



## EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant (FY26) Application Information

### Unlocking East Palestine: Brownfield Inventory, Assessment & Reuse Strategies

#### 1) Applicant Identification:

- a. Applicant: Village of East Palestine.
- b. Address: 85 North Market Street, East Palestine, Ohio 44413.
- c. The Village of East Palestine is the applicant and, if awarded, will receive and be accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of grant funds.

#### 2) Website URL:

- a. <https://eastpalestine-oh.gov>

#### 3) Funding Requested:

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

#### 4) Location:

- a. City: East Palestine
- b. County: Columbiana County
- c. State: Ohio

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

- a. Target Area(s):
  - i. Downtown Market Street Corridor a collection of properties
  - ii. Rail Yard and Adjacent Parcels at approximately 183 Edgeworth Avenue, East Palestine, Ohio 44413
  - iii. Sulphur Run Corridor a collection of properties
  - iv. Additional sites that include those which may need demolished, have existing pollution or contamination, but no environmental assessment exists to date.
- b. Priority Site(s):
  - i. Former JASAR Manufacturing Site at 183 Edgeworth Avenue, East Palestine, Ohio 44413
  - ii. M&W Plating at 62 Walnut Street, East Palestine, Ohio 44413
  - iii. Vacant and underutilized Market Street properties (approximately 3 acres across multiple parcels)
  - iv. Sulphur Run corridor parcels (approximately 5–10 acres)
  - v. Additional sites that include those which may need demolished, have existing pollution or contamination, but no environmental assessment exists to date.

#### 6) Contacts:

- a. Project Director:
  - i. Name: Antonio Diaz-Guy
  - ii. Title: Village Administrator, Village of East Palestine
  - iii. Phone: (330) 881-6715
  - iv. Email: [a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov](mailto:a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov)



- v. Mailing Address: Village of East Palestine, 85 North Market Street, East Palestine, Ohio 44413
- b. Chief Executive / Highest-Ranking Elected Official:
  - i. Name: Antonio Diaz-Guy
  - ii. Title: Village Administrator, Village of East Palestine
  - iii. Phone: (330) 881-6715
  - iv. Email: [a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov](mailto:a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov)
  - v. Mailing Address: Village of East Palestine, 85 North Market Street, East Palestine, Ohio 44413

**7) Population**

- a. Population of Jurisdiction: Approximately 4,699 residents (U.S. Census, 2023)
- b. Population of Immediate Service Areas: 12,908

**8) Other Factors**

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	YES, page 1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	No
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	Yes, page 1 and 2 Previous AMLER Grant opportunities has identified the Village is substantially impacted by adjacent AMLER site
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).	YES, page 1 and 2 Most of the sites are partially contiguous to Sulfur Run Creek (See Map Attachments)
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	No
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	No
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Yes, page 3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	Yes, page 3
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in <a href="#">Section 3.A.(2)</a> , for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	Yes, page 6, 7, and 8



The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	NO
--	----

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

- a. A current letter from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and BUSTR acknowledging the Village's intent to conduct assessment activities and apply for FY26 Brownfields Grant funding is attached.

**10) Releasing Copies of Applications**

- a. The Village of East Palestine acknowledges that copies of applications submitted under this funding opportunity may be made publicly available for approximately three months after selected applications are announced.
- b. This application does not include Confidential Business Information (CBI). CBI status: Not applicable.



January 14, 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 the Village of East Palestine's – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant Proposal**

Dear Torre Ippolito:

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) acknowledges that the Village of East Palestine plans to conduct assessment activities and is applying for a FY26 U.S. EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant in the amount of \$500,000. We recognize the importance of this initiative and are pleased to provide support under the Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant program.

If awarded, the Village will use these funds to:

- Identify, assess, and plan for the reuse of critical brownfield properties that are essential to community recovery and revitalization.
- Advance redevelopment goals aligned with the Village's 2020 Comprehensive Plan and state recovery priorities.

The proposed target areas include priority sites such as:

- Former JASAR Pottery/Recycling Manufacturing Site (publicly owned) - Historic industrial use; potential metals and SVOCs contamination.
- Vacant Downtown Market Street Properties (publicly owned) – Stigmatized commercial parcels; potential petroleum and hazardous substance impacts.
- Former M&W Plating Operation (privately owned) – Historic plating activities; potential heavy metals contamination.
- Sulphur Run Corridor Parcels (publicly and privately owned) – Sediment sampling has revealed SVOCs and heavy metals.

The Village of East Palestine and its partners—including the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation, Columbiana County Health Department, Kent State University, and several nonprofit organizations—are committed to leveraging significant external resources to ensure the success of this initiative. These resources include \$25 million dedicated to long-term health monitoring, support from the Ohio EPA Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) Program, the Ohio Department of Development’s Brownfield Remediation Program and Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program, as well as \$10 million in NIH/NIEHS-funded health and environmental research.

Ohio EPA supports the Village of East Palestine’s efforts to carry out these assessment activities and implement its comprehensive reuse strategy. This initiative represents a critical step toward restoring economic vitality, protecting public health, and advancing environmental justice for the community.

We look forward to working with Village of East Palestine and U.S. EPA on this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-728-5441 or via e-mail at [emily.johnson@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:emily.johnson@epa.ohio.gov).

Sincerely,

*Emily Johnson*

Emily Johnson, Manager  
Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization  
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

cc: Antonio Diaz-Guy, Village Administrator, East Palestine  
Tom Mignery, CPG, VAP CP, Senior Hydrogeologist, Burgess & Niple, Inc.  
Natalie Oryshkewych, Ohio EPA, DERR

## Unlocking East Palestine: Brownfield Inventory, Assessment & Reuse Strategies - Narrative

### Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization. 1.a Target Area and Brownfields.

(1.a.i) Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area. The Village of East Palestine, Ohio (Village) is a small rural community in Columbiana County, situated along the Ohio–Pennsylvania border. As of 2023, the Village has a population of approximately 4,699 residents<sup>1</sup>. Historically, East Palestine grew as a rail town, with development tied to the now Norfolk Southern line, including mining, ceramics, glass manufacturing, and regional agriculture. The rail corridor, which still bisects the Village, has shaped its land use patterns and economy for over a century.

On February 3, 2023, a Norfolk Southern freight train carrying hazardous chemicals such as vinyl chloride derailed in the center of East Palestine, Ohio, triggering a mandatory evacuation of residents. 11 tank cars were involved, and a controlled burn conducted to prevent explosion released additional hazardous byproducts—including hydrogen chloride, phosgene, and dioxins—into the surrounding air, soil, and water, drawing national attention and permanently altered public perception of the Village. Since the derailment, extensive remediation has occurred. The U.S.EPA and Norfolk Southern contractors have removed more than 167,000 tons of contaminated soil and transported over 39 million gallons of wastewater off-site. While these actions addressed immediate threats, uncertainty remains regarding long-term impacts to soil, water, and public health. Concurrently, the Village has experienced intensified stigma, economic decline, and population loss. School enrollment declined by nearly 25 percent in the year following the derailment, resulting in over \$1 million in lost state funding, while downtown businesses continue to report sustained losses due to reduced foot traffic. The derailment accelerated longstanding challenges common to small Appalachian Ohio communities, including aging infrastructure, disinvestment, and population decline. Vacant storefronts along Market Street, underutilized industrial parcels, and properties adjacent to Sulphur Run remain significant barriers to redevelopment. Without external assistance, the Village lacks the technical and financial capacity to remediate brownfield conditions and support recovery. The national significance of the disaster is reflected in continued federal engagement. President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump have visited the Village. Most recently, Vice President J.D. Vance visited East Palestine on February 3, 2025, the second anniversary of the derailment, to tour the site and reaffirm federal support for cleanup, recovery, and rail safety. Additional follow-up engagement is planned in 2026, including coordination with the National Institutes of Health, Yale University, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Pittsburgh. An EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant is essential to East Palestine’s revitalization. This funding will enable the Village to identify, assess, and plan for the reuse of priority brownfield sites that are critical to restoring economic vitality, rebuilding confidence, and ensuring long-term community resilience.

### (1.b) Description of Priority Brownfield Sites

- Former JASAR Manufacturing Site (14+ acres). Past Use: an approximately 14.89-acre former recycling / pottery manufacturing facility located at 183 Edgeworth Avenue in Columbiana County; East Palestine, Ohio 44413. Current Use: Largely vacant, with some parcels fenced and inaccessible. Environmental Concerns: petroleum hydrocarbons, and heavy metals may be disposed in soil and groundwater<sup>2</sup>. Grant Outcomes: Conduct Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Site Investigations, and Remedial

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *ACS demographic and housing estimates: East Palestine village, Ohio*.

<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US3923940-east-palestine-oh/>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023–2025). *Soil, water, and air sampling updates: East Palestine derailment*.

<https://www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment>

Action Planning to enable safe redevelopment. Potential reuse includes light industrial, commercial, or green infrastructure. Census: located within a census tract 9515 characterized by below-median household income, limited educational attainment, and an aging housing stock, according to U.S. Census data. The size and location of this site, adjacent to residential neighborhoods with limited economic resilience, make assessment critical to reducing risk and preventing further disinvestment.

- Downtown Market Street Vacant Properties (3 acres across multiple parcels). Past Use: A mix of retail, small businesses, and service-oriented uses, including former dry cleaners and gas stations. Current Use: Vacant and/or Underutilized buildings. Environmental Concerns: Suspected petroleum contamination, solvents, and stigma from derailment-related air deposition. Grant Outcomes: Assess properties, provide remedial recommendations, and develop reuse strategies for small business and mixed-use revitalization. Census: Downtown Market Street lies at the economic core of East Palestine and serves residents from census blocks with elevated poverty rates (approximately 9.5%), lower-than-average educational attainment, and a higher proportion of elderly residents compared to statewide averages. Census data indicate that only 9.4% of residents hold a bachelor's degree, limiting access to higher-wage employment and constraining local economic recovery. Vacancy and blight in this area disproportionately affect low-income residents who rely on walkable access to goods, services, and employment opportunities.

- M&W Plating. Past Use: Small-scale foundry and assembly operations. Current Use: Largely abandoned parcel 2+-acre parcel in a residential neighborhood. Environmental Concerns: Heavy metals and petroleum chemicals with semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) and heavy metals in soil and groundwater. Grant Outcomes: Conduct Phase I & II ESAs and plan for greenway, trail, and possibly residential reuse. Census: The M&W site is in a neighborhood with a high proportion of children and elderly residents, as reflected in Village-wide census data showing approximately 22% of residents under age 18 and 17% age 65 or older. Such populations are considered more vulnerable to environmental exposures. Surrounding households exhibit lower incomes and limited housing mobility, increasing the importance of assessing/addressing potential contamination to protect public health and support safe reuse.

- Sulphur Run Parcels (5–10 acres). Past Use: Small-scale industrial and commercial uses along the creek. Current Use: Largely abandoned parcels with limited community access. Environmental Concerns: Previous sediment and soil sampling has revealed low-level contamination with semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) and heavy metals<sup>3</sup>. Grant Outcomes: Conduct Phase II ESAs and plan for greenway, trail, and stormwater management projects. Census: Parcels along the Sulphur Run corridor are adjacent to neighborhoods with older infrastructure, older housing stock, and limited access to recreational or green space, according to census and local land-use data. These areas experience heightened flood risk and environmental stress, which disproportionately impacts low-income households with fewer resources to adapt or relocate. Redevelopment of the corridor into green infrastructure and public space would provide direct benefits to residents who currently lack access to environmental amenities and resilience features.

(1.c) Identifying Additional Sites. In addition to these priority sites, the Village will work with Columbiana County and Ohio EPA to conduct a comprehensive brownfields inventory. This GIS-based inventory will include abandoned industrial sites, vacant residential parcels with demolition debris, and underutilized commercial lots. Sites will be prioritized using a rubric that considers contamination severity, proximity to vulnerable populations, redevelopment potential, and alignment with community goals. Community input,

---

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. (2023). *East Palestine train derailment: State monitoring and response*.

<https://epa.ohio.gov/monitor-pollution/pollution-issues/east-palestine>

gathered through a Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC), will ensure that site selection reflects the needs of residents, including disadvantaged groups.

(1.d) Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans. The Village has adopted a reuse strategy that aligns with its state-led disaster recovery planning<sup>4</sup>, and federal settlement resources. Four key goals shape this strategy: 1) Expand Housing Options: Provide safe, affordable, and resilient housing for displaced residents and families affected by contamination. With more than 60% of East Palestine’s housing stock built before 1970<sup>5</sup>, there is significant need for new, energy-efficient housing development; 2) Revitalize Downtown Market Street: Stimulate small business development, rebuild community gathering spaces, and restore the commercial heart of the Village. 3) Enhance Environmental Resilience: Transform creekside parcels along Sulphur Run into public green spaces, stormwater management areas, and trails that reduce flooding risk and improve quality of life. 4) Rebuild Trust and Public Health: Address stigma by visibly repurposing contaminated sites into community assets, coupled with transparency in assessment and monitoring.

(1e) Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy. Implementation of this strategy will produce: 1) Housing Development: New residential units constructed on remediated sites, expanding options for low- and moderate-income households. 2) Commercial Stabilization: At least 10,000 square feet of vacant Market Street space returned to productive use, supporting 20+ new or retained jobs. 3) Green Infrastructure: Approximately 2 miles of greenway and trail corridors established along Sulphur Run<sup>6</sup>. 4) Public Health Outcomes: Reduced community exposure risks, improved perceptions of safety, and restored confidence in the Village’s future. 5) Climate Adaptation Benefits: Redevelopment will incorporate energy efficiency, renewable energy, and stormwater resilience measures, aligning with federal climate goals.

(1.f) Strategy for Leveraging Resources. (1.c.i) Resources Needed for Site Reuse. The Village will leverage a combination of federal, state, academic, and local resources, including: 1) Federal Settlement Funds: 1) Norfolk Southern entered a settlement in May 2024, including funding for cleanup, long-term health monitoring, and civil penalties<sup>7</sup>. 2) State Resources: Ohio EPA and the Ohio Department of Development provide technical assistance and grants for cleanup and redevelopment<sup>8</sup>. f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse. In addition to EPA Brownfields grant funds, the Village will pursue leveraged resources to support cleanup and reuse of priority sites, including: 3) Ohio EPA: USEPA TBA funding for key sites; Competitive grants through the Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program to support environmental remediation and infrastructure improvements; Participation in regional Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds for cleanup financing and subgrants; Technical assistance and site assessment support through Ohio EPA’s Targeted Brownfield Assessment program; Voluntary cleanup financing through Ohio Water Development Authority brownfield

---

<sup>4</sup> Village of East Palestine. (2025). *Village of East Palestine Long-Term Recovery Plan*

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *ACS demographic and housing estimates: East Palestine village, Ohio*.  
<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US3923940-east-palestine-oh/>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2024). *Environmental data review update: East Palestine train derailment* (Technical Assistance Services for Communities fact sheet).  
[https://epohio.org/wp-content/uploads/TD-R5-3.4.14-East-Palestine-Env-Data-Update-Fact-Sheet-6-21-24-final\\_508.pdf](https://epohio.org/wp-content/uploads/TD-R5-3.4.14-East-Palestine-Env-Data-Update-Fact-Sheet-6-21-24-final_508.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Justice. (2024, May). *United States reaches over \$310 million settlement with Norfolk Southern to address harms caused by East Palestine train derailment*.  
<https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/united-states-reaches-over-310-million-settlement-norfolk-southern-address-harms-caused-east-palestine>

<sup>8</sup> Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. (2023). *State recovery coordination and environmental oversight for East Palestine*.  
<https://epa.ohio.gov/monitor-pollution/pollution-issues/east-palestine>

loans; JobsOhio revitalization incentives to attract private investment following cleanup. 4) Academic Partnerships: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) committed \$10 million for health research, and NIEHS-funded studies provide environmental and health monitoring<sup>9</sup>. 5) Local Initiatives: The East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) manages zero-interest business loans and tax incentive programs to support redevelopment<sup>10</sup>.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure. All priority sites are well-served by existing water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure. Recent and ongoing investments include: 1) Water Treatment Plant Upgrades: partially-funded in cooperation with Norfolk Southern<sup>7</sup> with additional distribution and collection system upgrades pending. 2) Roadway and Utility Improvements: Downtown upgrades supported by state recovery funds. 3) Creek Restoration Projects: Sulphur Run remediation coordinated by U.S. EPA and Ohio EPA<sup>8</sup>.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement. 2.a Community Need. (2.a.i) Demographic Indicators. The Village of East Palestine is home to approximately 4,699 residents (U.S. Census, 2023)<sup>1</sup>. Demographic and socioeconomic indicators reflect a vulnerable community:

- Median Household Income: \$49,006, significantly below Ohio's median of \$65,720<sup>1</sup>.
- Poverty Rate: 9.5%, above the Columbiana County average<sup>1</sup>.
- Educational Attainment: Only 9.4% of residents hold a bachelor's degree, compared to 31.6% statewide<sup>1</sup>.
- Age and Vulnerable Populations: Median age is 40.2 years, with over 17% of residents age 65 or older and approx. 22% under the age of 18<sup>1</sup>. These populations are particularly vulnerable to adverse health impacts from environmental contamination.

(2.a.ii) Health, Housing, and Economic Challenges. The February 2023 rail derailment compounded existing challenges related to housing, employment, and public health. Nearly 25% of school enrollment was lost in the year following the incident, resulting in more than \$1 million in lost state education funding, further destabilizing local services and community resources<sup>11</sup>. Many residents continue to experience economic stress related to perceived property devaluation, and small businesses report ongoing losses associated with community stigma and reduced customer traffic<sup>4</sup>. Additional site information on potential census considerations for sites which may be assessed are included in Section 1. Housing conditions are of particular concern. More than 60% of the Village's housing stock was built before 1970<sup>12</sup>, increasing the likelihood of lead-based paint, asbestos-containing materials, and structural deficiencies. Recovery from derailment-related contamination has further constrained the availability of affordable, safe housing, particularly for low-income households and families with children.

---

<sup>9</sup> National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. (2023). *NIEHS response and research related to the East Palestine train derailment*.  
[https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/east\\_palestine](https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/programs/east_palestine)

<sup>10</sup> East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation. (n.d.). *Economic recovery and local partnership initiatives*.  
<https://epohio.org/about/community-improvement-corporation/>

<sup>11</sup> Spotlight PA. (2025). *Two years after derailment, East Palestine schools struggle with enrollment loss*.  
<https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2025/04/norfolk-southern-east-palestine-ohio-train-derailment-lawsuit/>

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey housing characteristics tables*.  
<https://data.census.gov/>

(2.a.iii) Environmental Justice Considerations. East Palestine is designated as a disadvantaged community under EPA's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)<sup>13</sup>, reflecting cumulative burdens related to income, environmental exposure, and infrastructure vulnerability. The derailment heightened these inequities, disproportionately affecting low-income households, children, elderly residents, and individuals with preexisting health conditions<sup>3</sup>. Additional site information on EJ considerations related to potential sites is included in Section 1.

(2.a.iv) The Community's Need for Funding. The Village of East Palestine has a small population and limited tax base, which restricts its ability to fund environmental assessment, remediation planning, and reuse preparation without federal assistance. Emergency response and removal actions conducted following the derailment addressed immediate risks but did not provide comprehensive, site-specific environmental assessments needed to support long-term redevelopment or reuse planning<sup>6</sup>. Due to the Village's small population, low-to-moderate income characteristics, and limited access to private capital, the community is unable to draw on other funding sources to independently conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments or prepare cleanup/reuse plans. This Community-Wide Assessment Grant will meet these needs by providing the foundational environmental data required to support future cleanup and reuse using non-EPA funding sources.

(2.a.v) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations. Sensitive populations within target areas include young children, elderly residents, pregnant individuals, low-income households, and residents with serious disease burdens, consistent with \*\*CERCLA § 104(k)(6)(C)(x)\*\*<sup>7</sup>. Sensitive populations are those likely to experience elevated health risks from pollution due to age, pregnancy, existing disease burden (including cancer, asthma, chronic respiratory disease, coronary heart disease, and low birth weights), or socioeconomic factors. The derailment heightened concerns related to air, soil, and water quality and exacerbated stress-related welfare impacts among these populations<sup>2</sup>. This grant will support environmental site assessments that help identify and evaluate contamination at brownfield sites within the target areas, reducing uncertainty and supporting health-protective land-use decisions consistent with applicable law and EPA guidance<sup>7</sup>.

(2.a.vi) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions. For the purposes of this criterion, "greater-than-normal" refers to disease incidence that exceeds what is typically expected or considered average. Baseline conditions for comparison are provided by Columbiana County and State of Ohio public health data, including rates of chronic respiratory disease, cardiovascular conditions, and cancer incidence<sup>11</sup>. According to Ohio Department of Health data, Columbiana County experiences higher-than-state-average rates of chronic respiratory disease and cardiovascular conditions, which serve as the baseline for evaluating potential elevated risk in East Palestine<sup>13</sup>. Following the derailment, residents reported increased respiratory symptoms and stress-related health concerns, and multiple federally supported and academic research initiatives were launched to evaluate potential long-term health impacts<sup>9</sup>. While this grant will not fund health studies, it will support environmental site assessments that help identify environmental conditions that may contribute to elevated health risks. By clarifying contamination pathways and supporting cleanup and reuse planning, the project will help identify and reduce threats associated with hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum.

(2.a.vii) Economically Impoverished and Disproportionately Impacted Populations. Economically impoverished populations within East Palestine disproportionately experience the negative consequences of brownfields,

---

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2024). *Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)*.

<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>

including reduced housing options, limited investment, and proximity to contaminated or underutilized properties<sup>7</sup>. Assessment funding will prioritize sites near vulnerable populations and support reuse planning that mitigates environmental risks and advances equitable redevelopment outcomes.

2.b Community Engagement. (2.b.i) Project Involvement & (2.b.ii) Project Roles. Entities in the Project Involvement and Roles Table will be meaningfully involved in decision-making related to site selection, assessment priorities, and projected reuse planning for brownfield sites, including the priority site(s).

Name of Organization / Entity / Group	Entity's Mission	Point of Contact (name & email)	Specific Involvement in Project or Assistance Provided
Village of East Palestine	Local government responsible for planning and public welfare	Antonio Diaz-Guy - Village Manager <a href="mailto:a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov">a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov</a>	Grant administration; decision-making authority; site selection oversight; coordination with EPA
East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)	Economic Revitalization and Business Support	Chris Page East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation <a href="mailto:cpage@threshold75.com">cpage@threshold75.com</a>	Property owner outreach; reuse planning; participation in site prioritization decisions
Columbiana County Health Department	Protect and Promote Public Health	Wesley J. Vins DPA - Director <a href="mailto:WVins@columbiana-health.org">WVins@columbiana-health.org</a> Misti Allison - Board Member [REDACTED]	Public health input; coordination related to environmental conditions
East Palestine School District	Education and Community Support	James Rook - Superintendent <a href="mailto:james.rook@epschools.k12.oh.us">james.rook@epschools.k12.oh.us</a>	Outreach to families; participation in engagement activities
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency	Environmental Oversight and Technical Assistance	Melisa Witherspoon <a href="mailto:Melisa.Witherspoon@epa.ohio.gov">Melisa.Witherspoon@epa.ohio.gov</a>	Coordination on assessment activities; regulatory consultation
Academic partners (University of Kentucky)	Research and Technical Analysis	Dr. Erin Haynes University of Kentucky – Principal Researcher <a href="mailto:erin.haynes@uky.edu">erin.haynes@uky.edu</a>	Data analysis; technical review of assessment and planning information
Faith-based and nonprofit organizations	Community Support and Outreach	Chaney Nezbeth The Way Station - CEO [REDACTED]	Community outreach; participation in engagement and feedback processes

Residents/Property Owners	Represent Community Interests	Rube Ginder Housing & Zoning East Palestine <a href="mailto:r.ginder@eastpalestine-oh.gov">r.ginder@eastpalestine-oh.gov</a>	Input on site prioritization, assessment focus, and projected reuse
---------------------------	-------------------------------	--	---

(2.b.iii) Incorporating Community Input. The Village will implement a structured plan to communicate project progress and incorporate community input throughout the period of performance. Methods will include: a) Establishment of a Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC). b.) 4 Public Workshops per year, offered in in-

person and virtual formats. c) An annual “State of Recovery” meeting to communicate progress and next steps. d) Multichannel communication, including the Village website, newsletter, flyers, and social media. Community input will be documented, evaluated, and incorporated into decisions related to site prioritization, assessment activities, and projected reuse planning. The Village will communicate back to the community how input was considered and how it informed project actions.

### 3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

The Village of East Palestine proposes the following tasks and activities to implement the Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant. All activities are eligible uses of EPA Assessment Grant funds and are consistent with the FY26 FAQs. No ineligible activities (i.e. land acquisition, building demolition unrelated to assessment, construction, site preparation, or remediation) are included. The Village acknowledges that: Up to 10% of the total award may be used for health monitoring activities associated with sites where a Phase II ESA is conducted and hazardous substances are present, in coordination with the local health agency; The Village does not propose to use EPA funds for health monitoring activities at this time but will coordinate with the Columbiana County Health Department should future non-EPA health monitoring efforts occur; Administrative costs (direct and indirect) charged by the applicant will not exceed 5% of total EPA-requested funds, consistent with CERCLA §104(k)(5)(E); The administrative cost limitation does not apply to programmatic costs charged by procurement contractors. Costs will be classified consistently as direct or indirect, and the same cost will not be charged in both categories.

#### Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs Task 1: Program Management and Cooperative Agreement Oversight.

a. Project Implementation. EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Cooperative agreement oversight and coordination with EPA Region 5; b) Financial management, performance reporting, and compliance; c) ACRES data entry and maintenance; d) Procurement and contract administration for assessment services; e) Travel associated with brownfields-related training, including the National Brownfields Training Conference. Non-EPA grant resources: The Village will contribute staff time for executive oversight and policy coordination that will not be charged to the EPA grant. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 1–4 of the period of performance. c. Task/Activity Lead: Village of East Palestine. d. Outputs: a) Quarterly performance and financial reports; b) Accurate ACRES entries; Executed professional services contracts.

Task 2: Brownfield Inventory, Site Identification, and Prioritization. a. Project Implementation. EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Development and maintenance of a Village-wide brownfields inventory; b) Desktop review and site reconnaissance; c) GIS-based mapping of candidate sites; d) Development and application of a prioritization rubric considering contamination risk, redevelopment potential, proximity to sensitive populations, and community input; e) Coordination with Ohio EPA and Columbiana County. Non-EPA grant resources: Existing Village and County GIS data and staff support. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 1–2. c. Task/Activity Lead: Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), with Village oversight. d. Outputs: a) Comprehensive brownfields inventory; b) Prioritization matrix c) List of sites selected for Phase I and Phase II ESAs

Task 3: Phase I Environmental Site Assessments. a. Project Implementation. EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Conduct Phase I ESAs in accordance with ASTM E1527 and All Appropriate Inquiries requirements; b) Records review, site reconnaissance, interviews, and report preparation. Non-EPA grant resources: None anticipated. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 1–3. c. Task/Activity Lead: Qualified Environmental Professional. d. Outputs: Approximately 3-5 Phase I ESA reports

Task 4: Phase II Environmental Site Assessments. a. Project Implementation. EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Development of EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs); b) Soil, groundwater, sediment, and/or vapor sampling as appropriate; c) Laboratory analysis and data interpretation; d) Phase II ESA

reporting; e) Non-EPA grant resources: a) Coordination with Ohio EPA and ongoing non-EPA cleanup efforts to avoid duplication. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 2–4. c. Task/Activity Lead: Qualified Environmental Professional. d. Outputs: a) Approximately 3–5 Phase II ESA reports; b) Environmental data suitable for cleanup and reuse planning.

Task 5: Cleanup Planning and Reuse Planning. a. Project Implementation: EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Development of Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) documents; a) Site-specific cleanup planning; b) Conceptual reuse planning and evaluation of infrastructure needs; c) Coordination with local and state partners to identify future cleanup and redevelopment funding; Non-EPA grant resources: a) Local planning efforts and leveraged redevelopment initiatives (not charged to EPA). b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 3–4. c. Task/Activity Lead: Qualified Environmental Professional, with Village coordination. d. Outputs: 3 ABCA documents Reuse planning summaries for priority sites

Task 6: Community Engagement. a. Project Implementation EPA-funded tasks/activities: a) Brownfields Advisory Committee meetings; b) Public Workshops/Information sessions (hybrid format); c) Outreach materials and project communications. Non-EPA grant resources: Village communication platforms and partner outreach support. b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Years 1–4. c. Task/Activity Lead: Village of East Palestine. d. Outputs: a) Meeting agendas and attendance records; b) Outreach materials; c) Documentation of community input e. Cost Estimates: Cost estimates were developed using recent Ohio brownfields assessment contracts and reflect reasonable, market-based pricing for similar services. Examples of costs per unit include: Phase I ESAs: approximately \$3,500-\$5,500 per site; Phase II ESAs: variable based on sampling needs, averaging \$35,000–\$75,000 per site; Total direct and indirect administrative costs charged by the applicant will not exceed 5% of the total EPA-requested funds. Indirect costs, if proposed, will be supported by a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement or EPA-approved exception. Only EPA grant funds are included in the budget. Leveraged resources are excluded from the budget table and described elsewhere in the application.

Budget Categories	Task 1 Program Mgmt.	Task 2 Inventory	Task 3 Phase I ESAs	Task 4 Phase II ESAs	Task 5 Cleanup & Reuse Planning	Task 6 Community Engagement	Administrative Costs	Total (\$)
Personnel	\$21,000	\$7,000	—	—	—	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$48,000
Fringe Benefits	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	\$0
Travel	\$5,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	\$5,000
Equipment	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	\$0
Supplies	\$3,000	\$2,000	—	—	—	\$4,500	—	\$9,500
Contractual	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$50,000	\$292,500	\$45,000	—	—	\$417,500
Construction	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	\$0

Other (include subawards, conference, registration fees, and specific participant support costs such as stipends) (Specify Type)	\$4,500	—	—	—	\$5,000	\$10,500	—	\$20,000
Total Direct Costs	\$43,500	\$29,000	\$50,000	\$292,500	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$500,000
TOTAL BUDGET								\$500,000

f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results. The Village will track, measure, and evaluate progress using EPA-approved systems and procedures. Progress will be evaluated based on completion of tasks, achievement of outputs, and advancement toward long-term outcomes. Tracking methods include: a) Quarterly performance reporting to EPA Region 5; b) ACRES database entries documenting sites assessed, and planning activities completed; c) Internal milestone tracking for each task. Expected outputs include site inventories, Phase I and Phase II ESA reports, ABCA documents, and community engagement activities. These outputs will support long-term outcomes such as reduced environmental uncertainty, improved readiness for cleanup funding, and increased redevelopment potential within the target areas.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE. Programmatic Capability. (4.a Organizational Capacity, 4.b Organizational Structure, and 4.c Description of Key Staff)

The Village of East Palestine will be working with the Columbiana County LRC for administrative assistance and have developed a Memorandum of Agreement, which is attached. The CCLRC has Brownfield funding experience through the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) Brownfield Funding, having been the lead governmental agency in managing over \$4,000,000 of brownfield funding over the last 5 years. The Columbiana County LRC has passed all brownfield funding audits required through ODOD funding requirements. While the Village has limited prior experience administering EPA Brownfields grants, it has demonstrated the organizational capacity to manage federally and state-funded projects and to comply with programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements. Both the CCLRC/Village have successfully administered state-administered Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, demonstrating fiscal responsibility, compliance with federal cost principles, procurement requirements, and reporting obligations. This experience required adherence to approved scopes of work, timely reporting, and financial accountability.

Following the February 2023 rail derailment, the Village coordinated extensively with U.S. EPA, Ohio EPA, and FEMA during response and recovery activities. In addition, the Village has worked within a complex recovery framework that includes a \$310 million settlement entered by Norfolk Southern, which provides funding for environmental cleanup, long-term health monitoring, and community recovery activities administered by responsible parties and governmental agencies. The Village's role in this context has included coordination, information-sharing, and alignment of local recovery priorities with state and federal efforts. This experience demonstrates the Village's ability to operate effectively in a multi-agency, high-profile funding environment and to coordinate assessment and planning activities alongside large, externally administered funding sources without duplication of effort.

The Village will utilize a clear organizational structure to ensure the timely and successful expenditure of funds and completion of grant requirements: The Village Administrator and CCLRC Executive Director will provide executive oversight and policy direction. A designated Brownfields Project Manager, Mr. Antonio Diaz Guy, will oversee day-to-day grant administration, coordinate with EPA Region 5, manage ACRES reporting, and oversee contractor performance. The CCLRC's fiscal office will manage financial tracking, payment

processing, and compliance with applicable federal requirements. A Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) will be procured through a competitive process to conduct technical assessment and cleanup planning activities.

The Village will further strengthen its capacity by leveraging partnerships with the CCLRC, Ohio EPA, and academic institutions, which will provide coordination support, data resources, and technical input as appropriate.

4.d Acquiring Additional Resources. The Village will acquire additional expertise and resources, including contractors, through fair and open competitive procurement procedures in compliance with 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, and applicable EPA NOFO clauses. The CCLRC understands the distinction between contractors and subrecipients and will structure agreements accordingly. The CCLRC does not identify specific contractors or subrecipients in this application. All professional services will be procured competitively, and price reasonableness will be considered during contractor selection. Firms involved in preparing procurement documents will be excluded from competing for resulting contracts, consistent with federal procurement standards.

Past Performance and Accomplishments. 4.f Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but Has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements

The Village of East Palestine has not previously received an EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant, Assessment Grant, Revolving Loan Fund Grant, Cleanup (MARC) Grant, or 128(a) Grant. However, the Village has successfully managed other federal and non-federal financial assistance agreements and recovery programs that are relevant in structure and administrative complexity to the proposed project.

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments. The Village and CCLRC have administered Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects, which required compliance with federal eligibility standards, procurement requirements, financial management rules, and reporting schedules. In addition, the Village has: Coordinated with U.S. and Ohio EPA during derailment cleanup and environmental response activities; Collaborated with FEMA on disaster response and recovery coordination. Administered tax incentive programs through the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) to support business retention and economic recovery; Participated in coordination & planning efforts related to the \$310 million Norfolk Southern settlement, ensuring that local recovery priorities are aligned with cleanup, health monitoring, and reinvestment activities administered by responsible parties and governmental agencies. These experiences demonstrate the Village's and CCLRC's ability to manage public funds, coordinate with multiple agencies, and operate effectively alongside large, externally administered funding programs.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements. For CDBG and other assistance agreements, the Village and CCLRC complied with approved workplans, schedules, and terms/conditions, including timely submission of required documentation. When external factors required adjustments, the CCLRC and Village communicated with funding agencies, documented changes, and was compliant with its cooperative agreements.