



Application Information Sheet

- (1) Applicant Identification
Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE)
245 Fallbrook Blvd., Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68521
- (2) Website URL
<https://dwee.nebraska.gov/>
- (3) Funding Requested
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$2,000,000
- (4) Location
State of Nebraska (state-wide)
- (5) Target Area and Priority Site Information (See attached Map)
 - a. Target Areas:
 - Omaha Inland Port Authority (OIPA)
 - City of Beatrice (Beatrice)
 - Dodge County
 - Village of Spencer (Spencer)
 - b. Priority Sites:
 - Enterprise Industrial Park (EIP) – 1410 Locust Street, Omaha, NE (OIPA Target Area)
 - Dempster Industries (Dempster) – 711 S. 6th Street, Beatrice, NE (Beatrice Target Area)
 - Christensen Lumber – 201 S. Main Street, Fremont, NE (Dodge County Target Area)
 - Horizon Biofuels – 950 S. Union Street, Fremont, NE (Dodge County Target Area)
 - Twelve (12) residential properties: 1) 405 N. Kuhlman Street; 2) 106 S. Whipple Street; 3) 106 W. Vinton Street; 4) 101 S. Logan Street; 5) 308 S. Whipple Street; 6) 305 S. Whipple Street; 7) 504 S. Harmon Street; 8) 105 W. North Street; 9) 405 E. South Street; 10) 407 E. South Street; 11) 204 S. Kuhlman Street; and 12) 102 W. Randall Street, Spencer, NE (Spencer Target Area)

A minimum of 16 sites in total will be addressed during the period of performance.

(6) Contacts

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(7) Population

State of Nebraska: 1,977,209

- OIPA Target Area: 69,749
- Beatrice Target Area: 12,261
- Dodge County Target Area: 37,167
 - Fremont, NE (Christensen Lumber and Horizon Biofuels Priority Sites): 27,141
- Spencer Target Area: 408

(8) Other Factors

Factor	Narrative Page # and Priority Site/Target Area
Community population is 15,000 or less	1, 5 – City of Beatrice Target Area 2, 5 – Village of Spencer Target Area
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory	Not Applicable
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land	Not Applicable
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them)	2 – EIP Priority Site 3 – 101 S. Logan Street, Spencer Priority Site
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain	5 – EIP Priority Site 2, 4 – Dempster Priority Site 4 – Christensen Lumber Priority Site 4 – Horizon Biofuels Priority Site
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy	Not Applicable

The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures	Not Applicable
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters	4 – Christensen Lumber Priority Site 4 – Horizon Biofuels 4 – All 12 residential properties in Spencer
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2), for priority sites within the target areas	Not Applicable
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing	7 – OIPA Target Area

(9) Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

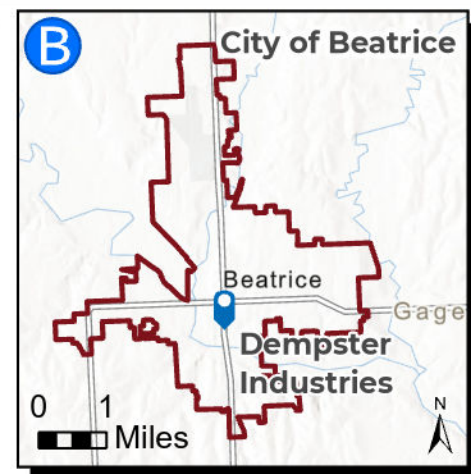
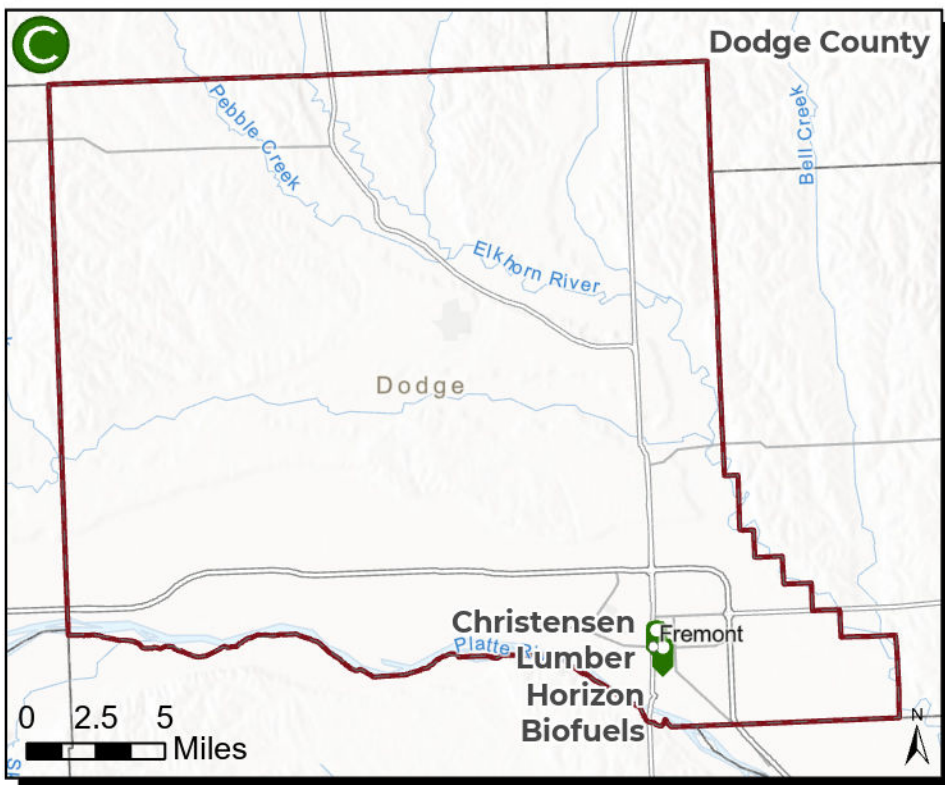
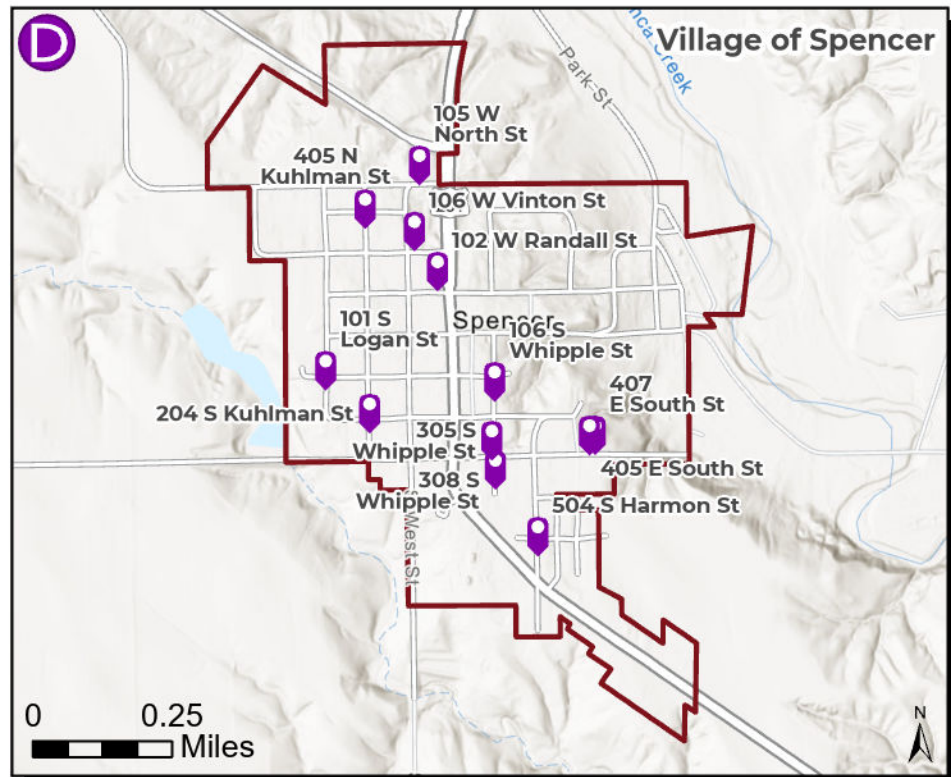
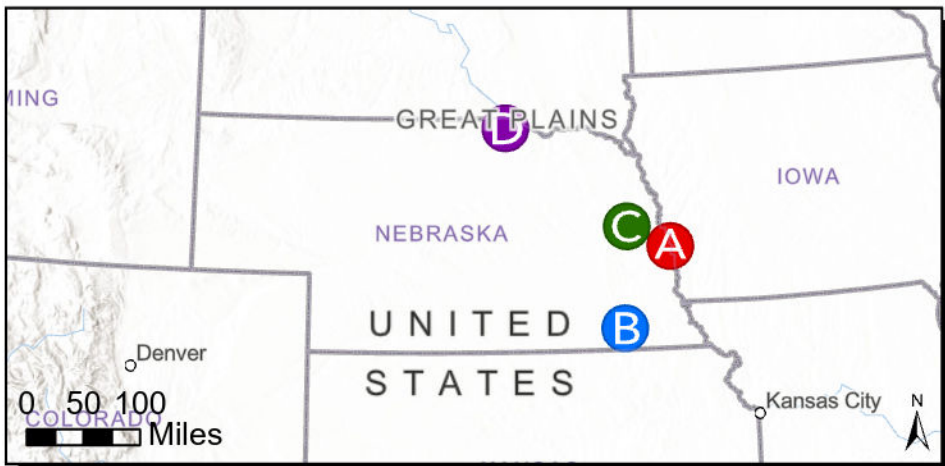
Not Applicable (applicant is a State authority)

(10) Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable (application does not include confidential business information or trade secrets)

DEPT. OF WATER, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT

Nebraska Target Areas and Priority Sites



NARRATIVE

1. Project Area Description and Plans for Revitalization

1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas

The geographic boundary of this grant is the State of Nebraska and will support DWEE's existing Section 128(a) State Response Program. Nebraska's history is rooted in agriculture and was transformed by railroad and manufacturing, including the world's largest lead smelting operation ([ASARCO](#)) in Omaha and one of the longest running windmill manufacturing companies ([Dempster Industries](#)) in Beatrice. Ultimately, neighborhoods that developed around these legacy sites suffered increased poverty rates, decreased population, and health disparities due to widespread environmental contamination. Additionally, over 79,000¹ river miles traverse across Nebraska, making it extremely vulnerable to severe weather events, particularly for those in rural communities with limited resources. The State of Nebraska is approximately 77,358 square miles, making it the 16th largest state but only 38th in total population². Out of Nebraska's 530 incorporated places, 383 have populations of less than 1,000 people, and many were severely impacted by a [catastrophic 500-year flood](#) in 2019, including Dodge County and rural Spencer. Due to limited tax base, staff, time, and knowledge, these places lack capacity to tackle these brownfield challenges on their own. Even in larger communities, limited funding and capacity may leave certain neighborhoods behind as development continues elsewhere. DWEE provides a starting point in the brownfield redevelopment process, and this grant will allow DWEE to assist people in the Target Areas (TAs).

TA-1: Omaha Inland Port Authority – The Omaha Inland Port Authority (OIPA) is in the Omaha, NE-IA metropolitan statistical area and consists of approximately 3,000 acres in North Omaha with a population of 69,749 people². North Omaha faces many challenges including underinvestment leading to economic disparities, food deserts, higher crime rates, and significant health inequities, often linked to past environmental pollution. As demonstrated in Section 2 (page 5), North Omaha contains some of the highest unemployment rates in Nebraska, and poverty is persistent for those in the labor force. There is an estimate of over 100 brownfields in this area. Without EPA assessment funding, environmental clearance – particularly on sites proposed for new business development – will be limited.

TA-2: City of Beatrice – The City of Beatrice (pop. 12,261²) is situated in Southeast Nebraska within the Big Blue River valley, about 40 miles south of the capital city of Lincoln. Beatrice is approximately nine square miles and is in Gage County, which is a non-metropolitan statistical area and borders Kansas to its south. The Homestead Act of 1862 brought millions west to file claims to land, with the very first homestead located in Beatrice and the city becoming a manufacturing hub for the American West. Shortly after its settlement, Beatrice's population began to decline, losing over 40% of its population from 1890 (pop. ~13,800) to 1900 (pop. ~7,900)³. This population decline was largely due to agriculture becoming more mechanized and the growth of larger trade centers like Lincoln. Today, the population of Beatrice still falls short of its 1890 maximum, and the city is scattered with remnants of the settlement boom, with an estimate of 30+ brownfields in the area consisting of former manufacturing sites, vacant lots, and downtown structures with vacant boarded up second floors. EPA assessment funding is needed to address these sites and help promote population and economic growth, reduce exposure to contaminants, and improve the quality of life for Beatrice residents.

TA-3: Dodge County – Dodge County (pop. 37,167²) is in the east-central part of Nebraska and is in a non-metropolitan statistical area. The county seat of Fremont makes up the bulk of the county's population with over 27,000 people², with eight of the nine remaining communities having populations less than 900 and the second most populated community, North Bend, having a population of only 1,279². The county covers about 543 square miles, with the Platte River forming its southern border and the Elkhorn River flowing through the northeast, making the county vulnerable to extreme flooding events. On March 11, 2019, [winter storm Ulmer](#) moved out of the Central Rockies, bringing hurricane-force winds and large amounts of snow and rain into the Great Plains that resulted in flooding on a scale rarely experienced in the region. In Nebraska alone, the storm caused two deaths and over \$3 billion in damage, affecting over 7,000 homes and causing multiple levee breaches and failures and one dam collapse⁴. The City of Fremont was one of the first places in eastern Nebraska to experience flooding and was only accessible by air for several days. Although it has been seven years, remnants of the historic event are still visible in the form of vacant commercial and residential properties scattered throughout the county, with one village (Winslow) all but abandoned except for the remaining 14 homes. Dodge County serves as a significant railroad hub, with a major railyard in Fremont that includes Union Pacific (UP)'s transcontinental main line, with Burlington Northern Santa Fe's north-south route intersecting the UP line. This

¹ <https://outdoornebraska.gov/parks/explore-trails/water-trails/>

² <https://www.census.gov> (2020)

³ <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/nebraska/beatrice>

⁴ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/emergency-preparedness/case-studies/natural-disasters/methodist-fremont-health>

provides a vital junction for freight and an ideal location for manufacturing businesses. With an initial estimate of over 200 brownfields throughout the county, this grant is needed to assess vacant commercial and residential properties with unresolved environmental concerns to promote the local economy, create jobs, and rebuild after the flood.

TA-4: Village of Spencer – The Village of Spencer (pop. 408²) is located in Boyd County, a non-metropolitan statistical area located in north-central Nebraska and directly borders South Dakota to its north, with the Missouri River forming part of its eastern boundary. Boyd County and rural Spencer were significantly impacted by the 2019 flooding event discussed in Section 1.a (page 1). The [Spencer Dam](#) failed when ice chunks several feet thick and a deluge of water swept down the Niobrara river through rural Spencer, which destroyed homes and businesses and killed one Spencer resident. Rural Nebraskans already face significant challenges in finding move-in-ready, affordable homes. The north-central region where Spencer is located has seen a decline in available housing for purchase, dropping from 39% deemed adequate in 2016 to only 30% in 2024⁵. The village itself is experiencing a housing shortage characterized by a limited available inventory and a need for improved, move-in-ready options. There is an initial estimate of 30+ brownfields in this community, with many being vacant, blighted homes. EPA funding is needed to help the community assess vacant lots and aged homes for hazardous building materials to prepare these sites for new residential units.

I.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites

TA-1: The Enterprise Industrial Park (EIP) is 45 acres of industrial land located at **1410 Locust Street** in North Omaha. This is a priority brownfield site for **OIPA**. Numerous environmental concerns have been identified on or adjacent to the EIP including historical railroad maintenance facilities as early as 1901, grain storage as early as 1905, fueling stations, auto salvage/scrap yards, manufacturing facilities with leaking underground storage tanks (USTs), and a scrap paper transport facility. By the 1990s, railroad operations ceased, and the site was used for stockpiling soil and debris from building excavation activities. Historical uses impacted the underlying soil and groundwater, with confirmed releases of petroleum hydrocarbons, arsenic, lead, hexavalent chromium, semi-volatile organic compounds, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The site is ideal for redevelopment, as it has rail access and is located adjacent to Carter Lake and recreational areas. Due to the large undertaking to define the complete nature and extent of contamination and subsequent cleanup, the EIP has sat vacant for over a decade, robbing North Omaha of a prime redevelopment opportunity.

TA-2: The former Dempster Industries (Dempster) located at **711 S. 6th Street** in Beatrice is a priority brownfield site for the **City of Beatrice**. The site covers approximately 10 acres of abandoned industrial property with over a dozen buildings that encompass approximately 250,000 square feet of space. Dempster was one of the longest running wind-powered water pump manufacturers in the United States and provided water for farmers around the world for over 100 years. The company began producing windmills in 1885 and continued until 2009. During World War II, Dempster formed a war production pool and produced over 1.5 million 90-millimeter shells for the war while continuing to manufacture farm equipment to support food supplies at home and at war. Dempster employed hundreds of people allowing the surrounding communities to thrive. Its closure was not only an economic loss, but the 124 years of manufacturing activity left widespread soil and groundwater contamination. Soil and groundwater on and around the site have been contaminated with heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, VOCs, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Additionally, asbestos-containing materials were identified in several of the abandoned buildings, posing a health threat to transients and nearby residents. Trespassers have exacerbated the environmental conditions by destroying transformers in the main manufacturing buildings, which caused the release of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The release triggered an EPA time-critical removal action due to the site's proximity to the Big Blue River and location within a 100-year flood plain. Environmental sampling after the release confirmed elevated concentrations of PCBs in soil and in a drainage ditch on the adjacent property to the south. In March 2025 trespassers set [fire](#) to one of the main manufacturing buildings, destroying the façade along the main throughfare and creating a risk of a release of asbestos fibers to the surrounding neighborhood. Beatrice is applying for an EPA cleanup grant to address approximately three acres of the site. Remaining portions will be addressed by funding from this grant to prepare the rest of the site for cleanup and subsequent redevelopment. The site's location near the Big Blue River makes it ideal for recreational development and outdoor amenities, attracting new residents to the community.

TA-3: The former Christensen Lumber site is approximately 1.25 acres of industrial land located at **201 S. Main Street** in the City of Fremont and is a priority site for **Dodge County**. The vastly successful Christensen Lumber company originated at this location in 1923, eventually expanding and employing up to 250 people. This location played a

⁵ <https://ruralprosperityne.unl.edu/news/poll-highlights-lack-housing-options-rural-nebraska/#:~:text=Most%20respondents%20feel%20there%20is,Labadie%20%7C%20University%20Communication%20and%20Marketing>

key historic role in the original Fremont business and was abandoned during the 2019 flooding event discussed in Section 1.a. (page 1); it has remained vacant since then. The site contains approximately 30,000 square feet of building space that consists of lumber storage sheds, warehouse storage, and office space. Environmental concerns associated with the site include contaminants related to wood preservatives and treatments and railroad activities. The site's location along the main railroad tracks creates a prime redevelopment opportunity to promote the local economy and job creation but has also attracted transients and nefarious activities, highlighting the community's need to prioritize the site. **Horizon Biofuels**, also located in Fremont at **950 S. Union Street**, is another priority site for **Dodge County**. Horizon Biofuels produced wood pellets for home heating fuel and wood mulch for animal bedding, using scrap wood like spruce, pine, and fir as raw material. On July 29, 2025, a [large explosion](#) occurred at the facility causing three deaths and extensive damage. Preliminary evidence indicates that the explosion occurred when a large release of combustible wood product, most likely wood dust from the process, ignited. The facility was permanently closed following the event. This site consists of over four acres of industrial land with a rail spur, making it ideal for a new manufacturing business. Its assessment and redevelopment will help support the local economy, create jobs, and bring life back to the site following such a tragic event.

TA-4: Blighted, vacant homes are scattered about the **Village of Spencer** creating health and safety concerns due to the likely presence of asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and mold. There are **12 priority sites** for this TA that are blighted former residences located at **1) 405 N. Kuhlman Street; 2) 106 S. Whipple Street; 3) 106 W. Vinton Street; 4) 101 S. Logan Street; 5) 308 S. Whipple Street; 6) 305 S. Whipple Street; 7) 504 S. Harmon Street; 8) 105 W. North Street; 9) 405 E. South Street; 10) 407 E. South Street; 11) 204 S. Kuhlman Street; and 12) 102 W. Randall Street**. One of these properties, 101 S. Logan Street, is adjacent to the Klasna Reservoir, making it a popular location for housing redevelopment. Spencer is dedicated to tackling their housing shortage by preparing lots for new housing development. Assessing and preparing these homes for demolition or remediation will increase the inventory of move-in-ready residences.

I.c. Identifying Additional Sites

To identify additional sites, DWEE is currently conducting brownfields inventories for the Village of Spencer and the City of Beatrice using its Section 128(a) funding and will use funding from this grant to conduct brownfields inventories for each of the ten communities comprising Dodge County. DWEE will also use its Assessing Wastewater Infrastructure Needs (AWIN) program. Information gathered for AWIN (e.g., population change, per capita income, average age of residents, and infrastructure needs) is used to develop a "sustainability risk" analysis. DWEE will perform targeted outreach to communities with the highest Sustainability Risk scores that have not yet received brownfields assistance. Additional sites in these communities will be prioritized based on 1) risk, 2) readiness, 3) community input, and 4) alignment with local plans. In addition, DWEE regularly engages with local governments, non-profit economic development organizations, and the Nebraska Regional Officials Council (a statewide organization of Nebraska's eight Economic Development Districts) to identify sites and communities in need. DWEE will prioritize funding to additional communities located in non-metropolitan statistical areas over metropolitan statistical areas and follow the same prioritization method discussed above. Sites must meet the definition of a brownfield under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act §101(39) to be eligible for funding.

I.d. Resue Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

OIPA is currently focusing on the Airport Business Park⁶ project. This project involves development of a new business park in two areas near each other, Carter Lake, and Omaha Eppley Airport, with one of these areas being the **EIP**. Assessment of the site aligns with and advances OIPA and the City of Omaha's revitalization plans by boosting the economy and creating new jobs in North Omaha. **Dempster** has been a redevelopment priority for the **City of Beatrice** since its closure. The city has held several public meetings seeking community input regarding its future redevelopment. The site was the subject of an Architecture and Planning [class project](#) within the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning at Kansas State University. Beatrice residents were able to vote on which project plan they preferred at an open house in November 2022, with new park space being the favored option. Assessment of this site will advance the city's planned development of the new park. **Dodge County** is dedicated to economic development and growth, being home to Nebraska's first designated inland port authority (Fremont-Dodge Municipal Inland Port Authority) that actively seeks more manufacturing businesses and to create developer-friendly conditions. Assessing and removing the environmental uncertainty associated with the vacant industrial facilities **Horizon Biofuels** and **Christensen Lumber** will align with the county's priorities to promote redevelopment, create prime real estate for new

⁶ <https://cityclerk.cityofomaha.org/wp-content/uploads/images/Inland-Port-Authority-Presentation-Airport-Business-Park.pdf>

manufacturing businesses, and reuse land impacted by the flood. The **Village of Spencer**'s priority is to create new homes to address housing challenges. In 2018 a group of residents committed to supporting and strengthening the Spencer community established the Spencer Community Economic Development (SCED) non-profit. SCED has been active in addressing housing challenges and promoting new housing projects in the area. This grant will assess **12 residential properties** containing aged, blighted homes to assist SCED's goal of increasing the move-in ready housing inventory. **I.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy**

An economic impact analysis completed for the development of the **EIP** within the **OIPA** estimated 482 new permanent jobs in manufacturing and business supportive services, with these 482 jobs supporting an additional 307 workers in Douglas County⁶. The project will also support an additional 529 construction jobs during the construction of the buildings and create a \$52.9 million boost to earnings in the local economy⁶. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC)⁷, stress associated with experiencing climate-related disasters is impacting the mental health of people living in the Midwest and is expected to increase as the frequency of extreme events rises. With North Omaha already experiencing high rates of poverty that negatively impact mental health, the economic boost and job creation the project will bring may help counteract any negative mental impacts. Assessment and subsequent cleanup of **Dempster** in the **City of Beatrice** will create approximately ten new acres of green space near the Big Blue River, which can be an asset to future recreational activities. With the site's location in a 100-year flood plain, subsequent cleanup will prevent contaminants being carried off site during extreme flooding events. The Greater Fremont Development Council (GFDC) is the economic redevelopment agency for Dodge County. GFDC's [five year action plan](#) to strengthen and grow the local economy contains four pillars: 1) attracting new businesses; 2) retaining and expanding existing businesses; 3) developing and preparing the future workforce; and 4) enhancing the quality of life throughout the Greater Fremont Area. Redevelopment of **Christensen Lumber** and **Horizon Biofuels** aligns with pillar 1, and that pillar has a goal to "secure new investment and support job creation through the successful attraction of new companies in Fremont." Assessment will prepare over 5 acres of industrial space to attract new businesses with rail access. Both sites lie within a 100-year flood plain, but in November 2019 Dodge County and the City of Fremont were awarded nearly a million dollars in [Community Development Block Grant](#) (CDBG) funding to reconstruct and improve the levee systems as a means to provide long term protection against another devastating flood. The assessments completed at the **12 residential properties** in the **Village of Spencer** will help prepare over four acres of residential space and at least 12 new housing units to attract a rural workforce and new residents as move-in ready homes become available. This in turn will increase the property tax revenue and help the rural community to thrive. New homes can also incorporate flood prevention methods, such as elevated structures, using water-resistance materials (tile, concrete, metal), installing backflow valves, and sealing foundations with waterproofing membranes.

I.f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

DWEE receives Section 128(a) grant funding annually and intends to use this funding to support the efforts of this grant. DWEE will fund all programmatic capacity building using Section 128(a), which includes outreach activities for the TAs and the rest of Nebraska to identify additional sites. DWEE has already invested over \$300,000 in Section 128(a) funding in the TAs to promote redevelopment. Most importantly, the Section 128(a) grant can be used to provide direct cleanups of contaminated properties and hazardous building materials after they are assessed under this grant. DWEE will be allocating Section 128(a) funds to assist the **City of Beatrice** with cleanup efforts at the **Dempster** site. The City of Omaha has secured Nebraska state funds from the Economic Recovery Act (LB1024) to develop the Airport Business Park that includes the **EIP** and other parcels within the **OIPA** for industrial development⁶. EPA funding will remove environmental uncertainties to ensure safe development may commence. Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD) operates a business revolving loan fund (RLF) program that is available to **Dodge County** to fill financial gaps, support business and industry expansion, and create new jobs. Additionally, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) offers over a dozen programs and incentives to attract and develop new businesses. Most of these resources require environmental clearance. By addressing the unknowns at **Christensen Lumber** and **Horizon Biofuels**, the grant will stimulate further investment from other sources that may be applied for after the assessment is complete, including RLF grants. DWEE also has a [Deconstruction of Abandoned Buildings](#) grant that is only available to communities with a population of 5,000 or less. Other than Fremont, this grant can assist all the remaining communities in Dodge County. NDED administers several funding sources for new housing development or renovation including [Community Development Block Grants](#), the [Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund](#), [Rural Workforce Housing Fund](#), [HOME Investment Partnership Program](#), and [Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment](#)

⁷ https://www.cdc.gov/climate-health/php/regions/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/default.htm

Fund that may all be applied for after the assessment is complete at the blighted residential properties in **Spencer**. The DWEE Section 128(a) Program also has asbestos, lead-based paint, and mold cleanup grants that are available to Spencer following the hazardous building materials surveys. SCED was the recipient of a \$700,000 Rural Workforce Housing Fund grant in FY22, which provided SCED with \$1,050,000 when combined with other local efforts to provide a match, showing their dedication to the project.

I.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The **EIP** will use existing infrastructure such as water, electric, communications lines, sewer/drainage systems, and roads within the **OIPA**. The OIPA area also has easy access to rail lines that will benefit the proposed industrial buildings. The OIPA is in a 100-year flood plain, and the City of Omaha has made great investments in their levee systems, bringing the flood risk down for the site to a Zone X (low to moderate risk). The **Dempster** building, particularly after the fire, is not salvageable and will need to be demolished. Green space and walking trails have already been completed adjacent to the north and east of the site that can connect to the new park, as well as access to the Big Blue River to the south. The site is situated along the main thoroughfare into the city, providing direct access to the park and its new amenities. Both priority brownfield sites in **Dodge County** have access to existing railroads, with **Christensen Lumber** situated along the main rail line and **Horizon Biofuels** containing a rail spur. Future businesses at these sites will be able to use the existing railroad, as well as the City of Fremont’s utility lines. In addition, the Christen Lumber building is not in disrepair and is capable of being renovated, which will preserve the site of the business’ starting point that served as the cornerstone in the development and growth of Fremont. The new homes created in Spencer will also use the existing water, electric, communications lines, sewer/drainage systems, and roads within the **Village of Spencer**. Where cases allow, some former residences may be able to be renovated instead of demolished, which will save money while avoiding construction noise, dust, and traffic associated with building new infrastructure.

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding

According to the State of Nebraska’s population report, Nebraska has 530 incorporated places: 147 cities (minimum population of 801) and 383 villages (populations between 100-800). Nebraska has 43 urban areas, 16 with populations over 10,000. DWEE consulted the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) to identify the population size and income of the TAs to determine whether the TAs have the capacity to manage their own Brownfields funding sources. **Spencer** has 408 residents, qualifying as a small population (under 5,000 residents). The village employs three full-time and three part-time staff to run the day-to-day operations, leaving planning and strategic decisions to a five-person volunteer board. Likewise, as demonstrated in Section 1.a. (page 1), 80% of the communities in Dodge County have populations less than 900 people and comparable staff size with Spencer. 25.98% of Nebraska residents are low-income, including three of the TAs. The low-income population in **OIPA** (i.e., North Omaha) is 51.55%, **Beatrice** is 36.61%, and **Spencer** is 35.29%. **OIPA**, **Beatrice**, and **Spencer** are also more impoverished than the state average (10.76%). Residents falling below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in **OIPA**, **Beatrice**, and **Spencer** are 22.76%, 19.78%, and 11.07%, respectively. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee released a study which found communities with more residents below the FPL had more brownfields but were less likely to be redeveloped and received less funding from local, city, and state governments to address cleanups. **All four TAs** earn less income per capita than the state average of \$41,206. Additionally, **OIPA** and **Dodge County** have higher unemployment rates than the state average (3.38%) at 9.55% and 3.52%, respectively. Areas with high unemployment are associated with a rise in poverty, housing instability, and a lack of community resources; all of which hinder the ability to address environmental concerns.

Location	Population	% Low Income¹	% in Poverty	Income Per Capita	Unemployment Rate
Nebraska	1,977,209	25.98%	10.76%	\$41,206	3.38%
OIPA TA ²	69,749	51.55%	22.76%	\$22,699	9.55%
Dodge County TA	37,167	25.57%	9.58%	\$34,866	3.52%
City of Beatrice TA	12,261	36.61%	19.78%	\$31,452	2.04%
Village of Spencer TA	408	35.29%	11.07%	\$36,652	2.46%

¹Low Income is defined as being below 200% of the FPL

²Considered “North Omaha” (the region of Omaha located in zip codes 68110, 68111, 68104)

The TAs cannot fund assessments without EPA assistance. The limited staff, tax base, and resources, along with higher poverty rates and low-income populations, create a lack of investment and ability to draw on other sources of funding. DWEE provides support for these communities through the statewide Section 128(a) Brownfields Program, which alleviates the burden that applying for, executing, and managing a grant puts on local governments that lack

capacity, technical knowledge, and funding. This program is the most accessible option for communities to address brownfields and the environmental hazards they pose. EPA funding will increase the capacity of the program and allow DWEE to address more sites and serve more communities.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Sensitive populations including children, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with chronic illnesses, and pregnant people are more susceptible to environmental hazards. While the pregnant population is variable within a year, the effects of environmental contamination can be assessed through the rate of birth defects. As outlined in the table below, based on data obtained from the Census, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Birth Outcomes and Water study, American Lung Association, and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service’s (DHHS) Vital Statistics report, **all four TAs**, as well as the State of Nebraska as a whole, have higher than the U.S. average of one or more of these sensitive populations.

Location	Age 18 & Under	Age 65 & Older	People with Disabilities	Occurrence Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	Occurrence Birth Defects
United States	23.10%	17.84%	12.44%	8.33%	3.03%
Nebraska	25.53%	17.05%	13.68%	7.50%	7.90%
OIPA TA ¹	28.90%	11.69%	15.88%	20.00%	9.50%
Dodge County TA	36.30%	18.03%	14.10%	11.60%	9.00%
City of Beatrice TA	23.68%	21.13%	19.21%	12.10%	6.30%
Village of Spencer TA	1.47%	12.25%	13.48%	12.40%	4.70%

¹Considered “North Omaha” (the region of Omaha located in zip codes 68110, 68111, 68104)

Low income, poverty, and unemployment impact sensitive populations by limiting access to resources which address environmental concerns and to housing outside areas with contamination. Brownfields contribute to environmental hazards through contamination in soil, groundwater, surface water, and air. As demonstrated in Section 2.d (page 7), citizens of North Omaha are directly impacted by lead contamination in soil, groundwater, and air due to historical lead smelting operations and an active coal-fired power plant. There are confirmed releases of petroleum compounds, heavy metals, hexavalent chromium, PAHs, and VOCs in soil and groundwater at the **EIP** and surrounding areas. Contamination is widespread on and around the **Dempster** site in Beatrice, with contaminants such as petroleum compounds, heavy metals, VOCs, PAHs, and PCBs. PAHs, heavy metals, and petroleum are all contaminants associated with developing asthma and COPD. Heavy metals pose a particular risk to children as they impact their developing brains and can lead to stunted physical and mental development. The elderly are also more likely to develop adverse health effects including heart and lung disease and cancer due to exposure to these contaminants. Additionally, these contaminants are linked to increased infant mortality (IM). According to DHHS, Nebraska has an IM rate of 6.2 (per 1,000 live births), while the national average is 5.6. **OIPA** (Douglas County) has an IM rate of 7.2. With EPA assessment funding, communities can identify and address properties that provide the most harmful environmental impact, reducing the adverse impact of contaminants and health burdens on sensitive populations.

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

Based on data from the Census, American Lung Association, DHHS, and CDC, **all four TAs** have higher populations of disabled individuals, higher rates of asthma and COPD, and higher rates of birth defects than the national average, as outlined in Section 2.b. (page 6). The University of Wisconsin’s Public Health Institute conducted a study on 77 of Nebraska’s 93 counties and ranked them based on their health factors, which considers how the physical environment, social and economic factors, access to quality care, and health behaviors impact the overall health of county residents. The counties are ranked 1-77, with a ranking closer to 1 indicating fewer factors negatively impacting a county’s health. All TAs rank in the bottom half of the state: **OIPA** (Douglas County) is ranked 47; **Dodge County** is ranked 62; **Beatrice** (Gage County) is ranked 55; and **Spencer** (Boyd County) is ranked 46.

Section 2.d. (page 7) discusses the health impacts on communities that are close to coal burning power plants, which **OIPA** and **Dodge County** are affected by. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 31.57% of all non-farm jobs in **Beatrice** are related to natural resource mining, construction, and manufacturing. These industries are closely associated with air pollution and respiratory illnesses and have a long history of operation in and around the city. Additionally, Dempster operated for over 120 years, which is a significant amount of time for contaminants to accumulate and spread to the surrounding areas, particularly with its location in a 100-year flood plain. These environmental hazards are attributed to higher rates of Lung and Bronchus cancer (lung cancer). According to the National Cancer Institute,

Nebraska has a lung cancer diagnosis rate of 52.2 (per 100,000 people). This is slightly below the national rate of 53.1, but **OIPA** (Douglas County) has a rate of 59.2, **Dodge County** has a rate of 61.3, and **Beatrice** (Gage County) has a rate of 63.1.

This grant will support local governments in assessing brownfields that may otherwise not be addressed to determine which sites pose the most risk to the community’s health, allowing them to address the most impactful sites first and alleviate the health burden these brownfields cause.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

OPIA, Beatrice, and Spencer are more impoverished than the Nebraska average according to the Census, as outlined in Section 2.a. (page 5). A 2016 study published in the Fordham International Law Journal found a strong correlation between poverty and the prevalence of brownfields in a community due to inadequate access to resources to address infrastructure, contamination, and redevelopment.

OIPA is disproportionately impacted by environmental contamination associated with the Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) coal power plant, leading to poor air quality and contaminated water, alongside historical lead soil contamination from the former American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) – the source for the Omaha Lead Superfund Site. ASARCO was the largest lead refinery in the world, operating for over 125 years until it was closed in the 1990s due to environmental and health concerns. During operation, lead and other heavy metals were emitted into the atmosphere through smokestacks and deposited on the ground. 1.9% of U.S. children have elevated blood lead levels according to the CDC. DHHS reports that at least 3.5% of Omaha children have elevated blood lead levels, with more suspected due to low testing rates.

The **EIP** priority site in **OIPA** is less than 2.5 miles away from the OPPD North Omaha Station; and both the **Christensen Lumber** and **Horizon Biofuels** priority sites in **Dodge County** are two miles or less from the Lon D. Wright power plant. Both facilities are coal-burning power plants, proximity to which is associated with higher occurrences of asthma, COPD, lung cancer, and other chronic lung and breathing problems, as well as higher incidence of asthma-related death. Closure of the Omaha Public Power District North Omaha Station has been delayed despite community opposition, with retirement now expected in 2028. Opportunities to identify and assess sites within these TAs without burdening already limited resources support vulnerable communities through the assessment of contaminants.

2.e. – 2.f. Community Engagement and Project Involvement

DWEE recognizes the importance of community involvement in the brownfield prioritization and redevelopment process. Initial project partners are identified in the table below. Additional stakeholders and partners will be identified and added as the assessment and redevelopment efforts are launched in each of the TAs, as well as statewide as outreach efforts to attract new partnerships.

Name of entity, organization, or group	Entity’s Mission	Point of Contact	Specific Involvement in the Project or Assistance Provided
Omaha Inland Port Authority	Foster economic development, infrastructure, and job growth in North Omaha.	Garry Clark Director Garry.Clark@omahaipa.com 402-733-2232 ext. 101	Assistance with public meetings; identifying sites; cleanup/reuse input; ensuring reuse plans align with local plans
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	Foster a vibrant, healthy, and high-quality region for the Omaha-Council Bluffs area.	Grant Anderson Community Development Manager ganderson@pacog.org 402-444-6866 ext. 3222	Assistance with community outreach; identifying additional sites
City of Beatrice	Provide quality, cost-effective government services, promote city growth and development, and enhance the quality of life for all citizens.	Tobias Tempelmeyer City Administrator ttempelmeyer@beatrice.ne.gov 402-228-5200	Local government contact; assistance with public meetings and outreach; identifying additional sites; cleanup/reuse input; ensuring reuse plans align with local plans
Dodge County Emergency Management	Provide comprehensive, integrated services to protect the county from all hazards by	Thomas Smith emergencymanagement@dodgecountyne.gov	County government contact; assistance with public meetings and outreach; cleanup/reuse

	managing the full cycle of emergencies.	402-727-2785	input; ensuring reuse plans align with local plans
City of Fremont	Foster an inclusive, sustainable, and economically vibrant community	Angie Olson Angie.olson@fremontne.gov 402-727-2367 ext. 1017	City contact; assistance with public meetings and outreach; identifying additional sites; ensuring reuse plans align with local plans
Spencer Economic Development Corporation	Support and strengthen the Spencer community.	Tracy Goesch SCED Board Member [REDACTED]	Local government contact; assistance with public meetings and outreach; identifying additional sites; cleanup/reuse input; ensuring reuse plans align with local plans

2.g. Incorporating Community Input

Through the use of Section 128(a) funding, DWEE operates a robust outreach strategy that involves social media platforms, live webinars, workshops, presentations or information booths at local events, press releases, virtual and in-person consultations, and economic development ListSers. DWEE also partners with the Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields Program to provide reuse visioning sessions for brownfield sites and resource roundtables that may occur virtually or in person. DWEE will perform additional outreach in the TAs to educate the community on brownfield topics, initiate work on the priority sites, and identify additional sites for assessment that would most benefit the community. DWEE will hold an initial kick off meeting and quarterly public meetings in each TA to communicate on project progress, answer questions from the residents, and solicit their feedback on additional sites to ensure redevelopment aligns with their priorities. A virtual option will be made available for those unable to attend in-person. The government representatives/partners in each TA will advise on the preferred methods of communication with residents (e.g., newspaper, radio, social media, local news, etc.), where and when to hold the public meetings, and when to provide information in languages other than English. Meeting notes summarizing the topics of discussion and outcomes will be made publicly available on DWEE’s website, along with the Brownfields Coordinator’s contact information. All community questions, comments, concerns, and recommendations will be heard and implemented (when practical) when planning for additional sites to be addressed pursuant to this grant. For each project, DWEE will assign a unique Facility ID number, which can be used by residents to access all project correspondence; documents drafted by the environmental consultant retained to perform the assessments; and any figures, tables, or maps related to the project. Individuals without a computer may contact DWEE’s Records Management office to request copies of all documentation.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress

<u>3.a. Project Implementation¹</u>	<u>3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule</u>	<u>3.c. Task/ Activity Lead³</u>	<u>3.d. Outputs (Quantity)</u>
Task 1: Planning and Management			
Administrative oversight of grant including, but not limited to, supervising staff to meet program goals	Monthly project meetings with staff	DWEE Environmental Supervisor	Project management assignment and milestone tracking sheet (1 total)
Develop the federal application package, proposed budget, and work plan ²	Immediately after award notice	DWEE Environmental Supervisor	Federal application package, proposed budget, and work plan (1 total)
Incorporate the Cooperative Agreement (CA) workplan and budget into the State’s performance and financial reporting system and other appropriate tracking systems ²	Incorporate immediately after award notice; monthly internal fiscal reporting; annual Federal Financial Reporting (FFR); final FFR within 120 days of grant completion	DWEE Accountant and Budget Officer	Monthly internal financial reports (60 total); Annual FFR (5 total); Final FFR (1 total)

Prepare performance reports on the overall status of project activities	Quarterly	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator	Performance reports (20 total)
Participate in program review and audit activities	Upon request by EPA	EPA initiated; response led by DWEE Environmental Supervisor	Program review/audit (number determined by EPA)
Conduct project closeout activities	Within 120 days of grant completion	DWEE Environmental Supervisor	Final performance report (1 total)
Task 2: Program Enhancement			
Partner with local and regional economic development districts, local and county governments, non-profits, and other public entities to identify the priority of sites to be addressed and secure site access	Conduct meetings with partners in TAs quarterly	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator and community partners	Tracking sheets; meeting with communities (20 per TA – 80 total); new brownfields applications (minimum of 16 sites)
Provide translation services upon request from partners when information is needed in languages other than English	Translated outreach materials will be provided within 14 days of request	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator and community partners	Translated outreach materials (maximum of 1 set of translated documents for the OIPA and Dodge County TAs – 2 total)
Conduct community-wide or partial community-wide inventories of brownfields properties	As requests for assistance are submitted to DWEE; reports are completed within 90 days of application	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator	Inventory reports and ArcGIS databases (if requested) (minimum of 1 per community in the Dodge County TA – 10 total)
Task 3: Site-Specific Activities			
Conduct Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs); lead-based paint, mold, and asbestos surveys; and Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) reports	As requests for assistance are submitted to DWEE; on average, reports are completed within 90 days of application	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator	Final Phase I ESAs (minimum of 1 at each priority site in the Dodge County TA [2]; may complete up to 30 total), Phase II ESAs (minimum of 1 at each priority site in the OIPA, City of Beatrice, and Dodge County TAs [4]; may complete up to 20 total), hazardous building materials surveys (minimum of 1 at each priority site in the Village of Spencer TA [12]; may complete up to 30 total), and ABCAs (minimum of 1 at each priority site in the OIPA, City of Beatrice, and Dodge County TAs [4])
Remove orphan USTs to identify potentially contaminated media beneath USTs (note that this includes assessment only and not cleanup of contaminated media)	As requests for assistance are submitted to DWEE; reports are completed within 180 days of application	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator	Final closure assessment reports (may complete up to 5 total)
Prepare Property Profile Forms and input data into Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment	Immediately upon completion of projects	DWEE Brownfields Coordinator	Property Profile Forms (1 per site; minimum of 16 sites)

Exchange System (ACRES) database			
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¹No subawards or participant support costs will be provided under this grant.

²State funds will be used for direct administrative costs.

³DWEE does not anticipate partnering with local health agencies for health monitoring activities.

3.e. Cost Estimates

Budget Categories		Task 1: Planning and Management	Task 2: Program Enhancement	Task 3: Site-Specific Activities	Total
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$11,130.00	\$36,400.00	\$124,950.00	\$172,480.00
	Fringe Benefits	\$3,561.60	\$11,648.00	\$39,984.00	\$55,193.60
	Travel	\$0.00	\$10,128.00	\$4,157.00	\$14,285.00
	Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Contractual	\$0.00	\$402,430.01	\$1,290,000.00	\$1,692,430.01
	Construction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Direct Costs		\$14,691.60	\$460,606.01	\$1,459,091.00	\$1,934,388.61
Indirect Costs		\$4,233.85	\$13,846.56	\$47,530.98	\$65,611.39
Total Budget		\$18,925.45	\$474,452.57	\$1,506,621.98	\$2,000,000.00

No subawards or participant support costs will be provided under this grant.

State funds will be used for direct administrative costs.

Task 1: Planning and Management

Personnel: 318 hours (hrs) @ average salary of \$35/hr = \$11,130.00

Monthly project meetings: 60 meetings * 1 hr * 2 staff = 120 hrs

Quarterly performance reports: 20 reports * 6 hrs (multiple staff included) = 120 hrs

Program reviews: 24 hrs * 3 staff = 72 hrs

Final report: 1 report * 6 hrs (multiple staff included) = 6 hrs

Task 2: Program Enhancement

Personnel: 1,040 hrs @ average salary of \$35/hr = \$36,400

Quarterly outreach meetings: 80 meetings * 8 hrs per meeting * 1 staff = 640 hrs

Inventories: 40 hrs each * 10 total = 400 hrs

Travel: \$10,128

Quarterly outreach meetings: 60 one-day meetings + 20 two-day meetings = 100 days

100 days * \$65 vehicle charge per day = \$6,500

20 overnight stays * (\$110 hotel + \$71.40 Nebraska in-state per diem) = \$3,628

Contractual: \$402,430.01

Translation services: 2 * \$1,250 each = \$2,500; reduced to \$2,430.01 to meet budget maximum

Inventories: 10 total * \$40,000 each = \$400,000

Task 3: Site-Specific Activities

Personnel: 3,570 hrs @ average salary of \$35/hr = \$124,950

Phase I ESAs: 30 hrs each * 30 total = 900 hrs

Phase II ESAs: 60 hrs each * 20 total = 1,200 hrs

Hazardous building materials surveys: 30 hrs each * 30 total = 900 hrs

ABCAs: 30 hrs each * 4 total = 120 hrs

UST Removals: 90 hrs each * 5 total = 450 hrs

Travel: \$4,157

Site-specific oversight: 25 site visits * 2 days per site visit = 50 days

50 days * \$65 vehicle charge per day = \$3,250

5 overnight stays * (\$110 hotel + \$71.40 Nebraska in-state per diem) = \$907

Contractual: \$1,290,000 (Approximately 65% of grant funding is dedicated to site-specific work)

Phase I ESAs: 30 total @ \$8,000 each = \$240,000

Phase II ESAs: 20 total @ \$24,000 each = \$480,000

Hazardous building materials surveys: 30 total @ \$5,000 each = \$150,000

ABCAs: 4 total * \$5,000 = \$20,000

UST Removals: 5 total * \$80,000 = \$400,000

Personnel (All Tasks): Average rate based on DWEE Environmental Supervisor and DWEE Brownfields Coordinator rates, who will be completing most of the work.

Travel (All Tasks): Vehicle cost based on average cost of State fleet vehicle rental. Hotel based on current U.S. General Services Administration rate for Nebraska (outside Omaha). Per diem rates are based on Nebraska State Statute 81-1174.

Contractual (All Tasks): Contractual tasks are based on average costs using DWEE's Environmental Engineering Services (EES) Contractors under the Section 128(a) State Response Program. The number of assessments is consistent with DWEE's performance under its Section 128(a) CA (see Section 4.e.1., page 12) and current capacity of the Brownfields Program.

Fringe (All Tasks): Total fringe benefits costs are calculated as 32% of personnel costs.

Indirect Costs (All Tasks): Indirect is calculated as 38.04% of direct personnel costs (per the Cognizant Agency Negotiation Agreement between DWEE and EPA dated March 3, 2025).

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

In order to ensure the completion of all tasks within the grant period, DWEE will track, measure, and report outputs (e.g., number and type of assessments completed) and outcomes (e.g., number of acres ready for reuse, amount of leveraged funding, number of cleanup and redevelopment jobs created) and compare them to the established baseline for measurement in the work plan. The status and estimated date of completion of outputs identified in Section 3.d. (page 8) will be tracked and reported to EPA via performance reports and ACRES. DWEE will inform the EPA Project Officer as soon as problems, delays or adverse conditions become known, which will materially impair the ability to meet the outputs/outcomes specified in the work plan. The environmental results of the project will support and contribute to EPA's Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American and Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency, and will assist in meeting the goal of EPA's Brownfields Program to assess contaminated properties with to facilitate their sustainable reuse.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

4.a. – 4.c. Organizational Capacity, Organizational Structure, and Description of Key Staff

DWEE, as the Agency for the State of Nebraska responsible for water management, energy policies, and environmental protection, has the technical and staffing resources to successfully complete all programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of this grant. The Brownfields Program successfully manages CAs under the Section 128(a) State Response Program that are of similar size and scope to this grant. The combined CAs (for funding provided via both the annual appropriation and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act [IIJA]) allocation for Fiscal Year 2025 is \$680,000, with total award amounts of \$5,274,920. Overall, DWEE currently manages 92 federal grants for a combined total of \$1,177,616,987.25. DWEE is compliant with all terms and conditions of these grants. DWEE's accounts are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting to ensure compliance with limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available to it. The State of Nebraska has an automated electronic accounting system, with customizable features to meet the specific needs of each department. DWEE keeps separate journals and ledgers (organization codes and project numbers) for each individual program in the direct cost base. A separate journal and general ledger (organization codes and project numbers) are maintained for the indirect cost pool.

Sarah Klescewski (Master of Science in Geological and Earth Sciences) has four years of experience as DWEE's Superfund/VCP Section Supervisor and manages federal grants in the Superfund and Brownfields Programs. Ms. Klescewski will serve as the Project Director and primary decision maker for this grant and will be responsible for communicating with the EPA Project Officer and ensuring work plan implementation. Taryn Horn (Bachelor of Science [B.S.] in Geology) has ten years of experience as DWEE's Brownfields Coordinator. Ms. Horn will be responsible for conducting outreach to local partners and stakeholders and coordinating assessment activities under the Brownfields Program and will serve as the primary Project Manager and technical expert for most Brownfields assessments. Wade Gregson (B.S. in Civil Engineering and Master of Arts in Business) has 29 years of experience in contract management and will oversee all procurement, contracting, and quality assurance activities under this grant. Janell Miller (Associate of Applied Science in Administrative Assistant with Information Processing Specialization) has four years of experience as DWEE's Budget Officer and will be responsible for ensuring the timely drawdown of funds and prompt submittal of financial reports. Coordination with other DWEE programs and State Agencies may also be completed to assist with technical and regulatory review, public outreach, legal counsel, and risk assessment evaluations. Contractors will be utilized for conducting site-specific assessment activities and assisting with public outreach.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources

DWEE already solicited bids and selected four Environmental Engineering Service (EES) contractors for its assessment work under the Section 128(a) State Response Program following all applicable State of Nebraska procurement policies and procedures. If DWEE is a successful applicant, then these four EES contractors will also be compensated with EPA funds made available under this grant. The solicitation documents and signed executed contracts are available at <https://dwee.justfoia.com/publicportal/requests/RM-2025-723/view>. DWEE's current EES contracts expire June 30, 2027. Once the current contract period ends, DWEE will request bids from contractors through a competitive procurement procedure similar to the one that was used to procure the existing EES contracts and in accordance with 2 CFR §200.317-326. There will be no subrecipients for this grant.

4.e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

4.e.1 Accomplishments

DWEE currently has Section 128(a) CA funded via both the annual appropriation and IJA and has successfully managed the grants, adhered to their schedules, and performed all phases of work identified in their respective work plans in accordance with their terms and conditions. Under the Section 128(a) CA funded via the annual appropriation (**RP 98732206**; July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2025; \$2,560,280), DWEE assessed a total of 78 properties, at which it has completed 45 Phase I ESAs, 12 Phase II ESAs, 28 Supplemental Assessments (e.g., hazardous building materials surveys), and one Cleanup Planning activity (e.g., ABCA). DWEE also completed cleanup activities at 71 properties. The total leveraged funding for this grant (including both assessment and cleanup) is \$24,061,475, creating 335.42 cleanup and redevelopment jobs and establishing 578.72 acres across 32 properties ready for anticipated reuse. These totals are reflected in ACRES. Under the Section 128(a) CA funded via IJA (**4W 97798601**; October 1, 2022, through June 30, 2026; \$2,214,640), DWEE assessed a total of 28 properties, at which it has completed 25 Phase I ESAs, nine Phase II ESAs, 12 Supplemental Assessments, and one Cleanup Planning activity. DWEE also completed cleanup activities at 27 properties. The total leveraged funding (including both assessment and cleanup) is \$419,367, creating 13.27 cleanup and redevelopment jobs and establishing 6.37 acres across two properties ready for anticipated reuse. These totals are reflected in ACRES. Under the Section 128(a) CA funded via the annual appropriation (**RP 96722201**; July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028; \$500,000), DWEE has not yet completed any assessment or cleanup activities due to the recent start date. Therefore, there are no activities reported in ACRES yet. However, DWEE continues to track progress made toward the outputs and outcomes in the work plan by ensuring continual progress on contractual tasks and maintaining communication with the EPA Project Officer.

4.e.2 Compliance with Grant Requirements

DWEE complies with the terms and conditions of its Section 128(a) CAs (**RP 98732206**, **4W 97798601**, and **RP 96722201**) by adhering to the approved work plans and schedules. DWEE submits timely semi-annual progress reports detailing progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of the work plan and listing accomplishments completed during the specified reporting period, works with the EPA Project Officer on any work plan or budget revisions, and notifies EPA of any delays in project schedule. The DWEE Brownfields Coordinator makes timely entries into ACRES immediately upon the receipt of final invoices from the EES Contractors and routinely audits ACRES (approximately once per month) to update information on leveraged funding, whether cleanup has occurred, the number of jobs leveraged, and any redevelopment activities. There have been no lapses in achieving or reporting the expected results of these grants.

DWEE anticipates utilizing all funds from its Section 128(a) CAs on eligible grant activities. The Section 128(a) CA funded via the annual appropriation (**RP 98732206**; July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2025; \$2,560,280) ended on December 31, 2025, and will have no remaining funds. The Section 128(a) CA funded via IJA (**4W 97798601**; October 1, 2022 through June 30, 2026; \$2,214,640) had \$1,520,308.77 remaining as of November 30, 2025, which will be used to complete a minimum of 18 brownfields inventories, four Phase I ESAs, four Phase II ESAs, 15 Supplemental Assessments, and eight cleanup activities, in addition to the development of program enhancement and outreach materials. The Section 128(a) CA funded via the annual appropriation (**RP 96722201**; July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; \$500,000) had \$489,170.15 remaining as of November 30, 2025, which will be used to complete a minimum of one Phase I ESA, one Phase II ESA, one Supplemental Assessment, one Cleanup Planning activity, and four cleanup activities, in addition to the planning and management and program enhancement tasks included in the work plan. DWEE expects to expend all remaining funding for CAs **4W 97798601** and **RP 96722201** by the end of the project period.

ATTACHMENT

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

The Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE) is a state agency and is therefore eligible for funding under a Community-Wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes.

2. Community Involvement

DWEE's Brownfields Program regularly engages with local governments, EPA Brownfield Grantees, non-profit economic development organizations, and the Nebraska Regional Officials Council, which is a statewide organization of Nebraska's eight Economic Development Districts. DWEE's outreach efforts have created numerous collaborative partnerships that helped DWEE identify target areas that could benefit from brownfields assistance. DWEE's plan for community involvement includes outreach to identify additional sites, as well as communication on project progress in the target areas. If DWEE is a successful applicant, then the Brownfields Program will perform additional outreach in the target communities to educate the community on brownfield topics, initiate work on the priority sites, and identify additional sites for assessment that would most benefit the community. DWEE will engage with government representatives in each target area who will advise on the preferred methods of communication with residents (e.g., newspaper, social media, local news, etc.); where and when to hold public meetings; and when to provide information in languages other than English. All community questions, comments, concerns, and recommendations will be taken into consideration when planning for additional sites to be addressed pursuant to this grant.

DWEE will also partner with the Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields Program to provide reuse visioning sessions for brownfield sites and resource roundtables that may occur virtually or in person. DWEE plans to provide at least quarterly project updates to target area partners. This plan will help ensure that all stakeholders are informed and engaged with the priority projects and this proposal. For each project, DWEE will assign a unique Facility ID number, which can be used to access all project correspondence, documents drafted by the environmental consultant retained to perform the assessments, and any figures, tables, or maps related to the project. Individuals without a computer may contact DWEE's Records Management office for complete copies of all documentation.

Through the use of Section 128(a) funding, DWEE operates a robust outreach strategy that involves social media platforms, live webinars, workshops, information booths at various conferences, press releases, virtual and in-person consultations, and economic development ListSers. If DWEE is a successful applicant, then the Brownfields Program will use these means to promote the availability of funding statewide, as well as postcard mailings to city/village clerks with information about how to apply to for assistance.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

N/A – DWEE has not been a recipient of a previous Community-Wide Assessment Grant for States and Tribes.

4. Target Areas and Priority Sites

DWEE has identified four target areas and 16 priority sites, with at least one priority project in each target area. The four target areas and 16 priority sites identified in Section 4.B.(5) of the Application Information Sheet include:

Target Areas:

- Omaha Inland Port Authority
- City of Beatrice
- Dodge County
- Village of Spencer

Priority Sites:

- Enterprise Industrial Park – 1410 Locust Street, Omaha, NE (Omaha Inland Port Authority Target Area)
- Dempster Industries – 711 S. 6th Street, Beatrice, NE (City of Beatrice Target Area)
- Christensen Lumber – 201 S. Main Street, Fremont, NE (Dodge County Target Area)
- Horizon Biofuels – 950 S. Union Street, Fremont, NE (Dodge County Target Area)
- Twelve (12) residential properties: 1) 405 N. Kuhlman Street; 2) 106 S. Whipple Street; 3) 106 W. Vinton Street; 4) 101 S. Logan Street; 5) 308 S. Whipple Street; 6) 305 S. Whipple Street; 7) 504 S. Harmon Street; 8) 105 W. North Street; 9) 405 E. South Street; 10) 407 E. South Street; 11) 204 S. Kuhlman Street; and
12) 102 W. Randall Street, Spencer, NE (Village of Spencer Target Area)

A minimum of 16 sites in total will be addressed during the period of performance.

5. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

DWEE already solicited bids and selected four Environmental Engineering Service (EES) contractors for its assessment work under the Section 128(a) State Response Program following all applicable State of Nebraska procurement policies and procedures. If DWEE is a successful applicant, then these four EES contractors will also be compensated with EPA funds made available under this grant. The solicitation documents and signed executed contracts are available at <https://dwee.justfoia.com/publicportal/requests/RM-2025-723/view>. DWEE's current EES contracts expire June 30, 2027. Once the current contract period ends, DWEE will request bids from contractors through a competitive procurement procedure similar to the one that was used to procure the existing EES contracts and in accordance with 2 CFR §200.317-326. There will be no subrecipients for this grant.