect Costs:* **\$12,248** calculated at 15% *de minimis* rate on non-Contractual and Other costs.

f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

The grant administrator will conduct monthly reviews of grant activities to ensure progress aligns with the approved work plan and that key outputs remain on schedule. An Excel spreadsheet will be used to track output progress. If delays or issues arise, corrective actions will be implemented immediately to maintain momentum. Progress and activities will be documented and monitored by OVRDC. The grant administrator will meet at least quarterly with the brownfields steering committee to evaluate performance and make necessary adjustments. Measures of success will include the number of community engagement activities, environmental assessments initiated and completed, an EPA approved QAPP, QAPP updates, remedial action plans and/or ABCAs developed, properties with redevelopment activities underway, cleanup and redevelopment dollars leveraged, jobs created or supported, and properties where cleanup activities have started or been completed. Because the scope and cost of Phase II ESAs depend on Phase I ESA outcomes, these metrics will be tracked accordingly.

For each parcel benefiting from EPA funds, a site-specific property profile will be entered into EPA's ACRES database. Quarterly progress reports summarizing project activities will be submitted to the EPA Region 5 Project Officer via ACRES within 30 days of the close of each reporting period. These reports will include updates to the work plan, progress against EPA grant objectives, task status and schedule, site identification and targeted properties, cleanup and redevelopment activities, a summary of expenses by category, and other financial assistance leveraged. Electronic copies of all completed Phase I and Phase II ESAs, cleanup plans, ABCAs, cleanup reports, and redevelopment plans will be forwarded to the EPA Project Officer via email within one week of completion.

(4) PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability

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

OVRDC is uniquely qualified to lead a \$500,000 Community-Wide Assessment Grant, backed by nearly six decades of experience in regional planning and economic development. Established 58 years ago, OVRDC has a proven record of managing complex, multi-jurisdictional initiatives and administering significant federal and state funding streams. OVRDC was created as a public regional planning commission established by agreement among its members pursuant to Section 713.21 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended. It functions as an EDA Economic Development District, ARC Local Development District, Regional Planning Commission for State of Ohio Region 7, and parts of Regions 5 and 1. OVRDC has the organizational capacity to manage a brownfields coalition grant. It has an annual operating budget of \$2,032,487, 11 full-time staff, and systems (financial management, procurement, reporting, audit systems) aligned with EPA requirements. It also manages of approximately \$887,000 in federal funds each year on behalf of its member entities.

OVRDC is governed by a full commission of 177 officials who meet semi-annually. The full commission includes representatives from county and local governments, social service organizations, educational institutions, and the private sector. The day-to-day oversight is handled by an executive committee of 32 members that meets monthly and is in regular contact with the Executive Director who reports to the committee. Full grant responsibilities will fall on Stephanie Gilbert, OVRDC Executive Director and day-to-day grant management will be completed by Kerri Richardson, Development Coordinator, with assistance from Candi Cox, Development Specialist Juanita Bragg will oversee fiscal management of the grant. This team will work together to ensure timely and proper expenditure of grant fund and completion of all grant requirements.

Stephanie Gilbert has been with OVRDC since 2013 and Executive Director since 2024. Stephanie directed the OVRDC revolving loan gap financing program and headed up the Regional Transportation Planning Organization program at OVRDC, growing the annual budget to \$1.2 million. As a small business owner, she understands the value businesses bring to the growth of the region, and she applies that perspective to her job and will ensure brownfield remediation efforts are aligned with future economic development, job creation, and long-term community revitalization. Kerri Richardson will lead the day-to-day grant activities. Kerri started with OVRDC in 2016 as the Bookkeeper/Secretary, she was quickly promoted to Administrative Assistant and then Development Specialist and currently serves as the Development Director. Kerri has proven herself as a leader and innovator during her time at OVRDC, streamlining grant application and review processes, improving communications, and building stakeholder relationships. Candi Cox works in tandem with Kerri on all projects and will provide grant support as needed. Candi has spent most of her career working in the county court system. During her time at OVRDC, her work has been focused on grant administration, ensuring that communities stay in compliance with state and federal grant requirements. Her attention to detail and desire to help communities succeed shows in everything she does. Financial oversight will be provided by Juanita Bragg, Finance Director, who has been with OVRDC for 38 years. Under her leadership OVRDC received the Ohio Auditor of State Award 7 years straight for a clean audit report. This speaks to the detail and knowledge Juanita brings to OVRDC.

d. Acquiring Additional Resources

OVRDC has a general contracting and procurement policy that will be used to procure a QEP and any other needed services. OVRDC’s policy was adopted by the finance and executive committees in 1996 and since updated and adopted in 2017. The policy conforms to applicable Federal law and the standards identified in the Code of Federal Regulations at 2 CFR §200.318 through §200.326 and is based on the Ohio Revised Code Section 307.86. This process is regularly used to solicit proposals and bids for OVRDC projects and ensures transparency and fairness. All bid opportunities are publicly posted on OVRDC’s website (ovrdc.org). To strengthen local economic impact and community representation, OVRDC encourages the use of local subcontractors during the solicitation process. For the brownfields grant, OVRDC will also follow its procurement process to select a QEP as well as EPA’s *Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements* and the *Brownfields Grants: Guidance on Competitively Procuring a Contractor*. In addition to formal procurement, OVRDC will leverage support from the community partners identified in Section 2e and utilize services provided by the Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program as needed.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

f. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments

OVRDC has a proven track record of successfully managing state and federal grants. Three recent examples are provided below. Additionally, OVRDC helps its members secure and manage over \$15M of federal and state funding annually.

Funding Agency/Fund Type	Amount	Description
USDA Rural Development Broadband Technical Assistance	\$290,000	This grant was awarded in 2025 to provide broadband technical assistance to 20 counties in southern Ohio. In April 2025, OVRDC released an RFP to contract with a broadband consultant for up to 20 months. The consultant was contracted in 2025 and is responsible for documenting unserved/underserved areas, mapping open middle mile and fiber routes for cost analysis, and identifying community partners and funding opportunities. The grant also covers the cost to assist local governments with grant applications. This grant requires annual reporting relative to the work plan, timeline, milestones and outputs.
Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Regional Transportation Planning Organization Planning Grant	\$236,689	The purpose of this 2025 grant is to support rural, multi-county transportation planning through development of long-range plans, data collection, preparing transportation project applications and assisting local governments. This is an annual grant the OVRDC continues to receive due to it meeting annual requirements. Reporting requirements include submitting an Annual Work Program to ODOT and an annual progress report. OVRDC used funding to prepare a draft 2050 Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Public input is being solicited on the plan and the public comment period is open through 2/3/2026.
Economic Development Administration Planning Partnership Assistance	\$70,000	OVRDC received a 2025 annual federal planning award that supports its role as the Economic Development District for southern Ohio. The funding covers costs associated with annual updates to OVRDC’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements

Funding Agency/Fund Type	Compliance
USDA Rural Development Broadband Technical Assistance	OVRDC is in compliance with grant requirements and is on schedule to expend all funds by grant expiration. Outputs includes selection of a consultant, and OVRDC is working on its first annual report for submittal.
Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Regional Transportation Planning Organization Planning Grant	OVRDC met its reporting requirements for this grant and submitted an Annual Work Program and progress report to ODOT. The primary outcome of the grant was the draft 2050 Comprehensive Transportation Plan. It is in full compliance with grant requirements.
Economic Development Administration Planning Partnership Assistance	OVRDC is in full compliance with the assistance agreement. It completed its 2025 annual CEDS update and submitted its performance report to EDA.

**FY26 Community-Wide Assessment Grant Threshold Criteria
Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission**

- (1) Applicant Eligibility**
- a. Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) is a public regional planning commission established by agreement among its members pursuant to Section 713.21 of the Ohio Revised Code. It is comprised of a County Caucus of 12 counties. It is an eligible applicant as a “group of general purpose units of local government established under federal, state, or local law to function as a single legal entity with authority to enter into binding agreements with the federal government” and as a “redevelopment agency that is chartered or otherwise sanctioned by state.” Documentation of eligibility is attached (a copy of the state statute and the first three pages of OVRDC’s by-laws).
 - b. OVRDC is not exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(2) Community Involvement

Community involvement will be a cornerstone of this project. Upon award, OVRDC will develop a comprehensive Community Involvement Plan (CIP) to guide engagement activities throughout the life of the grant. Steering committee members will meet shortly after the award to outline the CIP, ensuring it reflects local priorities and provides meaningful opportunities for input. The steering committee will convene quarterly meetings to review project progress, select sites, and address community concerns. OVRDC will create a brownfields webpage to serve as a central hub for information. The site will include site information, steering member committee contact information, and interactive features such as a “Nominate a Site” tool and a comment submission form for public feedback. For specific redevelopment planning efforts, dedicated links will be added to ensure transparency and accessibility.

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**FY26 Community-Wide Assessment Grant Threshold Criteria
Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission**

local festivals, fairs, and farmers’ markets. While in-person engagement remains the preferred method with our population, virtual options will be available to ensure broad participation. The OVRDC Grant Coordinator will monitor and share public comments with the steering committee at quarterly meetings or via email as needed, propose strategies to incorporate feedback, and provide responses. This process ensures that community voices are heard and integrated into decision-making. Through these efforts, the coalition will maintain a transparent, inclusive approach that fosters trust and collaboration across the region.

(3) Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

Not Applicable – OVRDC does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant

4) Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not Applicable