

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

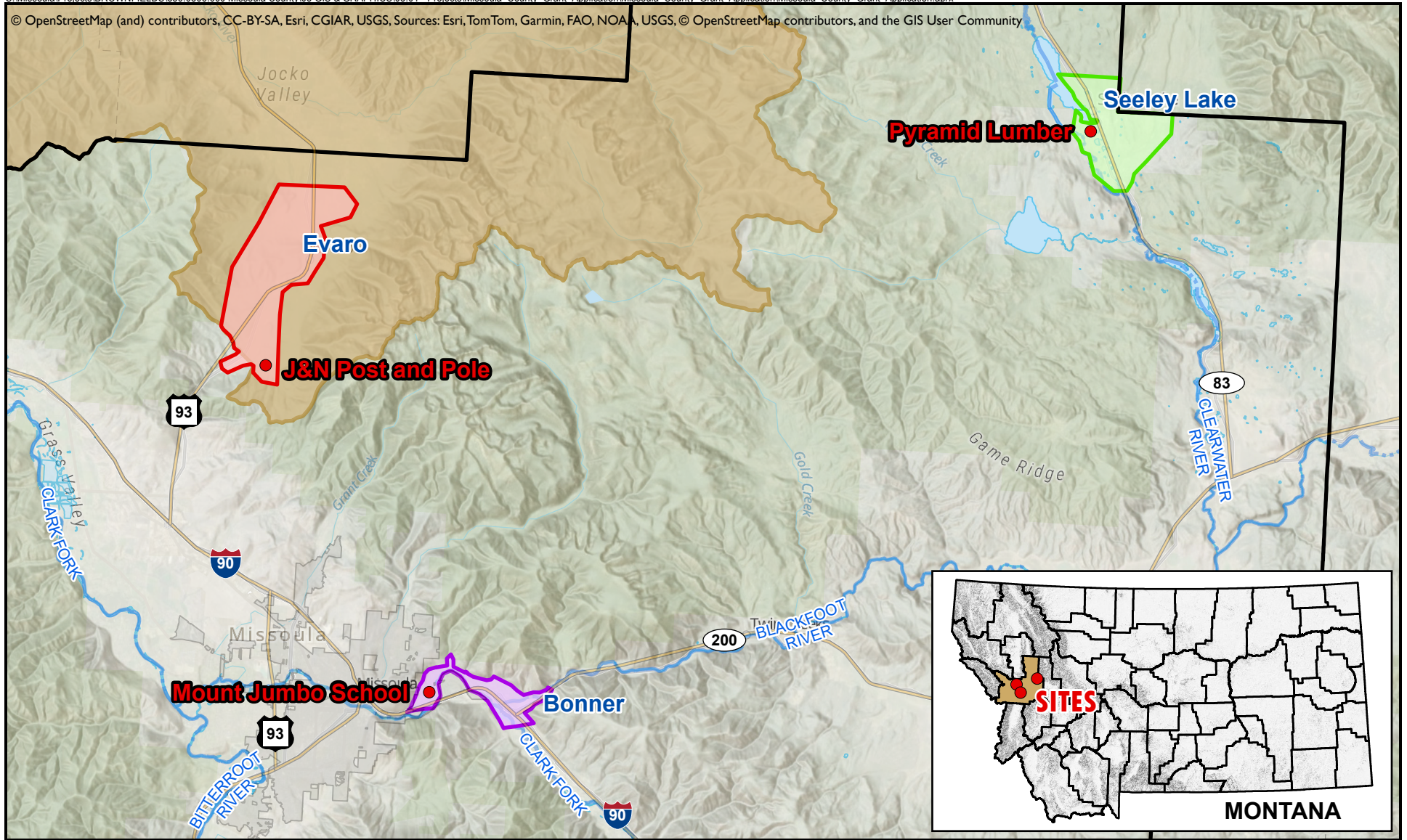
Mailing Address: 200 W. Broadway
 Physical Address: 199 West Pine
 Missoula, MT 59802-4292

P: 406.258.4877
 E: bcc@missoulacounty.us



**APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET
 FY26 ASSESSMENT GRANT PROPOSAL, EPA BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM**

1. Applicant Identification Missoula County
 200 West Broadway
 Missoula, MT 59802
-
2. Website URL <http://www.missoulacounty.us>
-
3. Funding Requested
- a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
-
4. Location The project is within the boundaries of Missoula County, Montana, including Tribal fee lands in the County. Preference will be given to sites outside the City of Missoula.
-
5. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information Our Target Areas include:
- a. Evaro Census Designated Place (CDP)
- b. Bonner – Consists of East Missoula CDP and Bonner West Riverside CDP
- c. Seeley Lake CDP
- Priority Sites:
- J&N Post and Pole: 5300 Mercer Lane, Missoula, MT 59802 (In Evaro Target Area)
 - Mt. Jumbo School: 735 Michigan Ave, Missoula, MT 59802 (In Bonner Target Area)
 - Pyramid Lumber: 379 Boy Scout RD, Seeley Lake, MT 59868 (In Seeley Lake Target Area)
-
6. Contacts
- a. Project Director
- Name: Sindie Kennedy
- Title: Brownfields Program Manager – Missoula County
- Phone Number: 406-258-3688
- Email Address: skennedy@missoulacounty.us
- Mailing Address: 200 West Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802
-
- b. Highest Ranking Elected Official
- Name: Josh Slotnick
- Title: Chair, Missoula Board of County Commissioners
- Phone Number: 406-258-4877
- Email Address: bcc@missoulacounty.us
- Mailing Address: 200 West Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802



- Priority Sites
- ▭ Missoula County Boundary
- ▭ Flathead Indian Reservation

Target Areas

- ▭ Evaro
- ▭ Bonner
- ▭ Seeley Lake

Target Areas & Priority Sites
Missoula County Grant Application
Missoula County, Montana
FIGURE 1



January 15, 2026

Sindie Kennedy
Brownfields Coordinator
Missoula County Grants and Community Programs
200 W. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802

RE: Missoula County's Brownfields Assessment Grant Application

Dear Ms. Kennedy:

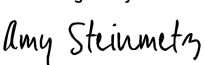
I am writing to express Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) support for Missoula County's efforts to obtain a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment Grant.

I understand that the assessment funds will be used to assess hazardous substance and petroleum Brownfields sites in Missoula County and on the Flathead Reservation within the Missoula County boundary. With the recent closure of the Roseburg and Pyramid Lumber facilities, the timber industry has met its full demise in Missoula County. Moreover, Montana's housing market was named by the National Association of Realtors as the least affordable in the country (with Missoula's housing market contributing significantly to that status). These conditions have placed more redevelopment pressure on underutilized and blighted sites. The Brownfields Program plays a critical role in bolstering an emerging manufacturing economy and addressing a housing shortage by returning underutilized and blighted sites to productive beneficial re-use.

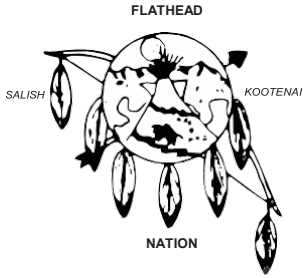
The DEQ supports Brownfields efforts in Montana and wishes to promote assessment and cleanup activities that allow contaminated properties to be redeveloped, thus promoting economic development.

If you have any questions or comments about petroleum or hazardous substance brownfields sites, please contact George Williams at 406-218-7410 or George.Williams@mt.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

DB2E8B9096174A7
Amy Steinmetz, Administrator
DEQ Waste Management & Remediation Division

cc: George Williams, DEQ Brownfields Coordinator, George.Williams@mt.gov.
Jason Seyler, DEQ Brownfields Coordinator, jseyler@mt.gov



THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION
P.O. BOX 278 Pablo, Montana 59855
(406) 275-2700
FAX (406) 275-2806
www.cskt.org



TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mike Dolson – Chairman
Jaimie Plouffe-Vice Chair
Danielle Matt– Secretary
Carole Lankford– Treasurer
Martin Charlo
Greg Dumontier
James “Bing” Matt
Tom McDonald
James Steele, Jr.
Len TwoTeeth

January 26, 2026

Missoula Board of County Commissioners
199 West Pine Street
Missoula, Montana 59802

**Letter of Acknowledgement
Missoula County Assessment Grant Application**

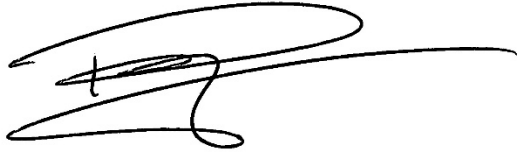
Dear Commissioners:

We, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), are the Tribal Environmental Authority on the Flathead Reservation, and we acknowledge that Missoula County plans to conduct assessment activities and is planning to apply for FY26 federal Brownfields Grant funds.

Missoula County overlaps part of the Flathead Reservation. As we have discussed with the County, on the Reservation, CSKT’s Brownfields Tribal Response Program plans to focus on land owned and/or managed by our tribal government or tribal members. It is CSKT’s understanding that Missoula County will focus on other properties.

CSKT supports brownfields revitalization efforts on the Flathead Reservation and wishes to promote assessment and cleanup planning that allow contaminated properties to be put into productive use. If you have any questions, please contact our Brownfields Tribal Response Program Manager (MaryRose Morigeau) at 406-883-2888 Ext. 7215 or via email to MaryRose.Morigeau@cskt.org

Sincerely,



Rich Janssen Jr., MBA
Department Head
CSKT Natural Resources Department

cc:

Michael Dolson, Chairman, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes – Michael.dolson@cskt.org

MaryRose.Morigeau, CSKT NRD Brownfields TRP- MaryRose.Morigea@cskt.org

Chauncey Means, CSKT Div. Mgr, NRD Environmental Protection- Chauncey.Means@cskt.org

Sindie Kennedy -Grants Administrator, Missoula County- skennedy@missoulacounty.us

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Missoula County is applying for an EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant to revitalize properties within its 2,600-square-mile jurisdiction, with focused target areas in Seeley Lake, Evaro, and Bonner. The 2024 closure of our last major wood product mills ended a century-old timber industry, eliminating hundreds of jobs and eroding household incomes and tax revenues. These losses have strained schools, emergency services, and infrastructure. Collaborating with partners in industry and the non-profit sector, and utilizing brownfields assessment resources, we seek to incentivize strategic investment, reverse blight, attract new businesses, create jobs, and build a diversified economy for long-term resilience.

Early timber ventures thrived in Missoula County because the narrow river valleys surrounded by steep forested mountains were well-suited for transporting logs down river to mills. In 1886, E.L. Bonner established Montana's first industrial sawmill here, and our communities grew to support timber operations with equipment suppliers, log trucks, fueling stations, and gravel mines. After a century of growth, the industry's decline started in 1990, culminating in the closure of all major mills and the loss of roughly 1,490 good-wage jobs across three downturns: the 1990s recession, the 2008 Great Recession, and the final closures in 2024.

Missoula County has a shortage of developable land due to steep hillsides and river floodplains, making compact infill redevelopment essential. Our target areas are **Seeley Lake**, **Evaro**, and **Bonner**, which are census-designated places (CDPs) in communities with former wood products facilities and struggling economies. **Seeley Lake**, once a thriving lumber town, lost its mill in 2024. **Evaro** is an area where Missoula County and the Flathead Indian Reservation overlap. The area historically supported logging and rail transport, but since the timber industry's collapse, Evaro has had limited local employment. Supporting Evaro neighborhoods with brownfields assistance could further strengthen our relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT). To avoid overlapping use of grant funds when on the Reservation, we will focus on non-tribally owned properties, while CSKT uses grant funds to revitalize tribally owned properties. **Bonner**, formed by adjacent CDPs of Bonner-West Riverside and East Missoula, is at the confluence of the Blackfoot and Clark Fork Rivers, and served as western Montana's timber hub for 122 years. After its mill closed, the community fractured, and the former mill became an industrial park that struggles to attract stable tenants. All target areas have low incomes and elevated poverty rates, underscoring the need for strategic investment to address economic decline and create opportunity.

The decline of the timber industry in Missoula County was driven by rising operational costs, severe labor shortages exacerbated by lack of affordable housing for workers. The closure of Pyramid Mountain Lumber in Seeley Lake was triggered by these factors combined with high inflation and volatile, low lumber prices. Mill closures have resulted in lack of investment, leaving large underutilized and environmentally contaminated industrial sites. These sites are at prime locations for redevelopment and have extensive infrastructure. They are ripe to be returned to active reuse that includes workforce housing and new job opportunities, if we can provide the right incentives. EPA Assessment funds will directly support community engagement, site inventory and prioritization, Phase I/II ESAs, and cleanup planning (ABCAs); thereby reducing uncertainty and revealing reuse options for properties that are otherwise hindered by fear of contamination or liability.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Through community outreach and research, we created an inventory of 344 brownfields sites in the County. These include former sawmills and wood treatment operations, a burned bowling alley, and a buried junk vehicles area in an Infrastructure Planning Area. We also identified four out-of-use schools, former fueling facilities (each with State Petroleum Fund status known, where applicable), and an historical oil refinery surrounded by urban development. The properties range in size from 1/8-acre residential lots to a 161-acre rural property with abandoned buildings. Environmental concerns include petroleum fuels at underground tank sites, methane and pentachlorophenol at sawmills and wood treatment facilities, tar at a former small refinery, and asbestos and lead-based paint in blighted buildings and former schools.

Within each target area for this assessment grant, we have identified one priority site that is better positioned for redevelopment with the proper due diligence and planning information. These sites include a former lumber

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

mill, a wood treatment facility near the Flathead Reservation boundary, and a closed school. Each site is prioritized based on environmental risk, reuse potential, and community benefit. These priority sites are inactive and present opportunities to clean up properties, protect public health, and catalyze economic revitalization.

Pyramid Lumber, the largest employer in Seeley Lake, shut down in 2024. This led to the loss of about 350 jobs in Seeley Lake, a town of 1,369. The mill operated for 75 years on the 136-acre site between the lake and the Clearwater River. There are 7 buildings on the property, and the main mill building has 10 different rooflines from generations of additions. Potential contaminants at the mill include fuels and oils from large-scale mill equipment, methane from buried wood waste, and asbestos in building materials. Assessments will include building materials testing plus soil sampling in areas with suspected wood treatment chemicals and petroleum releases. Cleanup planning will include collaboration with the Seeley Lake Community, DEQ, the County's Public Health Department, and the current owners. Seeley Lake is challenged by the absence of a community wastewater system, which limits growth and leads to polluted groundwater and surface water. We are working with our federal congressional delegation to earmark funding for a community wastewater system, while design of the system is underway. This site is a priority due to its size, long history of industrial operations, and threat to water bodies. Assessing this large site removes a barrier for investors.

J&N Post and Pole is a 6-acre inactive wood-treating operation in Evaro that operated from 1971 to 1990. The property is in a rural area spanning both Missoula County and the Flathead Indian Reservation. Contaminated soil was confirmed in several areas while removing an underground storage tank in 1991. Site contaminants include pentachlorophenol (PCP) and petroleum. The former site owner submitted a work plan for investigation and cleanup over 30 years ago, but it was never implemented due to a lack of funding. The property is in a rural area spanning both Missoula County and the Flathead Indian Reservation. Activities at this site will include surface and subsurface soil sampling to determine the remaining concentration, extent, and degree of natural attenuation of a known release of wood treatment chemical (PCP) in a petroleum carrier fluid. We expect the J&N Post and Pole cleanup plan to address the supplemental removal actions needed to delist the site from Montana's State Superfund list. Assessing this site could serve to further strengthen our already healthy relationship with CSKT.

Mt. Jumbo, a 39,800-square-foot former public school, served the Bonner area from 1980 until its closure in 2006 due to declining enrollment. It is the largest structure in East Missoula, but sits idle amid potential asbestos concerns and significant deferred maintenance, estimated at nearly \$3M. Assessments at this site will include building materials testing and a building materials cleanup plan. Bid specifications for the school district's use could also be provided. With new residential construction underway, demand for indoor public spaces and local commercial opportunities is growing. The school district is gathering community input and planning for Mt. Jumbo reuse. Expanding on our previous success, the district has requested more assessments to inform reuse planning. This is critical for advancing educational, economic, and neighborhood revitalization.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites: To identify sites in Missoula County, we will collaborate with our extensive outreach network, update our site inventory, and prioritize sites based on the criteria described below. Our outreach network includes 7 community councils, County Commissioners, economic development organizations, private developers, and Brownfields Coordinators at CSKT, City of Missoula, and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Our current inventory includes 344 sites in the County, including leaking underground storage tank sites, blighted buildings, shuttered schools, community centers, and the State Superfund (not Federal) contaminated sites list. Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) is facilitating a public outreach effort to obtain public feedback and explore redevelopment or reuse options for 4 closed school buildings (including Mt. Jumbo); we may -provide building materials testing at the other 3 closed schools after assisting our priority sites if they are prioritized. Additional likely sites in our target areas include the former Circle K fueling station adjacent to a church in East Missoula; the Piltzville Fire Station in the Bonner area; underutilized industrial sites in the Targeted Economic Development District around the Interstate 90 and Hwy 93 intersection; a burned former bowling alley in Seeley Lake; and green spaces adjacent to high school grounds in the town of Seeley Lake that Missoula County could acquire as a public open space or park. We will prioritize the following site characteristics: Brownfields-eligible under CERCLA §104(k), alignment with local plans, benefits to sensitive/disproportionately impacted populations, readiness (site access/owner cooperation), proximity to

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

existing infrastructure, and potential to leverage public/private resources. Community input collected through meetings and surveys will be incorporated into final prioritization decisions.

1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Our overall reuse goals are to assist business and residential redevelopment, enhance housing availability, and collaborate with CSKT and the State in communities affected by the timber industry crash. At **Pyramid Lumber**, the reuse strategy is to increase intensity of development at the site and improve wastewater management to allow a combination of waterfront housing, workforce housing, and specialized manufacturing. Retaining industrial use in a portion of the Pyramid Lumber property aligns with the 2010 Seeley Lake Regional Plan, which designates the site as one of only two industrial areas. At **J&N Post and Pole**, the reuse strategy is to restore the property to forested open space after cleanup and removal from the State Superfund contaminated sites list. This approach aligns with the *Open and Resource Land* designation in Missoula County's 2002 Regional Land Use Guide. This project strengthens collaboration with CSKT and promotes tribal priorities in planning and implementation. At **Mt. Jumbo**, we will facilitate redevelopment in line with the ongoing MCPS Properties Plan, with options including indoor public spaces and commercial uses. Reuse concepts are grounded in zoning, infrastructure capacity, public-health considerations, and market conditions; thus, advancing community priorities around jobs, attainable housing, and environmental quality.

1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Resuming **Pyramid Lumber** mill operations will revitalize a key industry that has historically anchored the Seeley Lake's economy. Economic strength and a need for housing may help develop a needed community wastewater system to support expanded housing on and off-site, while protecting water quality in Seeley Lake. Lack of local housing and the resulting workforce shortage were among the largest contributors to Pyramid Lumber's closure, according to the company. Redeveloping Pyramid Lumber is expected to create approximately 100 jobs and provide up to 10 affordable homes. At **J&N Post and Pole**, cleanup and delisting will support a safe return of 6 acres to open forested greenspace, eliminate contamination risks from PCP and petroleum, and support sustainable forestry and wildfire mitigation. Collaboration with CSKT will guide planning and strengthen intergovernmental partnerships, ensuring environmental restoration and climate resilience while honoring cultural priorities. The Properties Plan for **Mt. Jumbo** promotes a desire for indoor public or accessible spaces to accommodate community and neighborhood needs. An example of a possible reuse is incubator spaces for small businesses with the plan of creating up to 50 jobs. The community will benefit from improved access to public spaces that serve as a social and cultural hub, provide increased job opportunities, increase property values, and provide a ripple effect on other local services.

Pyramid Lumber is in a floodplain. Redevelopment will reduce vulnerability by restricting development in high-risk areas, restoring wetlands, and elevating or flood-proofing existing structures. Reopening mills, like Pyramid Lumber, reduces wildfire risk and lowers mitigation costs by creating a local market for timber removed during forest management. Energy conservation elements include developing housing near commercial spaces or opening a school to reduce the need for long trips. In any local government reuse of these sites, we would comply with the County's commitment to carbon-neutral operations by 2025 and 100% clean electricity by 2030. We will encourage reuse to incorporate energy-efficiency measures (e.g., high-efficiency HVAC, building envelope upgrades) and solar readiness; renewable energy integration will be evaluated during planning. Quantified projections (e.g., direct funding leveraged for assessment/cleanup, private/public investment committed and anticipated, jobs created, acres made ready for reuse, and community members engaged) will be added post-market analysis.

1.f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Missoula County's Grants & Community Resources Department works to secure state and federal resources for redevelopment in small communities. We have strong partnerships, including the Missoula Economic Partnership, which connects businesses to redevelopment opportunities; Homeword, a nonprofit housing developer; the Missoula Organization of Realtors, which educates members on Brownfields opportunities; and Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS), which is planning the reuse of shuttered school properties such as Mt. Jumbo. The City of Missoula Brownfields Program and the Montana DEQ Brownfields Program provide technical support and EPA grants, though their funds are insufficient for the scale of our planned projects.

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

Internally, Missoula County has committed significant resources, including staff time and a \$100,000 loan toward wastewater planning in Seeley Lake, home of **Pyramid Lumber**. Additional funding tools include loans under the Sawmill Revitalization Act (3-4% interest) for Pyramid Lumber, and potential cleanup assistance for **J&N Post and Pole** through CSKT’s Natural Resources Department and Montana’s State Superfund program. In Bonner, two Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDDs) offer tax-increment financing for infrastructure improvements. MCPS will lead efforts to secure resources for **Mt. Jumbo’s** reuse and leverage its strong record of voter-approved bond measures. These resources are distinct from tasks described in Section 3 and will be pursued in parallel to stimulate additional investment at priority sites.

1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: **Pyramid Lumber** has large sawmill structures, power, water, timber supply chains, and Seeley Lake is planning for a large new wastewater treatment plant to support the entire town. **Mt. Jumbo** uses the City of Missoula’s sewer and water systems and received fiber optic service this summer, making it ready for reuse as a community or commercial hub. At **J&N Post and Pole**, existing access roads and utility connections will support cleanup activities and future reuse as forested open space. No major infrastructure upgrades are anticipated beyond minor site stabilization, as the reuse strategy aligns with the Regional Land Use Guide’s *Open and Resource Land* designation. Using existing roads, utilities, and structures will reduce pre-development costs and timelines. Where upgrades are necessary (e.g., fire suppression, wastewater, stormwater), we will coordinate targeted funding (e.g., TEDD/TIF, state infrastructure programs) alongside cleanup planning.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding: Our target areas have small populations and limited fiscal capacity to fund environmental assessments, cleanup, and reuse on their own: **Evaro** (479 residents), **Bonner-West Riverside** (1,445), and **Seeley Lake** (1,335). According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, our target areas report median household incomes markedly below county, state, and national levels. Evaro’s median income (\$68,977) slightly trails Missoula County, while Bonner-West Riverside CDP (\$59,609) and Seeley Lake (\$46,031) fall 16–35% below county (\$71,246) and state (\$69,922) averages and 26-43% below the U.S. median of \$80,610. Poverty rates further underscore vulnerability: Evaro’s poverty rate is 24% (twice the state average), Bonner–West Riverside is 14.7%, and Seeley Lake is 6.5% (ACS, 2023). These small tax bases and below-county incomes constrain local borrowing and public funding for due diligence and remediation; EPA assessment funds are therefore essential to stimulate reuse and private investment in these rural communities. As a result, Missoula County lacks sufficient resources to conduct necessary brownfields assessments and remediation, underscoring the critical need for federal support to restore economic vitality and protect public health. Because these communities have small populations and/or low incomes, they are unable to draw on other sources of funding to carry out environmental assessments, remediation, and subsequent reuse.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Sensitive populations in the target areas include Native American residents (~45% in Evaro; ~13% in Bonner-West Riverside) and older adults in Seeley Lake (median age ~62.6) who face elevated health risks from wildfire smoke and legacy contaminants in rural valley communities with limited healthcare access (ACS, 2023). Seasonal smoke frequently pushes 24-hour particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) above 35 µg/m³ (considered “unhealthy for sensitive groups”), and the EPA’s tightened annual health-based standard is now 9.0 µg/m³, signaling persistent exposure concerns in these valleys (EPA, 2024; American Lung Association [ALA], 2023). This grant will identify exposure pathways through Phase I/II ESAs and plan cleanups to remove hazards (e.g., petroleum, PCP, asbestos), while site reuse will reduce exposure and improve welfare—e.g., workforce housing and resumed mill operations at **Pyramid Lumber**, forested open space restoration at **J&N Post and Pole**, and educational/business reuse at **Mt. Jumbo**.

2.c. Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Seeley Lake, Evaro, and Bonner face health burdens above Montana norms, driven by prolonged wildfire smoke and winter woodstove emissions that elevate fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) well beyond EPA health-based standards. In Montana, non-Hispanic Native American adults report higher asthma rates, 14% versus 11.6% statewide, indicating elevated respiratory disease burden. The CDC’s Analytic Database shows higher cancer incidence and mortality in

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

American Indian populations within Montana’s Indian Health Service areas. These health disparities are particularly significant for **Evaro** and surrounding communities, which have substantial Native American populations. Missoula County’s PM2.5 levels during wildfire season often exceed 35 µg/m³ (more than double the EPA 24-hour standard) and annually exceed the annual level of 9.0 µg/m³, placing residents at elevated risk for chronic respiratory disease and cardiovascular complications. In 2025, the ALA ranked Missoula among the top 25 most polluted cities for year-round and short-term particle pollution. The grant will directly address threats associated with contaminants linked to cancer and asthma by assessing and planning the cleanup of environmental contaminants with well-documented carcinogenic and respiratory hazards. For example, according to the Missoula County Water Quality District elevated PFAS have been detected in ground water in parts of Missoula with reports indicating potential contaminants exceeding EPA guidelines in the Bonner Target Area. The grant will also reduce exposure to wildfire-related particle pollution, which in **Seeley Lake** reached “hazardous” PM2.5 averages of 220.9 µg/m³ for 49 days with persistent lung-function impairment documented in follow-up cohorts (University of Montana, 2018), underscoring elevated disease risk from repeated smoke events. Planned reuse, including housing near services, mill operations that support forest fuel reduction, and community facilities, will lower contact with contaminants and smoke, helping populations with greater-than-normal burdens (e.g., chronic respiratory disease) by reducing exposure and improving protective infrastructure (aligned to EPA’s 9.0 µg/m³ annual standard and fewer >35 µg/m³ 24-hour exceedances). Greater-than-normal status is established by comparison to Montana averages (e.g., asthma 11.6% statewide vs. 14% in Native American adults) and national health standards (e.g., PM2.5 annual 9.0 µg/m³).

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: Our target areas are economically vulnerable and disproportionately impacted by legacy industrial activities and environmental burdens. Poverty rates range from 6.5% in Seeley Lake to 24% in Evaro. Median incomes of Seeley Lake (\$46,031), Bonner (\$59,609) and Evaro (\$68,977) fall well below county (\$73,429), state (\$70,804), and national levels (\$77,719) (ACS, 2023). These communities face the combined weight of poverty, insufficient healthcare, and persistent contamination from shuttered timber mills, fuel spills, wood-treatment chemicals, and aging building materials. **Seeley Lake** faces additional challenges from the 2024 closure of its largest employer, Pyramid Lumber, leaving a 136-acre mill site with potential petroleum and asbestos contamination and no community wastewater system. **Evaro’s** large Native American population (~45%) experiences disproportionate risk from the wood treatment chemicals and historic fuel release, while **Bonner’s** former mill area has documented arsenic and PCB groundwater contamination. This grant will fund assessments and cleanup planning to remove hazards and enable reuse strategies such as affordable housing, community facilities, and limited timber operations that restore jobs, reduce exposure, and strengthen resilience for populations that have borne a greater share of environmental consequences.

2.e. Project Involvement, and 2.f. Project Roles: Local stakeholders are highly engaged in brownfields redevelopment, with longstanding programs in place. Business development, housing advocacy non-profits, community councils, and groups focused on business expansion and environmental protection are all involved. The partners listed below will be essential to the redevelopment.

Partner Name	Partner’s Mission	Point of Contact	Role in the Project
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes	To protect, preserve and enhance the natural resources, culture and sovereignty of the Séliš, Q̓lispé and Ksanka people for future generations.	MaryRose Morigeau (CSKT Brownfields Tribal Response Program Manager) maryrose.morigeau@ckst.org 406- 883-2888 Ext. 7215	Collaborate on assessments of fee lands that are on the Flathead Reservation and within Missoula County.
Missoula Economic Partnership (Nonprofit)	Engage in strategic business development, create pathways for people to realize their	Julie Lacey (Economic Development Dir.) jlacey@missoulapartnership.com	Connect businesses with redevelopment potential in Seeley Lake, Bonner, and Evaro to our Program.

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

Partner Name	Partner's Mission	Point of Contact	Role in the Project
research and business siting)	potential, and foster our culture of diversity and innovation	406-543-6623	Provide economic and demographic data
Seeley Lake Community Foundation	Engage philanthropy, provide leadership, and enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of the Seeley Lake area	Clair Muller (Exec. Dir.) cmuller@slcfmt.org 406-549-4543	Connect us with key stakeholders in the Seeley Lake community and suggest Brownfields sites
Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS)*	Engage students in a quality education that empowers, inspires, and prepares them for their future	Burley McWilliams (Operations Director) bmcwilliams@mcpsmt.org 406-728-2400	Collaborate on MCPS assessments and support the reuse of shuttered school buildings (Mt. Jumbo)
Missoula Organization of Realtors (County-wide)	Empower our members to serve the real estate needs of their clients and the community at the highest professional level	Jeff LeRoy (Public Affairs Dir.) jeff@missoularealestate.com 406-728-0560	Provide market intelligence (vacancy rates, buyer constraints, demand) to guide redevelopment
Homeword (Nonprofit housing developer, County-wide)	Strengthen Montana communities with homebuyer education and financial skill building to create safe, healthy homes people can afford	Heather McMilin (Project Dir.) heather@homeword.org 406-532-4663	Bring large low-income housing redevelopment projects involving Brownfield sites to us, and support reuse
City of Missoula Brownfields Program	Protect human health and the environment by facilitating the reuse or redevelopment of contaminated properties	Tyler Walls (Brownfields Specialist) wallst@ci.missoula.mt.us 406-541-6108	Collaborate on potential Brownfields sites in the City and support cleanups with their RLF

*The school district is a separate entity from Missoula County.

2.g. Incorporating Community Input: To achieve meaningful engagement, we will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) that outlines multiple methods to communicate project progress and solicit input from residents and stakeholders. Our approach includes public meetings announced on our website and in local newspapers, quarterly email updates, and offer remote (Zoom/Teams) participation options for accessibility. Community council meetings will serve as structured opportunities for residents to share concerns and ideas. Significant concerns will receive formal written responses from County Commissioners, and routine matters will be addressed by the Brownfields Program Manager, ensuring transparency and accountability.

We will use our partners' established outreach networks to create a continuous feedback loop tied directly to project decisions. Partners such as the Seeley Lake Community Foundation, Missoula Economic Partnership, and Homeword will collect and relay public input during their regular interactions with residents and stakeholders. Community council meetings (in 7 communities) will be a key component of this loop, providing structured opportunities for residents to share concerns and ideas. The county's longstanding, mutually respectful and supportive relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes involves regular interactions that provide opportunities to obtain feedback and provide updates on the brownfields program. Our Missoula County Voice website displays project information and provides a simple platform for educating the public and soliciting comments. Missoula County Commissioners hold multiple public meetings weekly and receive public input through in-person attendees, community councils, phone, and email; Brownfields-related public input is shared with our Brownfields Program Manager, who responds to the public either directly or during public meetings. We will actively document and integrate feedback into site prioritization and cleanup planning, ensuring that community voices actively shape project outcomes. Following public and stakeholder meetings, we will publish a summary of 'concerns raised and plans changed.

Missoula County publicly announced its intent to apply for the FY26 EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant through a six-week notice posted on the Missoula County Voice platform, supplemented by

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

social-media outreach and our weekly county newsletter. The Missoula County Voice announcement generated strong engagement, with a 59.2% open rate (1,381 views) and a 4.8% click-through rate (111 views). Social-media posts reached 988 people on Facebook and 895 on Instagram, with community interactions on both platforms. This outreach invited residents to review the County’s proposed focus areas, share concerns, and submit recommendations regarding potential brownfield sites and community priorities. Feedback collected during this notice period was incorporated into our outreach strategy, site-prioritization approach, and the development of this application, demonstrating a transparent public process and a commitment to community-driven redevelopment.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Project Implementation, 3b. Anticipated Project Schedule, 3c. Task/activity Lead, 3d. Outputs

<i>Task/Activity</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
<i>Task 1. Cooperative Agreement Oversight</i>			
Procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP)	FY27 Q1	County	Request for Proposal and QEP contract
Meetings with QEP and EPA	Weekly/ Monthly	County	Meeting notes
Reporting	Quarterly/ Annually	County	16 quarterly reports, 4 annual reports, 4 DBE & FFR forms, input ~12 sites to ACRES, 1 final report & closeout
Reimbursement requests	Quarterly	County	ASAP.gov requests at least quarterly
Records	Continuous	County	Organized and accurate files
Training	Annually	County	2 national & 1 state conference
<i>Task 2. Community Involvement</i>			
Establish a coordinated plan for two-way communication with stakeholders, partners, and public	FY27 Q2	QEP, County	Community Involvement Plan
Develop outreach materials	FY27 Q2	QEP	100 Program brochure, 500 FAQ fact sheet, update presentation slides, update website
Present at meetings of all 7 Community Councils	FY27 Q3- FY28 Q3	County, QEP	Meeting notes
Stakeholder, Partner, and Local Public Communication	FY27 Q1- Ongoing	QEP, County	12 updates to partners, 6 ads/postings in target areas, 9 local public meetings, meeting notes
<i>Task 3. Site Assessments</i>			
Select and prioritize sites ¹	FY27 Q1- FY30 Q3	QEP	~12 Site Access Agreements and Site Eligibility Determination Forms
Sites Inventory	FY27 Q3- Ongoing	QEP	Updated Sites Inventory table with a map
Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) ²	3 in FY27, 2 in FY28	QEP	5 Phase I ESAs (current ASTM standards & All Appropriate Inquiries), ACRES updates
Update Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)	FY27 Q2	QEP	A 2027 QAPP that addresses the Quality Assurance Document Review Crosswalk
Phase II ESA (extent and severity of contamination)	2 in FY27, 4 in FY28, 3 in FY29	QEP	9 ASTM-compliant Phase II Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAP) and ESA Reports ³ , and ACRES updates
<i>Task 4. Reuse & Cleanup Planning</i>			
Cleanup planning documents with cost estimates	3 in FY28, 5 in FY29, 2 in FY30	QEP	6 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), 4 Cleanup Bid Specifications, ACRES updates

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

¹ Past Assessment Grants have streamlined our site prioritization and eligibility processes, allowing us to assess 20 sites in under five years. This efficiency shows our ability to drive impactful development.

² Phase I assessments will comply with ASTM Standards and the All-Appropriate Inquiry (AAI) rule and will identify Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs).

³ SAPs are drafted after discussions with each site owner about data needs, leading to a meaningful assessment. Onsite activities will follow applicable EPA rules, regulations, and grant requirements, as well as guidelines from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

All proposed EPA-funded tasks/activities are eligible under the NOFO (e.g., ESAs, ABCA, community engagement). If participant support costs are used for community liaisons, stipends will be based on documented time/receipts and verified to avoid duplication with other programs.

3.e. Cost Estimates: Budget table is below, followed by a description of unit costs.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)				
		1: Program Management	2: Community Outreach	3: Site Assessment	4: Cleanup Planning	Total
Direct Costs*	Personnel	\$22,000	\$11,677	\$0	\$7,176	\$40,853
	Fringe Benefits**	\$7,040	\$3,737	\$0	\$2,296	\$13,073
	Travel***	\$4,200	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$6,700
	<i>No Equipment, Supplies, or Other Costs</i>					
	Contractual	\$0	\$27,574	\$350,300	\$61,500	\$439,374
Total Budget		\$33,240	\$45,488	\$350,300	\$70,972	\$500,000

*The County is not requesting Indirect Costs. **Fringe Benefits are 32% of Personnel cost. ***Travel is for brownfields-related conferences and community outreach.

Task 1: Program Management costs (\$33,240, 7% of total) are calculated as follows: Personnel costs of 471.2 hours of Brownfields Program Manager at \$46.69/hour = \$22,000. Fringe Benefits at 32% of Personnel costs = \$7,040. Travel is mileage (\$90), hotel (\$370), and food (\$140) for one DEQ Brownfields Conference (total: \$600), plus flights (\$650 each), hotel (\$750 each), and food (\$400 each) for two National Brownfields Conferences (total: \$1,800 each).

Task 2: Community Outreach (\$45,488, 9% of total) is calculated as Personnel costs of 250.1 hours of Brownfields Program Manager at \$46.69/hour = \$11,677. Fringe Benefits at 32% Personnel costs = \$3,737. Travel cost of fuel and per diem for 20 trips to communities, partners, and stakeholders throughout the County (\$2,500). The Contractual cost of \$27,574 includes \$1,050 for a new Community Involvement Plan; stakeholder, partner, and community council meetings (\$17,974), and fact sheets (\$950 each) on 9 Phase II ESA sites.

Task 3: Site Assessment (\$350,300, 70% of total) is for contractual work to produce 5 Phase I ESAs (average of \$6,400 each; \$32,000 subtotal) and 9 Phase II ESAs (average of \$35,367 each; \$318,300 subtotal). The contracted QEP will perform a Phase I ESA for a priority site (Mt. Jumbo), then 4 additional Phase I ESAs on inventoried sites. We intend to complete 9 Phase II ESAs, utilizing the identification process outlined in 1.c. to include all 3 priority sites, 3 additional petroleum sites, and 3 additional sites with hazardous building materials concerns.

Phase II ESA costs include eligibility determination, SAPs, fieldwork, laboratory testing, and reporting. The estimated cost scale depends on the site conditions. At Pyramid Lumber, we estimate \$70,000 for the various sampling methods listed above. The average cost for other priority sites will be \$34,750. Our review of past costs in our Program suggests that Phase II assessments of building materials sites, beyond our priority sites, are relatively low cost (assumed average of \$16,300 each). These assessments have low laboratory fees (~\$10/sample) for asbestos testing, and field screening for lead in painted surfaces and soil using XRF would enable rapid and inexpensive testing at dozens of locations.

Task 4: Cleanup Planning (\$70,972, 14% of total) is for County stakeholder engagement (153.7 hours at personnel rate of \$46.69/hour = \$7,176, plus 32% fringe benefit rate = \$2,296) and contractual work of 6 ABCAs

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

averaging \$6,583 (\$39,500 total) and 4 bid specifications averaging \$5,500 each (\$22,000 total) where we complete Phase II ESAs.

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: Missoula County will implement a structured system to track, measure, and evaluate progress toward all anticipated outputs and outcomes. The Brownfields Project Manager will collaborate with the EPA Project Officer to develop a Work Plan that identifies deliverables for each task, quantifies outputs, and sets timelines and milestones (as proposed in section 3.a.). For example, Task 3 includes 5 Phase I ESAs and 9 Phase II ESAs; Task 4 includes 6 cleanup planning documents with cost estimates and 4 bid specifications. These outputs clearly correlate with the proposed project and will be tracked in ACRES and internal logs.

Monthly coordination with EPA and quarterly reporting will track progress against milestones, with prompt corrective actions (e.g., revising timelines, reallocating resources, or adjusting outreach strategies) if delays occur. We will integrate stakeholder feedback into weekly meetings and progress reviews to drive adaptive strategies and promote accountability. Success will be measured by compliance with EPA requirements and tangible outcomes: expedited reuse of Pyramid Lumber, delisting J&N Post and Pole from the State Superfund list, and reuse of Mt. Jumbo. Outputs (e.g., inventories, ESAs, ABCAs, meetings) will be linked to outcomes (e.g., acres readied for reuse, jobs supported, reduced exposure pathways) and summarized in public updates. Outcomes will be recorded in ACRES during and beyond the grant period, as redevelopment proceeds. This process achieves accountability, transparency, and adaptability while the outcomes advance public health, drive economic revitalization, and reflect community needs and priorities.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Organizational Capacity: Three elected commissioners lead Missoula County's government, which includes a chief financial officer, chief administrative officer, chief operating officer, and directors of over 30 departments, eight of which are led by elected officials. Missoula County complies with the auditing and reporting requirements provided for in 2 CFR Part 200 and Montana Code Annotated and maintains an established financial accounting system that conforms with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Missoula County maintains effective internal controls over federal awards, providing reasonable assurance that the county is managing such awards in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of each award. In 2024, Missoula County received and efficiently administered over \$17.3 million in federal grant funding for a population of 122,546 (2024 U.S. Census Bureau, ACS Demographics and Housing Estimates).

4.b. Organizational Structure: The Assessment grant will be managed by our Grants and Community Resources (GCR) Department in the Office of Lands and Communities (LAC). GCR's principal function is to acquire and administer grants and loans for the county, which currently includes a portfolio of local, state, federal, and foundation grants totaling \$9.9 million. GCR staff members report to the LAC Chief Officer and the elected Commissioners. Until June 2016, GCR was a joint city/county department, and in that capacity administered the City's EPA Brownfields grants for the prior 12 years. Missoula County has received one EPA Cleanup grant (2012) and two EPA Assessment grants (2019, 2022) – all of which were fully expended and successfully closed. Accordingly, GCR staff are well qualified to manage a Brownfields Assessment Grant, as they have been successfully managing local, state, and federal grants for more than 30 years. For the upcoming grant period, the Brownfields team includes Sindie Kennedy, Melissa Gordon, and Andrew Hagemeyer. These key staff are profiled below.

4.c. Description of Key Staff: Sindie Kennedy, MA, Community Resources Manager, currently serves as Missoula County Brownfields Program Manager and will continue to be responsible for everyday management and implementation of the assessment grant. Ms. Kennedy developed the Missoula County Brownfields Program upon securing an assessment grant in 2019. Since then, Ms. Kennedy formed strong relationships with stakeholders and increased demand for the brownfields program (more demand than can be currently met). She attended the 2019, 2021, and 2023 Annual Brownfields Conferences in Los Angeles, Oklahoma City, and Detroit, respectively; and brownfields workshops in Lewistown, Great Falls, and Helena, MT, and Denver, CO; and works closely with Montana DEQ and EPA staff on other ongoing projects. Ms. Kennedy has over 20 years of grant management experience. She has a master's degree from the University of Arizona.

Missoula County, Montana – FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant – Review Criteria

Melissa Gordon, MA, Director of GCR, has 20+ years of grant management experience. Ms. Gordon will provide senior-level oversight of the Brownfields Assessment Program, including periodic certification that program requirements and deadlines are met, and review of contracts in tandem with the county attorney.

Andrew Hagemeyer, AICP, a certified planner with over 20 years of community planning experience is the Missoula County Director of Community and Economic Development, manages five county Tax Increment Financing districts and Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDDs) and all developable lands owned by Missoula County. Mr. Hagemeyer will be instrumental in identifying additional sites for assessment and informing stakeholders of the Brownfields Assessment Program.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources: Our GCR staff have a long-standing track record of successfully procuring contracted service providers. To satisfy the requirements of the Brownfields program, in accordance with 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart C, we will publish a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). The QEP will provide contractual services that include community outreach, conducting environmental site assessments, and planning for redevelopment and cleanups. The RFP outlines the requirement for the QEP to extend subcontracting opportunities to qualified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms, per 40 CFR, Part 33, Subpart C. The county auditor reviews, approves and manages all county procurement efforts to assure a consistent, fair and public-facing process. Our procurement practices involve an impartial review committee with senior oversight by the county auditor. Contracting is completed with guidance from a county attorney. Our successful procurement and contracting systems are evidenced by the fact that none of the grants that GCR manages have ever been subject to a negative audit or monitoring finding.

4.e. Currently has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: Missoula County was awarded a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Cleanup grant in 2012 for the Missoula County Courthouse Remodel Project to abate asbestos, lead-based paint and other hazardous substances. Missoula County was awarded two 3-year EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment grants: one in 2019 (\$300,000) and one in 2022 (\$500,000). Both assessment grants were spent down or fully committed within two years.

(1) Accomplishments: Hazardous materials were removed or abated from the Missoula County Courthouse. The remodel resulted in new offices and meeting rooms for county staff and the public. With the 2019 Assessment grant, Missoula County assessed nine brownfield sites totaling 71 acres, including 9 Phase I ESAs and 4 large Phase II ESAs. With the 2022 Assessment grant, Missoula County assessed 10 sites totaling 606 acres, including 6 Phase I ESAs and 8 Phase II ESAs. All outputs and outcomes were accurately reported in ACRES. Deliverables include 2 site inventories, 3 EPA-approved QAPPs, 27 public meetings, estimated scope and cost of building materials abatement for 9 properties, 4 Analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), 33 quarterly reports, and three final reports. As a result of brownfields assistance, at least 686 jobs were created with anticipation of the creation of at least 450 more jobs; \$2.9 million in non-brownfields funding was leveraged for assessments or cleanups; \$38.8 million was committed in private or public investments; and at least \$329 million is anticipated in private or public investment. It is expected that overall redevelopment opportunities provided by the 2019 and 2022 EPA grants will result in leveraging at least \$370.7 million in non-brownfields funds with over 1,100 jobs created.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: For all three grants, Missoula County delivered acceptable and timely quarterly reports and grant deliverables and reported successful outputs and outcomes in ACRES. The Brownfields Cleanup grant for the county courthouse project was completed with all funds expended; the grant was successfully closed in December 2015. The 2019 Brownfields Assessment Grant was completed with all funds expended within two years; the grant was successfully closed January 2023. The 2022 Assessment grant was fully committed by September 2024, funds were fully drawn down by June 2025, and the grant was successfully closed in December 2025. All brownfields assessment projects were implemented according to the original work plan, schedule, and terms and conditions of the EPA Cooperative Agreement. An FY26 Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant will allow Missoula County to continue the success of its brownfields program and meet the exceeding demand for brownfields assistance because of that success.

ATTACHMENT A

Threshold Criteria

ATTACHMENT A

Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility:

- a. As a General Purpose Unit of Local Government, Missoula County, Montana is an eligible applicant for an EPA Brownfields Assessment grant.
- b. Missoula County, as a local governmental entity, is not an organization that is exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4).

2. Community Involvement:

Missoula County understands the value of community and stakeholder involvement in our Brownfields Program and has attended Community Council meetings in the target areas and met with business owners and community leaders in preparation for this proposal. The County intends to inform and involve community residents and other stakeholders during the planning and implementation phases of this project. Please see Section 2 in the Narrative Proposal for more information on the County's proposed community engagement efforts.

Missoula County will take the following Community Outreach steps under this grant:

- a. Develop a formal Community Involvement Plan outlining communication methods, feedback loops, and transparency measures.
- b. Hold open public meetings, announced via the County website and local newspapers, with remote participation options.
- c. Present program objectives and current information to seven Community Councils in and around the target areas.
- d. Leverage established outreach networks to collect and relay input during their routine interactions.
- e. Meet with landowners, developers, and business owners to discuss assessments, cleanups, and the redevelopment potential of specific properties.
- f. Prepare educational fact sheets for sites assessed.
- g. Distribute email updates to redevelopment advocates.
- h. Maintain and update project information in the Missoula County Voice for easy public comments

3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds:

Missoula County does not currently have an open EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant. Missoula County expended 100% of the 2022 Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant award in 26 of the 36-month period.

4. Names Contractor and Subrecipients

A contractor or subrecipient has not been identified or procured for this project. Upon being awarded an EPA Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant, Missoula County will comply with federal and local procurement requirements to procure a Qualified Environmental Professional.