



**COHEN BARNES
MAYOR**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET:
City of DeKalb, Illinois**

1. Applicant Identification:

City of DeKalb
City Hall
164 East Lincoln Highway
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

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

3. Funding Requested:

- a. Grant Type: Single Site Cleanup
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$2,462,900

4. Location:

- a. City: DeKalb
- b. County: DeKalb County
- c. State: Illinois

5. Property Information:

- Former Protano's Automotive Salvage Site – 1151 and 1205 S. Fourth Street, DeKalb, Illinois 60115

The Site consists of two (2) rectangular-shaped parcels comprising approximately 1.9 acres of land, formerly operated as an automotive salvage yard. Operations were concluded by 2007, and the Site has been vacant since that time. Structures and equipment associated with the historical operations have been removed. The grounds are primarily covered in grass and prairie grass, with mature trees in the central and western portions of the Site and concrete slab foundations from the former structures on the eastern portion of the Site. Parcel index numbers associated with the Site are 08-27-279-027 and 08-27-279-029.

6. Contacts:

a. Project Director: Mr. Andy Raih, Public Works Director
1316 Market Street, DeKalb, Illinois 60115
Phone: 815.748.8111
Email: andy.raih@cityofdekalb.com

b. Chief Executive: Mr. Cohen Barnes, Mayor
164 East Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, Illinois 60115
Phone: 815.758.1886
Email: cohen.barnes@cityofdekalb.com

7. Population: 40,290 (US Census, 2020)

8. Other Factors Checklist:

None of the “Other Factors” apply to the City of DeKalb’s Cleanup Grant.

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory	N/A
The priority brownfield site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land	N/A
Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the project/reuse; secured resource is identified in the Narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures	N/A
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	4
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	N/A

9. Releasing Copies of Applications:

Not Applicable. This application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information included that cannot be shared.

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION:

Target Area and Brownfields

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

As the western anchor to the booming I-88 Corridor, DeKalb, Illinois is only a little more than an hour from both downtown Chicago and O'Hare International Airport. Despite its proximity to the Chicago region, DeKalb remains apart and maintains its own unique character as a thriving community with both urban and rural roots. DeKalb has a history and culture of innovation and captures the spirit of days gone by in a variety of ways while embracing the future. From historic landmarks to new and remodeled facilities, there is much to explore and enjoy in this vibrant northern Illinois destination boasting historical architectural gems, national and local entertainment, as well as abundant shopping, dining and award-winning recreation.

Originally known as the "Barb City", where barbed wire was invented, the City of DeKalb has evolved from a primarily manufacturing and agribusiness town to a community which is recognized for its commitment to economic and environmental sustainability, a variety of cultural and entertainment opportunities, and regional leadership in educational and medical resources. These are the primary reasons why DeKalb has steadily grown to a full-service community of about 43,000. As the home to Northern Illinois University, the DeKalb area offers a unique environment that complements and enhances the lifestyle of DeKalb residents and visitors. Excellent educational partnership offerings between Kishwaukee College, NIU, and DeKalb High School provide a full range of career paths.

While DeKalb has evolved from a manufacturing and agribusiness town, they also have to deal with challenges from their early economy, like brownfields. DeKalb, like many rural communities, used to be a hub for manufacturing. DeKalb grew from a 19th-century agricultural hub into a major manufacturing center known as "Barb City" due to Joseph Glidden's 1874 patent for barbed wire. The town's industrial base was defined by massive wire production, agricultural implements, and, in the 20th century, hybrid seed corn, with a legacy spanning from steel manufacturing to advanced manufacturing and logistics. But since the turn of the century, DeKalb, like the rest of Illinois, has seen a massive reduction in the number of people manufacturers employ. An example is AGCO. AGCO announced in 2003 that it would be closing its DeKalb plant in May of that year, and would be transferring the production of the Challenger tractors to another facility. The plant employed 186. The losses aren't just in the past either. In late 2025, DeKalb experienced significant manufacturing losses, most notably the closure of the Panduit Corporation warehouse, which resulted in 185 job losses as operations relocated to Indiana. This move followed a trend of regional manufacturing decline, with industrial jobs in DeKalb County decreasing by 13.3% in recent years. The departure of Panduit represented a potential \$18.5 million loss in annual payroll for Illinois. When manufacturing and jobs leave the area, brownfields are left behind for the community to contend with.

The Target Area of this proposal is known as the South Fourth Street District, and the area includes a mix of residential properties, including single-family and multi-family dwellings, commercial properties, and some public and light industrial land uses. The Target Area contains approximately 205 acres and 213 parcels of real property. The Target Area is situated south of downtown DeKalb, and is generally bounded by E Taylor Street to the north, Interstate 88 (I-88) to the south, and from South 2nd Street in the west to South 5th Street in the east. The area is mostly built-out, and there are very few vacant lots, which is why brownfield redevelopment funding is so vital to the City. Many of the buildings and public infrastructure located within the Target Area are aging, and the area suffers from the presence of deteriorated buildings, site improvements, and infrastructure.

On April 9th and 10th of 2024, the City worked with their TIF consultants to conduct field investigations to document existing conditions of the properties located in the Target Area. Parcels, buildings, and roadways were examined for deterioration, dilapidation, vacancy, approximate building age, current land use, etc. The Target Area contains 292 buildings, of which 276 (94.5%) were determined by field surveys to be 35 years of age or older. Deteriorating conditions were recorded on 104 out of 199 (52.3%) improved parcels. The field survey of exterior building

conditions found defects in the secondary structural components, including windows, doors, gutters, downspouts, walls, etc. Additionally, deteriorated site improvements such as sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots were distributed throughout the Target Area.

b. Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site: The Site consists of two (2) rectangular-shaped parcels comprising approximately 1.9 acres of land, formerly operated as an automotive salvage yard. Operations were concluded by 2007, and the Site has been vacant since that time. Structures and equipment associated with the historical operations have been removed. The grounds are primarily covered in grass, with mature trees in the central and western portions of the Site and concrete slab foundations from the former structures on the eastern portion of the Site. Parcel index numbers associated with the Site are 08-27-279-027 and 08-27-279-029.

An initial Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed at the Site in 2003, identifying recognized environmental conditions (RECs) associated with automotive salvage operations at the Site. The Illinois EPA completed a Brownfields Redevelopment Assessment in 2004 and found contaminants of concern (COC) in the shallow fill material throughout the surface of the Site. Additional Site investigations were completed in 2013 and 2025 for further characterization. The subsurface investigations completed in 2004, 2013, and 2025 identified elevated concentrations of several COCs in shallow soil above Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) Tiered Approach to Corrective Action Objectives (TACO) Tier 1 remediation objectives, including select metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and pesticides. Furthermore, limited sample locations contained concentrations of lead exceeding the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) toxicity characteristic for hazardous waste and mercury exceeding the TACO soil saturation limit.

Based on the findings of the environmental investigations, contamination in shallow soil directly impacts the Site and future redevelopments. As a result, soil contamination remediation action is proposed to protect human health and the environment and further provide a site ready for redevelopment.

Revitalization of the Target Area

c. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The City of DeKalb intends to pursue the overall redevelopment of the proposed cleanup site in the near future as part of a larger initiative to revitalize the South Fourth Street corridor, which was established as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in 2024. The site redevelopment will be the catalyst for the remainder of the corridor's redevelopment.

The City of DeKalb will be following their Fourth Street Corridor Master Plan with this cleanup grant funding. H+B, an Architectural firm, worked with the City to provide a master plan for the sustainable redevelopment of the Fourth Street corridor south of downtown DeKalb, known in this application as the Target Area. The Target Area suffers from deteriorating businesses, a random mix of businesses and residences, vacated contaminated brownfield site (the proposed cleanup grant site) automobile salvage yard and numerous conflicts between automobile traffic and school students. There are two elementary schools and a middle school all located along this corridor. The master plan provided by the H+B team was aimed at providing significant improvements in economic, social, and environmental conditions, including the redevelopment of the proposed cleanup site. The Master Plan included developing safe routes to schools, innovative stormwater practices, and traffic calming strategies; including narrowing the highway, reducing the number of driving lanes, providing safe crossings, adding a bicycle lane, and separating sidewalks from the street edge. The redevelopment of the Former Protano's Auto Parts site follows the overall corridor Master Plan and Revitalization Plans of the City for the Target Area.

d. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

The most recent (2023) total equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for the properties in the Target Area is estimated to be \$12,411,930. It is anticipated that the private redevelopment investment in

the Target Area will cause the equalized assessed valuation of said Area to increase to approximately \$22,463,811. This projected value is based on a gradual increase in EAV over time as needed improvements are completed and property value growth approaches that of the rest of the City. The project will also eliminate long-term blight on the site and encourage new businesses to be developed in the corridor target area. The conditions of the cleanup site were considered noxious, offensive, and unsuitable for the surrounding area prior to vacancy. Although the cleanup site represents a small portion of the Target Area, it was considered blighted before it became vacant and represented a material impediment to the redevelopment of surrounding properties. This grant funding will eliminate this impediment to redevelopment.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

e. Resources Needed for Site Characterization

The City believes that all site characterization and assessment needed has been completed on the site to date. If the proposed cleanup site needs additional assessment work once cleanup activities are ready to commence, DeKalb will use redevelopment funding and work with its community partners to utilize additional funds to complete any additional assessment work needed for a complete site characterization. The City of DeKalb has demonstrated tremendous commitment and capacity to leverage funding from multiple private and public (Federal, State and local) sources to advance redevelopment projects in the Target Area. If additional funds are needed for site characterization, the City will make it happen.

f. Resources Needed for Site Remediation

The estimated cost of site remediation for the Former Protano's site is \$2,462,900, and the City believes that this cost is sufficient to complete the cleanup plans identified in the site's draft ABCA report. The City has determined that it is appropriate to create a program to provide financial incentives for private investment within the Target Area, including the Former Protano's Auto Parts site. It has been determined, through private and public project implementation experience, that tax increment financing constitutes one of the most effective means available for enabling development in the Target Area. The City will incorporate appropriate provisions within any redevelopment agreement entered into between the City and private parties ensuring redevelopment projects make progress towards achieving the objectives stated herein. These agreements will be utilized at the proposed cleanup site as well.

g. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

The sources of funds to pay for redevelopment project costs associated with cleaning up this site will come from the increment generated by increasing property values due to new construction and renovated structures. If available, revenues from other economic development funding sources, public or private, may be utilized. These may include State and Federal programs, local retail sales tax, revenues from any adjoining tax increment redevelopment project areas, and land disposition proceeds from the sale of land in the Area, as well as other revenues. The final decision concerning redistribution of yearly tax increment revenues may be made as part of a bond ordinance. The City may consider the use of tax increment financing, as well as other economic development resources as available, to facilitate private investment within the Target Area. It is the intent of the City to induce the investment of significant private capital in the Target Area, which will serve to redevelop aging properties and infrastructure that will likely enhance the tax base of the community.

h. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The Former Protano's Auto Parts site is located in an area already served with existing infrastructure – rather than greenfield development at the edge of the community which would necessitate extension of physical infrastructure and City services beyond existing boundaries. DeKalb's existing infrastructure preference is for infill development and adapting existing building structures on-site for redevelopment, however, this site is already vacant. The City will still encourage the reuse of existing parking lots/facilities, site access roads, local roads, sidewalks, curb and gutters, water, sewer, gas, and electricity infrastructure for this site development. New

infrastructure may be required for broadband capabilities or any energy efficiency installations like solar power, as they do not currently exist at the site. If broadband or renewable energy components are needed, the City will work with the developer to assist in the financing of these infrastructure needs. The cleanup site is already connected to the state highways that lead to Interstate travel, and is positioned on the City's Transit Route. Before any reuse construction begins on the remediated site, the City will work with the contractor to ensure they adhere to any ordinances or regulations for the site based on the environmental work completed with this funding. In addition, the City will identify any construction issues on the site to ensure that the DeKalb remains resilient to any extreme weather or natural disaster events in the target area, such as flooding or tornadoes. If additional climate resiliency efforts can be implemented during construction, DeKalb will ensure the end-use contractor includes those elements. DeKalb will utilize their local Hazard Mitigation funding for this review and make appropriate recommendations.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

a. The Community's Need for Funding

DeKalb is a medium-sized, rural community with limited financial resources to draw on to deal with brownfield challenges located in the community. DeKalb has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to contribute local funds to redevelopment, brownfields assessment and other revitalization efforts; however, the volume of redevelopment and brownfield work needed in the City, and specifically at the cleanup site, makes it necessary to seek assistance through the US EPA brownfields program. As a smaller city with a high poverty, income tax revenues city-wide and especially in the Target Area are insufficient to meet the demands of the growing city, let alone pay for brownfields cleanup. DeKalb is reliant on grants and loans for critical revitalization and infrastructure projects. Without EPA grant funding to remediate the site, the costs to cleanup the Former Protano's site are beyond the means of the City and inhibit private investment in the Target Area.

DeKalb's median household income (\$46,564) is only 56% of median household income of the State of Illinois (\$83,211), and DeKalb's Poverty Rate is 25.7% city-wide, compared to 11.6% for the State of Illinois. These economic factors impact the City's tax base and inability to generate revenue, causing increasing pressures on the corporate fund. Despite budget pressures, the City must continue to provide for public safety, infrastructure and the basic elements of municipal services in addition to development work, making obtaining US EPA brownfields cleanup grant funding even more essential. The Former Protano's Auto Parts site's surrounding neighborhoods are among the most severely impoverished in DeKalb. This project's Target Area is comprised of Census Tract Block Groups that have some of the lowest income populations in the City.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

In the Target Area, the income differential compared to the City as a whole and the State is higher than normal –with a median household income of less than \$40,000 and low-to-moderate-income rates reach that reach over 80% in the Target Area's Census Tract Block Groups. The Target Area is located in an area of DeKalb with some of the highest levels of poverty (up to 30% overall, and up to 35% for women in poverty); high minority populations with 18.2% who don't speak English as their first language; and adults with lower levels of educational attainment. Some of DeKalb's most vulnerable populations live within this area that is highly concentrated with brownfields. The conditions of the cleanup site property were considered noxious, offensive, and unsuitable for the surrounding area prior to vacancy. The cleanup site adjoins an elderly care facility called Pine Acres, and is situated between Lincoln Elementary and Huntley Middle School. The cleanup site is located on a walking route frequented by school aged children. Mitigating the exposure threats to these populations is vital to the City. By addressing the environmental contaminant issues in the Target Area and at the cleanup site with these grant funds, any threat of exposure by nearby sensitive populations to contaminants via direct contact, inhalation, vapor intrusion or ingestion will be eliminated. The remediated site will benefit these low-income populations by creating a space for new jobs and economic vitality to return to the area, and a reduced need for this population to travel out of the Target Area for work.

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

A review of the Census information and Health Department data shows a number of cumulative environmental issues present in the target area that illustrate a greater than normal incidence of disease and adverse health conditions. Per the data, the target area has the following health conditions and percentiles: Asthma – 80-90th percentile, Heart Disease – 80-90th, and Persons with a Disability in the 80-90th percentile. In addition, the Health Department has noted two more recent trends for the City that can be impacted by the proposed cleanup project: 15.4% of DeKalb County residents live at or below the poverty level, compared to 11.8% of Illinois residents; and the number of opioid-related deaths in DeKalb County rose from 9.60 per 100,000 in 2018 to 14.96 per 100,000 population in 2024. Remediating the site and returning it to a more productive end use that will benefit the area’s residents by spurring redevelopment in the Target Area corridor, which will create jobs and offer community health support, the two trends mentioned previously will be addressed by the City, and the threat of these issues will be eliminated. The EPA Cleanup grant funds will permanently remove the contamination threats on site that may be contributing to the health conditions of those in the Target Area.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

As mentioned previously, the target area is located in an area of the City with some of the highest levels of poverty (up to 30% overall, and up to 35% for women in poverty); people who do not speak English well or as a second language; high minority populations; and adults with lower levels of educational attainment. The unemployment rate in the target area can reach 43% in certain sections. Some of DeKalb’s most vulnerable populations live within this area that is highly concentrated with brownfields. By addressing the environmental contaminant issues in the Target Area with these grant funds, any threat of exposure by nearby sensitive populations to contaminants via direct contact, inhalation, vapor intrusion or ingestion will be eliminated. Removing the environmental issues will allow for redevelopment and job creation, alleviating some of the pressure on the City’s most impoverished populations.

Community Engagement

e. Project Involvement and f. Project Roles

Project Partner Name	Point of Contact	Specific Role in the Project
DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC)	Name: Melissa Amedeo Phone: 815.895.2711 Email: amedeo@dcedc.org	Through a strategic partnership with the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC), the City of DeKalb has successfully transformed its southeast corridor into a premier industrial hub. This collaborative effort has been instrumental in securing large-scale investments from global industry leaders, including Meta, Ferrara Candy Company, Kraft Heinz, and Amazon.
DeKalb County Health Department	Name: Lisa Gonzalez Phone: 815.758.6673 Email: lgonzalez@dekalbcounty.org	Provide the City with Health Information regarding the site and surrounding area, and will be a community health partner for residents and neighborhoods directly impacted by the cleanup.
Citizens’ Community Enhancement Commission (CCEC)	Name: Scott Zak Phone: 815.748.2396 Email: scott.zak@cityofdekalb.com	DeKalb actively engages the Citizens’ Community Enhancement Commission (CCEC) to ensure local development aligns with the community's vision for aesthetic and functional improvements. A primary focus of this collaboration is the long-term revitalization of the South 4th Street Corridor, which remains a top priority for infrastructure enhancements and beautification efforts in the years ahead.

g. Incorporating Community Input: The City of DeKalb believes that it’s important to involve the community in a meaningful way in brownfield projects. The most recent engagement activities

include public presentations/meetings, updating the community on the status of their brownfields program and the work that will be completed with this potential grant. Moving forward, the City of DeKalb will work with their Community Partners to continue communication with the targeted community, including neighborhood organizations, citizens groups, property owners, lenders, business organizations and developers in the development and implementation of the brownfields program. Any concerned citizens or business owners will have the opportunity to express their concerns, identify their needs, and participate in the brownfields project as stakeholders. Since this proposal is site specific to the Former Protano's Auto Parts site, DeKalb's outreach efforts also will have an extra emphasis on reaching members of the Target Area most directly affected by the site.

DeKalb is committed to using diverse notification methods to ensure that our efforts reach a broad audience. The City also is committed to ensuring that our outreach efforts describe project activities and progress in ways that are easily understood by residents who will most likely be unfamiliar with environmental and scientific terminology. In addition, translation services will be provided to those in our community who do not speak English – as noted previously, 18.2% of the population speaks Spanish. There will be 3 Community Meetings and 3 Fact Sheets throughout the project period. DeKalb will ensure that directly affected residents and neighborhoods are well informed and have an opportunity to have questions and concerns addressed as remediation activities take place, and have input into reuse planning for sites in their neighborhoods. DeKalb will seek out the expertise of the DeKalb County Health Department and Northern Illinois University to assist at community meetings to ensure that public health and welfare issues are adequately addressed. The City will also solicit community input using tools such as question and answer sessions during public meetings and will publicize the cleanup plan, community relations plan, and project contact information to invite community input. DeKalb will consider the input and plan adjustments and/or responses will be posted to the city website and social media pages as “FAQ” documents along with the Fact Sheets. Community input will be summarized in the quarterly reports to EPA during the grant term.

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

a. Proposed Cleanup Plan

The proposed tasks are based, in part, on the Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) prepared for activities associated with the cleanup of the former Protano's site located at 1151 and 1205 South Fourth Street in DeKalb, IL. The tasks and activities described below are eligible uses of funds and are specifically designed to be effectively completed within the four-year period of performance. The proposed cleanup plan is as follows:

The proposed Cleanup Plan for the former Protano's site is to conduct in situ stabilization for lead impacts exceeding the RCRA toxicity characteristic level through mechanical blending of soil with a chemical stabilization reagent. The environmental contractor will collect samples to verify the treated soil no longer exceeds RCRA hazardous waste criteria, excavate the treated soil and fill materials throughout the entire Site down to the native clay, approximately two (2) feet, and transport excavated fill materials off-Site for non-hazardous waste disposal at a permitted landfill facility. An estimated 2,300 cubic yards will then be treated by in situ stabilization and 6,800 cubic yards of soil will be excavated for off-site disposal. Confirmation samples at the excavation floor will be collected to verify chemical impacts have been removed. Clean backfill with seeded topsoil will be placed to surface grade for site restoration.

b. Project Implementation

Task 1: Program Management
b. Project Implementation: This task includes oversight of the City of DeKalb's Cooperative Agreement with US EPA for this project, ensuring compliance with the Agreement, Work Plan, Schedule, and EPA's regulations. This task also includes preparation/submittal of Quarterly and Annual Reports, entering information in the Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) database for the

project, procurement of a Qualified Environmental Professional to lead the project, management of the federal grant funds for the project, DeKalb staff attendance at a US EPA Brownfields Conference, and final closeout.
c. Anticipated Schedule: This task will start immediately upon project award and will be ongoing continuously throughout the entire four-year project period. The QEP will be procured in the first quarter of the grant period.
d. Task/Activity Lead: This task will be led by DeKalb’s Director of Public Works, assisted by the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP)
e. Outputs: Executed Cooperative Agreement, Contract with Qualified Environmental Professional, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 Annual Reports, Quarterly Updates to ACRES, attendance of City of DeKalb Staff at a National Brownfields Conference, and final closeout documentation to US EPA

Task 2: Community Involvement
b. Project Implementation: This task includes cooperation between DeKalb staff, QEP, and Project Partners to implement the community involvement and community relations plan to inform residents, property owners, and the public about the status of the project. This task also includes website updates and printed public information materials as needed. Public comments, questions, and concerns will be addressed under this task.
c. Anticipated Schedule: This task will commence immediately upon project award and will continue throughout the entire four-year project period.
d. Task/Activity Lead: This task will be led by the City of DeKalb with assistance from the selected Qualified Environmental Professional and Project Partners.
e. Outputs: Community Relations Plan, 3 Public Meetings and Meeting Minutes, 3 Website Updates, 3 Fact Sheets

Task 3: Cleanup Planning
b. Project Implementation: Prior to site cleanup work, the Qualified Environmental Professional will prepare a site-specific work plan including the Health & Safety Plan, Quality Assurance Project Plan, finalize the ABCA, and coordinate with the City of DeKalb and development professionals to finalize the Cleanup Plan, including in situ hazardous soil stabilization, remedial excavation of materials to 2 feet below ground surface, and installation of clean backfill materials with seeded topsoil. DeKalb, with assistance from a QEP, will secure all necessary permits and prepare bid documents to select a competitive, qualification-based Cleanup Contractor in compliance with federal, state, and local procurement requirements.
c. Anticipated Schedule: This task will commence after the City of DeKalb selects a Qualified Environmental Professional, approximately 90 days after award.
d. Task/Activity Lead: This task will be led by the City of DeKalb, assisted by the Qualified Environmental Professional.
e. Outputs: Health & Safety Plan, Quality Assurance Project Plan, finalize the ABCA Decision Document, Plans & Specs, Permits, and selection of Cleanup Contractor to perform site preparation and remediation activities at the project site, and contract documents for the QEP

Task 4: Cleanup Activities
b. Project Implementation: This task includes the cleanup work, including in situ hazardous soil stabilization, remedial excavation of soils contaminated with BTEX, PNAs, PCBs, Metals, and Dieldrin, and clean backfill/site restoration.
c. Anticipated Schedule: This task will commence in the Spring of 2027 and conclude in the fall/winter of 2027/2028.
d. Task/Activity Lead: This task will be led by the Qualified Environmental Professional and completed by the selected Cleanup Contractor.
e. Outputs: Pre-Construction Meeting/Minutes, site preparation, temporary site fencing, confirmation sampling, laboratory reports, a final cleanup report.

f. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories		Project Tasks				TOTAL
		Task 1: Program Management	Task 2: Community Involvement	Task 3: Cleanup Planning	Task 4: Cleanup Activities	
Direct Costs	Personnel	--	--	--	--	--
	Fringe Benefits	--	--	--	--	--
	Travel	\$2,500	--	--	--	\$2,500
	Equipment	--	--	--	--	--
	Supplies	--	--	--	--	--
	Construction	--	--	--	\$2,170,244	\$2,170,244
	Contractual	\$13,230	\$10,416	\$27,150	\$239,360	\$290,156
	Other	--	--	--	--	--
Total Direct Costs		\$15,730	\$10,416	\$27,150	\$2,409,604	\$2,462,900
Total Federal Funding		\$15,730	\$10,416	\$27,150	\$2,409,604	\$2,462,900
Total Budget		\$15,730	\$10,416	\$27,150	\$2,409,604	\$2,462,900
<p>Task 1: This budget includes 70 hours of QEP time at \$189/hour, for program management activities over the duration of the grant. The remaining \$2,500 is for two (2) City of DeKalb Staff to attend the National Brownfield Conference (Airfare at \$500 each (\$1,000), Lodging at \$170 per day for 3 days each (\$1,020), Meals \$80 per person for 3 days each (\$480).</p> <p>Task 2: This budget includes QEP time to help the City of DeKalb staff in the development of Fact Sheets, Website updates, and conducting Public Meetings. Contractual work is for support of community meetings and public engagement (62 hours of Qualified Environmental Professional at \$168/hour rate x 62 hours = \$10,416).</p> <p>Task 3: The Cleanup Planning Budget will be for the development of the HASP, QAPP, finalization of the ABCA, Plans & Specs and permitting for the project, and assistance with bidding. City of DeKalb staff will be assisted by the QEP during the bidding process with 150 hours budgeted at \$181/hour of QEP consultant time.</p> <p>Task 4: The \$2,170,092 Construction Budget will be for mobilization/demobilization, fencing, site preparation at \$184,475, in situ stabilization of 2,400 cubic yards of hazardous lead soil at \$145/cubic yard, excavation, transportation and disposal of 6,800 cubic yards of contaminated soils at \$153/cubic yard, and clean backfill with seeded topsoil at \$24/cubic yard. The Contractual QEP budget includes 604 hours at \$186/hr for documentation, post remediation confirmation sampling and analysis, final reporting to Illinois EPA, and project management during remedial activities. Total Contractual costs under this task will be \$239,650. The amount of time for the remediation is subject to the procured cleanup contractor availability but is expected to be completed within 3 years of grant award.</p>						

g. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

To ensure that the City of DeKalb achieves the intended results of the Cleanup Grant and completes the outputs of each task listed above, the City will carefully track, measure, and report project performance through annual reports, quarterly reports, ACRES reporting, and with the implementation of their Community Involvement Plan. Quarterly and Annual Reports will cover project progress, any difficulties encountered, a record of financial expenditures, data results, and anticipated further actions. Specific accomplishments, contaminants found, which materials were impacted, and resources required to leverage and complete the planned reuse will all be reported on, and will be posted to the City of DeKalb’s website to keep their community involved on the status of the project. This site will be entered into the ACRES database, which will also be utilized to track job creation and acres of land assessed as part of this grant project. Anticipated quantifiable outcomes from this project include the number of acres of land remediated, while other outcomes include liability protection for the site owner, removal of blight, reduction or elimination of future contaminant exposure, improving community health, and the return of the site to a productive mixed use. Periodic meetings with the QEP and the Cleanup Contractor will take place to ensure deadlines and milestones are being met - corrective actions like liquidated damages will go into effect if the project deadlines and milestones are not being met.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE:

Programmatic Capability

a. Organizational Structure; and b. Description of Key Staff:

The City of DeKalb's proposed cleanup project will be led by Andy Raih, Public Works Director, and a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). The goal of this grant is to support the remediation and redevelopment/reuse of brownfield sites in DeKalb, starting with the former Protano's Auto Parts site. Raih has successfully led DeKalb's Department of Public Works for over a year. The Public Works Department has 52 employees and an Annual Budget of over \$12M. While Raih has only been the Public Works Director for just over a year, he has been with the City of DeKalb since 2001, serving as Street Superintendent, Director of Streets & Facilities, and Director of Streets, Facilities, & Airport. Raih and pertinent City staff will serve on the Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Committee.

The City of DeKalb has extensive experience facilitating and managing redevelopment projects and will utilize that experience to support the most efficient and strategic use of these cleanup grant funds. Upon award of the cooperative agreement, City staff will prepare a draft Work Plan. After the US EPA approves the work plan, the City will retain the QEP in compliance with all applicable federal and local procurement requirements. Andy Raih and the selected QEP will be responsible for day-to-day grant operations including: project tracking, reporting, procurement of contractual services, and managing/tracking all financial transactions. The QEP will assist with grant and program management and will complete remediation plans, assist with hiring of a contractor to complete the remediation work, and participate in program development, project reporting, and community engagement activities. The City will work with Illinois EPA's Voluntary Site Remediation Program to provide independent oversight of remediation activities conducted under this program, to ensure all cleanup activities are conducted appropriately and with consideration for public health and welfare.

Andy Raih, the City's Public Works Director and Project Manager, will lead the City's programmatic and administrative efforts. Raih is now serving in his 25th year with the City of DeKalb and manages a division charged with administering and implementing the work of the City's utilities, transportation, aviation, and engineering departments. The goal of Raih's Public Works Department is to provide the residents of DeKalb with the best water, storm sewer, City right of ways, aviation, engineering and transportation services in an affordable and reasonable way. As the Public Works Director, Raih is part of an executive team that manages the day-to-day operations for a municipal government of more than 40,000 residents with an annual budget of over \$63.3M. The City will follow EPA's procurement policies to hire a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to effectively and efficiently manage the City's cleanup grant project.

c. Acquiring Additional Resources

The City of DeKalb will identify, coordinate and leverage any public and private resources needed to complete the described cleanup grant tasks. DeKalb does not foresee any issues with obtaining a Qualified Environmental Professional for this grant project. DeKalb will identify, coordinate and leverage any public and private resources needed to complete the described grant tasks. DeKalb will follow EPA's procurement policies to hire a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to effectively and efficiently assist the City in managing the Assessment grant project. The QEP will assist DeKalb in preparing bid documents needed to select a contractor to conduct the cleanup work, and manage the remediation project as it commences. All procurement will follow federal procurement regulations and any other additional requirements needed for procurement under an EPA Cooperative Agreement. The City of DeKalb, as a unit of local government, has the ability to procure services/contractors that meet the Federal procurement requirements. The cleanup grant's Project Partners will assist in providing supplies and outreach efforts for community outreach activities, and the City will provide in-kind time for any mapping, GIS, or planning efforts, as the information will be an asset to the City as well. The City will also work with the Public Works Department and their Project Partners to develop a management plan for taking over the grant project if any person serving the major roles were to leave the project.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

e. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal and Non-Federal Financial Assistance Agreements:

While DeKalb has not received US EPA Brownfields funding before, they have received other federal funding for large, impactful projects, including the following:

1) Purpose and Accomplishments:

- The City of DeKalb, IL is the designated recipient of FTA 5307 Apportionment funding for the DeKalb Urbanized Area (UZA) public transit system. In this capacity, the City has successfully managed \$14,985,725.00 in awarded funding in the last 10 years with an additional \$8,832,586.00 in awarded but unobligated funding available. Projects funded with 5307 funds include annual Operating Assistance, Rolling Stock purchases, Bus Shelter and Route Signage improvements, Route Planning Software purchases, and New Transit Facility Architecture and Engineering Design costs.
- The City is the designated recipient of Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP) Grant funding from the State of Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) which has averaged approximately \$6 million annually over the past 10 years and received an increase in funding to \$8.2 million beginning in 2026. This funding helps cover operating assistance for local transit operations and afforded City of DeKalb transit the resources to provide 1,088,518 passenger trips in 2025 (an increase of 8.58% over 2024).
- The City is currently administering \$17 million in grant funding through the State of Illinois Rebuild project for the New Transit Facility Architecture and Engineering Design and Construction costs. The transit facility project is at the 100% design development stage, is nearing completion of the federal NEPA process, and is awaiting IDOT pre-bid concurrence to move into the construction phase.
- The City has obtained \$4,200,000 in IDOT grant funding for the purchase of 6 Rolling Stock vehicles with expected delivery of vehicles in Spring 2026.
- The City has been awarded IDOT grant funding totaling \$768,000 for the upgrade of Fixed Route and Paratransit Route Scheduling Software. This software upgrade will improve efficiency in vehicle location and rider communications throughout the service area. Vendors have been chosen and we are currently going through the IDOT pre-award concurrence process.
- The City has obtained \$400,000 in IDOT technical assistance grant funding to support the next phase of planning for a potential passenger rail corridor between DeKalb and the Elburn Metra station. Vendors have been chosen and we are currently going through the IDOT pre-award concurrence process.
- The City of DeKalb manages and administers HUD CDBG funding for the City. A Five-Year Consolidated Plan is developed by the City to set goals and priorities for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reviews and approves all plans. If significant changes to the plan are necessary, an amendment is also submitted and approved. Prior to the beginning of each grant year, the City develops a CDBG Annual Action Plan, which HUD reviews and approves. After the end of each program year, the City submits to HUD a Comprehensive Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER), providing data on the previous year's program activities and distributions.

2) Compliance with Grant Requirements:

DeKalb's grant-funded projects described above have finished on time, within budget, expended all grant funds, and in a way that fulfilled the planned outputs/outcomes of their projects while adhering to the Grant/Financial Agreements. To ensure compliance with Federal regulations, the most recent Federal Triennial Review was completed in 2024. The City has a strong administrative staff with a history of managing a mix of state and federal grant programs who provide any and all necessary support in administration of grants.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA:

1. Applicant Eligibility:

The City of DeKalb, Illinois is an incorporated municipality in the State of Illinois and has the authority to enter into a cooperative agreement for a Cleanup Grant with the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

2. Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants:

The proposed cleanup site has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

3. Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds:

Not Applicable. The City of DeKalb has not been a recipient of a Multipurpose Grant.

4. Site Ownership:

The City of DeKalb is the sole owner of the proposed cleanup grant site, acquired by the City on April 24, 2015.

5. Basic Site Information:

- (a) Site name: Former Protano's Auto Parts
- (b) Address: 1151 and 1205 South 4th Street DeKalb, Illinois 60115 (2 parcels)
- (c) Current Owner: City of DeKalb, Illinois

6. Status & History of Contamination at the Site:

(a) Contamination: Hazardous Substance. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) including benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene, and xylenes (total); Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (SVOCs) including benzo(a)anthracene, benzo(a)pyrene, benzo(b)fluoranthene, benzo(k)fluoranthene, carbazole, dibenzo(a,h)anthracene, and indeno(1,2,3-c,d)pyrene; Metals including antimony, arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel, and zinc; Pesticides including dieldrin; and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) including Total PCBs have been identified in soil and groundwater above the Illinois EPA Tiered Approach to Corrective Action Objectives (TACO) Tier 1 remediation objectives. In addition, lead concentrations in select locations at the site exceed the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) toxicity characteristic for hazardous waste.

(b) Operational History & Current Use of Site: The Site was historically operated as an automobile salvage yard since approximately 1944. According to historical and environmental records, the Site salvage yard operations included crushing, stacking, and burning vehicles as well as storage of fluids associated with vehicles. Operations at the site were discontinued in 2007. The City acquired the Site on April 24, 2015. The Site buildings were demolished in 2016, and the Site has been vacant since.

(c) Environmental Concerns: Former salvage yard operations left behind contamination in the soil. Contamination, identified above state remediation objectives, directly impacts the Site and any future redevelopment. As a result, soil remediation will be necessary to

protect human health and the environment. Remediation will prepare the site for proposed redevelopment into residential and/or commercial land use.

d) Source of Contamination and Nature and Extent of Contamination:

Based on environmental assessment work, VOC, SVOC, Metal, Pesticide, and PCB contamination in shallow soils are associated with former salvage yard operations. The shallow soil contamination is encountered in fill material across the site but does not extend to the underlying native clay. Contamination was not identified in groundwater except low level lead in one (1) well, which is suspected to be the result of sediment in the undeveloped well.

7. Brownfields Site Definition: The former Protano's Auto Parts site meets the definition of a brownfield. This site is (a) Not listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List; (b) Not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA; (c) Not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. Government.

8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Applications:

A Phase I ESA was completed by the City of DeKalb on June 11, 2003, to evaluate the presence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) related to the Site and surrounding properties. The Phase I ESA identified RECs related to salvage yard operations and a historical UST. Illinois EPA Office of Site Evaluation (OSE) completed a soil and groundwater investigation at the Site, dated September 8, 2004. OSE found metals, benzene, SVOCs, and PCBs above Tier 1 Remediation Objectives as well as lead above Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) toxicity characteristic threshold. A Phase II ESA was completed by the City of DeKalb on September 23, 2013, to confirm data from OSE investigation at the Site. An additional Phase I ESA was completed by the City of DeKalb on February 13, 2015 prior to Site acquisition. The City of DeKalb initiated a comprehensive Site investigation (CSI) in 2025 to further characterize the Site in preparation for cleanup. Additional assessment is not anticipated; however, if further assessment is necessary, there will be a sufficient level of characterization from environmental site assessment performed by June 15, 2026.

9. Site Characterization:

Per Illinois EPA's Acknowledgment Letter on January 21, 2026, which is included in this application submittal, the Illinois EPA states: *"The grant will be a Cleanup Grant for Hazardous Substances and will be used on a site located at 1151 South 4th Street, DeKalb IL, 60115. The site is currently enrolled in the State of Illinois Site Remediation Program. Based on the current information, there has been a Comprehensive Site Investigation Report, Remedial Objectives Report, and Remedial Action Report submitted. Illinois EPA replied with comments and additional assessment is needed to sufficiently characterize the site for the remediation work to begin. A reply is expected from the City of DeKalb by the end of January 2026."* Should additional site

investigation be deemed necessary by the Illinois EPA for site characterization, the City of DeKalb will perform the required site assessment prior to June 15, 2026.

10. Enforcement or Other Actions: The City has owned the site since April 24, 2015. No known enforcement or other actions have been identified.

11. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination:

The Former Protano's Auto Parts does not require a property-specific determination based on review Section 1.5 in the Information on Sites Eligible for Brownfields Funding under CERCLA 104(k) of the FY26 Guidelines for Brownfield Cleanup Grants.

12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA:

a.) Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substances Sites

(iii) (1) Landowner Protections from CERCLA Liability: The site parcels meet the requirements for asserting an affirmative defense to CERCLA liability through bona fide prospective purchaser (BFPP) liability protection per CERCLA §101(40) as demonstrated through the following subsections.

- **Information on the Property Acquisition:** The City acquired the parcels through Tax Deed (\$1,300.00) on April 24, 2015. The City of DeKalb is the sole owner of the parcels, acquired from Guido Protano. The City of DeKalb holds no familial, contractual, corporate, or financial relationships or affiliations with any prior owners or operators (or other potentially responsible parties) of the property.
- **Pre-Purchase Inquiry:** The City of DeKalb completed a Phase I ESA in accordance with ASTM E1527-13, satisfying All Appropriate Inquiry, on February 13, 2015. The Phase I ESA dated February 13, 2015, was conducted by True North Consultants, Inc.
- **Timing and/or Contribution Toward Hazardous Substance Disposal:** All disposal of hazardous substances at the site occurred prior to the City of DeKalb acquiring the property. The City of DeKalb has not contributed or arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.
- **Post-Acquisition Uses:** The City of DeKalb has not conducted operations on the site, nor has the City of DeKalb allowed operations by others on the site, since acquisition of the parcel (acquisition date provided above).
- **Continuing Obligations:** Concrete slab foundation have intentionally been left in place at the Site to provide barriers over contaminated soils. Since site acquisition, the City of DeKalb Police Department and City Officials have monitored the site for trespassing, dumping, and littering. The City of DeKalb has enrolled the site into the Illinois EPA Site

Remediation Program to evaluate contaminant exposure routes in preparation for site remediation.

The City of DeKalb is committed to complying with the following future obligations:

- Compliance with any land use restrictions and does not impede the effectiveness or integrity of any institutional controls;
- Assist and cooperate with those performing the cleanup and provide access to the property;
- Compliance with all information requests and administrative subpoenas that have or may be issued in connection with the property, and
- Providing all legally required notices.

13. Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure:

a. Describe how you will oversee the site:

The City of DeKalb enrolled the site into the Illinois EPA voluntary Site Remediation Program (SRP) on September 22, 2025 with the intention of obtaining a No Further Remediation (NFR) letter relating to the identified subsurface impacts. Accordingly, the numerical cleanup objectives for subsurface contamination are the TACO remediation objectives for residential, industrial/commercial, and construction worker receptors.

b. Provide your plan to acquire access to relevant adjacent or neighboring properties if necessary: Access to adjacent properties is not anticipated. If it is determined that access to adjacent properties is necessary, the City of DeKalb will coordinate access agreements with the relevant property owners.

14. Community Notification:

a. Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives

A Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) was prepared for the project site. The City made it available to the public for review and comment on January 12, 2026. The Draft ABCA and DRAFT Cleanup Grant Application were available for review at City Hall and on the City's website: <https://www.cityofDeKalb.com/>. The DRAFT ABCA is included in this grant submittal.

b. Community Notification Ad

The City of DeKalb published a community notification advertisement in the local newspaper through the Daily Chronicle on December 30, 2025. This ad indicated the following:

- that a copy of the City's grant application, including the Draft ABCA, is available for public review and comment;
- how to comment on the draft application;
- where the draft application is located (with City Clerk and on the City's website); and

- the date and time of a public meeting (January 12, 2026, 6:00 p.m.)

The Certificate of Publication from the Daily Chronicle for the community notification ad is included in this grant submittal.

c. Public Meeting

The City of DeKalb held a Public Meeting during the regular City Council meeting on January 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the draft application and consider public comments on the application and project. From the Public Meeting, the City is including the following in their grant application submittal:

- the comments or a summary of the public comments received;
- the applicant's response to those comments;
- meeting notes or a summary of the public meeting;
- recording of meeting displaying attendance can be found at <https://www.cityofDeKalb.com/887/Watch-a-Meeting>

d. Submission of Community Notification Documents

The City of DeKalb has included the items listed below in their Cleanup Grant application submittal to US EPA:

- a copy of the draft ABCA
- a copy of the ad that demonstrates notification to the public and solicitation for comments on the application
- the comments or a summary of comments received
- the applicant's response to those public comments
- meeting notes or summary from the public meeting
- recording of meeting displaying attendance can be found at <https://www.cityofDeKalb.com/887/Watch-a-Meeting>

15. Named Contractors and Subrecipients:

Not Applicable.



ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

2520 WEST ILES AVENUE, P.O. BOX 19276, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62794-9276 • (217) 782-3397

JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR

JAMES JENNINGS, ACTING DIRECTOR

217/785-8726

1/21/2026

City of DeKalb
ATTN: Andy Raih
1316 Market Street
DeKalb, IL 60115

**Subject: State Acknowledgement Letter for the City of DeKalb
FY2026 US EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant Application**

Dear Andy Raih,

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) has received your request for a letter of acknowledgement for an upcoming Cleanup Grant application to U.S. EPA. The City of DeKalb is applying for a \$2,462,900 Cleanup Grant.

The grant will be a Cleanup Grant for Hazardous Substances and will be used on a site located at 1151 South 4th Street, DeKalb IL, 60115. The site is currently enrolled in the State of Illinois Site Remediation Program. Based on the current information, there has been a Comprehensive Site Investigation Report, Remedial Objectives Report, and Remedial Action Report submitted. Illinois EPA replied with comments and additional assessment is needed¹ to sufficiently characterize the site for the remediation work to begin. A reply is expected from the City of DeKalb by the end of January 2026.

Illinois EPA acknowledges the City of DeKalb's efforts to obtain federal Brownfields funds for this project. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at the above address or telephone numbers below, or at Jacob.fink@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

Jacob Fink
Brownfield Program Administrator
Bureau of Land/Office of Site Evaluation
Office# (217) 785-8726
Cell# (217) 986-0818
Jacob.fink@illinois.gov

¹ Note, applicants selected for funding that indicate that additional assessment is needed must submit updated information to the appropriate State or Tribal Environmental Authority and request an updated letter indicating that the site(s) has had a sufficient level of site characterization for remediation to begin. Applicants must provide EPA with the updated letter by June 15, 2026. If applicants do not meet this requirement by June 15, 2026, EPA may not make the award due to a failure to meet this requirement.

2125 S. First Street, Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 278-5800

115 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 2203, Chicago, IL 60603

1101 Eastport Plaza Dr., Suite 100, Collinsville, IL 62234 (618) 346-5120

9511 Harrison Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016 (847) 294-4000

595 S. State Street, Elgin, IL 60123 (847) 608-3131

2309 W. Main Street, Suite 116, Marion, IL 62959 (618) 993-7200

412 SW Washington Street, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61602 (309) 671-3022

4302 N. Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103 (815) 987-7760